



SCOTTISH POLICE FEDERATION West Area Committee

Ref: GM/PC/LW

Minutes of the Second quarterly meeting of the West Area Committee held in the West Area Federation Office, Paisley on Thursday 4 June 2020 at 1000 hours by Video conference

1. ATTENDANCE AND OPENING -

West Area Committee (WAC) Office Bearers & Staff

Paul Connelly – WAC Chair
Gary Mitchell – WAC Secretary
Ian Florence – WAC Deputy Secretary
Lorna Cunningham – WAC Deputy Secretary
Jenny Shanks – WAC Vice Chair
Lynne Welsh – SPF Staff
Philip Maguire – SPF Staff

West Area Committee

Attendance

Alistair MacKinnon
Campbell Smith
Cath McNally
Chloe Rice
Chris Thomson
Craig Fraser
David Hunter
David Osterberg
David Somerville
David Taylor
Dougie Chalmers
Dougie McKinlay
Elaine Sutherland
Emma-Louise Smith
Fiona Tyers
Gary Diver

Gerry Welsh
Gordon Cumming
Jamie Carruth
Jonathan Watters
Linda Mathers
Lynne Gray
Marketa Hola
Michael McCaughey
Pamela McFarlane
Richard North
Sarah Jackson
Stephen Gray
Stewart Gailey
Stuart Burns
Stuart Finnie
Stuart Johnstone
Iain Gray
Dougie Chalmers

Apologies

Craig Nicolson
Kenny Kean
Adam Peppard
Jennie MacFarlane
Ross Black
Lee Hamilton
Eddie Mather
Mark Dines
Paul McWhinnie

As per the SPF Rules, the Standing Orders took effect as soon as the meeting was opened and would remain in place throughout the meeting.

The meeting was held by video conference due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the members, thanked them for dialling in and invited them to take part in the meeting. He advised members that due to the circumstances, separate committee meetings would not take place on this occasion.

The Chair confirmed that agenda papers had been circulated in advance of the meeting along with pre read material and copies of questions submitted by members in advance of the meeting.

2. SEPARATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The separate committee meetings did not take place on this occasion.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTIONS**

The minute of the meeting of 27 February 2020 had been circulated to the committee and was approved as a true record of the meeting.

The Actions from the previous meeting had been addressed and members were updated.

1. Equality

Gender neutral Officers – Is there a policy and what is it?

Hats -All guidance and policy on their issue and use was subject of an Equality Impact Assessment with no issues identified.

Update - Non-binary officers are not legally protected by the Equality Act, which only recognises, male, female and those in transition, so deployments of these officers should be on a case by case basis, and it would be reasonable, and legal, for supervisors to ask them to nominate their gender. Nigel Bathgate (AGS Equality) has written to Force in this regard.

COMPLETE

2. Local Policing Commanders Meeting

Shift changes/rest days – causing disruption.

Update - The matter was raised at the Strategic work force planning Meeting. Similar to previous action, shift changes and rest day disturbance are at an extremely low level due to cancellation of courts and events. This is a perennial issue in the West and Full time Office Bearers (FTOB) will continue to raise it once events etc. restart

COMPLETE

3. Operational Duties

Request for a copy of the 5 point plan to be circulated in respect of direct reporting. This was circulated to all WAC Reps. 20/02/2020.

Update - SPF will continue to raise this matter at Events Planning Meeting and agreed to feed back to SPF HQ to see if any guidance/info can be circulated to WAC in respect of 5 point plan.

ONGOING

4. Negotiable terms and conditions

Can a copy of this can be made available to reps?

Update - As the document is not finalised it cannot be circulated at this time. This document is currently at version 11 and work is ongoing to finalise it. Once complete it will be published widely

COMPLETE

5. Local Policing Commanders (LPC)

Rest Day Disruption due to shift changes. WAC Chair to raise with Finance Officer and report back.

Update - Rest Day working has virtually come to a halt due to courts being on hold and events being cancelled so take up of allowance will be extremely low

ONGOING

6. Custody / CJSD

Deputy Secretary (Health & Safety) to speak to CJSD regarding officers still waiting lengthy times with prisoners needing processed during handover periods.

Update - These issues have been raised with CJSD and are ongoing, there is a further meeting with CJSD on 17 June 2020 where it will be raised again.

COMPLETE

7. Re Correspondence

Letter of resignation from John Munn. WAC Secretary to reply with letter of thanks.

COMPLETE.

8. Late excusal for Court during annual leave

This matter was raised at the LPC Meeting on 26 February and a point of contact has now been identified.

- 1) WAC Chair to collate examples and feed them in and await update.
- 2) Question over the gap in monetary aspect? WAC Chair to forward to JCC to take to PNB

Update -
Examples not received and courts not currently running.
WAC Chair will raise as possible topic for PNB but data and examples will be required.

ONGOING

9. Annual leave period

Possible restrictions on annual leave between October- January. This has to be addressed now before annual leave is approved. All Officers annual leave has to be considered.

Update - Events which were causing restrictions COP 26 now delayed until 2021. Police Scotland are still working through effect of other annual leave changes which were brought in due to pandemic but this specific action is no longer relevant.

COMPLETE

4. **LEGAL ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE**

The Secretary reported that 9 files have been submitted to SPF Legal since the last WAC Meeting –

Criminal Legal Defence x 6
Employment Dispute x 1
Injury on duty x 1
Other x 1

This does not include any that may have been sent to SPF Legal direct.

5. **DIVISIONAL REPORTS**

Each Division nominated a representative to submit a brief report on the issues in their division to the WAC Chair in advance of the meeting.

Under the new procedures the following divisional reports were received;

Area 8 – Argyll and West Dunbartonshire

The main issues which have been raised are again, custody related. The cells at Oban police office are still not fit for use, leaving only upstairs cells for observation. This proves problematic and a recent example of this was provided.

A new issue raised is the waiting times for the custody Inspector, or now the custody Chief Inspector to make a decision on whether a prisoner is being held custody or released. This often takes up to three hours for a decision to be made, meaning arresting officers are unnecessarily held on duty.

A new Superintendent for Operations has been appointed, Supt Claire Dobson who replaces Superintendent Kenny Armstrong. There have been no meetings with Divisional Management since December 2019, the last arranged meeting having been cancelled due to Covid 19 initial outbreak.

Area 9 - Ayrshire

No report received in advance of the meeting – any issues raised under Competent Business, questions section.

