

YOUR VOICE

Ffederasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru /
North Wales Police Federation



DECEMBER 2017

A photograph of two men in business attire shaking hands. The man on the left is holding a framed certificate, and the man on the right is holding a large silver trophy. In the background, there is a banner with the text "Ffederasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru" and "FOD".

Community Service Awards

– See Pages 4 and 5

Representing • Negotiating • Influencing

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Cover photo: *The Chief Constable congratulates our Community Service Award winner PC Jim Jones.*

Published by North Wales Police Federation, Police Federation Office, 311 Abergele Road, Old Colwyn, Conwy LL29 9YF

Designed and produced by **XPR (UK) Ltd**
www.xpruk.com

Contact the Federation

E-mail: FedAdmin@nthwales.pnn.police.uk

Tel: 01492 805400

Web: www.nwpolfed.org

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We will Protect the Protectors

By Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation

As we near the end of 2017, it is perhaps a good time to reflect upon the past year while looking forward to 2018 and beyond.

It is pretty clear to us all that the budget cuts imposed from Westminster are biting harder than ever and, while I still see great results from officers across the Force on a daily basis, there is no doubt that we are all feeling the pain; a lack of staff, lack of flexibility, lack of training and development opportunities, lack of opportunities to escape the pressures of the job.

These used to be the regular topics raised almost exclusively by front-line response officers, but that picture has changed dramatically and those concerns are now being echoed across all areas and roles.

It is clear that the Police and Crime Commissioner and chief officers are aware of the impact of the cuts on officers but to date we have not really stopped doing anything. Apart from covering all of our own bases, we are without doubt covering for a number of other agencies that are either struggling with cuts or are not in a position to deliver for their own reasons.

For most of my career we have accepted that when all else fails the public - and to some degree our partners - will “call the police” as we will always turn up and try to take on the problem. That cannot continue under the current funding reductions as we are a service in crisis that quite simply cannot pick up everyone else’s slack without the funding to do so.

On top of the financial issues, there are quite clearly the risks for the officers themselves. I am aware of far more colleagues who are raising their hands to highlight that they are struggling with the demands placed upon them. Officers quickly learn to adapt to busy periods, on the basis that those periods rarely last for too long, but at present there is no end or respite in sight.

We need a clear plan to ensure that we are doing everything possible to reduce the demands and pressures on our colleagues and, while there is some great work going on around health and wellbeing, there is clearly a lot more to be done. That starts with a local approach around support and understanding how to identify the early signs of a colleague under pressure.

We still find too many officers suffering in silence until the situation reaches crisis point, this needs to change and we all need a better awareness around looking after ourselves and each other. After that, there is

clearly a need for better support in-house and through external bodies such as MIND Bluelight Cymru.

The North Wales Police Federation has engaged the services of Red Arc to assist colleagues and I would ask you all to review the services offered as they are available to you and your family at times of need. See Page 11 for more details.

The other big threat to officer morale and wellbeing is the constant spectre of being under investigation following complaints or adverse incidents.

While the number of PSD cases judged as “misconduct” locally appears to be falling, there is still a huge job to be completed in persuading bodies like the IPCC that not everything is a matter of “misconduct”.

It is a sad fact that, despite being around for a number of years, the IPCC seems unable to accurately assess cases, even when faced with the very clearest evidence. Officers are then investigated and judged against the “Gold Standard” by the IPCC. The investigations pay little, if any, regard to the staffing or available resources at the time of the incident, that is very much a taboo subject.

There is, however, always a massive focus upon the numerous national and local policies and guidance documents.

Too often I see colleagues held to account over an alleged “non-adherence” to a particular document that in reality they have never even heard of, let alone read and digested. The reason for that is not laziness or a lack of professional interest, it is quite simply the fact that they are not afforded the opportunity to refresh their knowledge or skills and are expected to deliver against the highest expectations of others.

The lengthy IPCC investigations taking many months to conclude even the simplest cases adds to the pressure on officers. That in itself is pressure enough, but the cases often end up with a decision to refer the matters to a conduct meeting where there is a distinct lack of real evidence of wrongdoing and a heavy reliance on hundreds of pages of guidance and policy. The only light at the end of the tunnel for officers is that common sense usually prevails and they are cleared of any misconduct after many months or years of scrutiny and pressure.

So our mission is clear for the future, we must as a Federation continue to fight for you, to protect you and ensure that you are represented to the very highest standard.

In conclusion, we have one aim which now and into the future is quite simply to Protect the Protectors.

"We are screaming a united message"



By Simon Newport, Chairman of North Wales Police Federation

It is time to set the record straight, stop tip-toeing around political correctness and, despite it sometimes being seen as inflammatory, speak out against our political masters.

Those who have read my articles previously will be aware I often write about the budgetary cuts and the lack of police resources that we have suffered over the last 10 years.

There have been occasions when the Police Federation - including myself - have been heavily criticised for scaremongering or, famously, crying wolf when we speak out against the Government's continued, and savage, cuts to national policing budgets and highlight the dangers of continuing on this path.

We are often ignored as petulant dissenters intent on undermining public confidence in the police service.

But over recent weeks, members of the

National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) have also come out highlighting that the cuts are undermining their ability to ensure policing is fit for purpose in providing the secure and safe environment we have all come to expect and deserve.

Chief Constable Sara Thornton, the head of the NPCC, openly states that we are policing the country with depleted numbers of police officers; in fact, the lowest number since 1985. Crime is up 10 per cent and is rising and she says that the NPCC flat cash settlement that was announced in 2015 is simply not enough.

The NPCC, in my opinion, has for some time failed to openly speak out about the continued budget cuts the service faces and instead its members have often used eloquent language to appease their political masters but there are an ever-growing number of chief officers around the country now ready to speak out publicly as they can all see that the service is under significant stress and the core role of the service - to serve and protect its citizens - is under threat.

Our own Chief Constable, Mark Polin, recently sent out an email to all staff members within the Force outlining his concern about the Government's apparent arrogant and dismissive stance on the pleas of the NPCC that forces nationally are struggling to cope with significant rises in demand which will be tackled by further budgets cuts despite pleas for additional funding!

The Government is continually ignoring the advice of the professionals and to me this is very concerning especially when it involves public safety and national security.

So where does this leave us?

In a difficult place I would say, and that's why I applauded our Police and Crime Commissioner, Arfon Jones, who a few weeks ago came out publicly saying that he is fed up

with the police, in this case North Wales Police, picking up the pieces because of the cuts in other public services.

The police service is experiencing unprecedented funding cuts yet other public sector bodies, struggling themselves, see the police as the service that can do. Tradition will say that my colleagues and I pride ourselves on this "can do" attitude but I, for one, am not prepared to see my colleagues suffer ill-health for stress-related matters just to allow other public sectors to function.

The bottom line is that the policing budget needs to be increased and increased immediately. Where in any other walk of life do you ignore the advice of the professionals?

I am fed up with listening to political irresponsibility whereby it appears that those holding power are playing point-scoring games with the nation's security and this has to stop.

We live in a very dangerous world which, with technical advances, is becoming more and more hazardous and to see the Government of today ignoring the advice of those who have dedicated their working lives on serving and protecting the communities of the country is criminal.

The modern-day police service is often faced with new and innovative challenges that require new techniques and training to understand and this costs money; money, the politicians say is not there. Then the police service is routinely publicly criticised and the whole thing goes around in a great big circle whereby the police service always has to play catch-up at the detriment of another service it provides further reducing the visible side of the police to the public.

My message is clear. It is time politicians woke up to the reality that policing requires the appropriate funding and the austerity the service has faced should be halted immediately before it becomes too late. The organisation is screaming a united message that, unless funding is increased the core responsibilities will become impossible to deliver.

I am sure that despite these huge warning signals being flagged to Government, they will be ignored as usual and I see an uncertain future for the police service of the United Kingdom.

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Exemplary officers honoured at awards ceremony

By Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation

This year marked the 25th year of the North Wales Police Federation Community Service Awards and, as ever, the nominations were extremely tough to separate which reflects the great work being carried out across the Force area by officers of all roles and ranks.

The awards ceremony was attended by the Police and Crime Commissioner, Arfon Jones, together with our chief officer team and local Assembly Member Michelle Brown.

Nominated this year was Sergeant Vic Powell from Wrexham for his work with his team tackling the impact of "legal highs" on the communities in and around Wrexham town centre.

Vic had identified the conflict generated within the community, culminating in reports of anti-social behaviour from members of the general public.

Initially, there was little local, nor

national, understanding of the background, use or effects of using this product which, due to varying chemical constituent combinations, made each "batch" in circulation affect regular users in markedly different ways.

It is a fact that the users were extremely difficult to engage with and saw themselves largely as lost to society.

Vic's nomination set out how he had been innovative and pro-active in his efforts to engage with users and third sector providers including, but not limited to, health, mental health provision, housing, drug and alcohol advice agencies and others to attempt to divert users away from usage of the product and into what most people would term a "normal" lifestyle.

What Vic uncovered was a disturbing story of users who were at a very low ebb, many suffering from complicated backgrounds, most coping with addictions and all demonstrating a general feeling of

worthlessness.

Vic researched the background to use of the product, examined the legal position surrounding possession and usage and met with all third sector assistance providers to adopt a real multi-agency approach to solve this issue.

He trained his team to spot the signs of use of this product and moved the emphasis from police dealing with individuals who were addicted to the product back from a punitive stance to one of safeguarding this very vulnerable group of users.

This approach has subsequently been identified as innovative and attracted the interest of the national media, highlighting the Force in a positive light.

Local feedback is that the work carried out by Vic and his team has massively improved the situation within his area for all sections of the community in Wrexham.

PC 201 Jim Jones picked up this year's overall award and was a truly worthy winner



Sergeant Vic Powell receives his award from Chief Constable Mark Polin.



PC Jim Jones gives a donation to Luke Ashton.

of the trophy and bursary.

