



SCOTTISH POLICE FEDERATION West Area Committee

Ref: GM/PC/LW

**Minutes of the Fourth quarterly meeting of the West Area Committee on
Thursday 3 December 2020 at 0930 hours by Video conference.**

1. ATTENDANCE AND OPENING -

West Area Committee (WAC) Office Bearers & Staff

Paul Connelly – WAC Chair
Gary Mitchell – WAC Secretary
Ian Florence – WAC Deputy Secretary
Lorna Cunningham – WAC Deputy Secretary
Jenny Shanks – WAC Vice Chair
Lynne Welsh – SPF Staff

West Area Committee

Attendance

Adam Peppard
David Osterberg
Craig Fraser
Lee Hamilton
David Taylor
Stuart Burns
Chris Hynds
Chris Thomson
David Hunter
Richard North
Stuart Johnston
Linda Mathers
Cath McNally
Stuart Finnie
Craig Dunn
Sarah Robertson
Jennie MacFarlane
Kenny Kean

Michael McConnell
Dougie Chalmers
Pamela Macfarlane
David Carmichael
Stephen Gray
Iain Gray
Marketa Hola
Stewart Gailey
Dougie McKinlay
Steven Bryson
Gerry Welsh
Gordon Cummings
Elaine Sutherland
Lynne Gray
Fiona Tyers

Apologies were received from the following members:

Michael McCaughey
Gary Diver
Fiona Levett
Alistair Mackinnon
Eddie Mather
David Somerville
Campbell Smith
Jonathan Watters
James Mutter
Hugh Burns
Claire Duffy
Chloe Rice
Gemma Mazur

The WAC Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the members. He extended a special welcome to the newly elected representatives;

Lanarkshire – Q Division

PC Craig Dunn
PS Michael McConnell
PS Steven Bryson

Ayrshire – U Division

PS Chris Hynds

He also advised the members that Linda Mathers was now representing G Division (South).

As per the SPF Rules, the Standing Orders took effect as soon as the meeting opened and would remain in place throughout the meeting. The WAC Chair advised the members that ACC Johnston would be joining the meeting at 1030 hours.

The Chair confirmed that agenda papers and pre read material had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He requested that members did not record the meeting.

2. **SEPARATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The separate Committee meetings did not take place on this occasion due to the current pandemic and format of the meeting.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTIONS**

The minutes of the meeting of 3 September had been circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting and were approved as a true record.

The Actions from the previous meeting had been addressed and members were updated.

1. Custody / CJSD

Dep. Secretary (Health & Safety) to speak to CJSD regarding officers still waiting lengthy times with prisoners needing processed during handover periods.

Update - WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) has contacted CJSD and raised the concerns. They have looked into this and any teething issues with pilots should now be resolved. Any specific issue should be emailed to the WAC Deputy Secretary (health & safety) and it will be raised with the relevant Cluster Insp.

CLOSED

2. Re Promotion process.

Lack of transparency with sift highlighted. Request to find out what marking system is used and report back to WAC.

Update

The matter has been raised at the Local Policing Commanders meeting in respect of the confusion with the sifting of applications and the scoring process.

3. Invite to Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) & Separate Committee meetings

In respect of the December WAC Meeting, the WAC Chair advised members that there is the potential to hold separate meetings if they are required. He also advised that an invitation will be extended to the ACC to join the meeting at some point to address the Committee or take questions.

Update – Invitation extended to the ACC for December WAC Meeting.

CLOSED

4. **LEGAL ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE**

The WAC Secretary reported that 17 files had been submitted to SPF Legal since the last WAC Meeting

Criminal Legal Defence x 6
Employment Dispute x 5
Injury on duty x 2
Discrimination x 1
Misconduct x 2
Other x 1

This does not include any that may have been sent to SPF Legal direct.

5. **DIVISIONAL REPORTS**

Each Division was requested to submit a brief report on the issues in their division to the WAC Chair in advance of the meeting.

Under the new procedures the following divisional reports were received;

Area 8 – Argyll and West Dunbartonshire

The last meeting with Senior Management took place on 13 November 2020.

Conduct

Two cases at present – one of which has still to be heard after being reported in January, the case being put back until February. COVID delays causing additional hardship for those involved.

Health & Safety (H & S)

Clydebank H&S check completed, waiting on dates for Helensburgh and Dumbarton.

Division has paid to cover the cost of the flu jab

Work has been done with Senior Management to address low number of near miss/accident/use of force reports.

A number of issues raised regarding custody arrangements in Argyll. Reps expressed concerns that it is only a matter of time before a serious incident occurs in the now routine transfer of prisoners over long distances over some of the country's most remote and dangerous roads. Areas often left with no cover as all available officers are involved in prisoner transfer. A number of suggestions were put forward.

Division struggling with response cars, routinely using personal carriers for patrol duties. No alternatives been identified.

Tasers coverage expected to roll out in Argyll next year.

Oban office closed for renovations, prisoners now been sent to Lochgilphead.

Miscellaneous

Officers complaining regarding the availability of diploma places and the perception of a lack of transparency in selection. Management does not share these concerns.

Concerns raised that there is a lack resilience for front facing officers and that the division is not prepared for a high absence rate on response shifts also not shared despite warnings that the current circumstances coupled with double annual leave period will exacerbate the situation. Management appear reluctant to deploy office based officers/PST to backfill despite this.

MOD Police have and are continuing to recruit, and it is expected that several officers from L division will hand in their notice in the next few weeks in order to start with them. Over the last 5 years, the division has lost a significant number of officers to the MOD Police.

Area 9 - Ayrshire

Meeting held with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on 2 October 2020

Assaults

Persons who assault officers not being held in custody. This sends a message to the officers involved and to the court. Police Scotland have to treat this seriously if they expect the courts to.

SLT were equally concerned by recent examples given and have been advised due to presumption of liberty, this leads to most accused not just those arrested for assaults on police to released. However, they stated that they feel when individual circumstances merit then the accused should be released on police undertaking.

Police assaults are still being plead away or dropped. Examples to be sourced.

Officers on restricted duties

Assured that all posts are advertised and that persons on restricted duties should return to their original post at the conclusion of this, provided no issues prevent this.

Officers being given unlawful orders/advice re warrants.

Issues regarding advice re warrants. SLT stated they had checked and were satisfied that this was not the case. Reps stated that email content seemed to differ to shifts and supervisors.

Christmas period

Christmas Day and New Years day falling on midweek days, yet the frontline who work shifts and weekends all year round are expected to fulfil numbers.

Reps were concerned that every year the onus of this responsibility falls on Response/CP and this could and should be shared by officers within office roles who are operationally fit.

It was felt that some officers choose to work on the frontline (response and CP) throughout their service and therefore are disadvantaged by this. Also some officers have been within office roles for extended periods and are by default then continually getting the holiday season to spend with families.

General cleanliness of the office and condition of some areas are not up to standard.

General poor condition of some offices, especially Ayr and Kilmarnock, needing repainted/general maintenance. Cleaning still not up expected standards.

SLT stated they would again pass concerns regarding this to the janitorial supervisor and would look into where areas of building needed work and where finances will allow this to take place.

Current missing person guidelines and the interpretation of this.

Issues surrounding Young person's units still coding persons as green and with no concern yet contacting the police to advise and are thereafter surprised when police attend to take Misper report. Further liaison with units to be undertaken and fed back when complete.

Diary calls

Diary calls, incident of domestic assault/ threatening with weapons should not be a diary call and require an immediate response. Also calls that can be dealt with by way of phone calls still coming through.

Diary calls being made for incidents that should be prompt calls given potential risk to persons or calls being put on that are not prompt and should be either dealt with by resolution team or diary appointment. Examples given..

COP26

Division to ensure that officers with children and two serving parents are given the appropriate shifts to allow childcare. This was facilitated during lockdown and there is no reason we cannot allow first line managers to make provisions for this.

Assured by SLT that welfare of officers should be catered for when it is clear they will require this and to be managed by First Line managers and Op Urram.

New Government restrictions

Readdressing how we respond/investigate in light of new Government restrictions. Changes took place initially but it is now business as usual. Given the latest restrictions in place and the likelihood of this continuing for some time, reps asked if this was being reviewed and assessed.

This is ongoing and when confirmed this will be disseminated to officers.

Warrants

Procurator Fiscal (PF) not wishing to contact the Sheriff at night as they do not wish to disturb them, this leaves officers standing by a loci all night when the enquiry could be pursued and loci stood down. Losing officers in our division when not needed.

Concerns that officers were standing by loci's as the PF did not "wish to disturb the on call sheriff". Examples of this given. Issues if the Sheriff is on call then the PF should be contacting them for warrants. It was confirmed talks with the PF principal regards this and will feedback.

Closure of Ayr Office

Closing Ayr for October and November, no discussion with local custody staff or LP. This leaves officers having to make longer trips with prisoners and leaves resources short in that area for longer.

Officers from custody raised issues re the closure of Ayr during October/ November with no consultation with them on the effect this will have and the fact officers could now be driving with custodies for longer periods resulting in resources being taken away for longer.

Advised that this was due to Saltcoats needing additional staff as this is a Covid Centre and needs to be staffed to appropriate levels. All of the above was duly considered before decisions were made.

Fuel receipts

Fuel receipts and the request for proof. Officers being asked for screenshots of personal bank statements to prove and subject sheets to be submitted when the aforementioned cannot be provided.

SLT confirmed this was being looked at and has been addressed. Whilst receipts are preferred, not submitting them will not prevent claims being processed.
Now resolved.

Court

Officers standing by for court at Kilmarnock/Ayr, this leading to social distancing becoming more difficult and resulting in more persons being exposed to others that could be avoided. SLT felt this should be managed by on duty Sergeants.

There has since been a new court scheme deployed to reduce the foot flow at offices.

Committees

Health and Safety Stephen Gray – Reserve Claire Duffy

Equality Adam Peppard - Reserve Chris Hynds

Conduct Lynne Gray – Reserve Adam Peppard.

Area 10 – Dumfries & Galloway

COVID

Issues with officers who required to quarantine as a precaution after officers on an RPU course at SPC Tested positive for COVID. When quarantine period included periods of Annual leave (AL) Officers tried to reclaim the affected AL Period but we are refused. This is the current force position but head of HR are reviewing the position - the current position seems unjustly detrimental to officers - particularly when the requirement to quarantine initiated from attendance on a police-training course.

Federation representative Vacancy

Stuart Burns retires from the service in December leaving a vacancy for a Sgt rep in V division.

Area 11 – Lanarkshire

Meeting with Divisional Commander

At our last discussion with the Divisional Commander and SMT, concerns were raised regarding officers being overlooked for posts while even on the SNV list.

The Commander said he would look into it and provide an update, which is awaited.

Diploma

A number of concerns raised regarding the Diploma application process and uncertainty of what was required re the CVF format.

- The diploma team at Tulliallan were contacted and stated that as the process was completely new, there was no definitive answer. When asked if the STAR model would be appropriate they advised that it could be used or not. It is up to the applicant. It was suggested that an example to refer to would have been advantageous and this was agreed.

Officer safety training (OST)

Concerns from a number of members re OST starting up again in November. Fears that it was putting officers at risk and was unnecessary given that it had already been paused but was now being started again during the highest tier that the government had imposed so far. One member made a great point that the Police expect us to make Risk assessments when entering any environment that is operational but refuse to listen when the same officers make the same risk assessment in a training environment.

- OST were contacted and stated that full time Federation reps had a recent meeting with them, where no concerns were raised and that adequate measures had been put in place.

Covid

Further concerns from members regarding how some Sergeants are dealing with officers who have had to self-isolate. In particular, it was stated that if the correct 2m distances, facemask instructions are not adhered to then there may be disciplinary action. However, Officers are allowed to sit next to each other in police vehicles. The issue will be raised at the next Commanders meeting.

