



Federation response to Prime Minister's speech

01.03.10

Responding to the Prime Minister's speech today on policing, Paul McKeever, Chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales says;

“Whilst we are delighted that the Prime Minister sees the importance of maintaining police officer numbers and policing resources, it is important chief officers and police authorities implement and utilise this investment wisely to ensure the public gets what it expects; more police officers on the streets.

“Our concern is that with 32 forces already reporting a recruitment freeze, combined with the natural loss of officers leaving and retiring, it seems more likely we will see a dip in officer numbers. We would therefore be interested to hear a more precise projection on what figures the government believes provides the resilience needed, particularly with the 2012 Olympic games not too far in the future and with the clear link given that the current level of police officer numbers is proving successful in keeping crime rates down.”

“The Prime Minister is right that it is not just tackling crime but the fear of crime which is key to public confidence in the police. We are glad that Mr Brown recognises the importance of an open and public debate on the future of policing; something the Federation has been demanding for over a decade. This must be done urgently and needs to look at the whole of the criminal justice system to ensure targets between agencies don't clash, that there are clear communication lines and that excessive and unnecessary bureaucracy does not hinder the process.”

“We believe tougher, more transparent sentencing and a commitment to having a visible and warranted police officer presence on the streets will go a long way to boost public confidence that crime is being effectively tackled”