

Ffederasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru /
North Wales Police Federation



APRIL 2017

YOUR VOICE

Representing • Negotiating • Influencing

'We still just get the job done'



By Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation

As I tried to gather my thoughts to capture a theme around the latest edition of this magazine, I had to remind myself that within the last seven days of policing we had witnessed a UK terror attack culminating in the cowardly murder of innocents including PC Keith Palmer.

More locally colleagues had no time to really reflect or adjust as they were busy hunting for a dangerous murder suspect at large within our communities.

Given the tasks at hand, the backdrop and the constant negativity of the media, both local and national, you could have expected a very grey and bleak picture in North Wales.

The reality was quite the opposite and that, in my opinion, is what makes us part of the best police service in the world.

I am sure that I was not the only one left horrified and tearful after viewing the events in Westminster, but once again it was the sight of officers racing forward to protect others that invoked massive feelings of pride.

Travelling back to Wales the day after

the attack, it was good to see that there was no retreat from policing and the 'Heddlu/Police' livery and uniforms were out and about as normal.

Locally, there was little time for reflection as we were using large amounts of resources hunting for a murder suspect on top of every other call for service.

Eastern was a good place to be visiting on the day of the arrests, lots of positive colleagues reflecting upon a job well done after a tough run of shifts!

Hopefully, lots of commendations will be forthcoming for all of those involved in the case.

In reality, despite the fact that as a service we are cut to the bone and feel unsupported by Government, we still just get the job done and deal with the problems as they occur.

This week has shown that we will continue to do so until the end, that is our greatest strength and sadly our biggest weakness if those in power seek to abuse our commitment.

Another huge positive highlighted in this edition is the support from all parties in relation to the 'Protect The Protectors' campaign which is moving forward locally and nationally.

It is great to see that locally the chief officers and Crime Commissioner are fully behind the campaign and, in fairness, there is quite literally nothing that we can suggest that the Chief and Arfon will

not assist us with in relation to making sure you are covered.

I am confident that as we push ahead with the next phases you will start to see some great team work from us all and we will harness the public support which exists out there in our communities.

GOLD RESOURCE GROUP

By Aisla Nicholls

The Gold Resource Group has now been established. This has been set up as the Force continues to experience high staffing demands.

Most significantly, there has been an increase in the number of officers retiring (and predicted to retire) since April 2016 resulting in the need to increase our recruitment significantly in the coming years, upping our usual intakes to 144.

Increased recruitment will also create new challenges especially for those tasked with delivery.

Patrol resources are expected to be at their lowest in April and May 2017, and therefore working as one team is imperative to maintain an appropriate response across all areas of the Force.

The Gold Group is co-ordinating the management of vacancies, moves and secondments to maintain front-line officer strength, and strength in other departments.

Those decisions are being rationalised against an agreed matrix reflecting the Force's strategic priorities, with all work focussing on three areas:

- Understanding and improving response to demand (linked directly to the MRU)
- Managing abstractions (linked to training and sickness)
- The effective recruitment and development of constables.

Many abstractions are unavoidable, and are indeed planned and necessary, to support officer development, health and wellbeing but improved management of these will maximise the number of deployable officers.

A number of actions have now been taken, or are in the process of being implemented, to enable the increased recruitment of new constables:

- Additional places secured at the College of Policing Assessment Centre
- A review of the recruiting process
- Additional services contracted to support medical testing
- A review of the IPLDP probationer course to ensure it is made more efficient with the aim of delivering new recruits to the front-line more quickly
- Additional classroom facilities identified.

We would like to express our thanks to officers who have been affected by decisions made due to the reduction in staffing levels. Thanks also for the support provided by managers, and the continued team work shown by all of NWP, in helping to overcome this challenging time.

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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Public services need better funding



By *Simon Newport, Chairman of North Wales Police Federation*

The week between Christmas and New Year I was rostered to work a week of night shifts. Nothing unusual about that but what was unusual about that week in general was the amount of time my colleagues and I spent in our local Accident and Emergency units.

I am now cursing myself as on one such night shift I recall observing 10 ambulances and seven North Wales Police vehicles parked outside A & E. How I wish now that I had taken a photograph of this scene.

