

POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

3rd January 2007

Comment on public police discipline hearings

Jan Berry, Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, said:

“It is only right and proper that police officers are held accountable for any wrong doing.

“Police officers are not seeking special treatment but we consider admitting the public will add nothing to proceedings since very serious cases have often been heard in a court of law first, where criminal prosecutions can be brought.

“Evidence given in any follow up disciplinary hearing would differ little from that in open court. Where an officer has been found not guilty of a criminal offence, it would exceptionally rare for them to be disciplined on the same facts.

“It is important that disciplinary hearings should be objective, independent and help officers learn lessons. Turning them into a media circus, where people play to the gallery, will benefit no one. It may also deter complainants, who already have the ability to attend disciplinary hearings, from doing so.”