

YOUR VOICE

Ffederasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru /
North Wales Police Federation



July 2021

Welfare van proves a hit at G7 summit – See Pages 4 and 5

Read all about the Federation national conference – See Pages 14 to 25

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Secretary's foreword

IS 'THE RIGHT THING TO DO' THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

By Mark Jones
Secretary of North
Wales Police
Federation



I am sure some of you will enjoy every Saturday afternoon listening to 'Pick of the Pops' on BBC Radio 2 with Paul Gambaccini. As part of that programme, Mr Gambaccini plays songs from a particular year and enthusiastically comments on whether the track has gone up or down the charts from the previous week.

In a similar vein, I want to link 'Pick of the Pops' to police corporate catchphrases and one which has certainly been rising through the charts these last few weeks, months and even years is the phrase "the right thing to do" i.e. this decision has been taken because it is "the right thing to do". But what is the right thing to do?

Is "the right thing to do" always right? Is "the right thing to do" always fair? What constitutes something being right and something that is not? Facts? Feelings? Previous experience? Bias? Prejudice? What happens if a decision is taken because it is "the right thing to do" but it later transpires that it was the wrong thing to do? If I decide that something is "the right thing to do" but another person decides it is not; who is right?

It is very easy to make a decision and just throw in that it is "the right thing to do" to validate a potentially unpopular decision. Surely it is not as simple as that?

In the numerous meetings I attend (virtually), I can guarantee that at least

once, if not more, I will hear someone say the Force must do this, that or the other because it is "the right thing to do". I should start a tally to see who would hold the record for using that statement the most, though I would never reveal who was topping that particular chart!

Policing does rely on quick, fast-time, decision-making. In the heat of the moment we need clear, concise decision-makers but for matters that are not time critical then there must be more thought and consideration for the wider implications and effect on our members.

Thinking back to "the right thing to do" quandary, it made me wonder whether the right thing we do is for the benefit of the public, stakeholders, partners, peers, or workforce? Are 'we' trying to please those who will never be pleased but, nevertheless, it is still "the right thing to do"?

Perhaps you may think I am talking in riddles, and those who know me well will say that's the norm, but some thought-provoking and challenging conversations recently with key people in the organisation has made me think more deeply about this notion of "the right thing to do" and whether just because one person thinks something is "the right thing to do" that means the rest of us should accept it as so.

I certainly do not have the answers to this conundrum but I hope this proves to stimulate thought from decision-makers before deciding on what is "the right thing to do".

That's it for now, Pop-Pickers! I wonder what other police corporate catchphrases you would include on this week's chart? It is already giving me ideas in advance of the 2022 Federation calendar cartoon...

WELFARE VAN PROVES A HIT AT G7 SUMMIT



IT'S AMAZING THE DIFFERENCE THAT A CUP OF GOOD QUALITY COFFEE MAKES. IT'S A SMALL GESTURE, BUT IT PROVIDES A GREAT BOOST FOR OFFICERS, AND WAS WELCOMED BY EVERY OFFICER WE MET.



The welfare van in use at Carbis Bay.



Trystan shows the van to a Devon and Cornwall officer.

North Wales Police Federation's welfare van faced its biggest challenge so far when Federation workplace representative Trystan Bevan and Jayne Humphreys, the branch communications and case worker, took it to Carbis Bay in Cornwall for the G7 summit.

Jayne was joined by George Foxton once Trystan was on operational duties.

It was a massive operation, with Devon and Cornwall hosting around 6,000 officers from forces across England, Wales and Scotland who were drafted in to support their west country colleagues. Only a handful of arrests were made during the operation, and no officers were injured as protests and demonstrations from several groups largely took place peacefully.

The welfare van, which provides rest, shelter and refreshments for officers, and boasts a toilet, phone charging facilities and a bean-to-cup coffee maker, was deployed to Carbis Bay and St Ives between 7 and 13 June to support both mutual aid and Devon and Cornwall officers. It's first challenge, however, came within 30 minutes of arriving in Falmouth when 1,000 bottles of water were

sourced and speedily delivered to the officers staying on the cruise ferry.

The van, along with welfare vans from Thames Valley and Hertfordshire Federation branches, worked alongside Devon and Cornwall Federation reps to ensure that officers had what they needed to get the job done, dealing with countless Regulations and other procedural enquiries; providing sun lotion and insect repellent; and handing out hundreds of cups of good quality coffee, tea and snacks.

The hot weather put extra emphasis on officer welfare throughout the event, and the seating area under the NWP Fed awning provided welcome respite during officer breaks.

Trystan said: "The welfare van really was a beacon for officers to discuss their issues, needs, concerns and expectations. Being able to get advice and support proved to be invaluable to officers and was the morale boost required to keep them going till the end."

Jayne added: "It's amazing the difference that a cup of good quality coffee makes. It's a small gesture, but it provides a great boost

for officers, and was welcomed by every officer we met.

"We also found time to show our van to the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner, as part of Devon and Cornwall Police Federation's bid to have a Welfare Van of their own."

Devon and Cornwall Police Federation praised officers from the Force and across the country for their dedication and hard work after a 'long, hot week' policing the G7 summit passed off without major incident.

Andy Berry, chair of the Devon and Cornwall branch, said: "We can be proud as a Federation of our response and of the support we gave members and to the Force. A thank you to my team and to the reps from Thames Valley, Hertfordshire and North Wales who brought down their welfare vans which were a huge hit.

"There were bumps, and there were bound to be in an event of this scale, but everyone worked really hard to overcome them. I'm very proud of everyone involved."

North Wales Police Federation secretary Mark Jones said: "At North Wales Police Federation, we are very passionate about our members' welfare and this innovative deployment of the welfare van, and dedicated resources with it, has set the blueprint for future large-scale mutual aid deployments. I am sure it was also welcomed by North Wales officers who got a little 'slice of home' seeing the familiar and friendly faces of Jayne, Trystan and George.

"From listening and talking to a number of colleagues who went to Cornwall, it was clear that there were highs and lows with lessons to be learnt locally and nationally. As always, we will take the role of 'critical friend' to ensure that those experiences are understood and acted upon. Finally, I am incredibly grateful to Jayne, Trystan and George for committing so much to helping others and, of course, huge respect to our North Wales colleagues for the exceptionally long hours worked to make sure the G7 summit was safe for all."



Around 1,000 bottles of water were sourced and speedily delivered to officers staying on the cruise ferry.

'I LEAVE WORK EVERY DAY FEELING DRAINED AND EXHAUSTED'

By Sergeant Dan Ball
Workplace
representative for
North Wales Police
Federation



One of the key motivators for me to look towards

promotion years ago was a desire to lead a team and, hopefully, to inspire and help them develop in a way that several of my sergeants had done with me over the years. It sounds really corny to say this but I wanted to be a leader of people and to help make them, and therefore the organisation, better even if just in a very small way.

Three years on – give or take – and I am afraid to report that I feel that I have largely failed in this respect. This is not due to a lack of effort on my part or anything to do with the teams in Conwy Rural or Denbighshire Coastal that I have had during this time who have, and still do, work really hard to do the best they can. It is also not down to the other response sergeants I work with who come in every shift and work tirelessly to try to keep their heads above water and do the best they can for the public, their officers and the organisation.

The reason for my failure, and from a very quick poll of my colleagues this is their feeling too, is that the organisation places so many demands and priorities on response sergeants that we are forever fighting an uphill battle to keep up with admin tasks, and dreaded emails, that we just can't be the leaders that we all want to be.

And from my conversations with those away from the realities of the frontline, it is clear that, in general, they do not understand what the demands are. This, it seems to me, is largely because even in the last few years the slow creep of demand upon response sergeants has increased to a point where the role is barely recognisable to those in the organisation who have been away from the response policing arena for some time.

RMS has become an even bigger monster than ever, EOELs are fairly universally felt to be a huge barrier to working quickly and smartly and the Crime Management Plan is completely unworkable in the real world since it simply does not fit with a four on, four off response shift pattern. The new AG guidance on files is still not fully understood but more optimistic officers than me think it is likely to cause a crisis in staffing availability due to officers and sergeants being tied to desks even more than they currently are.

The back office demands and admin grow almost day by day and almost everything that officers do has to come through the sergeant. This is all on top of all the ICAD work, the calls from the public, the complaints (from public and internally), the demands from every department within the organisation and the staggering demands from CPS.

All this means that there is almost never any opportunity to actually develop and lead the team in any meaningful way at all, and a successful shift for me is normally one where I have been able to tread water sufficiently well that I have just about managed to stand still but almost never move forward. And I am far from alone in feeling this way. Every

single response sergeant I have spoken to feels the same.