Project Quest Meeting

The next project Quest meeting is scheduled for 9 December. A report will be provided at the next WAC meeting.

Court

Issues regarding SDO for Sub Div's QB & QA, had been reverting people who had a change of shift for court and not required, back to their original shift without asking and was calling it an exigency of duty. Discussed with WAC Chair and have not heard of any other instances where this is happening.

New Lanarkshire Reps.

Welcome to the four new members of the Lanarkshire Division Fed team. PC Craig Dunn and Sgt's Jim Mutter, Stevie Bryson and Mikey McConnell. There has been no discussions regarding the available divisional posts and interests yet.

Area 12 – Renfrew & Inverclyde

Health and Safety

There have been regular meetings and federation involvement with the OperationTalla meetings, other than ongoing Covid situation nothing of note.

Conduct

There has been an issue recently in relation to the time Professional Standards Department (PSD) is taking to progress enquiries, an officer recently had his move postponed due to an outstanding CAP and this was not communicated to them until a week before their move when they became concerned that SCOPE had not been updated and started checking with HR.

PSD informed them that due to the complaint being allocated to a new IO they had not progressed the enquiry as much as they would have liked to.

General Issues

Courts

The system is even more chaotic than usual- officers across the division are frequently being cited for court and being duty changed only to be countermanded at short notice, impacting on the officers welfare and their colleagues having to cope with reduced numbers on their shifts/teams. There have been numerous examples of countermands not coming through when an accused having pled guilty before the trial and whilst this has always happened, it is worse at the moment due to poor administration at the courts/PF.

Custody- continues to present the same issues that have been highlighted on numerous occasions such as extensive waiting times to be processed. Volume of constant observations with a high proportion of prisoners being placed on obs and for extended periods with limited if any reviews of this status.

Virtual courts also have an impact on this as individuals are kept in police offices all day instead of going to court in the morning meaning that if they are on Obs divisional officers are left to monitor them.

Divisional Structure

There is an upcoming change in the structure of the division where 2 of the sub divisions KA and KB are being made into 1 sub division for Renfrewshire, with a Chief Inspector in charge, this will require to be monitored to ensure the CI/ Inspectors ranks who it will have the greatest impact on are adequately supported. From a Constables and Sergeants point of view it should not mean any significant changes. This also leads onto the difficulty with trying to find Inspectors in the Division who are willing to stand as federation reps as currently we still have no Inspectors reps to provide feedback on the issues impacting on their rank.

There have been and there are also upcoming changes in the Divisional Senior Management team with a new Superintendent, new area Commander's and the Divisional Commander retiring in the near future, continued efforts will be made to maintain the good working relationships that we have in the division with the new team.

Area 13 & Area 16 – Greater Glasgow North & South

A meeting with the new Commander and other Senior Management took place on 4 November where the following was discussed.

Ongoing shift consultation to change the pattern of Community Policing officers.

Diploma Applications

There is a lack of clear guidance about what was being looked for. Some issues had been flagged up about inconsistencies across the Division as to how the sifting was being carried out.

Operation Maru

This was an operation that was to run throughout November when there was no allocated leave. The operation would involve abstracting officers from response and CP teams daily in order to focus on sub divisional priorities. Concerns had been raised by officers that this was not in keeping with some of the health and safety guidance, supervisors were frustrated that they were not being afforded an opportunity to direct their own teams and manage their own workloads. This operation has now been pulled as a result of being in tier 4.

Custody Division

Various working practices within Custody seem to be having a detrimental impact on operational policing. Crews are being sent far and wide across the Force, waiting times are still at times very long and the number of constant obs has crept back up.

Probationers

The number of probationers on some teams is now becoming unmanageable with insufficient tutors to teach them.

Exigency of Duty

The Division have declared exigencies and changed officer's shifts at short notice on a number of occasions recently and there is often a difference of opinion as to whether it fits the definition. An example being when pubs first closed an exigency was declared and night shift officers were brought out early on the basis that it was unsure what may happen. Football games are not being planned until the teams are known and then an exigency is declared when in reality some form of realistic plan could be put in place with the ability to increase the plans should the draw result in a higher risk game.

COVID

The absence figures through track and trace and also positive cases has risen considerably. The concern is when the next double annual leave period kicks in whether the Division will be able to cope with the absence to the same degree.

Op Urram

There are now monthly meetings for the Division with the planning team that the Divisional reps are invited to. The first one took place on 12 November where there were no issues for the Federation as there was insufficient detail available to ascertain the potential impact on officers.

Area 14 – Operation Support Division

Vacancies

No Vacancies within the subject committee list at present.

Flexible Working Plans

Queries received about flexible working plans however, after liaising with WAC Vice Chair, most of them have now been resolved.

Overtime

Overtime queries received from traffic officers have been dealt with. Positive feedback from members about the Police Officer handbook.

Dumfries traffic

Contact made from Dumfries Traffic officers regarding ongoing issues with Divisional Inspector, in particular not allowing officers to claim for a refresh after being held on duty and unable to return to home station. They were apparently advised that they should carry their refreshment in the car. This was passed onto the Dumfries Rep and appears to be an ongoing issue.

Gym halls

Enquiries regarding gym/gym halls re-opening. ARV/SFO officers are still being required by Police Scotland to complete annual fitness tests as part of their role profile. Failure resulting on them being withdrawn from Firearms role. Officers understand fitness is personal requirement however with gyms opening/closing due to COVID and winter months approaching, maintaining required levels is more difficult.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The provision of PPE In relation to Officers in Armed response Vehicles was discussed and the issues regarding officers being provided with the correct PPE. Guidance from Health & Safety may be sought in this regard.

Area 15 – Specialist Crime

There is no scheduled meeting with the Divisional Commander at present. Intention is to try to get this arranged prior to the next WAC meeting.

Conduct

One officer was gross, now awaiting improvement action
One misconduct awaiting improvement action
One grievance resolved
One grievance ongoing
One gross still ongoing

H & S

Numerous officers unable to get the flu jab.

Equality

One officer had been referred to Police Care UK and is now receiving fully funded counselling for himself and a family member.

