



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
Keeping people safe

18 October 2021

LAY-COMMUNITY ADVISORS
Standing Operating Procedures

Produced for Operation Turn

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is intended to provide guidance on the structure, use and availability of Lay Advisors. Lay Advisors are also known as Community Advisors or Community Lay Advisors.
- 1.2 A critical part of the enquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence as detailed in the [MacPherson Report](#), and the subsequent [Race Relations \(Amendment\) Act 2000](#), highlighted the need for police authorities to create an independent body that would scrutinise the effectiveness of police work and activity in the field of race crime and liaison with minority communities. This role has since been developed to incorporate other minority communities and is undertaken by Lay/Community Advisors with the Police Service of Scotland.
- 1.3 Lay/Community Advisors are independent persons who through their backgrounds or employment have a particular knowledge of a community group, but who do not necessarily represent that community. The Lay/Community Advisors are available to advise on all areas of diversity, race, religion, sexual orientation, faith, disability, gender and gender identity. Objectivity, insight and an independent overview are regarded as necessary skills as well as an ability to communicate and relate to a range of people at all levels in society. The advisors are comprised predominately of external community members, but in some areas a number of Police Officers and members of Police Staff are also available to give advice based on their community backgrounds or personal knowledge. Lay/Community Advisors are available to be utilised at a tactical and operational level, where advice may have a bearing on an incident/investigation or event.
- 1.4 A National Independent Strategic Advisory Group (NISAG) has been formed from a small number of existing Lay/Community Advisors who have an in-depth knowledge of a specific diversity area, or a number of areas, and who have the ability to provide advice and guidance on those areas at a strategic level. Their primary uses are to assist with policy development, and provide a scrutinising role on an independent basis towards our practises. In addition to this, they can provide advice and guidance to members of Police Scotland Executive and SPA Board on relevant issues, which can include training issues, media releases, critical incidents or advice for any incident or issue of national importance.
- 1.5 There is currently a level of inconsistency across Scotland in the use of terms, process, procedure, roles and responsibilities of Lay/Community Advisors. Most areas utilise Lay/Community Advisors in some way.
- 1.6 This SOP is an interim position whilst work is ongoing that will ensure the procedures, roles and responsibilities of the Lay/Community Advisors is standardised across Scotland.

2. PROCESS/PROCEDURE

2.1 The process and procedure in relation to Lay/Community Advisors varies across the country and the regional variations are held in the geographical appendices A-H and cover the following;

- Recruitment of Lay/Community Advisors
- Training of Lay/Community Advisors
- Vetting/Security of Lay/Community Advisors
- Call out procedures
- Expenses

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The role of the Lay/Community Advisor may include;

- Monitor Hate Crime
- Provide advice in critical incidents
- Review Equality Impact Assessments
- Provide advice and review policies and procedures
- Sample complaints against the police

3.2 Examples of when Lay/Community Advisors can be utilised are as follows;

- Advise on the potential impact of an incident on specific communities
- Advise on issues specifically relevant to the individual/community affected
- Advise on any potential impact, adverse or otherwise, from a proposed course of action by the police

3.3 As their title suggests Lay/Community Advisors should be utilised only in an advisory capacity. Their services should not be sought as mediators or advocates. They provide an important role in providing guidance surrounding sensitive issues that may arise during the course of an investigation. It is the decision of the service user whether or not to act on the advice of an advisor.

3.4 Lay Advisors/Community Advisors should **not** be used in the following circumstances;

- Undertaking enquiries on behalf of the SIO
- Acting as an intermediary to aid communication between victims/families/witnesses – this is the role of the Family Liaison Officer (FLO) who may receive advice from the Lay/Community Advisor
- Be actively involved in the proactive phase of the enquiry. i.e. arrests / searches except to advise on the potential impact of such actions
- Utilised for interpreting or translating.

- Speaking on behalf of police decision makers to the media or other scrutinizers
 - Meeting with victims, their families and witnesses or attending the scene of an incident during the active phases of an enquiry.
- 3.5 Specific Roles and responsibilities are illustrated in the Appendices, which identify regional variations.