This situation has led me to seriously think about my position as a response sergeant several times recently and I have had to consider if it is better, and more healthy, for me to step back to being a PC. I joined the police to be out and catch criminals and make my community safer – yes, I am sounding corny again, but it is true.

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I have to ask myself almost every day if in my current role I am actually doing that or if I have become an admin clerk for tasks that often seem needless or prevent me and my team actually getting out and helping people.

I certainly leave work every day feeling drained and exhausted while often wondering what I have done that I can honestly say I am proud about. I have a very young son who loves to hear my 'give up stories', as he calls them, about the police at bedtime. I should have an endless source of tales to tell him as he goes to sleep but increasingly I have to make these stories up as 'Daddy spent the day replying to emails and reviewing an endless sea of paperwork' just is not exciting for a five-year-old boy.

It is certainly not a new revelation that response is the one part of the organisation that cannot and is not allowed, to say 'No' when it comes to tasks and demands from every direction. But, with the vast increase in work that has been placed on response, it is high time, beyond time, that the organisation actually understood and reviewed the demands placed on response sergeants before many of them simply break.

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TALKING DIVERSITY

By North Wales Police Federation workplace representative PC Rae Ellis



I was thinking about the upcoming Federation elections, and what I would say to someone thinking of running. The obvious part is that being a Fed rep is all about being there for your fellow officers when they need you; providing help, support, and advice about different things.

That got me thinking. Sometimes I might have all the answers but sometimes another Fed rep is better suited to assist with a particular issue. Having diversity in the Fed is vital to allow us to have reps who together have the widest possible knowledge and experience to help and support our members.

Conversations about diversity are important in any industry but when it comes to policing these conversations often become confused by the press headlines, legislation and politics. We all know that historically the police service has been criticised for having a sexist, homophobic, and racist culture.

Probably the most well-known examples of this are around the lack of ethnic diversity in the police. The low number of police officers from ethnic minority backgrounds in the UK was highlighted in the Scarman Report in 1986 and the Macpherson Report in 1999.

But what does that mean for us here in North Wales? The events that prompted these reports and the subsequent legislation may seem very distant to us. It could be argued that our communities are very different from those in London or other large cities across the UK. The 2011 the census showed that only 2.5 per cent of the population in North Wales identified as coming from a black, Asian or other ethnic minority background. But if we take this view we are in danger of missing the key point.

We all joined the police to make a difference, to make our communities safer places and to protect vulnerable people. To do that effectively, we have to think past the numbers. Every single one of the people included in that 2.5 per cent is a member of our local community. They are all people who deserve to be treated fairly and with the same level of compassion and understanding as any other person. The same is true of people who identify as belonging to any

minority group here in North Wales. This is not a matter of numbers, it's about doing the right thing, for the right reasons.

We are all aware that female victims of sexual offences often feel more comfortable speaking to a female officer. It follows that an Asian victim of a racist offence or a non-binary individual suffering from hate-related abuse may feel more comfortable speaking to someone from a similar background.

That does not mean that another officer would not do just as good a job, it's simply human nature to be more trusting of people we identify with. By becoming more diverse we are more reflective of all our communities which, in turn, leads to better relationships between the public and the police.

It goes beyond that though. No single person has all the skills required in the police. Having people from a wide range of different backgrounds allows us to have the widest possible range of skills, experience and knowledge to draw from. Just as a football team would never be made up entirely of strikers our policing team needs to be made up of people from a variety of backgrounds.

This is just as important to the Fed as to any other part of the Force. We need more officers from different backgrounds applying to become Fed reps. We need more females, more LGBTQ+, more black, Asian and minority ethnic officers, more disabled officers and more officers who are carers to join us. This will bring a broader range of experience and skills to the team and benefit our members.

If you think this could be you, and you would like to know more contact your local rep or visit our website – nwpolfed.org

“ HAVING PEOPLE FROM A WIDE RANGE OF DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS ALLOWS US TO HAVE THE WIDEST POSSIBLE RANGE OF SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE TO DRAW FROM.

PCC CANDIDATES QUESTIONED AT VIRTUAL HUSTINGS

On the evening of 20 April 2021, North Wales Police Federation hosted a hustings of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) election candidates for officers, staff and volunteers.

It was a first for North Wales, and 44 officers, staff and volunteers attended. The hustings comprised a three-minute introduction by each candidate, covering their manifesto, followed by a series of questions from the (virtual) audience. Branch secretary Mark Jones was the host, keeping all the candidates to time, and ensuring that all members of the audience who had submitted a question to him in advance had

the opportunity to ask their question to the candidates.

Questions covered a wide spectrum, including Special Constables, wellbeing, training and recovery from Covid, and certainly tested the knowledge and vision of each candidate.

Branch chair Nick Hawe said: "There was great involvement all round. I think it provided the candidates with a great opportunity to show what they were about, as well as some food for thought, with the excellent questions asked.

"I thought the candidates gave some very good responses to some quite challenging

questions at times and a lot of personality came through. It was the first time I have taken part in a hustings, which is a word I can't recall ever using before, and I certainly saw the benefit in this event."

Mark said: "This event was an excellent opportunity to meet the PCC candidates, to engage with them and get more detail on their priorities and vision for the future of the Force. I was grateful to the candidates who attended and answered some challenging questions from the audience. All candidates committed to working closely with the Police Federation which was welcomed and encouraging."

NEW PCC TELLS FEDERATION MEMBERS 'I AM HERE FOR YOU'

MARK JONES, NORTH WALES POLICE FEDERATION SECRETARY, CONTINUES HIS SERIES OF Q AND A STYLE ARTICLES WITH THIS FEATURE ON OUR NEW POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (PCC), ANDY DUNBOBBIN. LABOUR CANDIDATE ANDY STOOD IN THE MAY PCC ELECTIONS FOLLOWING THE RETIREMENT OF ARFON JONES.

For those who do not know you, can you give us a short pen-picture of Andy Dunbobbin?

I am 46, married to my amazing wife Louise and we have two children – Jessica (19) and Zack (13). I live in North Wales and have done my whole life. I have also been a kinship carer for my nieces and nephew – family means everything to me. I have a lot of experience in working with people from various



The new PCC (left) with North Wales Police Federation secretary Mark Jones.

backgrounds in a positive and constructive manner. Many have said that I am also a good listener, which has contributed to my successes to date. I always focus on our shared values and build on that so we can all

benefit. I consider myself to be very approachable – so when you see me please feel free to say 'Hello'. I am very keen to meet as many of our policing family as possible. It is important for me to let you to know that I am here for you - as well as being elected to serve our communities. I am a strong believer in public service and a proud member of UNISON.

What were the main factors that brought you into the role of PCC?

I want to make a positive difference in people's lives. That is at the heart of why I got

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involved in public life. The role of the PCC encapsulates and impacts everything that we all want in our lives. Feeling safe and secure. Supporting each other. Making our communities the absolute best and safest that they can be. Tackling inequalities and social injustices. With the experience gained throughout my personal and professional life, I believe we can make further progress and build on the achievements made to date. I am looking forward to working with you all during my tenure.

What's your initial impression of North Wales Police?

I am very grateful for the warm welcome I have had from NWP. I really appreciate it. Those I've met have been very kind and supportive. I am proud to be in a force which is performing well. This is down to all the hard work everybody puts in – day in, day out.

As the third PCC for North Wales, you will have the benefit of being able to reflect on the different styles adopted by other Commissioners across England and Wales over recent years. What style can we expect from you?

The successes I have had to date are built upon my ability to listen, engage and take appropriate, assertive action. I am a good listener and treat everybody with dignity and respect. I am very tenacious and pride myself on being able to deliver.

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What is your opinion of devolved policing? How do you think this will impact upon the debate and timescales around the devolution of policing?

I am still curious about how this would look. What is apparent, following on from the pandemic, is the success of policing in Wales – and how we have truly embraced working collaboratively with all public services and third sector. This has shone through during these most difficult of times. There are some areas of concern I have, such as funding and still continuing to be part of UK organisations which are well established.

Scrutiny of areas such as grievances and complaints are an important function of the PCC. What measures will you put in place to

afford more confidence to police officers in the future?

I am always available to listen and support with any grievances and complaints police officers may have.

At the hustings, candidates were asked about whether the Force/PCC would pay subscriptions for Special Constables to join the Federation. Could you tell us what your position on this was and your views on the protection and representation Federation membership offers to our dedicated Specials?

