

FEDERATION



West Midlands Police Federation

February/March 2022

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TRAINING'**
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WELCOME

Welcome to the February/March 2022 edition of **Federation** - the magazine for members of West Midlands Police Federation.

We are always on the look-out for good news stories so please get in touch if you have something to share with colleagues. It does not have to relate to your policing role - though we are definitely interested in hearing about what's going on around the Force. Do you have an interesting hobby or perhaps you are involved in sport locally, as a player, a manager, a coach?

Just get in touch and let us know.

We would also be interested to hear what you would like to see featured in your magazine.

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'Force has to change decision on Taser training for sergeants'



By **Rich Cooke**, chair of West Midlands Police Federation

We are well and truly into the swing of the New Year now and as a Police Federation we are facing a number of challenges in 2022, not least our campaign to get the Force to change its mind over Taser training for sergeants.

Our colleagues - long-serving officers who are trained and experienced in the use of Taser - are being stripped of the authority to use it because of a nonsensical decision to stop funding one-day refresher training courses.

We have heard from a number of experienced sergeants who have carried Taser

in the past and used it sensibly and confidently and feel its presence as a deterrent has removed the tension from innumerable situations that could otherwise have ended in violence and potentially serious injury.

Not one of those officers can understand the thinking behind this bizarre decision which removes layers of protection, security and confidence in one fell swoop.

And, of course, it is not just our members whose safety is being jeopardised by the Force's position but also the members of the public whose safety might depend on a police sergeant who is ready, willing and able to deploy Taser.

Saj Ahmed has been in the Force for 18 years and he said he has never known such high levels of violent crime in Birmingham or such a rise in the number of weapons on the street.

Saj is an experienced officer and he's not naive enough to think that carrying a Taser is

the answer to all society's ills but he can tell you about the situations he has been in where without it, he and his colleagues could have been seriously injured.

Another experienced sergeant, Rob Horton in Coventry, was one of the first West Midlands Police officers to get Taser training and carried it for more than 10 years. His place on a refresher course was unceremoniously axed just before Christmas and his ticket has now expired.

Hannah Graham carried Taser for eight years and said she misses the security it provided and, although confident that she can handle herself, admits there are times she feels a bit vulnerable without it.

These officers police the frontline every day and often put their own safety at risk to do so. They operate in the real world and they know what it's like to be confronted by a violent criminal or threatened by an angry crowd.



AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THERE IS NO REASON WHY EVERY WEST MIDLANDS POLICE OFFICER WHO WANTS TO CARRY A TASER SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN THE TRAINING AND AUTHORITY TO DO SO, REGARDLESS OF THEIR RANK. SO WE WILL KEEP PRESSING THE FORCE ON THIS ISSUE UNTIL COMMON SENSE PREVAILS.

West Midlands Police Federation thinks its members deserve better than to be told sergeants are no longer being trained to carry Taser on grounds of cost. It is not good enough and it has to change immediately.

Taser could save an officer's life. Sergeants are often the only officers free to support colleagues at back-up shouts, they are mostly singlecrewed in some of the most violent streets of the UK.

To prevent sergeants, who are already trained and have years of experience, using the tactic from undertaking a simple one-day refresher course, on grounds of cost, is nonsensical.

As far as I'm concerned, there is no reason why every West Midlands Police officer who wants to carry a Taser should not be given the training and authority to do so, regardless of their rank. So we will keep pressing the Force on this issue until common sense prevails.

We will also continue to ask questions about the closure of police stations and the worryingly high number of experienced officers who are quitting the Force over pay and pensions frustrations.

The rising level of violence on our streets is also something the Police Federation is keeping a very close eye on.

A recent assessment by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services found the West Midlands had the highest rate of firearms offences (24.5 per 100,000 population) and knife crime offences (1.55 per 1,000 population) so we will be working hard to make sure our members feel they are getting the protection and support they deserve.

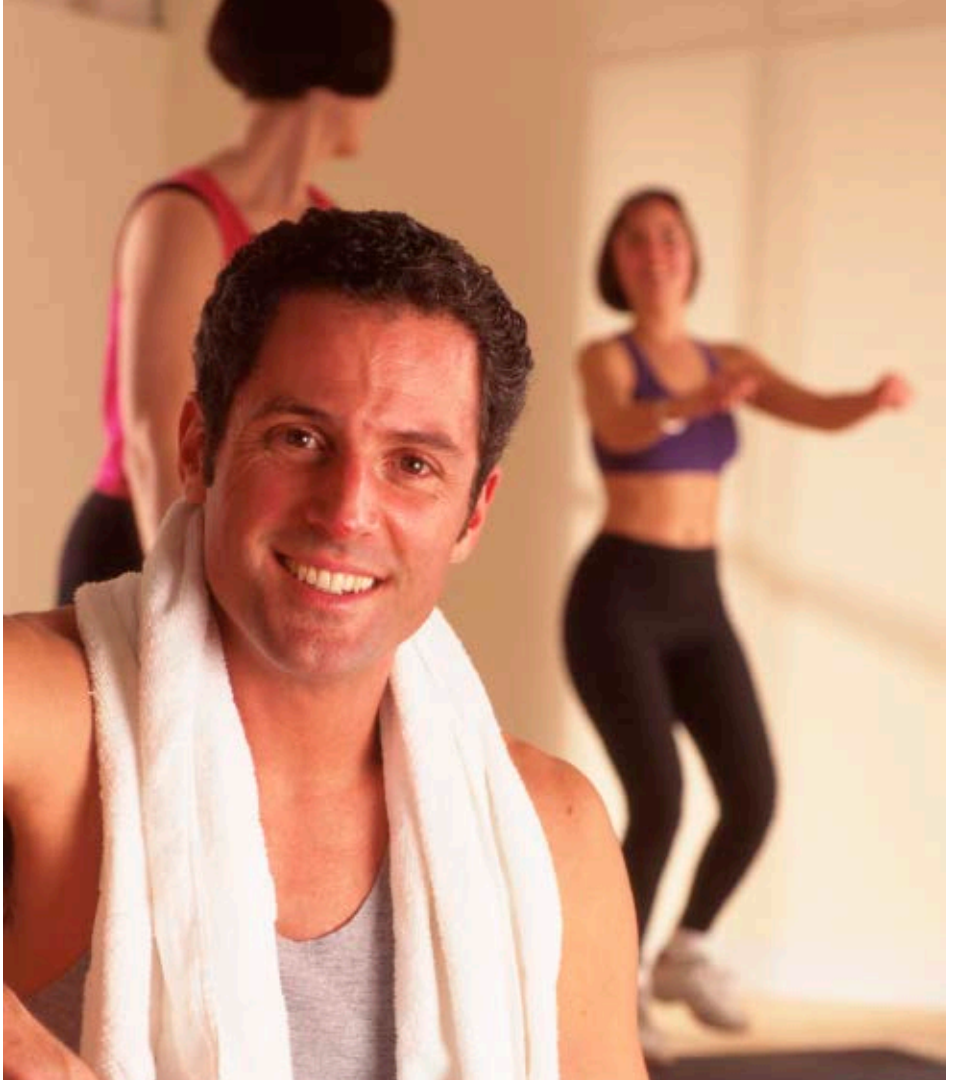
But not all challenges are negative and one I am particularly looking forward to is this year's Police Unity Tour (PUT) charity bike ride which raises vital funds for the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) charity.

I took part in the 2019 PUT ride and will do so again this year. I am actively encouraging colleagues to join me.

It really is an incredible experience and everyone who takes part always talks about the wonderful camaraderie. It brings out the very best of the police family and it is all done in the name of such a worthwhile cause, a charity that supports the families of fallen officers.

So if anyone's New Year fitness pledge is starting to flag, this is the ideal way to get motivated again!

As usual, I will end by urging you all to stay safe and reminding you that West Midlands Police Federation is always here for you and making sure your voices are being heard loud and clear, and acted on.



Want to get fit and healthy?

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE IS ONE OF FOUR FORCES INVOLVED IN A PILOT SCHEME FOR A NEW SPORTS PROGRAMME

Officers are being invited to take part in an exciting new fitness programme which is being piloted at a select few forces across the country.

Created by TeamPolice, in partnership with Sport England, 1TeamActive is a free sport and activity scheme designed to improve the health, lifestyle and wellbeing of those involved.

West Midlands Police officers and staff are being encouraged to apply for the 11-week programme, specifically those who tend to do less than 150 minutes of moderate activity each week, and those who feel that their mental health has suffered due to the demands of policing.

West Midlands Police is one of only four forces across the nation taking part in the pilot programme.

Force wellbeing manager Sophie Petrie said: "It's no secret that movement has a significant impact on our lifestyle and getting active can make us feel happier, as well as healthier.

"So, if you would like a physical and mental boost to your health, then get in touch because you are the ideal candidate.

"Signing up for 1TeamActive will encourage both you and your family to get moving more while having fun."

Those interested in taking part can apply as an individual or sign up with their family.

Each application will be assessed by Cardiff Metropolitan University and, if successful, the participant will begin their journey with a fun, interactive event day.

The programme is a total of 11 weeks, including two activity classes a week, led by an instructor and local to the participant's home.

Sophie added: "1Team Active aims to get participants moving for at least 150 minutes a week. Plus, we want everyone to feel like they're in this together, and thanks to an interactive platform, every participant will be able to stay in touch with one another, share stories, challenge themselves and motivate their peers.

"And the best bit is, this is all totally free to those taking part."

The aim is that the scheme will be rolled out nationally across all forces, depending on the outcome of the scheme.

If you are interested in applying then email Sophie.

Serious concerns over approach to Taser training for sergeants



Sergeants trained and experienced in the use of Taser are being forced to stop using the devices after a “nonsensical” decision by the Force not to fund a one-day refresher training course for them.

