



Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee

Minute of the quarterly meeting of the Scottish Police Federation North Area Committee, held on Monday 4 and Tuesday 5 September 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 Allen Begg Sorcha Burns Dale Evans Robin Brown	Julie Stephen Simon Lewis Dalby Allana Lewek Gary Johnston Paul MacLaren	Gillian Donald Lynne Kortland Ryan MacDonald Pat Nicoll Calum Smith

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all members present, extending a special welcome to Robin Brown as he was attending for the first time. He advised the meeting was only just quorate.

Apologies were received from: Yvonne Sloan, Rhona Di Meola, Alex Carle, Fraser Roberson, Ronnie Irvine, David McAlpine, Andy Bilton, David MacKay, Liam Devine, Andrew Horne and David Gibson

2. Minute of Previous Meeting

The previous meeting Minute was formally approved, having been proposed and seconded by Dale Evans and Gillian Donald.

3. PTC / The Police Children's Charity

The Chair introduced Graeme Addison who gave a presentation on the PTC and The Police Children's Charity.

4. Scottish Police Benevolent Fund / Credit Union

The Chair introduced George Nedley who gave a presentation on the Credit Union and Lynne Gray who gave a presentation on the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund.

5. Separate (Rank) Committees

No Separate (Rank) Committees required.

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 NAC there have been 83 calls to the legal assistance helpline.

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

On-duty – 11 applications. 1 x Misconduct, 1 x Criminal Legal Defence, 2 x Personal Injury, 7 x Employment Dispute.

Off-duty - 11 applications. 9 x Criminal Legal Defence, 1 x Personal Injury, 1 x Misconduct.

JCC Legal Advice and Assistance updates –

ALLARD (in respect of recall payments for CHIS handlers, been ongoing since 2015) – reassurance from the Deputy General Secretary that this will be settled very soon. Awaits calculations from PSoS and eventually SPF will be able to claim the legal costs back.

JUDICIAL REVIEWS – with cause drug-testing where there has been no suspicion of use. The Chair gave a brief update on our test case.

LEGAL OPINION – PSoS looking to bring in enhanced vetting but ACC Spiers has not consulted on this yet. May need to seek legal opinion in the future.

A meeting of the Legal Claims & Administration Committee (LCAC) was held on 14 June 2023. Matters discussed:-

SPF Reps should be present in meetings with solicitors and clients – we can then keep abreast of the level of service being provided and where cases are going. Solicitors should consider legal aid for more serious cases, so the financial burden does not fall solely on SPF. The Chair spoke about trying to get early pleas.

The Secretary advised of the General Secretary scrutinising all accounts to try and maintain members' costs.

May have to seek legal opinion on the "pension trap".

Thompsons have given the go ahead to re-open the applications for those that may have missed the opportunity to join the "hurt feelings" case last time round. This will be the last opportunity and closed in July. If members already have a claim running with another firm, they cannot run two claims at once and will have to leave the other firm if they join Thompsons.

The criteria for eligibility was covered in SPF Circular 19/2023.

Encourage officers to sign up to the daily SPF email digest – they will then automatically get any published Circulars as soon as they go on the website.

7. Divisional Reports

Divisional Rep Simon Lewis-Dalby gave an overview of issues within A Division. He spoke about issues with officers diagnosed with dyslexia whereby the reasonable adjustment is to have coloured paper and access to a colour printer but IT don't seem to know where all the colour printers are. Issues with reallocation of RRDs with officers going on courses. He then gave a brief update on a localised Web page he has been working on with the Deputy Secretary.

Divisional Rep Dale Evans gave an overview of issues within D Division. There are still issues with Court / citations / PF etc. He then spoke about ongoing issues with resourcing.

ACTION – Feedback further information and figures for Secretary to take to meeting with new LPA Commander – Dale Evans.

Divisional Rep Calum Smith gave an overview of issues within N Division. He also spoke about ongoing issues with resources. On a positive note, he acknowledged the SPF communication in relation to the pay claim is far better than it was. He stated the focus on modified officers is becoming more pronounced. There was then lots of discussion around modified officers.