Special Constables should not be disadvantaged. They are valued and volunteer their own time for our communities and police family. It is not morally right that they should pay subscriptions to the Federation for a role that they do for free. I am prepared to instruct the OPCC to pay for all our NWP Special Constables subscriptions. It such a small price to pay for what they contribute.

Also, at the hustings, there was a question about visible policing in which you said visibility would be your Number 1 priority – but you also referred to PCSOs being used for this. So, can you elaborate about your plans to increase visible policing and why you see

Increasing visibility of policing is my Number 1 priority. The increase in the number of PCSOs will help with this but isn't the whole answer. I believe that there is more that can be done. For example, I have had it said to me about the amount of time taken for case paperwork and the frustrations that creates. I am also mindful of this potentially encroaching in on an operational matter and would welcome further suggestions in how improvements could be made. I have already spoken to DCC Richard Debicki about a suggestion box scheme where issues similar to this can be raised.

As the largest staff association in policing, how do you value the importance of the Police Federation and what is your commitment to working with us on key issues affecting our members?

As a proud member of UNISON and strong supporter of the trade union movement, I know the importance of the Police Federation. I believe in working with people, rather than against. By already stating earlier (my instruction the OPCC to pay the Police Federation subs for our Special Constables) I trust goes some way in showing my commitment to working with you.

Finally, what is the key message you want to send to our Police Federation members?

I am sincerely looking forward to working with you during my term in office. I would welcome any opportunity to meet all of you as a group or individually. It is important for me to let you know that I am here for you - as well as being elected to serve our communities.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Assaults up

New crime figures showing a 26 per cent rise in assaults against emergency workers further demonstrate the need for courts to hand down tough sentences on those who carry out these attacks, says the secretary of North Wales Police Federation.

Mark Jones spoke out after new crime figures released by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) pointed to the rise in common assaults being driven by increases in common assaults on the police, including suspects spitting on officers while claiming to be infected with Covid-19.

"One of the most shocking things during the pandemic has been the fact that while crime fell in general terms there was an increase in attacks on police officers and other emergency service workers," Mark explains.

"It beggars belief that people have been attacking the very people who have been on the frontline trying to serve and protect their communities despite the obvious risks to their own health and that of their families.

"The courts must use the increased sentences available to them to both suitably punish these offenders and act as a deterrent to others."

Toolkit for investigators

North Wales Police Federation has welcomed the launch of a new wellbeing toolkit specifically designed for investigators.

The pioneering package has been carefully created by Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service, to make sure anyone who works in an investigative role feels heard, valued and knows where to seek support.

The comprehensive toolkit is available to all officers and staff via the Oscar Kilo website and provides investigators, their line managers and leaders with the information they need to build up their resilience and continue doing the critical jobs they do.

GIS and travel insurance

Members of our Group Insurance Scheme are advised to read the latest update on the travel insurance policy following changes to Government guidance on travelling abroad.

This is particularly important if you plan to book a trip or have already booked a trip to travel so please take a minute to read the guidance.

You can read the update at www.nwpolfed.org/group-insurance-scheme/



THE BEN FUND

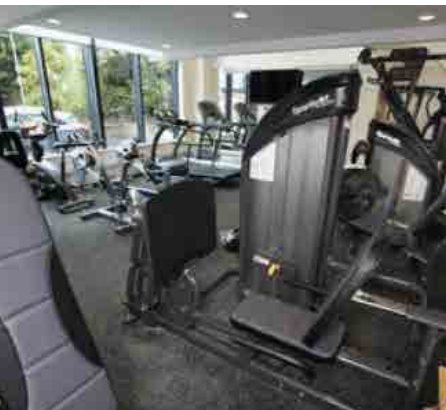


North Wales police officers can now join The Ben Fund.

The Ben Fund is an independent charity dedicated to supporting and caring for the police from recruitment into retirement. The charity understands that policing is more than a job – protecting the public is a vocation which presents its own unique set of stresses and strains. The Ben Fund has a unique offer which can be tailored to meet the specific needs of each individual member.

The North West Police Benevolent Fund (The Ben Fund) was founded in 1974 when Cheshire Constabulary, Greater Manchester and Merseyside Police brought together their independent welfare funds to combine them into one consolidated fund.

In recent years, it has been joined by Lancashire Constabulary, Cumbria Constabulary, the National Crime Officers' Association and now by North Wales Police. There are currently 16,500 members of the Ben Fund including many retired officers.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

The Ben Fund is dedicated to supporting your physical and mental health and wellbeing. It understands the police family has faced, and continues to face, unprecedented challenges.

Whether facing austerity with its impact upon terms and conditions, pay and pensions or on the frontline of supporting communities through the global health emergency, members of the police family face unique pressures.

The Ben Fund is here to support you when you need it with:

- **Physiotherapy treatment at St Michael's Lodge, Lancashire and day treatment in North Wales**
- **Holistic treatments including mindfulness, massage and alternative therapies**
- **Counselling for members on a self-referral and confidential basis**
- **Free respite breaks for members and their families. These are provided at the charity's luxury lodges in the Lake District and North Lancashire**
- **Luxury lodges available to rent at discounted prices**
- **Discounted luxury breaks available at its state-of-the art facility St Michael's Lodge**
- **Financial hardship assistance via grants and interest free loans**
- **Death in service grants of £5,000 payable immediately, and**
- **Wheelchair loan.**

The Ben Fund recognises that you may, from time to time, look at your pay slip to ensure you are getting value for money from

the various schemes you may be in. The charity believes that the Ben Fund provides a unique care package representing excellent value for money.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

Your donation is subject to payroll giving where you get the benefit of tax relief.

Your payslip shows a deduction of £7.40. This is deducted from your gross pay total before tax is applied. Therefore, there is tax relief on the £7.40 at the rate you pay tax, so the net result with regard to donations for a 20 per cent taxpayer, is actually £5.92 per month, and for a 40 per cent taxpayer, £4.44 per month. If you pull out, you won't be saving the full amount and the real saving is actually minimal.

The same principle applies to retired officers. The £5 donation equals £4 for a 20 per cent taxpayer and £3 for a 40 per cent taxpayer.

WHY NOT JOIN THE FUND TODAY?

If you want to join, visit <http://www.nwpolfed.org/the-ben-fund/> and complete the application form.

Your monthly donation will be paid directly from salary.



FORCE HELPS NEW RECRUITS PREPARE FOR LIFE AS A POLICE OFFICER

By Paula Kelly, SSF manager

Policing has always been a challenging but very rewarding role and now more than ever, despite negative media reports and recent anti-police protests, policing is as popular as it ever has been. Here in North Wales Police we are proud that people want to serve as police officers in our communities and help keep the people of North Wales safe.

In recent years police officer recruitment campaigns have attracted high numbers of applications with recruiting windows closing early due to the volumes received. This experience leaves candidates disappointed they were unable to get a chance to be a police constable.

In addition, some successful candidates upon joining the Force have found they aren't quite ready for the reality of policing. A combination of not being prepared for the challenging hands-on role, demanding academic study and an introduction into the world of shifts has meant some officers have struggled to do the job they thought they would love and worked so hard to get.

As a result, we've lost some officers who have only been in the job a short while. To recruit and train an officer is costly both financially and from a resource perspective. The time and energy student officers, trainers, tutors and colleagues invest means when someone makes the difficult decision that the job isn't for them it can be disheartening for everyone, not least the student officer who wanted a career in the police.

It feels right and responsible for us to ensure prospective recruits are given the opportunity to find out what it is 'really' like to be a police officer before they make the important decision to apply. We want to give them an opportunity to hear from our officers about their experiences, learn more about shift working and the demands of the role along as well as finding out more about the commitment required for the study and training. We want to provide them with enough information to make the decision that the role is really going to be right for them.

From May 2021 candidates applying to be a police officer in North Wales Police have been able to register their interest with us after which they will be invited to attend one of several familiarisation sessions, which started in June 2021, to learn more about the role, training and application process.

The sessions will include some of our officers sharing their experiences; the demands and impacts on them and their families; the challenges, the shifts, public perception and how proud they are to do such a rewarding job and being able to help their communities to keep North Wales safe.

Representatives from our recruitment,

occupational health, vetting and training departments along with the Federation will be sharing information about the application process and what potential recruits can expect from the medical and vetting checks. We will set expectations for potential timescales from applying to joining, share application tips and answer any questions they may have.

Once they have attended one of these sessions, they will receive a link to apply when the campaign window opens. It is hoped the candidates will be informed enough to consider the role in its entirety, how it will fit into their life and how they'll manage the commitments so when they join they are ready for life in North Wales Police.

