

# SCOTTISH POLICE BENEVOLENT FUND [SCIO]

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the **Scottish Police Benevolent Fund** held within the Hilton Grosvenor Hotel Glasgow at 17.00 hours, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

## 1. PRESENT

Chief Constable Stephen House - Honorary President

David Blacklock  
Davy Cummings  
Graeme Ednie  
Amanda Givan  
David Hamilton  
Andrea McDonald  
Stewart Ross  
Graham Sloan  
Donald Walker

## 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ian Duncan and Fiona Morris had intimated their apologies due to leave and operational commitments respectively.

## 3. OPENING OF MEETING

The Chairman welcomed everyone present and extended a particularly warm welcome to Chief Constable Stephen House. He also welcomed David Blacklock and Graham Sloan to the meeting. All present thereafter introduced themselves in turn.

*Secretaries note; the new business items were thereafter discussed in advance of any other business.*

## 8.1 Election of Trustees

Graeme Ednie suggested, and those present agreed, that agenda item 7 – New Business required to be taken first to identify a new board of Trustees.

Graeme advised that in accordance with the Funds Constitution all previous Trustees required to retire from office. Davy Cummings advised no written notification had been received from members in terms of the provisions of paragraph 58.2.

He then advised in terms of paragraph 61 those who had previously been appointed as Trustees were re-elected as follows:

### North Sub Committee

Ian Duncan  
Graeme Ednie  
David Hamilton

### East Sub Committee

Davy Cummings  
Stewart Ross  
Amanda Givan

### West Sub Committee

Andrea McDonald  
Fiona Morris  
Donald Walker

## 8.2 Election of Chair

Graeme Ednie then requested Trustees nominate from amongst their number someone to fulfil the role of Chair.

Graeme Ednie was proposed by Stewart Ross and seconded by Andrea MacDonald. There being no other nominations Graeme was duly elected as Chair of the Fund and thanked Trustees for their continued support.

## 8.3 Election of Secretary

The Chair called for nominations for the role of Secretary and Davy Cummings was proposed by Stewart Ross and seconded by David Hamilton. There being no other nominations Davy was duly elected and thanked Trustees for their continued support.

The Chairman thereafter addressed the meeting;

*“Chief Constable, ladies and gentlemen good afternoon and welcome to the inaugural Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund.*

*Chief Constable as honorary President of the fund we are delighted that you have been able to join us this afternoon. I would like to record my personal thanks and those of the Management Committee to you for the constructive support and assistance you have already provided to us and we look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff in our efforts to provide valuable services to our members and those in the wider Police family.*

*Colleagues we should not under estimate our achievements to date. None of us are experts in the 3rd Sector nor indeed do we have a great deal of previous experience in relation to the creation of charities or charity mergers. What we do have however is a collective wealth of experience in Policing and consequently a huge amount of knowledge of relevant issues. We have all come to this table with previous involvement in Police Benevolent Funds and know the issues that regrettably affect our colleagues past and present from time to time. This has been invaluable.*

*We have collectively laid the solid foundations of our new Charity and it is essential we continue to utilise our experience and knowledge to develop efficient and effective processes and procedures. It is only by doing so that we will be able to continue to meet our aims and objectives in the medium and long term.*

*Our success to date is down to you and your individual and collective efforts for which I am extremely grateful. I would also like to acknowledge the support and assistance we have received from the many Police Officers and Police Staff from legacy Forces and now within The Police Service of Scotland without whose help we would have struggled to develop and I would also like to record our gratitude to the members of SCVO and OSCR who have shared with us the benefit of their expertise at various times during and since our development.*

*I am delighted to report that we are now actively providing financial support and assistance to applicants and this, in appropriate circumstances will continue and develop. We must however look to broaden the areas of support that we are able to offer.*

*Projecting forward over the next twelve months I am keen to establish links with professional organisations who can provide expert financial advice and assistance to our members and help them manage their financial difficulties. I believe that in the right circumstances our support needs to be more than just financial albeit that financial assistance might be part of a solution.*

*Our communication strategy must be developed to ensure that we publicise the Fund internally and externally as effectively as possible to provide clarity to relevant parties on the details of the scheme and importantly how those*

*eligible access our services. I am grateful to the Chief Constable for his approval for the Fund to make use of the Intranet as part of this strategy and I have already asked David Hamilton to undertake some provisional work in this area.*

*Arrangements are now in place for the three Area Sub-Committees to meet and manage requests for assistance in accordance with the processes agreed and implemented by the Trustees. With that in mind it has become clear, based on claims experience to date, that the financial restrictions currently in place I believe are overly restrictive and I intend to ask Trustees to reconsider them. The Trustees forming part of each sub-committee must ensure that arrangements for meeting to discuss and deliver services are reasonable and cost efficient. We must explore every available option and make best use of available technologies in doing so, subject to the confidentiality of our business being protected.*

*Finally we must carefully consider our financial portfolio and secure suitable and sufficient expert advice and guidance to inform us of our options. Only by doing so will we be in a position to make informed decisions and secure financial stability for our Fund in the short medium and long term.*

*Thank you"*

The Chairman then invited the Chief Constable to address the meeting;

The Chief Constable opened by congratulating the Trustees on bring together the former funds in to one entity indicating that he too had experience of such a merger.

