



SCOTTISH POLICE FEDERATION West Area Committee

Ref: IF/PC/LW

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the West Area Committee on Thursday
3 June 2021 at 0930 hours by Video conference.**

1. ATTENDANCE AND OPENING -

West Area Committee (WAC) Office Bearers & Staff

Paul Connelly – WAC Chair
Ian Florence – WAC Deputy Secretary
Lorna Cunningham – WAC Deputy Secretary
Lynne Welsh – SPF Staff
Philip Maguire – SPF Staff

Apologies

Gary Mitchell
Jenny Shanks

West Area Committee

Campbell Smith
Chloe Rice
Chris Hynds
Christopher Thomson
Craig Dunn
Craig Fraser
David Taylor
David Carmichael
David Hunter
David Osterberg
Dougie Chalmers
Elaine Sutherland
Emma Louise Smith
Fiona Levett
Gary Diver
Jennie Macfarlane
Lee Hamilton
Marketa Hola

Gordon McKeand
Cath McNally
Michael McConnell
Michael McCaughey
Pamela McFarlane
Richard North
Stephen Gray
Stewart Gailey
Stuart Finnie
Lynne Gray
Alistair Mackinnon
Iain Gray
Adam Peppard
Kenneth Kean
Dougie McKinlay
Gordon Cumming
Gerry Welsh

1. ATTENDANCE AND OPENING

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

Inspector Gordon McKeand elected as Inspectors' Rep. V Division.
Inspector Catherine Glass elected as Inspectors' Rep. U Division.

2. SEPARATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Chair advised that he had not been informed of the intention to hold separate rank committees at this meeting. However, it should be noted that separate rank committee meetings should be held at the next WAC in September. It is hoped that this will be a face to face meeting but even if restrictions are still in place there is a need for rank committees to be held in order to elect replacement Chairs, Secretaries, JCC representatives and Benevolent Fund committee members.

3. ELECTIONS

Rule 6.1 of the Scottish Police Federation rules provides the West Area Committee must elect from amongst its numbers the following Officers.

Secretary
Chair
Deputy Secretary x 2
Vice Chair

Rule 6.2 of the Scottish Police Federation (Scottish Police Federation) rules provides that a member seeking election as an Officer as mentioned above shall intimate in writing his or her intention to stand for election to the Secretary and shall give not less than 28 days' notice. For the purposes of this Rule 'in writing' shall include by electronic mail.

Rule 6.2.1 of the Scottish Police Federation rules provides a candidate for election must have a nominator and seconder from the members of the Area Committee.

The deadline for the following posts was set at 1700 hours on 6 May 2021.

WAC Secretary
WAC Chair
WAC Vice Chair
WAC Deputy Secretary (Conduct)
WAC Deputy Secretary (Health & Safety)

As a result, the following nominations were received within the stipulated timescale;

WAC Secretary

The Chair advised the members that our current Deputy Secretary Ian Florence was unopposed in standing for the post of Secretary. The Chair called for Ian to be formally nominated and seconded at the meeting in order that the election be confirmed.

WAC Chair

The Chair advised the members that our current Deputy Secretary Lorna Cunningham was unopposed in standing for the post of Chair. The Chair called for Lorna to be formally nominated and seconded at the meeting in order that the election be confirmed.

WAC Deputy Secretary (Conduct)

The Chair advised the members that Lynne Gray of U division was also unopposed when standing for the post of Deputy Secretary. The Chair called for her to be formally nominated and seconded in order that her election was confirmed.

Elections were thereafter held for the posts of Vice-Chair and Deputy Secretary (Health & Safety). Each candidate was invited to speak for up to 5 minutes and at the conclusion of speeches a poll was circulated via Teams by David Ross, National Policy and Co-ordination Officer. Anyone experiencing technical difficulties was asked to email their vote to David.Ross@spf.org.uk

WAC Vice Chair

There were three nominations

Iain Gray, Kenny Kean and Adam Peppard.

On completion of the election, Adam Peppard was elected as WAC Vice Chair (elect)

WAC Deputy Secretary

There were two nominations

Gordon Cumming and Dougie McKinlay

On completion of the election, Gordon Cumming was elected as WAC Vice Chair (elect)

The committee noted the results of the elections and the WAC Chair congratulated the successful candidates.

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were presented for approval.

One amendment was raised under item 11, Pensions.

Amendment

The issue was not one of a possible age discrimination claim, but an issue surrounding the Government's proposed remedy in response to the court rulings and how this would affect officers who were previously informed they had full protection.

SPF could highlight the issue to those who will be affected, by way of a circular outlining the facts and requesting that they contact the SPF to gauge the extent of the problem.

The minutes of the March meeting were amended accordingly.

ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (March 2021)

(1) Re Training for representatives –

Carried forward from previous

The matter of lack of training for Area representatives was raised. This was in respect of Basic training for Reps/newly elected reps. and also IT training in relation to Microsoft Teams.

The WAC Chair and Secretary will discuss the matter further, and advised that they are aware of the need for training. The matter has been raised previously.

Update - The IT situation is more of an issue, especially during the pandemic where home working is in place. The matter will continue to be raised.

All SPF training for reps is on hold just now there has been some limited remote training delivered to staff.

ONGOING

(2) Conference

Carried forward from previous

One member asked if Conference (2021) would be postponed due to the pandemic.

Update - Invite for Conference sent to all reps on 17 March 2021.

Link for Conference sent to all reps on 24 March 2021

COMPLETE

(3) AOCB. Re -Age of criminal responsibility Act.

Carried forward from previous.

Local reps to question - What are local communities doing in regards to social work and places of safety for children? The Local authority have a duty to create a place of safety for the vulnerable.

Local Reps to report back at the next WAC

Update - Update from Local reps at next meeting. Reminder issued to all Reps. 27/05/2021.

ONGOING

(4) Re - Masks

Some officers complaining that masks are uncomfortable to wear

WAC Deputy Secretary (H&S) will raise matter to see if there are any complaints recorded from officers and report back to WAC .