Area 10 – Dumfries & Galloway

Issues in relation to pensions. Members who signed up with Leigh Day are dissatisfied with the explanation from SPF that one of the reasons we didn't pursue an action in addition to the legal advice obtained, is that any successful claim by other organisations on the same grounds would lead to the benefits cascading to police officers - this has been interpreted as the Federation re-writing history as it is believed that this position was not clearly articulated at the time. There is discontent from members who signed up for pension challenge that those who didn't sign up will be beneficiaries of the same at no cost, while members who did sign up are left to bear the cost - belief among some members that SPF should contribute towards costs for members who signed up with Leigh Day.

Issue with overtime not being approved by some Inspectors when worked as they believed that the overtime worked should be offset by shorter hours being worked on most shifts to ensure social distancing on shift overlaps. Issue addressed with Inspectors by Insp. Nicolson. All the station H & S inspections are due for review; these will be done by division only due to Covid.

Area 11 - Lanarkshire

Since the start of the lockdown, there have been 3 meetings organised by the Divisional Commander to deal specifically with Operational, Safety and Welfare issues related to the pandemic. Currently not aware of any major issues.

Absences-

Initial COVID related absences were relatively high but have dropped significantly. Currently absence numbers are lower than normal and not adversely impacting on resource levels or officer safety.

PPE-

Most deployable officers within the division have now received OP Talla training and have been fitted and issued with PPE. There are currently no issues with stocks of hand sanitiser and cleaning supplies.

Custody Division-

There have been some issues with Custody Division releasing prisoners on undertakings or for report, who would normally have been kept custody, including prisoners arrested on warrant. This has been raised by Divisional Management who have been informed that this is in line with current guidance during the Pandemic. Management are continuing to monitor and will challenge any decisions where public or officer safety would be put at risk.

Arrests relating to routine enquiries-

The Detective Superintendent has instructed that officers should continue to work through their routine Crime Reports and where necessary suspects should be arrested and interviewed. Concerns were raised regarding the necessity for this at the current time and if it was prudent to put officers at risk of contracting and spreading the virus to clear up a minor crime. The current standpoint is that now is a good time to clear up crime reports, so officers should continue to arrest and interview after risk assessing the situation and utilising common sense.

Area 12 – Renfrew & Inverclyde

No report received in advance of the meeting, any issues raised under Competent Business, questions section.

Area 13 & Area 16 – Greater Glasgow North& South

The last Commanders Meeting was held on 4 May 2020 by Teleconference. The date of the next Commanders Meeting is to be confirmed.

Actions;

- Salvation Army - Commander requested that this is closed as the Executive have said that they are taking it on – no update nationally.
- TASER - 20 more Officers will be trained once training is back up and running and money has been secured for TASERS to be available at Drumchapel Office

Equality;

Flexible working – Non covid related flexible working enquiries in the division seems to be increasing. It is unknown whether this is because the number of applications are increasing or they are being poorly managed.

Health and safety;

- Decontamination (COVID19) - Raised concerns that although advice exists about how to decontaminate very little practical advice exists. There have subsequently been divisional decontamination rooms set up at Cathcart Police Office.
- Individual risk assessments (Covid19) – There seems to be a disparate approach throughout the division regarding this, generally not being undertaken or not being detailed enough. Pregnant officers were initially asked to come back however this is being addressed – ongoing and may increase when shielding guidelines change as a number of officers still shielding.

Conduct – Nothing divisional specific.

Operational Duties;

- Christmas resourcing – Divisional guidance has been issued which SPF reps objected to the content – overcomplicating a simple process.
- Custody covering watches – Matter raised that custody has reduced demand and increased staffing therefore should be taking on the majority of prisoner observation and also moving staff to cover same – CJSD management have been supportive although practically there has been issues which have been fed back.

Area 14 – Operation Support Division

Most issues appear to have been dealt with at the time.

All are reporting significant queries regarding the pension compensation claim.

There have been Health & Safety visits to various areas and feedback provided from each.

There have been several queries regarding business practices that have been amended due to Operation Talla. None have been significant and most have been dealt with by way of explanation of rationale. None raised have had any detrimental effect on any members wellbeing. Quite the contrary as most have been put in place with Health and Safety(H&S) in mind. An anecdotal example would be a query regarding impact on refresh times given that the ACR and Resolution Team have adopted a temporary hot handover of shifts. This was referred to regulations and member was satisfied therefore not higher level intervention was required.

No other issues have been reported or fed back.

Area 15 – Specialist Crime

Numerous members have been in contact regarding the failure of the pension portal to launch on the stated date. These enquiries have been dealt with at local rep level.

1 member has made contact regarding a possible grievance, advice given and this is at an early stage.

Conduct – There have been no new cases since last WAC. 1 member has been informed that criminal proceedings will NOT be taken and we are waiting on a decision re conduct/misconduct proceedings.

H & S - Osprey House 2 (MIT staff). A shift change to 4 x 10 hour shifts (4 on 4 off) has been implemented to allow social distancing. This appears to have worked especially well with officers who had difficulty changing shift allowed to remain on the previous pattern.

Equality - A number of officers have been in contact from Gartcosh regarding working at home. In essence a number of officers have been required by the SMT to change shift/ attend at the workplace when they are in receipt of laptops and could have worked from home (Covid 19). This has been passed to Jenny Shanks, West Area Vice Chair.

No questions were raised in relation to the Divisional reports.

6. **DEEP DIVE**

The WAC Chair advised members that there was nothing to report.

7. **LOCAL POLICING COMMANDERS (LPC) AND PEOPLE AND OPERATIONS DELIVERY GROUP (PODG)**

Local Policing Commanders West

The LPC meeting took place via video conference on 29 April 2020. The WAC Chair and WAC Secretary attended. The meeting was chaired by ACC Johnston and was abbreviated due to the pandemic situation.

Professional Standards Department (PSD)

PSD updated that Operation Talla complaints were being monitored and SPF requested to be copied in to this information. No details received to date.

Information, Communication and Technology – (ICT)

The force is rolling out Microsoft Teams which should help Officers to work remotely and help with video conferencing.

Criminal Justice Services Division (CJSD)

An input was given by Chief Superintendent Gary McEwan of Criminal Justice Services Division (CJSD) regarding the feedback that they had from the Crown- the Crown's position being that we are still sending too many people to Court as custodies, with only about 1/3 of custody apprehensions being remanded when they reach Court.

ON behalf of SPF it was pointed out that the Crown are looking to interfere with operational decisions made by the Police and the accused person should be remanded if the Duty Officer deems it necessary, it is then up to the Courts to release them because there is the potential for members of the public to make a complaint and an increased risk to members of the public.

Chief Superintendent McEwan stated that CJSD are looking to maintain some of the changes that have been carried out due to Operation Talla which could have future benefits, such as virtual courts.

