



# Scottish Police Federation

5 Woodside Place Glasgow G3 7QF

## Joint Central Committee Health & Safety Subject Committee

Ref: CS/LS

### MINUTES

15 January 2020

#### 1. Attendance and Opening of Meeting

North Area Committee	Gordon Forsyth
North Area Committee	Mike Purdie
North Area Committee	Ross Polworth
East Area Committee	Graeme McLaren
East Area Committee	Lyn Redwood
East Area Committee	Andrew Toombs
East Area Committee	Ricky Wood
West Area Committee	Dougie Chalmers
West Area Committee	Ian Florence
West Area Committee	David Hunter
West Area Committee	Kenny Kean
West Area Committee	Tommy O'Pray
West Area Committee	Elaine Sutherland
Chair	David Hamilton
Assistant to the General Secretary (H&S) AGSH	Brian Jones
Business Manager	Doug Keil
Business Administrator	Lesley Stevenson

The Chair opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. He drew their attention to the new meeting format.

Apologies were received from Stephen Clark, Campbell Smith, Dougie McKinlay, Mike McCaughey, Gordon Cumming, Jamie Carruth and Marcus Lorente.

#### 2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minute of the previous meeting had been circulated with JCC Circular 51 of 2019 and was approved.

### **3 Violence**

The AGSH reported that a SLWG chaired by Louise Skelton had been established to look at how the force responds to violence. Amongst the matters discussed were ITFC training, an aide-memoire and authorisation cards. He said that the numbers of STOs had dropped to 246 from the 520 trained and that this was to be addressed.

He reported that James Bertram had highlighted that there was a 64% increase in the number of assaults on officers compared with previous year a 30% increase in RIDDORs. Members believed that there was a reluctance within C3 to deploy firearms and felt this was because staff feared criticism and considered there was a lack of support. There was also a concern that STOs were being sent to incidents where it was reported that a firearm was involved.

The meeting was advised that there was to be an increase in the number of hubs from 30 to 60. They also discussed barriers to being an STO which included; impacting on career progression, inability to get time off and misunderstandings of recent high profile incidents.

Ricky Wood said there had been 445 taser deployments and 46 discharges resulting in six investigations by PIRC. Members were concerned about the length of time it took to deploy assistance for an urgent assistance call in some areas. There were also concerns about the culture of "standing off" and it was felt there was pressure put on officers not to register a near miss.

### **4 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The AGSH reported that a new Taser holster had been identified which would allow a multi positional facility to enable the ease of use by the operator. It had been advised that a new carrier system was required to enable the additional equipment. Mobile devices and radio, PAVA and ASP was to be carried on the carriage system.

He advised that new ear defenders had been identified which could be mounted on the ARVs helmet as opposed to under the helmet which was extremely uncomfortable to the user.

He further said that it was increasingly difficult to obtain rip-stop trousers and that alternative suppliers were being sought.

He reported that the Footwear Group had met in November and three products had been identified for wearer trials. It had been agreed that the best product would be purchased irrespective of cost. The trials were to commence on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and conclude on 17<sup>th</sup> January.

The AGSH said that the new body armour would be 28% lighter than current issue and that people with backache etc should be issued the new equipment first. It was hoped that 4000 units would be obtained this year.

### **5 Operational Equipment**

The AGSH reported that he had attended a meeting to discuss the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Platform in October and November 2019. A total of 37 risks had been identified, 11 highlighted as high risk including, no air to ground coverage at excessive height; cost; downtime; lack of a back-up facility and the cost of handsets. The new system

would not go live until 2022 at the earliest but it could easily slip to 2024. The entire project costs had risen to £9.3bn with Police Scotland already reporting a £1bn shortfall.

There had been no meetings of the National Vehicle Users Group however work was ongoing and 2000 new breathalysers, 1175 throwlines, 5456 blue portable lights and 2350 fully compliant and 4700 partially compliant road signs had all been purchased.

## **6 First Aid**

The Committee was completely opposed to the use of naloxone and expressed serious concerns about the possibility of legal cases being taken against officers who used it. Similar concerns were also expressed about the use of defibrillators and tourniquets. In relation to all of these issues there were training implications which had not been fully explored. These matters were to be further discussed at the SLB on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

## **7 Wellbeing**

The AGSH reported that the wellbeing manager had resigned and Kirsty Garrick had taken over the lead. A pilot was in operation in N Division where officers could voluntarily participate in specialist wellbeing counselling. The Committee agreed that this should be supported. The AGSH said that some Government funding had been provided to the police in E&W and that SPF would look into a similar arrangement for Scotland.

He reported that 6000 vouchers had been purchased for flu jabs at a cost of £60,000. It was unclear how many had been used however as this management info wasn't available from the supplier.

Members expressed great sadness at the number of officers who had taken their own lives and felt it was important that both the force and the Government give a high priority to wellbeing. SPF would be taking an in-depth look at its own policies and practices in this regard.

A discussion took place re the need for wellbeing support during PSD investigations as too often managers were shying away from these.

The committee noted that N Division had reinstated a Welfare Officer, funded by Police Care (UK).

## **8 Administration & Governance**

It was reported that the Health & Safety Board had met on 4<sup>th</sup> December where it was highlighted that the RIDDOR figures for the second quarter had risen by 12 in comparison to the previous year. There were no specific trends or patterns identified however the number of assaults at point of arrest and within custody had increased with a further rise in slips, trips and falls and instances of manual handling injuries.

It was considered that many senior officers were reluctant to take any responsibility for these incidents. It was noted that all Divisional Commanders would be required to sign a compliance document stating that all areas of their business complied with H&S legislation.

It was considered important that **safety investigations** and **accident investigations** be seen as two different processes with the former focussing on future prevention and the latter focussing on cause.

The Committee also heard that Health & Safety inspections were increasing and being done in conjunction with safety advisors.

## **9 Training**

The AGSH reported that further training was to be held in February would be IOSH trained.

It was noted that additional training was required in station inspections. Training had already been delivered to 16 Safety Reps in the West and would be replicated in the North and East.

## **10 Competent Business**

There were no items.

## **11 Closure**

The meeting Chair thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting and wished them a safe journey home.

It was noted that in future Brian Jones would be the Chair of the Committee and an election for the Secretary would be held at the JCC meeting in February.

Date of next meeting: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020