

Norfolk Police Federation NORFOLK NEWS

Summer 2020



Officers' Incredible Bravery

Two Norfolk Police officers who detained a pair of violent offenders wanted for threatening murder and blackmail are our brilliant nominees for the 2020 National Police Bravery Awards.

PC Katie Swann and PC Marley-Jay Symonds will join colleagues from across England and Wales at the prestigious event in London when the Covid-19 pandemic allows. The Awards had

PCs Swann and Symonds went to the address of the offender's mother where they found him and another wanted suspect. Seeing the officers arrive, the pair became very aggressive and started to resist attempts to detain them.

PC Symonds tried to make an arrest but could hear that the other suspect was continuing to aggressively struggle with PC Swann.

PC Symonds moved his suspect into the

It gave enough time for PC Swann to use her Taser on the man, who was only subdued when backup arrived.

Norfolk Police Federation Secretary Sam Hawkins said: "These men were big, burly, violent offenders, so PC Swann and Symonds had to think on their feet and help each other out to get the job done.

"The fact that the suspects carried on strug-

"It was great police work. They fully deserve this nomination"

been scheduled for mid-July. PC Symonds cannot be pictured for operational reasons.

In the early evening of 15 January 2019, Norfolk Police officers had been dispatched to the village of Ormesby following reports that an armed man was making threats to kill and blackmail people. The man had left the scene once the officers arrived.

kitchen so he could aid PC Swann, but the man started to punch him, and PC Symonds had to use PAVA to get him under control.

PC Swann had managed to get one handcuff on her suspect in the struggle, and despite having partial control of him, he continued to be aggressive even after PC Symonds administered another dose of PAVA spray.

gling despite having PAVA and Taser deployed on them shows just how severe and violent this incident was.

"It was great police work, so our congratulations go to both officers for the bravery they have shown. They fully deserve this nomination."

The National Police Bravery Awards are sponsored by Police Mutual.

Covid Sickness Help For Police

Police officers who have to self-isolate due to the risk of Covid-19 will not be penalised in their sickness absence records, Norfolk Police Federation has confirmed.

If officers have to take time off work because they or their family members are displaying coronavirus symptoms, the time will not count towards sickness absence – even if they are not tested for Covid-19.

Norfolk Police Federation Chairman Andy Symonds said: “We know it is a tough time for police officers – going through lockdown and dealing with policing in these difficult and strange times.

meetings and we have been putting officers’ views across very strongly – making sure they have the right equipment.

“I’m glad to say the force have stepped up and we have a enough stocks.

”This is a big positive for officers as it was a significant concern for them – that they would have enough to protect themselves.

“Police officers have to get hands-on with the public; there is no social distancing when you are arresting someone. So it is vital for their safety that they are protected as best they can be.”

The Federation is now working through



“We have done as much as we can to make life easier for members”

“So we have done as much as we can to make life easier for members. And we continue to push the force and make sure they are fair and open and operating within Regulations.”

Andy listed interest-free loans and mental health support for officers as other areas where the Federation has been hard at work with the force.

The Federation has also worked hard to ensure officers have plentiful access to PPE.

He added: “PPE was a difficult issue so we have done a lot of work in Gold and Silver

more specific cases, representing members who are pregnant or are required to support members of their family who are vulnerable and need to be shielded.

Andy added: “This is on top of dealing with the current caseload of work that the Federation is doing in supporting and representing its members in all manner of areas across commands and the entire force.

“These things do not stop and are still important.”

Fund Can Aid Officers Affected By Coronavirus

Police officers who are worried about their family’s financial situation during the coronavirus outbreak can apply for a loan from the force Benevolent Fund.

Officers can apply for an interest-free loan, whereby repayment is taken from their salary. Payment holidays are also being considered. In some cases officers will be able to request a delay in starting repayments.

Applications can be made through the Federation, or directly to the force Benevolent Fund, meaning officers if needed can access some funds during this uncertain time.

Andy Symonds, Chairman of Norfolk Police

Federation, said: “In terms of financial welfare, we are concerned that many officers have other halves who have been affected by furlough, job losses and loss of income when self-employed. We want to make sure officers can get by, during these challenging times.

“There is a bit of a financial buffer available. It’s not masses of money but it will hopefully see our members through a difficult period.

“There are many officers who have partners whose income has gone to zero overnight.

“We have been working with the Chief Constable and the force Benevolent Fund and are now at the position whereby they will consider

applications for interest-free loans to see officer through this uncertain period.

“We are pleased that by working together our members will benefit giving them access to a bit of cash to ease the burden in an already difficult time.”

A welfare pack providing contacts for agencies that can help and other services has been sent out to all officers. This includes access to a financial helpline for officers who are members of the Federation’s Group Insurance Scheme. Non-members can find signposting to specialist policing stakeholders who can offer financial advice.

COVID 19

Rising To The Challenge

Officers in Norfolk have risen to the extreme challenge of policing the unprecedented coronavirus crisis – particularly as their actions come under the microscope as never before.

Norfolk Police Federation said it is proud of its members, who have undertaken work they would never have expected to police when they started their careers.

As lockdown eases, Chairman Andy Symonds has highlighted the continuing policing and

our representations on that. So for the last few months it's been better for officers in terms of their work/life balance. I know it's temporary but it's helped."

The Federation also helped during lockdown when officers were being prevented from cancelling their leave. It encouraged the force to relax the rules so that leave could be cancelled and officers didn't lose their holiday days.

