



Derbyshire
Police
Federation

Police Officers Representing
Police Officers

News & views

SUMMER 2020 News and views from Derbyshire Police Federation



Policing in a pandemic – See Pages 3 - 7

Chair's foreword



By Tony Wetton, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation

Over the last three months, I have heard – and probably also said – the words ‘unprecedented times’ over and over again but somehow they just don’t really convey the reality of the strange world we have all been living in.

Who could really have imagined even a few weeks earlier how swiftly lockdown would be imposed and how long it would have been necessary to keep restrictions on the way we live our lives in place?

As I write, we are just coming out of full lockdown – unless you happen to live in the Leicester city area where restrictions have been re-introduced due to concerns about infection rates. Pubs and restaurants have been allowed to open for the first time since

March and hairdressers and barbers are back at work tidying, colouring and re-styling the nation’s locks.

But, despite these signs of a return to normal life, I know there are some who want to retain some elements of their lockdown living.

Many people, forced almost overnight, to start working from home – some in roles where working from home had previously been considered impossible - are saying they would like to retain some degree of flexibility. Some forces are reporting lower sickness levels during the pandemic so I am sure this is something that will be analysed in more detail.

On Pages 4 to 6, four officers – including our branch secretary Kirsty Bunn and workplace representative Julie Shaw – share their experiences of working from home.

Established officers have shown their ability to adapt but spare a thought for any new recruit who has started their policing career during the pandemic. Sergeant Damien Shannon, the Force’s assessment and core training team leader, explains on Page 7 the measures introduced to deliver training and keep everyone safe.

I hope you enjoy this edition of your members’ magazine which, inevitably, is dominated by stories linked to the ongoing crisis.

Remember also that we regularly post latest news stories on our website – www.polfed.org/derbys and you can also follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Also, remember that there is a wealth of support available if you are concerned about your mental or financial wellbeing. You can find out more on our [coronavirus page](#) or simply contact your [Federation rep](#).

Group action on pensions

The Police Federation has published an updated set of pensions FAQs.

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) announced in May that it was launching a compensation claim against the Government on behalf of affected members who suffered any ‘injury to feeling’ as a result of the transitional protections afforded to some officers when the 2015 scheme was introduced.

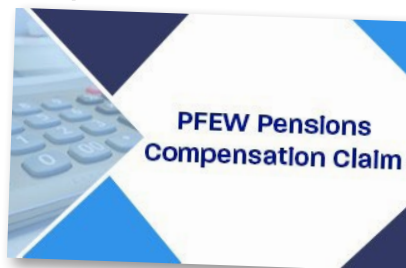
The Government has accepted that it must rectify any detriment suffered as a result of those transitional protections. Work is ongoing as to how that remedy will be applied across the whole of the public sector pension schemes, including police.

The purpose of the PFEW claim is to ensure those who have not already submitted a claim in respect of the

discrimination are also considered for any compensation the court considers appropriate for the distress caused by the transitional protections.

The Group Action is being handled on PFEW’s behalf by the leading UK and international law firm Penningtons Manches Cooper.

[Read the FAQs.](#)
[Find out more.](#)



NEWS IN BRIEF

Officer assaults

Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton has welcomed the Home Secretary’s backing for increased sentences for offenders who attack emergency workers.

Priti Patel also pledged to further strengthen the protection given to police officers.

[Read more.](#)

Fed subs to increase

Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) delegates at a virtual conference supported a motion to increase member subscriptions.

Members will now pay an extra £2 a month from September onwards representing the first increase in subs since 2011.

See Page 9 for more information.

Fed opens to Specials

A move to allow Special Constables to join the Police Federation has been applauded by Derbyshire branch chair Tony Wetton.

Under current legislation Special Constables in England and Wales are not allowed to be Federation members. But the Police Powers and Protections Bill which is due before MPs later this year will seek to allow them to sign up for membership.

[Read more.](#)

Wellbeing survey

The first national police wellbeing survey has revealed that almost half of the 35,000 officers who responded were getting less than six hours sleep a night.

The survey was carried out by Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service, and the College of Policing.

Those high levels of fatigue will now be addressed as the two bodies begin research, along with experts from around the world, practitioners and UK staff associations, to come up with solutions to improve officers’ wellbeing.

[Read more.](#)

POLICING IN A PANDEMIC

Superintendent expresses pride at officers' response to pandemic

Lockdown has presented Superintendent Gareth Meadows with one of the 'strangest periods in 26 years of policing'. Yet he believes the extended bonds that were created with the Derbyshire Police Federation during that time certainly played a part in helping everyone deal with some unprecedented challenges that came along. As the COVID-19 pandemic began to take hold in March and April, a Gold, Silver and Bronze Command structure was quickly set up to look at areas ranging from maintaining response and communities policing, absenteeism and welfare through to logistics around the provision of PPE and other equipment.

Gareth said the Force wanted the input of all officers in those meetings and so invited Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton and secretary Kirsty Bunn to attend.

Every one of those meetings over the past three months was attended by either Tony or Kirsty and some of them were being held on a daily basis.

