



Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee

Meeting notes of the 4th quarterly meeting of the Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee held on Monday 30 November 2020, via Video Conferencing.

1. Members Present

Full Time Officials

David Threadgold	Chair
Neil MacDonald	Secretary
Ross Polworth	Vice Chair
James Thomson	Deputy Secretary

Constables	Sergeants	Inspecting Ranks
Garry Maclennan Shirley Moran David MacKay Sandy Smart Mark Douglas Lesley Fraser Colin Nicoll Allen Begg Yvonne Sloan	Caroline MacNaughton Fraser Robertson David Macalpine Pat Nicoll Andy Bilton Andy Sawers Simon Lewis-Dalby Alan Devine Jamie Sherlock Bruce Crawford	Nick Clasper Scott Macdonald James Rice Karen Harrison Graham Smith

Apologies Received

Megan Heathershaw
Judith Wright
Kevin Hird
Andy Horne

2. Opening of Meeting

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all members present and he encouraged everyone present to take an active part in the meeting and to contribute to discussion and debate. He gave an updated explanation as to the circumstances leading to the repeat of the unorthodox approach to holding the North Area Committee Meeting.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were formally approved, after being proposed Caroline MacNaughton and seconded by James Thomson.

4. Election – Assistant Secretary NAC

Following James Thomson's selection for the AGSE role, a vacancy was created in the NAC for an Assistant Secretary.

The Chair briefed the Committee on the format of the electronic voting system, which was facilitated and scrutineered by David Ross.

Two candidates identified themselves for this position, namely Caroline MacNaughton and Fraser Robertson.

Caroline MacNaughton was proposed by Nicholas Clasper and seconded by Simon Lewis-Dalby. Fraser Robertson was proposed by Mark Douglas and seconded by Andy Bilton.

Both candidates addressed the Committee, and following the vote, the Chair announced Caroline MacNaughton as the successful candidate.

5. Rank Specific Separate Meeting

Separate Rank Committee meetings were not facilitated.

6. Matters Arising

Action/Decision Log

There were no outstanding actions.

7. Standing Items

7.1 JCC Update

The Joint Central Committee (JCC) is the statutory embodiment of the Scottish Police Federation (SPF). The role of the JCC is to discuss and co-ordinate SPF policies and come to decisions that have the approval of the majority of the JCC and which are then supported publicly by the JCC as a whole. It should then ensure that the decisions of the JCC are thereafter carried out. The Secretary provided an update.

The JCC was held by VC on Monday 2 November 2020.

The Minutes will be circulated when received.

Following slight technical difficulties, the JCC commenced with the usual format. Prior to Agenda business being addressed, the matter of the election for the post of AGS Equality was concluded.

NAC Assistant Secretary James Thomson was Proposed and Seconded for this post. He was unopposed and successfully elected.

Points of Note:

- **Legal Update**

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- **Allard (On Call Recognition)**

This is ongoing and discussions with PSOS continue to obtain data in an effort to find a settlement. Court proceedings remain an option.

- **Holiday Pay**

This case remains ongoing. Correspondence is being prepared for claimants and negotiations continue to agree the best settlement.

- **WhatsApp**

This is still sitting at the appeal in the inner house, with there being no update as yet. As per the previous meeting, if this is rejected at this stage the matter will be referred to the Supreme Court.

- **ITF – Pensions Claim**

6,500 claims have been lodged.

There remains an opportunity for anyone who has missed the deadline, and DGS should be contacted if anyone has been missed.

- **Judicial Review**

There are two judicial reviews ongoing, both in relation to the misconduct process.

- **Police Negotiating Board (PNB)**

This was established by an Act of Parliament in 1980 to negotiate the pay and conditions of Scottish Police officers and is exclusive to Scotland as there is now no PNB elsewhere in the UK. This is set up from the **Staff Side** who are the Scottish Police Federation (4 members), ASPS (Association of Scottish Superintendents) (1 member) and the Scottish Chief Police Officers Staff Association (1 member), and the **Official Side** which consists of The Scottish Government (1 member), the SPA (Scottish Police Authority) (3 members) and the Chief Constable (2 members).

The Deputy General Secretary provided an update. The scheduled meeting of the PNB on the 8 October 2020, was replaced with a meeting of the PNB TWG (Technical Working Group).

He reported on the following subjects;

PNB Handbook -

The handbook is complete and published. It is a living document and can be amended as required. It is available on the SPF and PNB website and will assist federation representatives in responding to day-to-day issues/queries. It should be acknowledged that this document is a collaboration between the Staff and Official side and FTOBs should be notified of any identified anomalies.