Jim was recognised for his outstanding work as the Community Officer for Ysbyty Glan Clwyd Hospital, the community in which he has been the dedicated officer for many years.

Ysbyty Glan Clwyd employs more than 5,000 staff and has 650 in-patient beds, however, in 2014 alone it had 64,000 standard admissions, 56,000 emergency department admissions and 153,000 out-patient admissions. The hospital provides emergency medical care, acute hospital services and mental health care via the Ablett Unit.

This produces its own unique demands, challenges and policing response. Despite the gargantuan numbers, crime remains relatively low although demand for the police remains high.

Jim has been pivotal in reducing this demand and continuing to make Ysbyty Glan Clwyd a safer place for staff, visitors and



PC Jim Jones presents a donation to Lindsey Thomas of St Kentigern Hospice.



PC Jim Jones with (left to right) RNLI Rhyll chairman David Simmons, Coxswain Martin Jones, Sergeant Mark Jones and crew members Charlie Williams and Callum Robinson.

patients.

Using his own initiative, Jim has commenced quarterly Crime Prevention Stand events at the hospital and offers crime prevention advice to visitors and staff in the public areas of the hospital.

Additionally, Jim has been an advocate for other organisations and campaigns within the hospital such as the White Ribbon Campaign and The Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

Jim has used his training skills to provide personal safety training and awareness for staff within the hospital, delivered by him on his rest days as he felt it was such vital work due to the unacceptable rise in assaults on emergency service workers and hospital personnel.

To further reduce crime and make Ysbyty Glan Clwyd a safer place, Jim organised a series of community events using PCSOs and Police Cadets.

This initiative featured in a national newsletter (Cadet News) showcasing the

excellent work of the Cadets.

The opinions about Jim are all reflective of his outstanding performance in his role:

Dave Baker, Violence & Aggression Case Manager for Betsi Cadwaladr UHB, said: "He is always approachable, and this is demonstrated by the multitude of endorsements from hospital staff. Indeed my interactions with staff of all grades and all professions within the hospital, speak highly of Jim's interventions."

Lee Gardner, Security Manager for Betsi Cadwaladr UHB, said: "He is an exemplary officer, as enthusiastic and motivated, towards the end of his service, as I am sure he was at the beginning of it. He has often come in on his rest days or in his own time to assist with incidents and investigations. I have been extremely fortunate to have him seconded to the hospital and he has been a pleasure to work alongside."

Inspector Alwyn Williams, District Inspector for Denbighshire Coastal and Abergelge, said: "Jim has been the Community Officer in Rhuddlan for many years. Jim is experienced in his field and goes the extra mile to help the public and his colleagues. I am proud to have Jim on my team and truly believe that the service he provides to the unique community that is Ysbyty Glan Clwyd is exemplary."

Jim picks up his award at the end of 30 years policing in front-line uniform roles and we wish him all the best as he approaches the next chapter in his life.

Hopefully, Jim can reflect upon his recognition, knowing that his £1,500 bursary is going to help his chosen causes, namely:

- £500 – St Kentigern Hospice**
- £500 – Hope House Hospice**
- £250 – RNLI, Rhyll**
- £250 – Luke's Army Fund.**

If you work with an officer who makes an unselfish contribution to policing their community then why not consider a nomination for the 2018 award.



PC Jones presents a donation to Amanda Jones, Area Fundraiser for Ty Gobaith.



We have to look after ourselves, and each other

By Nick Hawe, Federation representative

The results of the national detectives' survey were published by the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum in October. They did not make pretty reading and they highlight the effect that the cuts to the police service are having. Some highlights of the survey are that:

- Over 50 per cent of respondents said that service cuts have had a major impact on their morale.
- Over 25 per cent said that cuts have had a major impact on their physical health and wellbeing and on their mental health and wellbeing.
- Nearly two thirds said that service cuts have substantially increased their overall workload.
- Other figures showed a large increase in fatigue, stress and sickness.

None of this is rocket science. I recall a few years ago how Theresa May, the Home Secretary at the time, told the Federation conference that we would have to do

"more with less". Now I am not too bad at maths generally, and I remember thinking at the time that her formula was fundamentally flawed. Since this time, we have seen the Cuts Have Consequences campaign, and I think that this survey further backs up the evidence gathered.

Fewer officers doing more work was only ever going to result in the sort of figures that this latest survey has produced. Even the words of Theresa May were somewhat prophetic - she predicted we would have MORE to do – that our workloads would increase. This has come true. Not just because of the fact that there are fewer of us, but because of the increased demand on us. Modern slavery, child sexual exploitation, terrorism and cyber-crime have all posed different challenges for us, while domestic violence and drugs have tied up more of our staff than ever before.

As ever, we have done our very best to make things work, to keep the "wheel" from falling off. You do not have to go far to see

staff working long hours on complicated investigations, striving to provide the best service for the public. It is what they expect and it is what all North Wales Police officers do.

I think we can look at ourselves and be proud of that. But we also need to look at ourselves, and our colleagues, and make sure that we are okay; make sure that we are fit and healthy, and that we can do what is being required of us.

If we recognise that any of these things are not right – then we must flag them up.

Theresa May and the cuts that have been made don't keep the wheel on – we do. That means that we have to look after ourselves, and each other.

The constables' representatives would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Whether you are working or not, we hope it is a peaceful and happy time for you and your loved ones.

Fourteen months for IPCC to conclude that use of Taser in Llandudno incident was reasonable and proportionate

North Wales Police officers who deployed Taser in dealing with a male reported to have been armed with a knife have been vindicated by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) after 14 months.

North Wales Police officers were called to a report of a domestic disturbance in Llandudno at around 10.15pm on Wednesday 27 July 2016.

After gaining entry to the address, the officers confronted a 24-year-old man, who they had been told was in possession of a large knife, and discharged a Taser.

The man fell backwards and sustained a serious head injury which caused him to lose consciousness. He was treated in hospital and has since recovered

significantly.

The IPCC considered whether the use of force by the officers was reasonable and if authorisation to deploy the Taser and warnings regarding its use were in accordance with Force and national policy.

Investigators obtained accounts from members of the public, police and paramedics and examined body-worn video footage of the incident. All officers were treated as witnesses.

In the investigator's opinion, both the authorisation and the use of Taser were in line with Force and national policies.

The investigation followed a mandatory referral from North Wales Police as a result of the injury sustained by the man during police contact.

The IPCC report concludes that: "In this case, the officers were confronted in a confined space by an individual who had been seen in the street with a knife.

"The evidence indicates the officer who Tasered the man used no more force than he honestly, reasonably and instinctively considered necessary for the purpose of protecting himself and his colleague."

Rich Eccles, Secretary of the North Wales Police Federation, said: "While I'm pleased that the officers involved received the right outcome, I am still concerned about the length of time that this investigation took to reach what appeared to be an obvious outcome from the outset."

It is not just a women's issue, everyone needs to know about it **#HotFlashMob**

By Kim Owen, North Wales Police Federation representative



Where has the year gone? Sitting writing this, I am thinking of the past year, which has been another busy one in the life of a Federation representative.

I have dealt with numerous cases and supported many officers over the past 12 months and taken the lead for the Federation in addressing the issue of public holidays on maternity leave, whereby it transpired that some officers had not received their full entitlements while away from the Force.

After several months, we have finally got an outcome whereby all officers who have had maternity leave in the last six years and not received their full entitlement of public holidays should have now received their credits back to them.

We are seeing progression with the Chester treadmill machine being installed as an alternative to the bleep test and hopefully it will be up and running soon.

The NWP Menopause Action Group (MAG) has also been set up this year although we have only had one meeting to set the terms of reference. But hopefully, over the next year, we can move forward. And now I've got your attention, the heading of this article refers to the dreaded taboo of menopause and getting people talking about the subject.

In October, I attended the first National MAG Conference in Birmingham with Jennifer Hutchinson from HR and Lee Bailey from the Diversity Unit. During the day the Tweeteters in the room were using the Hashtags #MAGCONF17 and #HotFlashMob. Take a look at the Twitter feeds with those hashtags for some interesting links with advice and support.

This was a really informative conference, highlighting issues around the menopause, how it affects our members and ways in which we can support officers and staff who are currently going through the menopause while working for NWP and those who will do so in the future.

In March, I wrote an article in Your Voice

about this subject and it's good to see, a few months on, that concerns around this issue are now being recognised nationally and addressed.

The conference was opened by Chief Constable Dee Collins, who is candid about how the menopause affects her daily, personally and in work, highlighting the importance of understanding the impact it has on people.

Some really good speakers covered different areas. The first speaker was Dr Louise Newson who gave an input on what menopause is, why it happens and what a woman may experience. She went on to speak about the effects the symptoms can have on women and how they can manage these from a medical approach.

What became apparent is that, surprisingly, some doctors still don't identify the symptoms early on and will put some of them down to depression, prescribing anti-depressant tablets when ideally they should consider HRT tablets and other advice or treatment.

In the same week as the conference, Dr Newsom appeared on the GMTV Lorraine Kelly programme as they were discussing the menopause and the importance of talking about the subject.

Nutritionist Dr Marilyn Glenville gave an input on diet and the herbal and complementary approach to the menopause that may help. Interestingly phytoestrogens, Vitamin D3 and Omega 3 can assist symptoms.

The afternoon session began with Ruth Moore from Slater and Gordon giving an entertaining and thought-provoking presentation on the psychology of menopause and the power of language, the history, culture and social impacts of the menopause. Positivity can help!

Emma Hawksworth from Slater and Gordon gave a view on the employment law and on what employers should be doing and not doing.

There was an input from ACC Jo Shiner from Kent regarding fitness testing and the menopause and the reasonable adjustments that should be considered.

Nottinghamshire Detective Constable Keeley Mansell gave her account of how the menopause affected her at 38-years-old, including how she had been treated and what she has done within her force to address the

issues she found.

Clearly leaders and managers all have a role to play with a huge emphasis on communication and engagement and how to get everyone talking about the menopause.

