



Ref: CS/DK/LS

Scottish Police Federation

PO Box 27163, GLASGOW, G3 9EZ

Joint Central Committee Equality Subject Committee

MINUTES

13th January 2021

1. Attendance and Opening of Meeting

North Area Committee	David McKay
North Area Committee	Shirley Moran
North Area Committee	Andy Sawers
North Area Committee	James Thomson
North Area Committee Observer	Caroline MacNaughton
East Area Committee	Jim Friery
East Area Committee	Darren Gallagher
East Area Committee	Andy Malcolm
East Area Committee	James McLaren
East Area Committee	Norman Towler
East Area Committee	Graham Ross
West Area Committee	Dougie Chalmers
West Area Committee	Jennie MacFarlane
West Area Committee	Jenny Shanks
Deputy General Secretary AGSE	David Kennedy (meeting Chair) Nigel Bathgate
Business Administrator Administrator	Lesley Stevenson Cara Riley
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 Adam Peppard.

It was noted Nigel Bathgate was soon to retire from the police service and following an election at the last meeting, James Thomson would be taking over the role of AGSE. Caroline MacNaughton attended

the meeting as an Observer prior to taking over the role of Deputy Secretary for the NAC with the portfolio for Equality.

2. Minute of Previous Meeting

The Minute of the previous meeting held on 30th September had been circulated with JCC Circular 67 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.

He reported that the PNB(S) EWG continued to be fully engaged with the Official Side and the SPF relative to Equality matters within the Police Officer Handbook. Comments and guidance continued to be submitted when required.

4. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Employment Group

The AGSE reported that the last meeting of this group was held on 7th October 2020, the first meeting since the pandemic began. He said that the equality outcomes relative to the next period of review for the Mainstreaming Report were under review and would be the subject of workshops.

He further reported that the SWDF presented a paper relative to BME women in policing which was superseded by a working group on BME recruitment and retention.

He said that the staff survey, arranged for 2021 was also highlighted.

The next meeting of this group was scheduled for 3rd February 2021.

5. Area Updates

5.1 North

Absence Figures

James Thomson reported that he continued to work on absence figures for the North and SCD, highlighting any issues to the respective Command Teams.

He said there continued to be a considerable number of officers suffering from stress and anxiety issues, and People Boards were due to be held that month where more accurate figures would be available, as well as continued collaborative working.

IHR

James reported that the ill health retiral process continued to be a focus within the North due to the delays in the process relative to COVID. All officers being supported by the SPF remained on full pay following respective appeals. Encouragement was still being provided to the respective Command Teams to ensure all officers in this position should be encouraged to seek support and advice from the SPF.

Wellbeing

James reported that a Wellbeing Hub was being developed within the SCD. The purpose was to create an 'SCD HUB' pulling together a range of topics of importance that supported officers and staff with the intention of developing further engagement elements.

Suggestions from the SPF had included the procedure currently being implemented in N Division where funding had been secured from Police Care UK for a 'Mental Health Project Officer' Kirstin MacDonald, understood to be a 2-year secondment. This coincided well with the Wellbeing Strand of the North Peoples Board, chaired by ACC Hawkins. This matter continued to be developed and was shared with A and D Divisions.

An Intranet Wellbeing page was planned however was currently delayed to COVID.

A SWDF Menopause Café was due to open within D Division. Dianne Jamieson, SWDF Ambassador, had set up the first C3 Café based in Edinburgh with literature and educational reference material available, providing advice related to menopause and providing support to staff. Due to its success, the SWDF were in the process of rolling them out nationally across the Contact, Command and Control Division. This was particularly relevant to C3 as they had the largest contingent of women in any Division with police staff figures showing 71% of the workforce was female. The first café planned for the North was due to open in early 2021.

Grievances

It was noted that there were four live Grievances across the North. James hoped that relationships, developed across the North with the respective command teams, allowed for early intervention and resolution.

5.2 East

Graham Ross reported that there were 12 ongoing Grievance cases in the East which appeared to indicate a small decrease, however, this could have been due to delays in resolution meetings having taking place over the festive period and some due to Covid based delays. It was expected that the number would decrease in the coming weeks. There were no trends causing concern.

He said there was a total of three Equality cases ongoing which was an increase of one since the last meeting, however there was no indication of any trends or patterns. There were nine officers going through the CICA process, some of which were nearing conclusion.

18 officers were going through the ill-health process. This was a reduction of three since the last meeting. Fourteen were being retained on full pay.

He said that there were inconsistencies surrounding the force's interpretation of some of the COVID guidelines, however, some positive outcomes had been achieved when assisting officers with more serious illnesses etc. This was welcomed by the Committee.

5.3 West

Jenny Shanks reported that there were 23 live Grievances within the West area and she was providing

support to 10 of them. Five Grievances had been resolved since the last meeting.

She said absence data from the PSoS was being utilised to create files on the SPF database for members on long term sick which had shown that the West had almost three times as many members off sick as the East, and four times as many as the North. She was supporting 16 officers in the West through the ill health retirement process, many of whom had significant mental health issues relative to anxiety, stress and/or PTSD.

She said that the new Selected Medical Practitioner did not appear to have had a positive impact on officers whose ill health processes had been delayed by Covid which was disappointing.

She reported that she had received a vast number of enquiries from officers since the introduction of the latest lockdown restrictions, with many of the enquiries regarding pregnancy, shielding, underlying health issues and vulnerabilities in households, notwithstanding those with childcare issues due to school and nursery closures. She said that pregnancy seemed to be one of the most significant issues for supervisors in the workplace and she continued to ask for ongoing risks assessments to be carried out, preferably new risk assessments in line with the current restrictions and variant of the virus.

6. Consultations

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

The AGSE reported that there had been no specific equality related consultations since the last meeting.

7. Tribunal etc. Rulings & Legal Assistance

The meeting Chair said that he hadn't been made aware of any specific employment tribunal cases.

Jayne Monkhouse reported on the Employment Tribunal ongoing, Taylor v Jaguar/Land Rover, which was relative to a transgender officer, identifying as gender fluid, not being covered by the transgender provisions of the Equality Act. The AGSE said that members should familiarise themselves with the case in order that they be prepared for any similar cases in the future.

Jayne said that pregnancy issues appeared to be the most common matter and ultimately three options should be made available to pregnant women during the current pandemic; alter their terms and conditions, alter their work to accommodate them or send them home on full pay. Latest information received indicated that due to the latest variant, pregnant women should be isolating.

It was agreed that the AGSE should write to the PSoS regarding this matter.

8. Conference 2021

The Deputy General Secretary reported that Conference 2021 would be held virtually on a three-hour online event. The meeting Chair said that the format was still to be arranged.

The AGSE reported that James Thomson and Jayne Monkhouse would be meeting to discuss inputs.

9. Training

Due to the current pandemic, no training had been arranged. The incoming AGSE was to put a plan together for future training.

10. Competent Business

No competent business had been received.

The meeting Chair said that this would be the AGSE's last meeting as he was due to retire from the police service in the coming weeks. He gave thanks to Nigel for all his hard work and wished him well for the future.

The meeting Chair thanked the Committee for all their efforts over the last year.

11. Closure

The Chair told the Committee it was expected that the meetings would be carried out by VC for the foreseeable future.

Date of next meeting: 7th April 2021

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