West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke, who wants to see all officers trained and equipped with Taser if they want to be, says the Force’s decision comes at a time when the recent assessment by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services found the West Midlands had the highest rate of firearms offences (24.5 per 100,000 population) and knife crime offences (1.55 per 1,000 population).

“As a Federation we have serious concerns about the current approach,” says Rich, “The current level of risk faced by our frontline officers of all ranks is there for all to see. We want all our frontline colleagues of any rank to be afforded the protection Taser is proven to provide. We know that in 9 out of 10 cases where Taser is present there is no violence – so we could be preventing many of these assaults or worse.

“Put simply, Taser could save an officer’s life. Sergeants are often the only officers free to support colleagues at back-up shouts, they are mostly single-crewed in some of the most violent streets of the UK. This is the least they deserve, but to prevent sergeants, who are already trained and have years of experience, using the tactic from undertaking a simple one-day refresher course, on grounds of cost, is nonsensical to me.”

Before Christmas, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Simon Foster

has described how according to official data 173 cases of assaults on West Midlands Police constables were recorded in December, 2020 despite strict Covid restrictions being in place for part of that month.

Those incidents included 19 that were recorded in a 48-hour period between Christmas and New Year, which saw an officer sexually assaulted and another officer rushed to hospital after ingesting blood from a person with Hepatitis C while trying to stop a bleed.

“ WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND HOW, DESPITE FACING UNRIVALLED LEVELS OF SERIOUS VIOLENCE IN WEST MIDLANDS, IT IS OUR OFFICERS WHO ARE EXPOSED TO ADDITIONAL RISK WHEN EVEN RURAL FORCES LIKE NORTHANTS HAVE ALLOWED ALL FRONTLINE COLLEAGUES TO CARRY TASER, IF THEY WISH.

Another incident saw a 34-year-old man jailed for six months after admitting attacking a police officer.

The figure has been described as “completely and utterly unacceptable” by the PCC.

He added: “We all know policing is a job with serious risks, but these numbers are too high.”

Following numerous contacts from concerned sergeants around the Force, Rich and Federation branch secretary Tim Rogers questioned the Chief Constable over the decision made in November to cease providing refresher courses to sergeants in front facing roles who are already trained. This means when their training times out, they will have to stop carrying Taser.

The Force says its approach to Taser is set by the Force Strategic Threat and Risk

Assessment (STRA) 2021-22 which concluded that consideration had been given to allowing sergeants to carry Taser. But it was decided the greatest need was within frontline officers most likely to be deployed to most incidents that warrant the use of Taser and this will invariably be the frontline PCs across the forward-facing departments.

However, on 18 November it was confirmed that sergeants will not be trained in Taser. Some sergeants will carry Taser for a short

while longer but only until their training authority runs out.

“The reason provided was that there was not sufficient funding to train all the sergeants,” says Rich, “There will be a review of the STRA for 2022-23 and it is vital that the Federation is an integral part of that process. We cannot understand how, despite facing unrivalled levels of serious violence in West Midlands, it is our officers who are exposed to additional risk when even rural forces like Northants have allowed all frontline colleagues to carry taser, if they wish.

“We will, of course, continue to participate in consultative forums with the Force and put our views forward. We are currently collating examples of where officers have encountered danger or worse where Taser would likely have made a vital difference.”

● **Officers’ stories, see Pages 7 – 9.**

Taser: has someone got to be seriously injured before Force sees sense?

A West Midlands Police sergeant has warned colleagues could face serious injury without the protection of Taser after the Force announced it was no longer funding one-day refresher training courses for them.

Sergeant Hannah Graham, who has been based at Stechford since her promotion four years ago, is among the sergeants affected by the decision which has been branded nonsensical by the Police Federation.

Hannah, who was a response PC across Birmingham for 14 years before becoming a sergeant, said she found it difficult to understand the Force's stance.

She said: "I really can't get my head around it. It's as if they have no idea what is going on. But what is it going to take before they realise? Has someone got to get really badly hurt before they see sense?"

Hannah was fully trained and equipped with Taser for eight years but was unable to convert to the new model as a result of the funding decision and is no longer authorised to carry it because her ticket has now expired.

She said: "After having it for eight years, I really miss it and there have been times when I have felt vulnerable. I am quite slightly built and, while not suggesting I can't handle myself, I always felt it was there as added security."

"I am a proactive sergeant, I like to get out there and I am nearly always single crewed and sometimes I really wish I still had the Taser."

Hannah said Taser was more often than not used as a deterrent; to defuse

tense and potentially violent situations rather than actually deployed.

She explained: "Sometimes you just need to put your hands on it and it defuses the situation, sometimes you have to draw it but it is very much a deterrent, it calms people down because basically they don't want to be Tasered."

"I just can't get my head around the decision not to make it available for all frontline officers. There is an argument for not giving it to office-based sergeants but the ideal scenario would be to make it available to every serving officer who requests it."

Hannah said levels of violence on the streets have risen noticeably in recent years and made the need for proper PPE such as Taser essential for frontline officers.

She added: "It's something I am very passionate about and I find it so frustrating that the Force is taking this attitude towards it. It feels as if it is really unaware of what's going on out on the streets."

“ I JUST CAN'T GET MY HEAD AROUND THE DECISION NOT TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE FOR ALL FRONTLINE OFFICERS. THERE IS AN ARGUMENT FOR NOT GIVING IT TO OFFICE-BASED SERGEANTS BUT THE IDEAL SCENARIO WOULD BE TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO EVERY SERVING OFFICER WHO REQUESTS IT.

Sergeant Hannah Graham.



Taser training for sergeants: Force decision 'incomprehensible'

A West Midlands Police sergeant is backing calls for the Force to rethink its policy on Taser training amid surging levels of violent crime and assaults against officers.

Saj Ahmed said he found it incomprehensible that the Force had decided not to fund one-day refresher training courses for sergeants, effectively stripping them of the authority to carry Taser.

Saj, who has been based at Bournville Lane since his promotion in 2017, was initially trained to use the equipment in 2010 when they were brought in for non-firearms officers and has carried it ever since.

He said he fully supported the Police Federation campaign for all frontline officers to be fully trained and equipped with Taser if they requested it and said such a move had become vital for the safety and security of colleagues.

Saj said: "In 18 years of policing I have never known so much violent crime and so

many people carrying weapons, especially young people.

"And what is more concerning is the apparent willingness to use violence against police officers - it is certainly the highest I have ever known it.

"And to think that rank - being a sergeant - should be an obstacle to carrying a piece of kit that has saved me from so many violent situations over the years is beyond me.

"I am not saying Taser is the answer to everything. I have been in many situations where it has been effective and, if I was not in possession of it. I would have been injured if not worse and if officers did not have Taser as an option the assaults on police would be even higher."

Saj said the Force's decision on Taser training for sergeants was all the more frustrating because the benefits of carrying outweighed the downsides to its routine deployment.

He said: "In over 11 years of carrying Taser,

I can honestly say I have only ever seen positive outcomes in my personal experience.

"I am proactive, always out on jobs, supporting and backing up colleagues, and Taser has prevented serious harm to myself and my colleagues on countless occasions."

Saj said officers who carried Taser often found its appearance on their belt or vest was enough to prevent tense situations from escalating.

He said: "Just the mere presence of it is a massive deterrent. To put it in perspective, in 11 years of carrying Taser I have only fired it 10 times, but have drawn or red dotted countless times, which demonstrates the level of deterrent it is, without having to fully fire it."

Saj said there had been at least three occasions in the last four years where, as a sergeant equipped with Taser, he had been able to prevent serious injury to himself and fellow officers who had come under attack during violent incidents, by deploying Taser.

He said: "This notion that training for sergeants has become a cost thing is just beyond me. Taser should not be a rank-specific thing, and safety of officers should not be compromised due to cost.

"If you are a frontline officer - irrespective of rank - and you are happy to carry and take on the responsibility to carry Taser, then you should be afforded the opportunity to do so."

“ IF YOU ARE A FRONTLINE OFFICER - IRRESPECTIVE OF RANK - AND YOU ARE HAPPY TO CARRY AND TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY TO CARRY TASER, THEN YOU SHOULD BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.

Sergeant supports Federation's Taser campaign

West Midlands Police Sergeant Rob Horton has backed Police Federation calls for a review of Force Taser policy after being denied a place on one-day refresher course.

Rob was among the first West Midlands Police officers to carry Taser after its introduction in the late 2000s and used it effectively for 11 years.

Based at Coventry Central Response since joining the Force in 2006, Rob was promoted to sergeant in 2019.

He managed to get on a conversion course authorising him to carry the new X2 model but his ticket ran out in December when he was unable to complete a refresher.

He explained: "I was on the first ever training course with West Midlands Police for Taser at Ryton in 2008 and I started carrying it in 2009.

"Since 2009, I carried it continuously up until a few months ago. When we changed from the X26 to the X2 model a lot of sergeants weren't able to get it, but through persistence I spoke to the administrators in the training department and was told there had been a change and that the senior leadership team had now said sergeants still authorised for the old Taser could train for the new one.

"So I had a conversion course to the X2 around two years ago and until a few months ago I have been carrying the current Taser.

"I had done my first one-day refresher course for the X2 and had my next yearly re-qual booked in for a Friday in mid-December but when I called up on the Monday I was told sergeants were no longer being trained and that recently some had turned up for the course and had been sent home.

"If I hadn't called them to ask a question I would have turned up for my Taser course after rescheduling my shifts and a long drive to be then sent home.