There is still a lot of work to be done within NWP to ensure managers and supervisors have the relevant guidance and information regarding the menopause to ensure that they are able to support officers and staff who may be going through it and have relevant guidance on reasonable adjustments that may assist.

I am now looking forward to being in a position to take this forward along with the other members of NWP MAG group over the coming year.

So what else can you do?

Have an understanding of the menopause and the effects.

Do not discriminate against staff male or female because they are menopausal.

Respect and understand colleagues and family members who are going through, or may be going through, the menopause.

Start a conversation at work and allow people to talk about their symptoms and their fears without feeling guilty, ashamed or embarrassed about it.

Offer reassurance and support. Many women may lose self-esteem and confidence during the menopause.

Things currently being done nationally in the police service:

The Police Federation is doing a national survey regarding the menopause.

The College of Policing is preparing a national guidance for all forces.

Helpful websites

www.menopausematters.co.uk/menopause.php

www.project-aware.org/managing/exercise.sthtml

www.womens-health-concern.org/help/factsheets/fs_menopause.html
www.marlynglenville.com

And finally, as we enter the festive period I would like to take this opportunity to wish you, your partners and families a merry Christmas and a happy New Year for 2018. To everyone who will be working over the Christmas and New Year period, remain safe and look after each other.

Government is playing fast and loose with police funding

**By Paul McKeown
Chairman of the
North Wales
Inspectors' Branch
Board**



December again. My bank balance will once more take a pounding. However, my one per cent bonus will help buy a few small treats for the family but I'll explain to them that they shouldn't get used to such splurging as I won't be getting it next year; the Government, with its usual sneaky underhand tactics, has once again promised one thing and then done the exact opposite.

I wasn't surprised by the pay award news, in fact, I predicted disappointment when I last wrote in this magazine. It is clear that our masters still have a bee in their bonnet about police cash reserves. They believe that police chiefs have loads of money and should spend that instead of whinging at cuts to their budgets. Hence why they give us a bonus which they won't pay themselves.

However, I think they are playing fast and loose with police funding and taking a massive risk. Good business practice for any large organisation is to ensure they keep a reserve of cash to cover operational costs for between three to six months. I had a quick look on our PCC's website and noted that we seem to be below that amount and it can be seen to have dwindled a bit over the past few years.

Now, I am not saying we are in trouble but if the Government continues to force police to dip into their reserves then the whole service is going to be in real trouble in the near future. The Home Secretary mentioned the other day that the service has £1.6 billion in reserves. I am not sure how accurate this is, and it might sound a lot, but I'd put money on it that if you divided that amount by the 43 forces and compared their budgets the likelihood will be that the reserves are way below good business practice.

The fact is reserves are finite and the way the service is being forced to dip into

them to offset funding shortfalls is nothing short of disgraceful. It would make you think that the Government don't actually care about the future of the service or, in fact, how that impacts on the public but are more concerned in keeping power at all costs and diverting the money to other more vote catching initiatives. Maybe they don't expect to be here when the worst happens and so it is not an issue for them.

Inspectors and other supervisors have recently attended a day's course on how to deal with complaints against the police. I found it really informative as did others, particularly when it was explained that the Home Office has announced again that it wanted to get away from the "blame game" and move towards learning lessons. Ten years after announcing the same thing, it has decided to really try to move in this direction.

I remember when the initial proclamation was made all those years ago; I had no grey hair and weighed a bit less. At that time, I applauded this directive. It seemed the service was maturing for the better. But then I waited, and waited and waited. Nothing happened. Well, it did actually. The word 'misconduct' became the buzz word.

All that could be heard, particularly from the IPCC (which loves the word) was "No you haven't made an administrative error... you have miscondacted yourself!" This was quiet at first and then grew louder and louder until it's all you ever hear. Although the Home Office had decided to allow us to learn from our mistakes, the IPCC, growing bigger all the time, rampaged through the service firing the misconduct word at everyone in its path. And now here we are again; preparing to change culture and instead of treating officers like malfunctioning machines who need to obey every letter, we will now remember that they are in fact human beings, with private lives like everyone else and are prone to having off days just like normal people.

We make mistakes. We do not normally intentionally try to misconduct ourselves. But will the IPCC adhere to this? Has it matured? Is it still going to appear like a power-crazy zealot and use a big mallet to crack some small nuts?

I suppose it will be a game of wait and

see. The police service will hopefully push back and go down the learning the lessons route. If they do, we might see morale go up and officers becoming even more professional.

As an inspector, particularly in uniform, we spend lots of our time considering whether a domestic violence suspect should be issued with a Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN). These were introduced by the Government a few years ago. I would say they are a good thing but I find that they can be problematic with regards to the bureaucracy and the impact it has on inspectors and even more the superintendents who have to authorise them.

Every suspect who is arrested for a domestic violence offence need to be assessed and if suitable, the paperwork prepared. The frustrating part of this is that if the suspect is charged we will not require the paperwork which ends up in the bin. A waste of time you might say. Yes, in a sense, it is.

Often, we have to ring superintendents at night when they are on call to get them to complete the paperwork. This is a massive impact on them, especially when there aren't many of them in the Force (and a couple of them can be very grumpy getting woken up). What I can't get my head around is the fact that inspectors can be used to emergency charge a suspect should CPS advice not come through in time, with all types of crime including serious crime, but they can't be trusted to authorise a DVPN application.

Isn't it time the Government looked at this issue and changed the law? The courts actually decide whether to issue the actual Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs). I am sure an inspector could just as easily provide the justification. This would allow our superintendents to get their much-needed beauty sleep.

May I just take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



Cuts really do have consequences

By Jason Higgins, inspectors' representative

The Cuts Have Consequences campaign was launched at our 2015 national conference in response to financial cuts to the police service. National Chairman Steve White warned: "The cuts, if they continue, will have dire consequences for the police service and the public."

The then Home Secretary, Theresa May, immediately accused the Federation of "crying wolf" over the cuts.

John Graham, then a director of The Police Foundation, later responded in a blog: "But if the Federation is serious about working in partnership with Government to shape policing policy and practice, then maybe it should provide robust evidence of exactly what these consequences are and not simply rely on pathos to persuade."

Over the last 12 months tragic events in London and Manchester have temporarily focussed the minds of policymakers on the critical role that policing has to play in keeping people safe. It would be wholly inappropriate to suggest that the cuts had any effect on a failure to prevent the attacks, and the police response during and immediately after the attacks was exemplary.

Logically though, we would have expected to see an immediate halt to any further cuts and an injection of funds to allow PCCs and the NPCC to increase the availability of armed patrols to protect life,



matched by increased investigative capability to identify and disrupt plotters, and renewed investment in neighbourhood policing teams to provide a flow of intelligence to Prevent teams.

The Government's response has been to continue to impose budgetary constraint which has resulted in a loss to date of 20,000 officers. The cuts have also had an impact on the support and resources available to officers, thereby increasing officer workloads. At the same time, there has been a significant rise in recorded crime.

Recently, the Government awarded police officers a one per cent pay increase with a one per cent non-consolidated "bonus" to compensate for the additional stress and strain caused by "doing more with less", it then asked forces to pay that bonus from their own budgets, indirectly imposing further cuts on them.

In the week before I wrote this column the National Association of Police and Crime Commissioners told the Home Secretary that they and chief officers have found that

£440 million will be needed in 2018/19 and £845m in 2019/20 to combat the recent rise in crime. The funding would be used to recruit 5,000 officers to deal with this rise and to increase the number of armed officers by 1,100.

The Government's response was for Home Secretary Amber Rudd to tell them (1 November): "It needs to be about cutting crime, delivering on the priorities you were elected on and being held to account by local people in your area when you don't. So when crime stats go up, I don't just want to see you reaching for a pen to write a press release asking for more money from the Government."

In other words, a resounding "No" to additional funding.

The Federation has a massive task in trying to work in partnership with a Government that will not listen to the elected and appointed leaders of the service; a Government that cannot, or does not want to, understand that you need resources to cut crime by addressing the causes.

Officers cutting crime can't be recording and investigating it at the same time. Robust evidence of the consequences of the cuts is now here for anyone to see. The next national Federation Chair will need to work closely with PCCs and chief officers to persuade the Government to fully understand and listen to our concerns.

Season's greetings and happy New Year.



We need to start looking after ourselves

By DCI Alun Oldfield, North Wales Police Federation representative

I would like to start with a brief introduction as the relatively new inspectors' representative.

I joined North Wales Police in January of 1993 and was based in Wrexham. I then joined the Criminal Investigation Department in 1996 and have remained mostly within the arena of investigating serious and organised crime.

Throughout my career, I have worked on some very sensitive and harrowing investigations involving young and vulnerable people being abused by those in a position of trust and also organised crime groups.

My current role as a Senior Investigating Officer has given me the opportunity to continue to work with, and support, victims and also to target the suspects committing these offences. We frequently see on a daily basis the impact that crime has on the victims we serve but do we ever pause to consider the impact of dealing with these victims also has on ourselves?

While having mandatory screening for officers in specialist posts is considered a healthy start, there is also so much more that should be considered and acted upon.

There is no doubt that the Force is striving towards improving the support options available to everyone but it also needs to consider how this support is delivered and ensure that everyone knows

what is available to them.

This work has started with the review of critical incident de-briefs and also the roll-out of a peer support network which I am assured will continue to grow to ensure that there are operational officers trained to offer support at the front-line where it is needed.

The Force offers support to anyone within the Force who is suffering with poor mental health and the Force Health & Wellbeing Board and Health & Wellbeing Tactical Group are promoting and expanding the support we have available to cater for the needs of different individuals. Some of the key areas of work in relation to mental health are as follows:

Mental Health Peer Support Network – The Force has a team of 28 trained Mental Health Peer Supporters across the Force area. A conference for the MH Peer Supporters is being organised by HR for early in the New Year to facilitate the sharing of ideas, receive updates and review progress. A further report is due for the Police Dependants' Trust, which has funded the training programme for the supporters, in February 2018 to request the extra funding for the next financial year.

