



## Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee

Minute of the quarterly meeting of the Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee, held on Monday 31st May 2021, at 1100 hours via Video Conferencing.

### 1. Members Present

#### Full Time Officials

David Threadgold            Chair  
Neil MacDonald            Secretary  
Ross Polworth              Vice Chair  
Caroline Macnaughton    Deputy Secretary (Elect)

Constables	Sergeants	Inspecting Ranks
Shirley Moran	Fraser Robertson	Scott Macdonald
Mark Douglas	Pat Nicoll	Karen Harrison
Colin Nicoll	Andy Bilton	Jude Wright
Allen Begg	Andy Sawers	Nick Clasper
Yvonne Sloan	Simon Lewis-Dalby	Allen Shaw
Andy Horne	David MacAlpine	Marc Lorente
Ronnie Irvine	Gary Johnstone	
Gary Maclennan		
David MacKay		

#### **Apologies Received**

Apologies were received from James Rice, Graham Smith, Sandy Smart, Alan Devine.

No Response – Kevin Hird, Megan Heathershaw, Lesley Fraser.

#### **Opening of Meeting**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all members present. Specific mention was made of newly elected members Ronnie Irvine and Allen Shaw, and re-elected Gary

Johnstone, who were attending their first NAC meeting. The Committee were encouraged to take an active part in the meeting and to contribute to discussion and debate.

### **3. Approval of Previous Minutes**

The previous meeting Minute was formally approved, having been proposed and seconded by Andy Sawers and Simon Lewis-Dalby.

### **4. Rank Specific Separates Meeting**

A separate Rank Committee meeting for the Sergeants was held at the end of this meeting.

### **5. Matters Arising Action/Decision Log**

No Acton log update was provided due to there being no outstanding actions.

### **6. Standing Items**

#### **6.1 JCC Update**

For the benefit of newly elected members, the Secretary provided an overview of the remit and structure of the JCC and Subject Committees, and summarised the most pertinent points for the NAC as follows: -

**PNB** - The Chair summarised the PNB, and advised the Committee of the current status in respect of pay negotiations. He explained that, whilst this issue should have been resolved by the 1 April 2020, considerable delays had occurred due to elections and the successful candidate being established. A meeting is to be held to bring this matter to a conclusion.

**Pensions** - The Secretary informed the Committee of an update received from David Ross regarding pensions. This update is to be circulated in due course, however attention was drawn to [www.polfee.org/support/pensions/public-pensions-cost-cap-fax](http://www.polfee.org/support/pensions/public-pensions-cost-cap-fax) which contains frequently asked questions and relevant information. An explanation of the cost cap, remedy costs and pension changes were provided, and the Committee were advised that should they or any members have any specific queries regarding pensions, proper pension advice should be sought.

**SPPA** - The Secretary explained that the SPPA are promoting a self-service portal which provides Annual Benefits Statements due every August, which replaces the paper submission. Concerns remain regarding the accuracy of information detailed.

**SPCF** – A Short Life Working Group regarding Leadership, Pathways and Regulatory Changes met regarding My Career, the new promotion process for accelerated leadership. Twenty Sergeants are currently progressing through a trial of the new process which commenced in April 2021. This is running in parallel with the Diploma process. The My Career take up rate has been lower than anticipated, with challenges encountered regarding the reflective logs and appraisal system. Karen Harrison informed the Committee that C3 are part of the My Career trial, and that officers not looking to be promoted are not completing the logs, but are being pushed to do so. The Chair requested that any concerns regarding My Career be feedback for escalation to the Executive.

ACTION: Trial issues to be identified

**In-Service Injury Compensation Scheme** – The Secretary briefed the Committee on this SPF suggested Scheme which forms part of the 2021 pay claim. It was noted that this Scheme is proposed to cover officers who are injured in the execution of their duties but which injuries fall short of the IHR, and where there is no fault of the employer or recourse to the CICA. A broad agreement had been reached, following a meeting with the Police Service on 30 April, however the SPF have concerns regarding the involvement of less senior officials which has been escalated.

**SPA** – The Committee were advised that since the last NAC meeting, there had been 3 new board members, and the SPF have met with the new Chair, Mr Martin Evans. For the first time, the SPF have been formally invited to the SPA Resource Committee, along with the other relevant staff associations.