Gareth said he welcomed their commitment and said the long-term benefits of a more extensive relationship with the Federation and its officers was good for all concerned.

"This was a big commitment for them, but I know it was an important use of their time where they could ensure the views of the membership were heard and considered," said Gareth.

"Our visibility is always a challenge on the large geographical North Division with 700 colleagues working across many sites and all hours of the week. That becomes even more so when it is busy and where that has been taken to new levels during the crisis.

"But Kirsty and Tony have reminded us constantly of the importance of allowing for time to speak and debate issues directly with officers. We do actually enjoy this.



Superintendent Gareth Meadows.

Commanders have joined virtual parades, recorded VLOGs and hosted 'cuppa with the command team'. We can never do enough, but the reality is there are other demands too."

Gareth continued: "Seeing more of Tony and Kirsty has enabled us to build on the already good relationship we had with them before the pandemic started. Our desire to hear the views of the membership and work together is not something that started in March.

"The command team on North are genuinely committed to creating the best possible working environment for the officers. Humans don't always get things 100 per cent right and the command team are no different. We know that.

"That is why it is really useful to have critical friends around you who can tell you when you may be going off track or have missed something. Tony and Kirsty from the Federation really fulfil that role and we invite and encourage them to do so.

"Being reminded of what it is like on the coal face is good and what officers are experiencing now really helps in our decision-making. They do challenge us weekly and we welcome it. We want to get things right."

Gareth said the collective efforts of the Force and the Federation had created a working environment that made tackling a multitude of challenges much easier during the incredibly testing times of the past few months.

He was also keen to look back, however, and use the positives of the lockdown to praise colleagues and learn for the future.

"I am very proud of how all Derbyshire officers and staff have reacted to the pandemic," he said. "I would have to say that this lockdown has been one of the strangest periods in my 26 years of policing.

"It has actually required some real application of logic and discipline. This has been very different to my experiences in say dealing with a murder, large scale public disorder or a terrorist bomb.

"We usually all come together and get stuck in because that is our instinct. This time though, it has not been about us for once. It has been about saving life through supporting the NHS. This has meant minimising the spread of the virus within the police too so as not to add to the burden on health colleagues.

"That meant telling colleagues to stay away from the workplace and contribute in new ways. I am really proud of the officers who have had to carry on coming into the workplace and to interact with the public. Despite the PPE we have been provided with, they have increased their exposure to the virus.

"I am also proud of the officers who have had to go against their instinct, however, quickly adapt and bring their working lives home."

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POLICING IN A PANDEMIC

Working from home: safety concerns has outweighed feelings of isolation



Derbyshire Police Federation secretary Kirsty Bunn.

Derbyshire Police Federation secretary Kirsty Bunn has admitted that working from home during the coronavirus crisis has had an impact on her mental wellbeing.

The blurred lines between home and work, the difficulties of home schooling children and isolation have all had an impact, she says, but a feeling of guilt that she has been able to work safely from home when many colleagues have been unable to do so has also had a massive effect on her.

"Of course, the big benefit of working from home has been the safety aspect," says Kirsty, "I am in a role where I have been fortunate enough to be able to work from home but I am acutely aware that others in my profession haven't had that ability and I do have my concerns that social distancing at work isn't being taken responsibly.

"I also know I am fortunate that I have previously worked from home on occasions so the concept wasn't new to me. I feel I am productive as I am quite disciplined. But the fact that this concept has gone on for over 11 weeks, so far, has been difficult to come to terms with along with the fact there is no end in sight.

"The isolation has definitely had an impact on my own mental health. Some days it's very difficult to find the motivation to do yet another 'same day'. I have had the odd day's annual leave and would encourage others to do the same to switch off from the routine. I have been to the Federation office

on three occasions to meet with members, ensuring social distancing when I have attended. This has felt like an outing and was nice to be able to vary my routine."

Kirsty continues: "On some days I have been home schooling either one or three children which has its issues. Then there is the pressure of trying to keep everyone in the household happy while appearing to people on online meetings that you have everything under control.

"It's definitely harder to switch off and much easier to migrate back to your workstation and 'just send a quick email' only to find yourself on the laptop two hours later. I have found it difficult to draw a line between working at home and normal home life. The days when I totally switch off are very rare which is far from ideal. I would always encourage others to have down time but it's difficult to sometimes take your own advice.

"It's been tough for us as a family but I know we have been lucky that we haven't been touched by the devastation of COVID and when I have been struggling I have reminded myself of why we are doing this and have felt grateful my loved ones have remained healthy and well."

But, despite the difficulties Kirsty has faced, she believes the way in which working from home has been forced on people due to the pandemic could, in the long-term, benefit those who want to work more flexibly.

"It will be a big step forward if more people have the choice to work from home. The way agile working was put on the UK due to COVID has had a positive effect on flexible working and it will be difficult to argue that it can't be done or accommodated in the future," she explained.

The Federation office at Coney Green closed about a week before the country was placed on official lockdown. Kirsty and Federation branch chair Tony Wetton ensured the staff team had the ability, and equipment, to work from home but freely admit they did not think it would go on for so long.

"I think we have all missed the social aspect of being in the office; the spontaneous meetings and catching up with people but I think we have also appreciated the security of knowing everyone will be OK," Kirsty added.

'I really appreciate I have been lucky to be able to work from home'

Balancing work and home life during the lockdown has been a challenge at times, says TDC Julie Shaw.

Julie has been 'hot-desking' while her husband has also been working from home during the pandemic and added into the mix are her teenage children, who have also been at home.

"It's not been very easy, to be honest," said Julie, a workplace rep for Derbyshire Police Federation. "It's not easy concentrating and staying focused on your work from one space. We have no separate room in which to work at home.

"As well as me and my husband trying to do our jobs, we have had my 17-year-old daughter doing college work and my 19-year-old daughter who was furloughed for the first four weeks.

"But, despite the difficulties of trying to suddenly adapt to working from home, I really appreciate I have been lucky to be in this position and I have not been exposed to the risks that front-line section officers have faced while they have continued to maintain an effective policing service for our communities."

Julie, who joined the Force as PCSO in 2006 before becoming a PC in 2012, started working from home shortly after the lockdown started. She was set up with a laptop and a mouse.

"I wasn't allowed to bring any other equipment home," she said. "Having one small screen and no separate keyboard has been challenging at times."

So how has Julie overcome these difficulties?

"I've used yoga blocks to raise my laptop up to put the keyboard at a better angle," she said. "I've taken conference calls and team briefings in the bedroom and used ear buds to hear better.

"And I've 'hot-desked' between the dining room table and the home PC desk with my husband."

She said that her family has also had to adapt, with varying degrees of success.

"The kids are having to be aware that I may be on the phone and they can't behave normally in their own home," she said.

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TDC Julie Shaw.

"Late shifts are particularly difficult as my family are watching television and having family time, while I'm trying to work in what is essentially the same room."

Julie added: "I've not really found myself working longer hours, but I have sometimes worked over to finish something due to not being very efficient during the shift because of the distractions of the household."

Julie, who is based in Buxton, said she has missed the support from colleagues and the interaction with other officers during lockdown, as well as equipment such as a having two screens, a keyboard and access to a printer and scanner.

"A lack of access to other departments, such as CCTV, to assist with investigations has also caused some issues," she said. "Like most people during lockdown, by not going into the office, my world has become very small – just the four walls of home."

"It is by no means as bad as it is for some people, because I do have my family around me. It's the same for everyone else, all the normal activities which would have taken me out of the house have also gone."

Everyone has been supportive says TDC struck down with coronavirus

Ian Niven's spring and summer certainly have not worked out as he was expecting.

The temporary detective constable contracted COVID-19 in April at the height of the spread of the virus throughout the UK after catching it from his wife, who works as a nurse.

As well as the symptoms being an 'extremely horrible' thing to go through, Ian was also watching TV coverage of the pandemic while facing his own personal battle at home.

If being off work for five weeks was unusual enough for a hard worker, Ian then had to get used to working from home during lockdown after it was deemed that CID staff should be based at domestic locations.

"During my recovery, I was totally supported by my sergeant, inspector and chief inspector, which was really re-assuring and a surprise given my experiences of previous employers. It was something that I was really grateful for," says Ian, who joined the Force in 2017. "It had been an extremely horrible and unnerving experience.

"I am normally based at Wyatt's Way, Ripley on Group 2 but have been working from home since the lockdown began as it was decided that CID staff should primarily work from home.

"The caveat, however, is we are on call and have to be ready to respond to live incidents and be prepared to come into the office if required.

"I was issued with a laptop at the start of the outbreak and it came with all the instructions to help me connect to my home network which was really useful and I would say that work, including IS services, have been very supportive through the process.

"It has actually been easy adapting to working from home as there haven't really been any changes to my working pattern. We still log on as if we were in the workplace.

"What I have found most challenging is finding a suitable workspace at home though. My house doesn't really have anywhere for me and, typically, working from home coincided with the hottest spring on record.

"The only place that I can work comfortably at a table is in my conservatory and, unsurprisingly, it is too hot and too bright in there.

"What you soon realise is that you miss



TDC Ian Niven.

the convenience of having two screens, the printer to hand and paperwork that is required when working through case files.

"I have found myself working from different rooms in the house and just trying to find somewhere comfortable.

"I have planned my work around going into the office to carry out specific tasks and, invariably, there have been days where we have had to come in for live jobs or prisoners and I have taken advantage of that to carry out any tasks that I need to do."

What Ian certainly has been able to enjoy is the money he has saved from not having to make a commute of 50 minutes every day to and from Ripley and he has also made sure that, when he switches off the computer at the end of the day, he doesn't go back making sure that his own time remains just that.

As much of the country has been making early steps towards going back to the workplace or office, Ian says that Derbyshire Constabulary should take a look at more flexible working opportunities in the future.

Personally though, it is not something he would be putting his hand up for on a regular basis.

"I have found working from home quite isolating and I certainly wouldn't want to work from home on a permanent basis," he says, "The thing that I have missed the most is seeing and chatting with my colleagues and having a laugh in the office as well as seeing people round the workplace.

"I am a sociable person and have really missed seeing everyone."

POLICING IN A PANDEMIC

'There has been an almost overnight change in the way we work'

If Detective Inspector Claudia Musson had £1 for every time she heard someone say: 'Sorry, I was on mute' during lockdown, she could be a very rich woman.

Forced to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic because asthma put her at greater risk of contracting the virus, she has had to find ways of doing her job successfully from a domestic base.

Microsoft's video chat function 'Teams' has become a big part of her life in recent months – and so has reminding people to unmute themselves before talking in meetings.

"The thing I found most difficult has been the lack of face-to-face and ad hoc contact with my team members and other colleagues," explained Claudia.

"I love chatting with my teams, not just about investigations or work matters, but generally day to day things. They say that necessity is the mother of invention and although Microsoft Teams hasn't been invented during this pandemic, I think it has certainly come into its own within this organisation.

"I just wish I had a £1 for every time I heard someone say: 'Sorry, I was on mute.'"

Claudia joined Derbyshire Police in 2002 and is a detective inspector of Amber Valley, North Division based at Wyatts Way.

Just before lockdown began, she was advised to work from home by her line manager as Government guidelines about the dangers of the coronavirus to asthmatics were released.

Armed with a work laptop, Claudia set about adjusting to a new normal and, once



DI Claudia Musson.

she had set up a daily routine, began to find there were a number of benefits.

"I adapted quite easily especially when it was so clearly the right thing to do," she says. "It helped to get into a routine, getting up at the same time and having a proper lunch break.

"Of course, as an organisation, we have also been able to reduce the numbers of people within work and keep people safe.

"And on a personal level, the mileage on my car has benefited. It takes 15 minutes to get to work on a normal day and, as Amber Valley DI, there are often requirements to travel to Chesterfield for management meetings and meetings with the SLT, all of which have been done over Microsoft Teams during the pandemic.

"We have two whippets at home and I have taken them out in the mornings, which I

wouldn't necessarily have done if I was spending extra time travelling.

"This also reduced the number of times they would try to get on my knee during my morning team meetings too! Working from home, some days have been longer than others but I think this balances out over time really.

"Having said that, there have been times I have had work calls on rest days or annual leave days. Usually if I'm not in the office, I am not at work, but it's not that clear when working from home. This hasn't caused any issues though and I don't really mind.

"I think there is certainly a place for working from home in the future. If you can do your work effectively at home, then why not?"

"Before lockdown, there has been the option to work from home within my role, especially if a specific piece of work needed completing without distraction.

"It can be a little isolating at times but you have to make the effort to give people a call and I have certainly done that. I have really missed the people I work with. I have missed sitting in the office, having a cup of tea and chatting with people."

With the lifting of restrictions as time has gone by, Claudia is now allowed back into work after completing a risk assessment and she has had a chance to look back upon the last three months and reflect.

"The pandemic has brought uncertainty and anxiety to many people's lives, while at the same time, there has been an almost overnight change in the way we work," she said. "These times of change have required strong and visible leadership.

"I think we will look back as an organisation and realise that the coronavirus has really helped us to scrutinise and understand our processes.

"It has forced positive changes in both our ways of working and our use of technology which would otherwise have taken prolonged periods of time to adopt and put into place."

“It can be a little isolating at times but you have to make the effort to give people a call and I have certainly done that. I have really missed the people I work with. I have missed sitting in the office, having a cup of tea and chatting with people.”

Officer training: 'we've had to find new ways of working'

Sergeant Damien Shannon says it's been a challenge to train new recruits during the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

Damien, the Force's assessment and core training team leader, says they've had to adapt to find new ways to train and assess officers.

"It's been a challenge and we've had to explore new ways of working and training," he said, "We've used remote delivery to our students using Skype initially and now Microsoft Teams.

"Where delivery in classrooms has been essential we've maintained social distancing guidelines and have used PPE.

"We've had to think of new ways of working and assessing our students. For example, we've not been able to do our normal role plays as it was not appropriate during the current restrictions.

"So, we've used scenario assessment as a replacement whereby students are given a scenario and give a verbal answer about how they would deal with that situation.

"The students have adapted positively and accepted the different ways in which we have had to train them.

"They were all keen to complete their training and begin front-line duties to help support the efforts during this difficult time."

Damien, who is new to the post, outlined the new intake of trainee officers to have

joined the Force in recent months. The next intake will join in November.

"We've had two intakes start on 29 June, the final Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) course and a course of pre-join officers who have spent the last three years completing a degree with the University of Derby," he said.

"We also had a PCSO course start at the beginning of June."

He added: "The new officer recruits will be trained over a 17-week course. They will have officer safety and first aid training to enable the police to keep themselves and members of the public safe.

"There will be a large focus on domestic abuse training and mental health. They will have the usual law training and will be required to complete a number of knowledge checks and a final exam to complete their training."

The department is currently recruiting a police staff trainer who will help meet the demands created by the uplift in officer recruitment.

And Damien said it was one of a number of changes to the department.

"We're currently working on developing the Degree-Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) with the University of Derby," he said. "The first intake planned for this new programme is in November.

"This new programme will replace the current IPLDP programme which has been in place since 2006.

"The DHEP will incorporate new blended learning methods and will be delivered jointly between ourselves and the University of Derby. Students will have assessments throughout their training, which will aid them in achieving a certificate in policing at the end of their two-year probation.

"As well as this, we're continuing to develop our Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) programme working on improving the experience for our students.

"This will be the only entry route for officers who don't have a degree. We want to make sure we work with the University of Derby to deliver an apprenticeship which develops our students sufficiently to deal with the demands of modern policing.

"We took on our second cohort of PCDA students last year and they've just completed their tutorship phase on division.

"We plan two further intakes next year.

"The development of the new entry routes is a priority for us to comply with the new requirements under the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF), and develop new training methods to benefit our students and give them an enhanced grounding for when they arrive at their stations."



POLICING IN A PANDEMIC

Force capitalises on opportunities pandemic presented

When crisis hits opportunities often follow and this has been no different in policing, and more specifically, in Derbyshire.

Detective Superintendent Gemma Booth, who leads the Force's business change department, has been developing a number of projects that seek to change and improve the way the Force works and provides a good service to the public in a rapidly changing environment.

When she took over the department, her vision was explained by one of her team managers, Sharon Adkin, who said: "The business change and innovation department has a key role to play in driving forward organisational change required to create a responsive modern police force. It is taking a leading role in promoting an innovative culture across the organisation working collaboratively with everyone."

The rapid response to the COVID-19 outbreak provided an opportunity for business change to accelerate the introduction and adoption of particular projects. The Force's ability to quickly adapt was also, in part, a consequence of the work the department was doing up until the pandemic hit.

How did the Force adapt?

With lockdown looming, almost overnight hundreds of police officers and police staff retreated from the workplace and began, perhaps for the first time in their careers, to work from home. This meant that working differently and more creatively quickly became an operational necessity for many, if not all, departments.

Before the pandemic, one of the projects in development was the Force-wide roll-out of Microsoft Teams. This was accelerated and was very quickly adopted across most teams and departments within weeks. Colleagues immediately started interacting with each other on the platform and operational team briefings took place remotely.

New recruits were trained using a hybrid model of training, bringing some into training buildings on some days while training remotely with others; all to effectively socially distance. Training days for police officers migrated online too. On one occasion (and



there are probably more) training was delivered to 167 people in one go.

DCC Rachel Swann commented: "If we were going to speak to 167 people normally, we would generally ask them all to travel to headquarters and we'd put them somewhere if we could take that capacity, requiring a huge amount of travel and time that is unnecessary. Now we have new ways of doing it we really need to capture and embrace that."

Another significant opportunity centred around the way in which detectives work. Prior to COVID-19, who would have thought that a detective could effectively work from home?

Teams of detectives started working differently and crucially, at home either in part or in full. One department that adapted very quickly was the digital investigations unit, led by DI Adam Wilkins.

He explains: "The unit examines mobile devices, computers, hard drives and consoles by extracting data from them. We currently have 14 evidence recovery officers working across both disciplines and traditionally, this team has struggled to incorporate agile working practices into daily business, however, COVID-19 necessitated change in a way that hasn't been experienced before.

"During this time, the team has developed processes whereby multiple extractions can be completed physically in the laboratory with work being taken home for analysis and reporting on encrypted machines.

"Changes of this type hadn't been tested before in Force but what made it more necessary and pressured was that in March, we saw a year-on-year increase in demand of 55 per cent. In real terms, this was an increase of just under 50 exhibits against the average of what we had seen in the previous three years. The increase in demand continued in April 2020 when there was a year-on-year increase of 28 per cent.

"Despite a 55 per cent increase in demand during the COVID-19 months, the number of exhibits awaiting allocation for examination fell by 42. At the beginning of May, deep into the COVID-19 response, we only had 160 exhibits relating to 107 different cases that were awaiting allocation while in March, before the pandemic, the number awaiting allocation stood at 202, related to 134 cases.

"This not only demonstrates how well the team have adapted to the challenges of COVID-19 but it is representative of the wider digital investigation unit which has

delivered open source courses virtually, provided remote advice for CCTV recovery via Microsoft Teams and observed huge increases in demand in the communication data investigation team."

How is the Force moving forward?

Achieving a COVID-secure workplace has been the goal of every organisation. The Force is committed to achieving this for a number of reasons.

1. Developments such as 'Track and Trace' will play an important role in limiting the spread of infection but it presents a challenge in maintaining operational capacity. If somebody has prolonged contact with an infected person and hasn't adhered to social distancing or utilised other protective measures such as PPE, the consequence could be that large numbers within a team are immediately required to self-isolate for up to 14 days.
2. We have a diverse workforce who need to be confident that if they return to the workplace in any way that they have been provided a COVID-secure place in which to work.
3. In preparation for a second wave, either locally or nationally, we need to make sure that we have the ability to continue to work effectively while keeping each other, our families and the public safe. Therefore, sustaining flexibility within the way we work is important to enable us to respond effectively once again.

To achieve the COVID-secure status that is so important, a Force-wide strategy was written to enable teams and departments to create bespoke plans for their work spaces and people. To aid this, 81 buildings within the Force's estate and more than 4,000 rooms were assessed to determine their maximum occupancy levels where social distancing can be maintained at a level of two metres. Alongside this, other measures considered and implemented include:

Coming to work and leaving work

- Staggering shift patterns where appropriate
- Reducing congestion points by opening more entry points to the building
- Using markings and introducing one-way flow at entry and exit points
- Providing hand washing facilities, or hand sanitiser where not possible, at entry/exit points and maximising the use of borer access
- De-activating turnstile doors.

Common areas

- Using safe outside areas for breaks
- Reconfiguring seating and tables to maintain spacing and reduce face-to-face interactions
- Ensuring a consistent approach with DFRS, where co-located.

Moving around the buildings

- Discouraging unnecessary travel between rooms and offices
- Restricting access between different areas of the building e.g., CMARC
- Introducing one-way flow through buildings
- Where appropriate, installing dividing screens may be considered.
- Reducing maximum occupancy for lifts
- Opening doors frequently to encourage ventilation.

Workplace and stations

- Workstations being assigned to an individual and NOT shared
- Avoiding hot desking and spaces, however, where not possible, cleaning workstations between different occupants including shared equipment.

Meetings

- Using remote capabilities (MS teams, Skype, conference call etc) in the first instance
- Avoiding transmission during meetings, for example, sharing pens and other objects
- Providing hand sanitiser within meeting rooms.

Visitors

- Encouraging visits via remote connections
- If a visit is required, issue site guidance on social distancing and hygiene on arrival or prior
- Limiting the number of arrivals, through appropriate markings
- Removing transference of items such as pens, for individuals to physically sign in
- Clearly depict entry points for visitors, separating these from staff where possible to minimise contact.

Workforce

- Considering changing roles for those who require it
- Providing sufficient PPE for all staff
- Facilitating those who can work from home to do so.

Creating a COVID-secure workplace has been an immediate priority for the Force but, as expressed by DCC Swann, there is also a deep desire to capture the learning from successful adaptations within the Force and to really take the opportunities that COVID-19 has afforded.

The business change department has been working towards developing a flexible workforce that has the ability to work agile for some time; thus, as Derbyshire continues to embark on its recovery from COVID-19 the Force will continue to look differently.

Each department has made plans about how they will facilitate social distancing in the workplace for the foreseeable future because social distancing, however frustrating it is, remains the best way to limit the transmission of the virus. One of the results of this is that out of the 3,253 employees who work across 18 departments within the Force, 869 people are now working either fully at home or working a hybrid arrangement of working in the workplace sometimes and working at home on other occasions.

D/Supt Booth concluded: "As we celebrated our way into 2020, nobody would have predicted the outbreak of COVID-19. It has been tough on many people; those we serve and those within our organisation. It's been tough on those who have had to shield. It's been tough on those with vulnerable family members. It's been tough on those who have had no choice but to come to work, into the workplace, every day and continue to serve the public on the front-line of policing. And there are more. But in such challenging times, the Force has stepped up to the challenge, police officers and police staff alike; it is truly commendable.

"Social distancing may be a source of frustration for many, but it is one example of how we are responding to our 'new norm', and we are doing our utmost to use it to catalyse lasting change that creates a modern and evolving workforce."

'Tutoring role is challenging but satisfying'

Acting Sergeant Dan Quick says it's hugely rewarding as a police tutor to help students develop into officers.

Dan says the role is challenging but brings with it a lot of satisfaction, including the chance to build long-lasting relationships.

"It's a very rewarding role," he said.

"Especially when you reach the latter part of tutorship as you can see what progress the student officers have made and how they are now developing into a competent officer.

"You can almost see parts of your policing style come out of the student in how they deal with and manage incidents. It also builds good relationships which you take through your career."

Dan began tutoring in 2016 because he wanted to share his experience and develop new officers into the role.

Generally, he supports one Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) student at a time for 10 weeks, the length of the tutorship.

Dan said: "I have to ensure each officer I tutor is competent enough to be able to move forward to independent patrol, covering basic functions of an officer, like crime investigation, evidence integrity, and to ensure they're safe to develop on their own.

"It's mainly to ensure they're secure and confident enough to move into their independent phase of being a student police officer."

Dan added: "There are many challenges. They're new to the role and there is nothing in society quite like being a police officer.

"It's demanding as at the start of the tutorship you are doing the work of two officers, both your own and the student.

"You're constantly assessing the safety of both of you and checking over work they're doing, plus ensuring they're not missing vital parts of evidence.

"It can be difficult as some supervisors see you as a double crewed car and will deploy you to incidents which normally require more than one officer.

"This becomes difficult as you're dealing



Acting Sergeant Dan Quick.

with the live incident and trying to keep an eye on the student too. Workloads can be heavy and you can't really afford for colleagues to help you because you need to go through every step of the process with the student, regularly making you late off duty to ensure they experience every part of the job."

Dan, who became a Federation member when he joined the Force in 2006, said officers need a specific set of skills to be an effective tutor.

"You need to be confident in your own

ability and processes within the Force," he said. "But most of all you need to be patient and supportive.

"You've always got to bear in mind that what you do is second nature but for the students they are starting at the beginning of their careers with very little if no policing experience.

"You also have to be organised as there's a lot of paperwork that comes with tutoring, evidencing competencies they have achieved but also managing two workloads.

"Personality wise, you need to be motivated, positive and outgoing. This is the students' start of their career and you are very impressionable to them."

Dan, who recently transferred to High Peak for a period as acting sergeant, said tutoring was not a role that was suitable for all officers.

"You need to have the right personality

.....
“You’re constantly assessing the safety of both of you and checking over work they’re doing, plus ensuring they’re not missing vital part of evidence.”
.....

Subs increase

and be confident in your ability to tutor," he said. "You have to be able to bond with the student to get the very best from them.

"I also believe you need to have a good amount of service under your belt yourself so you can be sure you're passing on best practice and experiences you have faced."

Dan added that the idea of mandating officers to carry out tutoring work doesn't guarantee the best start to a students' career.

"To get the best out of a student you need to be motivated, positive and outgoing as well as being confident and competent at the role yourself," he explained.

"Someone being mandated to tutor isn't going to give it their best which will inevitably give the student a below par tutorship. If they don't want to do it, they will not give it the time and effort it needs.

"When the student leaves their tutorship into the independent phase, they will lack knowledge and this could negatively affect their motivation and view on policing throughout their career.

"I've seen tutors moan about the job far too often and it's not the right impression to give a newly recruited officer. It doesn't encourage independence and you find students lack knowledge because they've been signed off competent by the tutor, in an almost 'can't wait to finish' attitude.

"I've recently patrolled with students who needed some additional training for some core functions of a constable, like a road-side breath test. Although this was not on their mandatory list for completion, I see it as a function which is a core skill."

So, what is the alternative to mandating officers to tutor students?

"We need to seek the very best officers to tutor," said Dan. "Investment in a student's start in their career will produce more rounded and confident officers who will have more chance to succeed.

"Mandating isn't the way forward. I feel we need to develop officers with the qualities and encourage them to tutor, explaining the benefits and rewards.

"Tutoring is more than your full-time role and you have to go above and beyond to tutor effectively. This needs to be recognised.

"Individuals need to be identified for their qualities and not chosen at random because we have a lack of tutors, but their competence and recognition needs to be rewarded due to the extra responsibilities and work they take on."

Dan added: "Tutoring done the right way is a very rewarding role and you take a lot away from it, including personal development.

"You start to understand how you're perceived and how you engage with others to explain and teach. It's a big responsibility to take on and needs the right people to do this."

Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) delegates at a virtual conference voted through a motion to increase member subscriptions.

Members will now pay an extra £2 a month from September onwards representing the first increase in subs since 2011.

While the new monthly cost of being a member amounts to £23.58 a month for the wide range of support, advice and services that are provided by the Federation, individuals will actually only pay £18.86 when tax relief is applied.

In a joint statement issued after a vote by Federation representatives from across England and Wales, national Federation chair John Apter and secretary Alex Duncan said: "Increasing subscription rates for our members was not a decision we have come to lightly. In an ideal world we would have been able to continue as we had but, after almost 10 years of subscriptions being frozen, we reached the point that doing nothing was not an option."

"For a number of years, PFEW has bridged the gap between income and expenditure by using reserves. This is not sustainable in the longer term as costs continue to rise due to inflation.

"This decision allows the Federation to continue to do the very best it can for our members and to represent them to the best of our ability.

They added: "PFEW's National Board recommended the increase after considering it was in the best interests of the members, and

the organisation. Having avoided any increase in subscriptions for a decade when colleagues suffered years of austerity and pay freezes, this increase was essential to allow current levels of support and assistance for members to be maintained."

Delegates voted in favour of three motions, all with effect from 1 September 2020:

- The monthly voluntary subscription rate to PFEW to be £23.58
- Student officers who elect to subscribe to PFEW will be entitled to a 50 per cent discounted rate for the first year of their service, thereafter they will pay the normal subscription rate
- Those who join the service on the Direct Entry Inspectors' Scheme will pay the full subscription rate.

The virtual conference was organised after the annual national Police Federation conference, which would have been held in Manchester on 16 and 17 June, was cancelled due to coronavirus. Last year's conference was also cancelled, as a result of a cyber-attack on PFEW.

The online conference began with the national chair welcoming delegates to the Microsoft Teams event before national treasurer Simon Kempton outlined why it was felt necessary to increase subscriptions and how it was decided to seek a £2 a month rise. Delegates' pre-submitted questions were also answered before a series of votes.

[FAQs on subscription increase.](#)
[Get tax relief on your subs.](#)

Women's only fitness tests: new dates released

Dates have been released for the Force's women only Job-Related Fitness Tests for the remainder of this year and into early 2021 with COVID-19 restrictions in place.

