

Justification for Fox hunting?

 We are now just two months away from one of the biggest decisions the Police Federation has taken in its 77 year history. In this month's *Police* magazine we exclusively look at how the Federation has spent the last year examining options for its own future, including the possibility of opening its doors to an extended membership such as Special Constables and non-sworn staff.

Whilst discussions over the last 12 months to inform the debate may have caused some unease amongst officials in Unison, fearing direct competition for the rising numbers of community support officers, no decision as to how best to progress has yet been taken. There will be an open debate at the Federation conference in May followed by a vote to decide which, if any, of the options put forward are worth considering further.

Yet, whilst the Federation focuses on seeking to enhance protections, equipment and welfare in the police service, the Association of Chief Police Officers appears intent on eroding the protections already provided. Indeed,



Editorial by Metin Enver, Editor of *Police* magazine

just as the first anniversary of the ban for fox hunting with dogs passed last month, foolish comments made in a national magazine by the outgoing ACPO President gave fresh impetus for a new type of Fox hunting – namely, Sir Christopher Fox QPM.

Sir Chris has suggested that the service should soften its image not wearing body armour so frequently, with the tenuous justification being that bouncers don't need to wear it so why do police officers. All this at a time when the latest HMIC report shows yet again an increase of serious assaults on police officers.

Still, we shouldn't be too surprised. After all, ACPO have failed to deliver on all targets set in the healthier policing strategy, which was introduced during the Police Reform Bill in 2002 and aimed to reduce sickness and injuries amongst police officers and police staff.

The Federation is quite rightly taking the upper hand and asking all 140,000 police officers in England and Wales just how safe they feel and whether they have the right equipment to do the job; the results of which will be reported at the Federation conference in May.

Just as I thought I couldn't stumble across any more bizarre stories or comments as I casually read the weekend newspapers I came across perhaps the strangest of the lot. Now bearing in mind that many of the ideas that start across the Atlantic are trumpeted here in the UK as the solution to all our ills in due course, don't be surprised if what I recount in jest bears some semblance of truth in years to come.

It appears that a report by academics at the University of Colorado and Georgia State

University demonstrates a link between how ugly an individual is and their increased likelihood to commit crimes. Apparently the study showed that ugly people are less likely to secure good jobs and therefore might be more susceptible to getting involved in crime.

All I'm waiting for now is for Mr Fox's ultimate swansong to be a suggestion to the Government that the easiest way to tackle crime in England and Wales is to round up the 'uglies'. To which the Government response will undoubtedly be - such a simple but effective idea, why didn't we think of it before? Give this man a Knighthood – oh, we already have!



What do you think?

We would like to hear your views on the issues discussed in this month's magazine.

Write to the letters page at:

15 Langley Road, Surbiton,

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In Focus



Nick Herbert, shadow Tory police minister sets out the Party's vision for the future of policing. Pages 12 and 13.



Paul Davis, secretary of the Federation's operational policing sub-committee argues why he believes Taser would be beneficial to all officers facing violence on the streets of Britain. Pages 14 and 15.



A glimpse of some of the Federation's research on extending membership beyond police officers and the potential advantages and disadvantages. Plus a snapshot of views at a local level. Pages 19, 20 and 21.