Why? Well, as they say, a picture paints a thousand words and it would have captured just how busy both the local health board and police were at that moment in time.

I recall at the time that picture may have caused some sort of unrest with both local and national politicians and, as a serving police officer, I did not want to cause any political bias as I should remain apolitical. I do, however, believe the public should be made aware of such incidents, after all it's fact not spin or fiction.

A recent survey shows that nationally, police officers have reported spending up to 80 per cent of their time on some shifts waiting at hospitals while potentially vulnerable detainees are assessed at busy A & E departments.

A recent Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspection found that waits of six to eight hours for officers

in these cases are not uncommon. This equates to 62,000 hours a year.

The most telling image during that week was the sight of a senior member of the nursing staff on duty at that time breaking down in tears due to a mixture of frustration, lack of staff and the belief that they were unable to provide the care and service they believed the people requiring medical attention, regardless of why they were there, deserved. I have no doubt that those tears also represented anger at the situation we all found ourselves in at that time.

Politicians of all persuasions will repeatedly tell you that the public sector should do better despite year on year cuts to funding and budgets.

Never, it would appear, will they accept that their imposed cuts to services are the reason why the public sector is spectacularly failing and failing it is, especially when you witness the scenes I describe above.

Importantly, the failure is not the fault of the men and women working in the public sector. On seeing professional people showing profound emotion such as described, it is clear the fault lies higher up the chain. Yet, time after time, the finger of blame is pointed at those who struggle to provide the best professional service they can under impossible conditions.

Personally, working alongside doctors, nurses, paramedics and fellow police officers, I am aware what a fantastic job we all do under extreme circumstances and, quite frankly, I am amazed how it remains functional. All that I can say is that it does remain functional because of the magnificent professionalism of those people employed in these areas.

Very recently the Police Federation of England and Wales launched a new campaign entitled 'Protect The Protectors' and linked into this is the desire to have tougher sentences passed against those who are assaulted while carrying out their public duty. You would have thought that this would be a given but, as is too often the case, the vocal minorities undermine the views of the silent majority.

Take the recent debates surrounding the news that spit guards are to be introduced as standard issue across some of the police forces of England and Wales. The vocal minority call the introduction of these spit guards 'medieval' and a flagrant

breach of the persons human rights?

Maybe I am looking at this in a too simplistic way. If you don't spit, you won't wear one. Why should I, or any of my colleagues, be spat at with the associated dangers that this brings? The risks include hepatitis and other such diseases that could be passed on. Officers who are spat at face weeks of preventative medication, months of worry and anxiety as they wait for test results to see if they have contracted these diseases and in the meantime cannot be close to their family for fear of passing on any infections they may be harbouring.

Human rights? Surely, to qualify for those rights you need to act like a human?

The Protect The Protectors campaign needs the full support of all key stakeholders in this area in order to show the protectors, whether police officers, ambulance men and women, paramedics, doctors, nurses or firefighters, they are valued. Those who commit assaults against the Protectors should be told, loud and clear, that it will not be tolerated.

Time will no doubt tell if this message makes the slightest difference to those responsible for charging decisions and sentencing.

Finally, the 43 forces of England and Wales have been examined by HMIC under the PEEL programme. PEEL stands for the police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy.

These inspections should be welcomed as the police service requires constant scrutiny but what I don't get with these inspections is that HMIC will make strong recommendations as to how a force should improve. It never provides the answers as to how these improvements should be achieved and never mentions increased funding for forces. The more for less quotation is now starting to wear very thin.

In the meantime, I, like thousands of my colleagues across England and Wales, will continue to serve and protect the communities we live and work in to the best of our ability hoping that things will get better and that those in a position of influence will suddenly wake up one day and see the country's public services require better funding.

On that note, I am off to buy a lottery ticket...

MPs back assaults campaign

A Police Federation campaign which calls for harsher sentences for those who assault police officers and other emergency service workers has received the backing of MPs in Parliament.

The 'Protect The Protectors' campaign was launched on Monday (6 February) by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) after growing concern about the rising numbers of attacks on police officers.

