

# federation



West Midlands Police Federation

December 2019/January 2020

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# Welcome

Welcome to the December 2019/ January 2020 edition of *federation* - the magazine for members of West Midlands Police Federation.

We are always on the look-out for good news stories so please get in touch if you have something to share with colleagues. It does not have to relate to your policing role – though we are definitely interested in hearing about what's going on around the Force. Do you have an interesting hobby or perhaps you are involved in sport locally, as a player, a manager, a coach?

Just get in touch and let us know.

We would also be interested to hear what you would like to see featured in your magazine.

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# What's inside

- 04 Chair's introduction
- 05 Pensions update
- 05 Cash boost for Welfare Support Programme
- 05 Our Christmas opening times
- 05 Look out for your Federation diary
- 06 Half of officers regularly worrying about their finances
- 09 Call for safety training to include more hands-on practice
- 10 Study period extended for Force's trainee detectives
- 10 'I want to make being a detective as accessible as possible'
- 11 What is the Detective Academy?

## 12

More than 300 sign up for marathon events to show support for ACC



- 13 Supporters' stories
- 15 Band on the run?

## Advertisers

- 02 McAlister, family law
- 08 George Burows, financial health check
- 14 Care on Demand, Group Insurance Scheme
- 16 George Burows, RAC cover
- 21 Gorvins, police and family law
- 30 Police Insure, motor, home and motorcycle insurance
- 32 Warren & Co, independent mortgage advice
- 32 Irwin Mitchell, family law
- 34 Slater & Gordon, family law
- 35 NARPO, member services
- 35 First Call Financial, independent mortgage advice
- 36 Slater & Gordon, police law

## 17



Police Federation centenary celebration

- 21 Within three years of retirement?
- 22 I want to do the best I can for our members
- 23 New conduct regs come into effect in February
- 23 Supporting those who need it
- 24 'I am proud to be a Fed rep'
- 25 'There is more to the role than helping officers in trouble'
- 26 Review of the year 2019
- 31 Stay in touch with West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund
- 31 Why do more people get divorced in January?
- 33 Supporting you



# Looking back but thinking ahead



By **Jon Nott**, chair of West Midlands Police Federation

I am reliably informed that it's something of a tradition that the chair, in writing their introduction to the last Federation magazine of the year, looks back on the events of the last 12 months, touching on both high and low points.

Of course, being relatively new to this role - at the time of writing I had been chair for just a few weeks - this is perhaps a little more difficult than it would be for someone who had been at the helm throughout the year.

But, that said, I have still welcomed the opportunity to reflect on all that has happened during 2019 and make plans for what will be our focus in 2020.

One incident really stands out in my memory. The death of PC Andrew Harper of Thames Valley Police has to be one of the most shocking tragic events of the year. This young officer, just weeks after his marriage, died serving his community. He left home to go to work and never returned after his shift. The public outpouring of grief is testimony to the high regard the vast majority of people have for the police and his death was a poignant reminder of the risks officers take each and every day as they go about their duties.

Here in the West Midlands, we have seen

a number of incidents where our officers have suffered life-changing injuries when they have been struck by vehicles by mindless criminals who show no regard or respect for the police. We hope the officers injured in these incidents continue on their road to recovery but we also need to see those who are involved in these attacks face the full weight of the law. Unfortunately, while tougher sentences are now available to the courts as a result of the Federation's Protect the Protectors campaign, there is evidence that these are not always being handed down.

As a Federation, we will be pushing not just for the courts to suitably punish those who attack the police but also for even tougher sentences to be introduced. We will also be working with the Force to ensure that officers are given the very best safety training so they can protect themselves and this will just be one strand of work for 2020.

Another focus for us next year will be the Force recruitment programme and, coupled with that, measures to boost officer retention.

Closely linked to that will, of course, be the issue of pay. The annual Police Federation pay and morale survey revealed some shocking figures in relation to officers' finances (see Page 6 for more details of our respondents' views).

Earlier this year, for the first time in three years, the Government accepted the recommendations of the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) and awarded us a 2.5 per cent pay rise. This was perhaps one of the highlights of the year but, while welcome, the pay rise was not enough. In real terms, we have seen our pay cut in recent years and we need to see efforts to address that.

In the meantime we, as a Federation, want to remind members that help and support is available if you should find yourself in financial difficulty and, in the February/March edition of this magazine we will include a feature on some of the organisations that can provide you with tailored advice.

Much is said about the need to boost officer wellbeing – and I am really pleased to see that officers are now feeling confident about talking about their mental health – but healthy finances are also necessary to everyone's wellbeing so we want to ensure that everyone knows help is at hand.

Finally, I would just like to say how proud I am to have been elected as chair of the West Midlands Police Federation. You can read more about my policing and Federation background in the profile piece on Page 22.

However, I would just like to say here that, while I know it's going to involve a period of adjustment moving from my detective role to a full-time Federation post, I am confident that I can make a difference for members.

I will always represent you to the very best of my ability, putting your views and perspectives forward to senior officers and managers, negotiating on your behalf and seeking to influence decision-makers. I am looking forward to the challenges ahead.

Finally, I appreciate many of you will be working over the festive period. However, I hope that, despite your shifts, you are able to spend some time with your loved ones. All that remains is for me to wish you a very merry Christmas and best wishes for a safe and healthy 2020.

- See Page 22 for a profile of the new Federation chair.

“As a Federation, we will be pushing not just for the courts to suitably punish those who attack the police but also for even tougher sentences to be introduced.”

# Pensions update

The Police Federation will continue to do the best it can for all members in relation to the ongoing legal process regarding the 2015 pension scheme, national chair John Apter has re-iterated in his latest statement on the issue.

John also confirmed that the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) will represent the interests of all members, ensuring no one is left behind.

"The whole pension situation is a complex one and there are still many unknowns. However, I give you my word that PFEW will continue to do the best we can for all our members in what is a difficult and challenging situation," says John.

"Once I am in an informed position to announce how these changes will affect you directly, I will let you know."

The Federation published the blog at the end of October just days after it was one of seven staff associations representing officers across the UK to be granted interested party status in the Employment Tribunal considering the remedy over discriminatory aspects of the scheme.

The Government has also confirmed the remedy will apply to all officers discriminated against not just those who have lodged a claim.

The national chair wrote: "This is also good news as it effectively means that the same benefits will be received for all officers who were discriminated against, without the need to submit a claim to receive this benefit."

"What is yet to be decided upon is whether any compensation will be awarded to the claimants in addition to the discrimination being remedied. This will be decided by the Employment Tribunal during the course of 2020 after they hear and consider evidence of any suffering caused by the discrimination."

You can find out more on our pensions page.

# Cash boost for Welfare Support Programme

The Welfare Support Programme (WSP) which offers a round-the-clock helpline to officers and their families who are going through life-changing circumstances has been given a cash boost.



The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) is putting an extra £175,000 into the programme, taking its funding for the initiative to a maximum of £335,000 a year.

This will help set up a proactive phone line that will reach out to officers who may be in need and a bespoke counselling service as well as ensuring better support is available to Federation reps as they undertake various roles with a wide range of responsibilities. The expanded services will be trialled for a year.

"I am pleased to see the Federation putting extra money into what has become a vital life-line for distressed officers," says Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, "The Welfare Support Programme has supported more than 1,000 officers in the three years since it was formed and saved at least six people from taking their own lives. What further evidence could we require to demonstrate the need for the programme to receive additional funding?"

"It is essential that we, as a Federation, do all we can to ensure that we help promote officer wellbeing and also give access to support when it is needed."

Currently, 24 West Midlands Police officers are being supported by the programme, with 120 officers from the Force having benefited from its support over the last three years.

The WSP helpline, which is available 24/7, 365 days a year, is operated by staff who have had training in police discipline, Post-Incident Procedures (PIPs) and are certified in mental health first aid. The programme is run by the Police Firearms Officers' Association on behalf of the Federation.

It can be accessed by officers:

- **Involved in a death or serious injury incident at work that results in Post-Incident Procedures**
- **Suspended from duty**
- **Served with gross misconduct papers; or**
- **Deemed in need of the programme following a consultation with their Federation branch and the Welfare Support Programme.**

It is also available for partners, dependants and immediate family members of officers entered onto the programme and any person living in the same household as the officer.

# Our Christmas opening times

The Federation office at Guardians House will have reduced opening hours over the Christmas and New Year period.

Opening hours will be:

- Tuesday 24 December - 8am to 12 noon**
- Wednesday 25 December - Closed**
- Thursday 26 December - Closed**
- Friday 27 December - 10am to 2pm**
- Monday 30 December - 10am to 2pm**
- Tuesday 31 December - 10am to 2pm**
- Wednesday 1 January - Closed.**

For out of hour telephone numbers please contact the Force Control Room.



# Look out for your Federation diary

The ever-popular West Midlands Police Federation diaries have been sent out via internal despatch to all relevant departments so members are being urged to keep a look-out for them.

"As was the case last year, we are not posting out the Federation diaries direct to members," says Chris Cooper, member services team leader at West Midlands Police Federation.

The diaries were sent out on Friday 22 November.

# Half of officers regularly worrying about their finances

**A**lmost half of the West Midlands Police Federation members who responded to a nationwide survey on pay and morale said they worried about the state of their finances either daily or almost every day.

The results of the annual Police Federation survey, carried out among members across England and Wales, also revealed that 81 per cent of West Midlands respondents were dissatisfied with their overall remuneration – including basic pay and allowances.

Three quarters also felt they were worse off financially than they were five years ago with 13 per cent reporting they never, or almost never, had enough money to cover essentials. This was the 10th highest return in the country for this question.

A total of 91 per cent of West Midlands respondents said they did not feel fairly paid for the stresses and strains of the job while 86 per cent said they did not feel they were fairly paid for the hazards they faced.

“The results of the survey do not come as a huge surprise to us,” says Steve Grange, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation.

“We know that years of austerity and below-inflation pay rises have had an impact on police officer wages, meaning that they have not kept up with increased living costs.

“Police officers play a unique role in society, putting their lives on the line to protect their communities and they should be suitably and fairly paid for the critical work they do. I hope the Government and other decision-makers take note of the findings of this survey and realise that it’s time for officer pay to be looked at again.

“At a time when we are trying to recruit 20,000 new police officers nationwide, we need to ensure that we have a pay package

that not only attracts the very best people to policing but also ensures we retain the experienced officers we have.”

As well as painting a depressing picture on the issue of pay, the survey findings also revealed that West Midlands Police Federation members were concerned about poor morale.

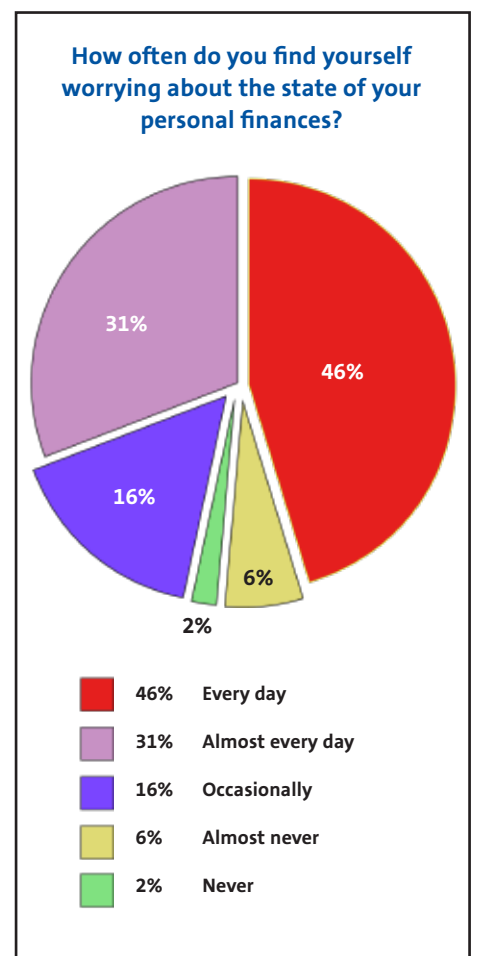
A total of 95 per cent of West Midlands respondents felt morale within the Force was currently low with more than half (59 per cent) saying their own morale was low, the sixth highest figure recorded in the survey for this question.