CAM

Several of the Commanders present gave feedback that the CAM project is not giving the benefits that were anticipated and there are still too many response and community police attending too many calls.

Estates

Several Commanders present also queried the estate strategy given the condition of some particular buildings in the West.

The next meeting of the LPC is scheduled for 23 June 2020.

People & Operations Delivery Group – (PODG)

The last meeting of the POD-G was held by telephone conferencing on 18 May 2020 at 11am

Chair: ACC Steve Johnstone

The unusual format was acknowledged by the chair and an acceptance that the meeting would seek to be as concise as possible with some matters that could be held over to a later date. All were in agreement.

Points of note for West Area Committee:

Action Log

Item 07/19 – Update as per Action Log – On Call Arrangements - WFA for Superintendents is going to WPRB in June 2020, includes rest day entitlement and WTR compensation.
16/05/2020

Item 10/19 – A Draft has been prepared, requires refinement and will be subject of ongoing discussion.. Closed.

A Meeting took place between the SPF Chair, David Hamilton and Nicky Page and process was discussed. SPF Chair has produced a draft process for further discussion, and Nicky Page has still to add to this, however, as a result of the significant strain on SPF time at present this will be progressed by Nicky Page in the coming weeks rather as a current priority. Proposed that Nicky Page/David Hamilton meet to further discuss out with this forum.

Item 11/19 – Acting Ranks – PSOS have agreed a process and this will require to be managed to ensure that this is applied appropriately. This action will be closed pending an agreement from SPF and the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents (ASPs) which is expected.

Assistant Chief Constables' Update

ACC Mark Williams provided an update. There was nothing of significance. Focus is on Operation Talla, Annual Leave Impact and Carry Over.

T/ACC Duncan Sloan (Major Crime & Public Protection & Organised Crime CT & Intel) – There was nothing of significance.

Cop 26 – likely to be Autumn 2021 but no date has been confirmed

Andy McDowall – There was nothing of significance. There had been recent meetings with staff associations and a meeting planned in relation to legal support for on duty matters.

People & Development

Nicky Page reported on the 'People matters' group that meets every Thursday; promotion processes will start to progress.

SPF

No issues raised.

The next meeting is scheduled for 20 August 2020

8. **CONDUCT**

The WAC Deputy Secretary provided a report on the Conduct Committee meeting that took place on 7 April 2020 by video conference. A copy of the draft minute of that meeting was circulated with JCC Circular 20 of 2020.

Criminal Cases

Legal applications were discussed, with the majority of applications to facilitate interviews, usually by arrangement. It was noted that many criminal matters were being postponed due to the coronavirus and that we should make our members aware that there would be little movement in the coming months. Safety concerns regarding the premises and social distancing measures required for interviews were discussed.

Conduct Cases

Conduct matters were also postponed and it was thought unlikely that any proceedings would be held unless they were admit cases with no witnesses required. The first of those was held in Grangemouth last week. The facilities at Grangemouth allow social distancing within the room provided. This is not available at Dalmarnock currently.

All officers with restrictions/suspensions were reviewed and a large number of these had non-operational restrictions removed to allow them to return to frontline duties. All suspensions remained in force.

CAP

Although CAP were up on last quarter, the number of allegations in these CAP's had actually gone down, so, more complainers but complaining about fewer matters.

Performance/PIP

Nothing new to report.

PIRC

Reports published since last meeting were discussed.

It was noted PIRC offices are now closed and they are operating a voicemail/email facility for urgent enquiries.

Training is currently on hold.

Representatives who were allocated a member who is facing a criminal investigation were asked to remember to keep regular contact and complete either a purple conduct form or a note of meeting form (electronic copies available), these should then be sent in to conduct.west@spf.org.uk

After requesting updates for all facing criminal proceedings it is clear that some of these officers have had no pro outcomes and not informed the SPF, therefore regular contact is essential. Not receiving regular contact from the SPF is still the most common complaint from members.

There were no questions.

9. **EQUALITY**

The WAC Vice Chair provided a report on the meeting of the Equality Committee, that took place on 8 April 2020 by video conference. A copy of the draft minute of that meeting was circulated with JCC Circular 20 of 2020.

The Assistant to General Secretary (AGS) for Equality gave an update on the PNB Equality Working Group, which he had attended on 5 March.

Version 5 of the Flexible Working Guidance document had been circulated and shared with the Official Side by Staff Side, the Official Side had sought to change the context of the document. They suggested there was too much focus on indirect discrimination which implied that only those with a protected characteristic would be considered for a flexible working pattern. The Staff Side disagreed with this suggestion and in fact believed it had the opposite inference. Further discussion is to take place at the next meeting.

The Committee was informed frustrations remained relative to the data and analysis of the Gender Pay Audit and Gap. The Staff Side maintained the position that the Official Side's figure of less than 1% as reflective of the pay gap was not possible. There was also continued scepticism in relation to the data which could have implications for the accuracy of results whether it was considered a pay gap analysis or pay audit, the latter having greater implications.

The Staff Side tabled a proposal in relation to Parental Bereavement Allowance in line with the Government announcement. Staff Side had received the draft circular wording from Official Side but were still considering implications in line with the existing regulatory position. SPF Conference 2021

The Equality Group are centring their input at Conference 2021 on Flexible Working and General Wellbeing Support. Potential speakers have been identified.

Ill Health Retirement/Redeployment.

This can be a very difficult time for the members, no matter what stage of the process, life changing decisions will be made that have a huge impact on them and their families. Fear will always play a part and have both a mental and physical impact on their well-being. As such it is crucial to be able to support them through this.

The redeployment aspect of the process can be forgotten, but must always be the starting point for any process. The Force must make every effort to introduce reasonable adjustments within the workplace to accommodate the needs of the Officer as well as carry out relevant risk assessments and these must be regularly reviewed.

It is very important not to simply acquiesce to medical retirement if the officer does not want to be retired and reasonable adjustments can be made.

An update on ET Decisions was provided. Ashton v Marks and Spencer plc ET 2020

COVID issues

A substantial number of enquiries have been received from members who have been shielding, or self-isolating, and who have received inconsistent advice, direction and support from some managers.

The Shielding Guidance issued by PSoS is not being fully understood by some first and second line managers, simply through the language it uses when stating that officers without Shielding Letters, 'must return to work'.

This has been evidenced by some using this basic narrative when requiring some of our most vulnerable officers to return to work, and quite rightly, they are concerned.