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'C' DIVISION**2. PROCESS/PROCEDURE**

- 2.1 'C' Division has 26 Lay Advisors. Membership regularly changes, but every effort is made to interact with as many communities as possible.
- 2.2 All Lay Advisors are vetted to Non Police – Level 1 Vetting to establish appropriate suitability for the role. Lay Advisors are then given supervised and controlled access to Police data, policies and procedures.
- 2.3 No specific training is undertaken by the Lay Advisors. If a specific training need is identified then a special meeting would be convened to address this particular issue / need.
- 2.4 There is no specific tenure for Lay Advisors, participation is voluntary. Anyone can apply to become a Lay Advisor and his or her acceptance would depend on the vetting process.
- 2.5 Lay Advisors meet on a quarterly basis where issues that have affected the area during the last quarter will be discussed, along with the quarterly statistics regarding Hate Crime. This meeting is also used to identify any issues that any Lay Advisors community are encountering.
- 2.6 If it is identified that an enquiry is being undertaken that may have a community impact, the Equality and Diversity Officer will be contacted and a suitable Lay Advisor will be identified and contacted to provide assistance and advice regarding any potential delicate enquiries that require to be carried out.
- 2.7 Lay Advisors are used in shaping policies and procedures at a local level. Where appropriate Standing Operating Procedures will be forwarded to Lay Advisors as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.
- 2.8 The Lay Advisors give advice as to what are the appropriate courses of action re media, community consultation/engagement, and religious considerations for their particular community.
- 2.9 Lay Advisors are able to claim travel expenses but no other payment is provided.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The quarterly meeting is chaired by the Chief Superintendent of Forth Valley Division. The secretariat for the group is held by the Equalities and Diversity Officer and all day-to-day running is completed by them.
- 3.2 All contact with the Lay Advisors is made through the Equalities and Diversity Officer who will contact an appropriate Lay Advisor depending on the situation.

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'V' DIVISION

Prior to the 1st of April 2013 'V' Division did not use Lay/Community Advisors.

Any queries in relation to Diversity and Equality issues please contact the Inspector,
Divisional Co-ordination Unit, Police Scotland, Cornwall Mount, Dumfries, DG1 1PZ,
[REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

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'P' DIVISION

2. PROCESS/PROCEDURE

- 2.1 'P Division have 24 members sitting on the Lay Advisors Group.
- 2.2 The Lay Advisors are vetted at a basic level with some of them vetted to a higher standard. These Lay Advisors assist with the ongoing enquiry into a Hate Crime of serious proportions.
- 2.3 Lay Advisors meet every twelve weeks and look at Hate Crime enquiries (the information has been redacted). The enquiry officer attends and provides an input in an effort to ascertain what was good about the enquiry, any mistakes/guidance on what could be done better.
- 2.4 Lay Advisors can be reimbursed for expenses incurred whilst travelling to and from meetings. They should complete the [Payment Requisition Form](#) and return it to [REDACTED]

'A' AND 'B' DIVISIONS**2. PROCESS/PROCEDURE**

- 2.1 In 2012, 'A' and 'B' Divisions moved from their previous model of three 'single-strand' groups (Race, LGBT and Disability) to a single 'multi-strand', strategic level Lay Advisor group, upon which all protected characteristics are represented equally.
- 2.2 The single group is chaired by a senior member of staff, normally a Chief Inspector, with membership drawn from a combination of individuals and/or those who provide executive level representation of key bodies representing the protected characteristics in the Grampian area. An essential criteria for membership of this group is an ability to demonstrate respect for all protected characteristics and a personal sphere of influence capable of both reaching and representing wider communities. Each member is expected to have the knowledge, skills and experience to be able to fully represent the diversity that exists within the protected characteristic they represent.
- 2.3 The core business of the single group is to increase the focus of the Lay Advisors and to deal with and address matters relating to a national or Service-wide perspective.
- 2.4 Members of the group were recruited following a period of external consultation, mostly by recommendation from organisations.
- 2.5 Members are required to undergo Level 1 NPPV processes, thus allowing them to be used in a consultative capacity in the Grampian area in a number of ways, including commenting upon Restricted or Confidential policies being developed.
- 2.6 Members also receive a Code of Conduct document, a copy of which is signed by them and retained by PSoS. The document specifies the competence, responsibility, ethical and professional and confidentiality standards that are expected of the member. Failure to adhere to this code of conduct can lead to removal from the group and the possibility of further action being considered depending upon the nature of the breach of trust.
- 2.7 The Lay Advisors have no specific training. At meetings they receive inputs from different areas of the business but in general their knowledge of practical realities of the challenges facing the area would be at best limited.
- 2.8 Call out processes are agreed with the Lay Advisors dependent upon the nature of their role or other commitments. This would generally be achieved through telephone contact.

