



Minutes of the People Committee held on Wednesday 27 November 2024  
on MS Teams.

Board Members present:	Fiona McQueen (Chair) Tom Halpin Alasdair Hay Catriona Stewart
Board Member apologies:	Paul Edie
In attendance:	<p><u>Scottish Police Authority</u> Chris Brown, Deputy Chief Executive Resources Jackie Kydd, Workforce Governance Lead Eric Leggat, Solicitor (item 9.1 only) Darren Patterson, Head of Workforce Governance Deborah Christie, Governance Support Officer</p> <p><u>Police Scotland</u> ACC Stuart Houston, Assistant Chief Constable Professionalism &amp; Assurance Dawn MacLean, Health and Safety Manager Nicky Page, Head of Human Resources Damian Shannon, Health &amp; Wellbeing Manager DCC Alan Speirs – Professionalism &amp; Assurance ACC Mark Sutherland, Local Policing West ACC Catriona Paton, Policing Together</p> <p><u>Forensic Services</u> Fiona Douglas, Director of Forensic Services</p>

	<u>HMICS</u> Alan Wright  <u>Staff Association and Trade Union Representatives</u> Derek Balfour, UNITE the Union David Malcolm, Unison Brian Jones, Scottish Police Federation (SPF) Rob Hay, ASPS  <u>Progressive (Staff Survey item only)</u> Sarah Ainsworth Leah Ringland
--	---

### **1.1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Fiona McQueen welcomed everyone to the meeting which was being held using MS Teams. Colleagues from Trades Unions, Staff Associations and HMICS were welcomed and the Chair reminded attendees that, after each paper had been presented, Authority Members would be able to ask questions and thereafter Staff Associations and Trade Union colleagues would be invited to provide any perspectives they feel would be helpful to the discussion.

### **1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CONNECTIONS**

There were no other declarations of interest or connections.

### **1.3 MINUTE OF THE PEOPLE COMMITTEE 29 AUGUST 2024**

Members approved the draft minute from the People Committee held on 29 August 2024 as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **1.4 ROLLING ACTION LOG AND MATTERS ARISING**

Members reviewed the action log after committee discussions had taken place and the updates were agreed and noted.

**Members noted the action log, agreed the actions to remain ongoing and noted updates provided.**

### **1.5 DECISION ON TAKING BUSINESS IN PRIVATE (ITEM 5 - 9)**

In accordance with paragraph 20 of the SPA Standing Orders, the Committee agreed to consider item 5 - 9 on the agenda in private. Attendees were informed that item 8 and 9 would be a Member only discussion.

### **2.1 Q2 WELLBEING REPORT & ACTION PLAN UPDATE – DAMIAN SHANNON**

Members considered the paper which had been submitted to provide the Committee with oversight of the new Health & Wellbeing (HWB) Plan, including measures and timelines. The report provided some data around

HWB activity that took place in quarter two of this year. In addition to the submitted report the following was discussed.

- Members considered a summary of report highlights and attendees discussed the links across different areas of wellbeing.
- In response to a question about funding for initiatives given the financial constraints being faces across all functions, it was explained that while the current plans and initiatives are funding, discussions will be required as part of future year budget setting to prioritise areas of wellbeing activity.
- The development of an MOU with Oscar Kilo was welcomed by the committee as a positive development which would enhance the available support to the Police Scotland workforce.
- A question was asked about what steps are in place to effectively manage the contract for the provision of Employee Assistance. The Committee heard that better data is now available which informs internal discussion and P&D will continue to work closely with Procurement colleagues to ensure this understanding and grip continues.
- The Committee Chair asked if the workforce can self-refer to Occupational Health and was told this was not currently possible and self-referral is only available for Employee Assistance Programme offerings. It was explained by Police Scotland that it is currently the view that this arrangement allows Line Managers to support individuals. The Committee is interested to understand the rationale for not allowing self-referral and asked that the outcome of ongoing discussions is reported to the People Committee at a future meeting.
- The Committee sought and received an assurance that stakeholders and Trade Union colleagues are part of the planning when wellbeing provision is being developed.
- In conclusion, Members agreed there has been significant progress seen in the wellbeing provision for our workforce and encouraged colleagues to continue the work to further develop and improve.

