



Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee

Minutes of the 1st quarterly meeting of the Scottish Police Federation – North Area Committee held on Monday 3rd and Tuesday 4th March 2014 at the Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry.

1. Members Present

Full Time Officials

David Hamilton	Chair
Graeme Ednie	Secretary
Graham Sloan	Vice Chair
John Ferguson	Deputy Secretary
Peter Jones	Deputy Secretary

Constables

Stephen Cook
Brian Dick
John Drysdale
Neil MacDonald
Angus Morrison
Sandy Smart
Davie Smith
Steve Thomson
Shaun White

Sergeants

Derek Baxter
Gary Brown
John Crawford
Gordon Forsyth
Grant Letham
George Murray
Steve Raeburn
Steven Ross
David Threadgold

Inspecting Ranks

Neil Cameron
Stuart Ednie
Paul Hogan
Willie MacLennan
Murdo MacLeod
Gordon Milne
Ewan Strachan
Iain Smith

Observers present

Andrew Bilton
Mike Purdie

Also in attendance

David Ross, SPF Vice Chair (day 1 only)

Secretaries Note: The minute records the business discussed in accordance with the agenda and not necessarily the order in which items were actually raised for discussion.

2. Opening of Meeting

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members present and encouraged everyone present to take an active part in discussions and contribute to debate.

The Chairman advised it was with regret he had to inform the Committee of the death of Constable Neal Gillies (36), A Division, Aberdeen following illness and the Committee thereafter stood and observed a minute's silence.

He extended a warm welcome to David Ross, SPF Vice-Chair and to Stuart Ednie who was joining the NAC as permanent replacement for Gordon MacDonald following his resignation as an elected representative.

The Chairman informed the Committee Willie MacLennan had tendered his resignation from the SPF, with effect from 5th March 2014, in advance of his impending retirement from the Police Service and was therefore attending his last meeting. He introduced and welcomed Murdo MacLeod who on this occasion was replacing Les Donaldson but who would be replacing Willie on a permanent basis thereafter. The Chairman thanked Willie for his years of commitment to SPF and wished him a long and happy retirement. He also welcomed Andrew Bilton and Mike Purdie who were observing the meeting.

The Chairman informed the meeting that SPF standing orders had been formally approved and implemented at the February meeting of JCC and had been circulated to members of the Committee in advance of the meeting. He thereafter took a few minutes to highlight some key provisions within the document.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from;

Linsey Burns

Les Donaldson *(replaced by Murdo MacLeod)*

Murray Haston

Caroline Scobbie

Bob Thomson

4. Approval of Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the previous Meeting which were circulated in advance of the Meeting were formally approved.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Action/Decision Log

The action and decision logs had been circulated in advance of the Meeting and the contents were noted by the Committee.

Action - 0005/13

The Secretary advised he had written to the General Secretary in the terms agreed at the previous Meeting. He advised the NAC meeting arrangements would be discussed in greater detail under agenda item 5.2. The Meeting agreed to **close** the action.

Action - 0010/13

The Secretary advised he had circulated a communications paper which he had received from Neil Cameron and David Threadgold in advance of the Meeting and this would be discussed in detail under agenda item 5.3. The Meeting agreed to **close** the action.

Action - 0011/13

George Murray confirmed he had communicated his concerns regarding custody training for probationers via John Drysdale to the Area Health & Safety Subject Committee. The Meeting agreed to **close** the action.

Action - 0012/13

The Secretary reminded the Meeting a consultation on the Management of Probationers SOP had been undertaken in January which offered the opportunity to highlight the concerns previously raised. The Meeting agreed to **close** the action.

Action - 0013/13

The Chairman advised he had replied to the author and forwarded the correspondence to PSD as agreed at the previous meeting. The Meeting agreed to **close** the action.

Action - 0014/13

The Secretary advised he had written to the General Secretary on 21.11.13 in the terms agreed at the previous meeting. The Meeting agreed to **close** the action.

Action - 0015/13

The Secretary advised he had written to the General Secretary on 21.11.13 in the terms agreed at the previous meeting. The Meeting agreed to **close** the action.