"I then found out my course hadn't been cancelled and I got an email telling me I had failed to attend. My slot wasn't filled so there was a vacant space that I could have filled, so their argument that they need to train more PCs just doesn't really make any sense."

Rob said he had always found his use of Taser to be very effective in his frontline role and in 2014 he was commended by his chief inspector for using it to support his colleagues and deal with an angry crowd during a demonstration at Warwick University.

He said he found it was a very efficient way of controlling and de-escalating potentially violent situations and had deployed it around 20 times in the 11 years he carried it.

Like fellow sergeants on the Force, Rob said it was difficult to overstate Taser's effectiveness as a deterrent.

He said: "Just having on my vest makes a massive difference and certainly makes people think twice.

"But I am now in the position where I will revert back to my baton and spray. I've never used my baton and I've used parva spray once, which unfortunately took about a minute to start working. In effect, I now am in the position where I am being forced to use a higher level of force on a subject, potentially resulting in me causing serious injury to them, while at the same time putting myself and my colleagues in greater danger. Taser gives you the tactical option to maintain distance between yourself and the

“TASER GIVES YOU THE TACTICAL OPTION TO MAINTAIN DISTANCE BETWEEN YOURSELF AND THE SUBJECT AND IS A MUCH BETTER WAY TO DEAL WITH A VIOLENT OR AGITATED PEOPLE THAN ENGAGING THEM AT CLOSER QUARTERS WITH A BATON OR SPRAY.

subject and is a much better way to deal with a violent or agitated people than engaging them at closer quarters with a baton or spray.

"I am a proactive sergeant, I carried Taser and I used it with confidence whenever necessary and it just seems bizarre that I now find myself in potentially dangerous situations but am not allowed to carry it because I am a sergeant."





West Midlands Police Federation deputy chair Sam Hughes.

“ I WILL BE GETTING OUT TO POLICE STATIONS SO THAT PEOPLE CAN PUT A FACE TO A NAME AND I REALLY WANT TO ENCOURAGE OFFICERS TO TALK TO ME ABOUT THE ISSUES THEY ARE FACING AND HOW THEY FEEL THE FEDERATION CAN HELP MORE.

Sam plans to put focus on officer wellbeing

Sam Hughes plans to put officer wellbeing at the heart of everything she does in her new role as West Midlands Police Federation deputy chair.

Sam, who has already launched a Federation booklet aimed at helping officers and staff facing a diagnosis of cancer or other serious illnesses, is aiming to visit as many police stations and departments as possible to help improve the visibility of Federation branch officials and also encourage members to talk about their concerns.

“When I returned to work in 2018 after treatment for breast cancer, I decided to become a Federation workplace representative and wanted to share my experiences to help others,” she explains.

“I enjoy helping people and offering support and, with a career that has included working in

the domestic violence unit, response and neighbourhood policing and public order, I can relate to the issues officers are facing.

“This new Federation role is a complete change for me but I believe I bring a fresh pair of eyes to the Federation branch and I am determined to make a difference to members.

“I will be getting out to police stations so that people can put a face to a name and I really want to encourage officers to talk to me about the issues they are facing and how they feel the Federation can help more.

“I really want to put a firm focus on officer wellbeing to see what more we could be doing to support officers. More and more officers are feeling more comfortable sharing their experiences of struggling with their mental health and I want to look at what else we might be able to offer by way of helping

them more.”

Sam is going to talk to wellbeing leads at other Federation branches around the country to see if there are initiatives that could be duplicated in the West Midlands.

In addition to taking on the wellbeing portfolio, Sam’s role involves supporting branch chair, Rich Cooke.

“I am really looking forward to getting to grips with this new position and believe I can offer some ideas that will really benefit the membership,” says Sam.

“I would like to encourage any members who have ideas for how we could improve what the Federation offers to get in touch with me and also to let me know if they want me to call in at their station or department.”

Sam can be contacted at Samantha.hughes@polfed.org

Sid takes on deputy secretary role

With an analytical approach to problem-solving, Chris James wants to make a long-term commitment to the Federation for the benefit of members and the organisation as a whole.

Chris, known as Sid in a nod to the British comedy actor, was elected as the deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation in December and started his new full-time role at Guardians House early in January.

"It has been a massive change from my former role in the Force support unit at Tipton," says Sid, who has been a workplace Federation rep since 2018.

“ I AM STILL YOUNGISH IN SERVICE AND QUITE YOUNG TO BE IN THIS POSITION SO I CAN MAKE A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO THE FEDERATION AND I THINK THIS WILL BENEFIT THE MEMBERS IN TERMS OF THE FACT THAT I CAN OFFER SOME CONTINUITY.

"But I am adjusting to that change and already starting to settle in. Having been a rep for four years, I have considerable experience of dealing with a wide range of issues but, of course, I was workplace based so was fitting in my Fed work around my full-time position with the Force.

"I am trained as a CAPLO so have handled conduct cases and more recently I have completed an equality course. But alongside this, I became a Federation trustee 18 months ago so I have a good understanding of the finances and my analytical approach helps with this.



New West Midlands Police Federation deputy secretary Chris (Sid) James.

"I am still youngish in service and quite young to be in this position so I can make a long-term commitment to the Federation and I think this will benefit the members in terms of the fact that I can offer some continuity."

While a workplace rep, Sid was instrumental in securing a Federation welfare van under a joint initiative with the Force and this new vehicle is expected to be delivered in the spring.

He has also secured chairs and pop-up tents that will be available to officers who are preserving crime scenes or otherwise exposed to the elements for long periods.

Sid is working with the national

Federation to improve the CMS time log system to enable reps to more easily record the time they have spent on Federation work.

And, while acknowledging that the West Midlands Police Federation branch is one of the most efficient in the country, he is now on a mission to try to make it the most green branch with plans afoot to reduce its carbon footprint.

"I have lots of ideas for how we can improve and I am really looking forward to getting my teeth into these," Chris says.

Chris will work closely with Tim Rogers, the former deputy secretary and more recently interim secretary, who has now been elected as branch secretary.

Federation first as regional solicitor is appointed

A new solicitor with wide-ranging experience in employment law and HR has been appointed by the Police Federation and will work across the four branches in the West Midlands.

Tim Rogers, West Midlands Police Federation secretary, first proposed a regionally based Federation solicitor last year and the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) has worked closely with him to launch the pilot project.

Reyhana Koser has joined the PFEW in-house legal team and will provide employment legal advice across all four branches in the Federation's Region 3 – Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia and West Midlands.

Tim explained: "Based on the success of the national in-house legal team, we wanted to ensure that branches had easy access to legal advice and support and felt that having a dedicated solicitor within the region would really improve the service we could offer members.



Reyhana Koser.

"This is the first time a regionally-based solicitor has been appointed by the Federation and I am confident that this will be a great benefit for all."

Reyhana will be based predominantly at Guardians House, the West Midlands Police Federation office in Sheldon, Birmingham, and will be able to visit the other three regional

branches.

"I am really looking forward to working for the Federation and getting to know the branch officials," says Reyhana, "By working on a regional basis, I believe I can help the Federation provide an exceptional level of service to officers seeking legal advice and support."

Reyhana has more than 17 years' experience in a wide range of employment law and HR matters with previous clients including large multi-nationals, housing associations, colleges and schools.

She also has significant practical experience with claimant work, providing advice and assistance in relation to grievances, disciplinary and/or dismissal, discrimination, early conciliation and employment tribunals.

In her spare time, Reyhana enjoys walking and hiking and she has completed the Three Peaks Challenge. She loves walking around the Lakes, Cornwall and the Malvern Hills. Reyhana enjoys cooking for family and friends, mostly Indian food, and reading thrillers and war and spy novels.

In the past, she has carried out extensive voluntary work with a charity in Kenya, Tanzania and India, teaching children and providing support for families in deprived areas.

“ BY WORKING ON A REGIONAL BASIS, I BELIEVE I CAN HELP THE FEDERATION PROVIDE AN EXCEPTIONAL LEVEL OF SERVICE TO OFFICERS SEEKING LEGAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT. ”

Detectives urged to take part in survey

Detectives and investigators are being urged to take part in a survey into the impact of changes to legal guidance on charging criminal cases introduced by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

The call comes from West Midlands Police Federation's Jon Nott who is secretary of the Police Federation National Detectives' Forum (PFNDF).

The PFNDF has launched a survey to understand how the changes, which were made in December 2020, have impacted detectives a year on.

Jon said: "The Federation is aware of the impact of the changes to the DPP guidance on charging, and the knock-on effect they've had on workloads and case file preparation time.

"Detectives are spending more time in front of their computer screens rather than being out of the office and on the job, investigating crime and dealing with victims and witnesses.

"It's simply adding to workloads and to the lengths of investigations, as well as increasing stress detectives are experiencing and



decreasing morale.

"Now we need detectives' help to fully understand the impact of the changes. We want to build an evidence base so we can raise the issues with our chief officers, police and crime commissioners, MPs and in the media.

"This is why we're asking detectives to complete a short survey, the results of which will help us to understand the issue from your point of view and give us direct feedback on how the changes have had an impact on you and your ability to serve the people of the West Midlands."

The survey is open until 9am on Monday 7 February.

To take part in the survey, contact the West Midlands Police Federation branch by emailing westmidlandspf@polfed.org



NOW WE NEED DETECTIVES' HELP TO FULLY UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGES. WE WANT TO BUILD AN EVIDENCE BASE SO WE CAN RAISE THE ISSUES WITH OUR CHIEF OFFICERS, POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS, MPS AND IN THE MEDIA.

Officer's appeal for life-saving stem cell donor for teenage daughter



Izzie during a recent hospital stay.

A West Midlands detective is urging Federation members to join the stem cell register after her teenage daughter was diagnosed with two life-threatening, rare blood disorders.