Update –

Checks have been made and officers spoken to during welfare visits re the masks. For the masks currently in use in the west there is two sizes. Provisions should be made to ensure that officers get a break from wearing the masks, although no set time is advised, it is generally agreed the wearer should have a chance to remove the mask after 4 hours. The masks are here to stay and uses other than during the Covid pandemic are being looked at.

COMPLETE

(5)

Naloxone – training for officers.

Questions raised over SPF lack of involvement in training. Who is running training and are the officers participating being given the opportunity to change their decision on carrying Naloxone after they have been trained?

WAC Deputy Secretary (Health & Safety) to investigate and provide an update at the next WAC.

Update –

For clarity the SPF had asked for an input into the training and this had been refused, there was a chance for full time SPF representatives to attend these meeting and we attended a small number. Prior to the training taking place we were provided with the training package. There is currently no record kept of who agreed to take the Naloxone packs so if an officer changes their mind after taking one no one would know.

COMPLETE

(6) Naloxone – information

Request to re issue JCC Circular 9/2020 re carrying of Naloxone.
This will be circulated to all WAC reps.

Update –
JCC Circ 9/2020 sent out on 04/03/2021 and JCC Circ 6/2021 sent out on 05/03/2021

COMPLETE

(7) Re PPE.

Should failure to provide officers with the correct PPE and inability for officers to carry the correct PPE be recorded as a near miss ?

MH to Circulate that such circumstances should be recorded. Circulate email to WAC in this regard.

Action 7 – Covid19 PPE –

Email was sent out on behalf of the WAC Deputy Secretary on 27/05/2021 advising that if officers are not provided the correct Covid PPE and are requested to attend a Covid related call or by not having a carriage system for Covid PPE, officers are requested to attend a Covid related call then a near miss should be submitted. There is now an opportunity to order more than one FFP3 mask and there is currently a roll out of the carriage system. Each Division should have a stock of an interim carriage system.

COMPLETE

(8) Pensions

This action was amended to reflect the amendment to the March Minutes.

Re Pensions

Issues surrounding the Government's proposed remedy in response to the court rulings, and how this would affect officers who were previously informed they had full protection. The proposal to transfer everyone on to the CARE scheme next year to remedy the age discrimination, will mean that officers who were previously fully protected by age will lose that protection.

Action -

SPF could highlight the issue to those who will be affected, by way of a circular outlining the facts and requesting that they contact the SPF to gauge the extent of the problem.

ONGOING

(9) I.T Issues

Concerns regarding representatives not being provided with the necessary IT to carry out Federation duties.

Update - WAC Chair agreed that there should be options available. i.e. mobile Phone, tablet or laptop. Will continue to raise the matter at JCC.

Update –
Provision of devices now in process. Situation will continue to be monitored.

COMPLETE

5. LEGAL ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

27 files have been submitted to SPF Legal since the last WAC Meeting

Criminal legal defence x 11
Injury on duty x 11
Employment dispute x 2
Civil dispute x 3

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

Any member submitting a legal advice and assistance application should note that forms should be signed by hand as an electronic signature is not acceptable. All applications should be accompanied by a full statement of fact.

6. DIVISIONAL REPORTS

Divisional reports were received in advance of the meeting.

Area 8 – Argyll and West Dunbartonshire

The following matters were raised.

Work Force Agreement

Pressure on officer resources throughout all departments and all areas has been experienced. This has been highlighted as the result of covid illness/self-isolation and the on effects of court re-opening and the resulting bottle neck of cases.

Knock on effects of absence is officers requesting annual leave out with their leave periods, build-up of RRRDs and TOIL.

A meeting set up to address the issues with resourcing only highlighted the difficulties of meeting demand with such tight resources.

Fleet

Response shifts are experiencing a shortage of marked vehicles making prompt attendance at change problematic. Knock on effect is now unmarked cars are becoming equally hard to source. It has been observed that it does not matter if the OBL is met if there are not got enough cars to put the officers out in.

Officer Safety Argyll

Recent incidents in Argyll have highlighted how exposed officers are in remote locations to violent attacks. Divisional Commander has consistently expressed his desire to install taser hubs in all offices but problems occur with training capacity and convincing officers to become STOs.

Discussions with officers in Argyll regarding changing shift pattern to accommodate more officer on duty, but which would potentially require shorter working days and less days off, tend to be of the in favour of keeping the current VSA146.

Officer Development/Training/Retention

Division is currently reviewing tenure of posts and has recognised that recruitment and retention of officers are equally important. There is discussion with SPA regarding an Islands and rural allowance and a review of the housing stock and estate (there is a national strategy meeting regarding housing availability) with potential of entering into a partnership with Indigo Housing Group.

Firearms Enquiry Officers

Representatives currently assisting divisional management in coming up with a realistic FEOs strategy. Pressure on officers, especially in Argyll, to meet demand is currently unsustainable. Training capacity is an issue.

Training

Backlog in training effect all departments from basic courses such as MOE to the more specialist roles. The lack of trainer officer is effecting capacity and also holding up transfers and postings.

With regards to discussion at the previous WAC Meeting in relation to the 'Age of criminal responsibility Act', the division had attempted to arrange a meeting with the local Council but this had been cancelled at short notice.

Area 9 - Ayrshire

The following matters were raised.

There has been positive engagement with the SMT regarding a variety of issues and there is an enthusiasm to meet with the Federation.

Vehicles - there are replacements for old vehicles ongoing however often there are a number off road and this is leaving shifts short of adequate vehicles.

Report from an officer that the constant wearing of the FFP3 mask resulted in a constant headache and sickness. Others complained of a similar feeling with the belief it was the mask causing this, however, there is no direct evidence. Requested the officer to submit feedback on return to work interview.

A new Sgts forum has been set up by SMT. One of the main issues raised in the meeting was custody back fill. Shift Sgts are regularly being moved to cover custody leaving the shift short. SMT to engage with R division however the hope is the recent candidates from the Sgt process may plug gaps.