5.2 NAC Meeting Arrangements

The Secretary advised he continued in regular dialogue with the General Secretary regarding the arrangements for NAC meetings and was pleased to report that agreement had now been reached with PSoS in respect of the reimbursement of costs associated with the NAC meetings with effect from 1st April 2014. He also confirmed staff at Woodside Place would assume responsibility for making the arrangements necessary in respect of future meetings.

The Meeting agreed this item could now be **deleted** from future agendas and the Chairman expressed his thanks to the Secretary for the valuable work he had undertaken on behalf of the Committee.

5.3 Communication

The Chairman referred Members to the communication paper which had been prepared by David Threadgold and Neil Cameron and to draft Strategic Objectives which he had prepared both of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

He explained the draft objectives were intended to underpin the key objectives of the Committee and that if approved they would be reviewed at each quarterly meeting to ensure they remained fit for purpose. He sought the views of the Committee as to the appropriateness of the objectives and on the contents thereof.

The Meeting discussed and debated the strategic objective at length after which the following were agreed;

- Protect North Area 24/7 response and community resources.
- Ensure that delivery of all aspects of policing in the North Area are reflective of community needs and area geography.
- Improve communications with the Federated membership.

The Meeting directed the Chairman to develop some finer detail in respect of each of the three agreed objectives off table to be circulated in advance of the next meeting.

Action 0001/14

Chair to develop the detail of each of the agreed Strategic Objectives.

David Ross advised strategic aim of the SPF was to protect police officers pay and conditions in an increasingly challenging financial environment. As part of its communication strategy SPF were about to launch the #itswhatwedo campaign which was designed to raise the profile of policing in Scotland and highlight the multitude of different considerations police officers face when dealing with what from the outset appeared to be routine of calls. The three short scenario based videos placed anybody watching them in the shoes of the police officer and users were posed the question at the conclusion of each clip, "what would you do?" There would be an initial launch of the campaign through media outlets and displays at each of the four main political party conferences over the coming weeks before rolling the displays out into more public arenas.

The Chairman invited David Threadgold or Neil Cameron to present their communications paper. David provided the Committee with a background of his research undertaken during the development of the document and summarised its contents.

The Meeting discussed a range of issues at length and considered a number of perceived communication weaknesses and a number of options that could potentially improve communications with the wider membership.

At the conclusion of the debate the Chair informed the Committee at the Operational Duties Standing Committee meeting held on 22.01.14 the Deputy General Secretary had accepted responsibility for examining SPF communications. He referred to the recommendations in the draft paper and summarised the deliberations which subject to the Committees approval he agreed to communicate to the Deputy General Secretary.

Action 0002/14

Chair to communicate the views of the NAC to the Deputy General Secretary.

6. Standing Items

6.1 JCC Update

The Secretary advised a meeting of JCC had been held on 5th/6th November 2013 the Minutes of which he had already circulated. A further meeting of JCC had been held on 11th/12th February and he advised he would circulate the Minutes of this meeting when they became available.

Economy

Members were provided with a report containing a summary of the financial challenges facing the Police Service in Scotland for the current and subsequent two financial years and the Chair summarised the contents of the report after which the Meeting discussed the implications for the service at length.

The Meeting acknowledged the importance of identifying cost savings and discussed a variety of potential measures after which the Chair requested members of the Committee provide examples or suggestions to their JCC Representatives. The Meeting also agreed it would be advantageous to survey the membership seeking their views and suggestions about potential efficiency savings for the Police Service.

Action 0003/14

Committee members to provide JCC Reps with examples where financial savings might be achieved.

Action 0004/14

Chair to create a draft membership survey in respect of budget saving suggestions.

PNB

The Chairman advised he and Peter Jones had been at the last PNB meeting in January 2014 and highlighted the main items of discussion related to the public holiday/ annual leave exchange, an input on proposed changes to pension annual allowances from £50,000 to £40,000 (*JCC circular 26/2011 previously issued*) which would only likely affect a small number of officers who were promoted rapidly through the ranks or those who held other pension entitlement, an equality paper which was hoped would secure a standardised approach to paternity and maternity arrangements.

