



## Legal Committee

8 August 2024

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Minutes of the Legal Committee held on Tuesday 14 May 2024 via MS Teams

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| Board Members present:  | Caroline Stuart (Committee Chair)<br>Grant Macrae<br>Michelle Miller<br>Catriona Stewart<br>Tom Halpin  |
| Board Member apologies: | Nil   |
| In attendance:          | <b><u>Police Scotland</u></b><br>James Douglas, Legal Services Manager<br>Vicky Watson, Chief Superintendent<br>Gillians Douds, Committee Services<br><br><b><u>SPA</u></b><br>Robin Johnston, Head of Legal<br>Susan Montgomery, Lead Solicitor<br>Eric Leggat, Solicitor<br>Colette Craig, Governance Support Officer |

## 1.1 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and extended the committee's sincere and grateful thanks to both Jane Ryder, who had recently left the Authority, and Michelle Miller who will be leaving at the end of May, for their hard work and contributions over recent years. Following Board agreement on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, the Chair welcomed Tom Halpin to the committee. The Chair confirmed that she had now taken over from Jane Ryder as Chair of the Committee.

## 1.2 Apologies

There were no apologies.

## 1.3 Declarations of Interest and Connections

There were no declarations of interest or connections.

## 1.4 Decisions taken since last meeting

The committee took a decision in private under paragraph 20 of the SPA standing orders, on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 regarding an ongoing legal matter.

## 1.5 Decision on taking business in private (Item 3 – 4)

In accordance with paragraph 20 of the SPA Standing Orders, the Committee **AGREED** to consider items 3-4 on the agenda in private.

The Chair noted that there are no minutes or action logs for approval. The minutes from the last committee meeting have already being approved via correspondence and published on the SPA website for the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023.

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

Members considered the report outlining the number of legal cases settled by Police Scotland within the previous financial quarter. James Douglas (JDouglas) advised members that the new Claims Register would take effect from the current quarter and as a result further management information will be available to members in future meetings if required.

In addition to the written report and during discussion the following points were raised;

- Members sought assurance that, where there is a pattern of claims of a similar nature, lessons are learned, or preventative action being taken to avoid further claims. JDouglas provided rationale for the motor liability claims, noting that the use of police vehicles is extraordinarily high. JDouglas assured members that driver training was taken to a standard significantly higher than a regular driver. With regard to employer liability claims that result in significantly higher costs, the Case Assessment and Review Panel (CARP), which includes People and Development and Legal Services, consider lessons learned. In addition, the legal team filter into Organisational Learning which is reported into other committees. JDouglas assured members that they continue to monitor any patterns of claims that give cause for concern.

Members **noted** the report.