The reasons given for low morale were:

- **How the police as a whole are treated – 87 per cent**
- **Management of change within the police – 83 per cent**
- **Pay and benefits – including pension – 80 per cent**
- **Work-life balance – 64 per cent**
- **Health and wellbeing – 60 per cent**
- **Workload and responsibilities – 58 per cent**
- **Opportunities for development and promotion – 50 per cent**
- **Treatment by senior managers – 49 per cent**
- **Day to day job role – 46 per cent.**

Almost three quarters (70 per cent) of those from the Force who responded to the survey said they would not recommend joining the police to others, the sixth highest in the country, and one in 10 said they intended to leave the police service either within the next two years or as soon as possible with low morale, how the police are treated and the impact of the job on their health and wellbeing cited as the main reasons behind this.

Just over a third (35 per cent) of members from the West Midlands who took part in the



survey said they are not treated fairly, the seventh highest.

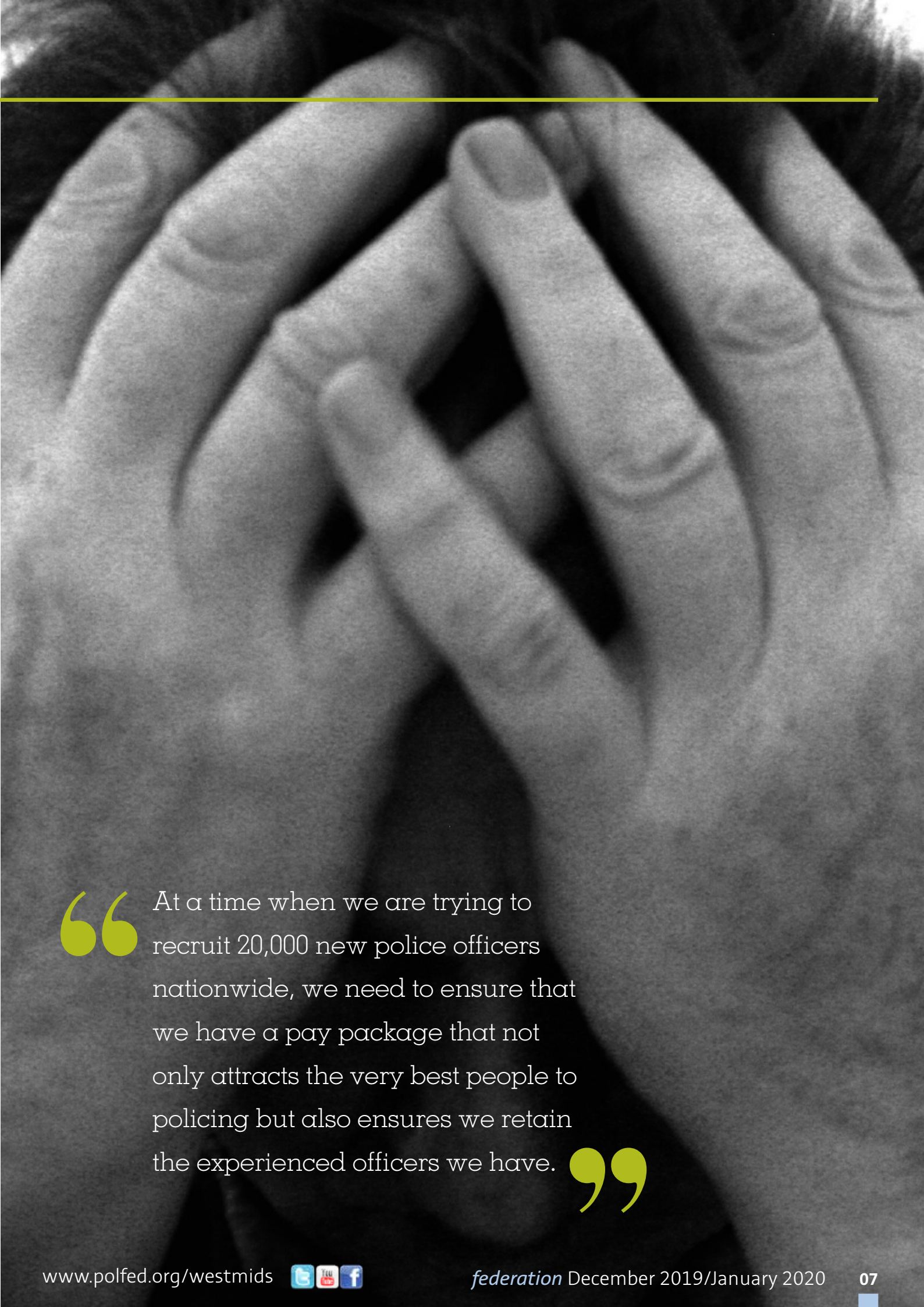
The pay and morale survey is carried out by the Police Federation of England and Wales each year with the responses being used to provide evidence in its negotiations with the Government, forces and other stakeholders.

A total of 1,237 responses were received from West Midlands Police Federation members this year, a response rate of 19 per cent compared to a national response rate of 16 per cent.


The survey opened on 10 June this year and closed on 30 August.

“The results of the survey do not come as a surprise to us.”





“ At a time when we are trying to recruit 20,000 new police officers nationwide, we need to ensure that we have a pay package that not only attracts the very best people to policing but also ensures we retain the experienced officers we have. ”



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See what your colleagues say:

"I am very grateful for Caroline's support. She could see I found the whole situation stressful but she took that pressure from me and was wonderful. She's a fantastic lady" Serving police officer, 2019

"Not only did she help me to understand how the new pension will affect me but she also helped save me money!"  
Serving police officer Bennett, 2019

"Visiting Caroline Harris was well worth the time. She helped put my mind at rest with informed information rather than guess work" Serving police officer Skidmore, 2019

"Caroline cleared up any doubts about my pension and helped me understand my tax code better, which has resulted in a tax refund. I highly recommend any officer who is close to retirement come and speak to her." Serving police officer Shippam, 2019



GeorgeBurrows





# Call for safety training to include more hands-on practice

Officers need to undertake more personal safety training with an emphasis on hands-on practice, according to West Midlands Police Federation.

The Force has reduced the former two and half day package of training in 2017 down to a one-day course but half of that day is spent on first aid training.

Federation workplace representative Jase Sayers, a former personal safety training instructor and the deputy secretary of the Federation's health, safety and welfare committee, says this is not enough.

"The Force has a duty under health and safety legislation to ensure the safety of its people and personally I do not think it is doing that right now," he explains.

"But I will say that the Force is listening to what we are saying, taking on board our concerns and trying to take things forward."

One of Jase's particular concerns is that a former session spent training officers in vehicles skills – how to contain a car, how to get people out of a car – has now been removed from the practical training programme.

"I worked as a personal safety training instructor with the Force for eight years. For this session, we would have a car and use it to fully demonstrate the techniques officers can use to either forcibly keep someone in a car or to take them out if necessary," he explains.

"These are really important techniques



*Federation workplace representative Jase Sayers.*

and cannot be learned by watching a video or simply being told how to do it. For me, there is an over-reliance on NCALT throughout the training that is now provided. It is easy to send a link to an online tutorial but this can seem like a tick box exercise.

"There is no one-size fits all for safety training but for me, and I know many others who are the same, I learn far better if someone shows me how to do it and then watches as I repeat what I have been shown.

"A hands-on approach is needed for officer safety training. We would previously have a two-day course and then at the end a half day 'scenario' session where the officers would be asked to demonstrate what they had learned."

He gives the example of the fact that officers are taught several different methods of restraining someone on the floor but now they are just asked to show one they can remember.

"There are several different options for a reason and officers need to be able to know which method to use in a given situation. If officers only know one of the options, they are not going to have that range of different approaches to try," Jase says.

Jase is also concerned that while officers go through refresher training there is actually no test to assess they have taken on board what they have been taught.

"You have got to be tested. To my knowledge in the last 10 years no officer has failed personal safety refresher training, I don't think this can be right," he explains, adding that some officers, including those in CID, now only do two days' officer safety training every two years.

"Two years is a long time between refresher training when your role does not require you to use the skill set on a daily basis."

Jase, who is National Examination Board Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) trained, is working closely with Chief Inspector Allan Green, who is the head of learning and development, to try to bring about improvements to the way officers are trained.

One element of the training Jase wants to see changed is the separate courses for Taser and officer safety training. He believes there needs to be an overlap between the two.

"These two subject matters are closely linked but are trained completely separately," he says.

“ There is no one-size fits all for safety training but for me, and I know many others who are the same, I learn far better if someone shows me how to do it and then watches as I repeat what I have been shown. ”

# Study period extended for Force's trainee detectives

**T**rainee detectives within the Force are now going to be given longer to study before taking their National Investigating Exam (NIE).

The Force has responded to concerns that trainees were being put under huge pressure to pass the exam in a restricted timeframe while already dealing with the stress of increased workload due to officer numbers being at an all-time low and more complex and hidden crimes being investigated as a result of awareness campaigns.

The formal NIE induction has always been held 14 weeks before the date of the November exam, allowing the recommended College of Policing minimum time for the students to study with the Blackstone's manuals provided by the Force. No maximum time for studying is stipulated by the college.

But now the Force is adopting a new approach. When the Detective Academy process starts in September next year, the NIE induction, where students will be given their manuals and information about the exam, will be in December 2020 with the exam in June 2021. This model will be repeated going forward.

DS Trudy Gittins, Federation workplace representative and deputy chair of the Force staff association EnAble, who suggested the changes explains: "I have been in the role as investigative training supervisor for just over 12 months now and, during that time, there have been many students who have enrolled for the NIE who have approached me just before the exam to withdraw for a huge variety of legitimate reasons.

"It is well publicised that police forces nationally, including West Midlands Police, are vastly understaffed and we are also doing so much to raise awareness of hidden and complex crimes such as child exploitation, modern slavery and forced marriage.

"By encouraging more people to come forward this vastly increases the workload and pressures of the staff taking the exam who may also be juggling extremely complex and difficult circumstances at home by being a single parent or a carer or just working more hours to keep up with the demands of their role in order to give a high level of

service to our communities.

"This all takes its toll and the high level of revision needed to pass the NIE suffers meaning staff feel the need to very reluctantly withdraw from the exam. This new approach is far more inclusive to all our staff fairly taking everyone's circumstances into account in order to give them the best chance of passing the exam."

Trudy adds: "I think this has been a case of doing what we have always done but, by allowing all students longer to study, we are taking everyone's needs into account, as well as the demands of the organisation, and we are giving far greater opportunities for all students to pass."

Detective Chief Superintendent Mark Payne, head of Force Criminal Investigation, authorised the change following approval from the Detective Academy Board.

He says: "I am really keen that the Detective Academy represents the breadth of people and talent within the organisation. After each process we talk to candidates about their experience, and look at opportunities to improve the process. As a result of this feedback, we have decided to extend the period available to study for the NIE.

"This will assist all candidates but will remove some of the time pressures on members of staff who have childcare issues or work flexibly. The detective role provides officers and staff with a brilliant career pathway. This change will allow even more people to apply and succeed."

While altering the current timelines helps all candidates, it also gives the Force an added financial benefit.

Currently, staff who fail the exam in November have to re-take it in March which means they have to be issued with new learning manuals since these are published each December. The manuals cost £75 per set.

Under the new scheme, anyone failing the June exam can re-take it in September or November using the same manuals and therefore incurring no additional costs.

The change to the NIE process will lead to a delayed start for the Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme (ICIDP) and the officers' subsequent accreditation but would be the start of a more inclusive process that would be of benefit after the first run through.

**'I want to make being a detective as accessible as possible'**

Detective Superintendent Anthony Tagg, Force lead for the Detective Academy, is committed to make the pathway to becoming a detective as accessible as possible.

He acknowledges DS Sergeant Trudy Gittins' work in recommending changes to the way in which West Midlands Police runs and administers the NIE to offer a more inclusive and flexible process for those progressing through the Detective Academy.

Det Supt Tagg says: "It is recognised that



*Detective Chief Superintendent Mark Payne.*

“ I am really keen that the Detective Academy represents the breadth of people and talent within the organisation. After each process we talk to candidates about their experience, and look at opportunities to improve the process. ”

people have a variety of responsibilities both at work and away from the work place. The changes to the process have been designed and implemented to help all candidates balance the demands of the NIE process with their other responsibilities. Therefore giving all candidates a better chance to secure the success in the NIE that they undoubtedly want.



**Detective Superintendent Anthony Tagg.**

“Agreeing to the revised process, procedure and administration, the Detective Academy Strategy Group hopes to open up the Detective Academy process to as wide a group of people as possible.

“This year was another very successful year for the Detective Academy and we are busy planning and preparing for the 2020 process. As soon as we have finalised the details, we will announce the launch of Detective Academy 2020 through News Beat. Becoming a detective offers an exciting, rewarding and challenging career path that I would recommend to everyone.”

## Emma's story

I have been a single working mother for the last three years and I have been trying to balance work-life commitments for that time, putting my career on hold while I focused on bringing up my son, states PC Emma Bushe, adult investigation officer in Team 3.



Now my son is slightly older I thought it was my opportunity to try to progress my career and train to be a DC as I work in PPU. I knew from others that the exam was hard work and required a lot of commitment and sacrifice. It is something I had been debating about for a while and decided to act on it instead of just merely thinking about it.

I knew it was possible to defer the exam to a later date for those in certain circumstances and therefore giving more time than three months to study. I asked DS Gittins about this when I enrolled for the much earlier exam but the answer then was not favourable. I left feeling a little jaded but started my revision.

It is not possible for me to revise in work's time as I am always busy. Out of work's time, I have responsibility for my child so the only time I would be able to study is in the evening. With my son going to bed at 7.30, this would give me an hour and a half.

From the study material and the amount of it, I started to feel very overwhelmed and worried. Had I made the right decision? DS Gittins then called me a few weeks later to say that she would support me deferring to the later exam.

“Not only was I balancing work but I am also in the process of selling my house so this for me made a huge difference. I have not been as stressed and I have been able to focus properly. There are still days when revision is just not possible and I struggle to get an hour in, however, I know that because I have been given the leeway for the March exam I don't need to 'panic revise' where I'm reading a page but it's not going in.

I think it is a massive undertaking and big ask for anyone to revise and learn the course material in three months. It is very stressful and just having the extra three months has afforded me piece of mind and the ability to do the best I can while still maintaining my work-life balance and looking after my son. I am very grateful to DS Gittins for being able to achieve this for me and hope that it reflects in the exam.

## What is the Detective Academy?



The Detective Academy, which has just recruited its third year of entrants, is West Midlands Police's approach to recruiting and training detectives.

Officers and police staff who pass through the academy are given the opportunity to train and qualify as a detective and then be offered a career pathway allowing them to develop skills across the Investigative arena.

They can then work, over time, in areas as diverse as homicide, child abuse, professional standards, anti-corruption and counter terrorism.

The academy will be the single route

into the detective world and is designed to give officers and police staff the chance to achieve a rewarding career while providing the Force, and the public, with the best trained, experienced and motivated detectives.

All areas of the Force that employ detectives are working with the learning and development team to put in place an accreditation programme.

To gain a place in the academy, officers have to attend an assessment event involving a written work-based exercise and a presentation to a panel including a detective inspector.

## Kathryn's story

Having a longer amount of time to study allows us to retain a home-life balance. Our job is very demanding on us, we work long hours and our work can be emotionally draining. We need down time without thinking about work. If study can be spread out this massively reduces the pressure we feel, I particularly have other issues to deal with outside of work and I am not alone in this, says PC Kathryn Sargent, who works in adult care abuse investigation Team 1.

I was becoming very stressed while trying to fit everything in and it started to take its toll on me and my family. I spoke to DS Gittins about my issues and being allowed to delay my exam and offer me more time to study has really lightened the load for me.

I am very grateful for this and I feel that this would be a benefit to all. Not everyone wants to speak about issues they may have at home and may be struggling their way through. A longer study period would help to make life that little bit easier.



# More than 300 sign up for marathon events to show support for ACC

**M**ore than 300 people have now signed up to take part in the Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon events next May in support of Assistant Chief Constable Chris Johnson.

The ACC was told he had Motor Neurone Disease 12 months ago and, inspired by his approach to his diagnosis, DS Trudy Gittins, West Midlands Police Federation workplace representative and deputy chair of the WMP police staff association EnAble, decided to run the full marathon in Liverpool on Sunday 24 May 2020 to raise funds for two charities offering support to the family – the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) and Primrose Hospice - and encouraged others to join her.

"We now have more than 300 police officers, police staff, friends, family and little ones signed up including colleagues and friends from all over the country to run either the full or half marathon or the 5K or one-mile events in Liverpool," said Trudy

"For most, including me, this is an immense challenge on top of juggling work and family life but in pushing ourselves in this way we are reminded that we are able and blessed to have the good health to do it.

"Inspired by Chris Johnson, it gives us an opportunity to come together with all of our varying running experiences to share that one thing that we all have one thing in common in the desire to demonstrate our support to the Johnson family who are fighting this very cruel disease; to ensure that through us in our working lives Chris Johnson's message 'it's okay not to be okay' is spread and to raise as much funds and awareness as we can about Motor Neurone Disease and Primrose Hospice."

Chris has been touched by the response to the campaign.

"I want to thank everyone involved. It's really important to me that we raise awareness of MND and help with much needed research in to this disease which has no known cause or cure. I also hope that we can show that 'it's okay not to be okay' and that the policing family will support you if you need help," he said.



ACC Chris Johnson.

"This is a truly wonderful thing to do. It's been a difficult time but I can honestly say things like this, where great people are prepared to do something to help raise awareness and support, is genuinely uplifting."

His wife, Sharon, a PC in the Force Initial Investigation Team, is running in the half marathon and has also thanked everyone for their efforts.

"When this first started we had no idea of how big it would get. We can't thank each and every person involved enough. It is very important to us a family to not only highlight Motor Neurone Disease and the fantastic work the MNDA does but also to thank the Primrose Hospice, a local charity, for its support to us as a family at a difficult time.

"Our son, Harry, who is nearly 10 will be running the one mile on the day and is so excited to be involved in what will make a truly fantastic memory for us all and show the children what an inspirational man their Dad is.

"I have made friends for life and this just shows that the police are one big family."

West Midlands Police Federation is supporting the fund-raising by making a donation of £2,500 on behalf of all the Federated WMP members taking part in addition to supplying a #WMPMND branded

water bottle for each runner.

In addition, the Federation is contributing £300 towards the cost of a charity song which has been written by DI Chris Jones which is hoped will raise thousands of pounds for each charity.

And the West Midlands Police Force Sports and Social Club has agreed to pay half the entry fees for any of its members who had signed up to take part. To find out more about this type 'cashback' in the sports and social club website.

As well as runners from the Force and their family and friends, there are entrants from other forces across England and Wales including former West Midlands Police officers Carl Foulkes, now Chief Constable in North Wales, and Alex Murray, now a Commander in the Met.

Thinking of joining Team #WMPMND? Please get in touch with Trudy and consider sharing this plea for recruitment with your own personal and working networks. Alternatively, if you think you can help by raising awareness and funds for MND or the Primrose Hospice in another way, please also contact Trudy.

You can also contact the occupational health and wellbeing fitness advisers for further training support. They regularly hold 'Couch to 5K' training programmes.

Challenge yourself... who's in?



The #WMPMND branded water bottles.

# Supporters' stories

**Having been inspired to enter, Damian Baxter from the Force Support Unit has decided to cycle to Liverpool from Lloyd House on Saturday 23 May.**

"Planning is underway with a proposed route of 107 miles, with two or three pitstops for a cuppa, sandwich and a cake to fuel us," says Damian.

"I'm also looking for a few more volunteers to ride with us or support us on the day. Please let me know if wish to join us on the ride or be part of our support crew. Good luck to everyone! #WMPMND."

**Chrissy Naccarato, a Force business analyst, was convinced to take part in the marathon by colleague and WMP Federation representative Rod Rose.**

"Back in August, I was on holiday when I got a text off Rod asking if I wanted to run a half marathon. I initially turned it down because there was no way I could run that far, however, after about a day or so of him texting and offering support, he convinced me I could do it and before I knew it my place was booked for the half marathon," she explains.

Chrissy admits her fitness levels have dropped to rock bottom over the last 12 months due to work commitments and signing up has helped motivate her to get back into the gym.

"Doing the half marathon for MNDA and Primrose Hospice was the perfect reason to get back into my fitness," she adds.

The furthest Chrissy has ever run before is 5k and that was a few years ago so Chrissy knows the event is going to push her to the limit. However, she is not aiming for a personal best but just wants to get over the finish line!

**Michelle Thurgood, a detective inspector with the Force, started running 18 months ago after joining 'This Girl Runs Couch to 5k'. Despite always being fit, running had always defeated her.**

"Running was something that has really frustrated me as I've got older, however, I now run two or three times a week but have struggled to get past 7k," she says.

"Having worked with Chris, I saw this as a way to drive myself forward and push to achieve a goal I'm still not sure I can make, but for Chris I'm going to give it a damn good try!"

**Sally Astwood has been a police officer with the Force for almost 26 years and works on the same team as ACC Chris Johnson's wife, Sharon. She joined the marathon team to improve her own fitness but also get behind the cause.**

"I'm 53 – soon to be 54 – and started running seriously about five years ago. In that time, I've run a number of events including about 10 half marathons, 10ks and aquathons. The Rock 'n' Roll half seemed an ideal opportunity to get involved for an amazing cause and try to push myself that bit further so I've got myself a coach and I am aiming for a sub two-hour time," says Sally.

**Sergeant Jon Butler wants to take part in the Liverpool event as a small token of the gratitude he feels towards ACC Chris Johnson and all he has done for officers during his career.**

Jon, who has been with the Force since 2004 and has been a traffic officer since 2009, has been running for several years with his first race being in support of the road safety charity, Brake, after which he took part in the London Marathon to raise money for Walsall Manor Hospital's neo-natal ward. Last year he ran the Birmingham Half Marathon for the Benevolent Fund.

"I first met Chris Johnson when he was chief superintendent at BWC where he was giving a talk to new sergeants about leadership," says Jon, "What he said sticks with me today and I like to think that moment inspired my journey as a leader in WMP. I am also running the London Marathon again as well as the Liverpool half to raise money for MNDA and Primrose Hospice. I couldn't think of a better cause to raise that money for. Chris is nothing short of an inspiration to so many of us and this is just a small token of the gratitude I have for all he has done for all of us during his career."

Jon is currently sergeant with the road harm prevention team based with the Central Motorway Police Group.