Miscellaneous

A high number of officers have been unable to access the diploma.

ADDRESS FROM ACC JOHNSTON

The WAC Chair welcomed ACC Johnston to the meeting.

ACC Johnston thanked the WAC Chair for the opportunity to address the members and offered to answer any questions.

One member highlighted an ongoing issue in relation to Custody division, which appears to be especially prevalent in the West Command area that is having a huge impact on day-to-day response policing. The proportion of prisoners placed onto constant observations, in the West is consistently much higher than the East and North areas combined resulting in numerous abstractions from operational policing. It is a frequent occurrence on any given day that one office in the west has more prisoners in on constant Obs than the whole of East and North command areas combined.

Why is this the case and what is being done to address this?

The ACC replied that this would be raised through the Performance meeting and agreed that there were issues with custody, which were affecting operational policing, especially in the West area.

One member asked if the Force Executive had any plans to identify differences between frontline policing and others. In front line policing there is no option to work from home and officers would like the Executive to acknowledge this.

ACC Johnston replied that he did appreciate this and that it was recognised. It has been fed back to the Force Executive.

Issues with estate was highlighted in relation to some areas requiring urgent upgrading when money is being allocated elsewhere. ACC Johnston agreed that standards were not of an acceptable level in some areas and as such, they should be treated as priority when budget is allocated.

One member highlighted that there was little recognition from PSoS Executive in relation to the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund, (SPBF) and the work that they carry out to assist and support members. ACC Johnston was happy for the SPBF Chair to make contact and arrange a suitable meeting time to discuss the matter further.

Other matters of discussion included issues for officers with Court duty change, when court dates are changed at short notice, resulting in additional childcare costs.

The WAC Chair thanked ACC Johnston for taking the time to attend the meeting and advised members that any further questions should be submitted to him by email and they would then be forwarded for the attention of the ACC.

6. **Deep Dive**

There have been no meetings.

7. **Local Policing Commanders (LPC)** **People and Operations Deliver Group (PODG) National meeting**

LPC

The WAC Chair provided an update.

There have been three meetings of the Local Policing Commanders since the last WAC. They took place on 22 September, 28 October and 24 November 2020.

There has been some progress with issues raised between the first of these meetings in September and the one in November, an example of which is IT provision for officers who need to shield or quarantine due to Covid issues. Police Scotland has spent a considerable amount of money on new laptops and devices to facilitate home working but the majority of this equipment has gone to officers and staff who work fulltime in administrative roles. It has proved to be much harder to obtain equipment for officers who only need a device for a short time. E.g., officers in the latter stages of pregnancy prior to going on maternity leave. The outbreak management team have obtained a small stock of laptops which they can loan out to facilitate short-term home working.

Other issues discussed are as follows.

Assaults

Figures from Q division show that 20% of recorded simple assaults in Lanarkshire are committed on Police officers and staff. ACC Johnson has tasked other divisions to check their figures. He is also concerned about PSoS policy on shields in vehicles.

Fleet

A presentation was given at the September meeting by fleet on electrification. PSoS aims to have its own charging infrastructure with app 1000 points across the estate.

Fleet are looking to replace the unmarked vehicle over the next 2-3 years before the standard response vehicles and finally the specialist fleet.

The first electric vehicles have been Peugeot 208s but this will change.

SPF raised concerns about vehicle types, and problems experienced when procuring the current generation of pandas which lack capacity. Fleet say that this has been taken into account and vehicles being looked at will be more comfortable and higher spec. Service times are expected to drop as electric vehicles require much less servicing than petrol/diesel vehicles.

People Plan

PSoS are very keen to reduce the number of officers who are long term sick and on modified duties. Work is being carried out nationally and at an area level.

The SPF welcomes better management of injured and ill officers and some of the training and new approaches will be beneficial to our members but we will need to ensure that this work is monitored closely because there can be a fine line between managing absence and mismanaging it.

Around 470 officers in West local policing are on modified duties with a total of about 1600 across the force.

Long term absence allegedly "costs" the service app £54 million a year.

Strategic Workforce Plan

This has been discussed at length over the last three meetings.

It should be noted that each division and department in Police Scotland had to make submissions to the SWP. Area officials attended workshops with the team and representatives from the territorial divisions. We did not see or contribute to the submissions or the West Area response.

The SPF received a draft copy at very short notice and it was only authorised to be shared with a small number of officials. The response to this was 21 pages long. The information contained in it was partial and did not paint a full enough picture of demands to merit making substantial changes to resource levels. Virtually all areas and departments that were not acted upon submitted requests for additional resources.

Risk

One of Police Scotland's risk management team attends the LPC meeting.

Some of the risks identified are very similar to those that we raise on our members behalf daily including; Court Duty Change, Assaults, Vehicle Fleet, remote & rural recruitment and custody.

Work carried out in the West to complete the SWP has confirmed that other risks that we have been raising for years including Capacity and capability to provide basic levels of service, OBLs and workload should be dealt with.

The Chair and Secretary have been invited to participate in a West Area risk management meeting with the commanders to address these issues.

Estates

As per previous updates the West area estates strategy is concentrating resources on three buildings; Greenock, Ayr and Oban. PSoS are looking to replace all three in the medium term (finances permitting) but significant investment is needed to keep them operational until then. Oban custody suite has been refurbished, over £1 million of urgent works to Ayr are required and Greenock are ongoing.

Other

A number of Commanders have expressed concerns about the lack of guidance for the new promotion processes and the CVF. These are almost identical to those raised by the SPF.

The SPF Chair is scheduled to take part in a meeting with the promotion team and SPF officials from across the country on Monday 30 November.

PODG

The WAC Secretary provided an update.

There has been one meeting since the last WAC. The meeting took place on 16 November 2020 by Microsoft Teams Chaired by ACC John Hawkins.