We hope to recruit an extra 60 supporters over the next two years – taking the total of supporters trained to 90. Further information on the scheme and how it can support you and your colleagues are available on the HR website under Health and Wellbeing.

Line Manager Training on Mental Health

– As part of the MIND Blue Light programme, the Force will shortly start training line managers on the new Managing Mental Health in the Emergency Services course, which is a half day's abstraction.

Blue Light Framework– National forces have been asked by the College of Policing to complete this framework, which is not mandatory. The framework is bespoke to policing and has five sections – Leadership, Creating the Environment, Mental Health, Attendance Management and Protecting the Workforce, and Resilience. The Health & Wellbeing Tactical Group will focus specifically on progress in these areas and report back to the Force Health & Wellbeing Board accordingly.

Welfare Support Review – The Health & Wellbeing Board recommended a review of the critical incident de-brief process, and focus group meetings were held across the Force area. The review concluded that critical incident debriefing is only one element of our welfare support and improvements need to be made. A Task & Finish Group has been established to design and implement agreed recommendations.

Resource investment is necessary for a successful welfare support programme, which demonstrates the importance the Force places on its people. This work is ongoing at the current time.

As Nick Hawe has already stated, we need to ensure we start to look after ourselves and are given the right support from our employers, we are jointly working towards this.

As the last instalment of the Star Wars film is about to screen just before Christmas let me leave you with this festive message regarding the health and wellbeing: *"Remember – the Force will be with you, always."*

Estates update

The new building at Llay is still on programme, with the contractor on target to hand over the building at the end of May for North Wales Police fit out and training. Nearly all of the internal partition walls have been erected and the work package for the glazed partitions is to begin imminently. The building services is ahead of schedule, and asphalt laying to the operational car park and emergency relief road will start from 5 December.

If you've been in Wrexham Police Station recently, you may have seen the mock-up of the new custody charge desk that has been built in the canteen. It has now all been signed off in terms of lay-out. Formal sign-off will occur once the drawings capturing all the comments made at a site



meeting on 15 November 2017 have been received.

If you would like to see more, you can visit the site – visits are from 2pm on Friday



afternoons. Contact Liz Bryan if you'd like to have a walk about, as numbers per visit are limited.

Federation actions on findings of pay and morale survey

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) carries out a pay and morale survey among members every year. It gives officers a chance to share their views which in turn informs PFEW work on pay and conditions and provides an insight into general police morale.

The survey is the only annual police workforce survey to gather consistent data on officers' experiences across all 43 forces. It forms a key part of PFEW's annual submission to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB).

The survey also provides local Federation branches with our officers' views on pay and conditions, which helps us when we discuss matters with chiefs, commissioners and local AM and MPs. This year 382 officers from North Wales completed the survey – a response rate of 27 per cent.

The main issues highlighted by North Wales Police officers this year were around promotion and training, and shift patterns and working hours.

A total of 55.9 per cent of respondents were dissatisfied with the promotion process (all respondents who identified with this question had applied for promotion) and, of the reasons identified for officers not applying for promotion, 20.8 per cent said they were more interested in pursuing other roles in their current rank, and 19.4 per cent feel that a promotion would mean being posted

somewhere else within the Force area.

In response to this, the Federation and the Force have done further work and have identified that a contributing factor to the issue of the promotion process is the posting process and this has now been changed.

The new process for postings is that any specialist posts will be advertised up to a month before the posting meeting thus giving an opportunity to existing sergeants to apply for those posts.

Where those posts are not filled within that timescale, the post will be discussed at the posting meetings as a vacancy along with generic sergeants' posts. CPD preferences will be one of the considerations taken into account within the postings meeting. This new process will also go some way to addressing the concerns for those 20.8 per cent of officers who wished to do other roles within their existing rank, and the 19.4 per cent who were concerned at the prospect of being posted elsewhere in the Force.

"Promotion and selection processes are always contentious topics," said Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation, "We are working hard to get more transparency into those processes. Officers who work hard towards a goal need to see fairness in selection for roles."

A total of 41.2 per cent of response officers expressed dissatisfaction with the

shift pattern. Officers had also expressed similar concerns around this issue more recently on Fy Llais, and the Force has recognised that this needs to be linked into workforce organisation and the remodelling work that is being undertaken.

There is no perfect shift pattern that suits all but we need to try to get a balance between operational demand and officer wellbeing.

Within the main body of the report, there is a noted decrease in personal morale. The Force is aware that support at a local level is appreciated by officers, and the Force wants to enhance this. Consequently, the next training for the peer supporters for mental health will look to recruit from front-line officers, and discussions will be had with Police Mutual around welfare screening events in each of the three areas.

In addition to the initiatives mentioned already, North Wales Police Federation is introducing RedArc, a brand-new support service for officers and their families aimed at providing 24/7 help from health professionals.

"I hope that this will offer another means of accessing timely interventions at a time of need – it really should #ProtecttheProtectors," said Richard.

See below for more information about the new support service.

New service for all subscribing Federation members

We have introduced a great new service for subscribing members of North Wales Police Federation - RedArc.

RedArc is an independent nurse advice service that provides practical advice and emotional support for a wide range of conditions including mental health problems, work-related stress and muscular-skeletal problems.

The service, available to NWPF members from 1 December 2017, is provided by personal nurse advisers who are all very experienced, registered nurses.

Why have we introduced this service?

Mainstream services such as the NHS and social services are coming under increasing strain to deliver on targets such as waiting lists. As a result, patients' expectations with regards to the service they should receive cannot always be met. The reality is that there is often little time for the patient, especially in the "softer skills" of listening, reassuring and informing. This shortfall can cause real distress at times of serious illness or at the onset of a chronic condition or

disability that is affecting you or your family.

The specialist nurse advisers are focussed only on you, and the time they can spend talking to you is dependent wholly on your needs.

So how does it work?

Once you've had a referral – either as an automatic referral as a result of a Group Insurance Scheme critical illness claim, your self-referral as a subscribing member of the North Wales Police Federation or, if you'd prefer, a referral made by your Federation representative with your specific consent and permission, your personal nurse adviser will call you to introduce themselves, to assure you about the confidentiality of the service and to explain exactly how the service can help you. Following the initial call, the nurse takes time to listen and understand how they can help both emotionally and practically. Regular support calls are put in place and, in many cases, this relationship continues for several years. This is because the service is focussed on your needs, and each of us are different.

Where clinically appropriate, at the

discretion of the nurse, your nurse adviser may identify additional support or therapy that could help speed up recovery or make life more comfortable. They can organise a very wide range of additional help, for example, a course of counselling, specialised physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, complementary therapies, a piece of specialist equipment. The list is wide and varied dependent on the circumstances of each individual. In addition, the nurses regularly supply CDs, DVDs, books, leaflets and health-related books including some specifically designed for children.

The RedArc service is now available for all subscribing members of North Wales Police Federation and the service that they provide will not cost you anything further. It's a family benefit so the service is available to you, your immediate family and dependants. **The service is also available to all members of our Group Insurance Scheme (including retired members of the scheme).**

If you feel that they could support and assist you or your family, you can ring RedArc on **01244 625180** (in normal business hours).



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Health and safety seminar round-up

By North Wales Police Federation representative Tony Edwards

The Federation's health and safety seminars are held twice a year to actively promote a healthy and safe working environment, working practices and to update health and safety knowledge.

There was a full agenda for the September seminar which included presentations about employment rights, corrosive attacks, CAST body armour standards and the new nine-point stress plan.

Peter Collingwood gave a particularly interesting presentation about the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) sponsored Breast Cancer and Night Shift Research Project.

The project aims to examine whether night shift work could increase women's risk of developing breast cancer. The Cancer Epidemiology Unit at Oxford University, led by Ruth Travis, followed a total of 800,000 women in three large UK studies and estimated the relative risks of breast cancer among women who reported night shift work versus no night shift work. The studies used were The Million Women Study: 522,246 participants, EPIC-Oxford: 22,559 participants and UK Biobank which had 251,045 participants.

Participants answered questions on shift work and were followed for incident cancer.

In a meta-analysis of the world-wide evidence, the authors combined results from the three UK studies with those from all seven previously published prospective studies (two each in the USA, China and Sweden, and one in the Netherlands). The 10 studies included a total of 1.4 million women among whom 4,660 breast cancers

occurred in women who had ever done night shift work.

The results showed that women who had worked night shifts, including long-term night shifts, were not more likely to develop breast cancer, either in the three new UK studies or in the combined results from all 10 studies that had published relevant data. The incidence of breast cancer was the same whether no night shifts were worked or night shifts were worked for several decades.

The HSE will continue to monitor developments in this area and will consider the current position in the light of new evidence as and when it is presented. Meanwhile, the main occupational risk from shift work is fatigue.

Tom Payne and Chris Malbon from CAST presented details of the new body armour. The armour uses ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE) fibre, branded as Dyneema®, manufactured by DSM Dyneema, a world leader in life protection materials and high performance fibres. Dyneema® Anti-Stab Technology is a patented anti-stab material for soft armour applications.

Vests manufactured with Dyneema® Anti-Stab Technology combine outstanding protection against knives and other sharp weapons with unmatched lightweight, flexibility and comfort. This new technology can be combined with Dyneema® soft ballistic materials to develop a new generation of multi-threat protective gear.

The Home Office Body Armour Standard 2017 provides minimum performance requirements and test methods for the assessment of body armour to protect against ballistic, knife and spike threats.

The key improvements from the

previous Home Office standards include:

- **Formed armour testing:** anthropometrically derived test surrogates, more representative of the morphologies of the female torso, enabling enhanced assessment of female body armour
- **Ballistic protection levels:** an updated set of ballistic protection levels with test rounds reflecting the current operational requirements of UK law enforcement
- **Rifle testing:** anthropometrically derived male front and back torso surrogates for ballistic testing to provide enhanced assessment on the performance of rifle protection
- **Production quality testing (PQT):** introduction of critical perforation analysis (CPA) as a quality assurance tool to provide increased confidence in the continued production quality of soft armour
- **In-life monitoring (ILM):** periodical assessment of in-service body armour over a period of time to ensure performance is maintained.