To be removed from Agenda with Committee's approval.

COP 26 -

See Operational Duties update.

Pay Claim -

Has been submitted but there has been no decision as yet.

Discussions are being had around the periphery, non-financial elements.

The issues of **college and overseas allowance** remain on the Agenda but remain unresolved.

Equality Working Group (EWG) -

There have been no meetings of the PNB EWG.

- **Pensions**

The Chair provided an update on pensions which are being discussed at different forums across the UK.

Public Services Pension Consultation -

It was noted that the SPF response to the Pension Consultation had now been submitted and shared as JCC Circular 61/2020.

The General Secretary was thanked by the Committee for the lengthy and complicated work he had carried out on behalf of the SPF and nationally.

Awaiting an update from the treasury on the consultation.

UK Police Pensions Consultative Forum (UKPPCF) -

The General Secretary attended a meeting of the UKPPCF on the 6 October 2020. No update was available at this time.

Cost Cap -

This was agreed by Parliament to help manage the costs of the 2015 scheme. This requires a review of the scheme every 4 years to establish whether too much has been paid in or too much being paid out, and creates review of costs on both sides – employer and employee.

Interested Party Meeting – the 7 staff associations being represented continue to deal with this as one, with the same approach.

Scottish Police Pension Authority -

The SPPA are the administrators of the Police Pension.

Further issues relating re the SPPA are causing concern and are being addressed. These relate to the calculation of the Lifetime Allowance, Annual Allowance and Data protection.

Pension Statements – SPPA are keen to use the member’s self-service portal to publish annual benefit statements. Current construction only provides figures rather than context and explanation. There is no evidence to show that this has been resolved and could create potential confusion regarding scheme membership.

- **Scottish Police Consultative Forum (SPCF)**

This body allows Scottish Ministers to consult policing stakeholders and have multilateral engagement in decisions around changes to Police Regulations. It is funded by the Scottish Government and has an independent Chair. The remit is to deal with any matters that falls out with that of the PNB. The SPF is a key stakeholder in this process and must provide sound governance to the process.

The meeting took place on 10 November 2020, via video conference.

A presentation was given by the head of Leadership and Training, Superintendent Laura McLuckie, on the new PDLP process and the regulatory changes required for this to take effect.

The issue of the COVID 19 Vaccine rollout programme was discussed. The role and risks to Police Officers from COVID 19 was highlighted and the issue of who would receive priority immunisation.

- **Scottish Police Authority**

The Chair has been attending SPA meetings including an engagement meeting on the 16 September.

Cyber strategy was taken to the SPA on 6 October 2020, Issues around consultation were highlighted and a further meeting is planned for 5 November 2020, with a view to improving consultation and lack of regard to views of staff associations.

- **Scottish Police Budget and Financing**

Scottish Budget provision has not been announced by Exchequer and thus Scottish Government has not directed the budget available to the PSOS.

Evidence has been provided to Scottish Parliament. PSOS are struggling to justify a finance and change sector, operational challenges and lack of money. This is being debated in Parliament and it is suspected that PSOS will not be seeking an increased budget.

SPF continue to engage on this and present the realities of PSOS rather than the narrative being presented.

SPF Divisional representatives are being asked to continue to highlight issues where the lack of money available is having a detrimental effect on our membership. This needs local involvement and engagement.

- **Scottish Parliament/Political Engagement**

The General Secretary attends and represents the SPF at the Scottish Parliamentary Justice Committee and the Justice Sub Committee on Policing.

The General Secretary has been giving evidence to Policing Governance and Accountability Reviews on policing during the ongoing pandemic. The SPF have significant engagement on this subject to ensure improvements in methods of policing and PPE etc.

The Chair has prepared the finishing touches to the SPF response to the proposed Hate Crime Bill. Issues around the impact and practicalities of policing this if it extends into a private dwelling have been highlighted. Scheduled to be discussed at the meeting on 3 November 2020.

Complaint Handling Review – See Legislation and Regulations update.

A further meeting to discuss Brexit and Policing is scheduled for 16 November 2020.

- **Joint National Consultative Committee (JNCC)**

The JNCC is concerned with matters within the authority of the Chief Constable. The JNCC will discuss operational delivery of HR policies and these will include agreements reached through PNB and SPCF meetings (which between them

define the Conditions of Service of officers within the Service). As such Scottish Ministers and the SPA have no representation at JNCC meetings (but may be invited at the Chief Constable's discretion) which are held solely between the Chief Constable's Representatives and Staff Associations. On operational matters, the decision of the Chief Constable is final however, should a matter remain unresolved due to a difference of view as to the meaning of a regulation or determination or, the application of policy / guidance promulgated by the PNB / SPCF, it is entirely appropriate for the matter to be referred back to PNB / SPCF for clarification.