Action Log

1. Draft Workforce Agreement – Superintendent Ranks – Draft Implementation Plan – This is being discussed at WPRB on 19 November 2020. Management of on call on rest days, RDU to develop guidance and audit of rest day working/disturbance.
2. Request to Nicky Page to provide an update in relation to other Actions outstanding (maintenance of pay to be the default and reasons given for reduction rather than the current operation that operates on reduction/appeal).

Updates

Biometrics

Update provided to the meeting on biometrics, current review being undertaken of biometric information currently held by PSOS in relation to staff. A working group has been created under the direction of the Deputy Chief Constable, the current focus is the taking use and retention policies in relation to biometric data. PSOS following NPCC guidance and awaiting appointment of Biometric Commissioner.

Comment was made that the paper provided had been helpful. Whatever board will deal with biometrics, should be a standing item on a board, currently the HR People Board has no staff association representation.

SPF highlighted that it would welcome further consultation and involvement; the biggest challenge will be in respect of historic data held by PSOS.

ACC Hawkins updated that he was progressing elements in relation to historic on call arrangements and issue of rest days being disturbed, current lack of records held by PSOS in relation to this.

CJSD

Update and overview provided of the ongoing CJSD restructure and proposals around custody which are being presented at JNCC.

COP 26

Update provided that the WFA for the conference was close to joint approval. Issues around budget and funding were hopefully being resolved and it is hoped that PSOS Inspecting Ranks would receive parity of compensation for the deployment as their English counterparts. This would be confined to those deployed in Urram.

OSD

Discussed WPRB and other meetings, Public Order uplift was continuing and contingency arrangements for the Scottish Police Information and Coordination Centre (SPICC) during winter.

P&D

Update was provided on 2 new workstreams designed to increase capacity as far as possible, one being 'maximising attendance' (review of attendance management process and SOP).

SPF highlighted that this subject had been regularly reviewed since the formation of the Service. The focus on support and enabling officers to return to work was a regular failure.

Staff associations and Unions

Nothing of note raised by SPF, ASPS or Unison

Date of next meeting

Meeting invites have yet to be circulated for 2021.

8. CONDUCT

The WAC Deputy Secretary reported on the meeting of the Conduct Committee that took place on 29 September 2020 by video conference.

Criminal Cases

Legal applications were discussed, 22 received for criminal cases, 3 had been concluded after interview and the remaining 19 were all being considered by CAAPD.

Conduct Cases

There has been a significant increase in Conduct investigations. It was noted that the west area continues to be the busiest area for assessments (50%), it has the largest case load and has seen another significant increase in suspensions.

CAP

As was the case last quarter, CAP are up again but many were attributed to COVID-19. PSD have reported to SPA that they were committed to promoting a culture of organisational learning. These opportunities were generally identified through PIRC complaint handling reviews or from internal feedback identified as part of the complaint handling process. Three Initiatives around improvements had been identified. Members were asked to report any feedback they received in relation to this.

Performance/PIP

The only performance matters under consideration were for probationary Constables. No PIP in West area since the last meeting.

Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC)

Several investigations were being carried out remotely due to homeworking. Officers are reminded that if a statement is noted over the phone they will not be provided with a copy. If officers wish to retain a copy of their statement, the Assistant to General Secretary for Conduct (AGSC) suggested they prepare these themselves and submit them.

Training is currently on hold.

Dame Elish Angiolini Review has been published and the SPF have collated comments for the General Secretary to present.

Members were advised of the current caseload in the West. Criminal case figures are sitting higher than normal as this was due to the fact that many cases had been postponed due to Covid.

There has been three meetings since the last WAC, with a variety of disposals.

There is one misconduct meeting scheduled for January 2021. One hearing scheduled for November has been taken back to the investigation stage. Four hearings scheduled for this period have been cancelled due to judicial review. There are four cases awaiting determination following investigation.

The Deputy Secretary asked that any representative sending in updates for criminal or conduct matters does so on the appropriate conduct form. Forms can be emailed out and anyone requiring a form should make contact with the Deputy Secretary or Lynne Welsh at the West Area. Completed forms should be sent to conduct.west@spf.org.uk

Representatives were reminded to submit either conduct forms or note of interview forms for all officers who are receiving support as the records of contact need to be maintained.

9. **EQUALITY**

The WAC Vice Chair reported on the last Equality Committee meeting which took place on 30 September 2020 by video conference.

PNB(S) Equality Working Group

The Assistant to the General Secretary (Equality) 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.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Employment Group

The Equality Working Group had been involved in a Short Life Working Group relative to Smarter working, agile working, homeworking and flexible working.

Long Term Absences

We continue to receive information from the service in respect of long term absences which assist us in identifying those most in need of our support. The level of longer term absences for the West remains consistent as it does nationally with no concerning spikes or trends to report.

Ill Health Process

The backlog is being addressed, helped by the appointment of the new SMP. The new SMP came from England and Wales, and in line with SMPs there, is now requesting historical medical records. This is permitted, and the regulations say if the officer does not give consent to full medical records, the SMP can only report on the information known to them at the time. Members are therefore advised to consent to the release of full medical records, usually going back to when they were 18 years of age.

Police Treatment Centres (PTC)

The PTC remains open with reduced capacity. Members who were due to go on the psychological wellbeing course have had to re-apply in order to give the centre the most up to date medical background. This has caused issues for a couple of our members however staff were quick to assist in resolving them. There are still places available in early 2021 for those seeking to apply.

Supporting Officers on Modified Duties

Superintendent Sharon Shaw has been delivering presentations to all Divisions in the West, to first- and second-line managers, explaining differences between modified, restricted and protected categories of members, and the range of support measures available to assist them, and their line managers. This is in line with the West Divisional People Plan.

This presentation is expected to be rolled-out nationally.

Ongoing National Equality Work 1

The SPF Equality Advisor, is carrying out some work with the AGS [Equality], Nigel Bathgate, in relation to the fairness of the Bradford Score in terms of how it may be discriminatory against female officers. Female officers are shown to be more likely to have shorter but more frequent absences than men. This is being reviewed to establish if this amounts to an equality issue.