It will also allow them to plan in readiness for the opening window, giving them time to get the documents they need for their application form so when the window opens they are not rushing their application.

We wish all potential candidates luck with their applications and hope being more informed will improve the retention of student officers and make the investment into their recruitment and training more meaningful.

“ IT FEELS RIGHT AND RESPONSIBLE FOR US TO ENSURE PROSPECTIVE RECRUITS ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS 'REALLY' LIKE TO BE A POLICE OFFICER BEFORE THEY MAKE THE IMPORTANT DECISION TO APPLY.





**NEW CRIME
FIGHTING TEAM
TAKES OFF**

Assisting in the discovery of a £1.5 million cannabis cultivation, using thermal imaging to locate a fleeing suspect in possession of drugs and weapons, guiding dog handlers to intercept offenders after a decamp and locating a critically injured male who had fallen from height in a quarry, we wondered how the newly-formed North Wales Police Drone Unit would prove itself, and we very quickly had the answer.

After two weeks of initial training, the full-time pilot team of four PCs and a dedicated sergeant began operational duties on 1 April, providing a new level of aerial cover to the Force. The strength of the team is added to by six of the original part-time pilots from within their regular roles as PCs, PCSOs and one CSI.

This hotly anticipated strategic development will be watched closely to see if it can bring a new advantage to the Force in tackling crime, making safer neighbourhoods and saving lives.

Since the start of April, the team has been deployed to more than 250 incidents and logged more than 50 flying hours during day and night time operations. The aircraft have been used effectively to provide aerial

oversight, impressive thermal imaging capabilities and powerful search functions, assisting on many occasions in bringing incidents to an early conclusion.

While the first instinct is to imagine that drones will be used for covert operations, the main role of the team is to provide overt air support to the Force in the same way that the National Police Air Service has done traditionally.

Additional to NPAS, the team provides a wider range of functions for almost every department, for example, evidential scene photography and video, internal building searches, oversight for urgent and pre-planned warrants, filming reconstructions and so much more.

Another huge step forward is the introduction of two new excellent aircraft: the DJI M300 RTK with its astonishing thermal camera and powerful 200x zoom lens with a flight time of up to 45 minutes and the ability to fly in rain and winds up to 33mph. This is an absolute game changer.

The drone industry across the world is accelerating fast, criminals are already using drones for their purposes but police forces across the UK are also making good progress in employing this amazing technology to

meet the demands of modern policing.

The public can be wary of the use of drones and there is some work to be done to show the unique benefits they bring and demonstrate this is not another infringement into the privacy of the public we serve. It is quite the opposite. The use of these aircraft will be used to serve the public in making North Wales a safer place to live.

The focus for members of the team now is to continue developing their flying skills and working alongside other departments to introduce new ways of using the aircraft, exploring new tactics and looking forward to the potential of growing as unit, increasing availability and delivering excellent results in this new and exciting area of policing in North Wales.



“ THIS HOTLY ANTICIPATED STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT WILL BE WATCHED CLOSELY TO SEE IF IT CAN BRING A NEW ADVANTAGE TO THE FORCE IN TACKLING CRIME, MAKING SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS AND SAVING LIVES.



The North Wales Police Drone Unit team.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

PM'S 'HUGE THANK YOU' TO OFFICERS

Boris Johnson delivered a message of thanks and support at the opening of the conference.

The Prime Minister issued a 'huge thank you' to officers for their work during the pandemic and praised them for rising 'to an enormous challenge'.

He said: "You have shown over the past year just why British police are the best in the world, now we are going to make sure you have the tools you need to deal with criminals, make our streets safer, and get on with the job you signed up to do."

WATCH CONFERENCE ON-DEMAND

Key sessions from the Police Federation annual conference are now available to members via a video on-demand service.

Speeches, panel discussions and round table forums covering a wide range of the issues currently faced by police officers can be viewed online.

North Wales Police Federation secretary Mark Jones said: "I hope members will use the on-demand service to catch up on some of the highlights from the 2021 conference. All the current issues faced by the police service were discussed at conference and I would urge members to try to watch the sessions if they can."

To access the on-demand videos, please simply email events@polfed.org and you will be sent a link.

CHAIR REFLECTS ON CHALLENGING YEAR



National Police Federation chair John Apter.

Police Federation chair John Apter has reflected on an extraordinary year in his keynote speech to this year's annual conference.

John said officers found themselves in unprecedented situations and often felt they were held responsible when things went wrong.

He noted assaults on officers shot up during the coronavirus pandemic as they became the focus of public anger and frustration.

The chair told members: "This past year has been one of the most challenging and one of the most extraordinary for us all in recent history.

"For the past 15 months we have been required to police in a way that none of us ever expected to when we joined the job.

"We knew it was never going to be easy. But our job was made even harder by the ever changing rules and regulations."

He told Home Secretary Priti Patel, who also addressed the conference: "We had officers going out on patrol literally hours after the new regulations were introduced.

"They had often received no detailed briefing because the laws had only just been passed, which meant they were often going out on patrol with no specific detail about what the change meant for policing.

"There was no discussion about how to deal with the new laws or the new guidance. And let's be honest Home Secretary, the rules were not always crystal clear."

He said the police had unfairly become the focus of blame: "My colleagues, who were doing their very best, every single day, in the most difficult of circumstances, became the focus of public anger and frustration.

"And for some perverse reason, some chose to see us as the enemy. We were labelled the villains of the pandemic and that is grossly unfair.

"A minority of people - and let's be honest about this: often agitators intent on causing mayhem - focused their anger and often violence on police officers.

"Well, I have a message to those who goaded my colleagues, a message to those who attacked police officers who were simply doing their job and to those vile people who weaponised Covid by coughing and spitting at my colleagues, often saying they had Covid and they hope the officer caught it and died.

"To those individuals: you disgust me, you completely disgust me. And I know that you disgust every decent, law-abiding person."

John said officers were also facing 'trial by media' on a daily basis and called on the Home Secretary for her support, he said: "We need you to speak out when you see footage of police officers being attacked on social media. When we see people reaching for their phone, not to dial 999 for help, but reaching for their phone to film an attack for nothing more than entertainment.

"Social media companies must also take more responsibility and the Government must ensure this happens. What kind of society have we become when attacking police officers is seen as nothing more than entertainment, nothing more than a sport?"

John finished his keynote speech by pointing out that police pay had fallen by 18 per cent in real terms in the past 10 years and that most officers were also currently affected by the public sector pay freeze.

“ THIS PAST YEAR HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING AND ONE OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY FOR US ALL IN RECENT HISTORY.

HOME SECRETARY PRAISES OFFICERS AND SAYS 'I HAVE GOT YOUR BACKS'

Home Secretary Priti Patel has told Police Federation members the country depends on them and pledged: "I have got your backs."

In her keynote speech, the Home Secretary praised the courage shown by frontline officers throughout the coronavirus crisis.

She told them: "On behalf of the whole country, thank you for still being there for us during one of the toughest moments in our country's history. You have done it superbly well and courageously."

Ms Patel acknowledged a rise in the number of attacks on officers as protests swept the country last summer and described such behaviour as "grotesque".

She said: "It's a cruel irony that while most crimes naturally fell during lockdown, violence and abuse directed at police officers increased.

"You were spat and coughed at by thugs claiming to have the virus. Some of you were seriously injured and your vans were set on fire during the despicable events in Bristol earlier this year.

"Police were bloodied and pelted with bottles in Hyde Park in April."

Assaults on constables without injury increased by 21 per cent to 25,156 in the year to December 2020 and attacks resulting in injury rose by 2 per cent to more than 11,000, figures branded 'shocking' by the Home Secretary.

She said: "This behaviour is grotesque. And I will never accept that it's simply part of the job.

"It is an attack on the fabric of our society. And every police uniform is worn by a human being who is entitled to dignity and respect.

"The right to protest and speak freely does not include the right to smash up property, or abuse police officers."

Ms Patel confirmed the Government was doubling the maximum prison sentence for common assault or battery against emergency workers from twelve months to two years.

She said: "I will continue to do everything in my power to ensure assaults on our police are treated with the appropriate severity across the whole criminal justice system.

"Those who have contempt for the police



Home Secretary Priti Patel.

may be louder and more vitriolic than ever, but they are vastly outnumbered and utterly wrong.

"Far from feeling any shame in being a police officer, you all should feel very proud indeed. We have also acted in response to what you said about the tools and powers you need."

Ms Patel insisted she would not let the police be subjected to trial by social media and said she supported calls to release more body-worn video footage of incidents.

She told the conference: "I want forces to be more proactive in sharing body-worn video footage to highlight the fantastic work of their officers, to build public confidence, and to correct harmful misinformation

circulating online.