**Sally Clark is one of a number of runners taking part in the Liverpool marathon events who doesn't work in policing.**

But Sally was inspired to sign up when she saw Sharon Johnson in September.

"We own a garage and look after Sharon's car so we've become friends," says Sally, "She dropped her car in to us and was in her running gear so I asked her what she was doing and she told me about the marathon. I run myself, normally around 10k, but I'd lost my mojo.

"I asked if I could join the team and I have been training ever since so at the moment I am doing about 10 miles a week with a local running club.

"Sharon has really inspired me, she is so lovely and when I don't feel like running, I think of why I am doing it, put my running stuff on and get out there."

Sally adds: "I did Couch to 5k about two years ago to get back into running but, while I had always run since school, I never fancied doing a half marathon. Now I can't wait. I feel that it's something I can do to help Chris and Sharon. I've met Chris at the garage; he's such a lovely man and so brave."

**DC Sarah Rose, who works in PPU, was asked to join the team by Kelly Monaghan (Bebe) who she knows through running for the Force.**

She had just made the decision to hang up her running trainers and concentrate on cycling but was soon persuaded to come out of retirement!

"I've run since a young age, culminating in representing Great Britain. I'm the current British Police cross country champion. I am totally inspired and love hearing about everyone achieving their goals even if that goal is to run one mile non-stop," says Sarah.

"To think there are people who cannot run due to health reasons makes me realise how much running means to me. I watched the 'Good Morning Britain' interview and was so inspired by Chris and his wife, Sharon, that I have entered the marathon. Training is going well with my goal at this moment in time being consistent with training.

"I wish everyone the best in their training. A big well done to Trudy and Chris Jones for all their hard work."

*Feature continued on Page 15*



## Care on Demand

### New to the West Midlands Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019.

We are blessed to have access, in the UK, to the NHS. A service free from cradle to grave, at the point of delivery, it is the envy of the world.

GPs are the gate-keepers. Historically, we tend to think of the friendly local family doctor. He or she would be familiar with every member of the family and each member's health. Appointments would be easy, they might even pop in from time to time 'doing the rounds', and there would be no time constraints.

Sadly, this now sounds like a misty-eyed fantasy.

Huge financial pressures, an ageing population, increase in obesity (resulting in diabetes, hypertension etc.), mental health issues and so on has put an impossible financial and resource burden on an already stretched NHS. This is evident in waiting times not just for in-patient treatment but also GP appointments with an average waiting time up to 13 days<sup>1</sup>.

Little wonder that the NHS has previously reported that between 10% and 30% of cases turning up in A&E were ones that were regularly seen by GPs<sup>2</sup>.

Fortunately, there is a solution.

Care on Demand allows all our Federation members paying into the Group Insurance, and eligible dependents to arrange an appointment 24/7 with a GMC licensed GP, whether in the UK or whilst on holiday.

For any non-emergency case, whether physical or mental, you can discuss your health concerns with a GP, via phone or video consultation. Calls can normally be arranged within 2 hours of your request. And unlike a GP visit, there is no time limit on the consultation (video consults up to 30mins) and you can ask more than one question.

Furthermore, the Care on Demand GP can arrange for a private referral to be sent to you or a private prescription\*\* to be sent to a pharmacy of your choice if you are in the UK.

It's a service that is not designed to replace your own GP but to work in conjunction, entirely in line with the Secretary of Health's strategy of introducing digital solutions to the NHS. So far those who have used the service have been thrilled with it, and a recent survey revealed a 93% recommendation rate with 89% satisfied or very satisfied. A WWPF officer who has used the service since inception on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 stated:

*"Very useful to have. Great that you offer out of hours, I was able to speak to someone in the middle of the night, I called at 1am and I was able to speak to the doctor not long after."*



Contact the Federation office for details or visit our website:

[www.polfed.org/westmids](http://www.polfed.org/westmids)

<sup>1</sup> [www.pulsetoday.co.uk](http://www.pulsetoday.co.uk)

<sup>2</sup> [fullfact.org/health](http://fullfact.org/health)

\*\* Within safe online prescribing guidelines

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# Supporters' stories

**With rheumatoid arthritis meaning she has to take care of her joints, Kristal Taylor has limited herself to runs of a maximum of 10k – until she hear about team WMPMND!**

"I always said 10km was my limit... the thought of running for longer than an hour did not interest me at all," says Kristal, a Force HR manager, "But a friend of mine was talking about running for Chris on her hen weekend. We've all known him a long time and she told me that she might not be the fastest and she might have to walk a bit of it but she was determined she would finish it and I thought you know what? Me too. I'm genuinely really excited about being part of something amazing and doing something amazing for and with some amazing people."

**Superintendent Kim Madill from Walsall NPU said there was no way she couldn't get involved when she saw what Trudy Gittins was organising.**

"Historically, I have been a 10km runner, but have covered more like 5km in the last few years. Loads of people have said I should do a half marathon in the past but, if I am honest, I avoided it as I knew it would hurt," she says.

"However, when I saw what Trudy was doing for Chris there was no way I could say no. Chris isn't just a top cop, he is an authentic leader and is totally inspirational. I personally am grateful to the support Chris has given me in the past and I know he has supported many others too - hence there are literally 100s of us in team #WMPMND.

"I have never followed a running programme before, but I am using BUPA training plans which are really making a difference. I have completed the 10km programme, now doing the 10 mile and then I will start the half marathon in the new year."

**Christine Howard is a sergeant with Derbyshire Police and has been involved in Police Sport UK (PSUK) competitions for the last 27 years taking part in several European marathons and triathlons.**

However, she has a very personal reason for signing up for the Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon with the West Midlands Police team.

"Four years ago my father, David Howard, was diagnosed with MND and in that space of time has withered from a highly active pensioner who built and ran his own vintage bullnose Morris cars and did long distance mountain walks to being utterly paralysed but with a fully intact mind," says Christine.

Christine's daughter, husband and sister have also joined #WMPMND to run in Liverpool.

Trudy Gittins says: "#WMPMND are thrilled that Christine and also other officers from Derbyshire Police have come together to fight for this cause and show that we are one big family no matter where you work in policing in the UK and are honoured to also stand beside Christine and her family in their difficult journey too."

# Band on the run?

A detective inspector is to swap his warrant card for a bass guitar to record a charity single – inspired by Assistant Chief Constable Chris Johnson's approach to his Motor Neurone Disease (MND) diagnosis.

Chris Jones, who works in public protection, had initially signed up along with colleagues to do the Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon to raise money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) and Primrose Hospice which is supporting Mr Johnson and his family.

But when injury forced him to pull out, he set about thinking how else he could raise money.

He said: "I was the first to sign up to the Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon but also the first to pull out due to a bad knee and ankle injury requiring an operation.

"I'm no good at baking cakes and was thinking of other ways to try to support this fantastic charity initiative. I've been in a band for around 20 years and did a charity song 10 years ago which went

down well and raised some good funds.

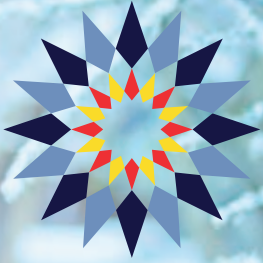
"In recent years the band members have all been occupied with families, children and our careers, so we have taken a step back with playing music. We have barely played together for four years but we have now all agreed to dust off our equipment and get back in the studio to write and record a one-off charity song."

The track will be titled 'On The Run' and will be recorded at Rockfield Studios, Wales where Bohemian Rhapsody was recorded, in March 2020.

"To up the profile of the fund-raising efforts the group, we are looking to audition for 'Britain's Got Talent', simply to raise awareness for the two charities but this is subject to change at any moment as the others may change their minds," Chris explained.

The band consists of bass guitarist Chris, drummer Karl Palmer, who works in the banking industry, singer Matt Allen, who works for Tarmac UK, and guitarist Simon Lane, a specialist whisky retailer.

Chris has spent a number of months generating donations from a range of companies and individuals to enable a free prize draw to be linked to his campaign and encourage donations. Anyone who donates to the charity song page will automatically be entered into the draw. There are a wide range of prizes on offer! In no particular order, they include sports vouchers, Brooks Sports trainers, signed items from Paula Radcliffe, Jessica Ennis Hill and Dame Kelly Holmes, a Land Rover driving experience, a bungee jump, laser tag sessions, simulated driving sessions, archery, go-karting, clay pigeon shooting, tickets to the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and a Pro Pulse Roller worth over £100. There are also a number of holiday prizes – accommodation only - a week in Orlando, Florida and short breaks in Greece, Malta, Padstow, Scotland and the Yorkshire Dales. At the time of writing, he has more than 34 donated items.



RAC

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# 'I'm on your side and I've got your back'



*John Apter, national chair of the Police Federation, listens to Home Secretary Priti Patel's speech to the event.*

**T**he 'bravery, commitment and sacrifices' of police officers have been praised by the Home Secretary.

Priti Patel said it had been 'humbling' to meet some of the 'most remarkable officers' from across the country, during her three months in post.

She was addressing 700 officers and invited guests including chief constables and PCCs at a Police Federation of England and Wales celebratory event organised to mark the organisation's 100-year anniversary. The event was held at Methodist Central Hall in Westminster, London where the Federation's first conference was held in 1919.

The Home Secretary said: "Your courage, dedication and public service has been truly moving. I'm hugely honoured that my job is to help you do all of yours. From physically taking on violent and ruthless criminals, to breaking heart-wrenching and tragic news to bereaved families.

"From handling some of the most devastating and atrocious tragedies to bringing safety and security to the communities in which we all live. You are always there. And for that, I salute you all."

The Home Secretary recalled that when her parents first moved to the UK they set up a corner shop and were victims of theft, abuse and burglary, before adding: "I will never forget the support shown back then to my family by the police, as well as the

local community."

Speaking about the dangers officers face, she said: "Each day, I ask myself, do people truly understand how unpredictable, dangerous and challenging the work of a police officer is?"

"Because, I worry the people posing the threats you face are ever more callous. The job we ask you to do is ever more complex and dangerous. That is why I want to make it clear that I am on your side and that I've got your back.

"I recognise the bravery, commitment and sacrifices of both serving and former officers. And I stand with you; the brave men and women of our police."

She paid tribute to PC Andrew Harper, the Thames Valley officer killed while on duty earlier this year, describing him as a hero.

She praised the Police Federation for the 'key role' it plays saying: "Whether it is engaging with Government, supporting families or, helping officers who have been assaulted, the organisation continues to work tirelessly to represent the interests of the rank and file."

And the Home Secretary said she was committed to strengthening the relationship between the Police Federation and the Home Office, adding the 100-year anniversary of the Federation was a 'remarkable achievement'.

She also spoke about how one of her

highlights as Home Secretary, so far, had been working with Federation chair John Apter, saying it is 'completely right that he is holding myself and the Government to account on our commitments'.

One of her first acts as Home Secretary was to begin the recruitment of 20,000 extra police officers and she also said she believed it was the job of the Home Secretary to give police officers the protection they need and empower officers to do their jobs, hence the £10 million of ring-fenced funding for Tasers.

She told the hall: "As crime becomes more violent, the assaults are increasingly brutal. Many of you will have been hurt. Many of you will have seen friends and colleagues subject to abuse in the line of duty.

"It takes extraordinary courage to keep running to the front-line to face that threat, day in day out. But, for you, your sense of duty comes first."

She concluded: "As long as I am Home Secretary, I will always give you the backing you need to keep yourselves and the public safe. So that, together, we can stand for the forces of right, and against the forces of evil.

"Policing is a job like no other. Every day, in every town or city, police officers perform thousands acts of bravery, humanity and compassion.

"You are the ones society expects to run towards danger, to protect the vulnerable and to keep us safe."

*Feature continued on Page 18*



# Is it time for a Royal Commission on policing?

**T**he national chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales believes now is the time to shape policing for the next 100 years and pave the way for change.

John Apter was speaking in front of Federation members and reps from across England and Wales, as well as the Home Secretary, at the centenary event.

The national chair heaped praise on Fed reps, calling them the 'backbone' of the organisation, and said 60 years on since the last Royal Commission he believed the time was right to ask the public what they wanted from their police.

"In that 60 years the UK population has increased by more than 14 million people, who all need the police. That's why I genuinely believe that the time has come to ask the public what they want from their police: is the current model of policing right

for the next 100 years?" he asked.

"We have a funding formula which sees a disparity in what people in one force area can get compared to those from another. It's a postcode lottery of funding that is grossly unfair. We have a structure of 43 separate forces. Is this right?"

Much of his speech was centred around the Federation reps, as without them the Federation would not exist as it does.

"The welfare of our colleagues is what drives us; it motivates us all. Looking out for and looking after our colleagues, is what we do. And let's not be ashamed to say, we do it really well," he said.

"I know many of you juggle your day job as a police officer with that as a Fed rep, very often working in your own time for those you represent, often without thanks or recognition. Well, today we give you that thanks, and that recognition."

Looking back at the last 100 years, John spoke about how the early years of the Federation were consumed with police pay, with little time for welfare and support issues.

He went on to highlight the most recent successes – the increase in funding for Taser, the Police Covenant, which will provide greater protection and support for officers suffering physical or psychological trauma, and the Protect the Protectors campaign which resulted in harsher sentences for those who assault blue-light workers.

And he paid tribute to officers who have lost their lives in the centenary year:

**PC Andrew Harper**, Thames Valley Police

**PS Colin Fox**, Metropolitan Police

**PC Kevin Flint**, Thames Valley Police.

He concluded by saying the Federation would continue to work with the Government but in return officers needed to be treated with the recognition and respect for the difficult, dangerous and demanding job they do and should be paid fairly.

He said: "The Fed reps of 100 years ago built the very foundations of our organisation. We are now building the legacy. Together, united, we will continue to do the very best for those we represent: our colleagues and our members who deserve nothing less."

“The welfare of our colleagues is what drives us; it motivates us all. Looking out for and looking after our colleagues, is what we do. And let's not be ashamed to say, we do it really well.”



A backdrop to the stage showed a photo taken at the Federation's first meeting at Central Hall in 1919.



Officers at the centenary event re-staged the 1919 photo.

# 'What matters most': officers give their views of Federation support



The panel session 'What matters most' (left to right) Mick Johnson, James Holden, Federation vice-chair Ché Donald and Zoe Bradstreet.

**T**hree officers who had received excellent support from the Federation gave an insight into how the organisation makes a difference to its members in a centenary event session called 'What matters most'.

Custody Sergeant Zoe Bradstreet from Surrey Police explained how the Federation was continuing to provide support during a four and a half year – and ongoing – case involving a death in custody.

On Day 1, she said, the Federation was there for her, offering her a comfort blanket and virtual hug. Crucially, Zoe explained, the Federation could see the signs of stress within her and the impact the case was having on her husband and her children, pointing her towards counselling which had helped give her strategies to cope. The Federation, Zoe added, had become like family to her, providing support 24 hours a day when she needed it.

Ché Donald, vice-chair of the Federation, said the impact of such cases on individual officers was phenomenal with many being made to feel like criminals when they were just doing their jobs. The psychological impact could last a long time, he explained, with there being nothing worse than being

accused of something you hadn't done.

This was also picked up on by James Holden, a Hampshire response driver, who was prosecuted for dangerous driving after what he felt was an 'uneventful pursuit' involving an offender with 150 convictions.

His Fed rep was the now national chair John Apter.

"I can't thank John enough," said James, who is now a Fed rep himself on the Isle of Wight.

Acquitted at court after an eight-day trial, he said the build-up to the hearing really took its toll on his mental health and that of his wife, also a serving police officer.

Ché told the audience that while it was right for there to be inquiries to find out what has happened, particularly in relation to the loss of life, it shouldn't be a witch-hunt and nor should it be assumed that someone has done something wrong rather than it being appropriate police action in dangerous situations. Inquiries into officers were often taking longer than murder investigations.

Mick Johnson, a Cleveland officer with 28 years' service, explained how he was treated for PTSD after an incident in which

he ended up with a relatively minor physical injury but a massive impact on his mental health.

Repeated exposure to traumatic incidents meant that around 20 per cent of officers are thought to be suffering from PTSD and this is why the Federation, Ché said, believed there should be a wraparound welfare provision for all officers, something that had been developed over the last 10 years through mental health support programmes, for example, at the Flint House rehabilitation centre and the Welfare Support Programme.

He also called on officers to support each other, by asking colleagues if they are OK and encouraging them to talk about how they are feeling but urged forces to invest in preventative tools rather than reacting when someone has a mental health crisis.

Some forces were talking the talk, he said, but not walking the walk with policies in place but no evidence of what they were actually doing. The Police Covenant could help to ensure there is not a postcode lottery in terms of the support available to officers.

*Feature continued on Page 20*



# Pledge to increase sentences for assaults on police

**S**entences for those who chose to assault police officers could be doubled, the Home Secretary has announced.

Violent offenders who assault officers and other emergency service workers currently get up to 12 months in prison but this could rise to two years, following the announcement by Priti Patel.

She made the pledge at the centenary event in London, saying: "One of the first acts of the next Conservative Government will be to consult on doubling the maximum sentence for assaulting police officers and other emergency service workers, taking the maximum sentence from 12 to 24 months in prison.

"We are going to make the thugs who attack police officers think twice."

The Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018 was introduced in November 2018 following the Federation's successful Protect the Protectors campaign.

Ms Patel said: "I've been appalled by the



John Apter welcomes Priti Patel to the event.

increasing numbers of assaults on our brave police officers and am not going to stand for it.

"Part of the solution is giving police the resources and powers they need to keep themselves safe but we also need to make sure that the punishment for assaulting an officer truly fits the crime."

In the last year alone, there were more than 30,000 assaults on police officers in England and Wales – up 18 per cent. As many as one in four serving officers were attacked.

## Policing priorities considered in panel session

The starting salary for new recruits is 'unrealistic' and will 'definitely' make recruiting 20,000 new officers harder – according to the chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

Chief Constable Martin Hewitt made the comments when he was part of a panel session on policing priorities.

He was asked whether a starting salary of £18,000 will affect the ability to recruit 20,000 officers and replied 'definitely'.

He continued: "What we've found is starting salaries differ considerably around the country, but I don't think that figure is a realistic figure for someone who is coming into policing.

"When we put the bid in to the Home Office for the funding, we set a mid-level range. We've got to have those conversations because we want people to come in with certain skills and aspirations.

"We've got to work to get to a point where the starting salary is an acceptable starting salary and the ability for someone to earn more as they progress in their career is there."

Sir Thomas Winsor, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who was also on the panel, said to improve diversity within the police service recruitment had to be based on merit and policing had to be made as attractive as possible through pay and conditions.

He also said that reforms on over-time

and linking pay rises to performance in terms of skills and contribution could have 'been more radical' when he was asked if he would change anything in the two reports published following his independent review of police officer and staff remuneration and conditions, in March 2011 and March 2012.

He was critical of the state of the whole justice system, calling it dysfunctional and citing, among other things, the state of prisons and the outsourcing of probation. The key challenges ahead would include implementing the 20,000 new officer uplift and the increased complexities of crime and he called investment in new technology 'the golden key' to tackling crime. He also expressed concerns around officer welfare.

Other topics discussed in the panel session included increasing pressure put on officers to respond to mental health call-outs, with the director of the College of Policing, Bernie O'Reilly, saying officers were not the best equipped to do so.

Sir Thomas warned the pressure being put on forces is 'unsustainable' with officers under 'intolerable strain' due to failures within other public services.

The panellists also gave their views on the need for investment in technology, whether 43 forces was the right model for policing and boosting diversity.

# National award for pioneering sergeant



Sergeant Hana Alayi-Moore (left) receives the Women in Policing Award from Dame Cressida Dick, Metropolitan Police Commissioner.

Lancashire custody sergeant Hana Alayi-Moore has received the Police Federation's National Women in Policing Award for her tireless work for colleagues.

Hana introduced 'Maternity Buddies' - a training scheme for male and female volunteers to support colleagues expecting a child or going through the adoption process. She also chairs a Menopause Action Group and a Divisional Wellbeing board and these, along with the 'Maternity Buddies' scheme, have been adopted as best practice.

On receiving her award from the Metropolitan Police Commissioner Dame Cressida Dick at the Federation's centenary event on 21 November, Hana said: "I feel privileged and proud and somewhat overwhelmed."

Talking about her focus on wellbeing, she added: "Leading by example, I actively motivate and encourage others to be passionate and positive about their work by adopting a positive team culture."



# Within three years of retirement?

A number of spaces are available on the West Midlands Police Federation retirement seminars.

The seminars, which are held at the Federation's office – Guardians House, 2111 Coventry Road, Sheldon – are for officers in the last three years of their service and aim to prepare them for life outside the Force, financially and generally.

Officers are welcome to take their husband, wife or partner to the seminars which run from 9am until 4pm. They start with coffee and registration from 8.30am and include a buffet lunch.

Among the topics covered by the facilitators at the one-day seminars are:

- **Managing change and uncertainty**
- **CV writing and interview techniques**
- **Transferrable skills**
- **Pensions and the state pension**
- **How do I manage money and these financial changes?**
- **Budgeting**
- **Starting your own business**
- **Taxation**
- **New horizons - what's next?**
- **Savings, investments and finances, and**
- **Protecting your wealth.**

Seminars are being held on:

**19 December 2019**  
**Thursday 23 January 2020**  
**Thursday 6 February 2020**  
**Thursday 12 March 2020**  
**Thursday 9 April 2020**  
**Thursday 14 May 2020**  
**Thursday 11 June 2020**  
**Thursday 23 July 2020**  
**Thursday 20 August 2020**  
**Thursday 24 September 2020**  
**Thursday 22 October 2020**  
**Thursday 10 December 2020.**

To book, email the Federation office with 'Retirement seminar' and the date you wish to attend in the subject line. Include your name, work and personal email address, phone number, proposed retirement date, number of places required and dietary requirements in the email.

Book early to avoid disappointment.



## OFFICER FEEDBACK

*"I found the day was informative with each speaker outlining just what you needed to know in the simplest of terms on each topic. A 'not to be missed' seminar for those coming up to retirement."*

PC Collins

*"A very useful and informative course which has made me give serious thought as to what to do with my pension money and how to protect it."*

PC Tonks

*"An excellent forum and opportunity to help prepare for the transition to retirement."*

PC McGoldrick

*"Thank you, a really useful and informative day, well worth giving up a rest day for!!"*

Anonymous



## Legal Services for West Midlands Police

With 20+ years' experience working with the police, Gorvins Solicitors, have been a leading provider of legal services to the Police Federation and all its members. We also act for officers, their partners, police personnel and families, so whatever level of support you require during the divorce process, we can help.

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# I want to do the best I can for our members

**T**he new chair of West Midlands Police Federation has vowed to keep the pressure on the Government and national Federation to ensure the best possible outcome for members' pensions.

Jon Nott was elected to the role after 12-years as a workplace representative with the Federation.

He said: "When I received the phone call to say that I had been elected, I was delighted but also a little apprehensive as I do not underestimate the amount of work that I have in front of me to ensure I can do the best that I can for our members.

"I have worked within all areas of business for the Federation and believe I bring a wealth of experience to the role. I have also developed a good working relationship with many senior leadership teams through various investigations and led for detective issues within the Force in recent years so I feel I am well placed to represent members' interests and negotiate on their behalf."

As an officer who was automatically transferred into the 2015 Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) Police Pension Scheme, he pledged: "My immediate priority is to keep the pressure up on both the Government and national Federation to ensure that all members receive the best possible outcome in relation to their pensions."

During his time as a rep, Jon has worked across all areas of the organisation. In addition to being a workplace rep, he was the deputy chair and then interim chair of the former Constables' Branch Board which was abolished after the independent review of the Police Federation.

Jon has concerns around the way in which members' wellbeing has been affected with the reduction in officer numbers creating greater individual workloads and adding to stress levels as they try to maintain a quality service for the public.

Outlining what he sees as the upcoming challenges, he said: "One of the major challenges for both West Midlands Police and officers will be dealing with the uplift in numbers of officers. These officers are really welcomed but there will be numerous logistical problems in getting them through



*New chair of West Midlands Police Federation Jon Nott.*

their probation period as we also deal with the change to the Policing Education Qualifications Framework and the change in the way student officers are taken through that time.

"West Midlands Police Federation needs to ensure that we look after the interests of all members during this time, ensuring their safety while at work and also maintaining their mental health.

"I will use my new role as chair to robustly challenge the Force where required but also to ensure that as a Federation we are actively involved in the discussions and planning around these critical areas."

As well as his workplace rep role, Jon has also been a Trustee for the majority of his Federation service, starting at the CBB before becoming a Joint Branch Board Trustee. Jon is currently the Chief Trustee to the National Reserve Fund.

Jon joined the Force in August 1998, working on response and then the tutor unit based on what was F3 - Handsworth, Lozells, Newtown – and is now part of Birmingham West. He joined CID six years later, passing the National Investigators' Examination in 2005 and becoming a fully qualified detective still within the F3.

Under Paragon in 2010, he moved to Force CID based at Harborne covering Birmingham South and West and Central. He worked on Operation Tripoli – a large disorder involving fans of West Bromwich Albion and Aston Villa – before being part of the Operation Transmission team looking at

keyless car key thefts.

"Operation Transmission was another highlight of my career, we were a small team investigating a new and upcoming type of crime across the Force with all different kinds of resources available to us. We obtained a large number of convictions but it was also the camaraderie between us that stands out," he recalled.

Jon then moved to a Serious and Acquisitive Crime Team covering the same area before, under the Transformation Project, becoming part of the Force Priorities Team which dealt with emerging trends and priorities across the Force working with Level 2 criminals. In 2015 he moved onto an incident room where he remained until his election as full-time Federation chair.

He was first elected to the Federation in 2007, having stood because there was a shortage of detective representation, and has been re-elected at every triennial election since.

"I had not really thought a lot about the Federation before this point," said Jon, who is also deputy secretary of the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum, "I'd had to use its services once where an allegation was made against me and I had a rep and a solicitor present during the interview with the Professional Standards Department. After joining the Federation, I began to realise that there was a lot more to the Federation than just representing members accused of misconduct.

"We deal with personnel and equality issues, health and safety within the workplace, miscellaneous issues affecting officers as well as looking after student officers as they move through their probationary period to name but a few. On top of all that, there are the whole department issues and then Force-wide issues that are dealt with by reps.

"I would like to take this opportunity to say to members that I will do my utmost to ensure that we will be constantly working for them, ensuring that the Force always understands the implications of any decisions it makes and seeking to work with them to try to ensure the best working practices for our members."

# New conduct regs come into effect in February

The new conduct regulations due to come into effect in February next year should further embed the new approach to dealing with low-level matters and empower supervisors and managers to have the confidence to handle these issues, says West Midlands Police Federation conduct lead George McDonnell.

George attended the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) Conduct and Performance Liaison Officers' Seminar in Liverpool in October where, as part of preparations for the introduction of the new regulations, reflective practice was one of the main themes discussed by conduct leads from across the country.

"There were inputs from the Home Office, the Independent Office for Police Conduct and Professional Standards Departments (PSDs), all explaining how reflective practice might work and what the Federation, as the staff association, can expect going forward," George explained.

"There were clear references to embracing this new way of dealing with low-level matters and empowering supervisors and managers alike to have the confidence to deal with these. However, while we will certainly be open to this, we will monitor how it plays out in the

workplace because it is often the case that different supervisors and managers will have differing opinions on what they see as low-level.

"I acknowledge the criteria for this decision-making should make it all the easier to identify but there was caution around matters being sent to be looked at by PSD Appropriate Authorities and that actually sit somewhere in the middle. The question will always be asked as to why a certain matter was decided upon to be dealt with in the misconduct arena when, in actual fact, it could have been suitable for reflective practice."

Nevertheless, George said the Federation is 'cautiously optimistic' that the number of low-level cases brought into the realm of misconduct will reduce due to a more pragmatic approach.

He concluded: "It goes without saying, we are all striving to become better at what we do. Hopefully, the new regulations and the increased use of reflective practice will be a good thing for our colleagues but it will just take some time to adjust and have confidence in the new provision; this is only natural."

During the seminar Ian Balbi, head of discipline policy at the Home Office Police

Integrity Unit, said PSDs are currently flooded with low-level cases and around 70 per cent of misconduct hearing outcomes end in management action anyway.

The proportion of cases dealt with through misconduct processes also varies greatly across forces, but many direct a vast majority of cases through misconduct proceedings regardless of how low-level they are. This puts officers through unnecessary stress, he added.

The issue of protracted investigations was also raised with the Home Office stating it is working on ensuring timeliness is improved in the future.

- The Police Federation will be lobbying Parliament for a change in the law to apply a 12-month time limit for prosecuting police officers with appropriate safeguards. "We are still seeing far too many investigations dragging on for months and sometimes years, putting officers – and their families – under untold stress and causing immense mental anguish," says Steve Grange, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, welcoming the 'Time Limits' campaign, "A time limit of a year gives ample time for enquiries to be carried out and ensures that we don't have officers being stuck in limbo."

## Supporting those who need it

By **Lorraine Horner**, Force wellbeing manager

TRiM (Trauma Risk Management) was officially launched in September at the Force leadership meeting.

My team and I have attended a number of meetings and events across the Force to provide an input on what TRiM is, how it can provide support and the process for its activation.

You will know about the large incidents across the Force that have impacted colleagues recently, for all of these incidents - and some smaller events - TRiM has been activated and the TRiM team has provided the support required.

The process has certainly been tested recently and it is great to see such an enthusiastic, passionate and motivated group of people who are going over and above to deliver the all-important TRiM interventions.

There have been two training courses to uplift the number of TRiM practitioners and managers. This supports the increase in demand for TRiM interventions and ensures

we are 'caring for the carers'.

What is so amazing is that there is already a list of people interested in being a member of the TRiM team in the future.

While TRiM support is really successful, it is important to help build resilience in all our colleagues. The National Wellbeing Service has a self-development programme called Mindfit Cop.

We are also fortunate enough to be part of a group of organisations with access to #resilientme-Blue Light. This enables all WMP colleagues to work through a year-long self-development journey which explores the impact of workload, burn-out and relationships.

Both Mindfit Cop and #resilientme can be accessed through the Wellbeing Portal on

the Force intranet so please look for these and access more information on available support.

Work has started on the creation of the Back-up Buddy app. We are currently working through the information we need to provide to the app creator to personalise the information for West Midlands Police.

We are also asking for people to come forward to provide their mental health video story to go onto the app. The collection of 'stories' will have a huge impact on those who are struggling with their own mental health and also raise awareness among colleagues by breaking down barriers.

If you feel you would like to contribute to the Back-up Buddy video story please contact me.

“It is great to see such an enthusiastic, passionate and motivated group of people who are going over and above to deliver the all-important TRiM interventions.”



# 'I am proud to be a Fed rep'

**I**t's almost two years since Dawn Murkett first became a Federation workplace representative.

She was spurred on to take up the role after being subject of a complaint herself and believing, while her dealings with the



Federation had been good, there were some things that could be done better.

So, at the start of 2018 she became a rep, and hasn't looked back since.

"I had a positive experience with the Federation but also felt that there were some aspects, having been on the receiving end of a complaint, that could be done better – particularly the contact and understanding element from other departments," she explains, "I have tried to bring some empathy to my role when dealing with colleagues and am keen to tailor my approach individually.

"I have learnt very quickly that each person needs something slightly different from a rep, and sometimes all people need is a listening ear, and sometimes people just need a hug!"

Dawn joined West Midlands Police in 2002 and spent the first five as a response officer before joining a new neighbourhood unit. She is currently a neighbourhood officer in Willenhall, Coventry.

She joined the Federation when she joined the Force, saying: "It was never a consideration not to join, to me it is like not considering having any other form of insurance."

Since becoming a rep she has attended courses on representing and advising members on performance, attendance and conduct, successful claim handling, disability in policing, legal updates and stated cases and managing the menopause. With the training being ongoing, there are more courses in the pipeline for 2020 and she will undertake training on the new conduct regulations, which come into effect in February, in January.

Dawn is a Federation Conduct and Performance Liaison Officer (CaPLO). The CaPLOs make up the Federation's discipline committee and specialise in supporting and advising members facing conduct allegations.

Speaking about the support she can offer, she says: "I like to think it is bespoke to

the officer's needs. I have supported individuals through return to work interviews, conflicts within teams, conflicts with supervision.

"I have supported several officers through Independent Office for Police Conduct investigations and, in the discipline field, I have supported members through misconduct and gross misconduct investigations.

"All officers are different, some need a lot of time and reassurance, some are happy to just have support at required stages and, while some are happy with a text or email, some want a phone call or a coffee shop meet.

"One thing I learned very quickly is to be fluid with people's needs, I try to be available in the day, evenings and at weekends as we are a 24/7 service and people don't just need support in office hours."

She continues: "As I have been subject to an investigation myself in the past, I feel I am in a good place to offer empathy. Sometimes people can't talk to their partners, sometimes they don't want to burden them.

"One thing, as all reps do, is to be realistic with our members with timeframes and adhere strictly to confidentiality.

"Sometimes the support is just an affirmation email or some clarity regarding a regulation, other instances may involve supporting that individual for a protracted period of time which can in itself be quite stressful depending on the type of allegation."

As a rep, Dawn can advise any officer in England and Wales but says she feels 'great pride' when a supervisor or inspector she has known for many years comes direct to her as a rep for advice.

"I engage in person, on the phone, by email – which ever suits the member best. I have been a Coventry officer for all my service which is a positive thing. Most people know me and I hope I have a good reputation as not just an officer but as a rep," she explains.

Since becoming a rep, she has made it a personal goal to have a good relationship

with her local senior leadership team something, she says, historically, the Federation has not necessarily achieved. She holds quarterly meetings with the Neighbourhood Policing Unit (NPU) chief superintendent where any issues raised by staff are brought up and any changes that may need Federation input or advice are discussed.

"It is an invaluable meeting which is very productive and has massively developed the trust and confidence between all parties," she says, "As a CAPLO rep, I also have a good relationship with the NPU appropriate authority – again to strengthen the relationship between the Force and the Federation."

The challenges ahead for the Federation, she said, will include keeping up with the changes in regulations and keeping staff trained with new policies, while for the Force, and policing nationally, it will be cuts to funding along with the changes to recruitment criteria, the training of new recruits and keeping serving officers motivated due to the effects of the cuts and changes to pensions.

Nevertheless, Dawn is keen to rise to those challenges.

"Everyone – from police staff to officers of all ranks – since Day 1 has fully supported me. Whenever I have called for help or advice, I have always been supported. I have been given some fantastic learning opportunities and have always been encouraged to push myself in my own development. The training I have received has been the best training in all of my service, the training is current and relevant," she concludes.

Female Fed reps historically are in the minority. I was encouraged to join a committee that I wanted to join rather than one than 'needed people' or 'needed a female'. In the Federation I am wholeheartedly treated as an individual and supported and encouraged as such – something I like to cascade to our members. I am proud to be a WMP Fed rep, and I hope to continue to doing to," she concludes.

“One thing I learned very quickly is to be fluid with people's needs, I try to be available in the day, evenings and at weekends as we are a 24/7 service and people don't just need support in office hours.”

# 'There is more to the role than helping officers in trouble'

Julie Fleming put herself forward to be a Federation workplace rep as she needed a challenge and a change to her working life.

She joined West Midlands Police Federation when she became a PC in 2002



as it was suggested 'you need the Federation to be there if you ever get in trouble'.

While, thankfully, this has never happened to Julie, she decided, in April 2017, she wanted to help others.

"I had a sergeant at the time who was a Fed rep and I came to realise there was more to the role than just helping officers who are in trouble," she explains.

"I saw that you can help to be a mediator and advisor in difficult times. Officers just sometimes don't realise their entitlements or rights.

"On the other side of this you sometimes have to advise people that the organisation is right in certain decisions and that the officer is asking or expecting too

much and needs to consider balancing their needs with that of the organisation."

Since becoming a rep, Julie, who is currently a neighbourhood officer at Stoke and Wyken, in Coventry, has completed numerous training courses including equality practitioners' course and the health and safety reps' course.

In the new year she would like to attend the mental health first aid course, saying: "I deal with a lot of officers who are suffering with anxiety or have other mental health needs and I feel a better understanding of this will assist me greatly in supporting them."

One area she feels the Force needs to improve is ensuring supervisors have sufficient training regarding flexible working patterns, reasonable adjustment passports and the attendance policy as she has seen how misunderstanding can cause 'conflict in already difficult times'.

"I specialise in the equality side of Federation work and I have conducted a lot of work guiding and supporting officers at attendance meetings where they are looking at returning to work after a bout of sickness," she explains.

"These meetings often raise challenges

with supporting them with their health and personal needs, such as flexible working applications and looking at suitability for roles.

"I also have found that sickness sometimes stems from a clash at work with a colleague or supervisor. While this is often a minor incident in itself it can have grown to cause real stress for all parties. Sometimes this is a case of just trying to mediate and allow for each party to have a voice and understand each other's perspective, find some common ground and a way to move forward.

"I have also supported members through the ill-health retirement process which can be lengthy and understandably quite emotional at times."

As part of her role, Julie meets with Chief Superintendent Mike O'Hara on a regular basis to discuss local issues and concerns.

She explains: "He is very supportive of the efforts we make to improve the working environment for our members, resolving issues and keeping the workforce happy and healthy."

Moving forward, she says the challenges for the Federation and policing locally and nationally are less officers, more work and the impact on mental health.

She concludes: "Overall, I really enjoy my role as a Federation rep but have been surprised just how much work this brings. I hope to continue building on my knowledge in order to continue supporting our valuable workforce in future. Policing is not easy at times and we all need to take care of ourselves and those around us."

“I specialise in the equality side of Federation work and I have conducted a lot of work guiding, and supporting officers at attendance meetings where they are looking at returning to work after a bout of sickness.”

# West Midlands Police Federation

## Review of the year



### JANUARY

**2** 2019 marks a milestone in the Police Federation of England and Wales' (PFEW) history as the organisation turns



100 and starts the milestone year hard on the heels of a transformed election process which appointed many new reps across England and Wales. National Federation chair John Apter, says: "This is a big year for us as we turn 100. It's important that we recognise the brilliant work that goes on locally and nationally to help make our members' lives that little bit better, much of which goes on unseen every day. This year, as part of the centenary, we will focus on the difference that the Federation has made to members' lives, both serving and retired – not only on a day-to-day basis but also during key events in police history such as mutual aid, equality and how policing has changed."

**22** West Midlands Police Federation discipline lead John Tooms says the legal test used by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) to determine if a misconduct case should go ahead needs to be reformed. He says too many officers are being put through 'traumatising' misconduct cases only to find they have no case to answer.



**24** Home Office figures reveal the number of officers serving in the West Midlands Force area has continued to fall. The Police Workforce Statistics show that from March to September 2018 the Force lost 22 officers (0.3 per cent). John Williams, deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation, said there was little headway being made 'in terms of getting more officers back on our streets to help fight the upsurge in violent crime sweeping the country and our Force area'.

**25** The Police Federation issues a briefing paper in response to the latest Court of Appeal ruling on the judges' and firefighters' pension challenges. The briefing, put together by the Federation's research and policy team, gives the background to the concerns around changes made to pensions for many public sector workers – including the police, firefighters and judges – in 2015.

### FEBRUARY



**1** Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and the Federation's response driving lead, tells the Federation's national roads policing conference the Government needs to state precisely when it will make the amendments to the law it has promised to ensure police drivers get the legal protection they need when carrying out their job

**7** The first West Midlands Police Federation retirement seminar is held at Guardians House. Further seminars are held throughout the year.

**12** The Police Federation seeks a three-year pay deal for officers with a five per cent uplift in each year. It says this will bring police pay back to 'fair levels'. The Federation says if the three-year deal is not considered possible, it will put forward a claim for a 6.2 per cent rise this year with an increase coming into effect from 1 September. Details of the pay claim are part of a joint submission to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) with the Superintendents' Association.

**13** The Federation's demand, capacity and welfare survey reveals that 84 per cent of members in the West Midlands feel there are not enough officers to do the job properly. That is slightly less than the national figure of 90 per cent. The survey also found that 73 per cent of West Midlands Federation members feel their workload is too high or much too high. And 79 per cent of respondents indicated they had experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the last 12 months, in line with the national figure.

**28** West Midlands chair Rich Cooke says established front-line police officers need to be trained in the use of Taser and issued with the devices before any roll-out to student officers. He is responding to a statement from police minister Nick Hurd on the decision to allow student officers access to Taser.





## MARCH

- 9** The first of two cyber-attacks hits the Police Federation of England and Wales' systems. A second attack occurs on 21 March and on 28 March the decision is taken to cancel this year's Police Federation conference.



- 1** An emergency funding boost to tackle the knife crime epidemic sweeping the country is welcomed, but is not a long-term fix, says the national chair of the Police Federation John Apter.

## APRIL

- 30** West Midlands Police Federation takes its members' roadshow to Perry Barr.

## MAY

- 2** The Home Office issues a Written Ministerial Statement announcing plans to change the law to give police drivers better protection from prosecution. Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and the Federation's national response driving lead, has led the campaign for legislative change and welcomes the news.
- 3** West Midlands Police Federation thanks members for their patience while its IT systems were down. The IT systems – along with those of the national Federation and branches across England and Wales – were disabled over a month earlier after a string of cyber-attacks.



- 8** Retired and serving West Midlands Police officers are urged to write to their MPs in support of a change to regulations that could lead to pensions for life for all police widows.



- 9** A survey published today reveals one in five police officers is suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The Home Office and police leaders are urged to act on the findings before more officers start to suffer.
- 10** West Midlands Police is one of 18 forces worst affected by violent crime to be given a share of the final part of the £100 million fund allocated by the Government to tackle the knife crime crisis. The Force is to receive £7.62 million, the second highest amount behind the Met which will get £20.6 million.

## JUNE

- 10** Federation members are urged to complete a survey on pay and conditions and officer morale. The Police Federation of England and Wales conducts a national survey on the issues each year with the findings being used as evidence in the Federation's submission to the Pay Review Remuneration Body (PRRB).



## JULY

- 4** The Government, having been refused leave to appeal a court ruling that its pension reforms were discriminatory, pledges to outline its position on police pensions before Parliament's summer recess starts on 25 July
- 11** The Home Office vows to embed wellbeing at the heart of policing and free up front-line officers' time for core policing activities after publishing the report following last year's Front-Line Review of policing.



- 18** West Midlands PCs Lorna Walsh and Adam McWalter, who were still in training when they confronted a group of men armed with knives, were honoured at the annual national Police Bravery Awards in London. The two officers were put forward for the prestigious awards by West Midlands Police Federation. Home Secretary Sajid Javid announces plans to establish a police covenant to recognise the sacrifice made by police officers.

- 22** Police officers are awarded a 2.5 per cent pay increase. The Home Office announces the news with the Police Federation of England and Wales saying it was a 'small step in the right direction'. It is the first time in three years that the Home Office has accepted in full the recommendations of the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB). National Federation chair John Apter insists the Government must do more to make up for years of real-term pay cuts endured by Federation members.



- 26** Plans to recruit 20,000 more police officers are welcomed by West Midlands Police Federation secretary Steve Grange. New Prime Minister Boris Johnson says recruitment will begin within weeks and he wants the recruitment drive to be completed in three years' time.



**29** A bike ride of more than 200 miles over two days in heavy rain was the challenge for three representatives of West Midlands Police taking part in the annual Police Unity Tour sponsored bike ride to raise funds for the charity Care of Police Survivors (COPS). Despite the wet weather, the trio – Chief Constable Dave Thompson, West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke, and Force academic researcher Gill Wall – were left in no doubt that their efforts had been worthwhile when they heard fallen officers' family members talk about the lifeline offered to them by COPS at the charity's annual remembrance service.

## AUGUST

**8** West Midlands Police Federation representative Trudy Gittins, inspired by Assistant Chief Constable Chris Johnson's approach to being diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease, signs up to run Liverpool's Rock 'n' Roll Marathon next year and calls on other officers and police staff to join her. Chris welcomes Trudy's efforts, saying: "Thank you to everyone involved. This is a truly wonderful thing to do. It's been a difficult time but I can honestly say things like this, where great people are prepared to do something to help raise awareness and support, is genuinely uplifting."



**16** West Midlands Police Federation deputy secretary Tim Rogers extends his sympathy to the family of a Thames Valley Police officer who died on duty the previous night. PC Andrew Harper's death came just days after a Met PC was attacked with a machete and West Midlands PC Gareth Phillips was run over by a suspected car thief.

**21** A fund-raising appeal set up to support injured West Midlands PC Gareth Phillips exceeds its £15,000 target within days of being launched.

## SEPTEMBER

**5** The Force must be prioritised when 20,000 new police recruits are taken on nationwide, according to West Midlands Police Federation secretary Steve Grange. Steve comments on the launch of a Home Office recruitment campaign.



**9** West Midlands Police Federation vows to work with the Force to ensure that women going through the menopause receive the support they need. The pledge comes as the first national guidance on the menopause in policing is issued to help forces provide better support for officers and staff at a time when a third of female police officers nationwide are aged 45 or over.

**13** West Midlands Police Federation holds a members' roadshow at Wolverhampton.

**26** A shocking incident in which a West Midlands Police officer was injured in a hit and run in Coventry is another example of the daily risks police face as they go about their duties, says the secretary of West Midlands Police Federation Steve Grange who adds that more needs to be done to tackle the growing number of mindless attacks on police officers.



**30** More than 400 referrals for cases relating to police officers' abuse of position for a sexual purpose are completed by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) in the three years to the end of March this year. The figures were given in a report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) which commissioned a review after becoming concerned about the progress forces are making in fighting the problem.



**30** HRH The Prince of Wales honours fallen officers at the National Police Memorial Day (NPM) at Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall. As patron of the NPM, he attends a service held annually to honour officers who have been killed, or died, in the line of duty. Steve Grange, secretary, and John Williams, interim chair, represent West Midlands Police Federation at the service.

## OCTOBER

**9** The Force is allocated 366 of the first 6,000 new officers being taken on through the Government's three-year drive to recruit 20,000 extra police. Steve Grange, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, welcomes the allocation – the second highest in the country.







