

YOUR VOICE

Ffederasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru /
North Wales Police Federation



December 2013



Brave Officer 2013 See Page 3

Representing • Negotiating • Influencing

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Police Bravery Award nominee Rhys Williams
(centre) with his partner Elaine and the MC for
the evening Mark Durden-Smith.

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Building on success



By Richard Eccles, Secretary, North Wales Police Federation

I have a confession to make at the outset of this edition of *Your Voice*.

After 12 years of regularly asking for the same thing in a number of different ways I had started to think that Santa did not exist and that Christmas was not for me.

I am pleased to say that this year somebody clearly has been listening and for the first time in years many operational officers got their duties published in line with Police Regulations.

I got my wish after years of complaining, thanks to some hard work by your local Federation representatives

and members of the Resource Management Unit.

Hopefully, we can build upon that success to introduce much better planning around duties and staffing levels to improve your life and that of your family members.

This edition of *Your Voice* carries a high number of articles, which hopefully set out the latest position across a broad range of local and national topics.

As we move forward into 2014, I appreciate that we are facing more changes locally and nationally, changing working conditions, reducing budgets and increased scrutiny of everything we do.

I want to reassure you that as a Federation we are ready and willing to represent your interests in every way possible to ensure that you are fully covered when carrying out your role across North Wales.

In an effort to avoid an enforced Action Plan from the Chief Constable I have voluntarily accepted a New Year's resolution to avoid using the words "Can't" and "Won't" when negotiating, I will update you throughout the year regarding my progress in that regard!

I really hope that you get a chance to read through the contents of our magazine in between jobs and let us have your feedback, good or bad.

Finally, I wish you all a very peaceful and safe festive period, please enjoy it in your own way and I look forward to representing you in 2014.

Your magazine...

This is your magazine; it is written for the benefit of you, our members.

If there is anything you wish to have included then please send an email to Chris.Warner@nthwales.pnn.police.uk.

Chris, our Policy and Consultation Manager, leads our communications programme and will be happy to include your ideas in forthcoming editions of *Your Voice*.

The printed and electronic versions of our magazine are available on a quarterly basis - March, June, September and December.

Brave Rhys honoured at awards ceremony

The 18th Police Federation Bravery Awards, hosted in partnership with Police Mutual, took place at 8 Northumberland Avenue, London.

This annual event honours police officers across England and Wales for their actions to tackle criminals and keep the public safe.

This year's nomination from North Wales was PC 1987 Rhys Williams who had carried out a heroic dinghy rescue.

In March, PC Williams and his colleague were on mobile patrol at 8.40pm one evening when they were flagged down by a member of the public who told them a woman was in the water at Porthmadog Marina and another member of the public had gone in to try to rescue her.

Upon arrival the officers could see the pair were some way out in the water and the man was struggling to hold the woman's head above the surface.

PC Williams and his colleague frantically searched for an object to help the couple and spotted a dinghy tethered at the base of a 20 foot retaining wall.

PC Williams scaled the narrow 90-degree ladder and managed to board the dinghy. He took off his heavy clothing and untied the dinghy.

With no oars, he leaned over the front and made his way across the water using a breast stroke swimming style.

By the time PC Williams reached the couple they were physically unable to pull themselves onto the dinghy.

Using nothing but his own physical determination, the officer got hold of the pair and dragged them aboard, using great mental and physical strength to ensure the dinghy did not capsize.

The officer remained on the dinghy until the arrival of the lifeboat crew. While the man and the woman were admitted to

hospital to be treated for water inhalation and hypothermia, PC Williams returned to Dolgellau Police Station to finish his shift.

Inspector Mark Cartmell, who responded to the incident, said: "Viewing this from the shore and not able to assist was quite distressing. Such was the inner strength of PC Williams, he could be heard verbally straining to heave them on board.

"The actions of PC Williams without doubt saved the life of both the woman and the member of the public who was attempting to assist her. The tremendous use of strength from PC Williams was continuous for six to seven minutes."

In addition to attending the awards ceremony on 17 October, Rhys and partner Elaine were guests at an afternoon reception hosted by Prime Minister David Cameron at 10 Downing Street.

North Wales Police Federation Secretary Richard Eccles said: "Rhys' actions on the night undoubtedly saved lives and was in the best traditions of British policing. It is only right that his brave efforts have been recognised at this prestigious evening and I know that he enjoyed the whole experience including his visit to Number 10."

'A once in a lifetime experience'

We had a fantastic couple of days in London. To visit Downing Street was a once in a lifetime experience, we were made to feel welcome and had the opportunity to speak to some of the other officers present and share some stories. After having a group photograph taken in one of the reception rooms in Downing Street we had a brief opportunity to meet the Prime Minister.

The awards ceremony was held at a stunning venue in central London and compared by Mark Durden-Smith who presented the evening with the appropriate balance of decorum and humour, and couldn't resist any opportunity to poke fun at the present Prime Minister and Home Secretary – which was greatly appreciated by all!

Although it was nice to hear some of the experiences of officers being re-enacted to the audience, it was also at times very sobering to hear some of the experiences that didn't have a happy or humorous ending. The members of the public who couldn't be saved and the officers who were killed doing what they thought was the right thing to do.