He stressed the importance of the Funds existence as Police officers and members of support staff often found themselves in financial difficulty and would continue to require assistance during the current financial climate. He did however express concern at the lack of knowledge supervisors may have in relation to personal financial problems officers in particular faced and was aware that the conduct regulations made it difficult for officers to come forward, however he did indicate that he saw this as more of a welfare matter than a conduct matter – other than the most exceptional circumstances.

The Chief Constable was very supportive of the Fund Liaison officers (from the Former Strathclyde Force area) and committed to them continuing in their current role. He did accept their may be geographical issues but saw no reason why they could not be deployed in the Central belt in the first instance. He also indicated he would be willing to enter in to discussions around the future employment of a further member of staff if the Trustees thought that appropriate on a cost sharing basis.

The Chief Constable encouraged Trustees to maintain the current links with the Police Treatment Centre and also the Scottish Police Credit Union as areas of additional support to members. He also offered assistance in speaking with new recruits and the Chairman was invited to explore this area.

**RESTRICTED**

Mr House concluded by indicating that whilst he had met with the Chairman prior to the meeting he would be pleased to assist the Fund, where at all possible, at any time and matters shouldn't be left until the next AGM.

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2013 circulated in advance of the Meeting were approved by the committee.

#### **5. MATTERS ARISING**

DH to provide statistical information from the Fund Website to the next and future meetings

The Trustees were advised that soft wear had been added to the website and that it would provide information in a number of ways including number of visits, pages visited and the method used to reach the site.

DC to engage with Gemma Pettman in relation to promoting the work of the Fund.

This matter is on-going although initial contact has been made.

DH make enquiry into allowing access to Ian Duncan including to possible provision of hard ware.

DH reported this was in hand and was progressing well.

All Trustees to forward details of local Debt Management Companies used by the previous Funds to the Secretary.

DH reported that he had had a meeting with a Debt management company and some good advice had been obtained from this. It was agreed this matter should be taken forward further and DH agreed to do this. He further reported that initial discussions with 4 further insolvency practitioners and Pay Plan (PMAS) had been productive and that PMAS were prepared to waive the need for membership. This matter is on-going.

## **6. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

### **6.1 Communication and Marketing**

The Chairman advised that he was aware the SPBF had not undertaken a specific launch day and sought views around the best way to raise awareness of the Fund.

In addition to on going work which had been previously agreed the Chairman advised that the Chief Constable has agreed to facilitate an area of the Intranet for use by the SPBF as part of its communication strategy and David Hamilton would develop work in this important area of business.

The Chief Constable also advised that SPBF could make use of the PSoS newsletter at any time.

**Action** DH to progress the use by SPBF of PSoS intranet

### **6.2 Future Events**

It was agreed this matter had been covered previously and all Trustees agreed to consider alternative events for promoting the work of the Fund.

### **6.3 Information Technology**

It was agreed this matter had been covered previously. David Hamilton introduced the possibility of raising capital for the Fund through the PSoS agreeing to use "easy search" as the nominated search engine for Force Internet use.

The Chief Constable advised that he would welcome an outline business case containing details of this proposal which he would consider.

**Action** DH to develop business case for use of "easy search" on Police Scotland intranet to the Chair and Secretary

**Action** GE to provide copy of business case to the Chief Constable and progress.

**Action** DC to write to the General Secretary of the SPF regarding the use of easy search

## **7. FINANCE**

### 7.1 Treasurers Update

The Treasurer updated the meeting on the current financial position of the Fund. She stressed that it was imperative that legacy Funds transferred their assist as soon as possible and that these were identifiable as to where they had come from.

The Chairman reported there had been some considerable difficulty with CAF Bank as they do not have "High Street" locations and deposits through other banks was problematic. He suggested the Fund examine alternatives including the use of a Post Office account to facilitate deposits and then cash transfers to the main account may resolve this matter. The Trustees agreed.

**Action** GE to establish a mechanism to facilitate cash deposits to the Fund.

### 7.2 Consideration of Applications

The Chairman advised he intended to defer this item until the conclusion of the AGM due to the confidential nature of business.

The Trustees reviewed the following applications;

LNA0002                      The loan was approved

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

Items of new business were discussed at the commencement of the Meeting.

## **9. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

The Chairman advised the Constitution directed the Fund could make an annual donation to the Police Treatment Centre [Scotland] and asked Trustees for their views on an appropriate amount. Following lengthy discussion it was agreed the sum of £20,000 would be donated to the PTC [Scotland].

Trustees discussed the vacant position of Treasurer which Mairi Macgregor had been filling on an interim basis and agreed that Mairi should fill the role of Treasurer to the Fund on a permanent basis. Mairi thanked Trustees for their support.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

## **11. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Secretary agreed to advise Trustees of the date and time of the next Meeting off table. It was agreed the venue would continue to be the Police Treatment Centre Auchterarder.

## **12. CLOSURE OF MEETING**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their valuable and constructive contributions and concluded by wishing everyone a safe journey home.

**Graeme Ednie**  
Chairman

**David Cummings**  
Secretary

Provisional meeting dates:

Monday 9th September 2013  
Monday 9th December 2013  
Wednesday 12th March 2014

2nd quarterly meeting  
3rd quarterly meeting  
4th quarterly meeting