Divisional Rep Pat Nicoll gave an overview of issues within Operational Support Division. Generally, the same issues as other Divisions, resourcing issues, Health and Safety issues re ear defenders not fit for purpose, no money for anything, OBLs - not enough cars.

Divisional Rep Ryan MacDonald gave an overview of issues within Custody. He spoke about an increase in hours officers are spending at hospitals in the last three months, sometimes 12-14 hours. He spoke about poor management.

ACTION – Examples to Allen Shaw to take to PIRC – Ryan MacDonald

Divisional Rep Gillian Donald gave an overview of issues within Professional Standards. She spoke about referrals coming in re issues with officers not getting time off, then going off on sick leave Surely this should be dealt with by supervisors and not coming to PSD.

8. JCC Sub Committees

Conduct

The Chair gave a brief update stating there are 45 cases in the North Area with 17 suspensions. There has been one dismissal with an ongoing appeal. He also spoke of some angst with regard to Special Constables and the fact very few sign up to the Voluntary Fund as they are only covered whilst on duty. He spoke about Misconduct Hearings and further Conduct training in the future. He then advised of Misconduct coming through via comments made in muster rooms and WhatsApp still causing issues and stressed that mobile phones can be looked at for anything under Misconduct.

Equality

There was discussion around dropping 'drill' at SPC and use of 'Sir' and 'Madam' in corridors before the Deputy Secretary gave the following update.

- 11 Equality cases (slight decrease from last June NAC) – Disability / Poor Supervision for reasonable adjustments – will result in a grievance.
- 11 Grievances – (Slight increase from last June NAC).
- 19 IHR / IOD (some just entering process and some awaiting IOD awards to be concluded, Redeployment / Retirement).
- 37 currently on IH in various guises.

IHR Retirement / Redeployment

- Turnaround is very quick now.
- Starting to see more redeployment where there is a back door within their medical journey that may allow PSoS to accommodate an officer in a non front facing role.
- The full timers have a great relationship with Heads of HR and can get to the right person if we feel something is just not right.

Particular Case Status (PCS) - Reminder

- Criteria DELAYS IN IHR PROCESS / INJURY ON DUTY / TERMINAL ILLNESS / CASE IS BEING CONSIDERED BY AN SMP / Delays with REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT under THE EQUALITY ACT.
- Appeals to ACC for certain circumstances where the criteria is not met.
- Not everyone will qualify for PCS so other options have to be considered – Group Insurance.

Mental Health / PTSD

- Increasing issues with this, we all need to be alert to issues within teams, its often the one who is coping that gets hit the hardest. Offer the services that we have at our disposal. PCUK / Credit Union / PTC etc.

Grievances

When approached, please ensure that the member has done as much as they can through line management before considering a grievance. There will be some that are clear and obvious but often they can be resolved at the lower level. Resolutions are key to this, just because a member is not happy does not mean it is a grievance. You may have to have that chat with them.

Equality Course

- Allocation of work to be discussed.
- Local meetings and training days to be planned.

Efficiency Standing Committee (Legislation, Regulation & Operational Duties)

The Secretary gave an update advising the first meeting of this Committee will be held on 20 September 2023. Items on the Agenda are:-

Leadership, Training and Development
Special Constabulary
Custody and Criminal Justice
Events and Rostering
C3
Workforce Agreements
Post Incident Procedures
Armed Policing Monitoring Group

She spoke about RRDs being allocated from September as per Regulations within 4 days, to be used within 12 months of original cancellation. Will all be allocated from banks over the next 3 years. Working a rest day is ALWAYS an 8-hour day.

The new Workforce Agreement (WFA) - need an exigency to cancel a rest day, no matter how many days notice is given. More specific guidance in the new WFA and will be looking to review this further to put a process in place to confirm conditions for an exigency.

She spoke about Police Accommodation BIK tax issues.