There has also been a memo published regarding taking annual leave out with allocated time in U div. The memo states that if an officer is requesting more than 3 days out with annual leave subgroup it needs to be authorised by a Chief Inspector. Unsure if this is National or local however having checked the Regulations, it appears the number of days is 9 not 3.

ACTION - Re memo published regarding annual leave.

Issue re carry-over of leave (72 hrs) If taking more than 3 days, has to be signed off by Chief Inspector. WAC Deputy Secretary to check and confirm

SMT have been approached with regards to confirming annual leave groups for 2022/23 as officers are having to postpone holidays due to covid and move them to later on. Now at the stage where officers are going to postpone into the annual leave year 2022/23 but the groups are not confirmed. Could police Scotland provide this information soon so officers can forward plan.

Current leads/reserves

Conduct - Stephen Gray reserve – vacant. Equality - Adam Peppard - vacant H&S - Stephen Gray - vacant

T/PI Claire Duffy and Sgt Chris Hynds to put into posts however this is currently still to be confirmed.

3 x PI - positions

1 x PS - position

1 x PC - position

Area 10 – Dumfries & Galloway

The following matters were raised.

Currently one vacancy at Inspector, Sgt. and PC levels. Currently going through election process for Sgt and PC level. It is very unlikely that the Insp/Chief Insp. Post will be filled.

Locally some concerns about staffing numbers on shifts in particular Galloway side of force and this will be raised with the local Commander.

Vehicle and the worthiness of the role being asked to do has also been raised. Again, this will be driven forward with local fleet users group.

Additional uptake of staff to St. Ives left shifts below OBL's. Officers left at Division have been advised that no overtime available.

The National Deputy General Secretary updated and advised the members that this issue has been raised. Clearly officers cannot police as required under those circumstances. Deployment has more than doubled in the last 5-6 weeks.

The matter was discussed further in relation to deployment, accommodation requirements and allowances.

One member asked if it was possible to publish documentation highlighting the benefits of signing the Workforce agreement (WFA).

The National Deputy General Secretary advised that the WFA was in effect to protect officers. Shift patterns have to be agreed offering protection for officers in terms of working hours and conditions.

The National Deputy General Secretary updated members on Operation Urram in respect of travelling time, accommodation and shift patterns during the event. SPF still await information in relation to this event and once confirmed, this will be circulated to members.

Area 11 – Lanarkshire

The following matters were raised.

New FFP3 mask carriers have been rolled out in the division, although there appears to be a shortage. This has been raised and additional supplies will be delivered.

There remain queries from Supervisors with regards to officers believing if they have been vaccinated twice they no longer require to be clean shaven, advice has been provided to clarify clean shaven remains the default at this time.

Project Quest - Movement to Euro Central site, has continued to slow further meetings to be scheduled for updates, other sites possibly being considered at this time also.

Continued issues raised by Response officers and Supervisors with Scottish Ambulance Service raised from last meeting, division appears to be taking more to do with this now.

Officers are still awaiting vaccines, and the gesture from NHS centres to give left over appears to have ended, the feeling from officers remains that they should have been prioritised.

There are currently three ongoing criminal proceedings.

There remains ongoing issues with the Response Fleet in Lanarkshire, the garage has now Re-opened, in the interim period Fleet vehicles were going to private garages which saw an increase in turnaround of repairs, it appears to have slowed now the Garage at Motherwell is back in operation.

Area 12 – Renfrew & Inverclyde

The following matters were raised.

The most recent meeting with the Divisional Commander was held on 26 May 2021. The following issues were raised and discussed.

Resources

The lack of service on the shifts and the high proportion of probationary officers and officers who are just out of their probation was discussed. Workload and the allocation of tasks was also discussed.

There is currently a number of reviews taking place including one into the divisional operating model, which is meeting next week, a review into modified duties officers in the division, as well as a force level review of local policing and divisional reps will be updated on the progress of these .

Communication

The Commander acknowledged that due to the pandemic, he and the SMT have not been able to be as visible as they would have liked. With the easing of restrictions he is keen to address this. Sergeant and Inspector forums will be introduced along with other ways to improve communication.

CAM

Issues were discussed in relation to CAM and the difficulties if problems are identified in feeding these back to the Resolution Team, the division no longer has a SPOC to highlight things to which may contribute to a perception that the system is working better than it is and does not give an opportunity to improve .

The Commander is going to look into this and provide an update for the next meeting.

Custody

The continued issues with custody division in relation to processing times and number of prisoner obs was discussed. The Commander wishes to try and address any issues and is keen to be made aware of problems so it can be raised at the custody forum.

The Commander is also aware of the ongoing Prisoner Obs group review which is due to report back in June and he will also provide an update on this when he has it.

Health and Safety

The poor state of the vehicle fleet was raised in relation to the age of the cars, number of cars at the garage for repair and the time taken to repair vehicles.

This will continue to be raised at divisional H+S meetings.

Taser and the shortage of trained officers, the Commander is keen to encourage officers to apply for Taser training but until more courses are made available this will continue to be a problem.

Lack of Lighting/Sentry tents in the divisional inventory - some divisions appear to have a stock of these items when they have to deal with a locus which has to be maintained for a protracted period.

This is another area the Commander will look into.

Renfrewshire Sub Divisional Merger

This is a relatively new development which has merged the sub divisional management of KA and KB sub division to align it better with the local authority area.

This was put in place prior to the new Commander arriving and he is currently in the process of having it reviewed, although no major issues have been identified with this to date. Divisional reps will be provided with an update on the progress of this and we will continue to monitor it to try and address any issues.

Area 13 & Area 16 – Greater Glasgow North & South

The following matters were raised.

OP Stumpacre - All injured or near misses being offered Trim. Several officers injured in what can only be described as the biggest Public order incident in the West resulting in numerous assaults. A dedicated enquiry team is now setup. SMARTEU will conduct 4 strand debrief.

Operation Urram – Local federation representation on planning meetings from G division perspective.