The following day Halifax MP Holly Lynch (Labour), who is championing the campaign, introduced a Ten Minute Rule Bill on assaults on emergency services staff in the House of Commons.

And it received cross-party support from MPs – many of whom cheered in the chamber when Ms Lynch said that laws in Australia mean that offenders who spit and refuse to have a blood test can receive a \$12,000 (£7,320) fine and a custodial sentence.

The bill calls for assaults against emergency service workers – 'a constable, firefighter, doctor, paramedic or nurse' – to become a specific offence.

Ms Lynch also called for those offenders who spit at emergency responders be required to have a blood test, and make it an offence if they refuse, so that officers know if they are at risk of contracting life-threatening diseases.

Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation, has welcomed MPs' support

and is supporting the Protect The Protectors campaign.

"We all know that assaults on police officers – and other emergency service workers – are becoming more and more commonplace," he explained.

"But what is just as alarming is the fact that some officers have almost come to accept that being assaulted is just part of the job. It is not. We all know that a certain amount of 'rough and tumble' is inevitable, we are dealing with people in extreme situations with heightened emotions.

"But the assaults we are hearing about on a daily basis now go way beyond that. We are seeing sustained and deliberate attacks on police officers and it is time this was tackled.

"An assault on a police officer is an attack on society. Police officers are committed to serving their communities they should not become society's punchbags."

Ms Lynch spoke about her work with blue light officers including West Midlands PCs Mike Bruce and Al O'Shea who had blood spat in their faces while trying to arrest a violent offender.

Because the offender refused to give a blood sample, both had to undergo anti-viral treatments to reduce their risk of contracting communicable diseases, and they faced an agonising six-month wait to find out whether the treatment had been successful.

The 'Protect The Protectors' campaign will call for:

- A change in legislation, leading to tougher sentences for those who assault emergency service workers
- Better training and access to equipment - wider roll-out of protection measures, such as Taser, body worn video and spit guards
- More accurate data on police assaults, and
- Improved welfare support.

She told MPs: "Behind the uniforms are incredibly brave and dedicated individuals who, regrettably, face risks that they simply should not have to face on an almost daily basis. They routinely go above and beyond their duties to keep the public safe, yet when someone sets out deliberately to injure or assault an emergency responder, the laws in place must convey how unacceptable that is in the strongest possible terms."

And she added: "To assault a police officer is to show a complete disregard for law and order, our shared values and democracy itself, and that must be reflected in sentencing, particularly for those who are repeat offenders.

"Many officers described feeling like they had suffered an injustice twice - first at the hands of the offender; and then again in court when sentences were unduly lenient."

After the bill, PFEW representatives, including vice chair Calum Macleod, West Yorkshire Police Federation chairman Nick Smart and West Midlands Police Federation interim chairman Tom Cuddeford, met with MPs to discuss the aims of the campaign and seek further support.

Mr Macleod said: "We are grateful to Holly for giving her support to police officers, and other emergency service workers, who are all too often getting assaulted in the line of duty. We do not believe that being hit, kicked, spat at or shoved is 'just part of the job' and we are delighted the bill passed its first reading. It was great to see it get support from all sides of the house."

The bill was read for a second time in the House on 24 March.

**PROTECT
THE PROTECTORS**

North Wales officer featured in campaign

An assault on a North Wales PC who was gripped in a headlock in an unprovoked attack has been featured in a series of case studies compiled by the Police Federation of England and Wales as part of the Protect The Protectors campaign.

The officer was responding to a call for help from a colleague at the scene of a possible robbery. There were about 30 people gathered in a busy area. One person had been detained in a police car and the officer and his colleagues carried out a search.

Without warning, another man attacked

from behind, grabbing the officer in a headlock. He managed to struggle free and arrest the offender with the help of another officer.

"It was about 10 seconds, which might not seem that long – but when there are 29 other people witnessing what's going on and not helping, it can seem like forever," said the officer.

The attacker was later charged and convicted of assault on the officer and his colleague but, oddly, only had to pay compensation to the other officer.

The PC said: "It's not about the money but it seems like because my assault didn't leave visible marks, it wasn't treated as seriously. It's the principle of the conviction being made, but no punishment; I've definitely lost faith in the justice system a little."