Ongoing National Equality Work 2

England & Wales appears to be set to see full maternity pay being extended from 18 to 26 weeks. Though the Scottish Government do not have to implement this, history shows that when positive changes are implemented in England and Wales, the Scottish Government often follow suit.

ETs

A series of briefing notes on recent ET judgements were prepared by SPF Equality Advisor Jayne Monkhouse and circulated to JCC members on 21 September 2020 by JCC Circular 58 of 2020, but are not for general publication. Anyone wishing to view the notes should contact the WAC Vice Chair.

The Assistant to the General Secretary for Equality, Nigel Bathgate, will shortly be retiring. At the last JCC, James Thomson from the North Area stood unopposed as Nigel's replacement, and will take over the position in the New Year. Wishes for a long and healthy retirement were extended to Nigel and best wishes extended to James in his new post.

10. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Deputy Secretary (Health & Safety) reported on the Health & Safety meeting, which took place on 1 October 2020 by video conference.

The updates were provided from recent meetings, the minutes of which may still have to be approved, as such the WAC Deputy Secretary requested that the information is not further disseminated.

JCC Health and Safety Committee – 1st October 2020

Covid

SPF have routinely asked for the wearing of Type IIR masks to be mandatory however the Executive continued to use language such as "should" and "default" rather than using the word "must" which was an instruction and did not allow for any ambiguity. Members discussed the differences in policy directions across the force. It had been noticed in recent weeks that the focus was on potential transmissions within the workplace. There had been incidents around the force where officers had tested positive and colleagues had to self-isolate.

There had been a distinct lack of clarity over the isolation process. The Outbreak Management Team are operational and deal with contact from a positive case, first line managers deal with all other contacts as per the guidance.

Station visits were being carried out by SPF representatives to establish understanding and compliance with the operational guidance, as well as cleaning regimes.

Violence

A meeting regarding more in-depth snapshots of police assaults had been conducted in C and G Divisions, as they appeared to have had the biggest increase in reported assaults.

In C Division, 11 of the 13 weeks analysed had normal levels of assaults but two weeks had significant spikes. The analysis found that COVID had no effect on these numbers regarding coughing/spitting incidents. However, it was noted that the first high week coincided with the easing of lockdown and good weather, so inadvertently did have an effect. In G Division, the increases in assaults correlated to increases in Antisocial Behaviour. Again, the spikes coincided with easing of lockdown restrictions. In most cases, the assault on the officer had been preceded by other acts of violence by the perpetrator.

The issue of repeat victims was discussed, and members were asked if there was any evidence of the same officers being repeatedly involved. There was potential for cumulative effect of victimisation on staff mental and physical wellbeing.

TASER

There was currently 436 tasers deployable with 80 trained but not deployable for a variety of reasons. Refresher training had restarted. A Taser Review Group had been created to liaise with Divisions regarding the management and development of STOs.

Members were requested to feed in any examples where STOs were used as opposed to firearms officers. This would be raised at the Armed Policing Monitoring Group.

It was noted that since 1st January 2020, Taser had been deployed at 299 incidents and used on 173 occasions. There had been no injuries sustained by officers or suspects when Taser had been discharged.

Use of Force

The Committee was given an update on the handcuffing policy and were informed that ultimately it was considered impossible to give absolute prescriptive guidance as it simply wouldn't be practicable. Officers had to be sensitive to each situation. The Policy still needed a review as it hadn't been fully considered for some time.

Use of Force form submission had risen by 10% for the quarter however; incidents were still being massively under reported. Handcuffing suspects to the rear had been utilised more often. It was suspected that this was COVID related. There was also a significant increase in the use of spit hoods which appeared commensurate with the number of COVID related spitting incidents.

PPE

Body Armour - It was reported that Phase 1 was complete and phase 2 was commencing. A self-measuring pilot had commenced with officers given guidance on how to measure themselves and then attending to be measured by Stores staff. If the pilot was successful it would dramatically reduce the time taken to order and replace existing armour.

There was still no formed armour approved by the Home Office, but this was still being actively pursued by Safariland. It was confirmed that armour should be checked annually at OST. Training was to be looked at for OST instructors to be able to complete that task. The meeting Chair said that PSoS were still the only force that had purchased lighter body armour and was hoped that there would be a full roll-out within the next three years.

Footwear -The SLWG had not met since the last H&S meeting. The initial template for sizing was found to be inaccurate. An alternative method had been introduced in Fife for testing and hopefully would be rolled out to the rest of the force. There were some manufacturing issues that would likely see the first phase extended into the next financial year for delivery for some officers.

Clothing

The Clothing and Uniform Working Group had met on a few occasions since the last meeting. There was no update regarding the cycle kit lists.

It was reported that due to the amount of equipment being carried on carriers, the current click-fast solution was no longer a viable option. The Molly system which allowed officers to adapt the carrier system to suit their own needs was being considered.

It was reported that the supply of ripstop trousers from the USA was still an issue. Some sizes were simply unavailable. An update was sought.

It was noted that the current agreement for waterproof jackets had been extended for a year with the potential of a further three years. Other options could be explored which may prove more successful. Any concerns or evidence should be submitted for feedback.

Shields - SLWG had been created to look at the requirements of shields being carried in divisional vehicles in the West area. This was a legacy position as no other area other than Forth Valley used to carry public order shields in divisional response vehicles. A memo was produced in 2016 advising that these shields would not be replaced when they became unserviceable and should be retained in stations and obtained in the event of an incident requiring them. However, they continued to be carried in vehicles.

These divisional shields were now well beyond their manufacturer's warranty and had not undergone any form of confidence testing and were not certified for use against edged weapons. Work was ongoing to assess the need for shields in vehicles, and if there was a need, what type of shield was best. OST had received a Buckler shield which was used in defense from edged weapons and would be demonstrated for feedback during OST refresher training once recommenced.

Operational Equipment

It was reported that since the initial rollout of the new road signs, it had been discovered that in some circumstances, the signs were unsuitable. The new signs were immediately withdrawn. It was later discovered that the suppliers had changed the design. Further testing was carried out at the SPC and it was agreed that additional weight would be added to the signs and then returned for testing.