Health, Safety and Welfare Standing Committee

The Secretary advised the North Area Committee needs to have its own Area H&S Committee to feed into this one. The Vice Chair to set this up. Naloxone – West Midlands have stopped officers carrying it. IT system used by Estates not been used for five years, it cost £170,000. First Aid training gives different advice to the online training package. Issues around Governance of OST training with memos being issued stating SPF in agreement with changes that have not actually been consulted on. PSoS leading force in the UK for electric vehicles. 380 charging points for over 1,000 electric vehicles. No training for officers at EV fires. Insufficient capacity for kit.

Gordon Forsyth, AGS Health & Safety then gave an update which included an update on the legionella outbreak at the College, maintenance schedules, electronic asbestos register. He also spoke about “Your Safety Matters”, OST, Naloxone.

9. JCC Updates

The Secretary advised there had been two JCC meetings since last NAC, 20 June and 22 August 2023, and the Finance Standing Committee took place on 14 June and 9 August 2023.

She advised that Philip Williams, Group Insurance provider, now run a discount on BUPA. Benedict Healthcare was also discussed, for £90 a year will provide assessments and diagnosis and health MOT, more information requested from JCC. The review of the costs of 1919 magazine is still ongoing. SPF office in Inverness will be closed by end of September as the owner of the building requires the return of the lease.

PNB

The Secretary advised PNB will now be known as Police Negotiating Board for Scotland and will be a recognized legal body. The website is hosted by the Scottish Government. The PNB information will be archived on the website.

She advised the following matters that are still outstanding and currently for resolution with the PNB Technical Working Group are as follows:-

Recall to duty.

Duty time at College.

35-mile threshold for travel expenses.

55-mile threshold – can officers get paid for all of it.

Court on annual leave and rest day and standby issues.

Travel expenses – simplify to one rate.

Mileage claims for Op Unicorn and Devon & Cornwall deployment.

Detained on duty from nightshift.

Length of working week.

Overseas allowance – make it the same as the overnight allowance.

Pensions

The Secretary advised the Scottish Scheme Advisory Board met on 19 June 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.
- 2015 remedy. Due to come in on 1 October. Lots of concern that the SPPA won't get it right by that date. How will they sort it out for those that have already retired? Recommend you don't retire before October or who knows when you will get your remedy solution sorted out. SPPA have declared that from the October date, those retiring will retire on their legacy pension scheme for the purposes of the remedy. Those before 1 October will have to wait 18 months for payment of remedy.
- Pension trap – want to retire due to age but can't. CARE impacting on commutation.
- Those members that were in 2006 Scheme paid higher contributions, whereas those in 2015 Scheme pay lower contributions. If members opt to go back to their 1987 Scheme, they could end up paying additional contributions.
- Statistics show that you are more likely to die younger in Scotland than in England and Wales. Police officer age of death is decreasing. This will mean you are likely to get a bigger lump sum (depends on GAD Actuaries Department).

Anticipate that there are likely to be lots of retirements once the remedy is in place in October, potentially 800-1,100 officers may go.

The Secretary then reminded members about widows pension in 1987 scheme – married only. Must have converted to 2006 Scheme to get pension left to non-married partner.

The Chair also advised on ensuring SPPA Nomination Forms are completed.

JNCC

The Secretary advised JNCC will meet again this week, 7 September 2023 and housing allowance and tax benefits issues will be taken there.

At the last meeting in June the following issues were discussed:-

- PIP not being done properly.
- Body Worn Video – why is this still not in place, assurances given about it being now out to tender. Should be in place in April 2024, costs of £23 million. Trials of the three systems from the companies that have tendered to go ahead.
- Working Practices Review Board – there are 5,000 live shift patterns in place and are looking to rationalise this.
- Concern around what is happening in vetting.
- LEZ – night-time economy will mean that less taxis available and more issues around town centres (or socialising will move to outwith towns); businesses affected not able to get deliveries may move to perimeter areas of LEZ. Discussion around impact on officers – parking areas, fines, change of commuting practices, impact on finances.

SPF Training

There will be quadrennial elections at the end of the year, to be completed by February 2024. For this reason, there will not be local elections – will have an impact on training if lots of new Reps come in prior to this.