Last meeting was on 3 September 2020. This meeting was a challenge for our officials with the majority of subjects not progressing. The full Minutes of this meeting will be made available in due course.

The matter of the Dog Handlers payments has been resolved.

The ALLARD case was discussed – previously updated.

WPRB – Met on 2 occasions since the last JCC. The majority of business has been passed to the Resource Deployment Group.

New guidance has been provided due to Risk Assessments being required with shift patterns.

Mass Mobilisation – lead by DCC Graham. The SPF have never been invited and this has been raised with the Chair.

OP URUM – A bespoke WFA/Shift Pattern is under discussion and taking into consideration the impact of COVID 19 has had in the planning.

OP TALLA – This has been up scaled recently to deal with the ongoing issues created by the fluid situation with the pandemic.

RDG - Resource Deployment Group. To date the area secretaries attended this meeting however, due to its record of achievement over the last two years, the SPF have reduced the attendance to this meeting to one area representative. DGS to write to Chair regarding the lack of progress in this group.

There continues to be a significant number of shift pattern change requests. There appears to be a lack of understanding of the Workforce Agreement. Work continues to establish a basic formula to identify OBL's. The National RPU pattern remains paused due to lack of resourcing to meet the H&S risk assessments.

PODG – Meeting of People and Operational Delivery Group took place on 16 November 2020. The purpose of this meeting is to raise any issues with the Force prior to any escalation to JNCC.

Appointment of Biometrics Commissioner in early 2021, was discussed and the need to ensure that the service has the appropriate policies in place to deal with any recommendations.

An update from ACC Higgins in respect of planning for COP26, is that work is progressing well and a peer review being conducted by the Metropolitan Police is awaited. The Workforce Agreement specific to the event is close to conclusion.

An update from Elaine Williamson, People and Development, in respect of work to 'increase capacity', was provided and this will take the form of a review.

- **PSoS Reform (was 2026 update)**

No update.

- **Police Related Charities**

PTC – Both centres operating in accordance with Government guidance. Psychological treatment is scheduled to restart in the new year. New facility to be opened in the summer.

ST GEORGE'S – NAC reps are reminded to consider this charity when appropriate.

BENEVOLENT FUND – The Benevolent Fund continues to do good work and assist members in time of hardship. A number of fund raising activities are in the planning and any support, by way of highlighting the availability is appreciated.

Reminder to NAC reps to give consideration to SPBF when dealing with members who have financial issues.

SPMT/NPMD - Work continues by the Chair who represents the SPF at the National Police Memorial Day and Scottish Police Memorial Trust in relation to Virtual Events.

Police Care UK – Continues to provide an excellent service. Again NAC Reps are requested to familiarise themselves with the service provided and give consideration to this charity when appropriate.

- **ICPRA/Eurocop**

Meetings have been held online.

EUROCOP – The meeting of EUROCOP's congress (which occurs every four years) took place virtually in November 2020. The office bearers are elected at this meeting, and our General Secretary Calum Steele was elected as President, which puts the SPF firmly in place, as part of a Worldwide forum.

ICPRA – Consideration is still being given to the meeting scheduled to take place in June 2021, in Glasgow.

7.2 Subject Committees

The minutes of all national Subject Committees were circulated.

- **Conduct**

The Conduct meeting took place on 29 September 2020, the Minutes of which have been circulated.

COVID 19 and the court backlog continues to have a significant effect on subject officers going through the criminal process. The consequence of this is that these matters are not being concluded and therefore no misconduct assessments are taking place.

There has not been a conduct specific meeting for the North reps.

The Chair continues to be supported by local reps who are dealing with specific subject officers, for which he is grateful.

Training has been discussed with the AGSC and she is fully aware that there are officers on the Conduct Committee who have yet to be trained. As soon as it is possible, this will be progressed.

The Dame Eilish Angiolini review into Police Complaints handling, Investigation and Misconduct was published on 12 November 2020. This is a significant document, which all full time conduct leads, as well as the General Secretary, are reviewing. There are 81 recommendations and the work is not insignificant.

- **Equality Update**

Due to the COVID 19 situation the meeting on 30 September 2020, was carried out via Video Conferencing.