Although so much good police work goes on all over the country on a daily basis, usually unnoticed and often without thanks, I think the awards ceremony was an opportunity to pay respect to fallen colleagues and to raise public awareness of



Rhys and his partner, Elaine, outside No 10 Downing Street.

positive work done by the police, something I think they don't get to hear enough about.

Rhys Williams

A privilege and an honour



By Deputy Chief Constable Gareth Pritchard

It is a great privilege and honour to have been appointed Deputy Chief Constable in my home Force. The police service is in a time of transition and there is much to be done to maintain and improve service delivery at a time of financial cutbacks.

It is now 12 months since the Police and Crime Commissioner commenced his role in North Wales and I believe the relationship between the Force, the Commissioner and his staff has been positive and productive.

In line with the Police and Crime Plan, we have introduced the dedicated Rape Team (Amethyst) and the Rural Crime Team. Both these initiatives have been well received and there is much positive feedback from communities and victims.

The future financial challenges are becoming clearer with cutbacks over the next few years:

- **2014/15 £2.5 million**
- **2015/16 £2.3 million**
- **2016/17 £4.6 million.**

In addition to the above, there are plans to top slice police budgets to increase the funding for the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and a National Innovation Fund. With such cutbacks envisaged we are looking at how these can be managed and the long-term planning that is required. However, it is important that the Force continues to develop and it is pleasing that a new police station at Llangefni officially opened on 29 November and that work is progressing on the new custody unit at Llay.

We have been looking in detail over the past few months at other collaborative opportunities and in April 2014 Cheshire and North Wales will form a Firearms Alliance with officers working together from a base in Deeside in addition to a base in each Force. Such alliances are made easier because of national training structures and operating procedures.

Over the last year there has been considerable focus on child abuse in North Wales and the investigation by the National Crime Agency on behalf of the Chief Constable is progressing well. A significant number of new witnesses have come forward and you will be aware from media reports of the arrests that have been made to date.

One area of concern to the public has

been the use of Taser and there is considerable scrutiny from the IPCC about its use especially in custody and in dealing with the vulnerable. We have undertaken a review of how we deploy Taser in Force looking at policy, training and its deployment. This has resulted in some amendments to the training.

You will be aware of the national debate concerning police integrity and the recent publication from the College of Policing of a code of ethics. There is clearly much comment and concern being expressed about the standards of integrity in the police service nationally but I am keen to ensure through my work with the Professional Standards Department here that we maintain the highest standards here in North Wales in line with the expectation of our community.

Many members of staff are concerned about national developments that include direct entry and compulsory severance. These matters will be considered in Force and consultation maintained with staff associations. Myself and the Police and Crime Commissioner attended a Joint Branch Board on Tuesday 12 November and I believe it was a useful discussion but it is imperative that we maintain this dialogue going forward (See Page 14).

As always, the North Wales Police staff continue to perform at a high level and are reducing crime despite some significant challenges. Myself and my chief officer colleagues greatly appreciate the hard work that is being undertaken and we wish everyone best wishes for the festive season.

PAT hearing considers compulsory severance

The Police Arbitration Tribunal (PAT) has now met to consider the Winsor 2 proposals for compulsory severance and restricted duties.

The two issues were referred to the PAT when a failure to agree was registered by the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) in the summer.

Ian Rennie, General Secretary of the Police Federation which has strongly opposed both proposals, issued a statement after the PNB negotiations ended saying: "Staff Side believes that the proposals before the PNB today are by far the most significant of

the Winsor recommendations. They give rise to the greatest degree of concern and anxiety among police officers and they have the potential to fundamentally alter the nature of service as a police officer."

He was also keen to point out that the Federation had tried to fully engage in the consultation process and reach 'a constructive solution'.

The PAT decision will be referred to the Home Secretary who will have the final say on the issues.

Community Service Award winner praised for building team spirit

On Friday 22 November North Wales Police Federation hosted the 22nd Community Service Awards at the St George's Hotel in Llandudno.

The guests assembled to celebrate this year's award included Police and Crime Commissioner Winston Roddick and Chief Constable Mark Polin, as well as local Assembly Members Ann Jones and Mark Isherwood.

This year's worthy winner was DC Angela Durkan from Crime Services, who was nominated by her local community in Rhuddlan for her continuous work on a number of fronts.

In the nomination papers submitted by Brenda Taylor, Chair of the Rhuddlan Environment Connection Group, there was a wealth of evidence detailing Angela's efforts in community projects with a wide group of local residents.

Brenda explained: "Angela has played a leading role in making improvements in our local community by helping, guiding and assisting us at all times to foster a wonderful community spirit."

Angela was clearly an extremely motivational member of the team and, in addition, acts as Brown Owl for Rhuddlan Brownies and as Choir Master for Rhuddlan Connection Choir.

Those gathered to celebrate Angela's award were able to see and hear the results of her hard work with others over recent years as the event included a short film showing the work carried out to improve the environment



Community service award caption DC Angela Durkan is presented with her trophy by the Chief Constable, Mark Polin.

around Rhuddlan, together with a soundtrack recorded by the choir.

The choir now regularly travel to perform at events and apart from promoting a very positive community image they have so far this year they have raised around £20,000 for local charities including CLIC Sargent, NSPCC and St Kentigen's Hospice.