The attack has made the officer more cautious and made him question his decisions.

He said: "I blamed myself for letting it happen. We all get taught not to turn our backs on people, but whichever way I faced someone was behind me."

Forces 'need Taser funding'

Police forces need to know how they will be able to fund a new generation of Taser, says Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation.

Richard has welcomed the Government's approval of the new X2 Taser which will replace the X26, parts for which are becoming increasingly difficult to find.

"It is great that the Government has backed the new model but there may be a cost implication for forces seeking to replace the X26s and that could put them out of reach for some," says Richard.

"It is essential that police officers have the right equipment to do their job and Taser has been found to be an essential bit of kit in this day and age as they face the challenges of modern day policing.

"We are waiting to hear if the Government is going to provide the funding needed for forces to be able to upgrade their Tasers. We need clarity on funding."

Steve White, chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales, has also expressed his concerns.

He said: "This is very much a case of give with one hand and take with the other. Beyond simply giving it its seal of approval, the Government needs to offer financial support to allow forces to purchase the new device. You cannot put a price on safety."

He added: "We keep saying it, because it's true, demand on policing is both changing and increasing. Where we have to adapt to manage this change, we need to equip those on the front-line with the

right tools for the job, including Taser."

In January, 82 per cent of Federated officers who responded to a national survey said Taser should be issued to more front-line officers.

The figures came a month after a public survey showed 71 per cent of those taking part considered it acceptable for police officers to carry Taser when on patrol.

Taser is also by far the preferred option to firearms, with only a fifth of officers surveyed by the Federation in 2016 having or wanting personal firearms for use, and a third wanting or having access to rapid response firearms teams.

From 1 April 2017, the Home Office has stipulated that all use of force must be recorded by officers in the same way, regardless of where they work. Simon Kempton, Federation lead on operational policing, has welcomed the new process in a blog which can be read in full at www.polfed.org

He says: "When refuting accusations levelled at us of using excessive force, we will now be able to argue, with solid evidence, that in comparison to the huge numbers of incidents we attend, we rarely have to resort to using force.

"Furthermore, the Federation will be able to use this data to demonstrate that if we are placed in a position when we must use force that we always try to use the lowest level of force available to us."

“ We keep saying it, because it's true, demand on policing is both changing and increasing.

Where we have to adapt to manage this change, we need to equip those on the front-line with the right tools for the job, including Taser.



Assaults on police: The Seven-Point Plan

Assaults on officers are not just part of the job. For too long the general view seems to have been that officers getting assaulted is a day to day hazard of the role.

Added to that, historically, officers often felt their own forces, the CPS and the Government have not taken the issue seriously. Many believed assaults on police officers were not treated as seriously as assaults on members of the public.

However, things are changing and it is now universally accepted that assaults are NOT part of the job, and that assaults on police officers and police staff should be treated correctly and appropriately.

North Wales Police Federation, in association with the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and UNISON have published a seven-point plan which details the process by which ALL assaults on police officers, police staff and police volunteers should be dealt with.

This will ensure that all assaults are taken seriously and followed up by both the Force and the Federation or UNISON. The plan should be prominently displayed in your place of work – if you haven't seen one, contact your Federation rep who will arrange to have one put up.

Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation, said: "It is vital that this campaign gets us to a point where we are looking after our colleagues in the best possible way when they are assaulted.

"This does not end at the Custody Desk. There will be a concerted effort to ensure that charges, convictions and sentences reflect the extremely serious nature of such assaults on the police. In the future, I hope to see legislative changes to underpin the fact that assaults upon the police are unacceptable to the vast majority of civilised society."

The plan shows that the Force will ensure these assaults are taken seriously. It gives support for all staff who have been assaulted, and also gives advice and guidance to line managers about what to do if a member of their staff has been assaulted.

