



Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee

Minute of the quarterly meeting of the Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee, held on Monday 5 and Tuesday 6 June 2023, at SPF meeting room, Dundee.

1. Attendance, Opening and Roll Call

Full Time Officials

Allen Shaw	Chair
Caroline Macnaughton	Secretary
Yvonne Sloan	Vice Chair (Apologies)
Andrew Sawers	Deputy Secretary

Constables	Sergeants	Inspecting Ranks
Mark Douglass Andrew Horne Allen Begg Sorcha Burns Ronnie Irvine Dale Evans Liam Devine	Julie Stephen Fraser Robertson Simon Lewis Dalby Allana Lewek Gary Johnston (Day 2 only) David McAlpine Andy Bilton David MacKay	Gillian Donald Rhona Di Meola Lynne Kortland David Gibson Ryan MacDonald Pat Nicoll

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all members present, extending a special welcome to Liam Devine as he was attending for the first time.

Apologies were received from: Yvonne Sloan, Alex Carle, Shirley Moran, Calum Smith, Paul MacLaren and Robin Brown.

2. Minute of Previous Meeting

The previous meeting Minute was formally approved, having been proposed and seconded by Fraser Robertson and Ronnie Irvine.

3. Overview of C3

The Chair introduced Chief Superintendent Paul Wilson who gave a presentation on C3. This was followed by a Q&A session.

4. Resource Deployment

The Chair introduced Resource Deployment Manager, Stevie Diamond who gave a presentation on the Resource Deployment Unit via Teams as he could not attend in person.

5. Separate (Rank) Committees

The meeting broke for Rank Separate meetings with the Committee being advised to forward items discussed to the Secretary.

6. Legal Advice and Assistance

The Secretary gave an update on the number and type of applications for legal advice and / or assistance made by members in the Area since the last meeting.

Since the last JCC there have been 48 legal cases with 661 cases remaining live.

For the North Area there have been the following number of legal assistance applications:

On-duty – 6 applications. 1 x CICA, 2 x Criminal Defence, 1 x personal injury, 2 x Employment Dispute.

Off-duty - 4 applications. 3 x criminal legal defence, 1 x other.

JCC Legal Advice and Assistance updates –

ALLARD (in respect of recall payments for CHIS handlers, been ongoing since 2015) - still ongoing, awaits results of last meeting.

HOLIDAY PAY – the settlement figures were determined by the solicitors and officers were contacted about their individual cases. To be closed imminently.

JUDICIAL REVIEWS – non live at the moment.

LEGAL OPINION - Consultation on the SOP for Respiratory Protective. There was then lots of discussion around JCC Circular 17/2023 – Clean Shaven Policy.

A meeting of the Legal Claims & Administration Committee (LCAC) was held on 17 March 2023, minutes not yet received. At this meeting, there was a review of the Memo of Understanding that is used with the solicitors that are instructed by the SPF. All cases currently being funded by the SPF will be subject to a review to confirm that funding is still appropriate, and that the Federation is getting best value for the cases being supported and the service from the legal firms used.

The next public inquiry, after Sheku Bayoh, will be the COVID 19 inquiry. This will mostly centre around the care homes and those that died. Police involvement may come later and will include the vaccination priorities, supplies of PPE, childcare support etc.

7. Divisional Reports

Divisional Rep Julie Stephen gave an overview of issues within A Division. She spoke about staffing issues within night shifts relating to countermands / 28 day rule and not reverting back to core shift. There was then some discussion around 28 day rule, courts and welfare of members. She then advised of the recent reinstatement of the Divisional Commander's Recognition Award

Divisional Rep Ronnie Irvine gave an overview of issues within D Division. He mentioned "officer overload" regarding CCTV and video footage, domestic abuse trials and VPD research. He spoke about Sergeants now having to do an 18 point check on every single crime report submitted. He also advised TRiM referrals are not happening. There are issues with Sheriff and Jury standby – one day had 21 officers and not one trial took place. Divisional Rep Julie Stephen gave an overview of what happens in A Division re Sheriff and Jury trials.