- 2.9 The Lay Advisors receive no financial contribution for their services, which are provided on a voluntary basis. Reasonable expenses needed to fulfil their role (travel etc) would be met.

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'E' AND 'J' DIVISIONS

2. PROCESS/PROCEDURE

- 2.1 Lay Advisors are ordinary members of the community who live or work in the Lothian and Borders area. They are independent of the police and are recruited for what expertise they can offer to the role.
- 2.2 Lay Advisors monitor hate crime, provide advice in critical incidents, review equality impact assessments and community impact assessments, provide advice and review policies and procedures and sample complaints against the police. They meet on a quarterly basis with Divisional command teams to review hate crimes, sample complaints.
- 2.3 All Lay Advisors are vetted to Level 2 and provided with photo ID's.
- 2.4 Lay Advisors undergo a period of training usually spread over 3 or 4 evenings where they are given inputs cover the following topics;
- Data Protection and Police Protocol
 - Role and Responsibilities of Lay Advisors
 - Contest Prevent, Complaints and Annual Review
 - Diversity Training
 - Equality Impact Assessment training
- 2.5 At all stages Lay Advisors are monitored and take part in probationary review meetings and annual reviews.
- 2.6 Lay Advisors can claim for expenses and are provided a yearly honorarium based on their commitment and the number of meetings attended.
- 2.7 In every instance where the need for the services of Lay Advisors are deemed necessary contact should be made via the following;
- During office hours contact should be made in the first instance with Preventions, Interventions, Partnerships (PIP), West End Police Station, Edinburgh on [REDACTED] or by email to; [REDACTED].
 - Out with office hours via the Area Control Room who will contact the on call Safer Communities Officer who has a list of all Lay Advisors.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 There are 9 Lay Advisors Including a local convenor.

3.2 Lay Advisors have a scrutiny role to;

- Monitor Hate Crime
- Provide advice in Critical Incidents
- Review Equality Impact Assessments
- Provide advice and review policies and procedures
- Sample complaints against the police.

3.3 Lay Advisors complete these roles:

- Bi-monthly hate crime monitoring meetings with divisional command teams;
- Critical incidents – as and when they occur;
- Bi-annual sampling of EIA's
- Sample complaints on a quarterly basis

3.4 The work of a Lay Advisor is underpinned with three guiding principles;

- Consideration – to be assured that Police Officers understand how people and communities are affected by what they do.
- Respect – being assured that Police Officers recognise and value individual differences when they interact with members of the public and take action to build effective relationships with people from under-represented groups
- Honesty – to be assured Police Officers demonstrate consistency and reliability when they deal with people from under-represented groups.

'N' DIVISION**2. PROCESS/PROCEDURE**

- 2.1 The 'N' Division covers 4 geographical Local Authority areas. Of the four, only Highland has direct representation through the Community Advisory Group.
- 2.2 This structure comprises nominated members of community groups, representing the interests of all groups with protected characteristics, as defined under the Equality Act. The format and remit of the group provides that the interests of minority groups across the division, are represented.
- 2.3 A list of member community groups and their nominated representatives is maintained by the Divisional Coordination Unit.
- 2.4 Members of the Advisory Group are issued with official identification cards.
- 2.5 Members of the Advisory Group are routinely consulted in relation to appropriate policy matters, as new or revised policy is being formulated, to ensure its application is legitimate, well-considered and consistent with the policing ethos across the Highlands & Islands.
- 2.6 The Advisory Group is Chaired by the Chief Superintendent and meets quarterly, facilitated by the Divisional Coordination Unit, with Minutes circulated and publicly available.
- 2.7 Members of the Advisory Group also assist in terms of scrutiny matters. The Multi-agency Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel draws its specialist membership from the Advisory Group.
- 2.8 Members of the Advisory Group are routinely available in an advisory capacity to senior police officers, to share their specialist knowledge on ongoing community issues, during times of tension which may arise following any local or national incident which has taken place.