In the absence of James Thomson, Deputy Secretary, Andy Sawers provided a written update to the Committee.

The issue of IHR continues to cause confusion, and it was reported that there remains considerable delays in this process.

The Committee were reminded that any equality issues required to be submitted on the Equality Form timeously.

- **PNB(S) Equality Working Group**

There have been no meetings of this Group since the last Equality Subject Committee meeting. However, there has been email correspondence, but no matters had been progressed to completion.

Anomalies raised relative to the Police Officers Handbook by the Official Side would be progressed through the PNB EWG. It is hoped the EWG meetings will be reconvened as soon as possible.

- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Employment Group**

This meeting was held on 7 October 2020, via Teams.

- **SLWG Black and Minority Ethnic Workforce**

The Scottish Trade Union Congress approached 150 workplaces including the Police Service of Scotland, looking to investigate why figures surrounding the Black and Minority Ethnic workforce are so low. A SLWG has been created and the first meeting took place on 24 September 2020. A further meeting was convened on 5 November 2020, and the AGS Equality and Deputy Secretary were in attendance.

The intention of the Group is to provide leadership, direction, understanding and progress around the recruitment, retention and progression of BME officers and staff, and to increase the recruitment, retention and promotion of Police Officers and Staff from an ethnic minority background into the Police Service of Scotland.

Engagement with relevant external and internal stakeholders to enable the formation of consultation groups to 'feed in' to the wider context of recruitment from ethnic minority groups into Police Scotland will occur.

- **Local Engagement**

There had been some work carried out by North representatives on the Committee surrounding Pregnancy and Maternity.

Andy Sawers provided an update to the Committee.

- **SCD Engagement**

The Deputy Secretary is continuing to work on absence figures for the North and SCD. A process had been developed for consideration on how this could be managed across the Force.

An initial meeting and correspondence between the Deputy Secretary, ACC Heaton, ACC McLaren and the HR Business Partner, with responsibility for SCD, has been encouraging.

- **IHR**

This continues to be a challenge, no less with the current and ongoing COVID 19 situation and the change of SMP. Members of the Committee are reminded to update the Deputy Secretary with any suspected issues and complete the relevant Equality Form.

There had been a recent case that showed an assumption of ill health in the future which could be seen as discriminatory. The Committee were reminded to notify the Deputy Secretary of any issues, even for clarity.

- **Conference 2021**

Initial planning is still in progress despite the COVID 19 uncertainty.

The AGSE had supplied the Chair with a draft letter for the attention of Working Families, who was one of the identified presenters at Conference. Jayne Monkhouse also put together a draft Flexible Working Guidance document and it has been proposed that this will be launched at Conference 2021 to delegates. The AGSE will circulate to the ESC in the near future for any additional input.

- **Training**

As a result of COVID 19, training remains a challenge, however options are being considered.

- **Competent Business**

The AGSE announced his retirement and the vacancy has been filled by James Thomson Deputy Secretary, North Area Committee.

HEALTH & SAFETY

COVID 19

Op Talla meetings have recommenced. Two Silver and one Bronze H&S meetings are held each week.

Station visits have been carried out within the North area by representatives and, where possible, in collaboration with Unison and the Force H&S team. Appreciation and thanks were extended to all who had carried out checks. The work carried out is valuable to ensure guidance is being followed and complacency does occur within your Divisions.

We are here to ensure our colleagues, work in safe environments and are provided with appropriate PPE. We must continue to ensure colleagues do all they can to protect each other.

Only business critical training will be carried out.

Violence

Over the first two quarters of this year, the North has recorded 128 incidents of officers injured due to assault compared to 83 last year. However, the number injured during arrest has fallen to 97 from 171. Some noticeable incidents, which have occurred across the North, involve custodies conveyed within the rear of police vehicles assaulting officers or causing officer injuries and custodies kicking van doors open onto officers.

Near Miss Recording – As reported at the last NAC meeting, there has been an increase in the reporting of Near Miss incidents in the North. This has been an area where we had seen a lack of recording; however, it is further evidence that we are moving in the right direction. While the majority are in regard to COVID 19, it is pleasing to see more are being submitted for other incidents.

Taser

There are currently 436 deployable Taser trained officers, while 80 are trained but not deployable for a number of reasons. Refresher training has restarted. A Taser Review Group has been set up to liaise with local divisions regarding the management and development of STOs.

Since 1 January 2020, Taser has been deployed at 299 incidents and used on 173 occasions. Taser has been discharged on 18 occasions within Scotland. 89% of discharges were successful. 90% of discharges involved persons with a weapon, 50% of which involved people who were self-harming. No injuries were sustained by officers or suspects when Taser has been discharged.