In addition to being presented with

her award, Angela received a cheque for £1,500 from North Wales Police for her efforts which she split between The Rhuddlan Connection Choir and 1st Rhuddlan Brownies.

After hearing the details of Angela's work within the community, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr Roddick, said Angela was 'a brilliant example of police officers working in communities'.

Specials want to join Fed

More than nine out of 10 Specials in England and Wales would like to join the Police Federation, according to the results of a survey.

The Federation will now put forward a motion to its annual conference in May seeking the go-ahead to take the necessary steps that will allow Specials to join the staff association. Any move to allow Specials to join the Federation would first need a change in legislation.

A total of 2,517 specials took part in the survey, conducted by the

Federation in partnership with the Association of Special Constabulary Chief Officers (ASCCO), with 2,356 answering 'yes' to the question 'if given the opportunity, would you choose to become a member of the Police Federation of England and Wales?'

Ninety-one per cent of respondents said they would be more likely to join the Federation if they were offered a discounted subscription fee.

The survey ran for two months until 6 November.



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Mr Mattin,
Police Family law client 2013

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PFEW must now listen

By Keith Jones, Chair,
North Wales Police
Federation



I'm writing this having just finished reading the progress report from Sir David Normington, Chair of the Independent Review of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW), which has just been published. It does not make comfortable reading.

The last few years have undoubtedly been among the most difficult for police officers, certainly in my time in the police, and also for the Police Federation itself.

The huge changes to our pay, conditions and pensions, brought about by the Winsor and Hutton reports, have driven a wedge between the Federation and its members. The fall-out from 'Plebgate' has been dreadful.

Are we capable of influencing and negotiating on behalf of the subscription paying membership? Do we as a Federation have a negative influence on public confidence in the service? These are huge

questions.

The review itself was commissioned in December last year by the then Chair-elect of PFEW - Steve Williams. If the interim report confirms anything, it is that the review was much needed.

Confidence in the Federation is low and, without doubt, significant and far-reaching recommendations will come out of the full report when it is published in January.

Despite the report acknowledging that members highly valued local representation at 'a time of crisis', it also clearly states that the organisation, at all levels, must change. For elected reps who have worked hard in carrying out their responsibilities conscientiously, this will be a bitter pill to swallow. But swallow it we must. We could all come out with a reason why the report, at this particular time in the Fed's history, is so negative, but that's not the point. Our subscribing members having spoken, PFEW must now listen.

And while elected reps, at a local and national level, must heed what has been said, the expectations of the membership must also change.

I've only been involved directly with the Federation as a rep for the past three years. But the number of times that I've heard the Federation described as 'toothless tigers' or it's time that we 'grew a backbone' is countless.

We are a representative organisation not the 'Coppers' Union' as the BBC likes to describe us. We are here to represent, influence and negotiate, within the restrictions of not having full industrial rights. That will not change. If the membership expects reps to put their own careers on the line by being more militant and taking action that does not meet the high professional standards expected of a police officer, then it's grossly unfair.

To close this piece, I'd just like to thank all my friends and colleagues across the Force for their help and support over the last 30 years. The time has flown by and, on the whole, I've had a fantastic career. I wish you all every success in the future in what will be a challenging policing world. If any group of people can overcome these challenges, it's the police officers of North Wales. Look after yourselves and look after each other.

Home Office issues pensions details

The Home Office has issued a circular setting out the Government's final position on some of the detail of its pension reform, including further information about how transitional arrangements will apply.

The Federation's General Secretary Ian Rennie, in a response to the circular, says: "Pensions are a central part of police officers' terms and conditions and a matter of the utmost concern to our members. We have not welcomed, and do not welcome, pension reform but we have sought to ensure that the position on the detail is as beneficial to members as possible."

But he has highlighted there are some aspects of the details that provide some reassurance to some members, including:

- Confirmation that pensionable service transferred into the police schemes from other employments will reckon in the same way as ordinary pensionable service for the purposes of assessing eligibility to full transitional protection and tapering protection;

- Agreement that part-time service will count as if full-time for the purposes of assessing eligibility to full transitional protection and tapering protection;
- Agreement that part-time service will benefit from weighted accrual for those who transfer to the 2015 CARE scheme with service in the Police Pension Scheme (PPS) 1987; and
- Confirmation that members will still be able to commute their PPS 1987 pensions using the rules which apply to the PPS 1987 scheme.

In relation to legal challenges, it is now clear, following the Public Services Pensions Act 2013, that, as expected, the Government has avoided the protections contained in Section 2 Police Pensions Act 1976. This means that no legal challenge under Section 2 is available.

Following the review of all public service pensions carried out by Lord Hutton, the Home Secretary announced the Government's position on the

long-term reform of police pensions on 4 September 2012 when she published the Reform Design Framework for the 2015 Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) police pension scheme.

The framework set out the main elements of the new scheme and transitional arrangements. Discussions about the detail of the scheme and the transitional arrangements have continued at the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) and unresolved matters will continue to be discussed at the PNB.

To read the Home Office circular please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/circular-0142013-further-information-on-long-term-police-pension-reform>)

The Federation has also compiled a FAQ dealing with some of the key issues. Visit www.polfed.org

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Federation representation

By Dave Thomas
Chair of the North Wales
Police Federation
Constables' Branch
Board



We are fast approaching the end of 2013 and the end of another triennial period for the Federation's Joint Branch Board. 2014 will see some changes to the Board membership.