**Members noted the report and agreed the following action.**

PC-20241127- 001: Wellbeing report to include understanding of the rational for self-referral not being an option that is available to the workforce. Benchmarking to be done to explore good practice in this regard.

## **2.2 POLICING TOGETHER UPDATE REPORT – ACC CATRIONA PATON**

Members considered the paper which had been submitted to provide the Committee with oversight of Policing Together (PT) and provide the 6

Monthly Performance Report. The report covers quarters 1 and 2 of 2024/25. In addition to the submitted report the following was discussed.

- An area of interest for the committee is how the Policing Together activity is addressing the challenges encountered by the neurodiverse workforce and other hidden disabilities and it was anticipated this will be reported in future updates with measures of progress and improvement being sought by the Committee.
- The good progress made by the organisation was recognised but Members asked what was being done to drive this work forward so that the committee could consider robust evidence of progress against key plan milestones or of impact against outcomes.
- The ACC for Policing Together explained that she is committed to delivering evidence of change and progress and cited that the fact there remains a firm commitment from the very top of the organisation to be an anti-racist and anti-discriminatory organisation demonstrated a continuing commitment to Policing Together principles.
- The Committee recognise the cultural and behaviour changes will take time and welcomed the commitment however were keen to better understand how we drive the Policing Together work through every area of the organisation so that our workforce and the public see and feel the changes.
- In conclusion and taking account of the discussion, the Chair summarised that the Committee understood there was a will and vision within the organisation to deliver the change but that how people feel and what they experience needs to be explored with this committee requiring robust evidence of change and improvement.

**Members noted the report.**

**2.3 SPA REPORT ON ILL HEALTH RETIRAL AND INJURY ON DUTY APPROVALS – JACKIE KYDD**

Members considered the paper which provided the People Committee with an update on ill health retirement and injury on duty approvals made by the Authority under delegated approval to the Chief Executive. In addition to the submitted report the following was discussed.

- The numbers reported for last year were higher than usual because of the previous backlogs but the run rate is now in line with what had been seen in previous years. Members sought and received an assurance that the time taken to process IHR and IoD cases was within an acceptable tolerance and there were no unnecessary delays being seen.

- An assurance was received that when redeployment opportunities are being explored, this is done in partnership with the officer is engaged in the full process.
- The ongoing action to provide details of the underlying reasons and causal factors was noted by Members.

**Members noted the report.**

**3.1 Q2 WORKFORCE DASHBOARD – NICKY PAGE**

Members considered the paper which provided the People Committee with an update on the Police Scotland workforce as at Q2 of financial year 2024/25. In addition to the submitted report the following was discussed.

- The effort to reduce re-rostered rest days (RRRD) was noted and the committee welcomed the work to address this. The Head of HR commented that this was a complex area but there were several workstreams that will seek to address the challenges. These include Force Mobilisation and review of shift pattern work and the introduction of Body Worn Videos. The impacts of this will be reported to the People Committee next year.
- Commenting on the upward trend in number of people requiring duty modifications compared to last year, a question was asked about what was being done to fully understand the impacts of modified duties and to support line managers with some of the challenges that may result where modifications are necessary. The Head of HR explained that a Modified Duties process is now in place and this has been developed in consultation with Staff Associations to make sure it reflects the needs of officers. This process ensures individuals are redeployed to meaningful and fulfilling work the approach will continue to be refined and improve as learning is gained.
- Members agreed the dashboard report was a good improvement in what has previously been available. The Committee is keen to consider areas of disaggregated data to provide focused insights into specific areas of the workforce compared to the entire organisation. It was recognised that this level of analysis would require specialist resource but plans are in place to take this forward.
- The Committee Chair confirmed action PC-20240228-001 will remain ongoing as the Committee require additional assurance to be provided in respect of sickness absence data.
- In response to a request for assurance about the control measures in place regarding deployment of officers who do not have up to date Officer Safety Training (OST), DCC Speirs confirmed the approved policy means that any officer who has not got up to date OST will not be operationally deployed.

