

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 – 28th May 2020, 10 am (by video conference)

Attendees: Members

David Crichton (DC)
Matt Smith (MS)
Elaine Wilkinson (EW)
Jane Ryder (JR)
Tom Halpin (TH)
Mary Pitcaithly (MP)
Grant Macrae (GM)
Caroline Stuart (CS)

Attendees: Officers

Tom Nelson (TN)
Lynn Brown (LB)
John McCroskie (JM)
Catherine McIntyre (CM)
Lynne Clark (LC)
Vanessa Ewing (VE)

Apologies:

Martyn Evans (ME)
Michelle Miller (MM)
Bob Hayes (BH)
Barry Sillers (BS)

Introduction

Director of Forensic Services Update

TN provided an update to members on absence levels across the workforce and the ongoing availability and use of PPE by staff within Forensic Services. TN also noted the importance also of limiting the risk of contamination in a Forensic environment.

TN highlighted the recent joint Health and Safety assessment undertaken at the Scottish Crime Campus performed by the Scottish Police Federation (SPF), Unions, Police Scotland Health and Safety team and Forensic Services staff. Feedback from the report has been excellent.

TN updated members on the efforts underway to ensure staff working across Forensic Services can return to their place of work. TN highlighted the development of a staff information pack produced for each Forensic Services site which will be complemented by a guidance document for staff on what to expect and how to interact when they return. Both have been informed by the Health and Safety Executive's 5-point charter.

TN updated members on work underway to understand, manage and make best use of capacity across Forensic Services. This work is being undertaken in partnership with the Crown Office and Police Scotland.

Police Scotland Weekly Summary Report

Members noted the referral made to the Health and Safety Executive and Police Scotland's position on the matter.

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ACTION: Members requested a briefing setting out the process following referral and anticipated timescales for response.

The Members discussed the next phase of lockdown restrictions, the implications for policing and the need for the SPA to be alive to the implications on specific groups.

Members discussed how this changing situation would link to the role and remit of the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and how the shift in emphasis would be dealt with. JMcC gave a brief update on the work of the group indicating the ongoing strands of work such as capturing an international perspective and HMICS undertaking officer interviews which were all forming the group's thinking. Members agreed that SPA will also need to be aware and consider any potential gaps that may not be covered within the IAG scope of work. DC agreed further discussion internally and with the IAG Chair would be beneficial.

ACTION: DC agreed to take an action to discuss further the role and real-time requirements of SPA initially with ME and JMcC as participants of the IAG and to then initiate conversation with John Scott QC as Chair of the group. DC will include the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable in discussions.

SPA Chief Executive Update

LB started by reminding the Members that some of the wider aspects discussed above were being considered within the Policing Performance Committee.

LB then took the Members through the key highlights of the finance report issued by PS. LB confirmed that workforce attendance within SPA remained at 100% and that staff were now being engaged in discussions and questions about what happens when the lockdown restrictions ease. These staff questions will be fed into a group established by DCO Page to consider estates, ICT and HR support. Weekly staff briefings continue as do Managers 1:1 meetings with staff and the CEO 1:1 meetings focussing on staff welfare. LB stated that she was keen to encourage staff to take annual leave during this period.

The Members were keen to recognise the efforts of staff under current conditions and in particular the Board Services Team who were stepping up to fill the current staffing gaps. JR reminded colleagues that there was an intention to carry out an internal audit focussing on staff wellbeing which would report to the Board in September.

Closing Remarks

DC closed the meeting asking Members for their thoughts on frequency and content of these meeting as lockdown restrictions begin to ease.

TH reflected that the briefings to date had been necessarily operationally focussed and suggested that a more staff focussed meeting would be helpful.

ACTION: DC took an action to explore this suggestion further with potentially something in place ahead of the June Board meeting.

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