Euros – scoping now done for event, including fan zones as it is anticipated that there will be fans at events.

COVID – There appear to be less cases and isolations. Some Officer were issued with the new carry case that can take goggles and 5 masks. This can be clipped to the belt if required.

NHSGGC not offering up spare vaccine doses to Officers despite a promising start.

Taser – numbers are still limited and Officers are complaining of having to travel across multiple subs – even having to borrow Taser trained officers from out with division (Q Division).

Custody division – Still significant issues with custody, Officers being sent to Lanarkshire custody suites due to queues in G Division.

One member highlighted that Officers in GG Division are losing parking due to custody now taking over several sites.

ACTION – the WAC Deputy Secretary will raise this and report back. Offices affected are Baird Street, Govan and Cathcart.

Exigencies/Events staffing/Time off – Discussions are ongoing around publishing exigencies better to inform staff of the reasoning. The monthly Ops Planning meeting is now back up and running. Representatives are worried about potential for large volumes of events and the subsequent pressures put on the frontline due to the abstractions.

PPU Shift pattern consultation – this is still ongoing.

Euro 2020/2021 - Scoping appears to have been done but red days remain. Querying with planning team regarding these remaining.

Area 14 – Operation Support Division

The following matters were raised.

Enquiries regarding resourcing for Urram. Some officers aware of a proposed 12 hour 6 day shift pattern with two early, two night and two off. Requested to know who will be doing this and when implemented.

Area 15 – S.C.D.

SCD continue to have issues with custody division in relation to offenders being released from custody instead of being detained for court, and the arresting officers being tasked with finding the prisoner alternative accommodation if they are not welcome back at their address.

7. **DEEP DIVE**

The Chair is completing a final report for the Deep Dive which took place in L division. A draft will be forwarded to the Deputy Secretary (H&S).

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

Local Policing Commanders West

Three meetings of the LPC have taken place since the last WAC. They were held on 23rd March, 29th April and 27th May. The following are some of the topics that were discussed in those meetings.

Event and partnership funding and shortfalls.

The cancellation of large-scale sporting and entertainment events had led to a shortfall in expected funding. Event organisers are charged for a police presence and although this sometimes does not cover the whole cost of an operation, divisions have expected levels of income factored into their budgets. There are still problems with how funding for events is

distributed with divisions only getting a fraction of the cost back. Mention was also made about some partners withdrawing funding for dedicated posts.

Strategic Workforce Plan

There is still an element of uncertainty as to what the SWP will mean for each division and department. Concerns include that posts will be moved from frontline to service demand in specialist divisions.

Estates

Preferred options have been developed for replacing Ayr and Oban offices. These proposals should be getting sent out to U and L divisions for circulation to our members. Estates are also in early discussions with Argyll and Bute Council regarding developing key worker accommodation in Argyll.

Shields

There is a general unease in the West regarding the removal of shields from patrol vehicles. The PSoS position is that they weren't used in the rest of the country however it was argued that the threat of violence was greater in the West and that protection should not be lowered.

Risk

Divisions, Areas and Police Scotland nationally maintain risk registers and the amongst the risks identified in the West are;

Court Duty Change- inability to maintain safe levels of officers and compliance with the Workforce Agreement. There is a massive backlog of court cases that have built up during the pandemic which COPFS and the courts are looking to clear.

Non-deployable officers- high numbers of officers who cannot be deployed operationally due to long term health issues and disabilities. There are barriers offering them meaningful work elsewhere in Police Scotland. The SPF also raised the number of officers who are on conduct restrictions and how this is applied inconsistently.

People Plan and People Boards

CS Carol McGuire and CS Alan Waddell are in charge of delivering the West people plan. There are multiple strands to this and SPOCs have been identified in each division. Essentially the plan looks to deliver a better working environment for the members. Through increased awareness of and better training in personnel issues. Activities to improve morale (Team Challenge) and welfare/fitness Cycle to Work, better KIT days.

An update was given on promotions at a People Board meeting on 13th May. There are 295 Constables qualified for promotion to Sergeant and a parade is planned for July where app 200 will be promoted. It is possible that the promotion calendar will need to be amended again as the service could run out of qualified constables before the next planned Sergeant process. There are 77 Sergeants qualified for promotion and four Inspectors. A further parade is planned for August.

In respect of the promoted ranks, the East Area Chair, represents Inspecting ranks at PNB. Work is ongoing at PNB in respect of compensating Inspectors and Chief Inspectors for working additional hours. There may be communication from the service regarding the recording of working hours. Members, particularly Inspectors and Chief Inspectors should be encouraged to accurately record their working time.

One member highlighted the need for officers to be encouraged not to take devices home with them after completing their working day, as this impacts on their personal lives. A memo had been circulated in one division in this respect and the WAC Chair asked that a copy of this be provided to Merrylee House.

ACTION – for all Divisional representatives

Reps to raise any issues with officer's home working on their Mobile Devices out with duty hours, which they are aware of, with senior management teams.

PODG

There was not much to report since the last meeting.

The Chair advised that the terms of reference were to be arranged by 28 May.

Naloxone – If this is passed to officers in Custody Division it was agreed that a risk assessment should be carried out.

There is a requirement for driver training.

9. **CONDUCT**

The Deputy Secretary (Conduct) updated on the last meeting of the Conduct Committee which took place on 6 April 2021 by video conference.

Criminal Cases

Legal applications were discussed, 21 received for criminal cases, two had been concluded after interview and the remaining 19 were all being considered by CAAPD.

Conduct Cases

Conduct investigations continue to progress, 1 meeting has been held since the last Conduct standing committee meeting. Several were scheduled to take place in the coming weeks and months.

CAP

The Assistant to General Secretary (conduct) - (AGSC) reported that from 1st May 2021 the frontline resolution and investigation of complaints will be entirely brought in house for PSD to handle. This has resulted in around 25 additional posts to PSD and has been brought in following recommendation 9 of the Dame Elish report. The 25 new posts include Inspectors, Sergeants and Constables and they will all attend a week long induction course (recommendation 6)

Performance/PIP

No performance cases since last meeting.

