



Simon Payne, chairman of Warwickshire Police Federation

Local Focus

All ranks can pull together to meet challenges

We are now four months into the new coalition government, and seven months into the force's '150plus' project, and I think it's plainly obvious for all to see that policing as we know it is not affordable or sustainable, and we all face significant challenges.

All the staff associations, including ourselves, are being fully consulted over the 150plus recommendations, and we will vigorously oppose any reduction in 'frontline' police posts.

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Police officers and the roles they perform are increasingly coming under the microscope. That is something we all have to accept. Frontline officers are being called upon to demonstrate that they are an indispensable cog in the police machine, and this should apply across all ranks within the service.

I believe it is not unreasonable to ask ACPO teams nationally to examine their own roles to see whether there is any potential to reduce their own numbers.

A recent article in Jane's *Police Review* revealed that in relation to the English and Welsh forces, only seven have fewer ACPO officers than Warwickshire Police, despite the fact we are the second smallest force.

The figures also revealed that 16 forces have the same number of ACPO officers as us, although some of these forces are significantly larger than Warwickshire Police. Warwickshire Police Federation has had a number of

meetings with senior officers including the chief constable concerning these observations, and to their credit they have responded very positively.

In August the force and the Police Authority announced that when one of our ACCs retires at the end of the year, their post will not be filled, reducing the ACPO team to one chief constable, one deputy chief constable, one assistant chief constable and one police staff director of resources.

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Their decision to reduce the ACPO team demonstrates that when it comes to cuts, there should be no 'them and us'. We are capable of pulling together as a team and delivering a service to the public, whatever role we perform.

It would be remiss of me if I were not to comment on the autumn Spending Review that is pending. The coalition government talk about the 'big society'. Well, it's vital that they remember our core role is protecting that society and keeping them safe.

We are the best police service in the world. Come October we do not want to be saying 'we were the best'. We will not compromise in our duty to society, and we should not be put in a position where future budgetary constraints put at risk the levels of service we offer to those we serve.

The public.