Due to the tendering process, we don't yet know which manufacturer will ultimately supply the new standard but you can find out more details about body armour at:

New Standards and Guidance July 2017
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-office-body-armour-standard-2017>

Good practice guide by PTC/PFEW
<http://www.thepolicetreatmentcentres.org/physiotherapy-programme/physiotherapyoverview/BodyArmour>

Overall, the seminar was well organised and well presented, providing a wealth of useful information. Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas.

Positive action: new Force strategy

By Annalee Morris, HR lead

We have a strong commitment to equality and diversity in North Wales Police and in the services we provide. The vision for North Wales Police is "A Safer North Wales" and, to achieve this, we aim to employ a workforce that reflects the diverse communities we serve.

So how would you feel if you knew that 2.5 per cent of the North Wales general population define themselves as Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) but only one per cent of police officers and no Special Constables at all do? Or that 79 per cent of our sergeants and 86 per cent of chief inspectors and above are male?

The Equality Act 2010 says employers can, in some situations, take steps to help certain disadvantaged groups access employment or training. This is called positive action.

Positive action is about creating a level playing field to enable people to compete on equal terms. It does not mean that people will be employed or promoted, for example, simply because they share a protected characteristic (race, gender, etc). This would be positive discrimination, which is generally unlawful.

A new Positive Action Strategy and Delivery Plan have recently been written for the Force, supported by both the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime

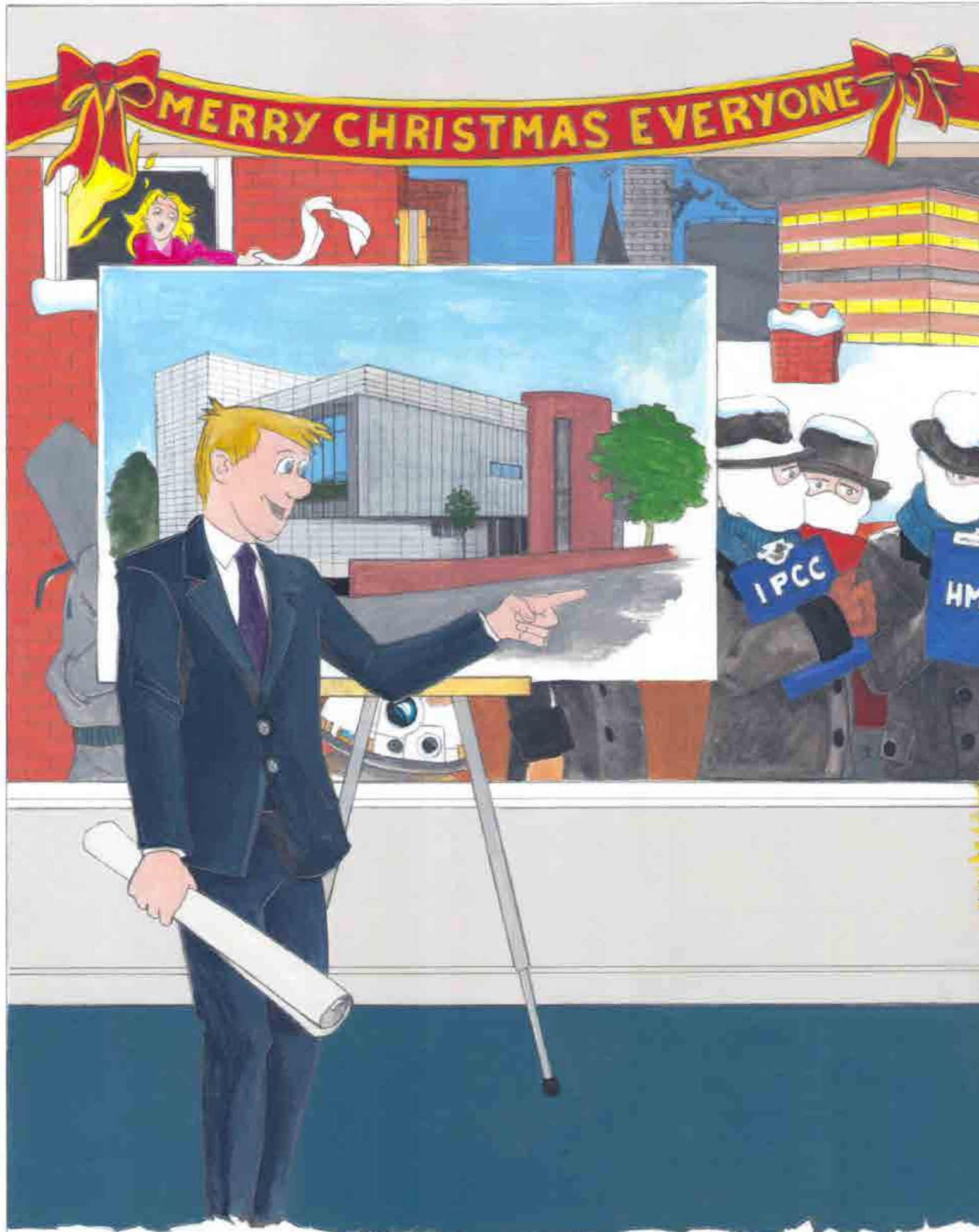
Commissioner. We are also in the process of recruiting a positive action officer to co-ordinate the work required.

We encourage all our staff to become involved in seeking out and reassuring potential applicants from under-represented groups to join North Wales Police. What can you do?

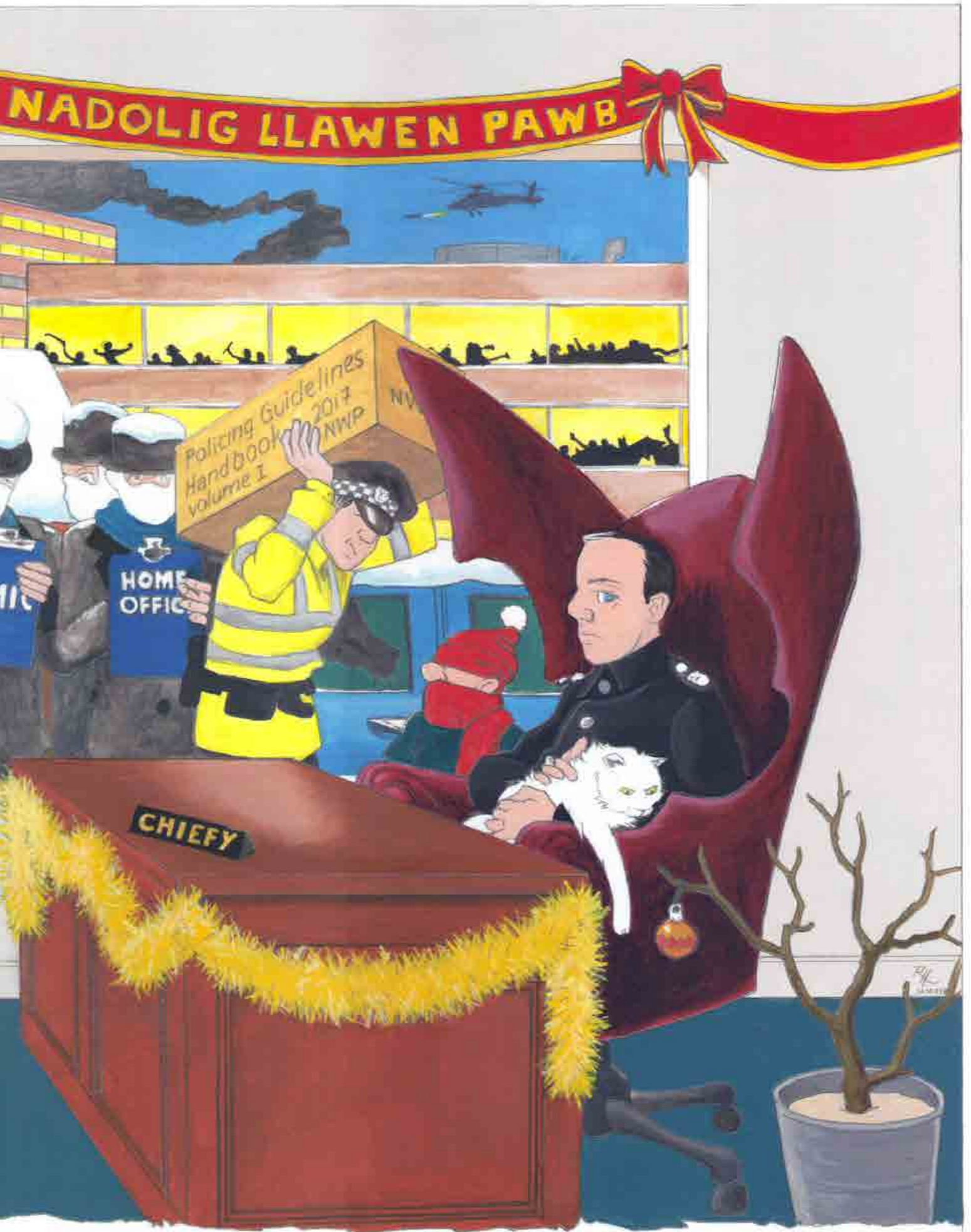
If anyone would like any further details or support please contact me or Lee Bailey in the diversity unit.



Twitter: @NWalesPoliceFed



Great news Chief, this new station will contain 500



0 policies, 4 Audit teams..... and one Officer!"

Custody concerns brought to the fore at successful seminar

By Paul Anderson, Federation representative

In September, I once again attended the Police Federation of England and Wales national custody seminar in Warwick. This year, in some recognition of the standing of the event and the quality of speakers last year, I was accompanied by two senior custody managers from the Force, and one of the event organisers was our very own Sergeant Sam Roberts who is now a regional Federation representative.