Scottish Police Consultative Forum

The Chairman advised the Scottish Police Consultative Forum (*formerly PABS*) had met a week later and was now an established mechanism for consulting with Scottish Ministers on non-negotiable matters.

Honoraria

Paul Hogan informed the Meeting the honoraria review group had completed their review and presented a paper containing recommendations to the JCC for consideration. He advised the paper had been rejected by JCC at its meeting on 11th/12th February and the matter had now been referred to the Finance Standing Committee for further development at its next meeting on 23rd April.

6.2 Subject Committees

The Secretary advised meetings of the JCC Subject Committees had been held on 15th October 2013 and 21st January 2014 the Minutes of which he had circulated in advance of the meeting.

- **Conduct**

The Deputy Secretary informed the Meeting conduct training for Representatives was currently being rolled out across the country by SPF Conduct Secretary David Kennedy and separate performance training would be provided by David in due course.

He advised there were currently 66 officers in the subject of either criminal or misconduct proceedings and was pleased to report progress in relation to the Operation Hortum enquiry which he hoped would significantly reduce these numbers.

The Deputy Secretary expressed concern at an apparent appetite at CAPD to prosecute all Police Officers who are reported to them. He advised he would make enquiries regarding these concerns and report back when further information was available.

- **Equality**

The Vice Chair confirmed that the NAC Equality Sub Committee had met on two occasions since the last meeting of the NAC, the first meeting being on 27 November 2013 and on 15 January 2014 in Aberdeen. The minutes of the November meeting had been circulated via the Area Secretary to all Representatives. The next meeting of the sub-committee is on 9th April.

Absence Management

The Vice Chair then gave a brief update that currently 82 officers were presently absent longer than 28 days (A&B 24, D 25, N 13). The process seemed to be working well and positive feedback had been received from Representatives that absent members were appreciative of the contact. The Vice Chair requested Representatives maintain regular contact with absent members throughout their period of absence to ensure that all possible assistance and support was provided as required. He also reminded Representatives to advise him of all contacts in order that members database records could be kept up to date.

The Deputy Secretary highlighted concerns regarding the numbers of absent members suffering from psychological illnesses and discussion surrounding the level of support and treatment currently provided by PSoS followed. The Vice Chair agreed to undertake some enquiry in this area.

- **Health & Safety**

The Secretary further advised Peter Jones had recently been elected as the SPF Health & Safety Subject Secretary (elect) following the retiral of Davy Cummings. The Meeting congratulated Peter on his recent appointment and wished him every success in his new role. In accordance with the provisions of Rules 11.3 & 11.4 the

full time officials had agreed the NAC Vice-Chair would assume the role of Secretary of the Area Health & Safety Subject Committee.

Peter provided the following updates;

- Orders had now been placed for 200 equipment carriers in D Division.
- Stores of replacement handcuffs are available if required.
- There are some concerns regarding pedal cycle training. Work is ongoing.

He also provided detail of an on duty injury involving an Officer in D Division, who having been seated in a stationary vehicle, was hospitalised suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning. The circumstances surrounding the injury were currently being investigated and the results are awaited however enquiry is focussed around an on board generator.

The Meeting expressed disappointment that no attempts appear to have been made by PSoS to contact and inform SPF of the life threatening injury to one of their members despite there being an on-call rota available to all control rooms across the North Area of PSoS. It was also confirmed the Officer had received little or no support from PSoS during her recovery.

The Meeting also discussed concerns regarding changes to fleet maintenance procedures across PSoS and Peter assured the Committee he was aware of the personal safety and personal liability implications and would be raising these concerns with PSoS at an appropriate level.

6.3 Standing Committees

The Secretary advised meetings of the JCC Standing Committees had been held on 16th October 2013 and 22nd January 2014 the Minutes of which he had circulated in advance of the meeting.

- **Finance**

The Chairman referred to the Minutes of the last Meeting and provided a brief summary of ongoing business in relation to accounting procedures, renovation work at Woodside Place and the requirement for continued VF subscriptions and payments of group insurance premia whilst on half/no pay.