"It is critical that we work as a system to ensure that we maintain public confidence in policing, which is vital for victim reporting, intelligence-led policing, and to maintain our treasured model of policing by consent.

"As part of this process, we will be looking carefully at strengthening the system of local community scrutiny and the value of body-worn video, because transparency is vital."

Ms Patel said the police had played a heroic role bringing the country through the incredible shock of the coronavirus pandemic.

She concluded: "Our country depends on you. And I have got your backs."

OUR REP SAYS...

"Watching the Home Secretary's speech I had the feeling that it was delivered in part with a smirk on her face although she also came across as quite sincere. I thought that Alex Duncan's later comments of 'just warm words' summed it up nicely.

"It struck me that the Government has been quick to accept the recommendations from the health board around Covid vaccinations for police officers - or rather the lack of them - and yet it ignored recommendations from the independent pay review body around fair pay awards, historically over the last several years under previous leadership."

Tony Edwards, workplace representative



POLICE MINISTER ADDRESSES OPENING SESSION

Policing minister Kit Malthouse has acknowledged the pressure the police found themselves under at the height of the coronavirus crisis but insisted they have always enjoyed the full support of the Government and the vast majority of the public.

Mr Malthouse said he stood 'square-shouldered' with frontline officers who had been asked to carry out their normal duties while also policing lockdown restrictions with great courage and professionalism.

And he told conference that, despite the unprecedented challenges of the last 18 months, officers had managed to maintain and probably improved public trust during the pandemic.

He said: "Policing is coming out of the pandemic in better shape than it went in."

The minister admitted he regretted not



Policing minister Kit Malthouse.

doing more to ensure police officers were prioritised in the Covid vaccine programme.

The opening session of conference, the

theme of which was Policing Under Pressure, saw a live panel featuring Mr Malthouse, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) chair Martin Hewitt, shadow policing minister Sarah Jones and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary Sir Tom Winsor.

Mr Hewitt praised the response of police officers but admitted frequent changes in legislation had presented extraordinary challenges for both the police service and the Government.

Sir Tom paid tribute to the police response during the pandemic and dismissed social media criticism of how officers had handled the ever-changing landscape during lockdown.

He said while not perfect, the police performance had been "very, very good" and deserved high marks of nine out of 10.

'THIS AWARD IS REALLY FOR VICTIMS WHO ARE STILL SUFFERING'

A former victim of domestic violence has received the Outstanding Contribution to Women in Policing Award 2021 having shared her own experience to help others.

Chief Inspector Sharon Baker of Avon and Somerset Police said she was accepting the award on behalf of all the victims who were still suffering.

"I hope this award shines the light on the darkness and shows you that you're not alone," she added.

Ch Insp Baker clinched the title for her outstanding work around domestic violence, including a powerful video she made sharing her own story of living in a controlling and abusive relationship.

She said victims of domestic abuse were everywhere.



Chief Inspector Sharon Baker.

"There's no them, there's only us. They are our crew mates, our bosses and the people on the other end of the phone. This award is really for the victims who are still suffering."

OUR REPS SAY...

"It's always really nice to see people getting recognition for their good work and the winner was extremely deserving. I was expecting to see more about the other nominees and I think that having that would have really highlighted the good work of all women in policing rather than just focussing on the final winner. As a female officer this is just as important to me as the bravery award which gave a much better overview of the range of nominations." PC Rae Ellis

BRAVE OFFICERS RECOGNISED

Two brave North Wales officers were interviewed by Police Bravery Awards host Mark Durden-Smith about their courageous actions during the Bravest of the Brave conference session.

After a montage showing each nominee's story, Mark spoke to North Wales PCs Richard Shea and Matt Reynolds and Derbyshire's PC Geoff Marshall.

PCs Shea and Reynolds were nominated for the 2020 awards, which were cancelled due to the pandemic, after tackling a man who had forced his way into the home of a woman he had earlier allegedly sexually assaulted and

was holding her at gunpoint while children were present. PC Reynolds explained that all the information that had been called through was that the man was armed and that they didn't have time to lose.

"We decided we couldn't wait for a second car," he said, "We made our way to the house in complete darkness and could hear raised voices... We got to front door, which we could see was open. At this point a barrel of something has come out of the open door and pointed at us. It's only down to the fact that we got so close to the front door that we saw a glint of streetlight. Something told me this wasn't right; a real

weapon doesn't shine like that."

The offender actually had a toy gun, which the officers only discovered because they got so close to the house. PC Shea explained how the man was Tasered and they made another nasty discovery. "After he ditched the imitation firearm, he had a large kitchen knife in a downward grip behind the door," he said.

"Had I breached the door like I had intended, the first place that blade would have gone is in my neck".

The 2020 Bravery Awards have been rescheduled and are now planned to be held in October.

PAY, CONDITIONS AND PENSIONS: 'WE NEED TO GET OUR MESSAGE OUT MORE'



Facilitator Alastair Campbell (left) and national secretary of Police Federation of England and Wales, and (inset) PFEW national secretary Alex Duncan.

The Federation has to be the unequivocal voice of policing, getting its message out more and rallying together, the Federation's national secretary told a conference session looking at pay, conditions and pensions.

The session was facilitated by Tony Blair's former spokesperson, Alastair Campbell, who recently appeared as a host on the breakfast TV programme Good Morning Britain, and featured inputs from Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) national secretary Alex Duncan and deputy secretary John Partington.

"As we come out of the pandemic and we return to normality, I think it's beholding on PFEW to be the unequivocal voice of policing. We need to get our message out more – we will all have different opinions, but it's important we rally together," Alex said.

John added: "We have to realise how powerful we can be when we come together with a united front."

Time was spent discussing the uncertainty around pensions with Alex explained there were officers who had no pension forecast, no idea of when they could retire and no details of what they would be

entitled to.

But he said the Federation was working with the Government and further guidance was imminent, including a pension calculator tool that was being tested.

OUR REP SAYS...

"This has been a topic much debated in canteens up and down the country so it was good to see what the official take was on the subject." PC Rae Ellis

TRIAL BY MEDIA: WE HAVE TO CHANGE



Federation chair John Apter (left) with Robert Rinder and Danny Shaw.

By PC Colin Hughes, North Wales Police Federation workplace representative

We, the police, have always been and always will be open to criticism from the public with the ever-present phone in your face during public order events, busy town centre night shifts and anywhere the public see us interacting with a less than co-operative suspect.

The conference session on Trial By Media began with an input from an anonymous officer who has been a 'victim' of a trial on social media and who had suffered some horrible abuse online. He talked openly about how it had affected him personally and professionally and knocked his confidence to police effectively.

Barrister and TV personality Robert 'Judge' Rinder was part of the panel and summed up the problems we encounter with the social media snippets that are posted online and yet often reflect only part of the incident. The interactions leading up to and after this are not posted as they wouldn't create the sensational 'wow' factor needed to generate likes and shares. When posts are

placed on social media we are immediately put on trial. I would always ask what we are on trial for. If you have acted lawfully and within the powers you have, then why worry?

This is where we, as a Federation, need to address the issue, what can forces do to protect their officers from suffering comments and threats in circumstances where if they were directed at a professional footballer or MP there would be calls for police to act and bring the perpetrators to answer.

National Federation chair John Apter added that we as officers have 'no right to reply' and have to sit and read all the comments with no chance to add the context that is missing.

Danny Shaw spoke on behalf of mainstream media, saying: "I don't think policing has been good in terms of influencing media. You've not been good at making them understand the realities of policing. But I honestly don't think people are looking at anti-police stories."

Personally, having viewed recent coverage of events in policing, I would argue that the media generally will spin anti-police headlines for profit and have no idea about

the pressures and stress of modern policing.

Within our Force we have been relatively lucky to avoid much of the trial by social media but even if you look at posts from neighbourhood teams, rural crime teams, RPU or our own NWP site on social media then you will see evidence of unchallenged hate toward the police even when the messages are positive and supporting local issues.

We do though have to change, to remove our fear of acting impartially, the fear of using reasonable force and of carrying out lawful stop and search when being filmed. We need forces to recognise this problem and work with us for an agreed approach to what is becoming yet another accepted 'keyboard' bashing of police procedures.

OUR REPS SAY...