Divisional Rep Andy Bilton gave an overview of issues within N Division. He spoke about low morale within the Division. Resourcing is still an issue on the islands. He also spoke about the national promotion process. Divisional Rep David McAlpine also raised issues with getting time off due to OBLs.

ACTION – Raise issue of OBLs / time off with Rob Shepherd - Secretary

8. JCC Sub Committees

The Secretary advised going forward these updates would revert back to Conduct, Equality and Health and Safety.

Policy, Procedure and Regulation

The Secretary advised the last meeting was on 16 March 2023. Conduct, Performance & Complaints – standards of paperwork coming out of PSD currently viewed by SPF as low standard. One pack had 33 points highlighted by SPF to be amended, which includes things as basic as including the home addresses of witnesses / subject officers. As a result, PSD reported themselves to PIRC for review!

Police Appeals Tribunals (PAT) – currently three live appeals, all related to WhatsApp where one officer has been reinstated.

There are currently 60 suspended officers nationally.

There are currently two public enquiries that Police required to give evidence to – Sheku Bayoh and COVID19. These are costing PSoS a fortune, yet have been instigated by the Scottish Government, who are not footing the bill. The SPF would not be able to afford all the legal costs of supporting officers required to give evidence at the Hearings so claiming it back from PSoS.

All FTOBs now trained in the Conduct Regulations.

Eventually looking to establish a Case Management System separate to the members database, to manage enquiries coming into the Areas.

Conduct

The Chair gave a brief update stating there are 58 cases in the North Area with 15 suspensions. He also spoke of “canteen culture” and WhatsApp cases and what comments “may be perceived to be racist / misogynistic”.

People and Operations

The Secretary advised the last meeting was on 15 March 2023. Alan Gibson is now Head of Leadership, Training and Development. There has been a 60% drop in those applying to join Police Scotland, with three intakes over the next year of about 160, this will equate now to about 450 new officers which was the number we were recruiting in each intake.

Since the last JCC there have been 122 retirements and another 89 in the process.

The Force has spent £1.5 million on the consultancy Ernst & Young, to provide a Leadership programme – which has a lot of holes in it. Currently being rolled out online to ACC and Superintendent level and feedback received is not good. They are now looking at rolling it out right down the ranks.

Regarding the Driver Training legislation for emergency services, Section 19 RTA, no exemptions, can only drive to the level of training received. This has now been extended to the NHS covering the Blue Light training for ambulance drivers.

Special Constabulary numbers have now dropped to 450 but PSoS want to increase them to 1,000.

My Career – a point raised by a Divisional Rep that only reflection logs submitted yourself can be used for evidence of promotion, not those submitted by supervisors, and it requires to be signed off. This appears to be going back to those shouting the loudest

getting the most recognition and a “200 words” format which is what My Career was brought in to prevent.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion People Strategy is in the first draft. This includes discussions around the use of Unisex toilets, due to the request by a non-binary person who was instructed to use a disabled toilet. Consensus that the People Focus has been lost.

Ill Health Retirement – looking at consideration for IOD pension assessments to be made at the same time as the SMP IHR assessments. The update in January was that there were 89 officers still in the IHR process – 43 with an appointment date; and 46 still waiting for an SMP date. The process is definitely speeding up with some recent officers taking only 3-4 months from applying for IHR process to getting an SMP appointment. This has been a shock to some who thought that they would remain off work on full pay for a long time, awaiting IHR assessment.

Some errors on IOD / IHR forms have been picked up where the SMP has been ticking the wrong box at the end which means tax implications for retiring officers. The Deputy Secretary gave an example of this whereby an officer would have had to repay £13,000 to HMRC. FTOBs get a copy of the final forms for reviewing and checking them to ensure that there is no human error resulting in the officers being placed on the wrong pension or IOD Tier.

Equality

The Deputy Secretary gave an update explaining the IOD process. He also spoke of positive comments around the equality training. He explained the IHR / IOD process and gave a brief review of the Grievance process. He then advised of neurodiversity issues at the SPC regarding the wording / comprehension of questions.