The opportunity to stand as a Federation representative has now passed and routinely will only again be open for new members at the end of 2016. Vacancies may become available at any time, through retirement or if an officer in a representative position changes their post or role and decides to stand down, so keep your eyes open in the future.

The last 12 months or so have been a turbulent time on the national scene for the Police Federation. At the end of January, at the point of his retirement, the outgoing Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) Chair, Paul McKeever, someone who did so much for the PFEW during his time in post, passed away suddenly.

Our own Steve "Slipper" Williams was the Chair Elect and took over the reins having announced in December that an independent review of the PFEW would be carried out. We were all given the opportunity to take part in perhaps influencing the outcome of that review. To all of you who did, I say thank you.

At the end of October the RSA, which undertook the review process, released a progress report. That report has made some stark comments about where the review team sees the PFEW at this time and has

given some indication of how it envisages the future for the Federation. The fall-out from the Andrew Mitchell incident in Downing Street and subsequent actions in the West Midlands area continues to rumble on relentlessly in the press, which is sad as it distracts from the real issues that policing faces following the 20 per cent cuts inflicted on forces by the Comprehensive Spending Reviews. One Met officer is to be charged with misconduct in public office and five face gross misconduct proceedings.

Perhaps this will be the beginning of the end.

Resources

Those cuts have affected us all in some way; whether it is changes to working practices, pay and conditions of service or most controversially the pensions. There is also a review of how our own organisation administers the annual leave officers want to take, while also trying to maximise the resources available to keep on policing the streets of North Wales.

An awful lot of hard work was undertaken within the organisation to set new staffing levels within the LPS structures and the Optimum system has been improved, so that line managers can now see more easily what the available resources are and ensure there are sufficient officers available to work safely.

We all have a part to play in making sure we work safe and I make this plea to you, if you feel that something you have been sent to or requested to attend was unsafe or a near miss, submit an HS1 without that there can be no checks made or evidenced.

I have no doubt that 2014 will bring new challenges for us to meet, but I know that the public of North Wales are lucky to

have officers and staff like we have to look after their safety. How anyone on the outside can look at the police service and say that it is in need of drastic change staggers me. The service has changed year on year ever since I joined. Ever increasing demands are being made of us and, although at times we appear to stumble, we always pick up the gauntlet and seem to rise to each and every challenge and meet them head on.

It is also good to see that Tasers are being made more widely available, to front-line staff. With fewer officers now deployed on 24/7 patrol, we have become more stretched than ever, putting officers at greater risk of injury. Patrol officers are also finding that at times they have been asked to cover for deficiencies in the resources that the Ambulance Service have as they find it a struggle to respond to calls. You are also having to deal with those in society who are unfortunate to have mental health illnesses and who are left struggling to get appropriate help from relevant service providers. MFH reports that can result in many hours of enquiries, added to this the later/longer licensing hours, pile pressure on you all.

The press have latched on to the view that public confidence in policing may be falling because of "honesty and integrity" issues, the two main qualities that we as police officers need to be clear on.

2014 might again start as a stormy time for us; we must simply disprove these claims, by maintaining our professionalism in our daily dealings with the public.

Finally, as this is the last issue of *Your Voice* for 2013, I wish you and your families, all a Merry Christmas and all the very best for the New Year and 2014.

Time for change – the outcomes

The Independent Review of the Police Federation, chaired by Sir David Normington, will shortly publish its final report and is expected to make recommendations on a package of reforms for the Federation.

