

**FORENSIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
7 November 2018**

**Minute of the Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services
Committee held on Wednesday 7 November 2018 in Pacific Quay,
Glasgow.**

Board Members Present: Tom Halpin (Chair)
Bob Hayes

Board Member Apologies: None

In attendance: Scottish Police Authority (SPA)
Tom Nelson, Director of Forensic Services
Gary Holcroft, Head of Physical Sciences
Fiona Douglas, Temporary Head of Forensic Services 2026
Programme
Derek Scrimger, Temporary Head of Biology
Amy McDonald, Forensic Services
Graham Stickle, Risk and Policy Specialist
Karen Vallance, SPA Committee Co-ordinator

Police Scotland (PS)
DCS David McLaren
Liz Nimmo, Programme Manager

Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)
Kenny Donnelly, Procurator Fiscal, High Court

HMICS
Roddy Irvine, Assistant Inspector of Constabulary

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Kenny Donnelly (KDonnelly) who would be attending the Committee in place of Stephen McGowan, on behalf of the COPFS.

The Chair paid tribute and acknowledged the Committee work undertaken by Iain Whyte and Graham Houston. The Chair

confirmed that the meeting was quorate, with two Members present, however additional Committee Members would be announced at a future Board meeting

Board Member apologies were received as noted above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTE FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 14 AUGUST 2018

The Committee **APPROVED** the minute from the Committee held on 14 August 2018.

4. ROLLING ACTION LOG AND MATTERS ARISING

The Committee **APPROVED** the action log from the Committee held on 14 August 2018.

There were no matters arising.

5. DECISION ON TAKING BUSINESS IN PRIVATE

In accordance with paragraphs 21 and 22 of the SPA Standing Orders, the Board **AGREED** to consider items 10 - 20 on the agenda in private for the reasons set out in the agenda.

6. FORENSIC SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q2

Tom Nelson (TNelson) referred to his report which provided performance activity conducted across SPA Forensic Services during Q2.

The Chair noted it was a developing report, therefore constructive feedback from Members, partners and attendees was necessary and welcomed. DCS David McLaren (DSCMcLaren) noted that the specific information on crime types in active work was helpful for Police Scotland's tasking meetings for volume crime.

Members requested further information regarding the invite to provide evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee. TNelson advised he anticipated questions would relate to how the Scottish Forensic Service model compares to the England and Wales model.

Members and attendees discussed how productivity, yield and value could be measured within the graph showing Scene Examination attendance and timelines. Amy McDonald (AMcDonald) advised that yield could be reported but it was acknowledged that capturing and reporting value was more difficult as a negative result still provides value.

Members queried the current Police Scotland level of provision and status of officer training for scene examination. TNelson recognised there was opportunity to further discuss assessment and tasking between Forensic Services and Police Scotland

Decision

The Committee **NOTED** the paper and **AGREED** the following actions:

(i) **Tom Nelson to provide an update on the outcome of the House of Lords Select Committee evidence session.**

20181107-FS-001

(ii) **DCS McLaren to provide update on status of provision of officer training for scene examination.**

20181107-FS-002

7. HMICS Update

TNelson referred to his report which provided an update on work to implement the improvements set out in the HMICS Thematic Inspection of the SPA Forensic Services. TNelson further added that the outcome of the HMICS quarterly review will be captured in the Forensic Services Board report in November 2018.

The Chair invited Roddy Irvine (RIrvine) to make any additional comment from the perspective of HMICS. RIrvine agreed that a significant amount of recommendations would be closed. He acknowledged the amount of work undertaken by Forensic Services and welcomed the context and assurance which had been received.

During discussion, Members raised concern regarding reporting at SPA Board Committee level of matters relating to digital forensics. It was noted that management information has not been reported previously to either the Forensic Services Committee or the Policing Committee. Members were concerned at the potential for inconsistency of digital forensics sitting within Police Scotland when

Forensic Science is completely separated within Forensic Science Services.

Decision

The Committee **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** the following action:

- (i) **The Chair to raise Committee's concern regarding reporting at committee/ board level of digital forensics.**

20181107-FS-003

8. FORENSIC SERVICES 2026 UPDATE

TNelson referred to his paper which provided an update on the work underway in respect of the first phase of the strategy and the projects which are being scoped to support the wider transformational activity in the short and medium term.

The Chair recognised that programme management capacity was the main issue and noted the positive impact of recruitment.

Decision

The Committee **NOTED** the paper.

9. FORENSIC SERVICES COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

There was no comment or proposed amendments to the Forensic Services Committee work plan.

Decision

The Committee **NOTED** the work plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 and resumed at 10:55.

Items 10 - 20 were taken in private.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting ended at 12:45.