The next meeting of the FSC is scheduled for 23rd April.

- **Legislation & Regulations**

Corroboration

The SPF Vice Chair provided a summary of the SPF position throughout the consultation process on corroboration. He advised that contrary to some suggestions the SPF had not changed its position on corroboration and at the Justice Committee meeting held on 3rd December 2013 the position had in fact remained consistent and as follows;

The SPF did not support the evidence from one single source being sufficient to take a case to court, but did support a general removal of the requirement for every single strand of evidence to be corroborated across the whole of a case which the SPF had consistently stated was a waste of police resources and Court time.

He explained this position was unique and not one shared by other stakeholders involved in the consultation process including members of the Justice Committee. He concluded that following the Justice Committee meeting and for the avoidance of any doubt he had formally written to the Committee and reaffirmed the SPF position.

JCC Consultations

The SPF Vice Chair summarised his responsibility in respect of Government and Police Scotland consultations with the SPF. He acknowledged the level of response he regularly received from the North Area and thanked members of the Committee for their valuable contributions. He informed the Committee they could expect further consultations in respect of existing SOP's as a process of review was conducted.

He advised the greatest area of concern related to the development of HR policies, in particular the consultation process and the delay in the drafting of many essential policies which had still not been completed.

The Secretary echoed David's comments in relation to the consultation responses and advised the volume of responses received continued to rise. He thanked members of the Committee and transitional representatives for their efforts.

The Meeting expressed concerns at the delay in publication of key HR policies and after debate it was agreed the Chair and Secretary should raise these concerns with ACC Thomson at an appropriate opportunity.

Action 0005/14

Chair and Secretary to raise the concerns regarding HR policy development with ACC Thomson

Parliamentary Liaison Officer

The Chairman informed the Committee of the intention by PSoS to establish the above post at Superintendent level as it looks ahead and considers the impact of forthcoming referendums on Policing in Scotland.

- **Operational Duties**

Variable Shift Arrangements

The Secretary advised the Committee this subject was covered by agenda item 6.4 – JNCC.

Area Committee Elections

The Secretary drew the Meetings attention to the 2015 quadrennial elections, advised that work was currently underway regarding the new electoral constituencies and sought the meetings views regarding arrangements within the North Area.

After debate the Committee agreed new electoral constituencies within the North Area as follows;

A Division -	2 of each rank from anywhere in the Division
B Division -	2 of each rank from anywhere in the Division
D Division -	3 of each rank from anywhere in the Division
N Division -	1 of each rank from each of North, South and Inverness Area Commands within the Division

It was also agreed members of the Federated Ranks working within support divisions would be considered on the basis of their permanent station/office location. It was also agreed that with the exception of the arrangements for elections geography and rank would not be barriers to demand allocation to Representatives.

Commonwealth Games 2014

The Chairman provided the Meeting with an update on the progress of arrangements for CWG2014. He advised that he, Malcolm MacDonald (Secretary - West Area Committee) and the Deputy General Secretary continued to engage with the planning team in respect of arrangements for CWG2014. He confirmed there would be no relaxation of the annual leave restrictions previously intimated albeit leave applications with exceptions circumstances would be considered. The development of shift patterns was underway but nothing had yet been agreed although it appeared PSoS intended to rely on the provisions of the existing WFA in support of any variable shift agreements.

6.4 Force/Area Meetings Update

JNCC

The SPF Vice Chair advised JNCC had now met on two previous occasions. He advised it was a developing process and that territorial ACC's were now going to be part of the Committee. This would complete a link between the LNCC's and JNCC and provide business continuity.

At the most recent meeting issues of particular note related to performance culture, the long awaited SOP in relation to allowances and expenses and the process for introduction of variable shift arrangements.

The Vice Chair advised the Allowances & Expenses SOP was largely complete but an issue regarding the travelling time and distance by Officers to and from work required an amendment to the PSoS Regulations & Determinations 2014 to be approved through the PNB. It remained unclear as to why the Official Side had failed to table the proposed amendment for discussion at PNB and consequently the SOP remained incomplete. David reminded the meeting of the direct link between the Allowances & Expenses SOP and one relating to Transfer & Deployment which was also disappointingly long overdue.