Inspector Paul McKeown, there in his role as Central Custody Manager, told me that it was "an extremely valuable conference attended by a number of national criminal justice organisations which highlights that custody is still one of the most scrutinised areas of policing".

The first speaker was Nick Ephgrave, Chief Constable of Surrey Police and NPCC lead for custody, who, after a fairly dry update on national custody strategy, grabbed the attention of the audience with his vision of how custody training is to be developed in the coming years.

He made the audience sit up and take notice when he unveiled a virtual reality pilot, whereby the mocked up custody suite would be entered on screen like on a gaming console. Look out Xbox and Playstation owning sergeants, you may soon be in a position of advantage for the essential criteria for custody.

Inspector Michael Brown from the College of Policing, better known to many of you as Mental Health Cop from his well-known blog, gave us an update on mental health in policing. The main topics he covered were the changing of police powers under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act, which will end the detention of children in a police station under the powers, among other things.

He also gave an update on the continuing difficulties and potential solutions around prisoners no longer detained in police custody for PACE matters who remain at the station while the NHS secures them a bed in a mental health unit.

The most gripping presentation was by DC Jamie Thompson from Cheshire Police

who dazzled us with his wide knowledge of the current trends relating to controlled drugs, including legal highs and the usual street drugs. Of interest was a current trend in offenders on licence deliberately breaching that licence in order to be sent back to prison for a short time to facilitate the transport of drugs into prisons for which they receive disproportionately large financial rewards. This came with a note to all, both in custody and on the front-line, to be on the look-out for this kind of activity.

The recurring theme of the seminar appeared to be restraint. It was mentioned by Ian Todd from the IPCC, who wants to see an improvement in de-escalation techniques rather than restraint. This created unsurprising murmurs around the room. Restraint was also mentioned as a "red flag" which should trigger medical intervention in custody, and issues around information sharing between arresting officers and custody staff over the restraint used on the street were highlighted by Susan Freeburn, solicitor from Slater and Gordon, in relation to a recent high profile death in custody which saw officers on trial before a crown court.

The officers were not convicted. Susan also talked about some of the hidden dangers in spending time making retrospective custody records following a serious incident in custody. NWP Federation will soon have several more post-incident trained Fed reps who should always be consulted following a serious incident and will be able to give you sound advice here locally should the worst types of occurrence unfortunately befall you.

The seminar once again brought the importance of the custody sergeant role to the fore, highlighting the dangers and scrutiny staff face on a daily basis. A full to capacity room and press attendance on both days reflected its reputation, with the speakers repeatedly drawing huge interest from those in attendance.

All that remains, as the busy festive season approaches, is for me to wish all custody staff a safe and incident free Christmas and New Year.

New police



Back in December 2014 we told you about the imminent demolition of the police station in Llandudno to make way for a new purpose-built station, fit for 21st century policing.

Dedicated policing began in Llandudno in the 1850s, when a Town Constable was appointed. There was a lock-up in Ty Coch Road where offenders could be incarcerated and the constable was paid 18 shillings a week by the Town Commissioners (predecessors of the Town Council). Despite the Caernarfonshire Constabulary being established in 1857, it wasn't until 1874 that Llandudno had its own sergeant and two constables.

In 1867, a police station and lock-up was built in Vadre Lane and in 1915 the purpose-built station was opened on Oxford Road with an extension built in 1961 to accommodate the Divisional Headquarters. This building, at one time, housed a Custody Management Centre, a Crime Management Unit and, more recently, a Training Department for new recruits. A County Court was also once housed in the building.

But things change and in 2004 the Divisional Headquarters re-located to a new purpose-built facility at St Asaph. The former building was recently deemed no longer fit for purpose with investment not cost-effective and so a new-build was recommended. There were mixed feelings about this decision, with many officers having fond memories of the old station.



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Stand up and be counted

Reps@work

Officers from all backgrounds are being encouraged to stand as Federation representatives.

A national Reps@work campaign highlights the positive difference reps can make in the workplace using real-life examples to show how becoming a local or regional representative could be a great career enhancement. Not only does it open the door to new skills, training and increased confidence, it also provides an opportunity to improve relations with the Force and the working lives of your friends and colleagues.

"Elections will be taking place early next year for workplace representatives so this is the ideal time to get involved," said Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) National Board member Hayley Aley, who is spearheading the campaign.

She became a rep nine years ago after a difficult experience with her line manager. "It gave me the confidence and the knowledge of regulations to successfully challenge that treatment," she explained. "I would encourage others to give it serious thought; the role offers so much in terms of personal development.

"As well as the satisfaction of helping your colleagues, you'll learn about regulations, equality, conduct, health and safety, and gain skills in advocacy and negotiation, problem solving – all of which will help enhance your skills as a police officer. The Federation's training is second-to-none and if you're one of those people who genuinely like to sort things

out – and police officers tend to be those sorts of people anyway – then you'll make a good Fed rep."

The Federation is not just something to consider at the end of your career – it can be a pathway to taking your career to the next level.

One former rep is Olivia Pinkey, Chief Constable of Hampshire Police. As a rep in Avon and Somerset in the late 1990s, she gained confidence and experience from working with – and often challenging – senior officers to resolve issues.

"Those situations felt rankless," Olivia recalls, "I only had a limited time so I learned to be well prepared and clear about what I wanted to achieve. Now, as Chief Constable, I could not do my job without the regular contact I have with my local Federation – they have insight the management might not."

PC Rebecca Smith from Derbyshire has been a rep for a year and is hugely impressed with the training she has received to date.

A young mum, whose husband is in the Force, she advises: "Definitely don't be put off by the time commitment – if you feel you are getting snowed under you can ask another rep and we all help each other out. It's been really good so far, so interesting."

Rebecca became a rep after the Federation helped her to keep her job.

She explains: "I had a blood condition that the Force was aware of when I applied. Once I became a probationer they decided that they didn't like the medication I was taking or the medical problem and basically they wanted to get rid of me. The Federation supported me through all of that and backed me up. I got to keep my job and now I want to help people that may be in similar situations."

Calum taking over as national chair

Calum Macleod has been elected as the national chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales. He will take up the post on 1 January 2018.



"We wish Calum every success in his new role and looking forward to seeing him build on the experience he has gained as vice chair," says North Wales Police Federation Secretary Richard Eccles, "He takes over the chair's role at a challenging time. The last stages of the Federation's reform programme are now being implemented so I hope as an organisation we will continue to move forward.

"Of course, for the police service as a whole the issue of funding remains the primary concern. Police officers are feeling the pressures of the cuts, as too are the communities we serve. We look forward to working with Calum in the months and years ahead so that we can all

represent the membership, negotiate on their behalf and seek to influence decision-makers."

In a statement after his appointment was confirmed, Calum explained: "I am honoured and privileged to be elected to the role of chair; with that comes the responsibility of ensuring that the organisation truly represents the views of rank and file police officers across England and Wales. Our organisational reform is nearing completion and now we must focus all our energy on achieving positive change for our members. Let's not sugar coat the current situation that we are facing – policing is in a critical state. We will continue to be robust with stakeholders and demand that they acknowledge and address the real issues facing the service and our members."

Calum has been vice chair since April 2016 and takes over from Steve White who became chair in May 2014. Che Donald has been elected as vice chair and also takes over from 1 January 2018.

Election process

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) holds elections every three years. The triennial election period was due to start autumn 2016 but new regulations changing the way elections are run following Sir David Normington's independent review of PFEW are now with the Home Office and are expected to be in place at the end of this year.

The new system

The new process will provide a rank-less structure with no more separate rank committees at local or national level. The number of officials on the National Board will be reduced from 30 to 24.

The National Board along with the National Council, which is made up of local Federation chairs and secretaries and other individuals from protected characteristics groups, will be the key decision-making bodies for the organisation. The new process allows members to vote for local chairs as well as the national chair via a new electronic voting system operated via the members' database.

The current triennial period has been extended by the Home Office until the regulations are completed and the new voting process can take effect.

Current process:

- Members vote for workplace Federation reps
- Workplace Fed reps vote for Joint Branch Board executive members
- The local chairs and secretaries sit on the Interim National Council
- Regional rank delegates to conference vote for their Interim National Board reps
- Interim National Board members vote on principal national officer roles – including the chair and general secretary.

The new process the Federation is working to while waiting confirmation in the new regulations, following Home Office approval:

- Members vote for workplace reps to form the Branch Council
- The Branch Council elects the Branch Board members
- Members elect the branch chair
- The Branch Board elects the secretary
- Branch Board chair and secretary make up the National Council
- Members vote to elect the national chair
- National Council votes to elect the National Board
- National Board selects the general secretary
- National Board votes in remaining principal officers.

Force Open Day

Thousands of people visited Force Headquarters to enjoy the latest Force Open Day.

The event, on Saturday 16 September, was organised to open up every element of policing to give the communities we serve a taste of how North Wales Police operates. Visitors were able to visit various departments, organised as stalls, displays and activities, including Crime Scene Investigations, Roads Policing, the Force Communications Centre, Cyber-Crime and many others. Among these, North Wales Police Federation once again ran an interactive session for visitors.

We invited the public (and the occasional police officer) to undertake some policing scenarios using a range of tactical options.

The broad themes revolved around:

- Child at risk
- Deranged male
- Domestic abuse.



Mel Jones on the Federation stand.

All participants had a range of options that would normally be open to a North Wales Response Officer and to add some reality to the scenarios time was extremely limited.

At the end, the participants were given an outcome, which could have included a satisfactory result but also might have resulted in a suspension or investigation by PSD or the IPCC.

On the day only 53 per cent of those taking part were able to draw their incident to a satisfactory conclusion. And of those, many felt that in a real-life situation they would not have been so

confident in their decision-making, particularly if they were on their own.

If that was transferred over into the incidents that officers face across North Wales we would obviously see a dramatic increase in complaints and PSD investigations locally.

