



Legal Committee

5 March 2024

Minutes of the Legal Committee held on Tuesday 21 November via MS Teams

Board Members present:	Jane Ryder (Committee Chair) Grant Macrae Michelle Miller Catriona Stewart Caroline Stuart
Board Member apologies:	Nil
In attendance:	Police Scotland DCC Alan Speirs, Professionalism, Strategy & Engagement Duncan Campbell, Chief Legal Officer James Douglas, Legal Services Manager David Duncan, Assistant Chief Constable Angelo Gustinelli, Head of Accounting and Control SPA Lynn Brown, Chief Executive Robin Johnston, Head of Legal Susan Montgomery, Lead Solicitor Eric Leggat, Solicitor Colette Craig, Governance Support Officer

1.1 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Members and attendees to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies

There were no apologies however Catriona Stewart was unable to join the meeting from the start and joined at the end of the public session.

1.3 Declarations of Interest and Connections

There were no declarations of interest of connections.

1.4 Decisions taken since last meeting

It was confirmed the Committee took a decision via email correspondence regarding an ongoing legal matter which was now reflected in the information to be presented at agenda item 3.

1.5 Decision on taking business in private (Item 5 – 8)

In accordance with paragraph 20 of the SPA Standing Orders, the Committee **AGREED** to consider items 5-8 on the agenda in private.

2.1 Minute from meeting held on 1 August 2023 for approval

Members **AGREED** the Minute from the Legal Committee held on 1 August 2023 was an accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Rolling Action Log and Matters Arising

Members **AGREED** the Action Log and it was agreed that the closure of the one open action would be discussed following the consideration of agenda item 3.

3. Legal Services Claims Handling - Quarterly Statistical Information Report - Trends & Analysis in litigation - James Douglas

Members considered the report which had been submitted to provide a quarterly update on settlement figures that have arisen from claims raised against Police Scotland. In addition to the written report and during discussion the following points were raised;

- Members were provided with a positive update in relation to work being progressed in relation to a review of the Claims Register. The intention is that changes will be seen in this report from April 2024.
- It was explained that while the number of motor claims remained in line with previous reporting, the actual costs were significantly higher and this was due to increases in the global markets for repair labour and parts.
- The Chair asked whether the amounts included both settlements and court awards and if the legal costs were included. The Legal

Services Manager confirmed the figures were the totality of the claims which included those settled by agreement and those in which amounts had been awarded by the court. The amounts reported did not include legal costs.

- Recognising it is a difficult area to forecast, Members sought clarity on the anticipated volume of claims known to be in the pipeline. Mr Douglas advised that there has been no undue increase in the number of claims being seen; however, when the Litigation Tables are discussed in the private session, Members will note some significant cases that may result in large payments.
- The Chief Executive updated attendees of planned work by the SPA to benchmark corporate responsibilities against other organisations and legal matters would be one of the specific areas to be considered and benchmarked.

Members noted the report.

4. Legal Committee Work Plan

- It was agreed that the committee will hold a Development Day in January 2024 which will go some way to inform the committee statement of assurance.
- The Chair explained that the Development Session will focus on organisational learning and the improved reporting of categories, themes and outcomes of cases to inform management actions. The Chair said that assurance provided to this committee would be of good use in these discussions.

Members noted the work plan and the planned timeline for a committee development day.