The tests will be conducted with no more than three runners and two trainers at a time as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

The fitness tests will take place at 8.30am at either Ripley or Chesterfield on the following dates:

Tier 1 (two-day)

Ripley: 6/7 Aug
Ripley: 10/11 Sept
Chesterfield: 5/6 Oct
Ripley: 2/3 Nov
Chesterfield: 4/5 Jan
Ripley: 3/4 Feb
Chesterfield: 1/2 Mar

Tier 2 (one-day)

Ripley: 21 Aug
Ripley: 16 Sept
Ripley: 7 Oct
Ripley: 4 Nov
Chesterfield: 6 Jan
Ripley: 17 Feb
Ripley: 8 Mar.

Kirsty Bunn, Derbyshire Police Federation secretary, was influential in securing the women-only fitness tests which started last year.

She said: "The fitness testing was suspended due to the outbreak of the pandemic but the Force has worked hard to be able to reintroduce them, which is great."

Kirsty said the female-only tests were initiated after the Federation and the Force's

Equality Unity became aware many women were feeling anxious about taking the tests.

"We believe taking the tests alongside their male colleagues was a contributory factor," she said. "We were not seeking any preferential treatment for women but felt that since both nationally and locally the pass rate for female officers is lower than that of male officers something needed to be done to try to help address their anxiety.

"The standard of fitness test 5:4 is not compromised but women officers who feel that anxiety or concern have the opportunity to take the test in a female only environment which they may be more comfortable with," she added.

Women who want to continue to take the fitness test in mixed groups can still opt to do so.

If your JRFT is due and you would like the opportunity to attend one of these sessions, please send an email to Force Training with the date of your training and stating your preference for a women-only test.

The Operational Training Team can offer support and advice to anyone concerned about the test.

The PAG Report & Treatment of Police Pensions upon Divorce

The report of the Pension Advisory Group ("PAG"), "a Guide to the Treatment of Pensions on Divorce" was published in July 2019.

Three recent decisions by the Family Court concerning the divisions of pensions have all referenced the PAG report as being influential on judicial decision making.

The judgment of HHJ Robinson in **KM v CV [2020] EWFC B22** and **RH v SV [2020] EWFC B23** along with HHJ Hess' judgment in **W v H (divorce: financial remedies) [2020] EWFC B10** can be drawn together to provide the following authority regarding the treatment of pensions:

- Expert evidence from a Pensions on Divorce Expert or "PODE" where proportionate and affordable is invaluable and often essential to provide evidence on the pension claim on divorce to achieve equality of income.
- The court is to determine the claim to a Pension Sharing Order taking into account the income – yield of pensions, as well as their capital value (CE), particularly in small to medium money cases, where needs are an issue. It will often be fair in such cases to aim to provide the parties with similar incomes in retirement by way of a Pension Sharing Order, rather than a simple division of CEs.
- When needs take precedence, the court will give less weight to contribution based arguments and excluding any portion of a pension as "non-matrimonial" is unlikely to be justified where pensions are

the sole or main asset to meet the parties' post-retirement needs.

- Pensions cannot be compared as like for like value with other capital assets. Mixing categories of assets by way of offsetting, risks unfairness and often the appropriate method is to divide the pension separately from other assets.

How does this effect the claim on a police pension upon divorce?

The police pension is an unfunded final salary occupational pension scheme and the income from within the scheme per £ of CE is generally higher than annuity income outside the scheme per £ of CE. As such, subject to the CE being valuable, in a case where retirement is on the horizon and the case being one in which needs arise, the guidance from the PAG Report is that the fair outcome would be for the Pension Sharing Order to be based on an equalisation of incomes on retirement and this approach requires expert evidence from a PODE. This is different to adopting the approach of simply dividing the pensions by equality of capital value (CEs). Therefore, in the majority of cases, before the claim to a Pension Sharing Order can be determined, it's now more likely than ever that there will need to be a joint instruction to an expert Pension Actuary (at joint expense) to prepare a pension report and to calculate the Pension Sharing Order to equalise incomes.

Further, it's certainly not clear cut, nor guaranteed that the portion of the police pension accrued prior to cohabitation/marriage will be automatically ring-fenced from the pot for

division. Where the pensions concerned represent the sole or main mechanism for meeting the post-retirement needs of both parties and where the income produced by the pension funds after division falls short in meeting needs, the court's approach is likely to be that no portion of the pension should be excluded and that all the pension provision, regardless as to when it accrued, should be taken into account in determining the Pension Sharing Order.

This is not to say that practitioners should stop asking the PODE to calculate percentages for Pension Sharing Orders on the basis of both the entirety of the pension provision as well as only that pension that has accrued during the relationship, but unless the latter calculation meets the needs of the receiving spouse, the likelihood is that the Judge will order a Pension Sharing Order that is higher, thereby dipping into the pre-marital/post-separation pension contributions.

Whilst there's no "one size fits all" to the answer as to how pensions should be treated upon divorce and every case is decided on its own facts, at the discretion of the Judge, the comments on pensions in recent case law, referencing the PAG report should be treated as authoritative and persuasive.

When going through a divorce, it's imperative that you seek advice from a divorce specialist experienced in dealing with police pensions.

If you'd like specialist advice from a family lawyer please contact Slater and Gordon on **0808 175 7710** and we'll be happy to help.