



Legal Committee

12 August 2025

Minutes of the Legal Committee held on Tuesday 13 May 2025 via Webex

Authority Members present	Chris Creegan (Committee Chair) Pauline Howie Mary Pitcaithly
Authority Member apologies	Tom Halpin
In attendance	Police Scotland James Douglas, Legal Services Manager Clairelouse Ritchie, Senior Finance Business Partner Insp David Bellingham, SECU Linda Pittendreigh, SECU Gillian Douds, SECU SPA Robin Johnston, Head of Legal Susan Montgomery, Lead Solicitor Eric Leggat, Solicitor Colette Craig, Governance Support Officer

1. Introduction and Welcome

1.1 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Members and attendees to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies

Tom Halpin, SPA Board Member

DCC Alan Speirs, Deputy Chief Constable
T/ACC Lynn Ratcliff
Duncan Campbell

1.3 Declarations of Interest and Connections

There were no declarations of interests or connections.

1.4 Decisions taken since last meeting

There were no decisions taken since last meeting.

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 items 5-9 on the agenda in private.

2. Minute and Actions from previous meeting:

2.1 Minute from meeting held on 11 March 2025 for approval

Members **AGREED** the Minute from the Legal Committee on 11 March 2025 was an accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Rolling Action Log and Matters Arising

The Chair advised that action 20251203-LC-002 would be further considered following Item 3 Legal Services Claims Handling - Quarterly Statistical Information Report - Trends & Analysis in litigation.

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

JDouglas provided an overview on settlement figures arising from claims raised against Police Scotland. Further information was also included within the report following recent request from members in terms of detail. Insight into the work currently being undertaken by Police Scotland Legal Services has developed this report from previous iterations. During discussions the following matters were raised;

- JDouglas advised members that the increase in motor liabilities is as a result of supply chain issues resulting in longer car

rentals in place, increases in parts and labour along with energy payments now being added as sub charges. JDouglas assured members that although there is an increase in financials, the number of settlements has reduced.

- Members were advised that the overwhelming number of cases faced in tribunals relate to disability discrimination and sex discrimination. Members were assured that HR are aware of each of the cases and any lessons learned will be implemented.
- Members welcomed and thanked the team for the developments around presentation of the report.
- Members asked that future end of year reports summarise key learning themes being captured and taken forward by PS and other organisations involved.
- Members welcomed the run charts which clearly showed a reduction on the number of motor claims being settled and advised that they would be keen to understand how that reduction has come about and how that can be built on.
- Members were advised that the fraction numbers noted within the employment liability and employment tribunal tables are a result of there being more reason noted within claims.
- Members noted the importance of learning from claims and although this can be a focus for high value claims, there is a need to consider learning from lower value claims. Members asked how that organisational learning could be captured going forward to prevent future claims or minimise costs. JDouglas advised members on what is being done in terms of learning within the organisation and advised that it was difficult to capture public liability claims, however, in terms of slips, trips and falls this is an area that could potentially be captured within future reports. JDouglas committed to linking in with DCC Speirs and ACC Ratcliff on this.
- Members agreed that action 20251203-LC-002 remains ongoing until the actions from this committees' discussions have been reflected.

Members **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** the following actions;

20251305-LC-001: James Douglas to ensure that that future end of year reports summarise key learning themes being captured and taken forward by Police Scotland and other organisations involved.

20251305-LC-002: James Douglas to advise members on how the reduction in relation to motor claims has been achieved and how that can be built on.

20251305-LC-003: James Douglas to link in with DCC Speirs and ACC Ratcliff to understand how the learning from low level claims can be captured and presented within future reports.

4. Committee Work Plan

Members **NOTED** the report.