Use of Force

Use of Force form submission has risen by 10% for the quarter; however, incidents were still being massively under reported. Handcuffing suspects to the rear has been utilised

more often. There was also an increase in the use of spit hoods that appeared in line with the number of COVID 19 related spitting incidents.

The current handcuffing policy is not changing at present. DCC Taylor considered it impossible to give absolute prescriptive guidance as it wouldn't be practical.

PPE

Body Armour - The first phase of new body armour distribution has been completed. Phase two is now under way. Individual divisions are to distribute to who they feel requires it first. This will allow for officers with health issues to benefit from the lighter armour where needed.

Unfortunately, Occupational Health are unable to support cases from officers for the new armour. Measurement and supply hubs have been identified across Divisions. Initial feedback of the new armour has been positive. Body armour is to be checked annually during OST by instructors. Training for instructors is to be looked at to ensure competency to carry this out.

Footwear - As previously reported, officers will be issued with Altberg Peacekeeper boots. A trial for sizing is taking place in Fife. Manufacturing issues due to COVID 19 could see the first phase extended with delivery now planned for January. Still aiming to be completed by end of March 2021.

Clothing:

- No update on cycle kit list. Consideration to be given to a regular user/occasional user kit lists.
- Gender-neutral headwear is still being discussed. Most of Europe adopted baseball caps. Some Forces in England have moved to a flat cap. The Swedish option of a boat or garrison cap was also discussed, along with a flat cap for formal occasions.
- The Tunics policy is still under development.
- Due to the amount of kit on equipment carriers, the current click-fast solution is no longer a viable option. The Molly system, which allows officers to adapt the carrier system to suit their needs, is being considered.
- There remains issues with supply of Ripstop trousers from the USA, with some sizes unavailable.

Shields

A short life Working Group has been created to look at the requirements of shields carried in vehicles in the West Area. From 2016, the Force position has been that shields should be retained within stations. Work is ongoing to assess the need and purpose of any shields as no single shield is certified to repel edged weapons and blunt object attacks. The Buckler shield is currently with OST. A trial will take place during OST training once refresher training recommences.

Operational Equipment

Throwlines - New higher specification throwlines, to replace the old style, have been ordered but delayed due to COVID 19.

Road Signs – As previously reported, the new signs were unsuitable due to the supplier changing the design from prototypes seen by Force. Further testing is currently taking place on adaptations to add weight to signs.

Electric Vehicles – The fleet strategy is to move towards Ultra-low Emission Vehicles (ULEV). The first phase will see 1700 unmarked vehicles replaced with ULEV's. The infrastructure is not in place across the force for this currently. Funding has been secured to put charge points in the M8 corridor. In short for the North, vehicles marked or unmarked will not be replaced unless they are written off. Any unmarked vehicles that cannot be used will be replaced by those getting replaced by ULEV's in the central belt. Further funding has been sought to replace more marked vehicles. 90% of 4X4 replacements will be in the North.

Driver Awareness training for ULEVs will be built into driver training, as well as online training.

Telematics – Fitted to 2700 vehicles and live since August. Driver cards will be used and mileage books removed once Automatic Drivers Log compliance reaches 95%. Telematics has also been able to identify vehicles in need of repair and enables fleet to schedule repair.

Training

The two-day OST course has been signed off by the Senior Leadership Board. Course content is still awaited, but will involve more First Aid training. Difficult or unused techniques are being removed from the syllabus. Discussions are taking place regarding recommencing OST training.

The Carriage of Oxygen Policy is almost complete. This mainly affects ARVs as oxygen is utilised as part of their First Aid training.

Administration and Governance

H&S inspections were mostly put on hold due to COVID 19. Some custody audits are continuing.

SPF Training

Due to COVID 19, no SPF training had been carried recently, nor is currently planned for the immediate future.

7.3 Standing Committees

FINANCE STANDING COMMITTEE

The meeting took place on 13 October 2020, the Minutes of which will be circulated in due course.

LEGISLATION & REGULATIONS

This is a JCC Board made up entirely of SPF who look at all Legislation and matters surrounding PSoS. The Committee meet four times annually.

This meeting took place on 13 October 2020, the minutes of which will be published in due course.

Matters under discussion included:-

Review of Complaints Handling, Investigations & Misconduct

The Deputy General Secretary advised that both himself and the General Secretary had been involved in discussions with Dame Elish Angiolini to review some of the finer points. One issue was the use of QCs to chair Misconduct Hearings and the impact this would have on representation from an SPF point of view. If this is to be ratified, the SPF will look to the Government to cover these costs.

