



Legal Committee

21 November 2023

Minutes of the Legal Committee held on 1 August 2023 via MS Teams

Board Members present:	Jane Ryder (Committee Chair) Grant Macrae Catriona Stewart Caroline Stuart
Board Member apologies:	Michelle Miller
In attendance:	<u>Police Scotland</u> James Douglas, Legal Services Manager Shirley Carr, T/Chief Inspector <u>SPA</u> Lynn Brown, Chief Executive Jackie Kydd, Workforce Governance Lead Robin Johnston, Head of Legal Susan Montgomery, Lead Solicitor Eric Leggat, Solicitor Colette Craig, Governance Support Officer John MacLean, Workforce Governance Lead

1. Introduction and Welcome:

1.1 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and noted that in her Chair's report to the Board on 23rd March 2023, she advised that the committee would receive a report on appropriate benchmarking by September 2023. The Chair advised that following detailed discussions between SPA and Police Scotland Legal, it has been agreed that the SPA will consider this issue as part of a strategic piece of work, linking in with Police Scotland as part of that.

1.2 Apologies

Michelle Miller, SPA Board Member and Assistant Chief Constable Alan Speirs, PS.

1.3 Declarations of Interest and Connections

None.

1.4 Decisions taken since last meeting

The Chair advised that the committee had taken one decision in relation to an ongoing confidential legal matter.

1.5 Decision on taking business in private (Item 6-12)

Members agreed to take items 6-12 in private.

2. Minute and Actions from previous meeting:

2.1 Minute from meeting held on 13 March 2023 for approval

Members **AGREED** the Minute from the Legal Committee on 13 March 2023 was an accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Rolling Action Log and Matters Arising

There were no matters arising and Members **AGREED** to note the action log and agreed the action proposed for closure.

3. Statistical Report on Ill Health Retirement and Injury on Duty Awards

Jackie Kydd (JKydd) provided a brief overview of the report which noted the applications received, the recommendations from Police Scotland, and the decisions taken in cases in the period 04 March 2023 to 14 July 2023. During discussions the following matters were raised;

Members sought clarity that there was no longer a backlog or any aged claims awaiting a decision. JKydd advised that in relation to Ill Health Retirements, Police Scotland have returned to normal timescales and although there is no backlog, these matters can take time to work through the system. Injury on Duty timescales have taken a little longer to return to normal timescales, however, it is hoped this will be addressed in the next few months. JKydd added that a report will go to the People Committee in September 2023 which will highlight work that has been done to reduce timescales, following good engagement with the Police Federation.

Members **NOTED** the report.

4. Legal Services Claims Handling - Quarterly Statistical Information Report - Trends & Analysis in Litigation

James Douglas (JDouglas) provided an overview of the report which noted the number of claims settled by Police Scotland during the period April - June 2023 (Q1) under the general headings of Employers' liability, Public liability and motor vehicle claims.

Members sought clarity on when they would have sight on the breakdown of liability claims. JDouglas advised that the claims register at present did not allow further differentiation, however this was being worked on, and PS Legal would be able to provide further differentiation between types of claim, by the end of the financial year and possibly in the next 3 to 4 months.

JDouglas updated members on the five year aged analysis and advised that the figures presented were mostly static, although highlighting reductions in 2021, most likely as a result of people working from home during covid. The Chair noted that this related to settled cases, and if there is an increase in claims now, there will be a time lag before they are settled. Some horizon scanning may be required to see what is going to be coming up in future.

Members **NOTED** the report.

5. Legal Committee Work Plan

The Chair advised that next committee meeting will be November 2023. In addition and in common with good practise the committee will look to have a Development Day in January 2024 which will be incorporated into the statement of assurance.

