



Scottish Police Federation

East Area Committee

**Minutes of the Third Quarterly Meeting of the East Area Committee
Held on Wednesday 3rd September, 2014
Within the Deer Park Conference Centre, Livingston, EH54 8AB**

ATTENDANCE

Inspector Graham Capes	C - Forth Valley
Inspector High Loudon	C - Forth Valley
Sergeant Murray McKenzie	C - Forth Valley
Constable Mhairi Davidson	C - Forth Valley
Constable Grant McDowell	C - Forth Valley
Constable Paul Redwood	C - Forth Valley
Inspector Fraser Downie	P - Fife
Sergeant Thomas Clague	P - Fife
Sergeant Wilkie McCloskey	P - Fife
Constable Kevin Payne	P - Fife
Constable Steven Herd	P - Fife
Inspector Allan Symington	E - Edinburgh
Inspector Colin Gagen	E - Edinburgh
Sergeant Willie Stevenson	E - Edinburgh
Sergeant Norman Towler	E - Edinburgh
Inspector Raymond Dutton	J - The Lothian's & Scottish Borders
Sergeant Brian Jones	J - The Lothian's & Scottish Borders
Constable Neil Elder	J - The Lothian's & Scottish Borders
Stewart Ross	Secretary
Nigel Bathgate	Vice-Chair
APOLOGIES	
Gordon Dixon	Chair
Amanda Given	Assistant Secretary
Inspector Andrew Malcolm	C - Forth Valley
Inspector Heather MacDonald	J - The Lothian's & Scottish Borders
Inspector David Watt	E - Edinburgh
Sergeant Scott Meechan	E - Edinburgh

Sergeant Neil Spowart	E – Edinburgh
Sergeant Mark Sherman	E - Edinburgh
Constable John Hay	C - Forth Valley
Constable Kevin Braidwood	E - Edinburgh

OPENING OF MEETING

The Vice-Chair welcomed all in attendance in particular, the new members of the Committee. He welcomed Sergeant Colin Johnston and Constable Allan McLean (observers) He also extended a warm welcome to Peter Jones the Scottish Police Federation “lead” who was also in attendance as an observer. He encouraged all to take a full and active part in the discussions.

The Vice-Chair highlighted that the recent past had proved to be most challenging for the federated ranks since the formation of the single Force. He praised the commitment, stamina and professionalism of his colleagues during the Commonwealth Games despite the carefree approach of Police Scotland towards their welfare. In summary, an event hailed a success in relation to the public should be viewed no more in policing terms than shambolic. He reminded the Committee that challenges remain as a legacy of the games and, that they must be met “head on” to direct the Force through the regulations and not what the Force perceive as the “new norm” which arose over the period of the games.

The Vice-Chair also highlighted challenges which remain within the three defined disciplines namely, Conduct, Health & Safety and Equality with a major concern being the application of the new Performance Regulations.

The Vice-Chair indicated that since the last Committee Meeting Constable Karl Cleghorn had retired from the service and John Lawson, Stewart Oliver and Jim Kerr had resigned from the Committee. Their service and contribution to the work of the Committee was acknowledged.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 4th June, 2014 had previously been circulated. They were approved as a true and accurate record on the proposal of Murray McKenzie and seconded by Raymond Dutton.

MATTERS ARISING

(a) Joint Central Committee

The Secretary updated the Committee on the meeting held on 19th and 20th August, 2014. A number of Legal Advice and Assistance applications had been dealt with. The Allowances and Expenses Policy which has been under discussion since September 2013 has been delayed with the main sticking point being the Force's view that "volunteers" for transfer would not be entitled to recompense. The Police Negotiating Board has been replaced by a pay review body while Scotland will continue to have its own PNB. One of the obvious recent benefits being the agreement on the hard fought Travelling Allowance for the Commonwealth Games. There has been little development in the production of the Pension Regulations however, they can be retrospectively applied. While new commutation tables have been produced for England and Wales this has not been the case in Scotland. The Police Consultative Forum has still to finalise the guidance of Conduct and Performance and that group have formed a sub group to examine Health & Safety and Working Time. There was also a suggestion that a Scottish Command Course be introduced but this was given a negative response. The Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee met on 10th July, 2014 when the weighty agenda was reduced by the Chief Constable. A sub group will be formed to look at travel and working time. Despite the Commonwealth Games being hailed a success and the Chief Constable being congratulated by the Scottish Police Authority Board, as far as the federated ranks are concerned, both locally and nationally, it was a shambles and has been communicated as such in the SPF input to the debrief.

(b) Health & Safety

Peter Jones, National Lead and Brian Jones, Chair of East Health & Safety Committee reported no meetings but highlighted the lack of training for Road Policing Officers in locus protection. A meeting is planned with Head of Procurement and Fleet Management when it is hoped to address the equipment storage in vehicles and whether it is fit for purpose.

(c) Conduct

In the absence of Gordon Dixon, Stewart Ross reported that the last meeting of the Conduct Standing Committee was held on 29th July, 2014 and the East Area Sub-Committee on 26th August, 2014. There has been a slight increase in complaints with a few cases being dealt with under the new Conduct and

Performance Regulations. The Professional Standards Department has been restructured into Conciliation, Criminal, and Misconduct with each area being managed by a Chief Inspector. PIRC have announced Ms Kate Frame as their new head. Advice has been received that officers, when involved in PIRC enquiries, should request a copy of the statement they have provided prior to leaving the meeting. The Vice-Chair indicated that the use of Performance Regulations would appear to be more prevalent in E Division where procedural failings have been identified with one case yet to reach the appeal stage.