It is also possible that a 'professional' Register for officers will be maintained and be available to other law enforcement related agencies. This is related to concerns around officers who retire before a Gross Misconduct Hearing and subsequently seek employment with another law enforcement related agency. Further discussion followed in respect of performance issues and personal body cams for officers.

The content of the final report is expected to be presented to the Justice Sub Committee on 7 December 2020.

Age of Criminal Responsibility Act 2019

The Chair reported that this Scottish Government document had been circulated with detailed statutory guidance to accompany the bill. This bill de-criminalises criminal behaviour for children under 12-years-old and authorises police officers to take them to an identified 'place of safety' if they meet a high-bar test. The difficulty arises where the

'high bar' is not met; what happens with that child? This has not been addressed within the Guidance, and will continue to be pursued with Scottish Government. Additional concerns include the recording of this information on police systems, finance, and resourcing (detailed at No. 3 of the document).

Another significant issue is a list of Places of Safety, (defined at no. 4.2 of the document), where return of a child to their home address is not appropriate, and a Police Station is deemed suitable. Financial implications will be incurred with Police Estates to make rooms suitable, rather than a child being housed in a police cell. SPF secured an amendment to this guidance to make it a statutory duty for each Local Authority to maintain a List of Places of Safety. The Chair advised that there is a strong drive to have this Bill enacted quickly, and requested that the Area Secretaries engage with Divisional Commanders, on 'places of safety' locations and also on the practicality of Police powers. The General Secretary advised that he would formally write to the Area Secretaries, with a copy of the guidance detailing the questions of the Chair. He requested that a written response is provided detailing the outcome of discussions by 23 October 2020.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020

The General Secretary briefed the Committee on the challenges faced by the Police Service, and specifically made mention of no prior notification of changes to Regulations, and the difficulties in obtaining copies of the amendments.

SOPs under Consideration

A list of SOPs received and circulated for comments had been noted within the papers. The Vice Chair advised that since this circulation, there had been an additional 8 SOPs from the Policy Support Unit, which now took the total number to 28 received. It was highlighted that the reason for this influx was due to full re-writes. The Committee were advised that this had been raised with the Support Unit, and the Vice Chair will streamline this process to reduce the workload where possible.

Operational Duties

This is a JCC Board made up entirely of SPF who look at all operational duties surrounding PSoS. The Committee meet four times annually.

This Committee also met on 13 October 2020, the of which Minutes will be published in due course.

Subjects under discussion included:-

Leadership, Training and Development Division and the Special Constabulary

- **Special Constabulary**

The Vice Chair reported that this quarterly Group reconvened on 22 September 2020. It was noted that since the inception of Police Scotland, the number of Special Constables had dropped from 1500 to 500, of which only 452 were active, however there was a desire to increase this number to over 1000, for use during COP26.

Following a recruitment drive, 190 applications for the Special Constabulary had been received, all of whom would require to undergo a 3-week training course at the SPC, however, due to COVID 19 restrictions, and only 12 can attend a course at any one time.

The Chair advised the Committee that, although the SPF had not taken a formal position on the upscaling of Special Constables, the parameters for utilising Special Constables in general and into specialist roles, such as PSU or for COP26 duties, required clarity.

The Committee discussed the value of Special Constables in general terms but also highlighted concerns where they are utilised to supplement the lack of regular officers on duty, or in replacement of specially trained officers, without appropriate equipment or experience, and the possibility of liability for the service.

The Vice Chair confirmed that he would feedback the concerns and issues raised to this Group.

- **Youth Volunteers**

An award of £79,000 additional funding had been secured for Youth Volunteers, the actual number of which was unknown. From an SPF perspective, there were significant concerns around volunteers carrying out this role in public, in identifiable police clothing, and without PPE.

Promotion

The Vice Chair provided an update on promotion in general and advised that the Sergeant to Inspector process would be concluded by the end of October. This would be closely followed by the Inspector to Chief Inspector process on 9 October 2020.

In respect of both processes, successful candidates must be ready to be promoted the day after the process has been completed, and advised of the likelihood of a further process due to the number of applicants far exceeding vacancies.

The Deputy General Secretary advised the Committee that there had been a number of legal applications regarding disability discrimination in respect of how Divisions have utilised the process.