"This was a great session. Robert Rinder came across extremely well and was very honest with his views. I liked his suggestions for different strategies in responding to 'Trial by Media' incidents."
Insp Ceri Hawe

"Judge Rinder was a great addition to the discussion and raised some really interesting ideas that I hope will be taken forwards." PC Rae Ellis

“ I WOULD ARGUE THAT THE MEDIA GENERALLY WILL SPIN ANTI-POLICE HEADLINES FOR PROFIT AND HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT THE PRESSURES AND STRESS OF MODERN POLICING. ”

CLARITY NEEDED ON USE OF FORCE

Frontline police must be given greater clarity on the use of force with officers at risk of falling foul of the law under existing guidelines, the 2021 Police Federation of England and Wales conference has heard.

The Federation is campaigning for better standards and education for officers who are forced to make split-second decisions to use force or authorise other officers to do so.

Scott Ingram, lead lawyer on criminal police misconduct at law firm Slater and Gordon, said: "An officer's decision to use force will be justified based on their honestly held belief so if it is their honest belief about the need to use force they are not going to be found guilty of any criminal offence.

"That's a subjective test - the honest belief of the officer based on their understanding or their perception of the facts.

"But in misconduct proceedings, because of a Court of Appeal decision, even if an officer has an honestly held belief, they can still be dismissed if a view is taken on an objective level that the belief was unreasonable.

"Most police officer decisions to use force are in quick time, they are in a difficult situation, a stressful scenario, so quite how an officer is expected to be able to weigh up the criminal law test and the misconduct test before they decide to use force is really



Scott Ingram, lead lawyer on criminal police misconduct at law firm Slater and Gordon.

what identifies the problem here.

"It is far from ideal and needs to be resolved by a decision in the Supreme Court."

Federation firearms and less lethal lead Steve Hartshorn said: "My concern is this decision, which is authoritative at the moment, affects every strand of policing, it affects the frontline officers who are responding to 999 calls, it affects decision-makers at a senior police leadership level, it might affect a chief constable who wants to

effect a policing plan.

"So it is only right that everybody involved - at the front end, in the middle and at the very top - knows exactly what standard they are being assessed and held to account by because at some point they will have to justify their decisions either in a criminal court, at a gross misconduct hearing or at an inquest."

OUR REP SAYS...

"I found it worrying watching the use of force 'objective or subjective' seminar in relation to the justification around the use of force.

"The test under criminal law is around honest held belief whereas now officers are expected to also justify it under misconduct law, the test being if the belief was unreasonable.

"There is a clear lack of clarity around this subject and there is currently a test case going through the Supreme Court of law.

"NPCC guidance was sent out in October, but it appears this was not sent to frontline officers and it's concerning they are not aware of this potential change to justifying any use of force.

Tony Edwards, workplace representative.

PRIORITISE OFFICERS' SAFETY

"My view will always fall on the side of officer safety," national chair John Apter told delegates during a conference session on policing protests.

The segment focussed on the protests that have taken place over the past year and whether more needs to be done on educating the public on the role of the police during these sometimes violent demonstrations.

John warned against taking advantage of the goodwill shown by officers, who continue to want to protect the public, despite the situation.

He said: "We have the best police force in the world. We don't have to do a lot to make people feel valued and wanted."

Speaking about the fact that frontline officers are not always required to wear protective kit when working at protests, he argued that there were more concerns about how they will look in the protective gear rather than prioritising staff safety.

Looking to the summer ahead, John said



Metropolitan Police Sergeant Nikki O'Malley spoke about her experiences of working on the frontline at protests.

forces are committed to protecting the public.

"Policing reacts to crisis," he explained, "The pressure cooker of frustration has built up and we had a taste of it last summer."

Metropolitan Police Sergeant Nikki

O'Malley spoke about her experiences of working on the frontline at protests, including one in which she was not wearing a protective kit, resulting in her getting injured.

UNDERSTANDING MISOGYNY IN POLICING



The panel members with Ian Collins (bottom right).

Jokes about gender are as unacceptable as those about race and sexuality, the annual Police Federation conference was told.

The pervasive nature of misogyny came under the spotlight in a session hosted by the Federation's self-organised national women's group.

Members heard how female officers still faced discrimination at work with group chair Zoë Wakefield giving examples of abusive social media messages she and others had received.

Zoë told the session that women often received negative comments from male colleagues about their fitness for the job.

National Police Chiefs' Council gender lead and Derbyshire Chief Constable Rachel Swann said misogynistic comments were too often dismissed as 'banter' which was no longer acceptable.

She said: "It isn't about not having fun. Having a laugh is important for de-stressing but it shouldn't come at someone else's expense.

"We've made other kinds of banter around sexuality and race off limits, but it still seems gender is OK to joke about."

Sue Honeywill, a Devon and Cornwall sergeant, branch vice-chair and member of the national women's group, suggested female officers who opted to work part-time for childcare purposes often faced discrimination.

The mother-of-five said: "When it

happened to me, I was still the same person, with the same abilities to offer the Force. The only difference was, I was part-time."

Federation national wellbeing secretary Belinda Goodwin told the session: "You still get eye rolls when you talk about 'female' issues.

"It's just about creating change and bringing barriers down so we can discuss things properly."

Assistant Chief Constable Mark Travis from South Wales Police delivered a presentation on gender discrimination in the workplace which revealed as many as 90 per cent of female officers in Wales said they had experienced sexual harassment at work.

Mark said: "When we talk to people who experience this harassment, they don't want things to escalate, they don't want a big, formal process, they just want the behaviour to stop.

"They just want respect, a good attitude, and to be treated professionally."

OUR REP SAYS...

"I really liked this session, great panel with loads of experience and educated views. Great points made on making sure that people talk about it and understand it; we definitely still have a way to go in this area. Some interesting stories from the panel. I did giggle at the quote Zoë used that someone thought misogyny was when someone married more than one person! This does exist in policing up and down the country and we all have our part to play in challenging it." Insp Ceri Hawe

"I was somewhat shocked at the level of negativity my female colleagues still receive. It was sad to hear from officers who have faced direct discrimination from colleagues who often would make comments and then have them dismissed as banter." PC Colin Hughes

PANEL PRAISES PANDEMIC RECRUITS

There was no shortage of praise for new recruits during a panel session at this year's annual conference, with those who have been forced to complete virtual training due to the pandemic called 'resilient' and 'nothing short of commendable'.

With an ambitious target of an extra 20,000 officers by 2023, concerns were raised about the impact virtual training has had on new recruits, with Federation roads policing lead and National Board member Gemma Fox recognising that newcomers have been immediately asked to put both themselves and their families at risk.

She said: "What we've asked of them, is to pick up a uniform, to put it on and get on

with it. They have done exactly that while putting themselves at risk of coronavirus, as well as risking taking the virus back home with them."

Dave Bamber, national Federation lead for professional development and issues related to the College of Policing, explained: "What we can't deny is the impact that the last year has had on our officers and members. Young officers have been forced to learn independently, online and virtually. We need to get an understanding of what effect that has had on them.

"What needs to be acknowledged is none of this is at the fault of our officers."

As well as recruitment, emphasis was



Dave Bamber, national Federation lead for professional development.

also on retention and the significance of finding out why people are choosing to leave the service early.

NEW CULTURE ON CONDUCT?

It is not the end of the journey, and adjustments still need to be made but it is absolutely clear that we are moving in the right direction in terms of embedding a culture of learning and development rather than sanction and punishment with police conduct proceedings.

That was the message given to delegates at a conference session asking New Regs – New Culture?

Phill Matthews, conduct and performance lead for the national Federation, said that relations between the Federation and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) had improved and he thanked the police watchdog's director general Michael Lockwood for his efforts to overhaul the system.

As a sign of the progress made, Phill will soon be giving the Federation's first input into IOPC investigators' training.

But he said there were some issues with forces adjusting to the new raised bar for conduct proceedings and the performance requiring improvement and reflective practice procedures introduced with the new conduct regulations in February last year.

Much of the session focussed on the timeliness of conduct inquiries which all agreed was essential for police officers,



Clockwise from top left: the session featured Phill Matthews, Chief Constable Craig Guildford, Ian Collins, Michael Lockwood and Ian Balbi, head of police discipline policy at the Home Office.

complainants the reputation of the complaints system as a whole.

Mr Lockwood said there would be times, where a case was complex or there were vulnerable victims, where cases might go over the 12-month limit the Federation would like to see on investigations. The IOPC was setting targets for nine and six months next year.

He stressed that there should be a real emphasis on learning not just for individual officers but also for forces themselves.

Phill agreed and said the IOPC had now issued more than 400 learning reports, rather than those involved being sanctioned.

OUR REP SAYS...

It was clear that there was some way to go but that the issues were understood and were being worked on." PC Rae Ellis

FED ELECTIONS COMING SOON

Members were encouraged to stand in the upcoming Federation elections, with national vice-chair Ché Donald calling his appointment 'life-changing'.