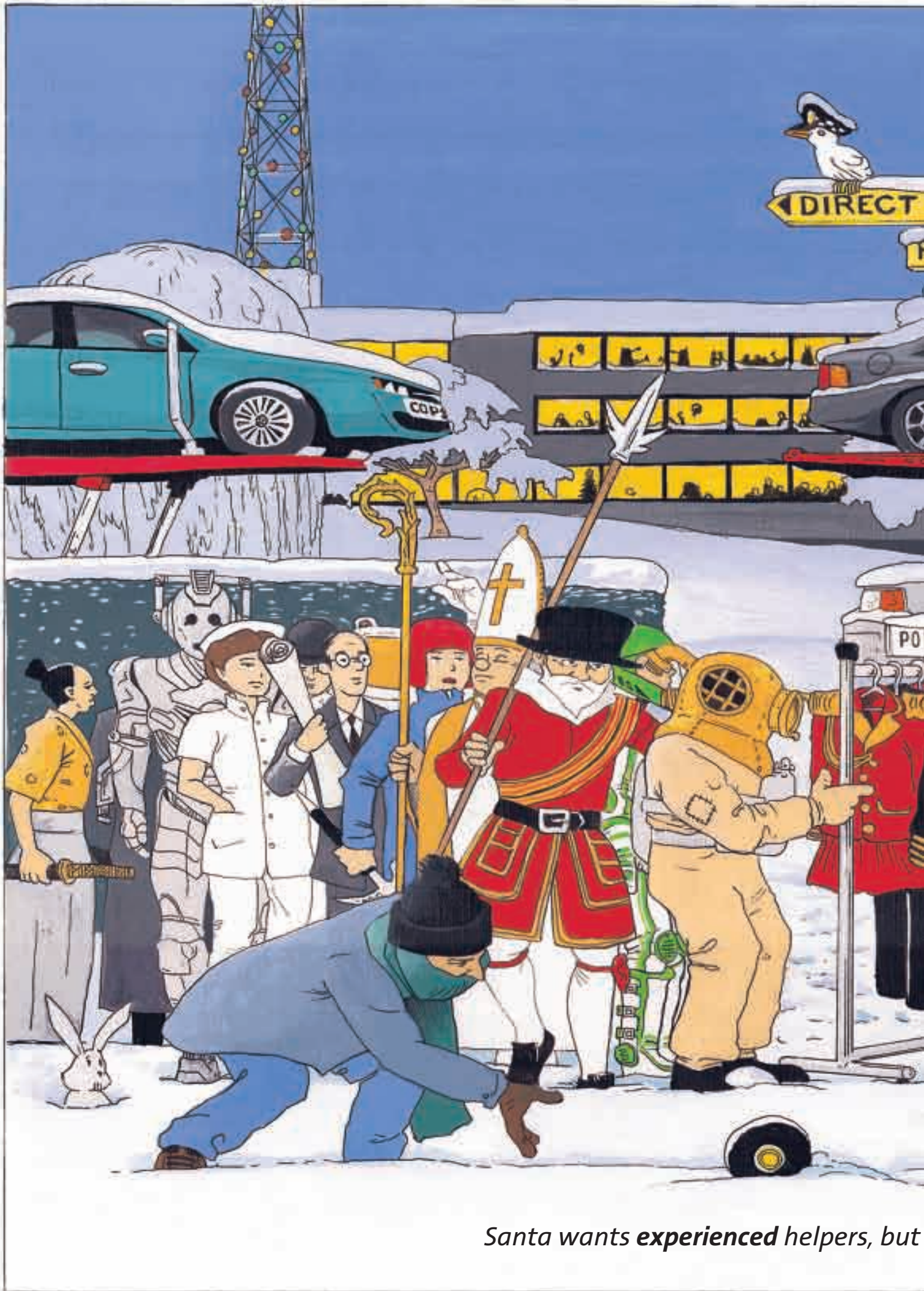
Given the great potential for change, the Federation's Constables' Central Committee (CCC) has made it a priority over recent months to contribute constructively and effectively to the official consultation process.

Its programme of consultation culminated in a survey during July and August which was open to all members. A summary version

of the research report is now available via our website www.nwpolfed.org. Further views or ideas about the issues raised are welcome particularly with regard to the ever changing front-line needs from serving constables across England and Wales.

Please register your details on the Members' Zone of the CCC website at <https://www.policeconstables.org> to keep up to date with all the latest news and issues affecting policing. The Police Federation of England and Wales faces challenges as never before in its history; together we can shape the future for our organisation. (See CCC's consultation with MPs on Page 15).





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Change is not synonymous with improvement

By Mark Davies
Chair of North Wales
Police Federation,
Inspectors' Branch
Board



The Police Federation holds elections every three years. As I shall retire in February, I am standing down as a Federation representative and Chair of the North Wales Inspectors' Branch Board at the end of December. This will be my last article for *Your Voice*.

In my last couple of articles, I have urged people to get involved in the Federation and I am pleased to report that we have two new recruits to represent inspectors and chief inspectors – Ceri Hawe and Paul Joyce. I wish them well and hope that they will live with the disappointment of realising that negotiating, as a way of resolving issues, is sometimes a slow and frustrating experience.

At the start of this year, the Police Federation of England and Wales commissioned a review of the organisation and its finances. The review panel has published an interim report and it is clear that a lot of people inside and outside the Federation feel that things need to change. The overall structure of the organisation has not changed dramatically since it was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1919.

Hopefully, the outcome will be a stronger Federation with greater credibility.

While change can be good and even necessary, stability can also be good.

It seems to me that change has come to be regarded as synonymous with improvement and progress and development. To speak out against change is to be a Luddite and dismissed as someone who lacks vision.

It is inevitable that some ideas get recycled. However, those that want to

change things back to how they were should bear in mind the adage – “Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it.”

I think that everyone would benefit from a bit more stability at North Wales Police.

During my time in the police everyone has had more responsibility and work pushed upon them. In particular, the inspector and chief Inspector ranks have had a massive increase in their workloads. Unfortunately, that has seen some fall to illness brought about by the stresses and strains.

Two years ago the Inspectors' Central Committee (ICC) of the national Federation commissioned a survey of inspectors and chief inspectors across England and Wales. The subsequent report is titled 'Time For Justice' and is available at www.polfed.org

Mr Winsor and his reports have rather dominated things since then, but the ICC is trying to stimulate debate with a view to getting some improvements for members.