The Chair made reference to previously circulated documentation regarding the new promotion process structure and My Career system (general Appraisal system). Currently, there are 2 cohorts for the diploma scheduled for November and February,

and applicants on the diploma would have the option to apply to enter the new Pathway for the Sergeants process, which would be fed via the My Careers aspect.

The My Career process was being trialled in C Division and C3. This was originally devised as a wellbeing conversation, but had now moved to a process that included promotion assessment and departmental transfers. This raised concerns around the powers of line management to agree or disagree with an officer's consideration for promotion.

The SPF has managed to nudge the direction of these projects in the right direction but there is no appetite from the Force to even consider the more fundamental strategic concerns raised.

A pilot Sergeant Leadership Pathway would likely start in 2021, to run in tandem with the diploma. The course content has been shared with SPF and will be reviewed by a team of SPF Office Bearers.

Accelerated Leadership Pathway was essentially the Accelerated Promotion Scheme, which was launched in January. A total of 17 people entered the Pathway, however, it was noted that this has not been approved by Scottish Ministers; therefore, it is not an authorised acceleration promotion scheme as required by Regulations. A Paper seeking authorisation for this and the My Career and promotion process, would be tabled at the next Consultative Forum.

Discussion followed regarding practical implementation, and questions were raised in respect of the qualifications and determinations detailed in the circulated papers, which may be unrealistic in terms of performance framework, timescales etc.

The General Secretary advised that there was a considerable amount of fundamental issues, which would require further consideration before the SPF could endorse this process. This will be circulated for formal consultation.

Public Order Monitoring Group and CBRN

The next meeting was to be held in 8 days' time and there was nothing of note from the TTEWG (Tactics & Technical Equipment Working Group); however, environmental protests are causing challenges in respect of Public Order capability and tactics.

There was nothing note of note in relation to CBRN.

Consideration of JCC and Consultations

The General Secretary advised there was nothing new to report.

COP26

It was noted that the Gold and Silver meetings have now reconvened. The Deputy General Secretary reported that all plans are now being progressed, with the Work

Force Agreement being the most significant issue for the SPF. The current document contained errors, and a more accurate document will be circulated for consideration once received.

As the event approaches a one-year timeframe, the escalation of work and frequency of meetings was likely to occur, and as such, a proposal was to be submitted to the Trustees for creation of an SPF Working Group.

It was highlighted that HMICS are concerned in the COVID 19 element and the impact on business as usual.

Events and Rostering

The Deputy General Secretary reported that the monthly Working Practices Review Board had met but that various difficulties continue to be encountered in respect of shift pattern submissions without supported documentation, such as risk assessments. Liaison was taking place with Claire Adamson with a view to devising a checklist to ensure all required elements are received.

A central email box has been created for monitoring purposes, and which will ensure that the SPF is gathering all relevant information. The Deputy General Secretary advised that a central Registry had been requested some years ago but this has not been forthcoming.

The Committee was requested to monitor this issue and report any issues identified.

Custody and Criminal Justice

The Vice Chair provided a summary of the vast amount of current work streams and leads. He advised the Committee that the move from Pinnacle House to London Road, was now no longer an option as it could not house all staff due to current social distancing guidelines. The intention was to re-hire Pinnacle House, until alternative accommodation could be identified.

The London Road Custody Refit was 75% complete and work was ongoing.

The question was raised around the amount of work streams which would inevitably impact on the workload of the Vice Chair, and designated FTOBs. The Chair clarified that the Area representatives involved in Custody and Criminal Justice, would act as a point of contact for operational issues, staffing, people board etc. and the Vice Chair would be responsible for policy issues and would utilise FTOBs as required.

Force Armed Policing Monitoring Group

- **Transferee Process**

The Chair informed the Committee of a new Transferee process, which enables the fast tracking of firearms officers moving between Forces, and removes the requirement for repeat of initial firearms training.

- **CTSFO (Counter Terrorism Specialist Firearms Officers)**

The Committee was informed of a merge of roles of SFOs/CTSFOs, who would be known as CTSFOs.

C3

There was nothing of note specifically in terms of C3, however the issue of CAM was raised. The Chair advised the Committee that the Initial Business Case was based on freeing up a high numbers of officer 'minutes', but many calls had been knocked on to cause additional demand in other parts of the business.

Discussion followed around the inaccuracy of success calculations and the Chair requested that area representatives from Divisions where CAM was utilised, obtain feedback from members in terms of effectiveness and percentage of time freed, which would be fed back to the Project Team.

Deep Dive Exercises

The General Secretary advised that a small Group would be assembled next year to organise Deep Dive Exercises. NAC Reps requested to provide suggestions for the deep dive.