'G', 'U', 'Q', 'L' and 'K' DIVISION**2. PROCESS/PROCEDURE**

- 2.1 In every instance where the need for the services of a Community Advisor are deemed necessary contact should be made via the following ;
- During office hours contact should be made in the first instance with the Diversity Unit, Safer Communities, on [REDACTED] or by e-mail to: [REDACTED]
 - Out with office hours contact should be made with Service Overview who hold the contact details of the National Safer Communities On Call officer, who has details of all Community Advisors and their specific areas of expertise.
- 2.2 Members of the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) can act as Community Advisors, and are available for call-out as per the above system, however, when their advice is requested in their capacity as members of the IAG contact should be made with the Diversity Unit prior to call-out, in order to ensure their appropriate use.
- 2.3 In order to provide information on the benefits or any negative aspect to the deployment of a Community Advisor/IAG member, where any Community Advisor/IAG member is utilised, an e-mail supplying the relevant Command and Control incident number (if applicable) and any information about the Advisor's use should be sent to [REDACTED]
- 2.4 All Community Advisors and members of the IAG undergo an initial Induction Day, giving information on:
- Their role and functions
 - Structure of the policing area
 - Professional Standards Department
Administration/Expenses
- 2.5 Meetings of the Community Advisors are held regularly and organised by the Diversity Unit, Safer Communities. These are designed to update the advisors on current issues, provide inputs from relevant specialist departments thereby widening their understanding of the Service structure.
- 2.6 Meetings of the IAG are held every three months, organised by the Diversity Unit at Safer Communities. These meetings are used to discuss ongoing issues at a strategic level, and to provide updates on relevant areas of business.

- 2.7 All Community Advisors are provided with a Community Advisor Record of Advice book (hard copy available via Stores). This is used by them to record any advice given when called out, and to whom it was provided. A copy is given to the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the incident, or the officer requesting their advice, and a copy forwarded to the Community Advisor Co-ordinator. This allows for an accurate record of advice provided. For reference, guidance on the conditions of the role and use of Community Advisors are contained within the initial pages of this book.
- 2.8 All Community Advisors and IAG members sign a contract provided by the Legal Services Department in order to formalise their terms and role. This does not entail them becoming employees of PSoS, but ensures that they are bound by certain stipulated conditions.
- 2.9 As part of the application process for becoming a Community Advisor or IAG member, each applicant undergoes the standard Police Officer/Police Staff vetting checks.
- 2.10 Those Community Advisors and IAG members who are external to PSoS are issued with an identification card similar to that of a Police Staff member, bearing the title "**ADVISOR**". This card should be worn only when on official business involving their role. It should be worn prominently thereby enabling Police Officers and staff to readily identify Community Advisors when accessing Police premises.
- 2.11 The identification card remains the property of the Police and must be returned on termination of the Community Advisor contract.
- 2.12 All expenses incurred by the use of Community Advisors are paid through a central budget at Safer Communities. There are no expenses incurred by the Division/Department requesting the Advisor. The claims process is administered by the Diversity Unit and any questions regarding their payment should be directed to them.
- 2.13 In order to ensure that the advice provided by Community Advisors is independent and unbiased, the advisors are not employed by Police Scotland, but carry out their role on a voluntary basis, and are reimbursed with necessary travelling expenses along with a nominal call-out payment.
- 2.14 Where an Advisor is utilised on more than one occasion, in relation to a single incident or issue, they are paid the call-out fee for each occasion they are called.
- 2.15 Where an Advisor is utilised in exceptional circumstances, such as over a prolonged period of time, they will be paid a one-off payment up to a maximum of £250, which will be determined by the Community Advisor Co-ordinator after consultation with the SIO/Police Incident Officer (PIO) for the incident.

- 2.16 Where an Advisor has additional travelling needs in terms of disability requirements, relevant reasonable adjustments are made to the travelling expenses on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.17 Members of the IAG are reimbursed necessary expenses in relation to travelling and subsistence, but are **not** paid for their use. Police officers and Police Staff who are Community Advisors are paid according to their Conditions of Service.
- 2.18 All Community Advisors submit their claims directly to the Community Advisor Co-ordinator using a standard expenses claim form; [007-003](#).