Ché was joined by John Partington, deputy national secretary, at this year's annual conference, ahead of the election process which began on 1 July.

The pair called on members to stand in the elections, with Ché referring to workplace reps as the 'lifeblood' of the Federation.

He added: "There are many officers out there who would struggle without them. I really want people to consider it. I found it life-changing.

Find out more about being a rep by speaking to your workplace or divisional reps or the full-time officials.

You can also visit the Reps@Work page on the national Federation website.



PFEW national vice-chair Ché Donald.

“THERE ARE MANY OFFICERS OUT THERE WHO WOULD STRUGGLE WITHOUT WORKPLACE REPS. I REALLY WANT PEOPLE TO CONSIDER IT. I FOUND IT LIFE-CHANGING.



WELLBEING IS NOT A BUZZWORD

National wellbeing lead Hayley Aley says that 'even the smallest changes made across the force will have a huge impact' on the welfare of officers, as she joined a conference session called **Wellbeing – Whose Responsibility Is It?**

Hayley's comments were part of a discussion that focused on the wellbeing of officers, which highlighted the demands of the job, pressures felt by staff and solutions that could help combat wellbeing issues.

Looking ahead, Hayley said she hoped to not be sitting here next year, 'saying the same thing over and over'.

"We've only just opened the box, looking at what pressures are affecting officers," she said, "We need to look at the things that need to change to prevent mental health and the physical issues people are feeling. We need to prevent people from walking away from the workplace because they can't cope.

"It's the simple things that need to change, the day-to-day jobs. Those quick changes will have a long-term impact on the organisation."

Hayley was joined by National Board



National wellbeing lead Hayley Aley.

member and wellbeing secretary Belinda Goodwin, who said that wellbeing can be broken down into four parts, including mental health, physical wellbeing, financial wellbeing and general wellbeing.

"We have to stop just talking about it," she said, "We need to make fundamental changes to impact the wellbeing across forces."

Inspector Ceri Hawe said the wellbeing session she attended has made her realise the investment North Wales Police has made in the area.

The Wellbeing – Whose Responsibility Is It? discussion included contributions from Haley Aley, the Federation's national wellbeing chair, national wellbeing secretary Belinda Goodwin, and Andy Rhodes, director of the National Police Wellbeing Service.

Ceri said the line she took from the session was: 'Wellbeing is not a buzzword'.

"There were high-impact accounts from officers on the realities of frontline response policing which made the session a 'must see' for lots of senior managers in my opinion," she said,

"They spoke about the pressure they are under paperwork-wise, the fear of being assaulted, working over to get paperwork done and the impact on family life. We heard frightening statistics on how officers are feeling stressed and fatigued, yet the love for the job still comes through.

"Speakers referenced the frustrations at the lack of pay increases for police officers and this topic was followed by a story from Steve, West Mercia chair, on why an officer left the job because of the workload, stress and increasing paperwork. He then went on to read out feedback and frustrations from a frontline sergeant on patrol."

Ceri said there was also information given on Oscar Kilo, the home of the National Police Wellbeing Service, and the support the Police Federation of England and Wales has given, including calls for forces to increase wellbeing services.

She added: "This really put into focus how much work has gone on in North Wales Police in terms of health and wellbeing, with our Wellbeing Team among a host of other things.

"I got the impression that we are ahead of lots of forces in this area, but there is always more to do."

OUR REP SAYS...

"There are changes within our Force that have been slow and most officers will, if asked to speak openly about their wellbeing, would discuss the lack of support, excessive workload and more time spent ensuring that multiple forms are completed, duplicated, scanned and tasked – endlessly.

"The forum was opened with a piece by two frontline officers from West Mercia who were allowed to speak openly about frontline policing, as a 20-year frontline officer it really hit home. I empathised with every word and knew exactly where they were coming from, the question from them is simple – where does the responsibility lie for officers' welfare in these situations?"

"Frontline officers have always been a slave to the radio and it is impossible to organise or structure a day effectively as such, this has now become more impossible to achieve. With the stresses of file builds and crime reports, officers are spending less time policing and more time administrating and when they leave to attend a job they know that they are picking up yet another incident with potentially hours of

paperwork involved.

"There was an input from a response sergeant who told the same story; they too are bogged down in never ending administrative tasks. Over recent years it has become a rarity for a supervisor to leave the station and see what's going on 'out there'. I remember a skipper of mine that would brief and disappear on nights, he would always be there at jobs and turn up, helmet on and out of the shadows and he knew you and knew how you worked, he had time to say 'grab a brew let's have a chat'. Today's supervisor sadly is no longer afforded that luxury, their officers are crime numbers and with the introduction of 'stats' will become more interested in these than their team.

"Things are changing and welfare must also change, officers are now leaving the 'job' in greater numbers than ever before, the lack of welfare and support being a key driver. We have to look to improve our crime management and with his address welfare of officers across the board to finally answer the question - where does the responsibility lie for officers' welfare?" **PC Colin Hughes**

PRIVILEGE COMES UNDER SCRUTINY

Fairness and equality came under the spotlight with a powerful session examining race, policing and privilege and the impact they have on public confidence and trust.

The session was led by scholar, activist and broadcaster Robert Beckford, a professor of black theology, who said British society remained one of the most unequal in the western world with unchecked privilege leading to financial and socio-economic consequences across the country.

He told the conference: "We have got to address the subject of privilege because we have got the persistence of structural inequality."

Session host Zac Mader, secretary of the Federation's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and BAME Belief Self-Organised Group, asked how the understanding of privilege could be improved within policing.

Prof Beckford said: "It is about talking about it. Part of the problem is it is not talked about. We need to talk and reflect upon it, to see how we can help in certain circumstances.

"Radical honesty is necessary to address these problems in institutions and organisations. In society we find a way to deny things exist, but we need to be completely honest so we can move forward."



Professor Robert Beckford.

He also said officers should try to educate themselves about the issues around privilege and suggested better training and honest answers to difficult questions were needed to tackle bias and inclusion across policing.

He said: "Think about how you can be an ally and support under-represented groups to ensure there is a real fairness. The fairness we want to see in public institutions and public life."

The professor called for 'really clear and powerful pathways' for career progression among under-represented groups to help improve an imbalance so the police can better reflect the communities they serve.

OUR REPS SAY...

"Professor Rob Beckford came across well. Good balanced views with a great presentation, recommending mandatory training for equality, diversity and inclusion and officers having to demonstrate competency in equality, diversity and inclusion if going for promotion. Zac Mader and Peggy Lamont asked some great questions which worked well. An engaging session." Insp Ceri Hawe

"A really engaging speaker Professor Beckford covered the topics in a relatable way. It was really evident from what he was saying that the police need to have a better understanding of privilege and the challenges faced by people who differ from the 'norm'. The key takeaway for me was that we all have differences and that we need to be able to have honest conversations about difference and privilege." PC Rae Ellis

'WE NEED DIVERSE EXPERIENCES'

A leading equality expert has identified three key barriers blocking the recruitment of new police officers from black and Asian communities.

Professor Robert Beckford, an academic, activist and broadcaster, pulled no punches when the issue was raised during a diversity session called The Challenge of Difference at the Police Federation annual conference.

Prof Beckford said the first stumbling block was a perceived lack of integrity within the police service.

He told the conference: "There is a lack of recognition of the negative history of policing black and brown communities, particularly black deaths in custody,

particularly around miscarriages of justice.

"If I was running the force the first thing I would say is sorry. It doesn't take much to appease people in this context and sorry goes a long way. So firstly there needs to be that kind of acknowledgement."

Prof Beckford said the second key factor

in the recruitment of black and brown officers was the idea that the issue could be addressed by simply having more black and brown people in positions of power.

The award-winning academic said the third stumbling block was over-reliance on long-term recruitment targets.

OUR REP SAYS...

"I found this particularly interesting as it relates directly to my day job in Force. More insightful information and observations from Professor Beckford on how colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds feel under pressure to fit in and that they can be perceived differently. In North Wales part of our work is around this, myth-busting and breaking down barriers and supporting colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds by using a Buddy Scheme so people don't feel unsupported." Insp Ceri Hawe

NEW WELLBEING TOOLKIT IS AIMED AT DETECTIVES



Glyn Pattinson, chair of the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum.

A unique wellbeing toolkit aimed specifically at detectives and investigators was previewed at the annual national Police Federation conference.

Details of the specially-commissioned Oscar Kilo Toolkit were unveiled during a discussion which covered issues such as recruitment, retention and growing fears of officer burn-out.