SPF COVID 19 Panel of Experts

The General Secretary advised that this Panel had not been reconvened due to there being no new issues to address, or issues which didn't fall into other categories such as Operational Guidance or Statutory Guidance from the Government. The Panel remains available if required.

8. Area Meetings Update

N – Neil Macdonald, Secretary, provided an update:-

The Secretary and Vice Chair meet with the Divisional Commander monthly or as and when required. They also attend the Peoples Board, which also meets monthly. No formal meetings have taken place since the last NAC. All matters required to be raised, are brought to the SMT's attention as they occur.

Future scheduled meeting have been planned.

Any Divisional matters should be brought to the Secretary/Vice Chair in order to be presented to the SMT.

A – David Threadgold, Chair, provided an update:-

The FTOs meet with Chief Superintendent Macdonald every quarter but will meet as and when required.

The project to 'exit' Queen street has been approved by the SPA Board. Plans, proposals and dates are on the Intranet for perusal.

The division have appointed Sgt Juliet Henderson as a full time wellbeing officer. Juliet held her first meeting in November 2020, and the SPF are engaged in that process.

D – James Thomson, Deputy Secretary, provided an update:-

- Deputy Secretary – continues to have regular contact with CS Andrew Todd and his Command Team, and represents the SPF at the local Peoples Board, where local issues are discussed and clarity sought. There has been no meeting with reps due to a combination of Annual Leave, COVID 19 etc.
- An overview was provided on changes to command and statistics around vacancies and long-term absences.
- Concerns continue to be raised by officers about the lack of movement of officers from the Force Reserve Unit, in particular those within specialist base posts. Division are aware and contact has been made again with FRU in an effort to obtain some movement.
- Efforts continue to be made to push the SPF Survey. The Deputy Secretary recorded thanks to Colin Nicoll, Caroline MacNaughton, Shirley Moran and Alan Devine for their continued efforts.

9. New Business

The Secretary advised that there was no new business.

10. AOCB / Correspondence

ACR Staffing

Following concerns raised by members, the issue around the number of officers working in ACR was highlighted. This was thought to be a 'cost saving' exercise, where these posts could essentially be filled by civilian staff and officers could be better utilised in CAM. Statistical data was provided and the Chair requested that the data and issues raised be submitted in writing, as some of these concerns were already being discussed at different forums.

Award Ceremony

The Secretary raised the issue of a Scottish Police Federation Award Ceremony, and highlighted that this did not have to take the form of 'Bravery' as it had been previously, but could take other forms such as Team Bravery, Individual Bravery, Officers Officer, Community Committee Awards etc. Any feedback or nominations would be welcomed by the Committee.

Handbook

All reps were reminded that the Police Handbook was now available to all staff and reps should promote it's accessibility. A link was circulated to reps along with a poster for distribution to all offices/stations.

Pension Challenge

Any queries in respect of the Pension Challenge should be directed to FTOBs, specifically in relation to 'hurt feelings' claims. Reps are instructed not to engage with officers directly.

David Ross informed the Committee that the Consultation for Resolution for MacLeod Sergeant took place at the end of October, and the Government response is awaited. The SPPA had agreed to implement immediate detriment.

ACTION - David Ross to circulate a Pension update.

Members Database

It was highlighted that a lot of work was ongoing to update data/cases held within the members database. Discussion followed regarding the process updating the database and possibilities to streamline ations.

Federation Representatives Skills

The Chair advised the Committee that the spreadsheet detailing skills and expertise held by North Area Representatives would be circulated as a source of reference.

ACTION – Cara Riley to circulate Spreadsheet.

Deep Dive

A brief overview of 'Deep Dive' exercises was given by the Secretary who advised that this was where the SPF choose areas of policing to carry out a thorough review of working areas, inclusive of premises, vehicles, conditions etc.

ACTION: The Committee were requested to give some consideration on this and to forward any ideas directly.

11. Time and Date of Next Meeting / Closure of Meeting

The Chair advised the next Meeting of the North Area Committee is scheduled to be held in March 2021; day, date and time to be confirmed.

An update will be given nearer the time should Government guidelines prevent the Committee from face to face.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked James Thompson for his dedication and commitment as Area Secretary, and wished him well in his new role.

The Chair further thanked the Committee for their active and constructive participation and wished all a safe and enjoyable Christmas, before closing the meeting.

He was thanked by the meeting in the customary manner.

David Threadgold
Chair

Neil Macdonald
Secretary