It is not a simple case that if Officers do not have a shielding letter they they must return to work, and SPF have provided their response as 'Supplementary Guidance' and have asked this be circulated by JCC Circular. The link to the response is below:

[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/file/DBDB0161-DA85-41EA-861E-5455BFD07683?tenantId=60502e8c-58ee-48cc-b612-c95886416ff6&fileType=docx&objectUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fspfrep.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FCOVID19PD%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FSUPPLEMENTARY%20SHIELDING%20DOC_NP.JT%20Comments%20\(002\).docx&baseUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fspfrep.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FCOVID19PD&serviceName=teams&threadId=19:88c8d3b788b94e3c80a7d38084b2f8dd@thread.tacv2&groupId=bc93ef59-3d2c-45fa-9831-0fdca835d742](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/file/DBDB0161-DA85-41EA-861E-5455BFD07683?tenantId=60502e8c-58ee-48cc-b612-c95886416ff6&fileType=docx&objectUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fspfrep.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FCOVID19PD%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FSUPPLEMENTARY%20SHIELDING%20DOC_NP.JT%20Comments%20(002).docx&baseUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fspfrep.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FCOVID19PD&serviceName=teams&threadId=19:88c8d3b788b94e3c80a7d38084b2f8dd@thread.tacv2&groupId=bc93ef59-3d2c-45fa-9831-0fdca835d742)

Modified duties update

Work is continuing with this through SPF Chair, David Hamilton, Equality Lead Nigel Bathgate, and the three Equality Area leads in partnership with People and Development. Due to the COVID situation, no further meetings have taken place.

There were no questions.

10 **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The WAC Deputy Secretary (Health & Safety) provided a report from the last JCC Health and Safety Meeting held at Dundee and reminded members that as the minutes of the meeting have to be approved as such, information should not be further disseminated.

JCC Health and Safety Committee held on 9 April 2020. Draft minutes as per JCC Circular 20/2020.

This was a slimmed down meeting due to current pandemic.

Violence

The draft assault pledge was due to be taken to the Strategic Leadership Board in February 2020, this has been delayed due to the current pandemic.

There was an increase in assaults on police recorded, there is still a disparity between the number of incidents recorded on SCOPE and the number of charges brought. Members are asked to complete the SCOPE form (near miss/injury on duty) for every officer assaulted.

It has been noted that officers being spat/coughed/sneezed on during the pandemic, had been reviewed by the Lord Advocate. It was asked if all offenders were being held custody. It was confirmed that no guidance had been provided by the Lord Advocate but that the above types of assaults should be treated as an aggravation.

A member highlighted that there was a new app for recording COVID-19 calls and details were provided.

PPE

COVID -19 PPE - Discussions have taken place around the most appropriate PPE for officers dealing with COVID-19, concerns had been raised about lowering the level of protection. From advice provided the SPF were clear that FFP3 masks should be worn when dealing with COVID-19 incidents. iIR Masks (surgical masks) have now been supplied by PSOS with guidance on when they can be used. These are designed to stop the wearer spreading infection and offer little protection.

Body Armour - Roll out is continuing.

Footwear - The paper on footwear has now passed the Senior Leadership Board and the Corporate Finance and Peoples Board, it is now sitting with the SPA.

Operational Equipment

Fleet – It is expected that vehicles due to be replaced will be as per the programme.

First Aid

Clinical Governance Group – The meeting due to take place had been cancelled.

Wellbeing

The meeting due to take place had been cancelled.

Administration & Governance

RIDDOR – Reports had already been reviewed by the Health and Safety Manager individually, there is guidance in the reporting of COVID-19 related incidents at work. The recording and reporting continues to be raised at various meetings.

Inspections/investigations – Had stalled, Inspections are resuming and investigations are again being carried out.

Training

IOSH Managing safely – 23 reps had undergone the training and all had passed. Congratulations to all. It is hoped that further training can be arranged soon.

Any other Competent Business

There are numerous guidance docs on the Intranet regarding COVID-19, members are asked to make themselves aware of these documents and any issues identified can be raised.

Alcometer/Intoximeter – The use of these items has been raised at various meetings with regards to what the correct level of PPE is required, there is currently guidance on the Intranet. The SPF continues to push this matter at meetings.

Accident investigations -

There are currently 12 ongoing accident investigations in the West area.

Inspections -

Inspections had been delayed however are starting to resume again.

WAC - other Business

Level 4 observations – At the recent meeting with the CJSD H&S, The WAC Deputy Secretary (H & S) raised 2 issues in relation to level 4 prisoner observations. The first issue was in relation to the prisoner observations being in place but no warrant being requested when it is suspected that the prisoner is concealing an item. (Can the level of Observations be justified). The second issue raised was in relation to officers carrying out level 4 or other observations in full COVID-19 PPE for any lengths of time. There has been a number of near miss/injury on duty forms raised throughout the country. CJSD will look into both of these issues. Guidance has been updated to reflect that officers need regular breaks when carrying out these observations.

The review of prisoner observations is still being carried out by CJSD.

There were no questions.

11. **JOINT CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

The WAC Chair reported on the significant issues discussed at the JCC Meeting held on 12 May at Dundee by Video conference. He reminded members that the minutes of the meeting will be approved at the next JCC Meeting and as such, information should not be further disseminated.

Due to the pandemic and the effect that it is having on multiple areas of business, a number of agenda items were deferred until the next JCC meeting including;

- Scottish Police Consultative Forum
- SPA
- Scottish Police Budget and Finance
- Parliament
- SPF-Training
- Police Charities
- Police Negotiating Board- PNB

The full PNB had not met since the last JCC but the technical working group (TWG) which forms part of the PNB met on 3 April and 1 May.

The TWG has a number of subjects under discussion which may or may not lead to a future agreement within the full PNB. They include;

College Allowance

The official side has raised the allowance that is paid to officers who are seconded to work fulltime at the Scottish Police College. Their position is that there are a number of anomalies including that other officers deliver training courses and have to stay away from home but are

not eligible for the allowance whilst due to changing working practices fewer instructors have to stay at the college overnight.

Overseas Allowances

This issue was suggested as something that should be raised at PNB by a member of this committee. Work is ongoing however it is proving to be complex as there are potential tax implications for officers depending on which country they are performing duties in. Meetings are scheduled with the International Development Unit to ensure that all possible types of duty are considered. Some officers are seconded abroad for extended periods of time and there are existing Foreign Office rules which cover them.

The following list of duties was considered on the day of JCC and the WAC Chair emailed the SCD reps and some others to confirm that we had captured all of the types of duties performed by SPF members abroad.

- International Development Unit delivering training e.g. Malawi
- Football operations- Spotters, Event Commanders, planners and translators at away European or Scotland fixtures
- Extraditions and subsequent escorts back to Scotland
- SCD major crime enquiries abroad e.g. Murder or Fraud enquiries obtaining statements, seizing evidence
- OCCTU surveillance
- Close Protection Officers

Bereavement Leave

This is also under discussion at PNB with confirmation that a 1975 Circular, showing that there is no limit to the amount of leave which officers are entitled to, is still valid.