**11** A West Midlands DC who has transformed detectives' training is presented with the Services to Detectives Award at the Police Federation National Detectives' Forum (PFNDF) awards. Nick Mills is credited with revolutionising the way the Force delivers the Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme with his ground-breaking work has recognised by the College of Policing. West Midlands DC Kelly Mahon is named as the regional winner for the Detective Recognition Awards for her work in child abuse investigation.

**14** The policing family and the public comes together today at the funeral of 28-year-old Thames Valley PC Andrew Harper.

- 16** A bill that will ensure police drivers' specialist training is recognised in law was one of 22 included in the Queen's Speech to set out the Government's legislative programme. The Police Protections Bill would set a new test for police drivers who are currently judged against the standard of a normal member of the public - the careful, competent driver - for potential driving offences with no recognition of their unique role and specialist training.
- 16** Car thief Mubashar Hussain is jailed for 12 years for knocking down and running over West Midlands officer Gareth Phillips in August this year.



- 30** The continuing issues around the length of time the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) takes to conclude conduct investigations is just one reason why a new inquiry into the police watchdog is necessary, according to West Midlands Police Federation. Parliament's Home Affairs Select Committee announces an inquiry into the IOPC's role and remit.
- 31** A Police Federation campaign calling for statutory time limits on officer conduct investigations is supported by the West Midlands branch. The Federation wants a 12-month time limit for prosecuting police officers with appropriate safeguards.

**NOVEMBER**

**12** A Federation workplace representative with 12 years' experience under his belt is elected as the new chair of West Midlands Police Federation. Jon Nott, who is also deputy secretary of the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum, first became a constables' rep in 2007.



- 18** Almost half the West Midlands Police Federation members who responded to a nationwide survey on pay and morale say they worry about the state of their finances either daily or almost every day. The results of the annual Police Federation survey, carried out among members across England and Wales, showed 47 per cent worried about money and also revealed that 81 per cent of West Midlands respondents were dissatisfied with their overall remuneration.



- 20** Funding for the Welfare Support Programme is increased with the Federation investing in widening the support offered.
- 21** Federation representatives nationwide attend a celebratory event in London to mark the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Police Federation of England and Wales. The centenary event is held at Methodist Central Hall in Westminster where the first Federation meeting was held in 1919.



**DECEMBER**

**9** West Midlands Police Federation holds its last members' roadshow of the year at Coventry.





**POLICE INSURE**

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# Stay in touch with West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund

We'd like to tell you about all our new member benefits and services but we can't if we have your old details. If your details have changed please get in touch.

You may also want to nominate a new beneficiary who will receive benefits that you are entitled to.

Updating your details is easy, you can do this either online via our website [www.wmpben.co.uk](http://www.wmpben.co.uk) by contacting the office on **0121 752 4919** or emailing [info@wmpben.co.uk](mailto:info@wmpben.co.uk)

The Benevolent Fund was set up in 1974 to support distressed colleagues in need of help. More than £1 million in benefits has been handed out in the last 10 years to help serving officers, retired officers, police staff and their families. That's down to the loyal support of our 6,500 plus members.

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- Convalescence and rehabilitation breaks
- Seaside breaks at the fund's two holiday homes in Weymouth and Dartmouth.

All details of member benefits can be found on our website including how to join the Fund [www.wmpben.co.uk](http://www.wmpben.co.uk)



## Why do more people get divorced in January?

By **Lorraine Harvey**, principal lawyer in family law at Slater and Gordon



The start of a new year is a time of reflection for many people giving more thought to their future, making resolutions and perhaps taking a closer look at their relationship and life at home.

If there are already problems in a relationship, couples can face a lot of pressure over the Christmas period especially when children and relatives are involved to put a brave face on for. Many couples choose to delay a separation announcement until the new year.

As family lawyers, we tend to see a rise in the number of couples seeking legal advice in January over the breakdown of their relationship.

If you're considering a divorce, here are a few things to consider:

### Is it really over?

If you decide to go ahead with a divorce, you

need to be sure that there's no chance that your marriage can be saved.

The Christmas period can be both a joyful and difficult time of year, particularly if you or your spouse have been on duty. However, a tough Christmas may not mean it's the end and you may be able to work through your difficulties with your own support network or counselling services, such as Relate.

### When can I start the process?

You're able to commence divorce proceedings at any time, providing you're not within the first 12 months of marriage.

You'll need to think about what reasons you're going to give the court to show that your marriage has irretrievably broken down. For example, if you've felt unsupported by your spouse, or feel that the two of you no longer make the effort to spend time together around your shifts etc, you could rely on this to prove to the court that your marriage is over.

### What action should I be taking?

If you've made the decision to go ahead with a divorce, you should speak to a family lawyer sooner rather than later, to ensure you're fully informed before starting the process.

The most common question we're asked is how an officer can protect their police pension and taking action at the earliest opportunity is very important. A spouse does have a claim against not only income and capital but pensions too and the level of the claim will be based on its value at the time of the divorce and not necessarily at the time of separation.

### What about the children?

If you have children, you should try to reach an agreement with your spouse about the most suitable and appropriate care arrangements following your separation. If you're unable to do so, you should consider mediation before making an application to court. Indeed, mediation is now compulsory before you can litigate.

The court's paramount consideration is the welfare of the relevant children and you should try to agree to a schedule of care, which is in the child's best interests.

If you need to speak to a specialist family lawyer, please contact Slater and Gordon Lawyers on **0808 175 7710** and we will be happy to help.

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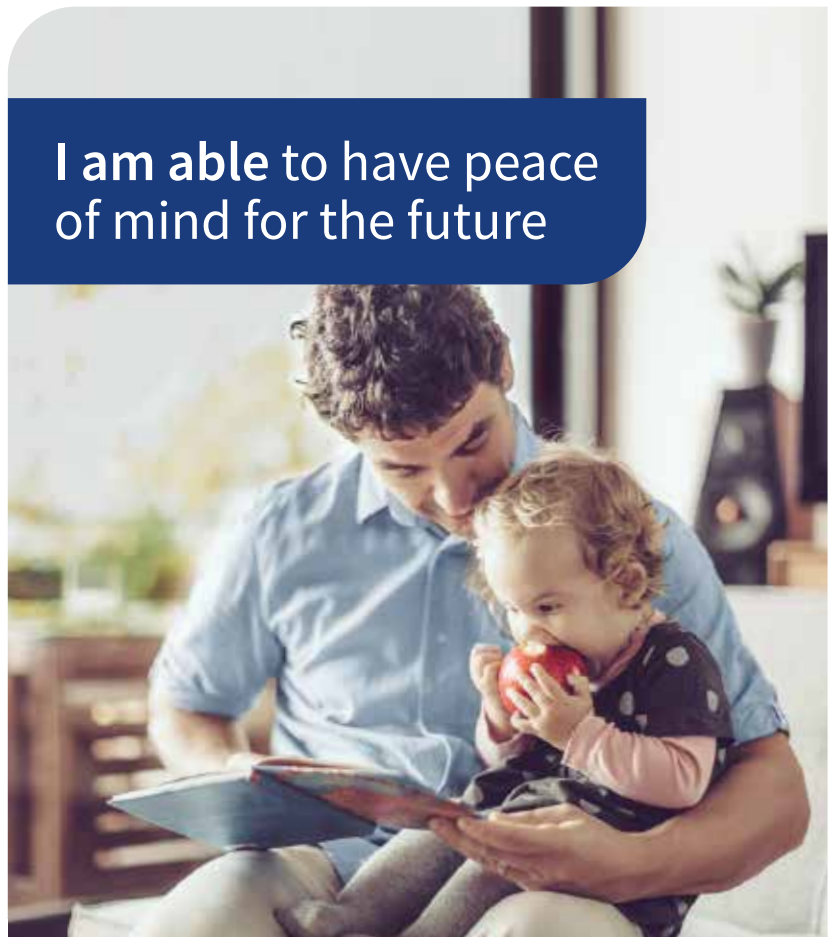
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I am able to have peace of mind for the future



W-FIN-1007



# Supporting you

Thank you thank YOU THANK YOU Thank thank YOU Thank you thank

**Our Federation reps and officials are keen to offer help, advice and support to all members.**

**It is always satisfying to find out that they have been able to make a difference. Here are some messages of thanks we have received in recent months.**

In November 2018 I was served misconduct forms (for which I am not proud) which culminated in me attending a four-day conduct hearing. The sanction awarded was a final written warning.

After what I can only describe as 11 and a half months of hell, I am now out the other side and starting to move on, rebuilding both my personal and professional life.

The investigation itself was sensitive from the off, as it involved other officers. Due to the nature of the allegations I had little confidence in my Police Federation branch and so I turned to another branch for support. My interview was listed for January 2019 and unfortunately my Fed rep was taken ill and I was left in dire straits. My then Fed rep offered an alternative **\*\*WITHHELD\*** or George McDonnell from West Midlands Police Federation.

I opted for George. I cold-called George a week prior to interview, in what I can only describe as a 'heightened frenzy'. I was in sheer panic mode as I was in genuine fear of losing my job; a job I had been 100 per cent committed to since 2001.

From the offset, George kept me grounded, listened to me and calmed me down, which was no mean feat. I was hysterical and very emotional.

Throughout the whole episode, I wanted to use the word 'journey' but it was more of a trauma than a journey, George was remarkable and prodigious. George was on the phone, text or email whenever I needed him, morning,

noon or night, and I became needy and emotional (which is not like me).

George often talked me down when I went off the scale of potential outcomes, George was open, honest and upfront all the time and I genuinely feel at times I would not have survived the horrendous process altogether.

We, as police officers, are very quick to scowl and criticise when things go wrong and so I felt it was pertinent to express the first class service I received from George as a Fed rep, a police officer but, most importantly, a human being.

I have expressed to George that in the future if I can help in any way with policing matters then please use me as a point of contact (I appreciate there are **\*\*WITHHELD\*\*** Fed reps for this...) there is also the fact if ever the opportunity arose to poach George for **\*\*WITHHELD\*\*** Police Federation, I would be front of the queue.

George, you are not only a life-saver, you kept the state of my mental health intact. You are an asset to West Midlands Police.

Thank you.

**From a Federation member from another force, details withheld.**

**On hearing the Federation has donated £2,500 to the fund-raising appeal for the Motor Neurone Disease Association and Primrose Hospice in support of ACC Chris Johnson:**

Wow!!! You have surpassed all of our expectations. Thank you all so much.

**DS Trudy Gittins, who is co-ordinating more than 300 runners who are taking part in the Liverpool Rock n Roll Marathon events next May.**

The Federation is also giving all runners a specially designed water bottle for the event.

**I wanted to write formally to place on record my gratitude and also to highlight the performance of George McDonnell in assisting me over the last three years.**

Without regurgitating the details, I was subject of a bogus internal complaint that revealed significant cultural and behavioural issues from within West Midlands Police in late 2016.

Not only did George support me through this process, but he also kept with me during the aftermath which has resulted in the Force paying a settlement of compensation. It required tenacity, patience and the capacity to understand the complexities of the case, as well as the courage to be resolute to resist the power of the organisation. Yet, in addition to this, George also showed basic kindness and attentiveness.

While such effusive praise may seem overstated, it is not. The salient reason for this is that George did so in a quiet but stoic manner. He treated the case, which was complex, as a learning experience and it is this open-mindedness that drove the momentum towards a successful conclusion. I hope he can take this forward in the case of other events. I also hope you can continue to use the lessons of what has endured from this along with him to represent your members in a way which does not allow the shortcomings of WMP to overrule the virtues and values we all had when we joined.

Please pass on once more my gratitude to George, a real asset to the Federation.

**Federation member, details withheld.**



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