ASSAULT ON POLICE OFFICERS, POLICE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS


SEVEN POINT PLAN

- 1 Assaults on officers, police staff and volunteers should be investigated with the same care, compassion, diligence and commitment as an assault on a member of the public, and North Wales Police will seek to ensure appropriate redress through the criminal justice system.** This sounds obvious, but too often our response to assaults on members of the policing family can be rushed or treated as secondary to other offences.
- 2 The Victim Code applies to all victims and therefore to police officers, police staff and volunteers.** Complying with the victim code means keeping the victim updated, discussing outcome options and taking into account the victim's view before reaching an outcome. This is essential because we don't always get our response right, with police victims reporting dissatisfaction and even resentment.
- 3 The assaulted officer must never be the reporting officer for the investigation into their own assault.** This is not appropriate on any level and even taking statements from witnesses may be inappropriate. The integrity of an investigation and the impartiality of the officer could be called into question, which could undermine the case and/or heighten the impact on the victim.
- 4 Victims recover better and more quickly with the right welfare and supervision.** This also helps to avoid long-term negative consequences. The assaulted person's supervisor should meet with them as soon as it is practical to do so. The victim may downplay the impact the assault has had on them and as such the supervisors must recognise the potential effects of the incident and engage Staff Association support for the victim.
- 5 The victim's supervisor must ensure that the area SMT is informed to provide continuity of welfare support.** The Police Federation or Unison will also provide valuable additional support to the victim and should be advised of the incident as soon as possible.
- 6 The assaulted officer and the supervisor must complete form A879 - Report of an Injury (on or off duty)** It will not always be possible for the victim to do this, where this is the case another person can complete the report in consultation with their injured colleague. The staff association will also provide the victim with details about advising the Dept. of Work and Pensions (DWP) and give advice regarding civil claims/CICA.
- 7 To achieve a successful prosecution, the best evidence must be presented.** You should use a victim personal statement and whoever is investigating the assault needs to fully understand the 'points to prove' for assaults on police officers, police staff and volunteers. An officer's self-written statements, provided straight after the events, could be made in haste and might not contain all of the key facts.

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A THROSEDD GOGLEDD CYMRU
OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER NORTH WALES

 **UNISON**

'Good' rating for Force in HMIC review

North Wales Police's effectiveness at keeping people safe and reducing crime is good, according to the latest report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC).

HMIC carried out assessments at all 43 forces across England and Wales in 2016 as part of its PEEL (Police Effectiveness Efficiency and Legitimacy) inspections.

HMIC judged that North Wales Police:

- Is 'good' at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe;
- Is 'good' at how it investigates crime and reduces re-offending;
- 'Requires improvement' in how it protects those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims; and
- Is 'good' at how it tackles serious and organised crime.

The results have been welcomed by Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation.

"It is pleasing to see that the Force is performing well in three out of the four categories assessed during this inspection," he said.

"I think this is testimony to the hard-working police officers and staff who day in, day out, despite the pressures they face due to the cuts programme, do their very best to deliver an effective policing service for our communities.

"Of course, there is a cost to this. Demand has not fallen despite a reduction in officer and staff numbers and, as a result, we have seen an increase in stress in our workforce and that is causing some serious mental health issues."

The Federation Secretary has also expressed his concern that the Force has been judged as not providing a good service in terms of how it protects the vulnerable and supports victims of crime.

"I think we are all aware that this is an area of our work where it is important that we get things right," says Richard, "We will be working with the Force to see where improvements can be made. But, with our resources already stretched, it is going to be challenging to increase capacity in specialist teams as HMIC suggests."

HM Inspector of Constabulary Wendy Williams acknowledged that the Force has made improvements since its last PEEL inspection in 2015.

"The Force continues to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour effectively, with some good work being undertaken with respect to how it consults with the public to

understand the threats and risks faced by local people," she explained.

"The Force can demonstrate a good understanding of the communities it serves, including some which are hard to reach. It is aware of some complex, emerging or hidden threats, and works with partner organisations to protect the public. The Force could further improve in this area by evaluating and sharing effective practice routinely, both internally and with partners.

"I am pleased that since 2015 the Force has improved how it investigates crime and reduces re-offending. The Force provides a good initial response to victims contacting the police, as well as during subsequent investigations. Officers at the first point of contact identify and prioritise crime scenes, and capture forensic evidence.