Cop26

This event is off until a yet to be decided date in 2021, JCC previously discussed options re getting some sort of additional reward for members due to the demands that COP26 will place on them.

The official side has raised paying officers who are required to work on a Rest Day with more than 15 days' notice rather than compensating them with a Re-rostered day. There would need to be protections built into this to ensure that it would be up to members whether they elect for payment or a RRD.

Additional payment for the Inspecting ranks for working excessive hours has also been raised.

Covid 19

The SPF General Secretary has written to the Official Side regarding the impact of the pandemic on members and included the following points.

- Carryover of leave, UK government guidance to employers is that employees should be allowed to carryover unused annual leave for up to 2 years due to the pandemic. Our regulations limit the carryover of leave to 40 hours in exceptional circumstances.
- Additional hours worked by the Inspecting ranks, some Inspectors appear to be working more hours than normal. There was already evidence that Inspectors in some roles were already working excessive hours before the pandemic. It was requested that consideration be given to compensating Inspectors with TOIL and payment where the hours worked are exceptional.
- Special Constabulary, some of our Specials are working extra duties to support Policing. The official side has been asked to consider extra payments for them and also what effect additional payments would have on furlough pay or other government support that the Specials may be receiving.
- Bonus payments for officers, in the event that absence rates rise bonus payments should be considered for those officers who are left to cover duties.
- Pension abatement for retired officers returning to service, if an officer is retired and in receipt of a police pension and he/she returns to service, all or part of their Police pension may be withdrawn for the period where they are in receipt of Police pay.

Pay

The meeting was updated re some anomalies on the pay scales relating to gains on promotion. Depending on when an officer is promoted he/she may be put on to a higher salary point than an officer who has been promoted previously.

The term of the current pay deal (see PNB Circular 2018/04) expires in April 2021, PNB is due to meet in June. A short discussion took place regarding the approach to be taken to initial pay negotiations.

Pensions

Scheme Participation

The meeting was updated that there have been real difficulties in getting accurate data regarding the number of officers who have not joined the pension schemes or who have chosen to opt-out. There is some data from England and Wales which indicates that larger numbers of officers in the 25-39 year age bracket are not members of the schemes. Even in this age bracket less than 10% of officers opt out but this has a potential effect on the financing of the schemes. NB there is no Police pension fund investing money but the deductions paid by current officers are used to pay the pensions of those officers who have already retired.

The Government Actuary's Department has been asked to look at this issue.

Cost Cap Mechanism

The design of the 2015 CARE pension schemes incorporates a mechanism whereby the costs of the scheme, benefits and contribution rates are revalued. The last review showed that the costs of the schemes were less than anticipated. This should have led to the accrual rate changing from app 1/55 to app 1/47 of salary for each year of service in the scheme. This would make the CARE schemes substantially more valuable for our members.

This change was due to take place in April 2019 but was "paused" by the UK government due to the potential cost implications of the McCloud and Sargeant cases. Even though public

sectors employees did not receive the increased pension benefits that were anticipated, the government passed on increased costs to public sector employers.

This decision to deny members of the public sector 2015 schemes the increased benefits is being Judicially Reviewed. The Fire Brigades Union is paying for this although the Police Staff Associations did offer to jointly fund it. The Police Staff Associations been granted interested party status. There are 44 interested parties for this Judicial Review.

Tax Allowances

The UK government is implementing some changes to pension tax allowances but it appears unlikely that the changes will impact on any SPF members although inspecting ranks can on occasion breach their annual allowances.

The meeting was updated that some Superintendents in England and Wales are looking to take some of their pay as non-pensionable honoraria to avoid tax bills.

Commutation Cap

Officers can retire from the 1987 scheme once they reach the age of 50 provided that they have a minimum of 25 years pensionable service. However, the maximum commutation they can take is capped at 2.25 times their pensionable salary. The Superintendents Association in England and Wales is looking at challenging this.

McCloud and Sargeant

Many members have been in contact regarding the McCloud and Sargeant and an email was sent on 20 May explaining the SPF's position and giving links to useful documents. The JCC decided at the November meeting that the SPF will not be reimbursing members who made private contracts with Leigh Day.

There are 2 main issues in this case; remedy and injury to feelings. Remedy relates to what needs to be done to ensure that officers who have been discriminated against don't suffer any detriment. This is what is under discussion at the Employment Tribunal in England where a suitable remedy will be devised which the governments have confirmed will apply across the UK.

Where unlawful discrimination has taken place it is also possible for a claim to be made for compensation relating to injury to feelings. Injury to feelings awards are not made in every case.

The SPF and ASPS have contracted with Thomsons solicitors to progress potential injury to feelings claims for Scottish Police officers. This involves setting up an online portal where officers can register their details. Some IT issues arose which caused a delay in the portal being launched.

JNCC

Part-time officers and Pensionable Pay

An update was given that if part-time officers work additional hours over and above those set out in their work plan they should not be recorded as overtime. Instead they should be

recorded as additional hours worked to ensure that pensionable pay, annual leave etc entitlements are updated. It is not clear in practice how this would be recorded through SCOPE.

Dog Handlers Allowance and Pay on Promotion

Agreement has been reached at JNCC regarding underpayment of allowances to dog handlers in Fife and also the pay gain on promotion which affected a number of officers from East legacy forces. Even though the force executive has agreed to resolve these issues PSoS seems incapable of delivering on them.

Telematics

PSoS are still looking to agree guidance, the SPF is objecting to any speed or crash data being recorded. The telematics system can only be used for fleet management purposes. It appears that there is a 2 week trial commencing in G division and Roads Policing on 1st June.

Working Practices Review Group

The SPF Deputy General Secretary reported frustration that this group was being chaired by a Chief Superintendent and not a member of the Force Executive who was empowered to make decision. He also requested vigilance in relation to potential changes to shift patterns being brought in under the guise of operational necessity due to the pandemic. Due to low absences and high availability levels there is no requirement to change the core shift patterns worked by the majority of officers in the West.

The WAC Chair noted that the MIT West has temporarily changed shift pattern to resolve some H&S issues but this was with the agreement of the officers.

Standing Committees

The Finance, Operational Duties and Legislation & Regulation Standing Committees had met by Video Conference on 21 April 2020.

Finance Standing Committee (FSC)

Provisional budgets that had been set aside for campaigning on Police funding and pay had not been spent and it was recommended that they not be used at this time. This was approved by the JCC.

