

Neighbourhood policing disrupts services

Hampshire officers hit out at the quick pace neighbourhood policing has been introduced into the force and say it is causing disruption to services.

Officers at the Hampshire Police Federation meeting, held last month, told Paul Kernaghan, chief constable of the force, they had concerns about the initiative and how it impacted on officers and the service they provide.

The force introduced neighbourhood policing teams in April this year alongside separate response teams to deal with serious and emergency calls. But one Hampshire officer said there were 'very legitimate concerns' that officers were now only responding to certain calls.

He added: "A lot of patrol teams are asking where the neighbourhood policing officers are."

Another officer was applauded by the audience as he told the senior officer team: "We are very happy to take forward neighbourhood policing but you need to talk to your officers. We are saying get probationers back on shifts to let them learn their craft. We need someone like you to come and talk to us because no one is listening to us."

But Simon Cole, assistant chief constable of the force, said that the timescale for introducing neighbourhood policing is dictated by the government. He added that they have only promised to release money on the proviso the funding is spent on neighbourhood policing and community support officers.

Mr Cole added that otherwise the force would have to give back three to four million in government funding.

Mr Kernaghan told officers: "I appreciate that some people are unhappy about the changes thrown up by neighbourhood policing but I want to wait for the full evaluation. The community is giving positive feedback. "The reality is that it's a pathfinder project. We are seeking to learn lessons from Portsmouth [where the scheme is in operation]."

MPs support Federation fair pay campaign

Nearly one in ten MPs put their weight behind the Police Federation's fair pay campaign and thousands of police officers registered their support through an on-line poll.

As *Police* magazine went to press, 79 MPs had signed an early day motion which put their support on record for the current pay arrangements to be honoured.

A poll on the Police Federation's website gained 16,000 responses from police officers, with 99.5 percent supporting the fight for fair pay.

Officers have also given their personal backing by sending letters to local MPs urging them to recognise the role they carry out by honouring their pay deal.

Jan Berry, chairman of the Police Federation, and John Francis, general secretary and chief negotiator, went to the House of Commons to brief MPs on the pay crisis at the end of last month.

A poster featuring a picture of Tony Blair and the words: 'gun crime, knife crime, terrorism – fair pay, one battle we shouldn't have to fight', was displayed outside Parliament and Downing Street.

While pay talks went to a Police Arbitration Tribunal last month, a decision is expected this month which would then need to be ratified by Home Secretary John Reid.

Mrs Berry told *Police* magazine: "We will fight for police officers to ensure they are paid fairly. In the absence of being able to take industrial action, we must make sure that police officers pay does not fall behind that of other professionals."

Although the findings have not yet been announced by the tribunal, Mrs Berry said the case for fair pay was delivered clearly and forcefully and is hopeful for a positive outcome.

Services are affected by introduction of neighbourhood policing



The Police Federation's poster for the fair pay campaign

Campaign: Police Federation

Gun crime
Knife crime
Terrorism

Fair Pay

One battle we shouldn't have to fight