It was clear that after spending a few minutes in the shoes of a police officer many visitors had a greater understanding of the decisions and pressures we face and how difficult the role can be, with people talking about "feeling scared" and "panic". The comments left on the feedback sheets showed an appreciation of just how tough the job can be at times.

Encouragingly, when faced with the real-life scenarios on a regular basis the officers tasked across North Wales make the right choices and deliver the right outcomes in almost 100 per cent of cases.

That is an even better record when you consider that for police officers the decisions are often made in difficult surroundings, compounded by shift work and limited resources.

Visitor feedback on the interactive Federation session

- "Quick decision needed with no back-up. Could very easily have gone either way."
- "Very quick. Hard to judge in time."
- "Quite a threatening situation to be in on your own."



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Luke's the Champion Young Person of the Year

Luke Ashton is the 13-year-old son of Rhyl based officer Pete Ashton.

On 30 November 2016 Luke was rushed to Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool after being ill for a couple of weeks. Two days later, on 2 December, Luke was diagnosed with Stage 4 Hodgkin's Lymphoma after lumps were found in his neck and abdomen. The only place the cancer hadn't affected was his bone marrow. Scans had also shown a bite-size chunk missing from one of the bones in Luke's spine.

Luke has been receiving chemotherapy and radiotherapy since the diagnosis and his family have been staying by his side, staying either at the hospital or at Ronald McDonald House which is about five minutes' walk away.

In spite of this, since February Luke and his family, under the name of Luke's Army, have been fund-raising for five amazing charities that have helped them through this awful time in their lives.

The charities are Kids with Cancer UK, Make-A-Wish, Ronald McDonald House in Alder Hey, CLIC Sargent and Bloodwise.

Throughout the year they have organised a number of events, including:

- A 12-hour spin bike ride and rode more than 250 miles (Kinmel to London) in association with Asda in Kinmel Bay raising more than £1,400.
- A football match involving North Wales Police and the ambulance service; a closely fought match with the police winning 7-1.

- Their youngest daughter, along with seven of her friends, completed the kids' Tough Mudder raising more than £300.
- Friends from the gym completed in the Tough Mudder challenge... 13.1 miles of exhausting tough obstacles.

- In October they held an auction night at the Faenol Fawr in Bodelwyddan. The total amount raised on the night was more than £4,400.
- Plus lots more - at the time of writing this article, Luke's Army had raised more than £16,700.

Luke continues to lead as much of a normal life as he can. Unless he is in hospital having his chemotherapy, or having a sick day, he goes to school, and on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays he goes with his friends to cadets and a local youth group.

Unsurprisingly, Luke's friends see him as an inspiration – one friend has written a wonderful article about her "Hero Luke" – which we have put onto our website.

On 13 October Luke and his family were invited to the Scottish Power awards evening at the St George Hotel in Llandudno. It was an



Luke Ashton.

amazing night, where Luke won the Champion Young Person of the Year Award. Luke's Army also won Champions Team of the Year so Luke and his family would like to say thank you to everyone for all the help and support they have given the charity and the family.

As Luke's dad, Pete, said to all the people who've helped them, or who have donated: "This is your award too. Diolch/thank you."

A wonderful postscript to this article is that, after an horrendous year, on 15 November Luke and his family received the news that Luke's scans have improved and there is no signs of the cancer relapsing.

Pete said: "We could never really explain what it is like to put our child through the chemotherapy and radiotherapy and to see him struggle so much.

"In dark lonely moments the thought of losing our child to cancer was always there but today he is here and doing really well and we would like to thank everyone for their continued support through the worst time of our lives.

"On telling Luke the fantastic news he took it in his stride and couldn't understand what all the fuss was about!"

To donate to Luke's Army visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserPage.action?userUrl=lukesarmy&fald=795025&isTeam=true>



Gweinidog yr Efengyl neu Weithiwr Cymdeithasol?

Rhingyll 2283 Raymond Williams – Uned Plismona Ffyrdd

Ymunais â Heddlu Gogledd Cymru yn reit hwyr o gymharu â nifer o'm cydweithwyr. 'Roeddwn yn 30 mlwydd oed ac wedi mwynhau gyrfa ddifyr ym myd trafniadaeth a diogelwch y ffyrdd cyn hynny yn y sectorau cyhoeddus a phreifat. Teimlwn reit hen a dweud y gwir ar y diwrnod cyntaf hwnnw mewn dosbarth yng nghefn Llety'r Dryw! Wythnosau wedyn yng Nghanolfan Hyfforddi Cenedlaethol yr Heddlu yn Bruche ger Warrington cefais fy addysgu ym myd y gyfraith - dysgu diffiniadau - rhai y cofiaf hyd heddiw. Cael y ffrainc wedyn o dderbyn 'y baton anrhydedd' ar ddiwedd y cyfnod yno a gorfod gorymdeithio am y tro cyntaf a'r diwethaf yn fy oes i gasglu'r baton gan uwch swyddog un o heddluoedd Gogledd Orllewin Lloegr. Mwynhau wedyn bod yn blismon go iawn o dan arolygaeth fy nhwtor. Siom fawr pan ddywedodd hwnnw yng nghanol cyfnod arolygaeth nad oedd yn teimlo y byddwn yn gwneud plismon - mai Gweinidog neu Weithiwr Cymdeithasol y dylwn fod! Dyfalbarhau a wnes ac erbyn heddiw - 15 mlynedd yn ddiweddarach yn Rhingyll ar yr Uned Plismona Ffyrdd ac yn sylweddoli mai dipyn o swyddi wedi eu cymysgu hefo'i

gilydd ydi rôl plismon mewn gwirionedd.

Bûm yn hynod ffodus o gael nifer o flynyddoedd hapus iawn fel RhRhG (CBM) tref Porthmadog. Cerddwn filltiroedd bron pob sifft yn dod i adnabod y gymuned ac ennill eu parch a'u ffydd ynof. Byddwn yn cael galwadau cyson i ymweld â nifer o gymdeithasau gwahanol hefo fy nghydweithiwr diwyd Steve Phelps pan oedd yn SCCH. Roedd y cymdeithasau yn cynnwys Clwb y Deillion, Ffrindiau Port a'r Siambr Fasnach. Buom hyd yn oed yn canu carolau yng Nghartref Preswyl Hafod y Gest. Fel RhRhG roedd yn bwysig cael cyswllt agos gyda'r gymuned yn ei chyfarwydd o'r crud i'r bedd. Wrth siarad am y bedd... Tra ar batrôl un pnawn clywais fy enw yn cael ei weiddi o gyfeiriad Capel y Porth. Un o aelodau'r Siambr Fasnach mewn tipyn o banig. Roedd organydd a oedd am gymryd rhan mewn angladd wedi llewygu ychydig funudau ynghynt, ac wrth fy ngweld yn fy ngwisg heddlu yn cerdded hebio'r capel - cael fy mherswadio i lenwi'r bwll fel organydd yn yr angladd. Roedd golwg syfrdanol ar wynebau teulu'r ymadawedig yn werth eu gweld wrth weld plismon yn camu i sedd yr organ! Rhag ofn bod rhywun o ASP (PSD) yn darllen hwn... mi wnes weithio hanner awr yn ychwanegol y diwrnod hwnnw

i wneud yn iawn am yr amser!

Rhyw nos Wener braf ym mis Gorffennaf oedd hi pan ddois i wybod fy mod wedi llwyddo i ennill parch gan hyd yn oed un o drigolion mwyaf problemus y gymdogaeth. Roeddwn yn cerdded yn hamddenol braf ar y Stryd Fawr pan welais ffrwgdw o flaen tafarn yr Australia. Roedd tua 20 o bobl o bob oed yn cwffio. Ar ôl gofyn am gymorth swyddogion eraill (a darganfod bod y gymorth hwnnw'n dod o Ddolgellau - 20 milltir i ffwrdd!), cerddais ar draws y ffordd tuag at y cwffio a cheisio gweithio allan pwy oedd y drafferth fwyaf ac anelu fy llais a'm hawdurdod at yr unigolyn hwnnw. Yn anffodus, cefais fy ngwthio i'r llawr, ac fel y gwelais droed rhywun yn cael ei anelu ataf, fel angel o'r nefoedd... daeth llais a adnabyddais yn syth - un o hogia' mwya' drwg Port! Bachgen ifanc yr oeddwn wedi ei arestio ar sawl achlysur, yn dweud "Hey, leave him alone - it's Raymond. He's one of the OK Coppers around here!" Tawelodd pethau a daeth stryd Port yn ôl i'w heddwch arferol. Y diwrnod wedyn, mi es i gartref y bachgen i ddiolch iddo, ond hefo gair o rybudd hefyd na fyddai'n cael unrhyw ffafriaeth yn y dyfodol am unrhyw fistimanars! Heb ei fai heb ei eni!



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Force runners in good form

Wednesday 13 September saw a team of seven honed North Wales Police athletes make the long, long journey down to Hampshire to compete in the 2017 PSUK 10-mile road running championships.

The venue was Portsmouth where a 40mph wind and rain was forecast at 1pm when the race was due to start. So it made for some interesting limbering-up in the cars as the vehicles, seagulls and perambulating pensioners were battered by the weather. But it passed in time for the nervous pre-race team photo to show blue skies in the background, though a fierce west-to-east wind persisted for the duration of the event.

The two five-mile loop course ran along the prom of Lee-on-Solent. This made for fast runs out but punishing, into headwind return slogs along an otherwise fairly flat course.

As ever, there were some extremely fast individuals from forces right across the country who sprinted off for some amazing times.

The battle of NWP from the off was between Nick Jones (Eastern PVPU) and Neil Coppack (Eastern JSCU) with Neil leading for the first three miles, but that was it. Nick's full season of road racing paid off as the youngster came in only 39 seconds ahead of the veteran. This made up for last year's crushing defeat when Nick was pipped at

the line by Neil. Both runners took four minutes off last year's times - 1:07:55 and 1:08:34 respectively.

