

FOI Response
Information provided under the Freedom of Information Act

Title of Request: How police force works with and supports advocacy groups	
FOI Reference: FOI/OPCC/21-013	
Date of Request: 24/04/2021	Date of Response/Release: 11/05/2021
Information Requested:	
1.	<p>Question:</p> <p>I am writing in order to learn and discover how your police force works with and supports advocacy groups. I am mainly interested in how the police works alongside advocacy groups or independent persons that scrutinise police practices to hold the police to account in regards to the way they treat alleged suspects, investigate crimes, and charge them for offences.</p> <p>I am particularly interested in how, and if, you work with persons that have been wrongly accused and unfairly investigated, in which you listen to their views and make positive changes to policy and procedure. Please can you provide a comprehensive list of the advocacy or IAG groups which your force recognises, supports and works with: providing specific details on any groups or individuals that have made complaints and have been unfairly and unlawfully treated?</p> <p>I would be grateful for as much comprehensive information as possible as I am in the process of trying to establish similar organisations within the social care sector. It is my understanding that the police are very good in the way they engage with communities and the general public in regards to community issues and accountability. All learning materials and resources would be appreciated, including up to academic level such as journals and reports etc.</p>
	<p>OPCC Response: The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is a separate organisation to Cambridgeshire Constabulary. The OPCC has no involvement in those groups you specifically refer to as 'in relation to those wrongly accused and unfairly investigated'. Anyone who has believes they have been unfairly or unlawfully treated and or have a complaint, have recourse to the complaints process which the Constabulary's Professional Standards Department deal with. Information relating to the questions asked relating to the 'police force' i.e. the Constabulary can be requested from them, details of which are given below.</p>

However, in providing you with assistance and for your information in respect of your introduction regarding your interest in 'advocacy groups and independent persons that scrutinise police practices to hold the police to account', the following information is provided.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has a statutory responsibility under the Police Reform Act 2002, as amended by the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011, to establish and maintain an Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme. This Scheme involves volunteer members of the public visiting police stations to check and report on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. This public oversight helps to prevent harm and provides public reassurance that custody is a safe place to be. Details of the ICV Scheme are given on the links below

<https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteer-schemes/independent-custody-visitors-scheme/policies-and-procedures/>

<https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteer-schemes/independent-custody-visitors-scheme/icv-scheme-business/>

Information relating to an Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel which the OPCC sits on in an observer capacity can be found on the link below.

<https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/media.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/uploads/2021/04/FOI-OPCC-21-012.pdf>

You can contact the Constabulary by email at foi@cambs.pnn.police.uk. Alternatively, please see the link to the Constabulary's Freedom of Information pages:

<https://www.cambs.police.uk/information-and-services/About-us/Freedom-of-information/Make-an-FOI-request>