DS Sally Olsen is making the appeal for 13-year-old Izzie, who is in desperate need of a stem cell transplant as she continues to fight the disorders.

Shortly after being diagnosed with aplastic anaemia - a condition which occurs when your body stops producing enough new blood cells - in June last year, Izzie was then given the news that she had the secondary extremely rare condition, paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH), which is when red

blood cells are easily destroyed.

"It was very, very sudden," explains Sally, "Izzie is a really keen netball player and it was literally like, one weekend she was playing netball and then the next weekend, she had developed this unexplainable large bruising.

"Izzie was just 12 at the time and it was very frightening. Izzie's life has turned upside down.

"You have to think about what life looks like for Izzie now, both short and long-term. And also for Izzie's 10-year-old sister and the rest of our family. Life totally changes. Izzie was even in hospital for her 13th birthday.

"For everyone else, life is starting to return back to normal. Izzie's friends are all back at

school again, but she just can't do that. It's so hard."

Having the condition means Izzie is vulnerable to infection, which has meant she has extremely limited contact with her friends, is currently home-schooled and is not allowed to enjoy playing netball any more.

Izzie's life is now centred around hospital visits, with regular routine appointments taking place every Monday and Thursday for blood and platelet transfusions.

"We're watching her all the time. Any bruising or blood blisters, and we need to go to hospital immediately," said Sally, who joined the police 22 years ago.

The best solution for Izzie would be to find a perfect match stem transplant donor.

Sally added: "There's no denying, these are life-threatening conditions, it's heartbreaking. Finding a donor would literally change Izzie's life. I'm doing this for Izzie.

"Of course, as soon as we could, all Izzie's close family went for tests to see if we matched her but none of us did, which was

“THERE'S NO DENYING, THESE ARE LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS, IT'S HEARTBREAKING. FINDING A DONOR WOULD LITERALLY CHANGE IZZIE'S LIFE. I'M DOING THIS FOR IZZIE.

obviously disappointing. But now we've joined the register, I hold hope that maybe we could help someone.”

Last year, Izzie was told that a perfect match had been located but due to a last-minute health check of the donor, the transplant was devastatingly cancelled, just days before the procedure was set to take place.

“When Izzie was diagnosed, it was a total shock, but when we were told she had a 10/10 donor, it was amazing – and so overwhelmingly emotional. Then to have that chance just ripped away, was devastating,” Sally said.

“The way we like to look at it now though is that there is a 10/10 donor out there somewhere, so there must be another one.”

Becoming a stem cell donor is easy, and, if you are found to be a match, you will then be asked to take part in a preliminary health check before donating.

There are two different ways a person can donate stem cells, either peripheral stem cell donation or bone marrow donation. Izzie needs to receive stem cell donation, which takes around five hours for the donor and is very similar to somebody giving blood.

Depending on your age, you can register to donate with Anthony Nolan (if you are aged between 16 and 30) or DKMS (if you are over 30 and up until 60, as long as you meet other specific criteria). Both organisations match donors and patients across the world.

“So many people are waiting to find a donor, not just Izzie. You could help someone across the world. You could literally save their life within a day,” said Sally.

Sally said that one of the most vital parts of joining the register is physically posting your swabs back to Anthony Nolan or DKMS.

“SO MANY PEOPLE ARE WAITING TO FIND A DONOR, NOT JUST IZZIE. YOU COULD HELP SOMEONE ACROSS THE WORLD. YOU COULD LITERALLY SAVE THEIR LIFE WITHIN A DAY.



Izzie and Mum Sally.

“To register, you literally just swab the inside of your mouth and send the sample back in a pre-paid envelope, it's free – you don't pay a penny. As police officers, it's as simple as taking a DNA swab from a prisoner in custody, that's it. It couldn't be easier to register,” she explained.

“But your registration forms and swabs are no good if they're just sitting on the side. All you have to do is send it back – apparently, after appeals like this, both Anthony Nolan and DKMS are inundated with enquiries but only a fraction of those registration packs are returned.”

If you join the donation register, you will have a 1 in 800 chance of being asked to donate.

There will be a virtual donor drive especially for officers taking place online on 2 and 9 February. Members can access this by visiting the Force intranet.

There will also be an in-person drive at Lloyd House on 2 and 9 March, from 10am until 4pm.

Sally is asking as many people as possible one to attend the events if they can, reassuring those who go that registration takes a maximum of five minutes.



Izzie.



‘Roads policing must be seen as an essential’

Roads policing is absolutely essential for forces and the safety of the public should not be just a “nice to do”.

That’s the view of Tim Rogers, West Midlands Police Federation secretary and the Federation’s national driver training lead.

Tim has hit out at the current state of roads policing, which he says is all too often treated like a poor relation which has a huge impact on road safety.

Tim said: “Motorists here in the West Midlands and up and down the country have the right to know their roads are being policed and that we’re keeping them safe. In our region alone we have seen a 30 per cent reduction in dedicated roads policing officer and that has had an impact on the service the Force provides.

“For far too long now roads policing has been treated as a poor relation with cuts to budgets, cuts to officer numbers and cuts to training.

“For many of my colleagues, a large percentage of their time is spent away from roads policing on other areas – and it’s just not good enough.

“Roads policing is an absolutely essential

part of policing and should be properly resourced, not least for the safety of the public, but we also know that a proportion of those who commit a road traffic offence are involved in other criminality. These serial recidivists are not detected by inanimate technology, they need officers on the roads.

“The public want us to deal with that, to go after the high-level criminals and those who drive like idiots to keep them safe.”

He was also critical of chief officers who, he said, are given a budget with an expectation that there would be a ‘proportionate’ investment in roads policing. He challenged the Government, PCCs and force leaders to ensure that along with the Uplift Programme on recruitment there was a proportionate increase in funding for roads policing, infrastructure and training needs.

“More than 18 months ago, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services published the findings of its own inspection and concluded that roads policing is seen as less of a priority than it should be and highlighted that spending on roads policing had been reduced by 34 per cent meaning there were fewer officers dealing



Tim Rogers, West Midlands Police Federation secretary and the Federation’s national driver training lead.

with the offences that cause road deaths,” Tim explained.

“The report made it clear that the Government, police and crime commissioners, chief officers, and the College of Policing had to recognise the importance of roads policing

“FOR FAR TOO LONG NOW ROADS POLICING HAS BEEN TREATED AS A POOR RELATION WITH CUTS TO BUDGETS, CUTS TO OFFICER NUMBERS AND CUTS TO TRAINING. FOR MANY OF MY COLLEAGUES, A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THEIR TIME IS SPENT AWAY FROM ROADS POLICING ON OTHER AREAS – AND IT’S JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

in reducing death on the roads. But still we are not seeing adequate levels of investment and the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) has consistently raised concerns about road safety.”

Tim believes roads policing budgets have been mismanaged by chiefs and, with the Government indicating it wants the roads policed, wants to see roads policing aligned with the Department for Transport to protect the budget.

Tim says while the Force has road deaths and serious injuries as a key performance indicator this should be discussed at chief officer level more regularly as this would send a clear message to the families of the 100 people killed on the region’s roads in a year that it is taking road safety seriously. Roads policing is already part of the Strategic Policing Requirement.

Tim’s comments follow [an investigation by Auto Express](#) into the impact of cuts to road policing.

He said that the cuts of the austerity years have not only seen a reduction in the numbers of roads policing officers but has also led to what he describes as a “brain drain”.

“We’ve lost an awful lot of experience as part of those cutbacks,” he said, “And while the Government is saying it is recruiting 20,000 new officers they’re not an immediate substitute for the brain drain we’ve experienced in the last decade and more and we are not seeing a commitment to increase the number of specialist roads policing officers.

“It takes time, training and investment to bring new recruits up to the level that we need – we’re going to be playing catch-up for 10 maybe 15 years.”

Call for re-investment in roads policing

Tim Rogers has called for more investment in roads policing after an investigation found half of Britain’s fixed speed cameras don’t work.

He says money would be better spent in other areas of roads policing than replacing broken cameras.

He was speaking after a [BBC Panorama documentary](#) broadcast on Monday investigated the increasing risks motorists face on the roads and asked whether weaker policing was to blame.

“There’s no simple fix to the issue of improving safety on our roads, which has been highlighted by this BBC documentary,” said Tim.

“While it’s disappointing to see that so many fixed speed cameras aren’t working, they only play a small part in roads policing.

“They often seem to penalise generally

law-abiding people but don’t really deter or catch uninsured drivers, drink drivers, dangerous drivers and motorists using their phones at the wheel.

“We need proper investment in roads policing to help ensure the safety of motorists, road users and the general public. And by that I mean we need more cops in cars.

“More roads police officers and more visibility on the roads will act as a deterrent while also helping us go after dangerous drivers and those involved in other criminality.”

Tim added: “Effective roads policing needs officers to engage with drivers, to educate them and to help improve driving standards. Since the cuts to policing budgets began in 2009, we have seen a lack of investment in roads policing and it’s time this was addressed as a matter of urgency.”



Are we alone in the universe or not?

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE INSPECTOR ROY TEAGUE HAS JOINED FORCES WITH FORMER DS JOHN HANSON TO WRITE A BOOK ON THE INVOLVEMENT OF OFFICERS IN THE UK WITH THE UFO PHENOMENON. ROY GIVES AN INSIGHT INTO THE SUBJECT IN THIS EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE.

Unidentified flying objects (UFOs), extra-terrestrials, abductions, missing time and actual first-hand police involvement in such incidents?! These phenomena, and more, have been the subject of in-depth investigation and much debate in a book shortly to be released in mid-2022 by myself and my co-author John Hanson.