The FSC recommended that a provisional budget and contingency fund be created for potential Covid-19 expenditure. This was approved by the JCC.

The FSC recommended seeking reimbursement from PSoS for the cost of the hand sanitiser bought by the SPF. This was approved by the JCC.

The FSC noted that due to the ongoing turmoil in the stock markets the SPF's investment portfolio had lost 9.8% in value. Whilst this was disappointing news it should be noted that the benchmark for the type of investments that the SPF makes had lost 16.3%, the FTSE 100 23.8% and the FTSE All- Share 25% in the same time period.

Operational Duties

Thrive has been implemented in the East and North ahead of schedule as it was hoped that this would assist with the policing response to the pandemic and it was confirmed that all Deep Dive exercises had been halted.

Legislation and Regulations

The much awaited Police officer handbook was discussed and the committee were informed of the process by which they could suggest amendments.

The committee also discussed The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. Ordinarily the SPF would have been consulted on these regulations but due to the urgency with which they were produced this did not happen. The General Secretary is writing to the Scottish Government pointing out the weaknesses in them including; lack of power of entry, self-incrimination, vicarious liability for children etc.

Eurocop and ICPRA

The Eurocop conference is still scheduled to take place in Edinburgh in November whilst the ICPRA conference has been re-arranged for Glasgow in June 2021. They could both be subject to change, especially if a re-scheduled COP26 conference clashes with one of them.

The JCC had a brief discussion regarding the merits of membership of both organisations and it was confirmed that subscription to them is reviewed on an annual basis.

Competent Business

Due to the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic the decision has been taken to cancel the 2020 Bravery Awards and roll them in to the 2021 Awards.

There were no questions.

The WAC Chair provided a brief update on Pensions as per the pre read and asked for questions.

In relation to scheme participation, one member asked if the SPF could carry out a survey to find out what the percentage of participation is? as there are a lot of younger officers who are not part of the scheme. The WAC Chair advised on figures obtained by the National Police Chief Council and informed members that the Executive at SPF were trying to confirm figures and circulate information.

One member asked if the SPF were aware of a 50/50 pension scheme whereby officers could continue to pay half of their contribution. The WAC Chair he was not aware if this was part of the Police Pension Scheme and asked that details be forwarded to him by email to allow him to investigate further and report back.

ACTION – MEMBER TO EMAIL WAC CHAIR WHO WILL LOOK INTO THIS PRIOR TO NEXT WAC.

One member asked when the next auto enrolment would take place and was advised by the WAC Chair that although not confirmed, this would most likely take place in 2021. He explained to members that this was where members should be lettered in advance and have to advise if they do not want to continue and opt out.

12 **CONSULTATIONS**

The WAC Secretary reported on SOPs issued for consultation since the last meeting.

27/04/2020 Cyber kiosk toolkit V5
30/04/2020 My Career V0.07

Shift Consultations since the last WAC.

- V Div – PPU – Approved 19/05/2020
- L Div – Crime Management – Approved 15/05/2020
- L Div – Reactive CID – Rejected 24/05/2020
- U Div – Islands Millport & Arran – Approved 14/05/2020
- U Div – OMU – Rejected 22/05/2020
- U Div – Concern Hub – Rejected 22/05/2020
- Q Div – Reactive CID – Approved 21/05/2020
- G Div – Crime Management – Rejected 22/05/2020

There were no questions.

13. **MOTIONS**

There were no motions.

14. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Secretary advised the members of two items of correspondence;

- Letter of resignation from Tommy O'Pray, WAC Representative dated 31 March 2020. A letter of appreciation was written on behalf of the committee for Tommy's commitment to Federation duty.
- Letter of resignation from Stephen Murray, WAC Representative dated 01 June 2020. A letter of appreciation was written on behalf of the committee for Stephen's commitment to Federation duty.

15. **COMPETENT BUSINESS**

Due to the nature of the meeting on this occasion, matters were raised in advance and discussed by way of a Q&A in order that any issues could be highlighted fully.

1. Questions

Annual Leave Arrangements in Light of (COVID-19) Pandemic for Leave Year 2021 / 22

Due to the restrictions put in place to combat the Coronavirus pandemic many officers have had their holidays plans cancelled for the annual leave year 2020/2021. Many are being issued with vouchers and credit notes that need to be used within the next 12 to 24 months and some are trying to sort out holidays with family for next year.

In light of the above circumstances, it is important that annual leave for 2021/2022 leave period be sorted out as soon as possible so officers have the choice to plan ahead and rearrange plans that are now in disarray for this year. This is a pressing issue and several enquiries have already been received regarding this matter.

A) This was discussed briefly at JCC with the Deputy General Secretary canvassing opinion from the committee members as how best to progress this. The consensus opinion from the West JCC reps was that the annual leave periods should rotate as normal for each group. There will be some challenges regarding a re-arranged COP26. The SPF at an area and national level is aware of the level of concern amongst the members.

Brief discussion followed and the WAC Chair confirmed that this matter will be pursued. V Division are already aware and are trying to get answers from the Force.

Constant Observation

There continues to be issues with the number of prisoners who are placed on Constant Observation which seems to be a bigger issue in the West area in comparison to the North or East. Figures were provided (below) in relation to some of the bigger custody centres across the country. This is only an example of one day but from other occasions checked, this kind of pattern seems to be very common.

The member asked if custody ever provided figures in relation to the number/ proportion of observation in the 3 regions over a time period and do they have anything to explain why the numbers seem to vary so much-is it to do with other areas having better facilities or is it linked to legacy ways of working?

Also what are they doing to try and streamline the process across the country?

There are concerns that Custody staff are not getting the proper training/facilities and support, as well as the huge impact this has on operational policing but the Force Executive do not seem to have any desire to fix the problem.

Check of National Custody System on 31/05/20 at 1600h

The number of prisoners at the following offices were checked as well as the number who were on Constant observations

Custody Suite	Number of Prisoners	Number on Constant Obs
Aberdeen	28	2
Dundee	25	2
Inverness	16	2
Falkirk	15	1
Livingston	18	0
St Leonards	28	0
Dunfermline	14	0
Greenock	19	9
Cathcart	22	9
Govan	34	4
Kilmarnock	5	0
Saltcoats	12	0
Dumfries	9	0
Coatbridge	9	5
Clydebank	8	1

A) Work had already commenced within CJSD regarding the differing rates of higher level observation carried out in the West compared to other areas of the country. A review of decisions made by Duty officers confirmed that the vast majority of prisoners had been assessed correctly according to CJSD guidance. It was flagged up that improvements could be made in downgrading risk when circumstances changed e.g. when prisoners had been seen by a doctor etc. This was all fed back to fulltime custody sergeants at the development days which were held last year. Further work was supposed to be getting carried out by CJSD. However, the final decision as to what level of observation a prisoner is put on must rest with the Custody supervisor as he/she will be the one who must account for their actions should the worst happen. WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) will raise this issue with CJSD management at forthcoming meetings.

