

NOTE: Update will be reflected in the papers to the next public session of the Scottish Police Authority on 30 June 2020.

SPA Board Update – COVID 19 – 18th June 2020, 10 am (by video conference)

Attendees: Members

David Crichton (DC)
Matt Smith (MS)
Elaine Wilkinson (EW)
Bob Hayes (BH)
Tom Halpin (TH)
Mary Pitcaithly (MP)
Grant Macrae (GM)
Caroline Stuart (CS)
Martyn Evans (ME)
Michelle Miller (MM)
Jane Ryder (JR)

Attendees: Officers

Tom Nelson (TN)
Barry Sillers (BS)
Catherine McIntyre (CM)
Lynne Clark (LC)
Vanessa Ewing (VE)
Lynn Brown (LB)

Apologies:

John McCroskie (JM)

Introduction

DC welcomed Members to the meeting and began with an overview of the expected changes in current restrictions which will be announced today at FM's briefing. DC was keen to have a discussion with Members, during the course of the meeting, on what this might mean for both policing and the SPA in the next phase.

Director of Forensic Services Update

TN updated Members on the continuing good stock management of PPE currently within Forensic Services. At last week's briefing TN had noted some concern around the supply of gloves going into July but this has now been resolved and supplies are secured.

Staff absence remains at 2 staff members with COVID related absence, with 89% availability overall.

Work is continuing with Unison and Unite on the FS site health & safety visits at the Forensic Services sites.

A very positive meeting with COPFS, for putting in place short and long term proposals to reduce the workload, took place this week and TN will keep Members up to date on how discussions are progressing.

ACTION: TN will provide a fuller update on progress at the SPA Board meeting on 30th June for Members discussion.

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SPA Chief Executive Update

LB stated that Op Talla finance updates would now be provided at month's end. More regular reporting was required when there was an emphasis on PPE procurement however this is now under control. A report was discussed in full at the Resources Committee on 16 June. EW confirmed that the finance was being well controlled and had now moved into forward planning and the committee had taken assurance from the reporting and the discussion.

Police Scotland Weekly Report

DC noted Members would like to see a narrative produced on the weekly COVID 19 bulletin and indicated that LB would look into the resourcing of this to allow reporting from next week.

BS gave an overview of the current trend being seen in the reports with crime overall falling but with a spike in public nuisance reporting. The only other rise has been in fraud, in particular cyber fraud and the expectation is that this will grow in the future.

Members discussed the rising risk around rising cybercrime during this crisis with online shopping, remote working etc. but also discussed the need for strengthened cyber resilience across policing.

An area raised and agreed by Members for further analysis was around the falling enforcement actions in proportion to engagement as there had been a public focus on fixed penalty notices.

Other areas Members raised for further discussion and analysis included, hate crime, fraud, early prisoner release and demand in custody and reported crime and detection rates.

It was agreed that SPA should be proactive in bringing a clear narrative forward to provide balance across the Engage, Explain Encourage, Enforce (4 E's) principle as other independent reports emerge into the public domain. Members further discussed the differing perspective of producing analysis on the lockdown phase and post lockdown phase.

Members raised the possible impact on policing if the public move ahead of Scottish Government in implementing the easing of lockdown restrictions. DC noted that this will be included in discussions with Police Scotland in the coming week.

It was agreed that as well as a summary narrative for the Board update meeting next week BS would aim to produce a briefing for the Member ahead of the Board meeting on 30 June bringing all the available data together. Members acknowledged the fact that there is currently a shortage of analytical capacity within SPA and asked if there was a short term solution.

ACTION: LB and BS will explore options for getting immediate access to analytical capability for some short focussed work on the emerging data.

ACTION: BS and VE will discuss the early communications ahead of the Board meeting on 30 June.

DC also raised with the Members a further change in regulations coming into force with phase 2 of easing of lockdown restrictions which is the requirement for all members of the public to wear face coverings on public transport. DC asked for Members considerations on the further impact of this change on Police Scotland. Members agreed that they were supportive of the 4 E's principle continuing and that the strength of leadership within Police Scotland was a key factor in the phases going forward.

Closing Remarks

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DC thanked everyone for their time and input and closed the meeting.

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