**Scottish Police Budget & Finance** – The Secretary briefed the Committee on discussion held at the JCC around the recent Government election and the impact that may have in terms of Police budget and deficit. Concerns were raised regarding the understanding of those in Police Scotland regarding budget implications and planning.

**Scottish Parliament** – The Secretary highlighted that due to the inception of new Parliamentarians, suitable engagement with SPF representatives was encouraged. However, those present were reminded that should they wish to meet with Councillors/MSPs/MPs, the appropriate Lobbying Register must be completed to comply with legal guidance.

**JNCC** – The Committee were advised that the JNCC met virtually on 4 March 2021, and explained that the SPF remit was to challenge appropriate matters raised and outcomes. However, due to a lack of consideration and response to previous challenges, the General Secretary was tasked with collating a summary of the SPF concerns for escalating to the Police Service via the JNCC.

Policing Priorities was also discussed and it was agreed that the SPF would look at the current priorities of Policing in Scotland. The General Secretary suggested that the SPF should host a Policy Conference for SPF Representatives in 2022, along with a mini Conference in the Summer 2021, to progress the above, which was supported.

The Secretary encouraged those present to give serious consideration to their participation in the aforementioned Conferences and their future as SPF Representatives. Cara provided an overview of work ongoing in terms of case support/analysis and the efficiency and backup this provides to representatives as well as members, in ensuring cases and enquires are dealt with and recorded appropriately.

**Reform** – The Chair updated the Committee on the national Body Worn Video project. The project is split into two parts; one part is specifically for the provision of equipment for Armed Firearm Officers for COP 26. A budget of £500,000 was allocated to equip all AFOs in Scotland, not just those attending COP26, and access to this equipment should be by September. A supplier had been identified and formal approval is awaited.

Issues were raised included whether the wearing of the equipment was mandatory, which the SPF fully supports, and Pre-Event Buffering. An example of this is where video recording is activated due to a live situation and the video recording facility (not audio function) is back-dated for 30 seconds. The second phase is the equipment roll out to officers Country wide.

Discussion followed regarding the benefits of use, including officer protection and a possible reduction in less time spent at Court, but also highlighted concerns around a lack of awareness and understanding of use.

**Eurocop** – The Secretary stated that ICPRA accepted into the Labour Conference for the first time in history, and that Police Officers have been accepted as workers. This has potential significance in terms of the future of policing in Scotland and Europe as a whole.

**Motion Update** – The two motions submitted for approval to the JCC by the NAC were passed following debate. Discussion followed regarding the process involved.

ACTION: Process review to be undertaken & Note circulated

## 6.2 Subject Committees

- **Conduct**

The Chair provided an update in respect of Conduct.

COVID19 continues to have a significant effect on subject officers progressing through the criminal Court system, which had a knock-on effect on misconduct proceedings. There are currently 9 live conduct cases, and 21 ongoing criminal investigations in the North, which include On/Off duty cases.

- Misconduct v Performance - Mr Vic Marshall was commissioned to write for the Service on the differences between misconduct and performance. The draft is in its final stages and will be circulated once available.

- Staffing – A new Investigator, Kerry Rigg has been appointed for the North. The SPF have already had a very positive meeting with Kerry, and the working relationship continues to develop.
- WhatsApp case - The SPF have lost this case up to the Supreme Court, and members were reminded that, should Police take possession of your phone; any information contained therein is subject to review.
- Training – Basic Training courses are now being scheduled and a Conduct input will be provided by the AGS Amanda Given.
- Local Meetings – The Conduct Committee is looking to meet face-to-face subject to any restrictions that remain in place.
- **Equality**

Caroline Macnaughton provided an Equality update on the following issues.

**Pregnancy Discrimination** – Some examples of pregnancy related discrimination was provided and the Committee were requested to report any similar examples, which ultimately result in Direct Discrimination. These will be escalated to Senior Management and progressed with legal action if appropriate.

**Ill-Health Cases** – Assessments of ill-health retirement cases continues to be a problem, with there still being a significant backlog. It was requested that Federation representatives accompany the officers to their appointments where possible to ensure impartiality and fairness.