The WAC Chair advised members that this matter was being pursued with Criminal Justice and the WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) has a meeting on 17 June which should provide an update.

The member stressed the huge difference in the areas and queried if it was down to facilities, or legacy force procedures. He requested that it be looked at over a month and breakdown the figures and look at data to determine the reason.

There was brief discussion and agreement that this was draining shifts of resources. There appeared to be a reluctance in the West area to use other ways of monitoring prisoners.

The WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) advised that that this matter was raised last year and CJSD carried out their own enquiry to look into the problem over a 6-month period and the figures appeared to be 9x higher than East and North. Results showing that the West area do not use 15 minute observation. Which is often justified as prisoners may not be in a position to be questioned due to alcohol consumption and are often kept in over the weekend.

The WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) advised that some areas have hand held devices and this should have a facility for custody to update. This is ongoing but not available in all custody suites.

Level 4 Observations for Prisoners in custody

This has been a recurring issue used at custody suites serving K Division under circumstances that are not justified, proportionate, and necessary and appear legally questionable.

Prisoners with historic markers on NCS are often placed on level 4 observation. Prisoners who refuse a strip search being placed on level 4 observation. Issues with handcuffs and reference to the OST manual stating handcuffs are a temporary restraint device raised.

Two officers are on most occasions placed in the cell with the prisoner, sometimes for hours, fighting or restraining violent, hostile and suspected COVID-19 carriers, albeit wearing PPE, which after a matter of minutes causes them to be saturated in sweat. Issues around what protection that PPE actually provides when manipulated beyond its design when rolling about a cell. Officer's welfare is often disregarded as they are left in cells for hours at a time with little or no interaction from custody staff.

Recently officers have sustained injuries and reported sick when conducting level 4 observation. Examples provided.

More emphasis is placed on the health, safety and wellbeing of prisoners over that of officers. Potentially exposing multiple officers and their families to COVID19 versus preventing harm to one prisoner seems very disproportionate. Near miss forms are submitted each time yet there does not appear to be any reduction in the use of level 4 observation which is justifiable or proportionate. It is often felt the same response could be provided from outside a closed cell.

Repeatedly prisoners who refuse a strip search are being watched by multiple officers over entire weekends, then are conveyed by GEOAMEY to court cells where they are no longer watched in close proximity. Prisoners appear at court, often bailed/released and still possess contraband. It would be valuable to get an understanding of how level 4 observation is affecting the 3 regions.

Can the numbers of near miss forms and officers reporting sick/self-isolating due to injuries sustained by the use of this tactic be gathered to present the scale of the problem?

The SPF recently reported Police Scotland to the HSE over the breath test issue and COVID 19. Surely the risk posed to our officers of contracting COVID19 is far greater when completing an 8, 9 or 10 hour shift in a cell with a COVID19 carrier versus that of a 30 second breath test procedure?

Has our panel of experts examined this issue and if not, can this be done as there are fears that one of our officers is going to end up seriously injured or unwell.

A) The WAC Deputy Secretary has been looking at this issue and will raise it further with CJSD at forthcoming meetings. The panel were asked for their opinion on the risk to officers from engaging in prolonged physical struggle with suspects where potentially skin to skin contact took place. They stated that this was extremely high risk activity and officers should be prioritised for testing. This finding was given to Police Scotland by letter.

The matter is being kept under review.

Pensions Q.1

The SPF have now decided to now pursue injury to feelings claims for Scottish officers who were not in the successful Leigh Day challenge, yet continue to refuse to fund the Leigh Day litigants. This essentially means that members in the Leigh Day challenge who contribute to the voluntary fund are not only having to pay their own legal fees to challenge discrimination that the SPF refused to support, but they are also having to contribute to the fees of the officers now claiming via the SPF. These officers are therefore paying twice. Many view this as further discrimination and victimisation by the SPF towards the Leigh Day challengers. In order to address this, and in the interests of fairness to all concerned, shouldn't the SPF now admit they got it wrong, apologise to their members and make a firm commitment to paying the fees of the Leigh Day challengers?

Pensions Q.2

Is the decision by the JCC not to reimburse members who made private contracts with Leigh Day going to be revisited? there is a lot of anger towards the Federation regarding this.

The WAC Chair advised that this matter has been under discussion for some time, provided an update and asked for questions.

A) The JCC is the central decision making body of the SPF, it is empowered by law to raise funds for SPF purposes and make rules and decisions as to how those funds are spent including funding decisions on Legal Advice and Assistance. The SPF holds those funds on behalf of all of our members and they include reserves that have been built up over the last 101 years. The JCC has kept the legal challenge under continual review. During the JCC meeting held in November a decision was made that those SPF members who have chosen to privately engage with firms of solicitors would not be reimbursed. This is consistent with SPF Regulations, Rules, previous decisions made by the JCC and the Legal Advice and Assistance Guidance which is published on our website.

<https://spf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/spf-regs-rules-sos-august-2019.pdf>

<https://spf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Legal-Advice-Assistance-Guidelines-March-2016.pdf>

One member asked if the JCC vote is representative of the membership? Many feel that the challenge should be funded.

The WAC Chair summarised and explained that at the JCC meeting it is not just the full time SPF HQ officials that vote, it is the full JCC from all round the three areas, North, East and West that vote. He then provided an update on the Sergeant case.

The JCC considered the JCC Rules, Regulations and legal position and decided not to reimburse those involved. If entered into a private contract, JCC will not reimburse. Not all will agree but we as a committee are not in a position to overturn the decision of the JCC which is final.

One officer raised the same concerns and felt that many members were left feeling let down and that SPF should support those officers. He stated that the SPF General Secretary had previously stated in V Division that that this situation would not happen and now it has. The member agreed to clarify when this was and report to the WAC Chair.

One member felt that there is a lack of communication on the rationale behind the decision not to review the JCC decision. A Simple communication would be perfect to alleviate people's frustration and suggested a video from SPF HQ to give a clear message.

The WAC Chair agreed to raise this with SPF HQ to see if it was possible to put out clearer communication.

One member referred to an email that had been sent to WAC Reps from the WAC Chair some time ago covering the matter fully and asked if this could be sent to the wider membership. He was advised to postpone circulating more information at this point and advised that members should refer to the links as already circulated to obtain the most current information.

In relation to the JCC, one member asked if the Turnberry Hotel had been secured as the venue for Conference next year. He was advised that no accommodation had been booked to date.