No PIP since last meeting.

PIRC

PIRC obtaining statements by teleconference during COVID 19. Our advice to officers is to request to be sent a copy of any statement obtained to agree the contents, rather than have this read out.

Training

Training will restart once lockdown is eased. AGSC will prioritise training on regulations and additional support for reps dealing with conduct cases, meetings and hearings.

AOCB

Conduct IT – Tablet trial concluded, two of the West Conduct trained representatives were now utilising laptops to see if this is a better solution.

Total case load in the west of 102 (15 less than last WAC)

The criminal figures remain high, but as per last quarter this is anticipated to reduce once the courts are back to normal as many cases were postponed due to covid.

There have been five misconduct meetings since the last WAC, two with no misconduct found, two Final Written Warnings and one Written Warning. Two misconduct matters were dealt with via Improvement Action without the need to progress to a meeting.

We have two hearings due to take place with dates still to be set. There are a number of matters awaiting decision on how to progress.

Members were advised to ensure that any updates for criminal or conduct matters should be submitted on the new electronic form. The link has been emailed out by Lynne.

Thanks were extended to those who have supported officers during criminal trials and conduct during these difficult times, the inevitable delays have not been easy for anyone to deal with but the continued support is invaluable to those awaiting their outcomes.

Particular thanks to Jennie MacFarlane and Lynne Gray who both carried out their first misconduct meetings since the last WAC.

The Deputy Secretary (Conduct) also recorded thanks to all reps who have stepped forward to assist colleagues who have been under investigation whilst she has been conduct lead. She asked that the members give the new Deputy Secretary (Conduct), Lynne Gray, every support they can in her new role.

10. EQUALITY

In the absence of the Vice Chair, The WAC Deputy Secretary delivered the update to the Committee.

The last Equality Committee meeting took place on 25 March 2021.

PNB(S) Equality Working Group

The Assistant to General Secretary (Equality) (AGSE) reported that there had been no meetings of this Group since the last Equality Subject Committee meeting.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Employment Group

The last meeting took place on 3 February 2021. Equality outcomes relative to the next period of review for the Mainstreaming Report, continued to be developed, and is the subject of various work-streams, including Brake the Race Ceiling, Smarter Working and Maximising Attendance. The SPF have continued presence and continue to make valuable contributions based on members' experiences

Ill Health Process

There is still a significant backlog of cases to be heard, with some members waiting up to 8 months just for an SMP appointment. A further SMP has been appointed, working two days a week alongside the new SMP to try and address some of the backlog. The WAC Vice Chair and the other Equality Leads have had meetings with relevant HR leads to ensure cases are prioritised on the right basis, not necessarily those who have been in the process for longest. HR are sending letters to all those currently in the IHR process to explain the reasons for the delays. All members in the process are being retained on full pay. Advice should be given to any member enquiring about the IHR process that the timescales now are around 12- 18 months for completion, minimum.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Human Rights Strategic Oversight Board

The AGSE advised the Committee that DCC Fiona Taylor is the Chair of this Board, and that the first meeting was held on 1 March 2021. He stated that the Strategic Oversight Board (SOB), provides process and governance on EDI work within the Police Service, combining both and providing opportunity to take initiatives forward. Whilst this was the first meeting of the SOB, legacy business from the previous Strategy Group required to be concluded, to ensure a seamless transition.

Ongoing National Equality Work

The AGSE informed the Committee that, since taking up this role, he has attended various meetings to discuss relevant matters, and is seeking to find better ways of working together to strengthen the links with colleagues within Police Scotland and the Diversity Staff Associations.

He stated that matters relating to Pregnancy, Ill Health Retirement, and Injury on Duty, are being progressed, and that considerable benefits have already come to fruition. It is hoped that those members will see tangible results as the work with Police Scotland continues.

The AGSE highlighted the good work carried out by FTOBs in respect of pregnancy related issues, and made specific mention of the work undertaken by Shirley Moran and Jennie McFarlane.

Training

A training pack for equality matters is being designed and it is hoped to start the roll-out soon.

West update to the JCC Equality meeting

The WAC Vice chair provided an update for the West area and reported on the number of live Grievances, where members have sought SPF support. Many of the Grievances involved perceived discrimination, on a variety of the protected characteristics, and arrangements have been made to meet with other staff and diversity associations next month to share ideas.

It was reported that support is being provided to a number of those currently progressing through the ill health process, as well as other officers who have serious or terminal illnesses, significant mental health issues, anxiety, stress and/or PTSD.

The new Selected Medical Practitioner was being assisted by a part time SMP, as a result of which, there had been progress with some of the priority ill health cases.

The Committee were reminded of the SPF Group Insurance scheme, which includes critical illness benefit, but which must be claimed within 90 days of diagnosis as a qualifying illness/condition.

As lockdown restrictions begin to ease, it is anticipated that many pregnant officers with underlying health conditions, would be expected to return to offices. The Committee were reminded that individual risk assessments would require to be carried out before any return to duty could occur and that Health and safety considerations would remain for some time.

11. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Deputy Secretary (Health & Safety) provided an update on the last meeting of the Health & Safety committee which took place on 8 April 2021.

The following is a brief update on some of the Health and safety issues that are currently being discussed.

Covid

As the infection rates across the country have reduced so have the frequency of the Op Talla meetings. The guidance has not changed and FFP3 masks should still be worn when breaching the 2m distance when dealing with the public. The burn rate indicates that this is still not happening.

Joint Covid compliance checks are still happening with PSOS advisors and for the most part the covid control measures are in place. The additional cleaning is slowly being increased so stations that operate 24/7 should be being cleaned on a daily basis. Officers cleaning work stations and vehicles between uses should continue.

Lateral flow testing is been introduced for training and public order events.

PSoS are leading the way in the UK with reporting Covid cases under RIDDOR - 194 reports out of a total of 615 reported by UK forces to date. No forces have reported any feedback from the HSE.