"The Force allocates the majority of investigations to appropriately skilled officers and staff, but on some occasions officers without the necessary skills and experience are allocated high risk and complex cases. I have identified this as an area that requires improvement for the Force.

"The Force is also generally good at how it pursues suspects and manages offenders and reduces re-offending with effective offender management. I would like to see it improve its approach to managing foreign criminals."

While expressing disappointment that the Force has not made enough progress in improving how it protects vulnerable people from harm the inspector acknowledged it had improved the way in which it identifies and assesses vulnerable victims at the first point of contact and allocates the right response.

She explained: "It also has a good understanding of vulnerability in the area. It is let down by some response officers failing to safeguard victims properly, and the fact that on too many occasions specialist investigations are allocated to staff without necessary training or experience to deal with the complex cases of this nature. To prevent this from happening, I would like to see the Force improve the capacity of specialist teams.

"Overall, the Force is good at tackling serious and organised crime. Although the Force has an inconsistent approach to responding to known organised crime groups, it works well with the Regional Organised Crime Unit and works hard to deter people from becoming involved in serious and organised crime."

Did you know?

When you notify the Force of a change in your circumstances, the Force doesn't let us know.

KEEP US UP TO DATE



When you move



When you have a new phone number



When you have a new email address



When your circumstances change

When you keep us up to date, we can keep you up to date.

North Wales Police Federation
www.nwpolfed.org

365 days of representing, influencing and negotiating

By Mark Jones,
Central Sergeants'
Representative

2016 was quite a year! Who would have thought that the UK would actually vote to leave the European Union, that the heavyweight of the business world, Donald J. Trump would be elected the 45th President of the United States, and that we'd lose so many amazing stars of the entertainment world?



Looking closer to home, and specifically, the North Wales Police Federation, 2016 was just as busy as ever and in this edition of 'Your Voice', I thought it would be worth describing some of the work - just a

snapshot - that has gone on in 2016.

The Force, including its most senior management, recognises the importance of having the Federation involved and consulted on major policy and procedural changes. This ensures that decisions taken by the organisation are subject to intense scrutiny to safeguard officers' wellbeing and welfare.

Last year, the Federation attended more than 480 meetings. These included, but this list is not exhaustive: promotions appeals; Ethics, Leadership and Culture; Wellbeing; Screening Panels; Force Executive Board; Financial Savings; Misconduct; Grievance; Welsh; Tactical Citizens in Policing; PSD meetings; Employment Tribunals; funerals; Member Services, Redeployment and Recruitments Board; Missing Persons, CSE and Modern Slavery. More so than ever, it's vital that your voice is represented within

the organisation.

Additionally, the Federation in North Wales arranged 45 surgeries covering wills, family law and other areas that required specialist legal advice.

The Force stopped providing pre-retirement courses a few years ago, leaving a huge void for officers who were approaching a massive milestone in their working lives. The Federation took on this responsibility and in 2016 four courses were held, all of which fully booked. These courses, with guest speakers, ensured officers and staff approaching retirement had the best possible advice for when that last shift had finished.

On the flip side, we gave seven presentations to new recruits who were embarking on their new careers. It is vitally important from the start that officers know that the Federation is there for them and

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are exclusively for the Police Family...



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how they can be best supported in their career.

Thankfully, the Federation is more than just representing officers in troubled times. The Federation is a significant driver in recognising the amazing work officers undertake every single day plus highlighting outstanding achievements.

In 2016, the North Wales Police Federation Community Service Awards showcased the incredible work of three members: PC Gemma Poulton, PC Sue Carrington and, the 2016 winner, DC Tim Bird who was recognised for his voluntary work as a member of the Ogwen Mountain Rescue Organisation. Sergeant Iwan Owen and Constable Elwyn Williams were honoured at the 2016 national Police Bravery Awards in London.

Officer welfare and safety is at the top of the agenda for the Federation so keep an eye out for the #ProtectTheProtectors national campaign being led by the Police Federation of England and Wales. No officer should ever be victim of an assault or injury, and assaults should never be viewed as 'just part of the job' - though we must also be realistic and understand the dangers of policing - and there must be serious consequences for offenders who assault officers.