Here are a some of the findings from the executive summary of the report:

- About 70 per cent of respondents work over 40 hours with some reporting that they worked up to 90 hours in a week in North Wales.
- 87 per cent of the respondents in North Wales said they have never refused to work what they consider to be excessive hours. It is not clear whether that is their commitment or whether it is their fear of the consequences.
- The inspecting ranks have experienced a disproportionate reduction in personnel in recent years and more responsibilities have been cascaded down the ranks to this critical level, placing additional strains on two already stretched ranks within the police service.
- While inspectors willingly reported their ill-health in response to the ICC surveys, and in many cases included very

personal narratives on their own well-being and disrupted family life, they are reluctant to raise any concerns with their employer or indeed refuse to work excessive hours. For most, long hours and the associated ill-effects are simply accepted as part of the job. Others fear it will harm their promotion prospects. Many more are resigned to the fact that senior managers won't listen or don't care.

I doubt whether those findings will be a surprise to most inspectors and chief inspectors. The challenge is to try to do something about it.

Everyone has had their minds on Mr Winsor and 'Plebgate' since the report was published, so the ICC recently staged a series of workshops to stimulate discussion and try to get some action to improve things. The workshop for the Welsh region was held in North Wales and attended by HR professionals as well as officers and Federation representatives. Debbie Attwood, Deputy Head of People Services, attended on behalf of North Wales Police.

At the workshop, we had presentations about the effects of fatigue and career fatigue. We were shown evidence that tiredness and fatigue has a similar effect on decision-making as alcohol. Long hours and fatigue are worn as a badge of honour by some and overlooked by many senior managers, yet we would never condone officers and staff drinking alcohol on duty. Perhaps we all need to reflect on that sobering thought?

For those who throw their hands up and point towards the austerity measures it is worth considering this from the report....' the strains this can impose on family life and work-life balance, and the adverse effects this has on the efficiency and effectiveness of the police service'.

There is value to the police service to address the issues raised.

On that cheery note, season's greetings and happy New Year.



Question Time with the PCC and DCC



Police and Crime Commissioner Winston Roddick.

On Tuesday 12 November 2013 the local Federation representatives invited the Police and Crime Commissioner, Winston Roddick, and the Deputy Chief Constable, Gareth Pritchard, to join them at headquarters to discuss some topical issues.

During the course of the session there was a healthy debate on a number of areas and some of the main highlights are shown below:-

Constables' Branch Board Chairman Dave Thomas highlighted the impact upon officers when 'partner agencies' failed to pick up their share of the work, talking in particular around high risk areas such as ambulance attendance and mental health facilities. The Police and Crime Commissioner assured Dave that he was putting some effort into forging relationships with all partners to build to a position where they would carry their share of the burden of work.

Mr Roddick gave Dave his view with a final statement as follows: "Partnership working is essential and it fails when one or more of them doesn't pull their weight, leaving us, the police, to do not only our work, but we become the first point of call as ambulances, for mental health patients, which put us, and I mean you, the officers at risk."

Dave Thomas said afterwards: "I considered the response to be both

positive and supportive of officers."

Darren Groom raised the topic of the Force's ability to adapt to changes locally, in areas such as staffing, custody provision or police stations. He used Anglesey as an example where potential projects such as Wylfa B or Land and Lakes would alter the policing picture in a short period.

The Police and Crime Commissioner was able to reassure Darren that he was already reviewing such matters with the Force. Both the Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that there was sufficient flexibility in plans such as the Estates Strategy to cater for a changing landscape in North Wales.

The Police and Crime Commissioner accepted that Anglesey would have a totally different policing requirement if plans went ahead.

Simon Newport, JBB Chairman, continued the debate by querying plans for Colwyn Bay Response and the Deputy Chief Constable promised to update himself on the situation and get back to Simon in due course.

On the topic of compulsory severance both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Chief Constable accepted that it might emerge following the Police Arbitration Tribunal process as an option for forces to use.

It was clear that both the Police and Crime Commissioner and local chief officers were reluctant to use such a measure and stated that they felt that clear and careful workforce and budget planning were a better way to progress any reductions. Recruitment freezes and voluntary severance would be considered before any decision to use compulsory severance.

Simon Newport: "The DCC agreed and stated that there is no intention to use the compulsory severance should it be introduced and all other avenues would be explored before resulting to it. There were no assurances given to allay the fears of members but it seemed a reasonable answer to the question."

Sam Roberts, Chair of the Sergeants' Branch Board, queried intentions in



Deputy Chief Constable Gareth Pritchard.

relation to future promotion processes following the difficulties highlighted in the last 12 months. Deputy Chief Constable Pritchard confirmed that the processes had been amended in the light of events and there would be an opportunity for Federation representatives to observe future selection processes to ensure fairness and transparency.

The Deputy Chief Constable also set out that in certain instances the Force would consider opening out promotion/selection processes to allow external candidates to apply. He was keen to confirm that such instances would be considered after internal candidates had been considered and promised that in addition the Force would seek to ensure that North Wales Police candidates always received sufficient support to achieve career goals.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that at present there were no plans to increase the current powers allocated to PCSOs or indeed to increase their numbers.

The meeting concluded with the Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Chief Constable emphasising their desire to work positively with the North Wales Police Federation and offering an opportunity to engage in a number of ongoing consultation processes.

Federation meets MPs at Westminster

By Dave Thomas, Chair of the North Wales Police Federation Constables' Branch Board

The Constables' Central Committee (CCC) from the Police Federation of England and Wales organised an event at Westminster and invited MPs across England and Wales to join representatives in order to clear the air following what seems to have been a continual onslaught on policing services and officer pay and conditions of service.