One member raised concerns regarding the portal that was supposed to be launched at 8 am but as Federation Representatives, no communication had been circulated that day to advise why it did not go live. If SPF knew there was an issue with the portal then this should have been communicated. The Chair agreed and advised that the Full time office bearers were also frustrated with situation that they had not been better informed.

Lack of Taser trained officers

Highlighted concerns at the lack of STO - Taser trained Officers throughout K division and throughout the force in general. From recent experience as a response officer in the KB Sub Division, the following was highlighted.

There are no STO's on the shift. This has been the case for around the last 6 months.

In the last couple of months in KB there has been a number of high profile incident. These include a murder and attempted murder in the Division.

Further to this last week alone, there was a number of calls in relation to persons armed with weapons either assaulting persons or looking to harm themselves. Examples of two persons having to be red dotted, in order to affect their arrest.

Officers are getting sent to deal with these calls without having a local STO to assist. There is one Group 1 Officer trained at Paisley (KA) who is expected cover the whole of K Division. If he is off or he is dealing with another incident, then there is a requirement to try and source an STO from G or L Division. This in turn has its own ramifications?

Examples provided of arrest of male and subsequent surrender of dangerous weapons. On this occasion, containment set up until an STO attended to assist. Eventually one was sourced from G Division.

A) The service has agreed to an uplift in Taser officer numbers although training is currently on hold. Where there is a threat to life and a subject is in possession of a potentially lethal weapon ARVs should be deployed. Taser is an incredibly effective piece of PPE but it isn't infallible and should not be used in place of armed officers who can deploy and will have a full range of equipment and tactics available to them.

One member highlighted that in relation to ARV's, there are only 4 cars for west at one time. Often it would be divisional officers initially to go to the call dependant on information. If there is a threat then at that point they would be sent to call. There is a threat assessment in place but the reality is that it is not possible for ARV's to attend every call.

The WAC Chair requested that members submit examples of any incidents to Merrylee House.

Custody and the Crown – serious offenders

How Custody and the Crown are dealing with Serious Offenders when they are arrested and when they are appearing in front of the court.

Examples were provided of some unacceptable decision making by Custody.

Breach of bail whereby the offender was on bail and had breached his bail conditions twice in the space of a few days. The first time he was arrested Custody refused to accept his detention and told Officers to report him. On the second occasion they accepted his dentition but he was released before the paperwork was completed.

Murder investigation. The male responsible was arrested and released on bail to an address in England. Less than a week later he was arrested back in the same area of the murder in possession an offensive weapon.

An extremely violent male was released from prison to his home address. Within two days he had reoffended whereby it took a number of Officers to affect his arrest.

Although COVID – 19 has impacted the way things are done at the moment, releasing murderers and dangerous individuals back into Society is not only a concern for the public but also an Officer Safety issue?

The above are just an example of such incidents.

A) The WAC Chair and Secretary dialled in to the West Local Policing Commanders meeting on 29 April 2020. A presentation was given by the commander of CJSD which included that COPFS have raised concerns that even during the pandemic PSoS are sending too many people to court as only about a third of custody cases result in an offender being remanded. The point was made by us that the number of Custody prisoners has reduced considerably since the Criminal Justice Scotland Act 2016 came in to force and arguably too many prisoners were already being dealt with by report. It was queried by the WAC Chair if this represented an interference in operational policing. Custody Supervisors should not be second guessed re whether they send prisoners direct to court. In the event of a violent prisoner being released who then went on to harm others the officer would have to justify their actions. COPFS should not attempt to transfer risk over to Police officers. Complaints were also raised by commanders about Custody Supervisors dissuading officers who had called ahead from bringing prisoners into Custody Suites.

Expert panel

The expert panel which was compiled by the SPF initially seemed a welcome feature. What benefit has come from this panel so far? We are aware that the HSE issue in relation to breath testing. Circular 26 was welcome but was a bit light on factual use which could be used to challenge the organisation. We have a number of members who are high risk but not shielding eg diabetics/pregnant and also those living with shielding family members. It is felt that some have been let down by the organisation and by the SPF in regards to specialist advice or recommendations coming from the panel for such cases. Can you assure the committee this has been a worthy investment financially and with the physical advice provided?

A) The panel have given their opinion regarding a number of issues which has gone on to inform SPF policy on Covid 19. The SPF has sought to persuade Police Scotland to amend policies and processes including operational guidance. No sector specific guidance had been created for Policing in the UK. Instead guidance for healthcare scenarios and settings was being followed which did not accurately reflect the risks in Policing. The advice received was forwarded to Police Scotland and led to changes in a number of policies. It was also shared with other staff associations across the UK. In relation to officer who have to shield for health reasons of their own or to protect family members it has been a struggle to get Police Scotland to see sense. The levels of abstractions that were predicted at the start of the pandemic have not materialised. In virtually all areas of Police Scotland there has been more than enough capacity to allow affected officers to work from home, Police Scotland IT also say that they have configured thousands of laptops and tablets to allow this to happen. It has been extremely frustrating to have to fight for each officer on a case by case basis rather than Police Scotland adopting sensible policies in line with government guidance.

The WAC Chair informed members that there has been a budget set aside for covid response and £50,000 has been spent on hand sanitiser. SPF have asked force if they will reimburse.

The member stated that no federation advice has been circulated regarding pregnant officers and diabetics. This should have been circulated earlier.

The WAC Chair stated that SPF are trying to get PSOS to change their advice – specific legal requirement. They are going against Scottish government guidance. People and Development

are almost empty as working from home but advising officers to come in to posts where it is not required and therefore putting themselves at risk.

The WAC Vice Chair advised that advice from PSoS is mainly on process not people. People with medical conditions should consult their GP or NHS – everyone has unique circumstances. if there are any cases where this is not the case, they should be fed in to Merrylee House.

2.ELECTIONS

The WAC Secretary advised the members that the Election process for vacancies is now with David Ross, SPF Policy & co-ordination Officer. He advised West Representatives that he would circulate a generic letter to all and requested that one Representative from each Division/Department takes responsibility to distribute letter with details to all federated ranks.

One member highlighted a recent memo sent out by ACC McDonald which refers to officers kneeling re anti racial protest. This had raised some questions and concerns and required clarity.

The WAC Secretary confirmed that he would write to the SPF General Secretary in this regard.

ACTION – WAC SECRETARY TO WRITE TO SPF GENERAL SECRETARY.

16. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The WAC Chair thanked members for their participation and advised that the next meeting of the WAC will take place on 3 September 2020.

Paul Connelly
CHAIR

Gary Mitchell
SECRETARY