On his first PSUK adventure Mark Davies (SPOC Confi Unit) ran in a very strong performance arriving home in a very respectable 1:14:22; just two minutes ahead of Sian Beck (Central Supt) our first lady in with a time of 1:16:06 and a full five minutes up on 2016.

Our fourth male runner in to count towards the team prizes was Stuart Goldsack (Central CID) who smashed his personal best by nine minutes. Stu continued to remind the team of this fact for the duration of the trip.

Next in was Rhian Jones (Wrexham Rural LPS) who made Stu's PB look like he wasn't really trying as she slashed a whopping 14 minutes off her PB and didn't keep going on about it.

Last, but certainly not least, and in his final adventure for NWP, was super veteran Rich Jones (DSU DI). A man not unfamiliar with pushing himself, he managed a graceful 1:34:58 finish.

This made for a far less nervous post-race photo.

Alas, and for the first time in a long time, there was no silverware collected by NWP this year.

- Sian came a very close fourth lady in her age group

- NWP were lacking a third lady to score in the ladies' minor forces' team event
- Neil was fifth in his age group but did win a raffle prize
- As fourth male, Stu Goldsack's time was too slow to help NWP win a minor forces' team trophy
- Rich did win the disco freestyle dancing with his interpretation of a frog-in-a-blender.

NWP is hosting the 2018 PSUK 10-mile Road Running Championships in Bangor on Wednesday 5 September. This is a blue riband event in the police running calendar. Volunteers are needed at all stages of planning and staging this event at which up to 300 competitors attend. If you wish to assist in this Force hosting a really successful event please contact:

DC Stu Goldsack – 39065

Insp Craig Jones – 04098

Supt Sian Beck – 88642

PS Neil Coppack - 08401

Female runners from NWP are under-represented in many events and are very welcome to take part whatever their level of fitness. These events are undertaken by all ages, experience and ability where the underlying common cause is camaraderie, wellbeing and taking on a challenge. For further advice and guidance please contact Supt Beck.

See you at the cross country...



PTC puts Llinos on road to recovery

The Police Treatment Centres (PTC) is a registered charity supported by voluntary donations from the police family.

The charity provides two treatment centres – St Andrews in Harrogate and Castlebrae in Auchterarder - where serving and retired police officers can receive recuperation and treatment following an illness or injury.

Almost 4,000 serving and retired officers attend the treatment centres each year and most receive intensive physiotherapy. Others seek support with stress-related conditions.

North Wales officer Llinos Hughes has attended St Andrews for physiotherapy after back surgery.

She says: "The physios at St Andrews are amazing and I need to tell my story so that other North Wales officers can hear first-hand, the benefits of signing up."

As a response officer and loving the variety of the job, Llinos was helping a concern for safety and walking down stairs in front. The man stumbled accidentally, falling into her and Llinos felt her body armour push into her back as she too stumbled and fell to the ground. She knew she had been hurt but didn't realise how badly. After trying to carry on as normal for a few days it was increasingly obvious that things were seriously wrong.

Llinos ended up being rushed into her local



hospital on morphine and then referred to the specialist spinal practitioners at The Walton Centre in Liverpool. Given the seriousness of the situation, the consultant adjusted his workload to get Llinos in for immediate back surgery – a lumbar discectomy to relieve dangerous pressure and pain from prolapsed discs.

After four days in hospital, Llinos felt much better and needed physio to help recuperation but had lost her confidence. As she had been paying in to the Police Treatment Centres since starting her career, the occupational health team suggested that she visit the PTC and in September 2016 she had a two-week stay at the Harrogate centre.

"The best thing about my physio was the confidence he gave me and the variety of treatments I had – acupuncture, manual therapy, Pilates, balance/leg classes. People had said to me that Pilates would be good for me but coming to St Andrews gave me the confidence to try it and realise that for myself.

Now I go to Pilates classes at home at least once a week," she said.

After 12 months' injury free and doing the job she loves to the full, Llinos again woke with her back in agony. An MRI scan revealed that her back was in spasm and that there was also degenerative disc disease as a result of the surgery. Llinos re-applied for treatment at the PTC and has attended for a further week, again seeing the same physio as previously for the duration of her stay.

"My physio was able to reassure me and let me know that I needn't panic. He helped me realise that I had been in some stressful situations at work recently and without realising this had made my body tense and more prone to injury. I now know that I can continue to exercise and not worry about over-doing it, as long as I listen to my body and keep up the relaxation techniques," Llinos explained.

Llinos is lucky because she has a lot of support within the Force, from occupational health and from her chief inspector who backs her in spreading the message to colleagues that it is so important to sign up to be eligible for treatment.

Visit www.thepolicetreatmentcentres.org for more information and if you have any questions please contact the PTC on **01423 504448**.

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Extra support for children through St George's Trust

Trustees at St George's Police Children Trust have set out bold new plans to offer a list of extra benefits to those it cares for.



The charity supports children of police officers who have either lost their life or suffered an injury or illness that means they can no longer work.

And that remit is set to increase after trustees made a significant change to what the trust offers and who it offered that support to.

In the last year, support has been given to more than 300 children and young people helping them to have the same chances in life that we would want for our own families.

And from January 2018 the following new benefits will be made available:

The **eligibility** will be widened to include children of police families where the partner of a police officer has lost their life. The trustees understand the death of partners affects income received by the family and therefore impacts the children, and thus support should be offered in this instance.

The Registration Grant, renamed as the **New Beneficiary Grant**, will be increased from £100 to £1,000 to provide more immediate financial relief. The application will then be considered on its full merit at the next Board of Trustees meeting (held quarterly in February, May, August and November) and a decision in regard to payment of support allowances and grants to beneficiaries will be made.

A new **Driving Lesson Grant** will be made

available to beneficiaries from the age of 17 up to 25, to help with the cost of learning to drive. The support is capped at £1,000 per child.

A new **Child Counselling Grant** will offer financial support to all beneficiaries who wish to access counselling to support a child or family through a bereavement or difficult time. This support can be accessed at any time, up to the age of 25, and not only immediately after the specific event.

Suggestions had been coming forward from current beneficiaries for ideas around extra help or where they felt there was a gap in support on the back of their particular circumstances.

And therefore, trustees have extended that support as the trust continues to work hard to find innovative ways to adapt to the ever-changing policing landscape.

In order for the trust to be able to offer this extra provision, the weekly donation rate will increase from January 2018. This will enable the charity to be financially viable over the next few years and it to improve the support and service to the wider police family.

The weekly donation rate will increase from 20p to 35p – a first increase in the donation rate since 2011.

The St George's Police Children Trust chairman, Ian Hanson, said he was pleased

with the new levels of support the organisation could offer.

"The sad reality is that some terrible things happen to police officers, and the trust is able, with your support, to put in place measures to ensure the children of those brave officers are supported," he explained.

"Tragic and unexpected deaths leave families devastated, and whilst no amount of money can replace a parent, support from the trust can provide a degree of financial certainty in difficult times."

The idea of supporting the children of fallen police officers goes back to when the Northern Police Orphanage first opened in 1898.

Between 1898, when the orphanage opened, through to 1954, more than 600 children spent all or part of their childhood there. Running costs were funded by many hundreds of serving police officers who made a weekly donation from their pay.

The orphanage closed in the mid-1950s due to falling demand, possibly because of changes to the welfare state and an increase in adoption and fostering.

Anyone interested in making a regular donation to the St George's Police Children Trust can contact the trust, the Police Federation office or payroll to set that up. www.stgeorgespolicechildrentrust.org

“

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Things to think about if you are considering a divorce in the new year

By Roland Humphreys, principal lawyer in family law at Slater and Gordon

January is a time for making resolutions. It might be deciding it's time to kick a bad habit or get fit. But sometimes the beginning of a new year will be a point when you consider a change that will have a big impact on your life. What if that change is ending your marriage? Here are a few things to think about if divorce is on your mind in the new year.



Is it really over?

If you decide to go ahead with a divorce, you need to be sure that there is definitely no chance that the marriage can be saved.

The Christmas period can be both a joyful and difficult time of year. It may have been challenging for you if you have been on duty and this has caused a strain between you and your spouse.

A tough Christmas does not have to spell the end of a marriage and you and your spouse may be able to work through this together or with the support of family and friends or counselling services such as Relate.

When can I get a divorce?

Some people assume that they will not be able to divorce immediately as there has been no particular reason for the breakdown of the marriage. Some people think that there has to have been an affair or particular incident to be able to start a divorce straight away, but this isn't the case.

If you have felt unsupported by your spouse or feel that the two of you no longer make the effort to spend time together around your shifts etc, you could rely on this to prove to a court that the marriage is over.

When should I make the decision?

If you have decided that you do want to go ahead with a divorce, we generally advise that you speak to a family lawyer sooner rather

than later to ensure you are as informed as possible. Often the first question we are asked is how an officer can try to protect their police pension and taking action at the earliest opportunity can be very important.

A spouse has a claim to an ex-partner's income, capital and pensions on divorce and these will be based on their financial situation at the time of divorce and not necessarily at the time of separation.

Your spouse is likely to be successful in claiming against the value of your pension at the time of divorce rather than its value at the time of your separation, i.e. a claim to more of your pension. For example, we acted for an officer who separated from his wife but waited 13 years before dealing with his finances on separation. His wife might have achieved a 14 per cent share of his pension 13 years ago but had an argument for an increased share of some 32 per cent 13 years later.

What about the children?

If you have children, you will need to try to agree an arrangement for them with your spouse if you separate. The court is concerned with arrangements which are in a child's welfare. Parents are encouraged to agree a routine of care which is in a child's best interests.

You may find it difficult to reach an agreement with your spouse or perhaps your complicated shift pattern is making it difficult to set out a regular routine. If this is the case, then you should seek legal advice and a referral to mediation can be considered.

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

The logo for Slater Gordon Lawyers. It features a large blue plus sign to the left of the text. 'Slater' and 'Gordon' are stacked vertically in a bold, black, sans-serif font. 'Lawyers' is written below 'Gordon' in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.



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