The Secretary advised he, Malcolm MacDonald (Secretary - West Area Committee) and Stewart Ross (Secretary - East Area Committee) had recently accompanied the Deputy General Secretary to the JNCC - Working Practices Review Group where identified issues surrounding VSA's were discussed at length. Following the meeting PSoS circulated memorandum PS 031/14 in an attempt to clarify the implementation process although regrettably the contents did not satisfactorily address all the issues raised. Consequently following discussions with the Chief Constable, the General Secretary was currently in the process of completing a process map which would be submitted to the JNCC for consideration.

The Secretary advised whilst he welcomed the positive developments which would improve the VSA implementation process moving forward there was still uncertainty regarding the validity of many VSA's which had been introduced across the country during transition without any consultation or negotiation and it remained unclear as to what action PSoS intended taking to address these circumstances.

The next meeting of JNCC is scheduled for 10th April.

LNCC

The Secretary advised the Meeting the LNCC meeting structure continued to develop and he was optimistic the structure was heading in a positive direction.

The last meeting of LNCC had been held on 19th December 2013 and the Secretary advised he had already circulated the Minutes for information. He highlighted the concerns raised in respect of duty re-rostering, centralised applications to HR for advertised vacancies and the welfare support arrangements for Officers in D Division.

The Chairman advised that he remained concerned regarding the management of CAV days in D Division and of his intention to submit a paper to the forthcoming LNCC meeting

Action 0006/14

Chair and Secretary to raise concerns regarding CAV deployments at LNCC

The next meeting of LNCC is scheduled for 20th March.

Divisional Management Meetings

The Secretary highlighted the importance of attendance at Divisional Management Meetings and encouraged representatives to ensure SPF representations at these meetings wherever possible. After discussion it was agreed the F/T Officials should identify the dates of forthcoming meetings and in the event they were unable to attend personally every effort should be made to identify a suitable replacement.

The Chairman advised of constructive engagement he had established with Custody and Operational Support Divisions and stressed the importance of maintaining links with all specialist Divisions on an ongoing basis.

Action 0007/14

F/T Officials to liaise with Divisional Commanders to identify future dates of senior management meetings

Scottish Police Authority

The Secretary advised of a meeting of the SPA scheduled for 26th March 2014 in Inverness. He and the Chair continued to try and develop working relationships with several SPA members.

7. New Business

7.1 Motion

The following motion received from Inspector Paul Menzies was proposed by Neil Cameron and seconded by David Threadgold.

“This Area Committee asks Joint Central Committee to note that the General Secretary has failed to serve the needs of ordinary members of the Scottish Police Federation and has not acted in their best interests in particular respect of the changes to pay, conditions and pensions and therefore has no confidence in Calum Steele holding the post of General Secretary of the Joint Central Committee of the Scottish Police Federation.”

This motion was **defeated**.

Following the conclusion of debate the Committee agreed the SPF General Secretary continued to have the overwhelming support of the North Area Committee.

8. AOCB

Performance Culture

The Chairman sought the views and experiences from the Committee in respect of the setting of targets and whether the representations made to date were having any effect.

The Meeting discussed at length the distinct differences between target setting and general performance management and a number of examples of both were provided from various areas within the North Area.

The Chair summarised that discussions appeared to indicate an improving picture not least due to representations made by SPF at various levels and thanked the Committee for their contributions.

9. Correspondence

The Secretary advised of the following items of correspondence;

- E-mail resignation from Scott Godfrey
- Letter of resignation from Willie MacLennan

10. Time and Date of Next Meeting

The Secretary advised the next Meeting of the North Area Committee would be held on Monday 2nd and Tuesday 3rd June at the Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry commencing at 1300 hours on day 1 and 0900 hours on day 2.

Dates of future meetings

1st/2nd September 2014

1st/2nd December 2014

11. Closure of Meeting

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their active and constructive participation and closed the Meeting by wishing everyone present a safe journey home.

He was thanked by the Meeting in the customary manner.

David Hamilton
Chair

Graeme Ednie
Secretary