**Disability Discrimination Challenges** – The Committee were informed of several instances which resulted in officers returning to work following the implementation of reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

**Diversity Associations** - A meeting was held for the National Equality Leads and the Diversity Staff Associations, which included the Disability & Carers Association (DACA), SEMPER (Supporting Ethnic Minority Police Employees for Equality in Race), the Christian Police Association (CPA), The Gay Police Association (GPA), Scottish Women's Development Forum (SWDF) and ASPS (Assn Scottish Police Supts). Information shared led to support for officers with specialist requirements. The Committee were advised that further information could be provided on any of these groups if they wished.

It was highlighted that some of the SEMPER members have some issues with the SPF and efforts are ongoing to improve relationships.

**Support and Treatment** - The Police Treatment Centre had re-opened and appointments were being offered to officers. Mention was made of the charities available to officers, specifically St George's Trust which provides options for the children of officers who are bereaved or struggling with other family issues.

**Employment Tribunal - Moth VS Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police 2021**  
- Caroline summarised this possible discrimination case regarding the misuse of the

Bradford Score. This case highlighted the discrimination that can be caused if this is used as a lone factor for penalising officers for high absence rates.

- **Health and Safety**

Ross Polworth provided a Health & Safety update and highlighted the following: -

**COVID19** - A number of restrictions had been lifted since the last meeting and whilst some colleagues will have received one vaccination, if not both, members were reminded not to become complacent. Lateral Flow Testing was utilised on a number of training events in addition to C3 and previously reduced station cleaning had been fully reinstated.

**Violence** – It was reported that there had been an increase in the North with officers being injured due to assault in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20; increasing from 264 to 265. An increase of 13 was recorded in A Division, whilst D Division recorded a reduction of 13 and N Division increased by one. The number of officers injured during arrest fell from 258 to 198. Discussion followed regarding prevention, training and work ongoing by Police Scotland and local Case Management Units.

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

**Body Armour** – The roll out continues with over 2200 sets of armour having been issued across the Force.

**Footwear** - All North Divisions are scheduled to receive supplies by the end of June or beginning of July this year.

**Clothing & Equipment Working Group** - Equipment Carrier samples were in the process of being obtained to trial as well as klickfast attachments.

Op Urram – There has been a request for additional kit to be supplied to officers deployed to this operation. The SPF has made representation that should additional kit be supplied, then all officers should be issued with extra kit regardless of event worked.

Fire Retardant Shirts are to be introduced for ARV officers. Trials have been carried out with a selection of garments and the Clawgear option was found to be the most comfortable. This will be included on the kit list for all new AFO's; an issue date is yet to be confirmed. Nomax Fire Retardant Suits will still be retained for pre-planned incidents.

**Shields Working Group** – Short shields have now been removed from all vehicles. This was as a result of ineffective confidence testing and warranty expiration. Vans can be used to carry intermediate shields due to the weight capacity to carry additional equipment. The safety shield (Buckler Shield) is still being considered and a trial is likely to occur prior to roll out.

**Taser** – Plans are in place to increase the number of STO's to 2000 across the Force.

**Vehicle Equipment Group** - An increase in capital funding had also been received which will be utilised to replace older vehicles. A racking system for vehicles had been developed and a prototype is expected to trial soon.

**Naloxone** - The Test of Change is underway in Dundee, with the majority of officers within this area now trained. SPF Representatives were in attendance at two of the inputs due to dates not being supplied to the SPF until the final week of training.

A number of concerns were raised by officers who had attended the training, some of which included officers being coerced into carrying Naloxone after training attendance, and that it did not focus enough on the delivery of the substance and aftercare. These concerns were raised with Police Scotland and a report will be produced once training had been concluded.

The Secretary requested that the Committee forward details of officers who have undertaken this Training for Woodside Place – regardless of whether they wish to highlight any concerns or not, as a matter of urgency.

ACTION – Committee to forward officer details

**Training** - A number of Training Courses have recommenced with suitable safety measures in place.

Driver Training issues have been highlighted to Police Scotland, with 4500 out of 8000 response officers not received Emergency Response Driver Training. JCC Circular 13 of 2021 – Driving Police Vehicles, had been issued to ensure officers were aware that they are legally responsible when driving Police Vehicles.

### **7.3 Standing Committees**

- **Finance Standing Committee**

The meeting took place on the 20 April 2021, and due to confidentiality, the Minutes are not circulated beyond the JCC.

