



Ref: CS/NB/LS

Scottish Police Federation

5 Woodside Place Glasgow G3 7QF

Joint Central Committee Equality Subject Committee

MINUTES

15 July 2020

1. Attendance and Opening of Meeting

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| North Area Committee | Bruce Crawford |
| North Area Committee | James Thomson |
| East Area Committee | Austin Barrett |
| East Area Committee | John Burgoyne |
| East Area Committee | Jim Friery |
| East Area Committee | Darren Gallagher |
| East Area Committee | Andy Malcolm |
| East Area Committee | Chris Richardson |
| East Area Committee | Graham Ross |
| West Area Committee | Gordon Cumming |
| West Area Committee | Lynne Gray |
| West Area Committee | Stephen Gray |
| West Area Committee | Sarah Jackson |
| West Area Committee | Jennie MacFarlane |
| West Area Committee | Jenny Shanks |
| Deputy General Secretary AGSE Business Administrator | David Kennedy (meeting Chair) Nigel Bathgate Lesley Stevenson |
| Equality Advisor | Jayne Monkhouse |

Due to the COVID-19 situation the meeting was done by Video Conferencing. The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and invited all to take an active part.

Apologies were received from Linda Mathers, Andy Sawers, David McKay, David Osterberg and Alistair MacKinnon. David and Alistair were replaced by Bruce Crawford and Stephen Gray respectively.

2. Minute of Previous Meeting

The Minute of the previous meeting held on 8th April had been circulated with JCC Circular 20 of 2020 and was approved.

3. PNB(S) Equality Working Group

The AGSE reported that there had been no meetings of this Group since the last Equality Subject Committee meeting. Staff Side and Official Side had engaged in email correspondence, but no matters had been progressed to completion.

4. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Employment Group

The AGSE reported that there had been no meetings of this Group since the last Equality Subject Committee meeting. There had been no indication when meetings would resume.

5. Area Updates

5.1 North

James Thomson said that absence data details being shared with members was welcomed and on initial review, highlighted some concerns relative to those who may have been missed. He said the risks had probably been increased due to COVID-19 relative to the movement of staff, in particular, supervisors from national into local divisions.

He reported that Full Time Office Bearer single points of contacts had been identified for the national divisions which would hopefully ensure some continuity.

He said there had been a slight increase in grievances and officers seeking advice.

He said that there was still a lack of understanding amongst some supervisors regarding Agile and Flexible working, and the situation with COVID-19 acutely highlighted the lack of understanding of what was needed; PSoS Shielding and Smarter Thinking documents in particular.

He said he was monitoring an officer undergoing performance regulations and had concerns regarding her disability and whether she had received support in relation to her bereavement and autism.

He said that 20 officers were currently going through the IHR process, Injuries on Duty and grievances with more expected later that day.

He reported that there appeared to be issues with Police Incident Officers within D Division relative to their shifts constantly being changed and he was trying to seek clarity around this matter as it was contrary to the workforce agreement and does not meet the requirement of the definition of exigency of duty.

The delay in the IHR process had caused concern for some members and thanks were given to the AGSE for work carried out with regards to half pay or nil pay.

He reported that he was in regular contact with North HR Business Partner, Michaela McLean and had regular meetings with ACC John Hawkins, where any issues could be raised.

He thought that the new recording of cases would need defining as many would cross over eg IHR, IOD, half pay etc.

5.2 East

Andy Malcolm gave an update to the Committee and said that Graham Ross was now the Equality lead for the EAC. He said that there were 25 officers currently going through the IHR process and a further 25 on long term absence. There were seven cases relating to grievances, two relative to equality matters, one case going to an ET, one case relative to a disability and one performance meeting (non-member).

The AGSE said that there were currently 45-50 people currently in the IHR process. Due to Dr Watt's retiral, there was currently no SMP and a replacement was awaited.

5.3 West

Jenny Shanks gave an update and said that PSoS were now sharing the force's absence data. Absences in the West far exceeded those in the North and East Areas and discussions would take place to ensure processes were introduced to manage the data and define where responsibilities lay.

She reported that "normal business" processes had been reintroduced following the easing of lockdown including several grievance and flexible working applications and appeal meetings which she had attended, complying with social distancing rules.

She said she was currently supporting eight members with live grievances, most of which involved allegations of workplace bullying and two were currently being assessed by PSD for conduct/criminality matters.

She reported that she had been contacted by several members from one territorial division regarding issues surrounding flexible working applications, and this would be progressed directly with the Divisional Commander. This appeared to be a local issue.

She informed the Committee that there had been undue delays to the IHR process during lockdown and HR had been supportive of SPF's intention to have those members retained on full pay pending the finalisation of that process. She was currently supporting nine members through the IHR process most of whom have mental health issues, and lockdown itself, combined with delays in the IHR process, has caused anxiety for those individuals. Being retained on full pay had however eased some of the anxieties.

Lastly, she reported that she had been contacted by the Scottish Women's Development Forum who had asked if SPF would support the option of offering homeworking to pregnant officers out with the current pandemic. The AGSE had already had discussions with a Short Life Working Group relative to flexible and agile working and had responded to an initial draft document. She said that whilst some work was required to ensure proposals met with Regulations, it was encouraging to see a positive drive towards increased flexible working and flexibility in the workplace.

6. Consultations

A paper had been circulated with the Agenda and was noted.

The AGSE reported that there had been a number of consultations issued since the last meeting

to which he had responded. They had been of a policy or operational nature issued by PSoS.

He said that PSoS had compiled a "Smarter Working" toolkit. He had responded to the document which had been shared with the Equality Area Leads for feedback prior to his submission. He told the Committee that the Hate Crime and Public Order Act was currently out for consultation with a return date of 22 July.

7. Tribunal etc. Rulings & Legal Assistance

The meetings Chair raised concerns relative to P&D's influence on the IHR process. Solicitors advice was that they should be impartial, but he did not think this was the case.

Jayne Monkhouse said that data was being produced in E&W relative to sick leave and gender. She asked if the Committee thought it would be worthwhile to have some produced for Scotland and this was agreed.

The Chair said he would circulate information relative to the outstanding legal cases to the Committee.

The Committed discussed police computer systems, mobile devices and potential data breaches.

It was noted that ET updates, provided by Jayne Monkhouse had been circulated with JCC Circular 31 of 2020.

8. Conference 2021

The AGSE reported that he had contacted the Working Families organisation who appeared to be promoting flexible working since the start of COVID-19 and had been involved with several forces in E&W relative to flexible working. The CEO had offered to participate with the offer of other contributors from the organisation being involved also. Details of the Equality input would be progressed now that external involvement had been confirmed.

9. Training

As a result of the COVID-19 there was no training at the end of the meeting. It was agreed that the AGSE, Jayne Monkhouse and area leads would meet to discuss the matter further.

10. Competent Business

The meeting Chair told the Committee that the WhatsApp case had been appealed and a decision was now awaited.

Jennie MacFarlane said that there had been advice circulated within her Area relative to police systems being used to forward emails which could lead to Data Protection breaches. The Committee discussed whether officers on eg maternity leave or long term sick leave, could be at a disadvantage. It was agreed that the AGSE would write to PSoS to raise the issue.

11. Closure

The Chair told the Committee it was expected that the meetings would be carried out by VC for the foreseeable future, unless there was a training requirement, and asked how the Committee felt the process worked. Jayne Monkhouse said that she felt LifeSize worked better than Teams, however she would prefer her training inputs to be given face to face.

Date of next meeting: 30th September 2020

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting.