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West Midlands Police Federation

August/September 2021



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Welcome

Welcome to the August/September 2021 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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Officers are quite rightly angry at the Government



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

Policing is the service of first and last resort. Police officers run towards danger when others are running away and at the sign of any emergency they are there, helping pick up the pieces, restoring order in the face of crisis or chaos and supporting people through the worst times.

They perform their duties out of a sense of public duty, and I don't believe anyone goes into policing to get rich.

However, I do firmly believe that police officers should be fairly paid, with their salaries reflecting the risks they take and the limitations their role can have on their private lives.

But beyond that, it is absolutely imperative that there is a body that is truly independent to advise Government on

officer pay.

The Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) was set up in 2014. Each year, in a joint submission with the Superintendents' Association, the Police Federation of England and Wales gives its evidence to the PRRB, making recommendations on officer pay, supported by evidence to support its claim.

In theory, the PRRB considers this evidence, and details submitted by other interested parties, before making its own recommendations to the Government. It should also be noted that the Government can ignore these recommendations, and it has in the past done so, sparking anger from officers.

But the Government now has another way of controlling what comes out of PRRB.

Before the pay review process begins, the Home Secretary gives the PRRB its remit and this year the 'independent' body was told not to even consider a pay rise.

Priti Patel wrote: "It is right to temporarily pause pay awards for the majority of the public sector as we assess the impact Covid-19 has had on the wider economy and labour market. This approach will also allow us to protect public sector jobs and investment in public services as

Covid-19 continues to have an impact."

And the letter also stated: "I will not be seeking a recommendation from the PRRB for police officer pay uplifts in 2021/22."

There was one exception, PRRB was told to give a £250 uplift to those on less than £24,000 a year.

In terms of the overall instruction, I have two main issues. Firstly, how can the PRRB be seen as independent when it is told what it can consider? And secondly, while I totally understand and recognise the need for those in the health service to be recognised with a pay award in the wake of the pandemic, there are other groups of workers who have also been given a pay rise – for example, firefighters.

Police officers are quite rightly angry at the Government. Officers have been on the frontline throughout the pandemic, serving and protecting the public, as you would expect, while facing the risk of contracting the virus. They have been spat at and coughed over by people claiming to have Covid-19.

As a branch, we are fully supportive of the Federation's decision to withdraw from the PRRB process. It is meaningless when

“As a branch, we are fully supportive of the Federation's decision to withdraw from the PRRB process. It is meaningless when one party buys into the process and fully engages and the other just rides roughshod through it.”

one party buys into the process and fully engages and the other just rides roughshod through it.

We welcome the decision to deliver a letter to the Prime Minister explaining officers' anger and frustration.

And, we are supportive of the vote of no confidence in the Home Secretary.

When this current Government took power, there was a reset of the relationship between ministers and the Federation. Relations in the Theresa May years – during her time as Home Secretary and as PM - had reached rock bottom. But both sides made a commitment to move forward.

“The Government cannot tell us how much it values police officers' exceptional efforts during the pandemic and then preside over what amounts to a pay cut, given the effect of inflation.”

We did that in good faith and, to be fair, the Government made all the right noises. There has been plenty of public praise for policing. But at our national conference in June, national Federation chair John Apter made it clear that warm words were not enough.

I cannot agree more. The Government cannot tell us how much it values police officers' exceptional efforts during the pandemic and then preside over what amounts to a pay cut, given the effect of inflation.

The Federation is meeting again to discuss how it will continue to fight back given the Government's contemptuous treatment of its members.

Moving on from the pay row, I would just like to welcome the unveiling of the new UK Police Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

The memorial is a fitting tribute to our fallen colleagues and will, I hope, show their families that their sacrifice will never be forgotten.

You can read more on Pages 8 and 9.

Federation has no confidence in Home Secretary

The announcement of a police pay freeze has been the final straw for officers who are angry at the way in which the Government has repaid their commitment to serving their communities during the pandemic, according to the national chair of the Police Federation.

At an extraordinary meeting of the Federation's National Council in the wake of the confirmation of the pay cap, it has announced it no longer has confidence in Home Secretary Priti Patel and that it will be withdrawing support and engagement from the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB).

National chair John Apter said: "The PRRB is not truly independent, the body which is the only mechanism we have to consider any pay award for police officers, has its hands constantly tied by the Government which continually interferes.

"The PRRB itself recognises its lack of independence. We can no longer accept this and have no confidence in this system which is why we are walking away.

"We often hear the Home Secretary praise police officers but our members are so angry with this Government. They have been on the frontline of this pandemic for 18 months and will now see other public services given pay increases while they receive nothing. At the beginning of this pandemic they endured PPE shortages and were not even prioritised for the vaccination. They continue to be politicised and this pay announcement is the final straw. As the organisation that represents more than 130,000 police officers I can say quite categorically – we have no confidence in the current Home Secretary. I cannot look my colleagues in the eye and do nothing."

The Federation's stance has been welcomed by Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation.

He said: "Police officers are just sick of hearing all the noise coming out of the Government but with no firm action to back up what politicians are saying. Politicians need to realise that officers are going the extra mile every day, every shift and in every type of incident they deal with. They are forced to work outside legislation at times and put themselves at significant risk as they go about their duties keeping the country going and ensuring people are safe.

"They need to be appropriately paid for this and for the fact that they put their

lives on the line to serve their communities. During the pandemic, despite the risks involved, they remained on the frontline, serving the public in incredibly challenging circumstances. They couldn't always socially distance and they couldn't always completely protect themselves, particularly given an increase in officer assaults and the weaponising of Covid-19 by people spitting and coughing over them while claiming to have the virus.

"Officers are fed up of hearing politicians saying they recognise the commitment of police officers and that they have got our backs when those warm words are not backed up with firm action. The failure of the Government to give officers any priority in the vaccine roll-out programme has already left our members disappointed and frustrated. Confirmation of this pay freeze is just going to add to that, affecting our existing officers but also our recruitment processes.

"I think it is particularly galling that officers are seeing firefighters and local government workers in England being given a 1.5 per cent pay rise while they will receive nothing at all. Either the cupboard is bare or it is not. Clearly, not all public services are been treated the same and I doubt whether MPs themselves will be having a pay freeze."

At the National Council meeting, the organisation reacted to the pay announcement and the Home Secretary's claim that the Government 'recognises the bravery, commitment and professionalism' of police officers, while offering no improved financial package to members to illustrate that is the case.

Those present overwhelmingly supported a vote of no confidence in the Home Secretary and the PRRB process for police officer pay.

With inflation set to increase to almost four per cent later this year, the pay freeze is yet another real-terms pay cut for police officers in England and Wales and the Federation says it is 'a huge slap in the face for our members' who it points out have been attacked and vilified while holding the frontline during the pandemic.

The Federation says the Government cannot pat officers on the back for their heroic efforts with one hand while effectively taking their pay with the other.

● Letter delivered to Downing Street – see Pages 6 and 7.



John Apter, national Federation chair, in front of a 'billboard' van that toured London delivering the Federation's message.

Letter to PM: “This is about much more than money”

The Police Federation has presented a letter to Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Chancellor Rishi Sunak expressing the anger members feel towards the Government.

National chair John Apter delivered the letter, which was also copied to Home Secretary Priti Patel, to Downing Street on Tuesday 27 July.

It followed the previous week's National Council meeting which voted through a motion of no confidence in the Home Secretary and agreed to walk away from the Police Remuneration Review Body which it branded “not fit for purpose” after a bitterly-opposed pay freeze for officers earning more than £24,000-a-year was confirmed.

West Midlands Police Federation secretary Steve Grange said: “Our members, who put their lives on the line every day to protect our communities, feel totally taken for granted by this Government and the time has now come to take a stand.

“This letter should act as a wake-up call to ministers because it makes it clear that we are no longer going to allow our members to be treated with such utter contempt.

“So much is asked of them and so little offered in return. Enough is enough.”

The letter highlighted the anger and

frustration felt by police officers across the country.

It says: “This is about much more than money, though for many the offer of a zero per cent pay rise, after all the police have been through in helping deal with the pandemic, was the final straw.

“It is about the risks you asked us to take - which we did, because it is our duty - without proper PPE. It is about the endlessly changing and confusing Covid legislation which we were expected to police - which we did, because it is our duty. It is about your mixed messaging and lack of understanding of our role, which combined to put many of our members in invidious positions which led to them being abused and attacked.

“It is about the failure, despite the promises of the Home Secretary, to take seriously our request that police officers should be given early priority for vaccination. It is about the very strong feeling we have, not least when the Prime Minister and Home Secretary spoke at our annual conference, that the warm words flow easily, but the actions that show genuine support for the police do not.”

The letter points out the Federation only found out through a Sunday newspaper column about the new Beating Crime Plan being launched by the Government.

The letter continues: “We don't need old ideas presented as new, we need genuine investment for the whole of the Criminal Justice System and genuine consultation over new ideas. Without that, this is just another ill-thought-out initiative.

“Police officers are sick of gimmicks. Sick of underfunding. Sick of mixed messaging putting police at risk. Sick of Government contempt for police. It's time for a total reset of police-Government relations.”

The letter concludes with three demands:

- **Stop taking police officers for granted and treat them with respect.**
- **Agree to work with the Federation on an entirely new and fairer system of remuneration decision-making.**
- **Reverse the zero per cent pay award decision and give officers a meaningful pay increase.**

Policing minister Kit Malthouse promised the Government would do “other things” to make police officers feel “valued and supported”.

He told Sky News: “We want to make sure that officers feel valued and rewarded and are supported in doing their job. And while obviously a decision was taken last week around pay which is tough, there are lots of other things about policing which have been good over the last couple of years.

“It has been tough this year. I hope we can return to some kind of normality in the future, but our economy is in some difficulties. Obviously the private sector has taken a big hit and it is the private sector that pays for the public sector, and we have to balance all those things.”

“Police officers are sick of gimmicks. Sick of underfunding. Sick of mixed messaging putting police at risk. Sick of Government contempt for police. It's time for a total reset of police-Government relations.”

Fallen officers honoured

HRH The Prince of Wales pays his respects to fallen officers.

HRH The Prince of Wales at unveiling of new police memorial

HRH The Prince of Wales attended the unveiling of a memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) dedicated to police officers who have lost their lives on duty.

The UK Police Memorial at the NMA in Alrewas, Staffordshire is a magnificent 12-metre sculpture that will provide a place for loved ones, friends, colleagues and members of the public to go to remember fallen officers.

Addressing an audience of 400, as well as those who were watching live from home, Prince Charles said: "I pray this memorial will provide a place to pay tribute and provide

reassurance that those who have given their lives will leave a lasting legacy and will never be forgotten."

He expressed his "profound gratitude" to "those who have laid down their lives" to protect the public and paid tribute to "those who continue to serve" today.

West Midlands Police Federation was represented at the service by Steve Grange, secretary, who is retiring from the Force in September.

"It was a moving service and served as a personal reminder of what being a police officer is all about – putting yourself in harm's way to protect others. During my

service, I have seen so many officers give their lives while carrying out their duties and I am pleased this memorial will now stand as a fitting tribute to all our fallen colleagues," he said.

"I would urge all officers to take the time to visit the arboretum and in particular the new memorial."

The ceremony, on 28 July, was also attended by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Home Secretary Priti Patel and the national chair of the Police Federation, John Apter, as well as serving police officers and the families of officers who have died while on duty.

After the ceremony, John said: "It's really important the memorial - along with other memorials across the country – is recognised for what it is intended. That is to remember the supreme sacrifices colleagues have made over a great many years.

"It was an honour to have attended and to lay a wreath on behalf of the 130,000 police officers the Federation represents. This memorial will be especially important to colleagues and ensure friends and colleagues will always be remembered – they will never be forgotten."

In a pre-recorded message, the Prime Minister said: "It takes a very special kind of person to be a police officer. When you put on that uniform, you know there's a chance,

“ It was a moving service and served as a personal reminder of what being a police officer is all about – putting yourself in harm's way to protect others. During my service, I have seen so many officers give their lives while carrying out their duties and I am pleased this memorial will now stand as a fitting tribute to all our fallen colleagues. ”



HRH The Prince of Wales addressing invited guests.

however small that is, that you won't be going home, yet you continue to do it anyway."

He continued to thank the police service for providing the country with "safety, security and freedom", adding that members of the public are only able to walk down the streets without fear because police officers are standing between them and danger.

"We must never take that for granted and we must never forget. No words can describe what we owe your fallen colleagues," he said, before ending by calling the British police force, the finest in



John Apter, national chair of the Police Federation, lays a wreath during the ceremony.

the world.

The £4.5 million memorial, which follows seven years of fund-raising and took 12 months to build, was designed by Walter Jack Studio.

The sculpture is designed to look like a slightly ajar door said to signify officers going into the unknown during their line of work on a daily basis.

Sir Hugh Orde, chair of The Police Arboretum Memorial Trust, explained that it is decorated with cut-out leaves, which represent the lives of the heroic officers lost.

During the ceremony, the National Police

Air Service (NPAS) paid tribute to fallen officers by taking part in a fly past and "bowing" in front of the sculpture.

The British Police Symphony Orchestra performed during the event, with singer Katherine Jenkins closing the ceremony with the National Anthem. There was also a minute's silence.

The event was two months before this year's annual National Police Memorial Day, which will be taking place on Sunday 26 September, and just days before the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) memorial service at the arboretum on Sunday 2 August.

Boys' poignant tribute to granddad killed in line of duty

Three boys have paid their respects to the grandfather they never got to meet on the site of the new UK Police Memorial.

Harvey (10), Riley (5) and Reggie (7) are pictured beside the memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire which was officially dedicated on 28 July.

Falling leaf-shaped apertures in the 12-metre-tall brass sculpture signify the lives of almost 5,000 officers who have died while protecting the public.

One of those was their grandfather, Mac Walker.

West Midlands Police traffic officer Mac was deliberately rammed off his bike in Birmingham by a man driving a stolen car in 2001.

The 46-year-old officer was catapulted off his bike into a bollard and later died from his injuries.

His widow Helen Walker said: "The memorial is in a lovely location at the arboretum: a beautiful, peaceful place where people can go and reflect on the life of loved ones they've lost.

"It's a place where children, grandchildren



The three grandchildren pay their respects.

and future generations can come and honour their heroes and the courageous sacrifice the fallen officers have made to protect the public."

The £4.5-million project - which also includes a digital memorial and educational package for schools - was paid for through fund-raising.

Policing the pandemic: mental toll revealed

More than three quarters of police officers experienced mental health or wellbeing difficulties over the past year, according to a new survey.

The devastating impact of policing during the coronavirus pandemic was highlighted in a new report from the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) which followed a survey of 12,471 rank and file police officers.

The report revealed 69 per cent of all respondents linked “work-related difficulties” to their distress. Of these respondents, 58 per cent experienced work-related mental health and wellbeing difficulties and cited heavy workloads as a factor.

The survey also illustrated a gap between officers who sought help and those who chose not to, with just one in five respondents saying they asked for help.

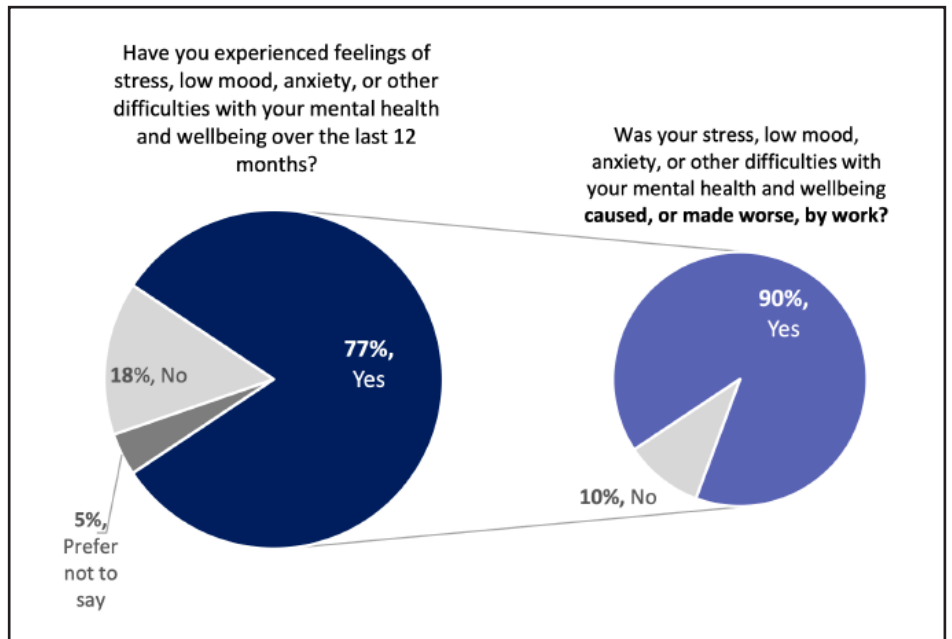
A perceived stigma around declaring mental health or wellbeing issues within policing was also evident, with 41 per cent of those who had received help admitting they didn’t share this information with their line manager because they didn’t want to be treated differently in the workplace.

More positively, the results showed the police service was playing an increasing role in combating mental health issues and that proactive support services were having a constructive impact.

It found 71 per cent of those who sought help for mental health and wellbeing had disclosed this information to line managers, with 67 per cent claiming they were “adequately” supported by the police service after doing so.

A total of 74 per cent indicated they were aware of force provided support services, such as resilience training, mindfulness workshops, and mental health awareness programmes.

“Our members have faced unprecedented challenges since the start of the pandemic more than a year ago and it comes as no surprise that many have struggled with the emotional impact working under such extraordinary circumstances.”



Officers who responded to the survey were asked about their awareness of national support initiatives within policing, with the Blue Light Programme by Mind, Oscar Kilo, and PFEW’s Welfare Support Programme the most recognisable.

West Midlands Police Federation secretary Steve Grange said: “Our members have faced unprecedented challenges since the start of the pandemic more than a year ago and it comes as no surprise that many have struggled with the emotional impact working under such extraordinary circumstances.

“It is important that these brave men and women know that support is available for them and that there is no stigma in asking for help when it is needed.

“It is also very important that the sacrifices made by police officers and their families throughout the crisis get the

recognition they deserve from Government and policing.”

PFEW national chair John Apter said: “The pandemic has put pressure on policing like never before. But while the negative impact on the mental health of police officers comes as no surprise, it should sound alarm bells.

“Police officers often feel as though their concerns are irrelevant. Policing and government therefore must do much more to make sure they can more easily access the support they deserve.

“On a positive note, there is more mental health and wellbeing support available than ever before - and it’s clear from the evidence more officers are seeking support.

“But we need to remove the stigma around these issues. We have to ensure every officer knows where they can reach out and get support no matter what time of day or night they need it.

“The Police Covenant, which is currently going through Parliament, is the perfect opportunity to ensure that help and support is provided to officers. That’s why it is essential that what the covenant delivers is both tangible and meaningful.”

[Read the report](#)

Forces urged to use new BWV guidelines

The Police Federation is urging forces to following new guidelines which make it easier to release body-worn video (BWV) footage.

The Federation worked with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) which in November launched an updated policy on proactively publishing bodycam footage but only a handful of forces have adopted the new guidelines.

The calls for more forces to enable the release of video come amid fears that officers are often coming in for criticism when short clips are published on social media without context or explanation.

West Midlands Police Federation branch chair Jon Nott said: "Selective mobile phone footage uploaded on social media can be taken out of context and often shows just one side of the story.

"It can be incredibly damaging for officers but can also have an impact on public confidence in the police and faith in the criminal justice process as a whole.

"We want more forces to take full advantage of the new guidance and be more proactive in either releasing body-worn video clips or issuing a statement to add context to any material that is circulating online.

"There are obviously times when the police cannot publish footage and the new guidelines recognises this but we have to try to strike a balance."

Police Federation national chair John Apter stepped up his calls for more forces to follow the guidance after the issue was debated by peers in the House of Lords in July.

Minister of State, Baroness Williams of Trafford, said "speed is of the essence" when it comes to police publicising their interactions with the public.

She added: "Selective release of video can paint a very different picture from what actually happened. This point has been made again and again.

"It is absolutely right that these things be released quickly and brought forward in a way that does not undermine the criminal justice system that ensues."

Lord Coaker also raised the issue of police being vilified on social media not long after a video surfaced on social media of officers being criticised for stopping for lunch in their vehicle.

The national chair said: "It is good to see this important issue has been raised in the House of Lords as we have been pushing for change in this area over the past year.

"What is frustrating is that only a handful of forces have adopted the new guidance issued by the NPCC and many are not as proactive as they could be.

"It shouldn't be taking so long to do something which would support our colleagues.

"In recent days we have seen officers having camera phones stuffed in their faces while they dare to eat on duty. It may come as a surprise to some, but police officers are human beings and need to stop to eat during the little time they have free. Because of the demands of the job, lack of police stations and even fewer police canteens they will sometimes be seen eating in public, this should not be breaking news on social media."



Lords to discuss amendment to proposed police driver legislation

An amendment to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill designed to ensure the new legislation does not leave police drivers at greater risk of prosecution will be considered by the House of Lords later this year after failing to be discussed in the Commons.

Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and national Federation lead for police pursuits and driver training, believes that without the amendment to the bill police drivers will actually be put at further jeopardy by a change to the law aimed at offering them better legal protection.

"We are really grateful for the support that we have had to date," says Tim, "Our campaign for legislative change has been running for more than eight years now and we are on the brink of success in terms of ensuring it is truly fit for purpose but the wording of the bill has to be amended and we are hopeful that, with the support of the Lords, this will be agreed."

"The current wording sets out that drivers must follow their training at all times but this could mean more officers are prosecuted since, if they act instinctively rather than to the letter of their training, they could be found to have breached policy and procedures which could be deemed to be falling below the standard of the careful and competent police driver.

"The Government, the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Independent Office for Police Conduct have all listened to what we have been saying but there is a real risk that this new legislation could inadvertently



further criminalise officers. We have a number of Lords who are supportive of our aims.

"It is going to be a bitter disappointment to officers the length and the breadth of the country if this legislation, so long in the making, does not give them the protection they deserve. Too many officers have already been dragged through the courts, putting them and their families under untold pressure, when they have simply been doing their jobs, and often putting their own lives on the line while doing so."

The Federation wants a reasonableness defence clause to be added to the bill to give officers flexibility to respond legally to the matters they encounter on duty.

This would take into account what they reasonably believe they are responding to, the threat that is posed and any departure from the relevant standard should be reasonable and proportionate.

Tim explains: "Adding this defence will ensure we have legislation that is fit for purpose. This feels very much like we are almost over the finishing line in terms of getting the change to the law that is needed so that police drivers can use their skills and training when driving police vehicles, fighting crime, dealing with criminals, serving and protecting the public.

"Now we just need to ensure that in tackling the obvious issues caused by judging police officers' driving by the standards of your careful and competent driver, we don't create a greater risk to police drivers who, quite naturally, should be able to react instinctively to what they are faced with."

“Our campaign for legislative change has been running for more than eight years now and we are on the brink of success in terms of ensuring it is truly fit for purpose but the wording of the bill has to be amended and we are hopeful that, with the support of the Lords, this will be agreed.”

The risk created by the wording of the new bill was raised with the Home Secretary at the Police Federation's annual national conference last month when she said she will "absolutely" work together with the Federation to ensure it did not inadvertently further criminalise them.

She said the Home Office would work through how it could make it work in the right way.

An amendment to the bill was tabled by Philip Davies, Conservative MP for Shipley, and was due to be debated in the House of Commons on Monday 5 July but there was not sufficient time for it to be debated and the bill continued its passage through Parliament moving to the Lords.

"We had submitted a compelling argument for this amendment and both the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Independent Office for Police Conduct have shared their concerns with the Home Office. If we fail to secure this amendment officers will be advised to never go beyond what they have been trained since the new test under the bill as it stands will encourage officers to stand by impotently or risk exposing themselves to prosecution."

“We are really grateful for the support we have had to date.”

The bill will introduce a new legal test so officers' driving will be measured against that of a 'careful and competent police driver', however, this could still leave them exposed.

"An officer will be licensed to drive in accordance with what they have been trained to do but nothing more. Performing a manoeuvre which is not trained or in policy is likely to fall into the new definition of dangerous and careless driving under a new test against the careful and competent police driver," Tim explained.

"Going beyond the terms of that licence could give rise to criminal liability. I have grave concerns around the practicality of this approach. What's a police officer to do if they encounter something which falls outside of this policy? The bill in its current format won't permit a police officer to respond legally when confronted by the many and varied situations officers are likely to encounter while driving police vehicles."

An amendment to Section 163 powers is also being put forward. This would enable officers to compel drivers to switch off their engines, a measure which could help stem the growing number of officers injured when drivers make off after a police stop.

Police Covenant moves a step closer

West Midlands Police Federation has welcomed Home Secretary Priti Patel's pledge to make the new Police Covenant a "top priority" after its implementation moved a step closer to becoming reality.

Ms Patel, who told officers she "had their backs" when she addressed the Police Federation annual conference in June, was speaking after holding talks with Federation national chair John Apter and other key policing figures at the first meeting of the Police Covenant Board.

She said: "I have been resolute in my determination to ensure that the police have the support they need in order to carry out their duties to protect the public. This is an absolute priority for me.

"The new Police Covenant will recognise the dangers and the harms they face each day as they undertake their duties."

The board agreed to examine a wide range of proposals to provide officers and staff with long-term support and protection to carry out their duties, with the focus on health and wellbeing, physical safety, and support for families.

Reacting to her comments, West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott said: "We welcome the Home Secretary's pledge to prioritise the new Police Covenant. The proposals have a clear focus on the health and wellbeing of officers and their families and this is something the Police Federation has long campaigned for.

"Our members can be asked to work in extremely challenging, often dangerous circumstances and they deserve to be properly recognised and supported for their efforts and sacrifices."

The national chair described the first meeting of the Police Covenant board as an "important step forward".

He said: "The Police Covenant is something I believe passionately about, and I am incredibly proud this is finally

turning into reality.

"We have worked long and hard on the creation of a covenant to ensure it benefits all police officers, staff, volunteers, their families, and our retired colleagues.

"The first meeting of the Covenant Board is an important step forward and I look forward to playing my part in ensuring the Covenant is meaningful and tangible for all our members and their families."

The board discussed plans for occupational health standards are embedded across all police forces, the establishment of a new chief medical officer for policing in England and Wales and improved training for GPs relating to specific police roles.

Plans to develop pre-deployment mental health support for the entire police workforce and consider what a good support model for families should look like were also discussed at the meeting.

The Covenant Board will meet every quarter to discuss the Police Covenant, deliver agreed outcomes and monitor progress.

Those attending the meeting alongside the Police Federation and the Home Office included representatives from the National Police Chiefs' Council, the College of Policing, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Police Superintendents' Association, Unison, the Chief Police Officers' Staff Association and the Welsh Government.

A consultation process on the new covenant was launched last year. It is aimed at serving and former police officers, their families and any groups with an interest in supporting the police in England and Wales.

Plans for the covenant are set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which is set to be discussed in the Lords in the autumn having already progressed through the House of Commons.

'I've done my best to be a good custodian of the role'

West Midlands Police Federation secretary Steve Grange is encouraging officers to put themselves forwards to be workplace representatives as he prepares to retire from service.

Steve is retiring after 30 years' service with the Force and 15 years representing members for the Federation.

And he used the occasion of his retirement to urge officers to become Fed reps.

"Do it to make a difference for your colleagues by supporting those you work with," he said. "Realise that you have the skills that are required to do the role from the skills you possess to do the job you already do.

"It doesn't require any special qualifications to talk to people and determine their needs, to use your experience to identify what's required, and have conversations with managers and senior leaders to attempt to negotiate mutually agreeable solutions.

"The Federation will provide you with further and advanced training if you want to specialise in certain aspects of the role."

He added: "Providing good representation in the workplace is key and the new elections will be the first step to ensuring this is the case.

“Providing good representation in the workplace is key and the new elections will be the first step to ensuring this is the case.”



Steve Grange relaxing with companion Parsley.

"Reps need to take responsibility for immediate actions to resolve matters swiftly and appropriately for the benefit of both the member and the Force."

Steve joined West Midlands Police in September 1991.

"My first girlfriend wanted to be a copper and she sold me on the idea," he said, "We

split up just before I joined – I don't think she joined the police."

His first posting was to A Unit on the old K1 sub-division, working out of West Bromwich Police Station.

And his abilities as a middle-distance runner helped detain a suspect as a trainee.

He explained: "A vehicle reg of a stolen car was given out on parade. Two officers spotted the vehicle while we were patrolling a local housing estate.

"A pursuit ensued and the driver decamped at a dead end and ran across a park at the back of the houses.

"I gave chase to a very fit offender but, being young myself and a county standard

800m runner, the foot chase lasted quite a long time to the point where we were both shattered and stood around to recover our breath together.

"The offender was 'officially' detained by my soon to be work colleagues."

Steve said he has too many career highlights to mention, but added: "Managing a response team for five years at Brierley Hill and being as operationally active as possible contained most of my operational highlights, as well as working with some incredibly dedicated officers."

“ I most enjoyed dealing with members who had genuine grievances and supporting them to reach amicable solutions. ”

He first became a rep in 2006, said he had no previous knowledge of the Federation beforehand.

"I most enjoyed dealing with members who had genuine grievances and supporting them to reach amicable solutions," he said, "Also, negotiating with senior leaders on the local policing unit on matters that affected



Trying a cardboard cut-out uniform for size.

my members."

Steve has also been a member of the equality committee, and was deputy secretary and then secretary of the former Inspectors' Branch Board.

Steve said these roles gave him what he felt was the credibility to stand for election to deputy secretary of the then Joint Branch Board in January 2011. He became branch secretary in 2015 following the retirement of Chris Jones.

"The hardest part has been ensuring members are properly represented in the workplace due to a number of factors, including reps not being afforded the ability to perform the role or, conversely, the rep not wanting to take on the basic responsibilities they were elected to carry out," he said.

He said one of his achievements after becoming secretary was to put the branch in a strong financial position following a report stating it wouldn't be financially viable.

He said: "This has enabled us to provide our members with free off-duty legal cover – the only Federation in the country to do so.

"The vast majority of our members, by way of their Group Insurance Scheme cover, now have immediate access to a GP 24/7 at no additional cost. That's proved invaluable to many, particularly during the pandemic when access to their local surgery has been so restricted.

"We've led the country with regard to the current pensions situation and have committed to listening to the views of our members when it comes to the cost of the legal action that was taken by a large number of them.

"We've also provided information so members can better understand the position they're in with their pensions.

"I was also the chair of the national Federation Change Board that oversaw the implementation of the independent review of the Federation conducted by Sir David Normington. This led to a wholesale change of the organisation and new electoral arrangements which are now starting their second iteration."

Steve said that work still needs to be done on misogyny, sexual harassment and how it's dealt with.

"I don't think it is dealt with on an equal footing to other forms of harassment," he said, "And I believe this is letting down our

colleagues in many cases.

"I acknowledge the Force has at least recognised the issue and put measures in place to tackle it but, until we see this manifested in tangible outcomes, I cannot see officers having the confidence to raise matters in the first instance."

Steve said the Federation and the Force have made big strides forwards in looking after officers' mental health.

"Since coming into this role the issue of officer mental health has grown exponentially," he said.

"The overall level of sickness has not increased massively but the proportion of that sickness that can be attributed to a mental health illness has almost doubled.

"I'm proud the national Federation and West Midlands as a local board have been at the forefront of addressing this issue with many of our reps being mental health first aid trained to recognise and take immediate action if necessary.

"We've also been one of the leading lights among boards to signpost appropriate cases to our Welfare Support Programme, paying for further appropriate treatment and therapy where necessary that has aided officers' recovery.

"It's also good the Force has listened to us over time to recognise this issue and provide complimentary treatments as part of their Employee Assistance Programme."

Despite his retirement, Steve will continue to offer information on pensions and how upcoming changes will affect officers.

"I've already provided nearly 700 responses to individual officers as to how these changes will affect them personally," he said. "I'll hopefully have the capacity to do more in the lead up to the end of the remedy period in April 2022.

"I'm also hoping to qualify as a financial adviser so, rather than simply being able to offer generic information, I should be able to provide more detailed advice if required."

And as he prepares for retirement, Steve said he hopes he's left the role in a good place for his successor to take over.

"I've done my best to be a good custodian of the role I've had the privilege to hold," he said, "I know I leave it in a position from which my successor can take it along the path they, in appropriate collaboration, wish to head and I wish them well."

“ Reps need to take responsibility for immediate actions to resolve matters swiftly and appropriately for the benefit of both the member and the Force. ”



PC Luke Jemson.

'StomaCop' inspires new recruit with life-changing illness to not give up

Having been diagnosed with a life-changing illness, Luke Jemson hit rock bottom. He was medically discharged from the Army and became isolated from his family and friends. He shut himself away, admitting he didn't want to be around anymore. Eight years later and his life couldn't be more different, the 26-year-old, who is one of West Midlands Police's newest recruits, reveals.

Inspired by traffic officer Mark Woodcock, also known on Twitter as

'StomaCop', Luke's dream to work in the Force became a reality when he joined the police back in February.

As well as sharing a passion for policing, Mark and Luke have another thing in common and that's that they've both been diagnosed with colitis. The duo are among 146,000 people in the UK to suffer from the long-term, chronic condition, which leaves the colon and rectum inflamed, and causes pain and discomfort in the abdomen.

Last year, Mark (33) underwent an

ileostomy, which saw his small intestine diverted through an opening of 'stoma' in his abdomen. He was fitted with a military grade titanium plate to protect his stoma bag when he returned to work and now uses his blog to raise awareness of colitis and to encourage others who fear the condition will hold them back.

One of those people is Luke, who reached out to Mark around a year ago.

"It's been a really crazy year. I was discharged from the Army just before I was

meant to leave on my first deployment to Afghanistan. So, it was really hard knowing that this diagnosis stopped me from doing what I had always wanted to do. Honestly, at the moment in time, it felt like everything had gone south. It was as if everything I enjoyed doing, I couldn't do anymore, which is why the support and encouragement from Mark to join the police has been amazing," says Luke, who met Mark for the first time in person last month, during a traffic night shift.

"In a strange turn of events, during my training, I was a victim of burglary and, unbeknown to me at the time, the officer who came out to take my statement happened to be Mark's wife.

"I was telling the officer about my condition, and this inspirational officer I followed on Twitter - it wasn't until later the penny dropped.

“I'm motivated again, and I actually look forward to going into work, something that I haven't felt for a long time.”

"So it was great to actually meet Mark and go out on patrol with him."

Before finally securing his place in the Force, Luke was working for a national charity. Despite enjoying the role, his real ambition was to join the Force, which drove him to unsuccessfully apply for a role every six months from the age of 18.

"I began to think it wasn't meant to be, they were never going to take someone with such medical baggage," says Luke, "But then reading Mark's story gave me hope."

Having contacted StomaCop via Twitter, Luke, who reveals he was "ready to admit defeat" says Mark soon took him under his wing.

"I wish there were enough words out there to describe just how much Mark has helped me, professionally and personally," adds Luke, who was sworn in as a police officer on 18 February.

"He helped me a lot, especially with my mental health. He taught me to be positive."

Before speaking to Mark, Luke says he didn't know anyone else who had suffered from colitis.

"He helped me understand things," added Luke, who reveals Mark encouraged him to be more open to medical support, something he had struggled with.

"If Mark hadn't pushed me to work with the doctors, instead of against them, I probably would've ended up with a stoma



Luke (right) with Mark Woodcock.

bag too. I'm very lucky. I really have met a friend for life in Mark and, in terms of my career, he has become a professional mentor to me."

Since speaking to Mark and joining the Force, Luke says that his loved ones have noticed a change in him.

He says: "I'm motivated again, and I actually look forward to going into work, something that I haven't felt for a long time.

"My girlfriend says I've got my spark back."

Luke now sees having colitis as a positive and is more than happy to open up about the condition, despite not wanting to talk about it at all as little as two years ago.

"I didn't even want people to know I had it," he admits, "But now I can see the benefits of sharing my story.

"I've definitely grown a lot as a person. I've been through so much for a 26-year-old and now here I am, doing the dream job that I always wanted."

Luke and Mark now speak regularly, seeking support from each other, with their condition as well as at work.

Mark said: "One of the reasons I set up this account was to normalise the condition and show it shouldn't stop people from doing what they love, especially in a role like mine.

"I was so lucky to have such supportive management and team around me, especially when I was having my stoma fitted. It's great that now I can pay this forward and support Luke in any way he needs since he has joined the Force.

"It was great to finally meet him and be able to show him a different aspect of policing - hopefully he will join us on traffic one day."

West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott said: "This is a truly inspirational story. Both these officers have proved that living with a condition such as this does not mean hopes, dreams and ambitions have to be put on ice.

"We wish them all the very best in the future."

Follow Mark's journey on Twitter - @stomacopWMP

Officers give up their own time to help others

Almost nine in 10 police officers have done volunteer work or fund-raising during the pandemic, a new survey for Public Service Day has revealed.

Research carried out by civil service and public sector membership club Boundless found that 88 per cent of officers found time to give something back during the Covid-19 crisis.

Officers who responded were also found to have raised £13,817 per person for charity during the course of their career.

Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, said: "This research underlines that policing is so special, full of unique people and is at the heart of the communities we serve.

"So many of our colleagues have been working tirelessly on the frontline of this pandemic, putting themselves in harm's way to protect the public.

"And they've still been able to help communities and individuals by volunteering for roles or by raising money for worthy causes.

"It makes me proud to be a police officer and, on Public Service Day, I thank them all."

Public Service Day was launched by the UN in 2003 to celebrate our public services and the people working in them.



Fund-raising officer helps raise awareness of female genital mutilation

A West Midlands detective has told of her passion for helping to raise awareness of female genital mutilation (FGM) and how she has raised thousands to help the cause.

DC Gill Squires, who has been with the Force for 28 years, started working in the Public Protection Unit (PPU) as policy lead for honour-based abuse, forced marriages and FGM back in 2009.

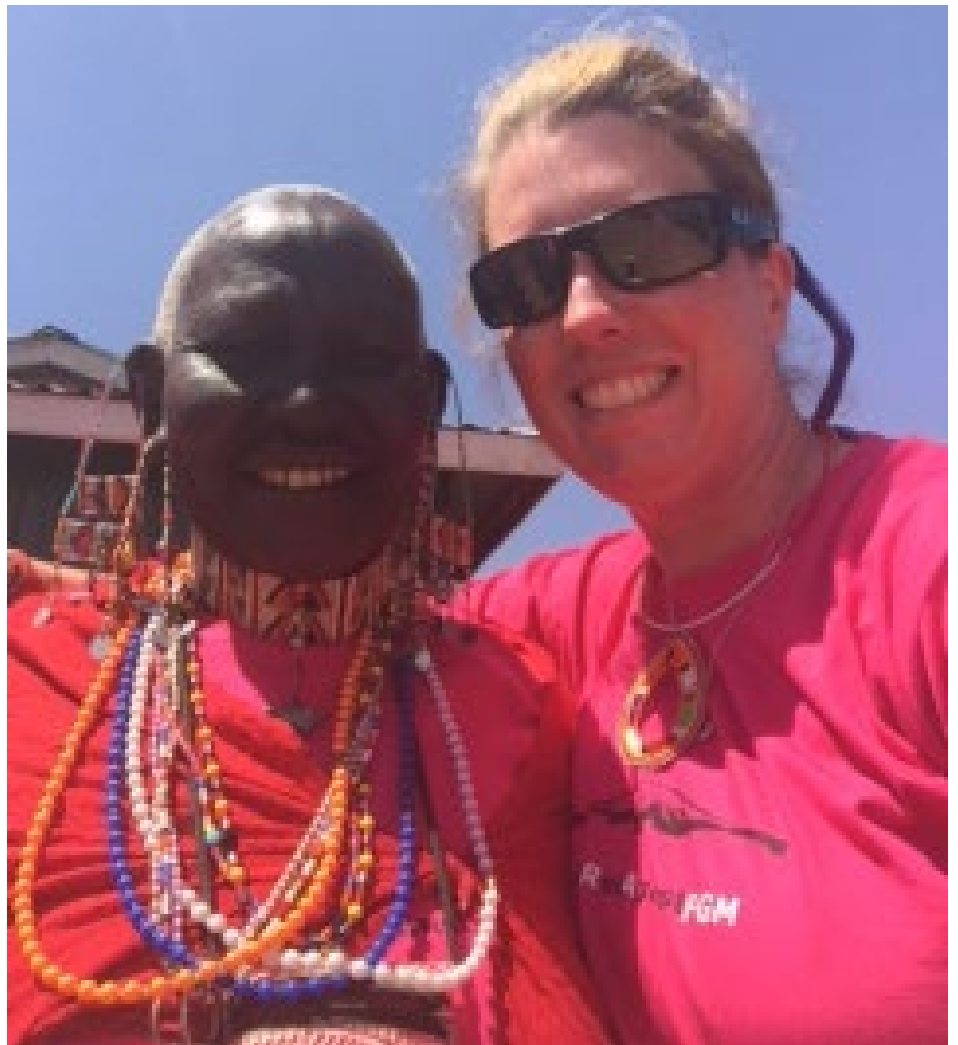
Inspired by The Divinity Foundation, an organisation she connected with to help gain a better understanding of her role, the mother-of-three has since been determined to educate others on FGM and has even climbed Kilimanjaro to raise funds to support victims.

“I didn’t realise the impact going to Kenya would have on me. It’s really hard to put into words but it was totally overwhelming.”

“Meeting the team at The Divinity Foundation has completely changed my life,” says Gill, who first visited Kenya in 2016 to support the charity and had visited every year since, until Covid-19 prevented her from travelling.

“I didn’t realise the impact going to Kenya would have on me. It’s really hard to put into words but it was totally overwhelming.”

Her trip to Kenya came from an email



Gill on a trip to Kenya.

that went around at work, asking if anybody wanted to climb Kilimanjaro, in neighbouring Tanzania and raise money for a charity of their choice.

Gill and a team of others, known as the ‘Peaky Climbers’, including fellow police officers, as well as medical professionals,

scaled the mountain for The Divinity Foundation and managed to raise £15,000.

These funds paid for an extension for the rescue centre, which the charity named the ‘Peaky Hut’, which meant they can now support more girls, of which many are victims of FGM, a procedure that involves

partial or total removal of external female genitalia.

"It just so happened that the charity's rescue centre was also at the base of the mountain so we arranged to visit them while we were there," added Gill, who was presented with an MBE by HRH Prince Charles in 2018, as recognition for her FGM work.

"We also spent time with the 'cutters', the women who carry out the FGM, so we could really understand what happened from a grassroots level perspective to bring back to the UK with me."

Gill explains that while she is passionate about ending violence towards women and girls, it is crucially important to gain an understanding of why they do it.

She adds: "It's not about us going into a community, pointing a finger and telling them what's right and wrong. That's not going to change anything. It's about educating about the harmful, life-long implications and encouraging communities to change these practices from within. It's about empowering them to end the practice themselves."

Along with her passion for helping the charity, Gill says she has made life-long friends, for whom she is full of admiration.

"These girls, the victims, the survivors, have to live with this for the rest of their lives. It impacts them massively. The rescue

“It's not about us going into a community, pointing a finger and telling them what's right and wrong. That's not going to change anything. It's about educating about the harmful, life-long implications and encouraging communities to change these practices from within. It's about empowering them to end the practice themselves.”

centre encourages and empowers girls to have a voice, and to be heard. All the girls have career aspirations and indeed some of them are heading off to university, making something of themselves. They wouldn't have that opportunity without The Divinity Foundation. The charity gives them so many opportunities," she says.

Gill now dedicates her time to sharing her knowledge of FGM and passing it on to colleagues, professionals and members of the community.

"FGM is an issue in the UK, we know that," she explains, "We've always known FGM is an issue in the West Midlands.

"The thing is, it's hidden, and it's cultural. We need to talk about it, safeguarding is everyone's business. It's not just about

protecting the children, adults can also be at risk, and it's also ensuring mum, who's likely to be a victim in her own right, is supported."

Gill continues to raise awareness of FGM, in hope that individuals will know where they can go for support.

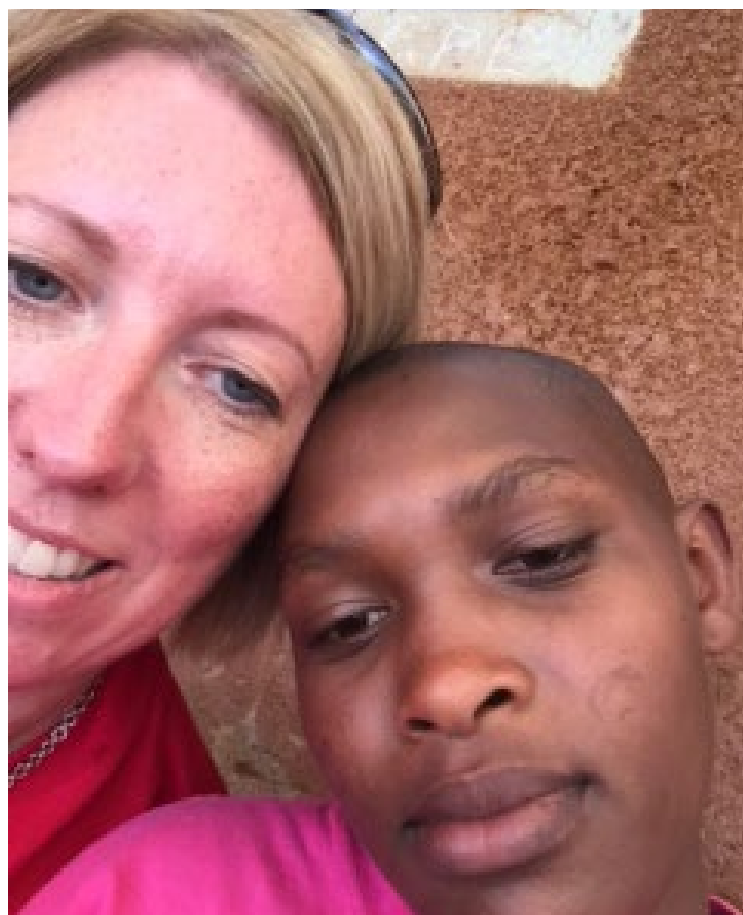
"It's all about supporting and empowering these girls and their parents, to say no," Gill says, echoing the Government's pledge to end FGM in a generation.

"We know there are cutters in the UK, this doesn't just happen abroad. I'd like to encourage officers to talk to their communities, build a picture and help us identify and prosecute those perpetrating this abuse. Please don't be afraid to tackle the issue.

"Together, we can end FGM."



Gill at the Kilimanjaro National Park.



Offering support.

Police praised for 'vast improvements' in response to crimes against women and girls

The police service has made vast improvements in how it responds to crimes against women and girls but fundamental system-wide reform is still needed, according to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

HMICFRS has published an interim report into how effectively the police engage with women and girls. It said there is an epidemic of offending against women and girls, for example, an estimated 1.6 million women in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse in the 12 months to March 2020.

But it said it was not just down to the police to tackle the problem with other partners such as the Crown Prosecution Service, health, social care and education also needing to be involved.

"For far too long, it has seemed as if the police are expected to tackle all society's ills," says Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, "But, of course, we cannot work in isolation. There needs to be a partnership approach with all sectors pulling together, developing strategies and then working together to ensure that we all play our part in protecting the public and developing an effective criminal justice system. Only then

will we be properly supporting the victims of crime."

The inspectorate's findings are from its interim report, released now to help inform the Government's violence against women and girls strategy, with its final report to be published in September.

HMICFRS reviewed evidence from previous inspections, consulted with experts from policing, Government and victim support organisations, and analysed the progress made by the police.

After reviewing the evidence, the inspectorate has recommended that transformation of the whole system is needed, including:

The Government, police, criminal justice system and public sector should immediately and unequivocally commit to prioritising the response to violence against women and girls, supported by sufficient funding and mandated responsibilities;

The police should make the relentless pursuit and disruption of perpetrators a national priority, and their capability and capacity to do this should be enhanced; and

Funding and structures should be put in place to ensure victims receive tailored and consistent support.

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

Zoë Billingham said: "We are living during a national epidemic of violence against women and girls. The prevalence and range of offending and harm is stark and shocking. We are clear that the police have made great progress over the last decade against a backdrop of greater demand, and we want forces to maintain this momentum and build on these improvements. But there is still evidence of inconsistent support for victims and low prosecution rates.

"Offending against women and girls is deep-rooted and pervasive in our society. Urgent action is needed to uproot and address this and police cannot solve this alone. There must be a seamless approach to preventing and tackling violence against women and girls across the whole system, including education, local authorities, health, social care and those from across the criminal justice system – with all agencies working together.

"A radical and immediate change in approach is needed, supported by sustained funding and mandated responsibilities, potentially through a new statutory framework. We need to end violence against women and girls by preventing it, supporting victims, and bringing perpetrators to justice with the full force of police powers and the law.

John Apter, national chair of the Police Federation, said police officers should not face anger from victims for the failings of other agencies and called on other sectors to step up and play their part.

He explained: "This isn't something that can be solved overnight, or by just recruiting more officers. It's a complex issue that demands time, attention, and money."

“We need to end violence against women and girls by preventing it, supporting victims, and bringing perpetrators to justice with the full force of police powers and the law.”



Welfare Support Programme accessible to all members

The Federation's pioneering Welfare Support Programme provides members with a wide range of services including clinical assessment and counselling.

The programme has been further developed by the Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) and is funded by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW).

It also offers person-centred support, access to fully trained and accredited professionals, independent and confidential support and referrals-appropriate follow-on specialist support.

All subscribing PFEW members can access the support provided by the programme which complements the welfare services already available to officers.

West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott said: "This development of the Welfare Support Programme will really enhance what is on offer to any officer who is in need of extra support.

"Any initiative focussed on the wellbeing of our members is to be welcomed and we

are pleased to be teaming up with our colleagues at the DMWS to boost the services on offer."

PFEW chair John Apter found out more about the new welfare support programme when he visited the DMWS headquarters in Hampshire with Policing Minister Kit Malthouse.

John said: "We're delighted to be working with Defence Medical Welfare Service to deliver our Welfare Support Programme.

"Our local Federation branches already go above and beyond to help members in their time of need, but thanks to DMWS we can go one step further and provide this extra and invaluable support service to all.

"We are very pleased with the progress so far and we know it is already making a tangible difference to the lives of our colleagues who, when in a dark place, often don't feel comfortable reaching out to their force, but look to the Federation for support."

Mr Malthouse said: "Our police officers

go above and beyond every single day – risking their safety to protect the public and keep us all safe – so it's vital we give them the health and wellbeing support they need.

"The work of the Defence Medical Welfare Service complements our efforts and gives police officers a place to go in their time of need – I'm extremely grateful for their efforts and was delighted to visit and see their excellent work in action."

To find out more about the new WSP, or to get support, please contact DMWS at <https://dmws.org.uk/police/> or on 01264 586 942.



'Courts must use full sentencing powers on officer assaults'

Assaults on police officers must be punished with the maximum sentences available under new guidelines, West Midlands Police Federation has insisted.

Branch chair Jon Nott said judges and magistrates should ensure the revised sentencing guidelines, which come into force in July, are used to their full effect on anyone who attacks an emergency service worker.

He spoke out after the new advice was published by the Sentencing Council, the independent body set up to promote greater transparency and consistency in sentencing.

For the first time, judges and magistrates in England and Wales will be given specific guidance for sentencing offenders convicted of assault on emergency service workers.

Jon said: "Assaults on police officers are totally unacceptable but are sadly commonplace. To assault a police officer, prison officer or any other emergency service worker is to attack society itself and should never be accepted as 'part of the job'.

"We welcome the new sentencing guidelines but judges and magistrates must use them to their full extent to ensure those

who assault police officers and other emergency service workers receive the maximum tariff sentences available."

The revised guidelines are a direct result of the Police Federation's Protect the Protectors campaign which triggered a change in law to double the maximum sentence for assaults on police officers and other emergency service workers from six to 12 months.

The Federation supports a maximum tariff of 24 months and not 12 months, at least, because of the likelihood of offenders being released before the completion of their sentences.

The Government has pledged to increase the maximum sentence from 12 months to two years for assaults on emergency workers through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which is currently going through Parliament.

The new advice includes factors classed as "high culpability", such as the "intention to cause fear of serious harm, including disease transmission" in common assault cases, as well as intentional coughing or spitting in both common assault and ABH offences.

“Assaults on police officers are totally unacceptable but are sadly commonplace. To assault a police officer, prison officer or any other emergency service worker is to attack society itself and should never be accepted as 'part of the job'”

ONS releases latest figures

The chair of West Midlands Police Federation has called for the toughest possible sentences to be handed down to thugs who attack officers.

Jon Nott said he was appalled at new figures which show that West Midlands Police officers were assaulted more than 1,000 times in the last year.

New Government figures, released by the Office for National Statistics, show there were 566 assaults on officers causing injury in the year ending March 2021 and a further 518 assaults on officers without injury.

Nationally, there has been a 14 per cent

rise in assaults on police officers. In the year ending March 2021, there were almost 37,000 assaults on police officers in England and Wales, including British Transport Police.

Of those, 25,734 were assaults without injury on a constable, an increase of 21 per cent compared with 21,321 in the previous year.

And 11,235 were assaults with injury on a constable, up by 1.2 per cent compared with 11,106 in the previous year.

Jon said: "These figures are absolutely unacceptable. I find it shocking that in the West Midlands Force area alone, on average

three of our colleagues are attacked every single day just for doing their job.

"An attack on a police officer is an attack on society and it must not be tolerated.

"We've long been campaigning for tougher sentences for criminals who attack emergency services workers, and anyone convicted of attacking a police officer should feel the full weight of the law.

"We need the courts to pass down the toughest possible sentences to anyone convicted of such attacks. We need to send out the message that this is not acceptable. It needs to stop."

Back to Basics: focus on body armour

An awareness drive focusing on the damage body armour can potentially cause if worn excessively has been launched by the Police Federation as part of World Wellbeing Week.

The Back to Basics campaign highlights simple tweaks officers can make at home or at work to make sure their backs, necks, and shoulders are not harmed by the protective gear.

Officers are being urged to keep an eye out for social media updates and helpful videos on the Back to Basics webpage.

West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott said: "Body armour should

absolutely be worn when it's needed but problems start to surface when officers wear it when it's not needed.

"The human skeleton isn't built to carry around this amount of weight long-term and it could contribute to significant health issues."

The Police Federation's national Wellbeing Sub-Committee will be working with experts from Flint House, the Police Treatment Centres (Harrogate and Auchterarder) and the North-West Police Benevolent Fund to examine ways to help ease the strain on muscles and skeleton.

The sub-committee will also remind

forces of their responsibility to look after officers' welfare and encourage good practice around body armour care, storage and checks after being damaged.

The committee's body armour working group has found that there were problems with the weight of the plates used and also the weight caused by what officers were carrying on their person such as mobile units and other kit.

It established that officers from across England and Wales are being referred to treatment centres with back, shoulder and neck pain, which could be caused by wearing body armour.

“Body armour should absolutely be worn when it's needed but problems start to surface when officers wear it when it's not needed.”





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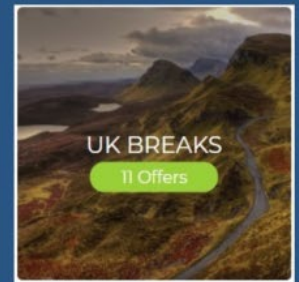
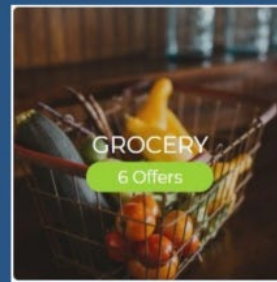


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Value for money and peace of mind aren't the only things West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund can offer its members.

The charity has been supporting serving and retired police officers, police staff and their families for more than 45 years, providing incredible support and a wide range of benefits for its £2.00 monthly subscription fee.

With over 7,300 members, the Benevolent Fund is committed to providing substantial support and attractive membership benefits while keeping its subscription fee as low as possible.

Here's a summary of what members are entitled to:

FULL MEMBERS (SERVING OFFICER OR POLICE STAFF EMPLOYEE)

Subscription is £2 per month. You can apply for these benefits:

- Access to interest-free loans and grants in times of hardship or distress should the unforeseen or unexpected happen
- High street shopping vouchers (sickness vouchers) if a member is unable to work for more than 21 consecutive days due to sickness or injury

- Convalescence and rehabilitation breaks at St Michael's Lodge Treatment Centre
- Death in service grants of £3,500 to nominated person
- £25 per week to children of deceased officer or police staff employee up to 18 years
- Discounted holidays at the fund's holiday properties in Dartmouth and Dorset
- An exclusive rewards scheme offering a range of discounts on retail, family days out, UK holidays, groceries, gifts and much more.

RETIRED OFFICER OR POLICE STAFF EMPLOYEES

Subscription is £1 per month. You can apply for these benefits:

- Interest-free loans
- Grants
- Small gifts (sickness vouchers)
- Convalescence
- Discounted holidays at the fund's holiday properties
- An exclusive rewards scheme offering a range of discounts.



West Midlands Police
Benevolent Fund
Charity

For full details of membership benefits visit www.wmpben.co.uk

Not a member of the Benevolent Fund? Why not join online today <https://wmpben.co.uk/how-to-join/application-form/>

Legal expenses cover for members: **policy updated**

The policy details of the legal expenses cover for West Midlands Federation members has been updated.

The West Midlands branch is the only one in the country to give members this cover as part of their Federation membership.

The off-duty legal scheme covers a wide range of situations where professional fees could be incurred and in almost all cases will be accessible by members not covered under other elements of the Federation package of protection.

“We felt it was important to have this cover in place,” says Steve Grange, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, “While membership of the Federation gives officers the umbrella of a wide range of support, this extra legal cover has proved to be useful for situations that fall outside the general member benefits.”

Cover is available for the Federation member, their spouse or cohabiting partner, children, stepchildren, adopted and foster children and grandchildren normally resident with the member as well as parents and grandparents of the member and the member’s partner, again where normally resident with the member.

The West Midlands branch is the only one in the country to give members this cover as part of their Federation membership

THE MEMBER ONLY COVER INCLUDES:

HOME RIGHTS

- Professional fees incurred:
 - In the pursuit or defence of legal proceedings following any event causing loss of or damage to the home
 - In the pursuit of defence of legal proceedings as a result of or any cause of action arising out of or relating to alleged infringement of the beneficiary’s legal rights relating to the home.

FUND TRUSTEE DEFENCE

- In the defence of any civil legal proceedings against the beneficiary in respect of alleged act or omission as a trustee of a fund set up by the beneficiary’s employer.

REPRESENTATION AT PUBLIC INQUIRIES

- In respect of representation of a beneficiary at a public inquiry ordered by a district auditor.

INDEPENDENT OFFICE FOR POLICE CONDUCT

- Professional fees incurred by the beneficiary for representation by an appointed representative at an investigation by the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

- Professional fees:
 - Incurred in providing representation

during an investigation where the beneficiary is subject to a Regulation 15 Notice

- In providing representation at a disciplinary hearing before the Misconduct Tribunal Panel or the Police Appeals Tribunal following a disciplinary procedure.

BANKRUPTCY ADVICE

- Professional fees incurred where filing for bankruptcy is recommended as the most appropriate option by our debt advice specialist.

WRONGFUL ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT

- Professional fees incurred for advice and guidance where the beneficiary has been wrongfully arrested and imprisoned.

THE MEMBER AND PARTNER COVER INCLUDES:

EDUCATION

- Professional fees incurred in appealing against a decision of a Local Education Authority (LEA).

PROBATE

- Professional fees to pursue civil legal action in respect of a probate dispute involving the beneficiary’s parents, grandparents, or children.

“While membership of the Federation gives officers the umbrella of a wide range of support, this extra legal cover has proved to be useful for situations that fall outside the general member benefits.”

CRIMINAL PROSECUTION DEBATE

- **Professional fees incurred:**
 - In the defence of criminal legal proceeding brought against the beneficiary
 - Overseas in providing emergency legal assistance or representing a beneficiary at a police station where they are being interviewed, in relation to an alleged criminal act.

MEMBER AND FAMILY COVER INCLUDES: PERSONAL INJURY

- Professional fees incurred in the pursuit of legal proceedings to recover damages or compensation following any event causing death of or bodily injury to a beneficiary.

CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE

- Professional fees incurred in the pursuit of legal proceedings to recover damages or compensation following any medical, clinical or surgical event causing death of or bodily injury to a beneficiary.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

- Professional fees incurred in the pursuit or defence of legal proceedings as a result of any contractual dispute over £50.00 for obtaining services including insurance or the sale, purchase or hirepurchase of any personal goods.

TAXATION

- Professional fees arising from or relating to a full enquiry by HM Revenue & Customs of the beneficiary's personal tax affairs.

DISCRIMINATION

- Professional fees incurred in the defence of civil legal proceedings brought against the beneficiary alleging discrimination related to sex, race, age, religion or disability at work.

DATA PROTECTION

- Professional fees incurred in the defence of legal proceedings taken against the beneficiary for compensation relating to the way that they have kept or used personal information about another person or organisation.

UNINSURED LOSS RECOVERY AND MOTOR PROSECUTION DEFENCE

- Professional fees incurred:
 - In the pursuit of legal proceedings to recover uninsured losses incurred because of a motor accident causing loss or damage to the vehicle
 - In the defence of legal proceedings taken against the beneficiary arising from a breach of road traffic regulations relating to the vehicle.

IDENTITY THEFT

- In the event of identity theft:
 - Professional fees and ancillary costs incurred to defend a claim from a financial institution, merchants or their collection agencies; for the removal of any criminal or civil judgements wrongly entered against the beneficiary; challenging the accuracy or completeness of any information in a Credit Reference Agency report; and to create documents needed to prove the beneficiary's innocence in terms of any financial irregularities committed unlawfully
 - Postal and phone costs the beneficiary has to pay in relation to those made about actual identity theft
 - Fees charged for re-applying for a loan due to the original application being rejected because the lender received incorrect credit information
 - The beneficiary's lost earnings because of time away from work to report or discuss actual identity theft

[Find out more in the policy document.](#)

Personal injury claims

One of the benefits of your Police Federation membership is the ability to receive legal support and make a claim for compensation if you are injured on or off duty.

A team of specialist personal injury lawyers are dedicated to recovering damages for you and your family. Whether you win or lose your claim, you will not be charged and you keep 100 per cent of any compensation won.

The Federation has specialists who have expert knowledge of the unique losses that can affect police officers and ensure these are recovered as part of your compensation award.

Please note, the process for submitting personal injury claims has changed. Claimline is now closed and all personal injury claims - that are not related to a road traffic incident - need to be sent to us to submit on your behalf. [Please contact us for more information.](#)



RTA personal injury claims

If you or a member of your family have suffered an injury as a result of a road traffic accident then you are entitled to free legal advice, support and representation to obtain financial compensation.

All RTA personal injury claims can be submitted directly via [PFEW RTA Legal Assistance.](#)

Booking a holiday your GIS travel insurance

Subscribing members of the West Midlands Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme are being urged to check the latest update from our travel policy providers before booking a holiday.

The summary below was published in June 2021.

IF THE FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE (FCDO) ADVICE HAS BEEN LIFTED TO YOUR COUNTRY OF DESTINATION THE FOLLOWING APPLIES:

From 1 April 2021 a new Covid-19 exclusion applies under all relevant sections (excluding medical expenses). This means there will be no cover for claims relating to Covid-19 after 1 April 2021 unless your holiday was booked prior to 17 March 2020. In addition, the Covid-19 exclusion will not apply to any claim for the cancellation of an Insured Journey as a direct result of:

i. An Insured person who was due to undertake such Insured Journey receiving a positive diagnosis of Covid-19 that necessitates such cancellation as a direct result of:

(a) Such Insured Person being legally required to undertake compulsory quarantine or self-isolation following such positive diagnosis; or

(b) The continued suffering by such Insured Person of symptoms of Covid-19 that results in a Qualified Medical Practitioner confirming that such cancellation is medically necessary;

ii. A close relative with whom you reside receiving a positive diagnosis of Covid-19 which directly results in an official instruction to you to undertake compulsory quarantine or self-isolation and necessitating such cancellation.

WHAT ABOUT THE TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM, AM I ONLY COVERED FOR TRAVEL TO A DESTINATION ON THE "GREEN" LIST?

The traffic light system is more about the implications when you return to the UK after travelling, mainly around the need (or not) to quarantine. While some of the guidance, such as avoiding travel to "amber" or "red" designated destinations, should also be adhered to for non-essential travel e.g. holidays (as with all Government regulations and guidance), it is the advice given by the FCDO that affects whether cover is available. In addition, it also often means you should be able to seek any refunds for cancellation from your tour agent as imposes responsibilities on them if the FCDO issues such advice and we would always recommend you contact them in the first instance.

IF THE FCDO ADVISES AGAINST TRAVEL, AM I COVERED TO TRAVEL?

No, travelling against FCDO advice invalidates your insurance so you will not be covered for any claims under any sections of cover. This includes whether the FCDO is advising against all or all but essential travel. If the FCDO advice remains unchanged and is advising against all but essential travel then the following applies:

- If you have booked a package deal we anticipate your holiday company will contact you nearer the time you are due to travel. They will generally offer you a credit note or re-booking of your original holiday for a later date. Under the Package Travel Regulations, if your holiday is a package deal you are not obliged to accept a credit note and you can insist on a refund from them. That is

your own decision.

- If you have booked flights and accommodation separately then you should be able to get a refund on your flights under EU Regulations if they start or finish in the EU. You will need to contact your accommodation provider directly to see if they can reimburse you or arrange alternative dates in the future.

IF I AM UNABLE TO RETURN HOME DUE TO COVID WILL MY INSURANCE POLICY EXTEND PAST MY PLANNED RETURN DATE HOME?

- For anyone abroad who is unable to return to the UK, the policy will automatically extend while you are forced to remain. This is on the understanding that the member is following Government advice which is that all UK citizens should make reasonable attempts to return to the UK as soon as possible.

BOOKING FUTURE HOLIDAYS

- As Covid-19 is a known event, it has unfortunately become necessary for a new exclusion to be applied to the policy under the cancellation and curtailment sections. This exclusion will be introduced from 1 April 2021. However, there are some exceptions to this exclusion as noted in the first point of this statement.
- Medical problems while abroad will be covered provided that there are no restrictions in place against travel at that time. Travelling against FCDO advice would invalidate your insurance.

MAKING A CLAIM

Considering the ongoing global situation with coronavirus, we understand that airlines, and travel providers, may be taking

ty: please check Insurance

longer than normal to provide refunds or may not be able to provide refunds. Alternatively, they may allow you to re-book for another date or issue a refund credit note for future travel, also known as a voucher.

Nevertheless, if your flight was covered by the EU Passenger Rights Regulations (flights departing from a UK or EU airport and operated by any airline, or arriving at a UK or EU airport and operated by a UK or EU airline), the airline operating the flight you booked with is liable to provide you with a full refund of the price paid for the ticket or an alternative flight. You should contact your airline (and travel provider) in the first instance to discuss your options.

If you paid any part of your trip with your credit or debit card or Paypal, you should also check with your payment provider to see if they will provide a refund.

Your travel insurance covers you for non-recoverable costs. If your flight is covered by the EU Passenger Rights Regulations, the payments made for the cancelled flight are recoverable from the Airline (or travel provider) (or payment provider).

Insurers will only consider a claim once other avenues have been reasonably exhausted.

MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Please refer to your current travel Insurance policy wording for the medical and emergency contact numbers.

All details are available on the Group Insurance Scheme pages at our website polfed.org/westmids

USEFUL WEBSITES

Civil Aviation Authority - <https://www.caa.co.uk/Our-work/Newsroom/COVID-19-guidance-for-passengers/>

ABTA - abta.com/news/coronavirus-outbreak

FCDO - gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

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£6.05 per month*

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West Midlands Police Federation is an Appointed Representative of Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, and George Burrows is a trading name of Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered Office: Spectrum Building, 7th Floor, 55 Blythswood Street, Glasgow G2 7AT. Registered in Scotland. Company Number: SC108909 www.ajg.com/UK

* Benefit levels reduce and premium rates increase on retirement. Terms and conditions apply. Cover ceases at age 65. Full details are available from the Federation or George Burrows.

**The premiums quoted are correct at 1 June 2021

GB1401/FFP675-2021/V3


GeorgeBurrows

A Gallagher company

Spoilt for choice: Car offers available for members this month

Are you looking to upgrade your car? Do you fancy treating yourself to a new set of wheels? The latest car deals for West Midlands Police Federation members have now been released, giving officers the chance to save thousands of pounds across many vehicle manufacturers.

With models from Audi, BMW, Vauxhall, Ford and Nissan among those available, there is plenty on offer for anyone thinking of getting their hands on a car.

Motorfinity Group has several exclusive discounts for members looking to buy a brand-new car outright.

Motor Source also offers great savings while Affinity Leasing gives members the chance to drive away with a great deal.

Several models can be bought at a discounted rate with My Club Nissan.

With so many deals to choose from this month, members will be spoilt for choice but be quick, these offers are available for a limited time only.

[Check out the latest deals.](#)

ACCORD
LEGAL SERVICES LTD

Free will writing service

Do you have a will? If not, now may be the time to get one. A free will writing service is being offered to members of West Midlands Police Federation by

[Accord Legal Services.](#)

To arrange your free virtual meeting – which is also open to all police officers and police staff – or for more information then call

01744 807048 or email

info@accordwills.co.uk

Website:

www.accordlegalservices.co.uk

Time for a holiday? Special deals for Fed members

Who isn't longing for a luxury getaway at the moment? Well, now is the time to turn your dreams into reality.

Ben Casey's Great Escapes is giving West Midlands Police Federation members the chance to treat themselves to a holiday.

If the Caribbean is not to your taste, then Ben Casey strives to find the perfect holiday for you. Whether it is a city break, a family-fun holiday or an adults-only getaway, Ben Casey is promising his best price for Fed members.

Depending on how much they spend, those who book with Ben Casey's Great Escapes could also receive a complimentary extra gift thrown in with their holiday package, with VIP Airport Lounge Passes, a Fortnum & Mason Hamper or a John Lewis voucher all up for grabs.

Contact Ben Casey and let him remove any unwanted stress that comes with booking a holiday, as you plan your next getaway.

• Look out for weekly offers being posted by Ben on his [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) social media pages.



At the end of my money I still have some month left!

Do you need support with your budgeting?



Let the Federation help you with a free confidential one-to-one Financial MOT.

Your meeting with Caroline Harris could help you manage financial issues that may arise throughout your police career and into retirement.

If you're struggling to understand what workplace benefits are available to you and your dependants, George Burrows could help. They have arranged for Caroline Harris, a financial welfare specialist with over 25 years' experience, to work alongside the Federation and provide detailed information on the range of pensions and schemes available to you.

Contact the Federation to arrange your free, confidential one to one support.

0121 752 4900

Appointments take place at Guardians House

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GB1450/FP459-2019/V3

See what your colleagues say:

"Caroline helped me put things into perspective and come away with a plan that will allow me to get back control of my finances. I feel in a good place to move forward."

Serving police officer, 2019

"I am very grateful for Caroline's support. She could see I found the whole situation very 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 me save 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

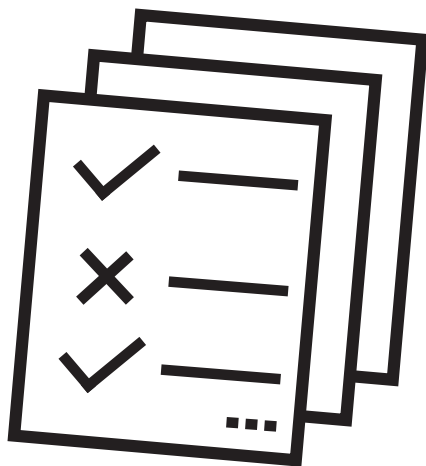
"Caroline cleared up any doubts about my pension and helped me understand my tax code better, which has resulted in a tax refund. I highly recommend any officer who is close to retirement come and speak to her."

Serving police officer Shippam, 2019



GeorgeBurrows

Focus on regs



In each edition of *Federation*, we focus on some of the Police Regulations most frequently queried with our office expert Gary Nuttall.

Q. I've been detained on duty and had to buy a meal what can I claim?

A. When a member of a police force is retained on duty beyond their normal daily period of duty, they shall be reimbursed the cost of any meal they then necessarily obtain provided that expenditure is reasonable and backed by a receipt.

An officer has to be retained on duty in excess of two hours past their normal finish time to claim this allowance.

Q. I'm having to attend a police residential training course what can I claim?

A. Incidental Expenses Allowance for those attending residential training courses

At the Police Negotiating Board meeting on 9 February 2005, it was agreed that the incidental expenses allowance for those attending residential training courses should be frozen at its current level of £4.43 per night. The maximum allowance is £17.77 per week, except where an officer has to attend for a week's course of training on the preceding Sunday night and will therefore be in attendance for five nights.

Q. I'm not working at my normal parade station, can I claim a meal as I don't know if there is a fridge there where I can put my sandwiches?

A. If an officer is unable to obtain a meal in their usual manner and, as a result, it costs them more money, then the officer can claim

the difference between what they normally pay and the cost of the replacement meal.

There is no distinction between an officer being on a scheduled tour of duty or being required to work on a rest day. It all hinges around being able to obtain a meal in their normal manner. If they can't, then they can claim.

So, for example, if the officer normally takes sandwiches to work, they are placed in the fridge on arrival at work and then the officer is detained away from the station due to operational requirements and is unable to eat the sandwiches then the officer could obtain a replacement meal and deduct the cost of the original meal when submitting a claim.

In respect of officers having to remain on duty past their normal daily period of duty (those officers who have been placed on 12 hours), once the officer goes beyond two hours of their normal scheduled tour of duty they are entitled to claim for a meal they then obtain, this must be reasonable and backed by a receipt.

In conclusion, unless the officers can show they were unable to obtain a meal in their normal manner and have deducted the cost of that meal from the replacement meal the claim will fail.

The Heads of Agreement set the level of meal expenditure for officers not to exceed, £6 for breakfast, £7.50 for lunch and £10 for dinner.

Award-winning dog handler praises inspirational pooch

"I looked down at my hands and there was blood on them. I initially thought he'd been hit with a stick, but it was actually a machete. It could've been me on the receiving end of that, Stark essentially saved my life."

West Midlands dog handler PC Paul Hopley, who has received the Force's 'Dog Action of the Year' Award, alongside police dog Stark has told how "incredibly proud" he is of his furry four-legged partner.

The duo have been recognised for their bravery following an incident that took place last year which involved German shepherd Stark being attacked by an offender.

The pair were called to allotments where there had been reports of three males walking around with torches.

"After around 20 minutes, Stark indicated that he had found someone and when I ran round the corner to join him, he was being hit. I thought it was with a stick

at first, he was waving it around and I couldn't get near," explained Paul, who has been in the Force for nearly 28 years and a dog handler for the past two-and-a-half.

"My main concern was for the dog. To be honest, I thought he was going to kill him."

Paul says that despite being attacked, Stark, who was just two-year-old at the time, "never backed off", persevering to detain the offender.

"Eventually I managed to spray him, then Stark and I both jumped on him," Paul added.

Once the offender was being handled by fellow officers, a seriously injured Stark was blue-lighted to the local PDSA centre, where he was treated.

He had a total of nine deep cuts to the head, one of which had missed his eye by a small fraction, which meant he needed surgery and stitching.

"I didn't realise the extent of his injuries at first," says Paul, who actually went on to raise £2,000 for the PDSA following their care for

Stark, "I was extremely concerned."

Stark took around six weeks off work to recover in which time he unbelievably qualified as a firearms support dog, with the training managed due to risk of his injuries getting infected.

Paul added: "The first night back to work and it was as if the attack hadn't affected him at all. In fact, he actually located a wanted offender who was hiding in a garden.

"I think that's a reflection of his strength. He just got straight back on with the job."

Paul and Stark have since received the award, which recognises them for their dedication and bravery.

"Stark deserves all the praise he can get," says Paul, who says the bond he has with Stark is "something special".

He added: "He was viciously attacked, and I dread to think what would've happened had he not been there. He protected me."



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Simply call me to arrange a home, or station, visit. Alternatively pop in to see me,
I am available between 10am and 4pm **EVERY DAY** at police stations across the force.

Our service is open to all Police Officers and Civilian Staff.

We normally charge a fee for mortgage advice with a typical fee being £200. However for anyone responding to this promotion
(website and poster) we will not charge a fee. The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate most Buy to Let mortgages.

Contact **Louise Norton** CeMap M: 07968 317 671
Independent Mortgage Adviser E: louisenorton@hotmail.com

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www.firstcallmortgages.net

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS



NARPO is a rank-free association of retired police officers, dedicated to improving benefits for its members.

**NARPO has Branches across West Midlands:-
Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Walsall, and Wolverhampton.**

- **FREE ADVICE** – Pensions, Benefits, Computing, Taxation;
- **MEMBER SERVICES** – Welfare Support, Car, Health and Travel Insurance, Car Purchase, Domestic Appliances, Trusted Legal Advisors, Mobile Phones, Travel Discounts, Job Opportunities + National/Local Websites, National Magazine, Branch Newsletters;
- **SOCIAL EVENTS** – Keep in touch with old friends and colleagues.

Annual membership fee deducted from pension:- £20.64 in 2018.

ARE YOU RETIRING SOON?

Join on-line www.NARPO.org, or for more information, contact the secretary of your preferred Branch:-

Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Walsall:-
Wolverhampton:-

www.NARPOWestMidlands.org
www.NARPO-Wolverhampton.co.uk



Legal Services for West Midlands Police

With over 20 years' experience of working with police, Gorvins have been a leading provider of legal services in all matters arising from relationship breakdowns and disputes concerning children. We understand the importance of family and the impact that a family breakdown can have upon all of those closely concerned and that is why our service (with discounted fees) is offered not just to serving and retired police officers and police staff, but also to their partners and immediate family members.

Part of **our commitment** to supporting those whose vital work supports us all includes a prompt **initial consultation - free of charge**.

We also supply our legal advice to you at a discounted rate and are able to offer a **fixed-fee divorce process**.

Our family & divorce law specialists understand the aspects that particularly impact upon the police with reference to pensions in divorce cases and shift patterns in relation to arrangement for children.

Other Legal Services

- Wills, Trusts and Probate
- Corporate/Commercial
- Personal Injury
- Employment Law
- Insolvency
- Dispute Resolution & Civil Litigation
- Commercial Property

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police divorce
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Contact your dedicated force representatives today on

0161 930 5274

e-mail police-divorce@gorvins.com

or visit us at www.gorvins.com/wmp





Protect what matters most

The **Birmingham family law team** are leading experts in police divorce, finances and children matters.

As experts in this area, we understand the specific pressures and concerns that you may be facing. We have a wealth of knowledge dealing with a variety of police matters to include pensions as part of financial proceedings, and the impact of shift patterns on child arrangement disputes.

Where necessary, we work closely with other specialists, such as pension, tax and financial advisors, to deliver the very best results for you. We can also help with mediation and collaborative law options.

As a member of the West Midlands Police Federation our leading experts in police divorce, finances and children matters can offer:

- A free initial consultation
- 10% discount on all fees
- Fixed fee divorce service
- Price certainty options.

Our experts

To speak to a specialist member of our team, please call Lucy, Mark or Clare for an initial chat:



Lucy Todd

+44 (0)7592 121 001



Mark Hands

+44 (0)7712 428 748



Clare Wiseman

+44 (0)7525 911 737