

Police authority supports drugs' legalisation

North Wales police authority has backed their chief constable's call to legalise drugs.

The authority voted overwhelmingly in favour of chief constable Richard Brunstrom's paper submitted to the Home Office in the latest round of government drugs consultation - *Drugs: Our Community, Your Say*.

In it, Mr Brunstrom argues the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 should be scrapped and replaced with a Substance Misuse Act. This would be based on 'the legalisation and careful regulation of all substances of abuse in one consistent manner'.

"The new Act will have at its core a philosophy of objectively-assessed harm assessment and reduction," said Mr Brunstrom.

He also states in his submission that the current war on drugs is 'unwinable' and dismisses the current ABC drugs classification as 'a disgrace' as it is subject to politically-motivated manipulation, making it 'indefensible both legally and ethically'.

"This system has not worked well. Illegal drugs are now in plentiful supply, and have become consistently cheaper in real terms over the years. The number of users has increased dramatically. Drug-related crime has soared," said Mr Brunstrom.

Jan Berry, chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales, said she agreed there was a need for serious debate about our current drugs policy.

"A number of people believe legalisation will impact on the level of crime. I cannot see how decriminalisation of drugs will improve the problem. I'm concerned about the long-term health issues, including mental health, surrounding persistent drug intake. There needs to be a sensible debate about this."

Vehicle safety is compromised by police kit

Police cars are often 'operating at the edge of their design capacity' in order to find space for equipment.

Alan Jones, who leads on roads policing issues for the Police federation, said safety features were compromised in order to find room for all the equipment officers needed to carry.

Mr Jones said: "It is not acceptable. Officer comfort, seating requirements to accommodate personal equipment, and general safety should not be an aspirational check list of how we can improve what we buy – it should be a priority."

Federation hopes for a 'quiet' Queen's speech

Jan Berry, chairman of the Police Federation, said 'the best thing' to come out of this year's Queen's speech would be the announcement of a Royal Commission on policing.

"There are so many initiatives, so many pilots. They are not knitting together. In fact, it's more like knitting fog. Unless there is an announcement of a Royal Commission, the less said about criminal justice matters the better. We need a period of rationalisation," said Mrs Berry. The Queen will deliver her speech on November 6.

Drugs Laws: Chief calls for legalisation



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Safety check: Safety a 'priority' for police vehicles



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