The Chair advised the Committee that in terms of developing assets, the SPF are looking to purchase new premises in Aberdeen, and will be vacating the current premises in October this year. The Committee will be updated on this matter in due course.

- **Legislation & Regulations**

The draft Minutes of this meeting were previously circulated and no issues were raised.

- **Operational Duties**

The draft Minutes of this meeting were previously circulated and no issues were raised.

## 8. Area Meetings Update

**N Division** – An update on divisional matters was provided by Neil Macdonald, Area Secretary, and which included regular attendance at meetings with the ACC, Divisional Command Team, Peoples Board and National Peoples Board, which ensures good working relationships are maintained.

The Committee were also briefed on the following: -

- Staffing issues at Caithness and use of Naloxone as a Test of Change. Concerns regarding this proceeding will be raised with the Division Commander.
- Bespoke promotion system for the NAC area – Constable to Sergeant process will be advertised country wide which will include the completion of a Transfer Request at the same time as applying for promotion.
- Hard to fill SLWG
- Shetland issues. The Committee were advised that should there be contact from Shetland officers regarding grievances or any ongoing issues, to contact the FTOBs.

**A** – David Threadgold, Chair, reported that the FTOBs meet with Chief Superintendent Macdonald when required, and whilst COVID has prevented this occurring recently, a meeting was to take place on Wednesday 2 June 2021.

**D** – Caroline Macnaughton, Deputy Secretary, provided an update on D Division matters, some of which included the following: -

- **Divisional Meetings** – Regular attendance at meetings continues, including LPA Commanders, Op Talla, the Wellbeing Board, People's Board, Estates Transformation and the Re-modelling of the Uniform Inspectors Cadre duty team.
- **Promotion Policy** – There will be a 6-monthly rotation of temporary posts, to allow for development opportunities for officers seeking promotion to Sergeant or Inspector. An Information Newsletter is being circulated, containing Divisional updates and news.
- **Naloxone Test of Change** – The Pilot commenced in D Division, with a number of issues raised as previously highlighted.
- **PIO Inspector Role** – It is proposed that uniform Inspectors will cover PIO via Duty Rota, in addition to locality and office-based Inspectors. This will ensure that the role is a core-function of the uniform Inspector post. This phase will progress to Consultation with the SPF in the near future.

## 9. New Business

No new business was brought to the attention of the Committee by the Secretary.

## 10. AOCB / Correspondence



The Secretary briefed the Committee on AOCB and correspondence received.

- Award Ceremony – The second stage of the process of choosing the finalists has commenced. Consideration is being given to forming a judging panel.
- Microsoft Teams – A North Area Committee Teams Group has been created on Microsoft Teams for reps. All relative meeting documentation is uploaded to Files within Teams, and will remain there as a source of reference.
- Attendance - The Committee were reminded that attendance at the four NAC meetings per year, is vitally important to ensure the success of the NAC. Any apologies must be notified in advance of the meeting.
- Email Trail Volume – A recent instance had highlighted the significant impact on staff having to review all case related email trails for an external body. The Committee were requested to give due consideration to this when adding to already lengthy emails.
- Vacancies – The A Division Inspector Rep vacancy has now been filled, but still have a Sergeant vacancy within N and A Division.
- The Secretary wished to recognise the commitment given by federation representatives James Sherlock and Bruce Crawford and congratulate them on promotion to Inspector.
- RDU Shift Patterns. Allan Begg requested clarity around the role of the SPF in respect of the RDU Shift Pattern proposals. Clarity was provided by the Secretary on the involvement and process of the SPF.
- SPF Magazine 1919 – David Hamilton is the Chair of the Editorial Board of the magazine which was launched in June. The magazine will deal with public facing issues which affect the Police Service of Scotland. A member of staff, Gemma Fraser, has been employed for this purpose.

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

The Chair advised that the next Meeting of the North Area Committee is to be held on 6 September 2021, time to be confirmed.

An update will be provided nearer the time should Government Guidelines prevent the Committee from meeting face to face.

The Chair thanked the Committee for their active and constructive participation and closed the Meeting. He was thanked by the meeting in the customary manner.

**David Threadgold**  
Chair

**Neil Macdonald**  
Secretary