Over 1600 officers have been contacted in relation to their exposure of potential exposure to Covid while at work. They are provided with a simple health questionnaire so that we can capture the information should it be required in the future.

Violence

Assault data analysis

Snap shot analyses from Q and L divisions as they had been identified as the 2 areas seeing significant spikes in police assaults.

The most significant finding was that the majority of assaults had assailants between 12-17 years and many were related to Children's homes, absconders and missing persons. Indeed, a single 15-year-old male was responsible for 18 assaults in Q3 and had been responsible for 42 police assaults in the previous 6 months.

Including that youth, six offenders were responsible for 44 assaults.

The clear failings of other partners were highlighted and are being addressed by the command teams.

L Division had higher numbers through the festive period, but had no repeat offenders. The MO in both Divisions were Kick, Spit, punch in that order of prevalence.

In both divisions a large number of the assaults occur in police vehicles or premises.

Accident reporting/Data Recording SLWG - This has been set up to look at the massive discrepancy in numbers of crimes and reports on SCoPE.

They have developed an accident report completion guide that is now on the Intranet. That in itself is about 26 slides long and highlights the issues in that the form has to be repeated for individuals involved in the same incident and also requires more than one form if the accidents are in the same incident, but unconnected ie officer punched by assailant and cuts lip, assailant runs off pursued by injured officer, injured officer slips and hurts ankle.

The data recorded has to be "good data" and the quality of completing the forms varies significantly from "punched in face, sore lip" to the cut and paste of the SPR. Info recorded should be about the incident and the injuries, but in sufficient detail to make the data worthwhile.

G Division have the highest number of submitted reports until looked at from a reports per 1000 officers, and they drop down the table. Number of reports will also affect the identification of repeat victims.

The ongoing review of SCoPE will make any changes unlikely until it is decided what the future of SCoPE is.

There is a guide on how to complete the SCoPE forms on the intranet.

TASER

A number of questions were put to the Chief Constable in relation to Taser at the recent conference. As indicated, there is a push from the force executive to increase Taser, however they want a public consultation carried out first.

The Committee discussed the appropriate response to dealing with incidents involving knives and where taser fitted into that list of options. The Chair reported that there were plans to increase the number of STOs to 2000 across the force. Members agreed this was a step in the right direction. The Committee agreed that it was crucial to get the right people for the job in hand which in the case of knife calls should be armed officers.

Use of Force

A paper has been submitted in relation to the use of soft-cuffs within the CJSD area of business. There has been an ongoing trial and the recommendation is that soft-cuffs be used when carrying out level 4 obs.

PPE

Body Armour - The AGSH reported that 12 regional hubs are operating well with no issues for delivery once the new sets arrive. The sets ordered for Inverness arrived the day before the meeting, with orders for Aberdeen, Glenrothes and Stirling arriving in the next couple of weeks. 2200 sets of armour had been issued.

Footwear - Boots had been issued in Fife over the last month and was nearing completion there. 400 pairs of boots had been issued thus far. The Forth Valley rollout would commence early next month and would move North and finish in the West area. It was reported that there had been an issue raised by an officer in SCD in relation to their reluctance to buy boots prior to potential deployment at COP26 given that they will eventually be issued with a pair by PSoS. In the interim during the rollout, is it still the officer's responsibility to ensure they have suitable footwear for deployment.

Shields - The Assistant to General Secretary (Health & Safety) (AGSH) reported that the Working Group was required to carry out some more work on the issue. A paper submitted to the YSM group recommended the immediate removal of the short shields from vehicles as they could not be confidence tested effectively and their warranty was expired. Carriage of intermediate shields in divisional vans could be considered as they have the weight capacity to carry the additional equipment. The safety shield (buckler) was then discussed. DCC considered that it would be useful to consider other techniques and tactics that could be included in the Officer Safety Training (OST), but also a trial of the safety shield would be appropriate before a wider roll out if they proved to be successful.

There was also a discussion regarding shields at the West H&S meeting after the force memo had been published. An action was raised at this time for the ACC to engage in further discussions about the removal of the shields.

Clothing

There had been no meeting of the meeting of the Clothing and Equipment working group since the last update. One member raised the issue of only being supplied with one body armour cover. It was agreed that this issue would be taken back to the group.

Operational Equipment/Fleet

The AGSH advised that a racking system for vehicles has been developed and a further prototype is expected in the next few weeks. Photos of the systems developed for the BMW X5 and the Peugeot 308 were shared with the committee. They are considered a positive step. Members of the committee were pleased to note the additional funding. One member said that Northamptonshire seemed to have excellent vehicles and widespread use of tasers. The Chair said he would contact Northamptonshire to learn more.

Fleet

The AGSH reported that a welcome injection of capital funding had been received and this was going to be utilised to replace some of the older vehicles.

The AGSH explained the recent Carbon monoxide incident. They were still trying to ascertain how the gas got into the passenger cabin as it did. The vehicle will be going to Millbrook testing centre in a few weeks following removal of travel restrictions where they will replicate the exact shift using information from officers and the telematics from the vehicle. He also updated re the carbon monoxide detectors which they are still in the process of identifying a suitable model, although a Glasgow based company had been identified who may be of help.

The AGSH explained that samples of the new vehicles in fleet are going to be reweighed at the end of April to assess the requirement for any further safety alerts.

First Aid

The AGSH reported that the Naloxone Test of Change is underway. An updated JCC Circular 6 of 2021 had been issued. Carrying naloxone is voluntary.

The Committee discussed naloxone in general and concerns in relation to training, where no information had been provided about actual delivery or aftercare. It was reported that PIRC and PSD had made certain statements about investigation and prosecution but neither had been able to give any guarantees.

H&S BOARD – OTHER

Fire Safety

There had been good progress on fire safety issues and work is being progressed on most of the High and Medium risk issues which should be complete by end of March.

Fire awareness training is in a very good place with 18, 498 having completed this which is an increase of 527 since the last report. SFRS are happy with the training package we present.

