



Scottish Police Federation

PO Box 27163, GLASGOW, G3 9EZ

JCC Circular 2 of 2024

Ref: DK/SF

16 February 2024

Dear Colleague

Members Update - Pay, PNB, Pensions, Income & Expenditure

These updates contain as much information as I can give you publicly. Clearly, openly explaining negotiating strategies is not advisable and some issues are commercially sensitive but please rest assured your representatives and doing all they can to try and ensure satisfactory outcomes on all of the issues covered below.

Update on Pay

Yesterday, at a PNB meeting in Glasgow, an update was provided on ongoing work on pay. You will recall that last year (2023) we achieved an agreement which said:

Pay negotiations for 2024/25 will begin immediately and the principles of fairness and affordability will remain paramount but will be informed by four main factors;

- *The inability of police officers to take any form of industrial action.*
- *Restrictions on their private life.*
- *Deals done elsewhere in the public sector.*
- *The prevailing economic conditions*

- **In other words a pay level check.**

On top of that, it was agreed that the Official Side and Staff side would commission an independent review into police officer pay and benefits. The scope of the independent research will consider the benefits and risks of potential approaches and will identify mechanisms to ensure appropriate wage growth within policing going forward from 2025/26.

- **In other words, an index.**

The mechanism for doing this was to include full consideration of the unique nature of the officer role in society. The Official Side and Staff Side would be given the opportunity to directly feed in views as to;

- key strategic principles that would inform such a review.
- relevant comparators/factors that should be taken into consideration.

The tendering process to confirm who would carry out the independent review is being done in line with Scottish Government tendering rules and this takes time – arguably too much time. I think it is inevitable that this important work for the 2024 pay award may continue beyond the April pay award date however we will keep you updated.

Update on PNB

Outstanding Issues on the Agenda of PNB include:

- Recall to duty
- Duty time at SPC
- Travelling Issues
- Standby for court
- Length of the working week
- Overseas Allowance
- PH Compensation
- AL – half day

Work on these issues continue between PNB meetings and hopefully we will have some resolutions before the next PNB meeting in June.

PNB Review

The PNBS (Constitution, Arbitration and Qualifying Cases) Regulations 2023 came into force on 16 August 2023. Work is being done on the PNBS Guide which will cover flow and structure and how business moves through the system including the re-establishment of Joint Secretaries to deal with Requests for Guidance, meeting structure, logos and branding, level of public transparency, level of progress tracking for PNBS and the Technical Working Group.

Update on Pensions

The main issue discussed recently has been the pensions remedy. There is still a great deal of uncertainty over process and precise arrangements but all members should receive correspondence from the Scottish Public Pensions Agency by August 2024.

We were recently advised that employer's pension costs were to increase, and that life expectancies post-retirement were less than pre-covid. This could affect Government Actuaries Commutation tables and we wait to see if they may change.

We still await our legal advice on age discrimination re the 'pension trap'. The 'pension trap' actually covers two scenarios. One, where someone has reached 25 years' service but cannot access their pension until they are 50 years of age, and two, where someone has reached 30 years' service in the 1987 police pension scheme but cannot access their entitlement under the 2015 police pension scheme. Because the pension schemes are separate entities, they have different retirement ages. This is a complex area and involves many factors so we have sought legal advice and we await the outcome. I am fully aware of how important this is to members and how they desire a quick outcome but these are complex issues and I will continue to update you when there are developments.

Finally on pensions, the 'hurt feelings' claims remain 'sisted' which means that the court has suspended proceedings and in this case the suspension is to allow judgments on other cases to be taken before our case proceeds.

Update on Income and Expenditure

At the JCC meeting on 29 November 2023, the following recommendation was carried:

"In light of the facts that membership is falling, the Voluntary Fund subscription has not been increased since 2015 and the cost of legal advice and assistance has increased, the FSC recommends to the JCC that it examines expenditure, subscription income and member services."

Work has been done and the following facts established:

- In the first quarter of 2013, there were 17,496 police officer in Scotland. In December 2023, there were 16,363 and it is projected that it could go as low as 15.959.
- We have not increased the subscriptions since 2014.
- The monthly subscription is £17.39. £6.21 of that is allocated to legal advice and assistance costs.
- Legal costs have doubled between 2015 and 2022, largely due to outlays such as Counsel costs, medical report etc. The £6.21 figure has remained static in that time.
- A new memorandum of understanding between ourselves and solicitors has been signed in an effort to control costs.
- In 2013, the SPF had 31 staff members. Over the past 10 years this has reduced to 13.
- Accommodation, travel and other costs associated with courses and meetings are constantly reviewed.
- We are contracted to holding one more conference at Turnberry in 2025.
- We are considering holding the Bravery Awards only every two years and in conjunction with the biennial conference.
- We are looking at reducing the number of meetings we hold.
- We are critically examining our use of consultants.
- We have closed our office in Inverness.
- We will close our office in Dundee in November 2024.
- If we had increased subscriptions by inflation each year since 2015 the £17.39 subscription would now be £22.70.
- If we had increased subscriptions in line with wage increases since 2015 the £17.39 subscription would now be £21.23.
- We are currently running at expenditure well in excess of our income.
- We have outstanding legal costs due to us which would cover the excess but we need to operate within our income.
- The £6.21 element of the subscription allocated to legal advice and assistance will be further examined.

At the JCC meeting on 6th February 2024 it was agreed that this be kept under consideration and a decision on a subscription increase, if necessary, be taken to coincide with the payment of a 2024 pay award.

Further updates will be provided by Circular or Minutes of meetings as and when there are developments of any of these issues.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Kennedy', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

DAVID KENNEDY
General Secretary