It was also an opportunity to rebuild a working relationship with those in Government along with those in opposition. This follows the now infamous and unfortunate on-going Andrew Mitchell incident in Downing Street last year. The CPS has now announced that one officer will be charged with misconduct in public office and others will face gross misconduct charges.

Your Constables' Branch Board members contacted the MPs in North Wales and invited them to come and speak with us, giving us an opportunity to highlight concerns face to face.

The Chair of the CCC, Will Riches, opened the event and the meeting was then addressed by the current Policing Minister, Damian Green.

Unsurprisingly, he recapped the why and how of the implemented cuts to

the policing budget and made reference to a 10 per cent decrease in crime as evidence of how the cuts have still allowed us as the police to provide a crime fighting ability, despite numbers reducing.

The address of the Shadow Police Minister, Jack Dromey, centred on the very recently published, Labour commissioned report into policing by Lord Stevens. This was set up in 2011. The report points to neighbourhood policing being the bedrock of policing in this country. He referred to this report being a form of Royal Commission, something that the Police Federation has repeatedly called for.

Elfyn Llwyd from Plaid Cymru spoke to the gathering and his address was praised by all present. He acknowledged the continuing efforts of officers to maintain law and order despite the cuts to their pay and conditions.

North Wales MPs who attended the event included Albert Owen, Anglesey who expressed his concerns for the policing on the island with Wylfa B and

the new development at Holyhead. He said the custody unit should not be lost and that a court function be retained locally. David Hansen and Chris Ruane also dropped in between debates in the House and interviews.

Guto Bebb praised policing in his area and also the positive responses he had with one local inspector. I asked him directly for his view and opinion on compulsory severance which is at present with the Police Arbitration Tribunal and did he think that its

introduction would undermine the Office of Constable as we are Crown servants and not employees. His reply was direct and to the point, he did not believe that anyone

should expect a job for life in either the private or public sector, but he did believe that Chief Constables would choose not to use it as an option very often if at all.

In a press interview after the event, Wrexham MP Ian Lucas said: "As a Wrexham MP it is important that I have a close working relationship with the police. A good police officer is not just someone who enforces the law, but is part of his or her community. That is certainly my experience of police officers in Wrexham and I am delighted to welcome PC Laidlaw and discuss the work of the Federation with him."



Detectives under pressure

Detectives in England and Wales are feeling the strain with the added pressure resulting from cuts to policing.

The Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum conducted a survey of its members earlier this year with results from 4,000 detectives revealing that 96 per cent of respondents are finding the job stressful, of which 28 per cent finding it very stressful.

The results also showed:

- **56 per cent of respondents said their workload had increased substantially in the last three years, which has led 80 per cent**

to feel under pressure

- **67 per cent of respondents feel emotionally drained from work**
- **78 per cent of respondents said work keeps them away from family and social activities more than they would like**
- **When off-duty, 72 per cent are contacted by their force concerning current case work, at least once a month**
- **Notably, 78 per cent of respondents think the police service to the public has deteriorated – of which 29 per cent think that it has seriously deteriorated.**

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Would you put your health, job and livelihood on the line?

By Sam Roberts, Chair of the North Wales Police Federation Sergeants' Branch Board

I am sure I wasn't the only one sat with tears in my eyes on Sunday 10 November watching the Remembrance Day service from London. I watch it every year and never fail to feel humble and admire what those men and women went through and are still going through, every day, for our country. They are remembered and always will be.



We have our own National Police Memorial Day and this takes place every year, in September, for officers who have died while on duty. Again it's a day to be humble and having attended it's very much one of those days when you are proud to wear your uniform and be a part of the police family.

The Police Bravery Awards have also been held recently and officers from around the country including our own NWP

nominee attended a Downing Street reception where they met the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary.

While they praised the police for the wonderful job, I personally find it difficult to hear this from the Government at a time when the police service is being attacked on every level. As we went to print, we were still awaiting the result of the Police Arbitration Tribunal ruling on compulsory severance and restricted officers.

So, picture also this, you are out on patrol somewhere in the Force area and you deal with a violent prisoner who assaults you causing some injuries. You are hospitalised and the NWP machine goes into overdrive from dealing with the prisoner, your command team/rota paying you a visit, ensuring there is a critical incident debrief, injury on duty forms and, of course, the mandatory bottle of wine from your friendly Federation rep! A good job all round and apart from feeling pretty sorry for yourself you do feel that people have appreciated that you put your own life on the line to protect others.

Six months later, you are at home and the shoulder injury that you sustained in the arrest has not healed and, in fact, you have been told that it will never be any better and you will never be able to be a front-line officer again. But that's OK, it was an injury on duty and you are still getting paid but you are desperate to get back to work to help your colleagues in any way you can. Is that a fair request?

The likelihood is that sooner rather than later you will be medically retired and you will be forced to leave a job that may have been your life and all for doing what you were being paid to do. Gone are the days when you could have been redeployed into an 'office' type role. If you are permanently restricted from the full responsibilities of a police officer then you will be retired out.

Now my question to all of you is: 'Would you put your health, job and livelihood on the line in order to arrest that violent prisoner?'

Of course we would because that would be the last thing on your mind but it is something that you do need to be aware of. It is particularly relevant to those of you having to work 40+ years before you can retire. Look after yourselves, dynamically risk assess each and every situation and ensure that you have the necessary resources in place if you have the time to plan.