Administration and Governance

There are 14 ongoing accident investigations. 8 investigations are live in the West. Some of the recent accident investigations have been carried out or are being carried out by Divisional reps who were thanked for their assistance.

Joint custody audits continue to be carried out. Joint welfare visits to offices have also been carried out.

Training

The Force H&S team are still working at developing online training so that it can still progress in these socially distancing times. Some issues having the content transferred to Moodle. Manual handling is proving more difficult as requires to have face to face training and is mainly for police staff.

They are developing a bespoke H&S training package based on the IOSH Managing Safely course, which is to be accredited and can be adapted to any area of policing as well as potentially provided to other forces.

DCC Taylor highlighted the need for training to a number of new SPA Board members as well as new executive officers.

The Assistant to General Secretary (Health & Safety) AGSH advised that once safe, training will re-start for the SPF. The Chair advised he was looking at potential dates to hold training in Dundee, Covid restrictions would be implemented.

The Committee discussed standard driver response training. The Chair said that the biggest risk in training terms was driver training. He explained there were 8000 response officers and 4500 of them had not received driver training. He said this amounted to a backlog on training of between 9 and 12 years. He said that some shifts had no trained drivers.

One member asked if PSOS was recruiting non-drivers. The chair said that PSOS was currently reviewing its position on this subject but it was understood that a driving licence would be made an application requirement.

West Update

Joint welfare visits regarding Covid are being conducted in the west area.

The West H&S Meeting took place on the 11th February 2021, the following items were discussed.

Scope reports (near miss / accident forms) – Still being under-reported, force H&S team will be putting out guidance. This will include what information to put on the form by the officer completing it and for supervisors.

Assaults on Officers/staff – Same as main update.

Fleet – Most divisions reporting issues with the number of marked vehicles available for use.

Shields – As per main update, an action was raised from the west meeting for the ACC to take this back to the Force executive.

Estates – An update from the estates team was provided. 80% of high and medium issues raised with estates were completed in the required time frame.

WAC - other Business

There was no meeting of the Constant Obs short life working group since the last meeting. As a result of a PIRC enquiry into a death in police custody, the HSE were tasked with visiting two offices (Govan and Clydebank) to ascertain the set up for officers carrying out constant Obs. This was initial visit and we are waiting on the report.

Work with CJSD continues, as well as the national and West H&S meetings there is also a catch-up meeting to discuss items that may not fall under H&S. Items under discussion from feedback from members was as follows –

The volume of Constant OBS – As well as the Short life working group (SLWG) , QAI's now regularly check to ensure that reviews are being varied out. This has led to a reduction to the number of people who are initially put onto Obs remaining in constant Obs.

OBs rooms – These will be looked at further when the report comes back from the HSE.

Prisoner transports from Campbeltown and Lochgilphead – There is currently an advertisement out for 1 + 5 officers to work Criminal Justice Services Division (CJSD) in Oban.

Custody staff to prisoner ratios – Advised that work was ongoing to ensure that all custody staff were aware of what the ratios should be and in some areas there will be an uplift in CJSD staff.

Waiting times/waiting in cars – It was agreed that persons should not routinely be held in cars waiting to be processed and if there is space in the office they should be held there. There is staff assigned to OP Urram who are again looking at overall waiting times. Any issues with waiting times should be raised at the time with the Duty officers and with their own local supervisor.

Disposal – Issues were raised with regards to concerns re disposals with persons being released and committing further crimes and with offenders being released for crimes which would normally be custody, it was highlighted that feedback suggests that some officers are getting emails from the Procurator Fiscal (PF) to ascertain why the person was released. QAI's roles are under review, the guidance they are working from has come from the Crown office and they are aware that some PF's are contacting officers direct, these enquiries were put back to Crown office to ensure that PF's were aware of the full guidance. If there is any issues with disposals these again should be raised with the duty officers and local supervisors at the time.

Virtual courts – Issues raised with the length of time virtual custody courts take and the paperwork involved. CJSD are aware of the scale of the problem and are looking at fixes.

The WAC Deputy Secretary thanks all who emailed in with those issues and asked that this continues.

12. **JOINT CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

The WAC Chair provided an update.

Operational Duties

The JCC Ops Duties Committee met on 20th April and items for discussion included;

Probationer Leadership and Development Pathway (proposed new process for being promoted to Sergeant). The SPF has concerns that Police Scotland lack the capacity to implement this on a larger scale because it is dependent on the candidates being mentored and supported by their peers and managers.

Sergeant Process which has now concluded. The SPF had received complaints about the fairness of the sifts. These complaints were relayed to the project lead.

Removal of fitness testing from Taser courses and lack of initial courses.

Lessons learned from recent protests and incidents with a perceived lack of consistency in how they were policed.

NB this meeting was held before recent events in George Square and Kenmure Street.

The National Chair had also been briefed by colleagues from England and Wales (E&W) about public order operations in Bristol, where the level of violence was unprecedented and may be a taste of what will happen during Cop26.

Welfare arrangements and SPF cover during COP26 was also raised.

Finance Committee

The JCC Finance Standing Committee met on the 20th April.

Items discussed included;

Performance of SPF investments.

Recommendation made to full JCC meeting to purchase properties to replace our offices in Aberdeen and Inverness which are currently rented. This was approved at JCC.

Cost for subscription to the Voluntary Fund has not increased since 2015.

Legislation and Regulation Committee

The JCC Legislation and Regulation Committee also met on the 20th April

Items discussed included;

The Angiolini review.

Scottish Government has given an undertaking to implement all of the recommendations. This will substantially increase the costs involved in the conduct process. If independent chairs are appointed the SPF will be looking for each officer to be legally represented. The service will need to pay for this.

Age of Criminality Responsibility Act 2019.

There are still major gaps in the legislation and the Police and Social Work are nowhere near ready. Unions representing Social Workers are also concerned.

JCC Meeting

The main JCC meeting was held via Teams on 11th May and updates were given on;

Pensions

There is a huge amount of uncertainty regarding pensions and the following positions are subject to change. Any change to pension provision has far reaching consequences that can vary from officer to officer.