The Secretary then spoke about issues surrounding an email that has been circulating to officers whose surname looks to be from ethnic minorities asking if they speak another language. This has been escalated to AGS, Equality.

Working Practices

The Secretary advised the last meeting was held on 15 March 2023.

Events & Rostering – should not be rostering rest days into a bank – should be re-rostering within four days. At People Boards, officers to bring up the rostering of rest days and not to use banks.

Workforce Agreement (WFA)– discussion around areas for bringing to the Working Group compiling the new WFA. Issues flagged up included vagueness of the term Exigency of Duty and to make sure that WFA is legally binding. There needs to be a WFA for Variable Shift Patterns to be agreed, otherwise no shifts over eight hours long. If we withdraw from the WFA then VSA affected.

Body Worn Video project – project leads hope to have a full business case in by October 2023. There will be an uplift in CBRN officers and new PPE guidelines. National requirement is 500 officers but there is no driver training and no additional vehicles available.

Health and Safety Forum

The Chair introduced Gordon Forsyth, AGS, Health and Safety who gave an update on all health and safety issues including body armour, footwear, thermals, torches and hats.

He spoke about the increase in assaults, although generally down in North Area with the exception of N Division. Good news is injury rates from assaults are down by about 25%.

He spoke about Taser training and advised uses rise month by month.

He advised of roofing issues at Baluniefield and Perth, whereby the area in Baluniefield had to be evacuated.

Positive news following the Deep Dive at the end of last year regarding police housing and lots of improvements have been made. Alternative accommodation is being sourced for the worst cases.

He then spoke about the RPE policy and particular risk assessments and lots of discussion took place. The Chair explained the rationale around JCC Circular 17/2023 regarding RPE. Gordon Forsyth advised there is no SPF position at this time, the next JCC meeting will be held on 20 June 2023.

9. JCC Updates

The Deputy Secretary advised the last meeting of the JCC took place on 18 and 19 April 2023 and gave the following updates.

Finance Standing Committee

The last meeting of the JCC Finance Standing Committee took place on 19 April 2023.

The cost of legal cases having large impact on Voluntary Fund levels due to drop in membership with reduction in Force recruitment. Current budget for legal costs is £1.5 million.

The JCC endorsed that there should be a Review of 1919 magazine financing. The publication cannot be independent of the SPF as there are SPF Directors. There was discussion around the publication and the Committee were asked to review the current issue and feedback.

ACTION – Divisional Reps to review current issue of 1919 magazine and feedback.

PNB

PNB last met on 24 February 2023.

- Public holiday for all re coronation.
- Inspector / Superintendent Allowance (pay 2022) now on PNB live.
- Paid parental leave (pay 2022).
- Flexi time.
- Relevant travelling expenses.
- Electric vehicle mileage rates.
- Handbook updates.

Full PNB Strategic Working Group meeting was held on 10 March 2023.

General Secretary gave an update on the pay claim. Explained the “reasonable and fair claim” of 8.5% - this has come from the use of external auditors, not just plucked out of the air. Average from other emergency services. Nothing back from the official side yet. We want better pay AND more officers, not one or the other. Likely that pay claim will be rejected and that we would then go to arbitration.

Pensions

Scottish Scheme Advisory Board met on 23 March 2023 where they discussed:

- Medical assessments for eligibility for ill health pension. There is now no medical required if an officer leaves the pension, then comes back into the Scheme.
- Budget 2023 – pensions taxation changes.
- 2015 remedy.
- Participations rates.
- 2020 Scheme valuation process.

There was a SAB meeting held on 18 April 2023 in relation to the 2015 remedy and its implementation – awaits update. The remedy was due to be implemented by October 2023 so that officers could have a choice of Scheme at that time on retirement, unlikely to be sorted by then.

From 3 April 2023 – increase in the commutation %.

**Leigh Day Hurt Feelings case – they have issued communication to those involved. SPF similar case is sisted until June, pending outcome of the Leigh Day case being settled. SPF legal is going to ask lawyers for update on when SPF case will be compensated.*

JNCC

JNCC last met on 21 February 2023.