Detective Chief Superintendent Martin Brunning of the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit said the package could be transformative in terms of improving the emotional wellbeing of detectives and stop

them leaving the CID.

He told the session: "This is not a one size fits all or a token gesture. It's got real substance as it comes from a group of people who have been through the pain of having colleagues crashing and burning."

The Investing in the Investigators discussion was led by Glyn Pattinson, chair of the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum (PFNDF) which has long campaigned for leaders to provide better support for investigators in relation to the unique pressures they face.

He said: "I know that the toolkit is going to get a big launch on 21 June and I am conscious that as senior officers you

understand what it's like to be a detective - been there, seen that, done it. But that's not always the case with some of our senior command team and executive officers across the country.

"So when the emails and correspondence lands with those officers back in their own forces, what can we as Federation reps do to help you help our members?"

Det Ch Supt Brunning said: "I would plead with everybody to get behind this because it is the product of a lot of people with a lot of experience in investigations who also get what it's like to be a young in service new detective or police staff investigator."

The discussion heard how high workloads, the increasing complexity of investigations and the enormous impact on work life balance had led to once-coveted roles in CID losing their appeal.

Thames Valley's Deputy Chief Constable Jason Hogg, who is also detectives' lead on the National Police Chiefs' Council, said a survey by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found 22 per cent of detective posts were vacant and had described it as a 'national crisis'.

His force enjoyed a recruitment boost after highlighting the detective role, introducing flexi-time working arrangements, covering the costs of books for officers studying, giving time off and offering a bonus payment.



The Investing in Investigators session was very interesting, writes North Wales Police Federation workplace representative PC Rae Ellis. Starting with a video highlighting issues facing our detectives, it covered a wide range of topics including direct entry pathways, bonus payments, the creation of a national staff bank for detectives and the implementation of national standards for police staff investigators.

There was a good introduction to the

new wellbeing toolkit and it was clear that the focus is now on the welfare and wellbeing of detectives.

There was a lot of participation of the audience and questions included the issue of flexible working provision for detectives who are also parents or carers. There was recognition that there needs to be understanding around where people do their best work and that the role has room for flexibility.

The panel have undertaken to further

review the links between flexible working and detectives so I look forward to hearing more on that.

There was also discussion about the increasing demands, whether that is from the CPS, the IT systems being used or because of the numbers of detectives.

The overall message was that we all need to get behind the wellbeing toolkit. It's not a token gesture but is a real effort to support detectives through the challenges and demands of the role.



FEARS OVER CHANGES TO DRIVING LAW

Federation representatives are being urged to implore their chief officers to ensure that changes to driving legislation aimed at better protecting police drivers make the law truly fit for purpose.

Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and national pursuits and driver training lead, gave an update on the provisions of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill during a roads policing session at the Federation conference.

The bill, which is due to become law later this year, sets out changes that will

mean officers will no longer be judged by the standards of the careful and competent driver, allowing their professional training and expertise to be taken into account.

But Tim fears the wording of the proposed legislation could lead to officer being further criminalised.

"We are very grateful for the support so far from the Government, the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Independent Office for Police Conduct," he said, but adding that an amendment to the bill is now required.

A new legal test will currently be applied so officers' driving will be measured

against that of a 'careful and competent police driver', however, this could still leave them exposed.

"An officer will be licensed to drive in accordance with what they have been trained to do but nothing more. Performing a manoeuvre which is not trained or in policy is likely to fall into the new definition of dangerous and careless driving under a new test against the careful and competent police driver," Tim explained.

"Going beyond the terms of that licence could give rise to criminal liability. I have grave concerns around the practicality of this approach."

'WE MADE IT THE BEST IT COULD BE'

The national chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales closed this year's conference by saying the decision to make it a virtual event was the right one.

John Apter told facilitator Ian Collins: "This was our first virtual conference so it has been strange. We would rather not have had to do it this way but I think we made it the best it could be."

He added: "People asked me why we didn't wait until after lockdown was lifted but we had to make a decision and we didn't know what was going to happen – we still don't – so it was the right decision in the circumstances and the feedback has been really positive."

Ian Collins said the theme of conference 2021 had been Policing Under Pressure and at times it had also been 'conference under pressure'.

John added: "We had a couple of glitches and some things going on behind the scenes which caused some hairy moments!"



John Apter sums up conference 2021.

OUR REPS SAY...

"This was my first Federation conference so I have no benchmark for comparison, admittedly it was rather odd taking part from home and I was a bit concerned as everyone on camera had a shirt and tie and I was taking part in an old t-shirt and shorts. I decided on Day 2 to choose a wide range of sessions covering differing topics. They were all presented well and made some good arguments on what I feel are the biggest changes in policing for generations."

PC Colin Hughes

"Overall I enjoyed the conference and the subject matter in the main."

Tony Edwards, workplace representative

FEDERATION MOURNS THE LOSS OF A TRUE GENTLEMAN

By Sam Roberts, former chair of North Wales Police Federation

It was with a very heavy heart that I contacted a number of ex-colleagues and friends recently to let them know that retired North Wales Police Federation chair Keith Jones, retired inspector 1100 - AKA Keith Curls - had lost his battle with cancer and died at the regrettably young age of 57.

Keith retired from North Wales Police in 2014 after serving his 30 years with the Force. He became a member of the North Wales Police Federation Inspectors' Branch Board in 2011 where he quickly embraced that very difficult balance of being a boss but also ensuring things were fair for his staff and other Inspectors.

He did this incredibly well and became the chair of the North Wales Joint Branch Board in 2014. He led the board until his retirement later that year and did so in his own inimitable style, non-judgemental, balanced and considered. We could not let his passing go without remembering his unerring support for his colleagues throughout his time with the Force but in particular those last few years on the Federation.

There will be many of you reading this that will have known Keith as a colleague, a boss or as a friend and in each role he was

exactly the same: kind, happy and always willing to assist anybody, anytime. He always had that smile on his face that made him so approachable. I know many of you will have worked alongside him and have so many stories of him that would make us all smile and nod. Because of Covid we haven't been able to have that time together celebrating his life and reminiscing about all the near misses and stories of life in 'the job' with Keith.

However, the retired officers and staff site on Facebook has helped those grieving for Keith and I just wanted to share some of the things that people have added there to illustrate the man he was:

True gentleman, highly respected, capable, friend, jolly, consummate professional, strong, kind, always had a smile and time to talk, calm, knowledgeable, lovely, good, a man of many talents, an outstanding investigator. These are just a few comments



Keith Jones is pictured with former Police Federation national chair Steve Williams, himself a former North Wales officer.

from an enormous list of messages.

His loss is felt deeply by us all but it pales when we think about the loss to his family, his wife Sian, daughters Catrin, Ania and Cara, his grandchildren Alys and Math, his parents Gwyndaf and Julia, his brother David and sister Julie. Please rest assured that he will always be remembered, and you will always be a part of our police family.

Rest in peace, Keith – until we meet again.



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STATION RE-VAMP AT PWLLHELI



The major refurbishment and modernisation of Pwllheli Police Station was finished in May 2021 after more than 12 months on site.

Located on Ala Road in the busy seaside town on the Llŷn Peninsula, the three-storey station also once housed the local magistrates' court. When the court was relocated to Troed yr Allt, the area was converted to accommodate custody cells on the ground floor with a canteen area and station accommodation on the first floor.

An extension was built on the side to process inmates which included fingerprinting. When custody was decommissioned within the last decade,

the whole of this area became unusable in its existing configuration.

After consultation with LPS, proposals to update the station were agreed. With asbestos stripped out in late 2019, construction began in February 2020 with Anglesey-based OBR Construction carrying out the works. Unfortunately, after less than a month on site, Covid-19 forced the site to shut down with works starting up again in mid-June.

With the modernisation now finished, the station now boasts a new fitness gym, which includes a treadmill, rowing machine and cross-trainer, separate male and female locker rooms and showers, interview rooms and a meeting/briefing



room.

In addition to the large canteen, complete with a kitchen, TV and sofas, there is a wellbeing room for officers to unwind and de-stress. A controlled access system has been installed as well as new heating, electrical and IT systems throughout and the station now benefits from WiFi.

The station has been upgraded with double-glazed windows, a new roof and external rendering. There is also an electric vehicle car charging point making the site more future-proof for forthcoming environmental requirements.

With the works now complete and the officers having moved back, the refurbishment has provided a much brighter, modern and fully-equipped station befitting North Wales Police and its officers.





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ANTHONY DUFFY,
RETIRED, PWSLHELI

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MARK DAVIES, RETIRED, MOLD

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