PAYMENT RATES AND EXPENSES

FEEs FOR COMMUNITY ADVISORS

Fees for Deployment	Amount Payable
Telephone/e-mail Consultation	£10.00
Call out:	
(1) Call out including first hour of deployment	£20.00
(2) Single hourly rate thereafter	£10.00
(1) plus (2) above up to a maximum of £100 per day	
Single payments for extended hours or use in exceptional circumstances (as reported by the SIO/PIO)	£250.00

MILEAGE ALLOWANCES

Standard Rate per mile	36.9 p
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'D' DIVISION**2. PROCESS AND PROCEDURE**

- 2.1 Strategic Community Advisory Group: The meetings will be administered/facilitated by the Diversity Adviser and chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable or their nominee.
- 2.2 Divisional Community Advisory Groups: The meetings will be organised and chaired by divisional representatives of Chief Inspector rank or above.
- 2.3 The Groups will meet at least twice a year. In addition 'special meetings' may be held if and when required either in response to concerns from members or a particular incident or set of circumstances.
- 2.4 'D' Division staff will arrange and manage the meetings. Notes or reports from the meetings will be shared with members of the appropriate Group/s. Any relevant emerging issues and concerns will also be reported to the Diversity Development Group for strategic considerations.
- 2.5 Membership is open to anyone who has the relevant knowledge, experience and/or expertise and who wishes to help the Police in achieving the aims and objectives of the Group(s) in accordance with PSoS policy. The number of members will be at the discretion of the chairperson. In recognition of the fact that not all members may be able to attend every meeting a large pool of interested people will help to sustain meaningful meetings. This would also allow those who would like to be involved but not necessarily attend meetings to make a contribution informally. Minimum age will be 16 years. There will be no maximum age limits.
- 2.6 All Community Advisers are expected to demonstrate high standards of personal behaviour at all times. Every Community Adviser is encouraged to engage in debate on the challenging issues that may be raised. Critical views are welcomed and should be expressed in a constructive and respectful manner. Members must not use their advisory status or relationship with the Police for personal gain or reward. The views expressed by individual members of the Community Advisory Groups on issues, whether in public or private shall not be intended to imply that they reflect the views or policies of PSoS or views of other members of the Group(s).
- 2.7 Conduct that seeks to attack individuals or individual beliefs, preferences, affiliations or cultures, or likely to bring the Community Advisory Group(s) or PSoS into disrepute, may lead to suspension of membership. The Chairperson of the relevant Group will have the discretion to suspend or terminate the membership of an individual at any time. The member concerned will be informed of the reason for the decision. There will be no right of appeal.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 Strategic Community Advisory Group (SCAG): The purpose of establishing this particular group is to bring together members of Tayside's diverse communities as advisers with the aim of ensuring that the strategic vision, plans, policies and practices of the Service are responsive to the needs, and reasonable expectations of all sections of the communities it serves. As a member of this group you will consider Service-wide strategy and policy issues and be actively involved in the development and review of relevant strategic approaches.
- 3.2 Divisional Community Advisory Group (Div CAG): As a member of the Div CAG advisers are expected to provide views on the proposed delivery of policing services within their locality, as presented by the senior police management team. They are expected to act as a 'critical friend' and raise any relevant policing issues that they feel may affect individuals or groups within their locality.
- 3.3 The main duties of a Community Adviser are:
- to attend meetings when possible, listen to proposed policing objectives and initiatives on strategic/local policing matters and comment/challenge and advise where appropriate;
 - to bring to the Group, views and concerns of their community or membership, or personal experience and knowledge of issues related to police policy and service delivery that may help to improve quality of service and promote equality of outcomes for all sections of the community; and
 - to be involved in the development and review of policy/strategy and contribute to the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process as and when required.
- 3.4 As a Community Adviser, either as an individual or representing a body, which has significant contact with the relevant community, they should have:
- Knowledge/experience of a 'customer' based understanding of public service delivery;
 - A desire to shape and improve strategic/local policing services;
 - An ability to work as an independent 'critical friend' in a challenging, constructive and respectful manner;
 - The willingness and ability to devote some time to the issues developed by the Group; and
 - Reside or work within Tayside (for Strategic CAG) or the relevant divisional area (for Divisional CAG).

LIST OF ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION

- [Race Relations Amendment Act 2000](#)

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ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

- [MacPherson Report](#)

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CAG	Community Advisory Group
CPEU	Community Planning and Equalities Unit
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FLO	Family Liaison officer
IAG	Independent Advisory Group
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
NISAG	National Independent Strategic Advisory Group
NPPV	Non Police Personnel Vetting
OIC	Officer in Charge
SCAG	Strategic Community Advisory Group
SIO	Senior Investigating officer

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