On Call Review – PSoS tried to kick this into the long grass stating that on-call worked really well and there were no issues. The General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary pushed back to highlight that the only review that the Service had completed related to Superintending ranks, and this needed much more work as there are so many ad-hoc on-call arrangements throughout the Service, which have not been authorised via staff associations.

SPF Training

Equality and IOSH training for Reps has now been completed.

Other JCC Business

Scottish Police Consultative Forum – last meeting held on 22 March 2023.

Areas discussed:

- Outcome of Working Group discussion on Acting / Temporary promotion.
- Police Leadership Development Programme (PLDP) final evaluation papers.
- Update from the PNB Strategic Commitment Working Group paper.

Any officers that have gone through the old system of exams / diploma, will still be valid.

CJSD confirmed that supervisors must legally be a Temporary not Acting Sergeant to be in Custody. Ranks allocated therefore being reviewed with conversion to Temporary from Acting where possible.

There has been a backtracking on the withdrawal of courts officers as there was realisation that many of the posts were funded by the Crown so would need to be backfilled if withdrawn.

SPA

Last meeting held 23 March 2023. Anyone interested in watching can view online, though some of the sessions are held in private. The Chief Constable contribution to the last meeting appeared to be the same as his input given to the SPF at Conference. Lots of discussion around the Baroness Casey report. Chief Constable reported that we needed a more reflective organization. Reduction in numbers to 16,600. Applications open for new Chief Constable position.

523 operational officer posts being lost – will mostly be actioned by losing current vacant posts.

A Division – losing 39 PCs

D Division – losing 33 PCs

N Division – losing 10 PCs

C3 – losing 27 PCs

SCD – losing 132 posts

Very few posts being cut are above the rank of Constable.

Direction from General Secretary as a result of the above for Area Secretaries to speak to Area ACCs to find out how they are going to deal with the cuts, what is NOT going to be done, what jobs are being cut.

Divisional Reps to meet with local councillors and MSPs and ask same question – what do they expect us NOT to do, with reduced resourcing levels.

SPA People's Committee – discussed Rhona Malone enquiry and ill health retirements.

Scottish Parliament and Political Engagement

New Cabinet Secretary resisting meeting / contacts with SPF since taking over the role, not meeting anyone.

On 8 June there is a planned lobbying event at Holyrood for FTOBs with MSPs – more details to follow.

Scottish Police Budget and Finance

£37 million funding for 2022/23 pay award.

£53 million capital.

£20 million for Reform projects, including £5 million for Justice Sector.

C3 looking to increase the % of staff as civilian to account for reduction in officer numbers.

EuroCOP & ICPR

EuroCOP recently held this year in Belfast. Looking at Industrial Rights in the Public Sector.

ICPR – in June next year in Portugal.

SPF Bravery Awards

North has 28 nominations.

West has 65 nominations.

East has 20 nominations.

Need completion of phase 2 entries to allow judging process to begin. Simon Lewis-Dalby and Dave McAlpine have one each.

10. JCC Circulars and Consultations

The Chair advised of the most recent JCC Circulars and SOPs for Consultations issued since last meeting.

11. Motions

The Chair gave an update on the motion taken to JCC on behalf of Divisional Rep Ronnie Irvine. Ronnie Irvine then gave his update advising the first meeting of the SLWG took place where discussions took place around updating the website, web links, apps, what kind of content we want etc.

12. Correspondence

The Chair advised there were no items of correspondence.

13. AOCB

The Chair asked if there were any items for discussion. Divisional Rep Fraser Robertson spoke of tragic circumstances in A Division whereby there have been several cases of terminal diagnosis for members and he made a plea to all to “brush up” on the services available through the Group Insurance Scheme, PTC, Police Charities etc.

The Secretary advised that local elections for Divisional Reps are being moved back to quarterly for all Areas. Proposed date for next elections is February 2024.

The Secretary asked anyone that is interested in observing at a JCC meeting, please let her know and she will request permission.

14. Closure

The Chair advised that the next Meeting of the North Area Committee is to be held on 4 and 5 September 2023.

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

Allen Shaw
Chair

Caroline Macnaughton
Secretary