Legal advice has been sought regarding the proposed remedy for McCloud and Sargeant around the disproportionate effect on part-time officers. The remedy will also affect officers who were older joiners to the service and were fully protected as a result of their age. The UK government position is that the courts found this to be illegal and they cannot continue this practice beyond April 2022.

The UK government position is to recover the costs of implementing the remedy from 2022-26. This could lead to increased contributions from CARE scheme members or a reduction in benefits.

There are potential changes to Commutation Caps. Currently under the 1987 Scheme Constables and Sergeants can retire once they reach 50 years of age provided that they have completed 25 years' service. However, they are limited in how much of their pension they can commute. If this cap is removed it could lead to an increase in experienced officers leaving the service. Police Scotland have not factored this into their Strategic Workforce Plan.

The underpin for commutation factors also expires in April 2022 which may lead to changes in lump sum payments for members of the 1987 scheme who retire from that date. SPF members, Police Scotland and the SPA continue to receive poor service from the SPPA.

Police Negotiating Board (PNB)

The only formal claims that have been tabled are the Staff Side's claim which was tabled in July and the offer from the Official Side of 1%. Informal discussions have taken place with the Official Side raising an improved offer. Technical working group is looking at Inspector working hours and compensation for Urram.

Budget and finance

Government line is that they are protecting Police Scotland's budget in real terms. Please note that this only applies to the Capital Budget which comprises 12% of the total.

Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee

Frustration was expressed about how the service is ignoring the views of the SPF. Issues should be dealt with at JNCC but are ignored and end being escalated to the Chief Constable who recognizes our legitimate concerns.

Consideration is being given to holding a policy conference later this year or in 2022 for all reps. This would decide future SPF policies.

1919 magazine

There was a lengthy discussion about the structure, finance and legal liability of the magazine. Legal advice was being taken about how to deal with this.

SPF Training

With restrictions easing, SPF basic courses are restarting in June. A training programme is being put in place for FTOBs to ensure that they are fully trained across all the main business areas Conduct, H&S and Equality.

PSoS Reform

An update was given on the Body Worn Video project. First phase is only aiming to equip firearms officers in time for Urram. This is indicative of the lack of capital investment in PSoS and lack of ambition from the Force executive.

On average the Change Board produces 215 pages of documents a month.

People Strategy

The problems in rural recruitment and retention were discussed. PSoS are looking to wind up the working group that was looking into this. Consensus from the meeting was that PSoS have not implemented any meaningful change and the problems still exist. The issues are being progressed by our National Chair and Secretary.

Police Charities

The Police Treatment Centres (PTC) are expanding with new wings at Harrogate scheduled to open in June.

Police care UK had experienced a 300% increase in referrals during the pandemic and has had to curtail some types of assistance to keep up with this demand.

Motions

Two motions were passed. The first related to a review of responsibilities and line management of FTOBs which generated a large amount of discussion. The second related to giving officers the opportunity to claim compensation when they have an annual leave day or public holiday reinstated at short notice.

The Chair asked if there were any questions on the update.

One member asked the cost of publishing the 1919 Magazine. The Chair advised an approx. figure from his recollection for the first edition but it was expected that the cost would reduce for future editions. The member informed the meeting that there had been some concerns raised to him as the magazine was not in relation to Police pensions, pay or conditions.

This was noted by the WAC Chair and would be fed back to the Trustees.

13. CONSULTATIONS

SOPs issued for consultation since the last meeting.

COMPLETE

04/03/2021	C3 National Guidance
04/03/2021	Drugs Investigation National Guide
09/03/2021	Annual Policing Plan

15/04/2021 Temp Promotion Procedure
15/04/2021 Externally Funded Officers
15/04/2021 FOI

CURRENT

04/05/2021 Data Protection SOP
04/05/2021 Case Reporting National Guidance

There were no questions.

14. MOTIONS

The Chair advised members that two draft motions had been received and would be put forward for the September WAC Meeting.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items of correspondence had been received.

Letter of resignation from Gemma Mazur dated 4 March 2021

Letter of resignation from Paul Connelly dated 15 April 2021

Letter of thanks received dated 30 April 2021

Letter of resignation from Gerry Welsh dated 2 June 2021

16. COMPETENT BUSINESS

Retirement – G Welsh

The committee noted the retirement of long-standing L division Representative, Gerry Welsh who retires from the service on the 4th June. The Chair thanked Gerry for his contribution to the SPF.

Resilience and Capacity

The Chair thanked the local Representatives who had assisted with cases and enquiries over the last few months due to the impending change amongst the full-time officials. Members may experience a slight delay in response as cases which would usually be dealt with by a full-time official may be allocated to someone from another area.

The changes amongst the full-time officials could impact on the administration of the Benevolent Fund in particular.

Base Posts and Representation

It was noted that many local area representatives may have moved on from the posts that they held when first elected. In order to ensure that the records are correct and that cases are allocated to the most appropriate person, Representatives were asked to update Lynne Welsh at the West area office of any changes to post.

Under rule 7.12, members can continue to represent their original division even if transferred. Members would only be moved from their current post if promoted or if 20 members from their constituency wrote to the Area Secretary calling for them to stand down.

- Op Stumpacre/Public order

Due to many of the members having been involved in the operations at George Square, Kenmure St and elsewhere, the Chair allowed time for discussion regarding these events.

Concerns were raised regarding airwave capacity, lost communication and inadequate refreshment for officers. Any issues should be forwarded to Merrylee House and they will be fed into Events West.

17. CLOSE OF MEETING

The WAC Deputy Secretary extended thanks to the Chair, Paul Connelly, who was attending his last meeting of the WAC. On behalf of the SPF, he wished Paul well in his new role and for the future.

The Chair thanked the members for their attendance and wished the SPF the very best for the future. He thereafter closed the meeting.

The next meeting will take place on 9 September 2021.

Paul Connelly
Chair

Ian Florence
Deputy Secretary