And on that cheery note it is that time of year again when I wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New year. It is the worst time to work if you have loved ones and family celebrating at home. I am on nights Christmas week so anyone visiting custody during that time with a 'guest' will be asked to pay an entrance fee... mince pies are a favourite of mine!

Take care out there and get home safely.

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CAPTION COMPETITION WINNER

The winning entry for the caption competition in the last edition of *Your Voice* was: ***“Rover? Is that your real name or the make of your car?”***

The caption came from DC Richie Bebb from the Air and Coastal Unit who wins £100 in Marks and Spencer gift vouchers kindly donated by Roland Smith, providers of our Group Insurance Scheme.

Our picture (left) shows Richie (on the right) receiving the vouchers from Richard Eccles, Secretary of the North Wales Police Federation Joint Branch Board.



Blogberry

Romantic gesture

I understand that there was some trepidation across the ranks at the news that former Federation representatives would be joining the newly formed Resource Management Unit.

There appeared to be a concern that some, if not all, of those taken on to help get the new systems up and running would in fact operate as “poacher turned gamekeeper”.

I would like to point out that the above phrase in no way accuses anyone involved of having a history as a poacher!

After a few months of operating, I am pleased to advise you that those concerns appear to have been unfounded.

Proof, if proof was needed, emerged recently when a member of the team showed his true colours when he allocated every Force employee an extra two days’ leave on his own volition.

Recognising the importance of romance within our busy lives the said caring person allocated US ALL 12 and 13 February 2014 off work, thus enabling us all to fully prepare for Valentine’s Day.

I now truly realise how soft hearted and bashful that person really is, as he has phoned me several times asking me not to tell you about his actions!

All in a lather?

On the theme of the Resources Team, I understand that they are now working weekends to cater for the 24/7 demands from operational colleagues.

This has given a much needed boost to their ability to react to events as they unfold.

Sadly, with reduced numbers in the unit at weekends there is always a suspicion in certain parts that it might not be working to full capacity.

Early reports reached us of music and strange behaviour within the office, which initially suggested that the office was being used to host Ibiza style foam parties.

I am pleased to report that the music originated from a small radio used to replace the normal office banter during times of reduced staffing.

The foam was a whole different matter as it seems that one of the team had used a brief rest period to tidy up the office and kitchen area, taking advantage of the nearby

dishwasher.

Clearly, this type of modern device was a bit of an unknown to the “Duties Guru” who filled it with dirty cups and a generous amount of Fairy Liquid.

Having hit the start button and retired to the office, he quickly found himself disappearing under an approaching tidal wave of soap suds.

Luckily, the bubbles soon faded and no harm was done, in fact, I am reliably informed that certain team members now have much softer hands!

Return to Sender

During the recent hard fought campaign for selection as JBB Chair one of the candidates went to great lengths to set out to the ‘voters’ why he was the ideal choice.

An initial email presented an impressive CV and promised to lead the Board forward with strategic thoughts and vision.

Not content with setting out his stall in electronic format, the potential candidate followed up the initial message with a signed letter posted to all ‘voters’ at their home addresses.

Sadly, it appears some opinions dipped when ‘voters’ had to pay £1.50 to collect those letters from their local sorting office as they had no stamp!

Clocking up the miles in memory of Drummer Rigby

Run to remember



Richard Eccles reaches his destination.

A team of officers from North Wales took on a fund-raising challenge in June to raise funds for a Help For Heroes after the alleged murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich.

The aim was to cycle from Conwy to Woolwich Barracks covering 270 miles in three and a half days.

The first two days saw Federation Secretary Richard Eccles and DCI Alun Oldfield cycle from Conwy to Nuneaton, supported by a "team bus" crewed by Simon Newport and Barry Andrews.

Sadly, Alun caved in to pressure and returned home after day two, leaving Richard to cover the last few miles alone, apart from the support team.

Despite some testing times cycling on fast and congested roads, they were able to reach Woolwich Barracks and deliver a purpose made plaque to Lee's Regiment before retiring to get some well earned rest at the Federation HQ.

As a result of huge generosity from family, friends, colleagues and the general public, the final total sponsorship raised for the ride was £3,000. A further 25 per cent will be added from HM Treasury after Gift Aid is received and hopefully that will help make a difference for wounded troops.

If YOU have a cycling challenge that the team could attempt to raise funds why not set them a dare to complete it in 2014?



It is time to dust off those training shoes and get that New Year resolution to get fitter underway earlier than normal, as well as raising funds for a great cause.

Bryn Hughes, father of PC Nicola Hughes, who was tragically murdered with PC Fiona Bone last year in GMP, has set up a challenge for us to run two miles per day over 125 days starting on 1 December.

Bryn is hoping that every runner will raise £100 and if you are interested then please visit the website and sign up today:

www.pchughesnorthpolerun.co.uk/run-to-remember

A large group of North Wales Police runners, novice and experienced, has already registered, so you will not have to run alone!

Team NWP has already set up a Just Giving site to help you raise funds easily at **www.justgiving.com/Team-NWP1**

Come on get involved and if you really cannot find your trainers in time then please consider making a donation.

See you on the road!



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