The first phase of the green wave was to replace all 1700 unmarked vehicles with Ultra-low Emission Vehicles (ULEV). There were currently 100 ULEVs already in service. Sites had been

identified with the number of charger points required. A feasibility study was to be carried out at each site to identify the requirements for upgraded national grid access.

The technology is not available to confidently deliver a fit for purpose and safe marked fleet. Driver awareness of ULEVs is being built into driver training as there are differences to driving conventional vehicles. Due to the purchase of the electric unmarked vehicles and only around a third of the normal fleet replacement taking place this year, discussion took place and concerns aired on the effect that would have on the remaining fleet which was only getting older with higher mileages.

Telematics had been fitted to 2700 vehicles and the fleet management product was live from the beginning of August. Driver cards would be used, and mileage books would be removed once the automatic drivers log compliance reached 95%. Mileage books would remain in the vehicles that did not have telematics.

First Aid

The Assistant to General Secretary for Health & Safety (AGSH) reported that the naloxone policy was still being developed for the Test of Change. Members discussed the legal indemnity of officers who administered naloxone. A letter had been circulated to the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC), Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) and the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS) seeking their views. Since the JCC H&S meeting, PSoS have publicly announced the Test of Change will go ahead in three areas. This remains on a voluntary basis.

The two-day Officer Safety Training (OST) course had been signed off by the SLB however, course content was still being awaited.

A patient recording form was still being developed and would be required prior to administering oxygen or naloxone.

Administration & Governance

There were nine ongoing accident investigations.

H&S inspections were mostly on hold due to COVID but a few had taken place. Similarly, some custody audits were continuing. Issues were generally in relation to fire safety with the provision of fire doors and fire gaps being the most reported. This was replicated across the force and significant works were required in some areas to achieve suitable fire protection in stations.

Training

There had been no recent SPF training due the current pandemic.

It was reported that training on Section 19 of the Road Safety Act 2006 (Requalifying) required to be carried out and the matter had been raised in July. A response was awaited from the force.

West Update

The WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) and WAC Chair had carried out some station visits in relation to Covid compliance.

There were issues regarding health checks for firearms officers. Hearing tests were not being carried out properly and the matter had been reported.

One member reported a local issue regarding an officer with a latex allergy and the issues faced relative to this. Members discussed these matters and agreed alternatives should be in place.

WAC - other Business

A SLWG has been set up nationally to look at Constant Obs. The WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) has been invited to these meetings and will update as the meetings progress.

One member highlighted a Covid related incident where Officers in attendance ran out of PPE. Offices should be provided with a seven day cover of kit to avoid such situations.
ACTION - The Deputy Secretary agreed to raise this at the weekly meeting.

One member asked if there was any update in relation to police boots. The WAC Deputy Secretary advised that it was hoped that 5000-6000 pairs would be provided by the end of 2020 and each area allocated their supply by spring 2021. Front line officers would be the first to receive the boots.

11. **JOINT CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

The WAC Chair provided an update on the last meeting of the JCC which took place on 2 November 2020 by video conference.

Elections

Amanda Givan was re-elected as AGS (Conduct) and James Thomson from the North was elected as AGS Equality. He will take over from the current AGS, Nigel Bathgate who retires early in the New Year.

Legal

The Deputy General Secretary gave updates on;

- Allard- ongoing discussions with PSoS regarding data required to settle the case
- Holiday Pay- Correspondence is being sent out to the approximately 1600 members involved in the case regarding trying to negotiate a better settlement.
- WhatsApp- Still heading towards the Supreme Court
- Injury to feelings- approximately 6500 members have signed up through Thomsons solicitors for injury to feelings claims
- Leigh Day Claim- Notice given by them initiating claims from a number of members.
- Judicial Review- There were 2 live judicial reviews relating to conduct matters at the time of the JCC
- Legal Opinion- Opinions had been sought into reclaiming annual leave lost due to members having to self-isolate. Interpretation of Regulation 25 (12) Police Service of Scotland Regulations 2013.

PNB

- Police Officer Handbook- this is now on the advice section of the SPF website and pnb.scot website. This guide is authoritative and has been well received by PSoS business units.
- Pay Claim- This was discussed at a staff side meeting on 8 October, a claim was put in prior to Covid.
- COVID-19 Related issues- discussion took place on special injury payments for anyone suffering injury due to Covid.
- COP 26 – Special Arrangements- still ongoing, bespoke Workforce Agreement has been negotiated.

Pensions

The SPF has submitted its response to the Treasury Consultation on Public Sector Pension Remedy. A full response from the Treasury is awaited.

Scottish Police Consultative Forum (SPCF)

There was a meeting of the SPCF scheduled for 10 November and the SPF intended to raise several issues including;

- Appraisal, Promotion and Accelerated Promotion
- In service compensation for officers who are injured on duty but who are redeployed instead of being ill-health retired.
- Special Constables
- Legal advice and assistance for on duty incidents. If officers are involved in an incident on duty Police Scotland should pay their legal expenses. In the vast majority of cases the SPF appoints lawyers and then submits a claim for reimbursement.

Budget and Finance

The UK government has not published a budget, which in turn means that the Scottish Government cannot be certain of its own funding. This will have a knock-on effect for Police Scotland funding and money to pay for any pay claim.

SPF Training

A planned SPF initial course was cancelled due to the Dundee area (site of the training venue) being placed into a Tier 3 lockdown.

Eurocop & ICPR

ICPR Meeting scheduled to be held in Glasgow is still penciled in for June. This will be kept under review due to the pandemic.

Eurocop meeting which was due to take place in Edinburgh was due to be held online. Since the JCC took place, the SPF General Secretary, Calum Steele has been elected as the President of Eurocop.

Police Charities

Police Treatment Centres- both treatment centres (Castlebrae and Harrogate) are up and running at 50% capacity in line with government guidance. PTC are looking to expand their psychological wellbeing programme to take on more seriously ill patients.

St George's Trust- Where an officer is likely to be ill- health retired they should consider registering. Note that the officer must have contributed to the Trust.