The title of the book is "The Bluelight Casefiles". It was given this title as it catalogues the sightings of UFOs and other linked phenomenon experienced or investigated by UK police officers since sightings began to be collated back in the 1940s. It is the first book in history to ever record UK police only specific involvement in the UFO phenomenon. The number of police officers who have come forward to provide their accounts is staggering. It is my hope that this article will encourage other police officers to contact John or I and do the same.

Now why would I, a serving police inspector involve myself in such a topic knowing full well to do so may cause damage to my professional reputation, career and make me the subject of ridicule? Why would I ever conceive of involving myself in the publication of such a book, especially considering I have never had a sighting myself? Has the firearms inspector gone mad? Has he chosen to commit career suicide? Whatever will the Brass on the top floor at Lloyd House Police Headquarters think or more importantly the armed officers I work alongside? I guess fate will decide that in time. So why have I done this? How did my

journey start and what is my opinion on the subject?

Why have I done this?

Simple. I want to know the truth. Are we alone in the universe or not?

How do I expect to achieve this?

Investigate, collate and examine the evidence. Even if that investigation leads me down a dark path and the evidence to an uncomfortable conclusion.

How did my journey start?

Several years ago I ended up watching a documentary on television after arriving home from a busy late shift. I was too tired to get off the sofa and retrieve the remote control on the other side of the room so left the channel on. I can even remember the title of the documentary which was called "UFOs and Nukes". It involved UFO incursions over American military bases which had rendered their nuclear missiles unlaunchable for quite lengthy periods of time.

Hundreds of service personnel have come forward over the years to attest to this

occurring at numerous different bases across the United States over many years. I then learned that the same had happened in Russia and China.

I enjoyed the documentary but was sceptical. However, at the back of my mind I couldn't but wonder why hundreds of military personnel would make up such a fantastical story? This led me to ponder who makes the best and the most credible witnesses to such phenomenon? For me it's those that are in professional occupations who give more detailed evidence than perhaps others do by virtue of their training. Furthermore, owing to their professions they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by coming forward. These occupations include but are not limited to doctors, pilots, scientists, politicians and, of course, police officers.

I don't know why, curiosity I suppose, but I ended up Googling something like "police sightings of UFOs" and, to my amazement, a retired BTP Detective Constable by the name of Gary Heseltine had created an internet site in 2002 called PRUFOs (Police Reported UFO Sightings). There were just over 100 sightings on there from UK cops. I thought to myself what a great job our colleague had done. This is when I started to collate sightings of UFOs reported by UK police officers and got into the weeds of those reports myself.

In September of 2019 I met my co-author at a conference. John Hanson was an ex-detective sergeant and 30-year veteran of WMP who I discovered also had an interest in the subject. I was also soon to discover in the weeks and months to follow that John is without doubt one of the world's most dedicated and talented investigators in the field of Ufology. In my professional opinion,

“ I HAVE GONE FROM BEING SCEPTICAL TO OPEN MINDED TO NOW BELIEVING BEYOND ALL REASONABLE DOUBT THAT NOT ONLY ARE WE NOT ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE BUT ALSO THAT FROM TIME TO TIME WE ARE VISITED BY INTELLIGENT LIFE FAR, FAR GREATER THAN OUR OWN.



Authors Insp Roy Teague (left) and former DS John Hanson.

John makes the majority of the other so called 'experts' look like they're standing still. We spoke about how police officers by the nature of their training made excellent witnesses. Shortly after that a partnership began where we both combined forces and sought out police officers who had either had a UFO encounter or had investigated an encounter reported to them by the public.

As a result of this, we have spoken in person to numerous witnesses. Some of the more recent sightings, as you would expect with smart phones being freely available, have been captured on camera. The evidence is compelling to say the least. Naturally, however, as you would expect, some of the older sightings were not captured on video or camera. Where this is the case, we have had our colleagues sketch what they saw. Sadly, some of our colleagues who had reported sightings back in the distant past are no longer with us. We hope we have done them proud by bringing their accounts into the public arena.

What is my opinion?

Based on the accumulation of "best evidence" and, as a result of my investigations which have lasted several years, I have gone from being sceptical to open minded to now believing beyond all reasonable doubt that not only are we not alone in the universe but also that from time to time we are visited by intelligent life far, far greater than our own.

There simply is too much evidence for me to believe otherwise; too many accounts from credible witnesses, including my fellow police officers, of unknown aircraft making impossible manoeuvres that would simply break any human pilot's neck. This, combined with some incredible footage leaked by military and Government staff of unidentified craft toying with our most advanced military fighter jets, has led me to this conclusion.

However, it must be said - and I wish to clarify this here and now - that it is my opinion that 99.9 per cent of UFO sightings have a

rational explanation. It is the 0.01 per cent that I am interested in and it is the investigation into those sightings in particular by police officers that has led me to the conclusion I have.

I suspect a great deal of UFO sightings are in fact craft being developed and tested by our military. Our governments will never admit this and why should they? After all, every nation has the right to protect its secrets in the interests of national security. I fully agree with this. That said, and going back to the 0.01 per cent, I am absolutely convinced that it is these craft that are not man made and continue to visit us from elsewhere in the universe.

Now before I get carted off to a padded room and someone offers me a tin foil hat, I would like the reader to consider this. When people are asked if they believe in UFOs and extra-terrestrial life, if the answer is "no" the reason almost always given is "because I've never seen one". Yet most of those same people will believe in the existence of God despite never seeing him. In fact, more than 90 per cent of the world's population believe in a supreme deity of some kind when there is no evidence whatsoever. Their belief in their God therefore is purely based on faith which, of course, is an amazing thing. No one would dare question or poke fun at those people - and quite rightly so - and yet when someone provides actual evidence of the UFO phenomenon via witness statements, photos and footage, they are in the main stigmatised as a loose cannon and labelled as unhinged. This, I must say, does make me smile and causes me some inner amusement.

Why Government denial?

Well, let's say for argument's sake and hypothetically speaking, of course, that governments around the world had undisputable evidence that UFOs and their extra-terrestrial

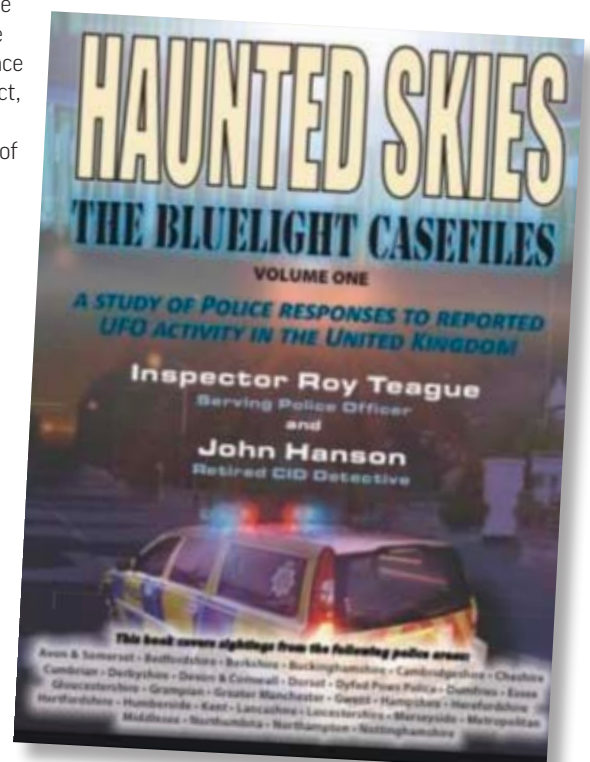
crews exist. What would you have them say? Would you expect the Prime Minister, President of the United States or any other world leader to go on national television and admit to us all that there is a higher intelligence visiting our planet at will? For them to further concede that there isn't a thing your government can do about it, that we aren't the biggest kid on the block and therefore are vulnerable? This could potentially frighten citizens and cause some unrest.

Personally, I'm not particularly concerned about a potential threat. I've arrived at this prognosis on the basis that if there was any hostile intent towards us none of us would be here now and I wouldn't be ruining my prospects of becoming a chief inspector by writing this article. In short, until governments understand this phenomenon in more detail or a UFO lands in front of the world's press on the White House lawn so that denials are no longer possible, the official stance from governments will always be denial.

Final word

For my final word, I would like to thank those officers who have come forward over the years and provided their accounts. I have chosen to release this article a few months before the book's publication in the hope that there may be other officers and staff out there who haven't shared their experiences yet but would like to do so. Anonymity is guaranteed should you wish it and be bold enough to step forward. This is a subject that shouldn't be tiptoed around and looked upon with scorn. It deserves open and honest dialogue and should be treated with the respect it deserves.

- Roy can be contacted on roy.teague@westmidlands.police.uk





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Lucy Todd

+44 (0)7592 121 001



Mark Hands

+44 (0)7712 428 748



Clare Wiseman

+44 (0)7525 911 737

Toolkit for separated parents

By Lucy Todd, family law associate solicitor - Irwin Mitchell, Birmingham



Entering a New Year presents us all with the opportunity to make New Year's resolutions and to commit to putting in place time in our calendars for us to look forward to in the year ahead.

As family solicitors, it is during the periods ahead of school holiday time that we tend to see a spike in child arrangement disputes, reflective of our clients' desire to take their children away on holiday or to spend extra time with them outside their usual arrangements. This can cause conflict between separated parents, particularly where communications are strained.

With the above in mind, we have prepared the following guidance, aimed at separated parents in a bid to reduce tension and provide a useful aide memoir as to how best to achieve constructive and positive communications to facilitate solutions that all parties are happy with.

The aim is to enable parents to positively co-parent, which will undoubtedly be in the best interests of the children involved.