It is now working on issues for officers who go abroad in the summer and who may be forced



"It was good that the force flexed to our representations. So it's been better for officers in terms of their work/life balance."

personal challenges members will face.

He said: "It's been a really difficult period, particularly with the scrutiny that officers feel that they're under.

"They feel that they're being videoed at every angle when they go and police their communities, particularly when they deploy stop-and-search in areas where the intel says there is drug dealing going on. They feel they're under a microscope."

On the positive side, Andy said that during the lockdown officers told him they were happy with the amount of resources they had available.

Officers have now returned to normal shift patterns, after the Federation pushed for a temporary change in shifts during lockdown, when officers were no longer required to police the public order night-time economy at weekends.

Andy said: "It was good that the force flexed to

to quarantine on their return – and is pressing for this not to be counted as additional holiday.

Andy said he had been working shifts on the frontline himself, in order to see first-hand the challenges that officers were facing.

He said: "There's nothing like getting out there on shift, experiencing it for yourself next to colleagues and delivering that service to the public.

"It's really important, particularly when I go to silver and gold meetings with the bosses.

"I tell them this is not just information from officers, this is my experience of shifts. It makes it a lived reality and they sit up a little bit more in their chairs and listen."

Andy said the Federation would continue to

fight its members' corner, especially when the force had to make rapid decisions.

He added: "We understand that they do have to make those big decisions, but it's important that the officer's voice is heard at those meetings, so we don't have issues that are detrimental to our officers' wellbeing, financially or in terms of all the shifts they're working and the fatigue they have."

Finally, Andy advised officers to prepare for a long summer and encouraged them to relax and recuperate while they can.

He said: "We're heading into a long, hot summer, along with the coronavirus and all the problems that throws up for us. So take some down time, chill out and come back as refreshed as you can be, safe in the knowledge that in the background your Federation is trying its hardest to make your lives that little easier."



New Shifts To Attract Detectives

Norfolk Police has changed the shift patterns in its Safeguarding Investigation Unit after consultation with the Federation, in an attempt to attract more detectives to vulnerability roles.

The aim is for greater parity between the shifts worked in CID and the vulnerability unit, with more collaboration between departments. Shift patterns will change on 5 July.

DC Kevin Maskell works in the child abuse investigation unit and is the detective lead on Norfolk Federation's Branch Council.

He said: "We had fairly good shift patterns within the CID framework, but in the vulnerability department – which includes MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub), child abuse and education units – it was a worse pattern, particularly for supervisors. It was causing a stumbling block, with people not wanting to work in vulnerability roles due to the shift patterns.

"I had feedback from officers, so communicated with the lead detectives in Norfolk Constabulary, who agreed that they were going to change the shift patterns and look to enhance the wellbeing of their detectives in the vulnerability area."

Kevin said it was a struggle to get people to work in the vulnerability department because of the nature of the work. He added: "It is a difficult world to work in, with child and adult abuse, and working with vulnerability. It can have a vast emotional impact. There is further training that's also required. People are opting not to go into those areas, so we have to try to make it more appetising for them."

Kevin acknowledged that people had to "go through a lot of hoops" to become a detective, with extra exams, including the PIP Level 2 course. He said: "They're losing unsociable

hours for coming from the uniformed, local policing side of the world into being a detective. They're also having to fund their own clothing. So there are a lot of reasons why people say, 'Financially I can't afford to be a detective'.

"Particularly officers who have only been in the job two or three years, who are on the lower pay scales. It's difficult for them."

Kevin said that he hoped the changes would attract more detectives to the role.

He said: "I want to make sure it's more enticing for those officers who are the detectives of the future to come and work in our department. We take a vast amount of pride in what we do and the public we serve and the investigations we take on."



Rise In Assaults Is Unacceptable

Just because they wear a uniform it does not mean it is acceptable to punch, kick, spit at and bite officers.

New figures show that assaults on emergency workers rose by 24% in the four weeks to 7 June, driven by a rise in Covid-related attacks, with offenders deliberately spitting and coughing, as well as public disorder at mass protests.

Norfolk Police Federation Chairman Andy Symonds said: "I am sadly not shocked anymore with regards to the completely unacceptable levels of assaults on my colleagues in Norfolk and across the country.

"I see first hand the results of these awful attacks as I get to speak to these officers, who are victims the same as any member of the public."

Home Secretary Priti Patel has said she is launching a consultation to double the sentences for offenders who assault emergency workers to two years, to "make these thugs think twice".

Andy was cautiously optimistic about the Home Secretary's pledge.

He said: "Her warm words need to be converted to action, and this means magistrates and judges using the current powers at their disposal in addition to any new sentencing powers that

may come from the Government.

"Just because they wear a uniform it does not mean it is acceptable to punch, kick, spit at and bite officers.

"These officers are human beings who come to work to help and protect the community they serve. What they don't come to work for is to be used as a target for people to attack them.

"These assaults on my colleagues take a huge toll on them both physically and mentally, as well as on their family.

"I am dealing with an exponential increase in officers being considered for ill-health retirement due to injuries they've sustained from being assaulted.

"These are officers who have family to care for financially, and to have their career threatened and in many cases ended through no fault of their own is a terrible place to be.

"I am still shocked and saddened when I hear from my colleagues who have been assaulted and the offenders are found guilty but do not spend any time behind bars. I'm quite sure if a magistrate or judge was assaulted at work, the offender would be sentenced to time behind bars."

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Visit the Federation website for further details:

www.polfed.org/Norfolk

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** Correct at 1 August 2020 the premium includes the Federation administration fee and Insurance Premium Tax (IPT)

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