In 2024, after elections, there will be Mental Health First Aid Training by Lifelines for all Reps.

Pre-retirement courses to be reviewed.

Other JCC Business

Scottish Parliament and Political Engagement

The Chair and Secretary met with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Angela Constance. Her background is in social work. She appears to be prioritising prison service over police with the development of new prisons. The Party Conferences will be in the autumn and will be looking for volunteers. There is an appetite for local councils to get the power back for control of policing.

On 8 June there was a lobbying event at Holyrood for FTOBs with MSPs. Several journalists and MSPs attended, along with Justice Secretary. Jamie Greene, Russell Finlay, Pam Gosal all engaged and supportive of SPF. Meeting planned with MSP Donald Cameron for Highlands and Islands at Holyrood on 6 September to discuss resourcing and finance of police.

SPF Bravery Awards

The Secretary advised the finalists judging is now underway.

Police Related Charities

Update on PTC and TPCC Trustees meeting held at Auchterarder on 4 August 2023 from Ricky Wood, FTOB East, Trustee of the PTC.

Patron visit HRH Princess Anne in September at Harrogate after weather stopped last visit and official opening of new wing. Hopefully have a separate visit to Auchterarder in January.

September will be the yearly discussion around wages.

Upgrade on outdoor lighting at Auchterarder looks like will go ahead.

Looking at benefits of Solar power at Auchterarder. Cost is high but should get a return on it. More work to be carried out regarding costs and benefits.

Opening access to staff has been agreed. Looking at 1st January 2024 implementation.

Donation rate to be maintained will be reviewed at strategic workshop the middle of next year.

IT strategy, ongoing work looking at PTC APP. Various strands for apps but nursing staff keen on the use for patient notes.

Looking at doing research into what stops officers from attending the centre. 36 – 50 age group seems most affected. Do we need to be more flexible.

On-line Women's Health Service launched 17th July. Emphasis has been on strength and conditioning and menopause.

Question asked why so many yellow boxes but officers not attending PTC. 1500 in PSoS. Officers may need educating that you don't need to be injured on duty. Officers need to be made aware it is duty time. Quicker you attend for Physio or Psychological treatment the quicker you get back to work.

The hot ticket questions were the Admission of Suspended Officers. I circulated the information about this before the meeting. At the conclusion of this discussion, it was decided to maintain the status quo. Or though there will be some discussion around how to manage the officers better. Our set up works well its some of the E&W Forces where it's harder to get information on the officer, who is the relevant authority to authorise attendance.

With the wellbeing course it needs to be emphasised to officers that this course is for mild to moderate anxiety and depression. While being suspended this may not be the

course for the officer. It is after the investigation/ suspension is completed that officers get most benefit.

To finish on some good news the works on upgrading one of the wings at Auchterarder has commenced. I was at the PTC Monday, and I was asked to pass thanks as this is the monies donated by the SPF that is going towards paying for these works.

TPCC running smoothly, linking in more with the SPBF to see how we can work together. And any unusual applications from PSoS I'm getting heads up on so can look at getting some due diligence done on them to help their submission.

Birthday gifts to recipients is being signed off.

EuroCOP & ICRA

EuroCOP recently held this year in Belfast.

ICRA – in June next year in Portugal.

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 Deputy Secretary gave an update on the motion taken to JCC on behalf of Divisional Rep Ronnie Irvine. He advised currently on hold as further information is required on costs for an App.

12. Correspondence

The Secretary gave an update from the action on lack of nightshift resourcing from the three Area Commanders and read each of their responses to the Committee. This action is now complete.

13. AOCB

The Secretary read out resignation letters from David MacKay and Alex Carle who have to stand down as Reps due to promotion and noted thanks to both for their contributions.

She also advised of the retiral of David Ross and noted thanks for all his assistance with regard to pensions.

The Chair then advised of an imminent pay claim offer.

There was then discussion around speakers for the next meeting and hopefully three Area Divisional Commanders will attend.

14. Closure

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