Our tips are:

- Champion the principle that it is in the best interests of the children to have a meaningful and secure relationship with each parent (subject to there being no safeguarding concerns e.g. issues relating to violence, abuse etc).
- Acknowledge the children are to be treated as important individuals with unique feelings, ideas and desires and not as a source of arguments between parents.
- Never denigrate the other parent in the presence or hearing of the children.
- Never seek to undermine the other parent's position as the child's parent.
- Actively encourage the knowledge and appreciation of what is good in each parent.
- Permit the children to express their love and affection for the absent parent. This will enable the children to feel that they have the emotional permission to love both parents, and avoid them fearing the other parent's disapproval which will, in turn, permit the children to relax and enjoy their time with the other parent.
- Ensure the children are not placed in a position to manipulate one parent against the other.
- Endeavour to communicate reasonably and properly with the other parent in respect of arrangements relating to their children and show proper respect to one another.
- Never attempt to discuss the arrangements via the children. These are adult issues and the children should be protected from them.
- Remember that children require routine, stability and consistency. It is important that they feel secure in the arrangements made.
- Understand that to expose the children to adult conflict may contribute to the risk of the children suffering long-term emotional and psychological damage.

Should you require any guidance or support from a legal perspective during the summer period, then Irwin Mitchell has a wealth of experienced family law practitioners who will be able and happy to help.

Contact Lucy Todd:
0121 203 5566 / 07592 121001
Lucy.Todd@irwinmitchell.com
www.IrwinMitchell.com



FREE family law surgeries

Family law specialists from legal firm Irwin Mitchell are offering free consultations to members of West Midlands Police Federation.

The firm said initial consultations with members would be free of charge with a 10 per cent discount on the fees from and any further meetings.

It has released a series of dates for legal surgeries at Guardians House and requires members to pre-book consultations by contacting Lucy Todd on her direct mobile **07592 121001** or emailing her at Lucy.Todd@IrwinMitchell.com

Consultations are available on:

- 16 February 2022
- 16 March 2022
- 13 April 2022
- 11 May 2022
- 15 June 2022
- 13 July 2022
- 17 August 2022
- 14 September 2022
- 12 October 2022
- 16 November 2022
- 14 December 2022.

Julie awarded British Empire Medal



Sergeant Julie Harrison.

A West Midlands Police officer who has led pioneering projects to tackle youth exploitation and violence against women has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM).

Sergeant Julie Harrison, who has served in Coventry for 25 years, received the honour in recognition of her efforts to protect and support some of the city's most vulnerable communities.

Julie has spent all of her distinguished policing career within Coventry apart from a brief six-month secondment. She has been based across the city before moving to her current role within the City of Culture Policing Team around two years ago.

West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke said: "Julie has rightly been honoured for the outstanding work she has carried out across Coventry for many years.

"I have rung her to offer my congratulations on behalf of the Federation. The thing that's striking about Julie is her modesty and good humour after years of outstanding public service particularly striving to bring diverse communities together and help build the strong sense of community and shared values which back up the rule of law. It is wonderful to see her honoured and this recognition is so well deserved."

Over the years Julie has spearheaded a range of innovative projects aimed at supporting young people, diverting them away from gangs and protecting them from exploitation.

She has also been a driving force in developing schemes to safeguard women and help and support victims of domestic abuse.

Julie is passionate about supporting refugees and migrants who have made

Coventry their home and has been instrumental in several programmes to support refugees and promote community cohesion alongside local partners.

As part of the Coventry City of Culture policing team, she is trailblazing the use of arts and creativity to improve our communication with the public and to tackle community safety priorities.

Julie – who will receive the award under her married name, Godwin – said: "I'm really surprised but also incredibly humbled. It's a proud moment and one I never expected.

"I've got a real passion for Coventry, I've spent my whole career here and I am very proud to call it home.

"There are some absolutely fantastic people doing some fantastic things right across the city and it's a privilege to be part of the City of Culture team.

"Throughout my policing career I've always tried to do what I can to make lives better and that will never change."

Clare Gollop, director of the West Midlands Violence and Reduction Unit (VRM), also received the BEM in the New Year Honours as did Janice Mathias for her voluntary work with the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner's custody visitor scheme.

“THERE ARE SOME ABSOLUTELY FANTASTIC PEOPLE DOING SOME FANTASTIC THINGS RIGHT ACROSS THE CITY AND IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO BE PART OF THE CITY OF CULTURE TEAM.

THE ANNUAL POLICE UNITY TOUR SEES OFFICERS CYCLE FROM VARIOUS POINTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO ARRIVE AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM IN STAFFORDSHIRE FOR A SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE. COULD YOU REPRESENT THE FORCE IN THIS YEAR'S TOUR?

West Midlands Police Federation members are being urged to sign up for this summer's long distance Police Unity Tour (PUT) charity bike ride which raises vital funds for the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) charity.

Many members are still clinging onto New Year fitness pledges and Federation branch chair Rich Cooke believes focussing on this 200-mile challenge could help inspire some colleagues to stick to their 2022 resolutions.

This year's PUT ride begins on Friday 19 August and ends at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire on Sunday 21 August.

Rich said: "We'd love to see as many West Midlands branch members as possible taking part in this year's Police Unity Tour bike ride and I think training towards that goal will help people stay motivated and focus on their fitness.

"The event is a real highlight on the policing calendar and everyone who takes part always talks of the incredible camaraderie they experience by taking part - it brings out the very best of the policing family.

"Some officers have made friends for life doing the PUT ride and it also gives us the opportunity to take part in a challenging bike ride while raising money for an extremely important cause and then celebrate the lives of fallen officers at the memorial service.

"I took part in the 2019 PUT ride and will do so again this year and would encourage colleagues to join me."

Since the first ride in 1997, the tour has grown into a major event which sees hundreds of riders from forces across the country take on the three-day challenge to raise cash for COPS which supports the families of officers who have died while on duty.

The charity was launched to raise awareness of law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty and raise funds for COPS.



West Midlands riders pictured in 2019 (left to right) Chief Constable Dave Thompson, Gill Wall and Rich Cooke with another member of the PUT team.

Sign up for Police Unity Tour and help the families of fallen officers

Traditionally, each of the PUT riders wears a wristband specifically dedicated to a fallen officer and the event ends at the COPS service of remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Last year's event was the first physical ride in two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was the 9th year of the PUT and saw the £1 million milestone hit for the amount raised for COPS since the inaugural event.

ABOUT COPS

COPS is independent of the police service and was founded in March 2003 by Jim McNulty and Christine Fulton MBE.

Jim was a retired police officer from Strathclyde Police and Christine is the widow of PC Lewis Fulton who was murdered on duty in Glasgow in 1994.

Christine's experience of that tragedy gave her a unique understanding of the overwhelming grief and confusion that is

encountered by new survivors.

COPS makes contact with the survivors of every officer who loses their life on duty, explaining what COPS does and inviting them to make contact when they are ready for such support.

The annual service of remembrance is a poignant event which brings together friends, families and colleagues from across the UK and farther afield.

'Rest days should only be cancelled as last resort'

The Chief Constable has made it clear that officers' rest days should only be cancelled as a last resort.

And West Midlands Police Federation will now work closely with Force planners to ensure robust systems are in place to ensure that is the case.

The Federation chair, Rich Cooke, and secretary, Tim Rogers, have met with Assistant Chief Constable Mike O'Hara and other senior members of the Force's Operations Planning unit to discuss a number of recent issues.

“WE WANT THE FORCE TO AGREE TO PAY OFFICERS AT THE SAME RATE REGARDLESS OF HOW THEY HAVE BEEN RECRUITED FOR A FIXTURE AND ACCEPT THE EXTRA COST. CLEARLY, THIS IS DIFFICULT GIVEN THE CONSTRAINED FINANCIAL CLIMATE, HOWEVER, WE EMPHASISE WE WILL NOT ACHIEVE THE COMMITMENT AND RETENTION OF SKILLS WE NEED WHILE SUCH UNFAIRNESS PERSISTS.

These included officers claiming travel time and officers who have had their rest day cancelled ending up with no compensation compared to volunteers who receive over-time.

Rich explained: "Our starting point is that want to ensure that all officers can rely on their basic rights within Police Regulations. An officer is on duty from the point they collect PPE and are doing necessary travel to arrive at their muster point for the briefing.

"This should normally not exceed an hour within the Force area. Officers should never be left in a position where they are carrying a Section 5 firearm (PAVA or CS) without the full support and safety net that being 'on duty' provides. I would also remind colleagues to ensure they are insured for Class 1 business use when using their own vehicles for this purpose.

"The Planning Unit acknowledges this and recent communication which appeared to contradict this has been withdrawn.

"The disparity of pay for officers who volunteer for over-time and officers who have had their rest day cancelled is a more difficult one to resolve, which is a pity. There are many areas where the minimum the law stipulates is

exceeded because it is right to do so, the statutory minimum wage is one such example.

"While there is nothing to prevent this practice within Regulations, we have strongly challenged the Force, including the Chief Constable directly, to aspire to a better position than the minimum the law provides for. We want the Force to agree to pay officers at the same rate regardless of how they have been recruited for a fixture and accept the extra cost. Clearly, this is difficult given the constrained financial climate, however, we emphasise we will not achieve the commitment and retention of skills we need while such unfairness persists."

Officers have told the Federation chair they often feel coerced into volunteering on their rest days for fear that if they don't their days off will be cancelled in any case.

"This sense of coercion is unacceptable to the Federation, and we believe it must stop," says Rich, "All these points have been well made on members' behalf. There is no agreement on equality of payment for cancelled rest days yet, but the Chief Constable has made clear that cancellation of rest days is something he does not want to see."



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of

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We all want to do everything we can to take care of ourselves and our loved ones - both now and in the future.

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More details about the free will service and extended packages can be found at www.wmpben.co.uk

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The £2 monthly membership subscription is deducted straight from your salary. To join simply visit the [Benevolent Fund website](#).

SUMMARY OF MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

All members can apply for:

- Access to interest-free loans and grants in times of hardship or distress
- Sickness vouchers if a member is unable to work due to sickness or injury
- Convalescence and rehabilitation breaks at St Michael's Lodge Treatment Centre
- Discounted holidays at their properties in Dartmouth and Dorset

- Exclusive rewards scheme offering a range of discounts

- Access to a free will writing service.

Members who are serving officers or police staff are also entitled to:

- Death grant of £3,500 to a nominated person
- £25 per week for all their surviving children until their 18th birthday.

Serving officers or police staff who pay £5 and retired members who pay £3.75 are protected members. This means they are also entitled to:

- £600 medical consultations.



West Midlands Police
Benevolent Fund
Charity

Detective reveals 'raw emotion' that comes with reuniting missing people with loved ones

A DI who works as part of the Force's missing person team has described the huge reward and emotion that come with reunited people with their loved ones.

Detective Inspector Phil Poole, who joined the Locate team around two-and-a-half years ago, has given an insight into the incredible community effort that goes into finding thousands of missing people every year.

Phil, who joined the police 20 years ago, has revealed that around 13,000 missing people were reported across the West Midlands last year and only around 20 of those have not been located.

"I like to think we're pretty unique as a Force, mainly because we have our own dedicated missing person unit," explains 44-year-old Phil.

The department was initially formed in 2016 as a pilot scheme, after the Force recognised a rise in the number of missing people across the region. It became fully operational the following summer.

A team picks up an investigation, if initial response officer checks of addresses, with family and friends and at hospitals draw a blank.

Locate officers then carry out a range of enquiries including CCTV, mobile phone and

transactions to establish a missing person's movements and help find them as quickly as possible.

Thankfully, in the vast majority of cases there's been a successful conclusion.

"We have dedicated teams that cover all areas, including operations, who work from 7am until 3am, 365 days of a year," added Phil.

"We also have an intervention and prevention team, along with those dedicated to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults."

Phil says that effective partnerships with local organisations have played a huge role in the department's success in finding people.

"This is a real community effort," said the father-of-two, "And finding them isn't good enough, it's all about preventing this from happening in the future too."

"We try to think outside the box, so people can help themselves in the community. We also work closely with networks and organisations like those in social care to support vulnerable people."

Phil explained that as well as focusing on new cases, the team regularly revisits and reviews inactive files.

"Since around 1950, we only have around 200 inactive cases now, which I think is testament to where the Force is at," he added.

Having helped reunite thousands of people with their loved ones over the past two years, Phil says the incidents that really stick in his mind are those when they get to a person before they can cause intended harm to themselves, or worse, take their own life.

"We have to act extremely quickly but if we find them, we can often stop them from harming themselves and get them the help they need," he continued.

"Last year, I found we were called to a lot of middle-aged men, who might have experienced a significant change in their life, like a marriage breakdown. If we can get to them and intervene before they take their life, that matters to me."

"It's equally as rewarding when you reunite parents with their children, I get a huge amount of satisfaction from that."

"And even though it's rewarding, this is a very challenging job, and we must never lose sight that there is always a family out there wondering where their loved one is."

Phil says that the role can be very emotional for the team, especially if they have been heavily invested in searching for that missing person.

"I've been present when a family member is reunited with someone who was missing, and the whole room is full of such raw emotion. I don't think we'd be human if we didn't feel anything," he added.

"There's never a shortage of people wanting to join our department and when they're here, they don't often have an appetite to go anywhere else. After all, it totally satisfied the one thing most police officers want to do, and that's to help people."

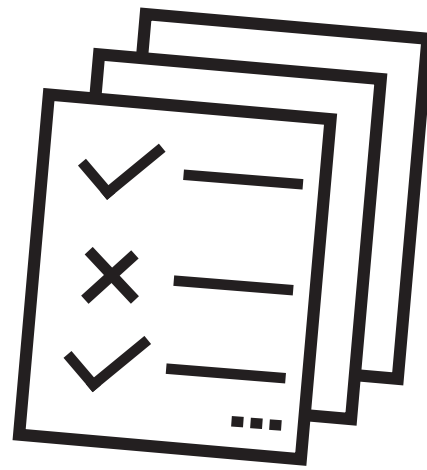
“ IT'S EQUALLY AS REWARDING WHEN YOU REUNITE PARENTS WITH THEIR CHILDREN. I GET A HUGE AMOUNT OF SATISFACTION FROM THAT.



Detective Inspector Phil Poole.

“THERE'S NEVER A SHORTAGE OF PEOPLE WANTING TO JOIN OUR DEPARTMENT AND WHEN THEY'RE HERE, THEY DON'T OFTEN HAVE AN APPETITE TO GO ANYWHERE ELSE. AFTER ALL, IT TOTALLY SATISFIED THE ONE THING MOST POLICE OFFICERS WANT TO DO, AND THAT'S TO HELP PEOPLE.

Focus on **POLICE** REGULATIONS



Our Police Regulations expert Gary Nuttall answers some of the questions he is regularly asked.

If there's an aspect of regulations you want us to feature, please let us know and please remember you can also refer to the Police Federation's Quick Reference Guide for information and the Advice and regs section of our website.

Q. I was told I had to start my shift earlier than scheduled, what can I claim?

A. Where the time at which an officer is due to commence a rostered tour of duty is brought forward without due notice (less than eight hours) so that they are required to commence duty on a day in which they have already completed their normal period of duty. The time for which they are on duty before the rostered commencement time shall be reckonable as overtime and also taken into account as part of that tour of duty. The Force day commences at 7am.

If you are given more than eight hours' notice of the duty change then your working day merely starts at the new time. If the time you are brought on at is before 7am following a period of rest days then you will be eligible to claim rest day over-time (minimum four hours).

Q. I am being asked to change my duties at short notice, can they do that?

A. The Chief officer shall cause to be published duty rosters for members of their force after full consultation with the Federation branch at intervals not exceeding 12 months and not later than 1 month before the date in which it starts. Each roster will set out for at least three months the following:

- Their rest days
- Public holidays in which they may be required to do duty on
- The time at which their scheduled daily period of duty begins and ends
- For part-time members their free days
- Intervals of at least 11 hours between the end and the beginning of the next shift
- An interval between rostered rest days not exceeding seven days.

Where alterations are made to an annual duty roster after its publication these changes must arise from the exigencies of duty (unless they are made at the officer's own request or have otherwise been agreed with the Federation branch).

The term exigencies of duty, should be interpreted as relating to situations where a pressing demand, need or requirement is perceived that is not reasonably avoidable and necessitates a change of roster. In this context the word, pressing relates to the expected situation at the time when the duty is to be performed rather than the time when the duty roster is changed, ie the reasons for a change may be known many months in advance but still be pressing.

Changes to rosters should only be made after full consideration of welfare, operational and practical circumstances rather than purely on financial grounds. Because rosters are produced annually a number of unforeseen reasons for changes may subsequently arise. It is clearly not possible to produce an exhaustive list of all of the potential reasons, which may necessitate changes. However, by way of example, unforeseen public order situations, court attendance and essential training would justify changes to rostered duties. An officer should be told as soon as the requirement for the change is known and at the latest, by midnight on the calendar day before the changed period of duty commences.

Q. My rest day was cancelled for an operational reason, I am now no longer required to work on that day as they have scaled the operation down, what am I entitled to?

A. When an officer's rest day is cancelled in anticipation of an operational need for which in any event they are not required to attend for duty:

- Where the officer is told with more than 7 days (and less than 15 days) notice that he/she will not after all be required to work on his/her rest day, he/she will take the rest day with no compensation.
- Where the officer is given less than eight days' notice they can choose between taking the rest day with no compensation or working on the rest day with compensation in accordance with Police Regulations.

Q. What travelling time can I claim when working on a rest day?

A. Where an officer is required to duty on a public holiday or on a rostered rest day their period of duty shall include the time occupied by him/her travelling to and from their place of duty. This will be disregarded where the period of duty exceeds six hours.

Travelling expenses may also be claimed, for the journey, this ceases when there is no travel time included in the over-time.

Q. I was recalled to duty from home, what can I claim?

A. Travel time between home and your usual place of duty is generally not duty time.

Such travel time shall only be treated as a period of duty when you are:

- Required to perform your normal daily period of duty in more than one tour (split duty) or recalled to work between two tours of duty and you travel to and from your home between tours
- In calculating any period of over-time in respect of being recalled between two tours of duty, an officer can only claim for the time worked plus travelling time (one hour).
- The minimum of four hours' pay for a recall to duty has been abolished.

Jack Dromey: 'a firm friend of the police service'

The death of the Erdington MP Jack Dromey represents a loss to politics and the Labour Party but also the police service and police officers, says West Midlands Police Federation secretary Tim Rogers.

Tim was keen to pay tribute to the long-serving Erdington MP and former police minister who died suddenly on 7 January 2022.

"Jack was a firm friend to the police service," says Tim, "He had been one of the region's MPs from my early days as a Federation representative and in recent years, while I have been one of the branch officials, we have developed an effective working relationship which had seen him raise issues in Parliament on our behalf.

"Both while in Government and as a shadow minister, he would often contact the branch asking for our views on policing issues and just before Christmas had been in touch to discuss our thoughts on the police funding settlement and seek our thoughts on the challenges officers were facing.

"He will be a sad loss to the politics generally as well as the Labour Party specifically and also to the police service and police officers. He was always keen to ensure the police service was properly funded and that police officers were treated fairly.

"West Midlands Police Federation will miss him and I will certainly miss him too as he was very supportive of the campaign I have been leading to ensure that police drivers are given better protection in law. It is sad that he will not see the changes to legislation he supported come into effect with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which is expected to be enacted in the coming months.

"Our thoughts are with his family at this sad time."

Mr Dromey, whose wife Harriet Harman was deputy leader of the Labour Party, had represented the Erdington constituency since 2010.

Tributes to the much-respected MP came from across the political spectrum.



Jack Dromey.

Police museum seeks volunteer support

The new West Midlands Police Museum at the Steelhouse Lane Lock-up is looking for volunteers to help run the unique state-of-the-art site.

The museum is dedicated to telling the history of policing the West Midlands from the early days of law and order right through to the present day.

And it hopes to recruit a team of volunteers to help share the important stories with visitors.

There are roles in retail, admissions, engaging with visitors, assisting school visits and helping to run out-of-hours events such as talks, tours and ghost hunts.

Volunteers will be required to make a regular commitment to

helping at the museum at least once or twice a month but do not need experience of policing or an in-depth knowledge of police history.

The museum is looking for friendly people with enthusiasm, a desire to learn and the ability to work as part of a team and is offering training in customer service as well as health and safety, the chance to meet new people and to visit other museums.

The museum is launching later this year and will be open every Tuesday to Sunday, from 10am to 4pm.

People can get more details by emailing helen.taylor2@westmidlands.police.uk or find out more on the West Midlands Police Museum website.





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Range of discounts and services available to Federation members

MEMBERS OF WEST MIDLANDS POLICE FEDERATION CAN ACCESS A WIDE RANGE OF DISCOUNTS AND SERVICES.

FROM ADVICE SURGERIES TO SAVINGS ON CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR TO DAYS OUT AND HOLIDAYS, ALL MEMBER SERVICES OFFERS CAN BE VIEWED ON A DEDICATED PAGE ON [THE FEDERATION WEBSITE](#).

BUT TO GIVE YOU AN INSIGHT INTO SOME CURRENT DEALS, WE HAVE SELECTED A FEW FOR YOU.

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- Energie Fitness, and
- Living Well Health Clubs.



THEME PARKS AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

As we slowly venture back to some kind of normality after almost two years of restrictions on our lives, perhaps now is the time to start planning a family day out?

Members can get discounted prices on entry to the country's leading attractions including:

- Alton Towers
- Cadbury World
- Chester Zoo
- Chessington World of Adventures
- Dudley Zoo & Castle
- Merlin's Magical London which includes the London Aquarium, London Dungeon, Madame Tussauds and Shrek's Adventure
- The National Motorcycle Museum
- Thorpe Park
- Warwick Castle, and
- Wookey Hole.

There are some great deals which can really help with the expense of taking children out for a day of fun.

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Among the big names offering money off bookings are Haven and Lovat Holiday Parks and destinations include Windermere where luxury cottages are available and Buttonwood Bay in Florida where you can rent a three-bedroom, two bathroom villa with a private heated pool.

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

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Extra funds are welcomed, but more still needed, says Fed chair

West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke says the provisional police funding settlement for 2022/23 will not be enough to undo the damage of the austerity years.

Home Secretary Priti Patel has published details of the provisional settlement. Policing will receive an extra £1.1 billion next year, which represents a seven per cent increase on last year's figures.

The money West Midlands Police receives from the Government will rise from £620.8 million in 2020/21 to £655.5m in 2021/22 and then to £694.9m in 2022/23.

But Rich said that will not be sufficient to meet the demands of modern policing.

"The Government needs to come up with a long-term funding settlement, so that forces can plan and prioritise accordingly," he said. "Working year to year does not lead to effective policing for the communities of the West Midlands, nor the country as a whole.

"West Midlands Police lost more than 2,200 officers during the austerity years. The uplift announced by the Prime Minister in 2019 was welcome but it still won't take the Force back to pre-austerity levels of policing. And we're replacing experienced officers with inexperienced officers.

"Policing has changed considerably since the austerity years. Demand has escalated, with increases in traditional crime but also new and emerging crimes like cyber-crime, human trafficking, and child sexual exploitation.

"The pandemic has added to this with officers having to adapt to rapidly changing

legislation, and getting criticised for being too harsh and also for being too lenient.

"Policing has picked up the pieces for other services hit by cuts during the austerity years, such as the ambulance service, mental health services and the voluntary sector.

"It's not just numbers though. Police stations and offices have closed. The infrastructure has been decimated so, in fact, forces have nowhere to put the new influx of officers, nowhere for them to store their kit, no canteens and so on.

"They've also put huge pressure on police officers who volunteer as tutors. Some tutors, with some being fresh out of training themselves, are mentoring three to six students and this leaves them all, and the public, vulnerable.

"It seems the Government has budgeted solely for the new officers but not the intricate infrastructure needed for them to be effective which was sadly dismantled as forces tried to cope in the austerity years.

"What was dismantled in a couple of pen strokes as part of the budget cuts cannot be rebuilt by simply trying to re-employ what was discarded. The Government has to consider this but also needs to urgently address the issue of police officer pay. The pay freeze has had a massive impact on officers who have been right in the frontline of the response to the pandemic. We need a motivated, properly training and equipped workforce.

Rich has called on the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable to ensure that every penny of extra funding is

directed towards supporting policing local communities with police officers on the ground not staff in offices

He added: "We also have to ensure we are structured in a way which deploys resources as efficiently as possible, I'm not convinced the current operating model achieves that.

Ms Patel said that the additional £1.1bn will help support the delivery of the Beating Crime Plan, which set out the Government's mission to deliver fewer victims, safer neighbourhoods, and a more secure country.

She said: "Crimes including theft, burglary and knife crime are down, we've got an additional 11,053 police officers on our streets, and we've shut down 1,500 drugs lines which exploit the young and the vulnerable.

"But we must go further and faster to make our communities even safer, so today I am giving our excellent police forces and law enforcement agencies more funding to do just that, in line with our Beating Crime Plan.

"Reducing crime is a top priority for this Government and I will continue working with police leaders to ensure this unprecedented investment results in less crime and fewer victims."

Jack Dromey, the Labour MP for Erdington who died suddenly on 7 January this year, had been in touch with West Midlands Police Federation before Christmas, to find out officials' views on the funding settlement and seek their thoughts on the challenges the Force, and officers, were facing.

“THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO COME UP WITH A LONG-TERM FUNDING SETTLEMENT, SO THAT FORCES CAN PLAN AND PRIORITISE ACCORDINGLY.

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WEST MIDLANDS POLICE FEDERATION REPS - JANUARY 2022

LOCATION	REP(s)		POSTING	
FEDERATION OFFICIALS				
Guardians House	8474	Tim Rogers	Secretary	
	9270	Richard Cooke	Chair	
	20428	Chris James	Dep secretary	
	9187	Sam Hughes	Dep chair	
	9878	Dave Hadley	CaPLO	
	4132	George McDonnell	CaPLO	
	5583	Cliff Tomkinson	P & E	
	4368	Julie Fleming	P & E	
WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVES				
Acocks Green	3249	Lee Howkins	BE NHT	
Aston C3 Ops	9694	Roy Teague	Check Blue Pages	
	7658	Matt Minton	Check Blue Pages	
Bloxwich	5992	Barrie Punshon	Check Blue Pages	
	1284	David Keasey	Force Response	
Bournville	8851	Jason Dooley	FCID	
	6329	Simon Wheeler	NPU	
Brierley Hill	8879	Ian Smith	DY NPU	
	4993	Rod Rose	FCID	
Coventry	24843	Jess Davies	Force Response	
	1329	Jason Sayers	L & D	
	21420	Suky Bagri	Force Support Unit	
	8440	Steve Malone	Neighbourhood	
Coventry/Willenhall	2162	Dawn Murkett	NPU	
	CTU	9271	Mark Flynn	CTU
	CTU	21352	Sam Staite	CTU
	CTU	8979	Simon Price	CTU
Operations	4413	Aaron Bell	Operations	
Edgbaston	6219	Lorayne Brown	Force Support	
Kings Heath	20213	Duncan McDonald	OSU	
Ladywood	20287	Marcia Francis	PPU	
Lloyd House	9996	Jordan Keen	CJU	
Nechells	1687	Pete Snape	NHT	
	643	Westley Smith	CJU	
Perry Bar	20455	Jasdeep Pahil	FCID	
	5508	Carrie-Ann Lowe	CMPG	
	8137	Raj Kanth	FCID	
	7338	Andrew Lavanchy	CMPG	
Perry Barr/Custody Suite	21554	Osman Khan	PPU - DV	
	5456	Winston Christie	CJS	
Stechford	6557	Stuart Whitehead	Force Response	
	9900	Curt Wilkins	FCID	
	2503	Stacey Francis	Offender Management	
Steelhouse Lane	3799	Gemma Griffith	Force Response	
	2703	Patrick McBrearty	Reg Cyber Crime Unit	
Sutton Coldfield	1566	Kin Devi	ROCU	
	4377	Martin Bonser	Neighbourhood	
Tally Ho	8178	Wayne Bennett	Organisation & Learning	
Wednesbury	6736	Andrea Forrester	Organisation & Learning	
	4468	Sue Cheek	Ops - Dog Unit	
West Bromwich	501	Glen Foster	Force Response	
Wolverhampton	9233	Darren Neville	Organised Crime WV	
	21287	Lee Hayward	Force Response	
	9152	Michael Woods	CJS	
	9104	Ash Forster	FCID	
Dudley	6979	Jon Nott		
	1978	Deano Walker	NHT/H & S secretary	



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