Any other competent business

Input on My Career and Promotion-

The JCC received an input from Superintendent Laura McLuckie from LTD, who is responsible for My Career, replacement for the diploma, Leadership Pathways and Accelerated Leadership Pathways.

Discussion took place on; the rationale behind replacing the diploma, the arrangements for officers who are taking part in the pilot, what constitutes frontline policing, candidates being supervised by temporary ranks, how family friendly the new system will be and other issues.

Conference

Conference is due to take place in March 2021 and it was asked whether it was still going ahead. Conference in the run-up to an election can be a useful platform at which we can extract commitments from politicians.

No formal vote was taken however, the consensus was that it should be cancelled or at the very least postponed.

Standing Committee Updates

The Finance Standing Committee took place on 13 October via Teams; the following were the main points of discussion;

SPF Expenditure is substantially down on this financial year. Staff salaries and IT are the main areas where spending has been in line with expectations.

The coffee machine pilot, which had been carried out in V division, is being reviewed. A new partner company has been identified and discussions are ongoing with the Force Executive about re-starting it.

An update was requested on the pilot for members of the conduct committee being given tablets; the national Chair said that work needed to be carried out to upgrade our servers. Two surface pro tablets have been obtained from the IT providers and will be issued to members of the conduct committee.

The Operational Duties Standing Committee meeting took place on 13 October 2020 via Teams; the following were the main points of discussion.

Special Constabulary (SC)

A new group has been set up under the chairmanship of CS Phil Davidson. Only around a third of the specials on Police Scotland's books are active. Questions were asked regarding experiences of other forces around the UK who publicly at least have more developed SC programs. Also capacity to train new SCs, regulations and their role.

Armed Policing

Process now in place to accept transferees from other forces.

Specialist Firearms Officers will be trained as Counter Terrorism SFOs.

Close protection is under review with the intention that many of the deployments will be carried out by officers equipped with Taser rather than firearms.

Legislation and Regulation

The last Legislation and Regulations Standing Committee meeting took place on 13 October 2020 via teams; the following were the main points of discussion.

The Age of Criminal Responsibility Act 2019
The Coronavirus Regulations 2020
The Review of Complaints Handling, Investigation and Misconduct.

One member asked if there was any information on proposed training for local representatives, particularly in relation to IT. The matter has been raised previously with no update provided. The WAC Chair advised that any plans to carry out training/ local inductions for newly elected representatives, had been put on hold due to Covid and understood the concerns of local representatives. He also intimated that he had hoped to have some update in relation to the roll out of devices for representative's use but there had been no progress to date.

ACTION WAC Chair to discuss further with WAC Secretary.

12 **CONSULTATIONS**

The WAC Secretary updated on the SOPs issued for consultation since the last meeting.

02/09/2020	Firearms Licensing Sop V4.1
04/09/2020	Air Support National Guide V0.06
04/09/2020	Fraud and Economic Crime SOP V5
04/09/2020	Anti-Social Behaviour SOP V7.6
04/09/2020	Forced Entry and Insecure Property SOP V6.05
04/09/2020	Community Advisors National Guidance V0.04
04/09/2020	Specially Trained Officers SOP V3
04/09/2020	EqHRIA Natonal Guidance V1
09/09/2020	National Notebook Guidance V1
09/09/2020	Incidents involving Trams V4
09/11/2020	Public Order V4.09
09/11/2020	SID SOP V5
09/11/2020	Armed Policing Operations V5.05
23/11/2020	Surveillance V3.06
23/11/2020	Prostitution V1.05

13. **MOTIONS**

There were no motions.

14. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Secretary advised the members of the following items of correspondence.

- Letter of resignation from Stuart Burns dated 05/11/2020
- Letter of resignation from Ross Black dated 06/11/2020
- Letter of resignation from Jamie Carruth dated 06/11/2020
- Letter of resignation from Craig Nicolson dated 26/11/2020

15. **COMPETENT BUSINESS**

1. Bravery Awards Update

The WAC Deputy Secretary provided the following update.

A further meeting has been held with regards to changes to the bravery awards and discussion took place around what the awards would now be called, it is likely to be the SPF awards. Each application form will need four parts to be completed; judges would then individually mark each part out of 25 for a total mark out of 100.

We are looking at six categories for awards, two for bravery; an individual and a team, an award based on support an officer provides in the community they work in, for support of the service, for support of officers by a civilian and for an officer who always steps up, but is not recognised in other ways. Discussion took place around what to call these categories, and is still ongoing. Not all categories would be awarded each year unless an application meets the criteria. The criteria still needs to be discussed.

Any comments should be directed to the WAC Deputy Secretary and anyone who hears of incidents that they believe may be suitable for a bravery award should email the details when known. There are no bravery awards this year so applications will go forward next year.

2. Operational duties

The WAC Chair requested any information from representatives in relation to how well CAM is working in divisions. He asked that responses be sent by email directly to himself or to Lynne Welsh at the West Area.

3. Legislation and Regulations

The WAC Chair requested any information regarding experience implementing and enforcing the Coronavirus regulations, is there a lack of clarity between what regulations are and what is guidance?

4. Age of Criminal Responsibility Act 2019.

The legislation seems to set a very high bar before officers are able to remove children who are at risk. Local authorities will have a duty to maintain and create places of safety.

The WAC Chair requested that local reps engage with their command teams and find out where their local Social work department place of safety will be? Police premises can be places of safety; will local Social work monitor children there?

ACTION – local representatives to report back to WAC.

5. Covid Vaccinations

The WAC Secretary highlighted that there had been many questions from members as to why Police Officers were not priority in terms of receiving the vaccine. He advised that at this time, NHS workers, care workers and paramedics were considered front line and as such, most at risk. He advised members that the matter had been raised and is being addressed.

16. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The Chair thanked the members for their attendance and wished Stuart Burns a long and happy retirement. The next Meeting of the WAC will take place on 4 March 2021.

Paul Connelly
Chair

Gary Mitchell
Secretary