- Attendees and Members welcomed the transparency of this report and agreed the data will be key to understanding the areas of good practice and any areas of concern.

**Members noted the report and agreed the following action.**

PC-20241127-002: Future reports to build on improved insight reporting and provide disaggregated data for specific areas to allow further analysis of how individual business areas compare with the entire organisation. List of areas for future focus to be considered by the committee.

**4.1 Q2 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT – DAWN MACLEAN**

Members considered the paper which provided provide a strategic overview in relation to health & safety within the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland.

- The committee recognised the importance of near miss reporting and a question was asked about what was being done to encourage, promote and remove any barriers to reporting so that this valuable data can be collected and used to improve circumstances for officers and staff. The Health & Safety Manager agreed this was an area in which under reporting is seen across the organisation and work was underway to improve the reporting. This will involve refreshed training and changes to SCoPE to make it more straightforward for users to report near misses. The SOP will also be reviewed and updated as appropriate.
- Members asked for an understanding of why there were higher levels of 'non-assault injuries' RIDDORS and it was agreed this would be included in the next committee report.

**Members noted the report and agreed the following action.**

PC-20241127-003: Next report to provide analysis of any underlying reasons for a higher level of 'non-assault injuries' in this category.

**4.2 YOUR SAFETY MATTERS - ACC MARK SUTHERLAND**

Members considered the paper which provided an annual update outlining activity undertaken under the Your Safety Matters end-to-end strategic review of all issues related to the prevention of violence and abusive behaviour against police officers and police/SPA staff, to ensure they are effectively trained, equipped and supported while carrying out their duties. In addition to the submitted report the following was discussed.

- Members considered a brief overview of the submitted report.
- The Committee noted the work to reduce 'out of card' officers and welcomed the transparent reporting in this regard. Previous



committee comments were re-stated that that this was not an acceptable position and welcomed the assurance this was a priority for Police Scotland which was anticipated would be resolved by March 2025 by which time the organisation will be in a strong position around officer training compliance. The committee asked if there had been any incidences where operational officers were not able to be deployed because they were out of card and it was confirmed that this had not happened.

- As no assault on any officer or staff member is ever acceptable, the Committee was disappointed to see a reported increase for the year. Members asked what was being done to educate the public about how unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. Known hotspots for assaults are being pro-actively targeted to try and change behaviours and reduce assaults and this will continue to be in place. It was also explained that the roll out of Body Worn Video is anticipated to drive reductions of officer assaults which will be a benefit for not only Police Scotland but the wider Criminal Justice System too.
- The Committee heard views that the effort from Police Scotland in respect of reducing officer and staff assaults was recognised by other UK forces as being good practice.
- To allow improved analysis and insights the committee asked that future reports provided a disaggregation of assault data so that the officer and staff split is clear.

**Members noted the report and agreed the following action.**

PC-20241127-004: Future reports to provide disaggregated data on assaults for officers and staff.

**4.3 FORENSIC SERVICES H&S UPDATE – FIONA DOUGLAS**

Members considered the paper which provided an update on concern raised with the Health & Safety Executive about Forensic Services. In addition to the submitted report the following was discussed.

- This report had been submitted following a verbal update at the last meeting of the People Committee which provided details of engagement with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) regarding a concern that had been raised directly with them regarding the use of Fast Blue B. SPA Forensic Services submitted a detailed response to the HSE and Members welcomed the assurance that the comprehensive and detailed responses and evidence provided to HSE had been reviewed and the HSE was fully satisfactory and the matter had been closed.

**Members noted the report.**

The remaining items were taken in private.

End.