(d) Equality

The Vice-Chair reported that the PNB Gender Equality Group no longer exists therefore, it was suggested that this item be placed on the agenda of PNB Scotland. Police Scotland is resisting this suggestion and would wish it to form part of the work of the JNCC which, would ultimately dilute the decision making powers. An attachment to the Equality Standing Committee Minutes highlights the achievements of the PNB Group over its lifetime. Areas such as maternity and related issues; fertility treatment; variable shift arrangements; keeping in touch days; part-time officers pay; increase in paternal leave and pay and pension arrangements for part-time Inspecting ranks. A similar body under the auspices of PNB Scotland could replicate that level of achievement and clearly benefit the members of the federated ranks. A meeting on 9th September will address issues of the Maternity/Paternity/Adoption SOP where officers had received incorrect payments on leave. A helpful question and answer guide has been circulated with the Equality Sub-Committee Minutes to assist with maternity related issues. A full amended re-draft of the Flexible Working SOP has been agreed and will be circulated in due course. The Disability in Employment SOP will form discussion at the September meeting. The Vice-Chair and the SPF Equality Secretary met with the Justice Secretary when they voiced their concern around the Force's approach to sick pay. The Minister voiced his support and assured that he would raise the matter with the Chief Constable and the Convenor of the Scottish Police Authority. Work is ongoing to monitor how this issue is being approached in different areas. A response has been received from John Gillies regarding fitness testing but it fails to address the issues and concerns raised. The area of ill-health, despite a number of concessions, continues to be problematic. Flexible working patterns continue to feature as different divisions change shift arrangements and then impose flexible pattern reviews on members. The Vice-Chair asked that any instances should be notified to him and encouraged the use of the Equality Case Forms to allow for an accurate evidence trail in the event of formal

proceedings being required. He concluded by encouraging representatives to notify him of any Equality issues that they are aware of.

(e) Finance

The Finance Standing Committee met on 30th July, 2014 when the accounts for the year were considered prior to presentation at the Joint Central Committee. Work continues in relation with the honoraria for full time officials. It was agreed to refurbish Woodside Place at a cost of £500k with staff working out of Paisley and Livingston while the work is ongoing. Enquiries are underway to examine the possibility of SPF being VAT exempt which may have benefits to the way in which we do business.

(f) Operational Duties

The last meeting took place on 30th July, 2014 and the minutes will be circulated in due course. Discussion took place regarding payment for Inspecting Ranks over the period of the Commonwealth Games and that matter is currently being progressed.

(g) Legislation and Regulations

This Standing Committee also met on 30th July, 2014 when the discussion surrounded the present Bills which were out for consultation.

(h) Police Charities

A new Chief Executive has been appointed for the Police Treatment Centres with Gordon Dixon elected Chair of the Board of Trustees. Plans are afoot to hold a strategy day to examine the medium to long term aims of the charity. This will include the re-evaluation of the plans to upgrade Castlebrae and the suggestion to widen the membership. The Scottish Police Benevolent Fund AGM was held on 19th August with Martin Bertram (West Area) and Amanda Givan being elected Chair and Secretary respectively. The accounts were presented and a decision taken to invest funds of £1.75m. This fund continues to assist and support those in difficulty and representatives were encouraged to make the members aware of the options available or to point the members in the direction of the web-site should they be in need of assistance.

(i) Member Services

The Scheme appears to be working well and it was agreed to remove it from the Agenda.

(j) Area LNCC

A meeting was held on 19th June, 2014 when topics discussed included early issues with travel and expenses for the Commonwealth Games; blanket cancellation of rest days; the amount of time officers spend at hospitals; too many acting ranks and the expense of substantive promotions.

(k) Divisional Updates

E Division - The next meeting was due on 4th September, 2014. Members are very unhappy over the Force “all fits one” approach to the allocation of Annual Leave. The decision to introduce this system was taken by Working Practices Review Group on which the National Chairman and Deputy General Secretary represent the federated ranks. There followed a lengthy discussion on the system and the Secretary undertook to make the views known.

J Division - Staffing levels continue to be a cause for concern with the impression that the Service is completely risk averse. Brian Jones raised concern over the distances being covered attending grade 1 and 2 calls.

P Division - No meetings – concerns over Sergeant resilience.

C Division - No Meeting – concern over the reduction in supervisory levels. Grant McDowell gave a lengthy presentation to the Committee on staffing levels and resource deployment and this engendered discussion.

(l) Major Events

A number of officers are currently deployed to the NATO Conference in Wales. They are volunteers and working under the Hertfordshire Agreement. Accommodation appears to be good but there are reported difficulties with the logistics of the operation. The up-coming Ryder Cup will involve mainly officers from P and C Divisions and will entail early starts, this is being dealt

with nationally. There may be an increased police presence required on Referendum Day.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion:

“That this East Area Committee asks the JCC to engage with the Force Executive to seek an agreed definition of “Exigency of Duty”.

Proposed Stewart Ross

Seconded Grant McDowell

The Motion was unanimously carried.

COMPETENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Competent Business.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The Fourth Quarterly Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday 3rd December, 2014 within the Deer Park Conference Centre, Livingston.

CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Vice-Chair thanked everyone for attending and for their valued input into what had been a busy and most productive meeting. He wished everyone a safe onward journey home and formally closed the meeting.

Stewart Ross
Secretary

Nigel Bathgate
Vice-Chair