For too long we have been systematically let down by governments, the justice system and even our own organisations when it comes to officer assaults. Now is the time when we need to be vocal and say 'enough is enough'!

To ensure that injured officers get the best possible chances of recovery our partners at the Police Treatment Centres (PTC) step in and in 2016 they cared for 87 North Wales officers. The work of the PTC is incredible and if you don't pay in to the fund then please get in touch with the Federation office for more information.

If you question whether you can afford to be part of the Group Insurance Scheme, my question to you is: 'Can you afford to NOT be a member'? The list of benefits is extensive and much more than just a life insurance policy. For example, in 2016, over 280 breakdowns were attended by RAC, travel insurance claims totalling a whopping £42,222 were paid out to members, personal accident claims to the value of £5,793 were

“ For too long we have been systematically let down by governments, the justice system and even our own organisations when it comes to officer assaults. Now is the time when we need to be vocal and say ‘enough is enough’!

365 DAYS OF NORTH WALES POLICE FEDERATION

2016 AT A GLANCE...



The Federation Office Team attended over **480** meetings.



45 surgeries (wills, family law etc) were scheduled.

1 Community Service Award.



87 NWP officers attended The Police Treatment Centres.



7 presentations were made to new recruits (police officers and PCSO's).



4 Pre-Retirement courses were held – all were fully booked.

1 Finance day was held in St Asaph (where members services were available to talk to officers and staff for the day).



In addition, reps attended conferences/meetings for Roads Policing, Custody, Detectives Forum, Conference, National Police Memorial Day, Bravery Awards etc.

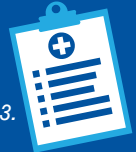
Regarding Group Insurance, there were...



Over **280** breakdowns were attended by RAC.



Travel claims to the value of over **£42,200** were settled.



Personal Accident claims totalling **£5,793**.



2 Critical Illness claims **£6,000** each.



And sadly **2** Death Claims to the value of **£55,000**.

settled plus a number of critical illness claims were finalised. I seriously recommend if you are not a member of the Group Insurance Scheme you please contact the Federation office for details on joining. Remember, it's open to police officers and police staff.

There's no doubt 2016 has been a turbulent time for the Police Federation nationally and, rightly or wrongly, the Federation has taken quite a kicking from some quarters. I can only speak from my own perspective and as someone who is very much affected by the pension changes.

I still see passionate Federation representatives and staff who are genuinely trying to get the best protection, the best conditions and the best deal overall for the hard-working, sacrificing and dedicated

officers across the length and breadth of the country.

Looking ahead to this year, you can be guaranteed that in North Wales we will continue to represent, continue to influence and continue to negotiate on your behalf, however, this is a two-way street. In order for us to fight for you, we need you to talk to us. If there is a risk identified, submit that HS1; if a colleague is injured, however minor, submit that injury on duty; if you're subject to unwarranted pressure or unjust treatment from a manager, let us know at the earliest opportunity and we will engage. Don't suffer in silence; don't acquiesce if it's not right, do something about it.

I encourage you all to engage with your representatives and take an active interest in the Federation. If you don't know who your rep is or for any further information visit the North Wales Federation website (www.nwpolfed.org), check out our Facebook page, follow us on Twitter and join our MSG Federation mailgroup.

I wish you all a safe and successful 2017 and, in the words of the great Jerry Springer, 'Till next time, take care of yourselves and each other'.



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Spring is welcome, new bail laws not so

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

It's nice to see the dark evenings are slowly fading away and Spring is nearly here. I'm looking forward to getting back into my garden.



As I mentioned last time, I am still not looking forward to the new, ill-conceived (in my opinion), bail legislation which came into effect on 3 April.

I have real reservations about the detrimental impact on police time these new procedures will have. I know my bosses are working tirelessly to try to make the process as gentle on us as possible and that is much appreciated. But it is still going to be another administrative burden yet, from what I can see, there will be absolutely no gain to anyone other than criminals. It certainly won't help victims.

However, the changes are coming and we now have to get on with it. Custody sergeants, all NWP inspectors and the senior officers above us have all been provided with training dates.

As I type, I've not been on my course yet but I am aware that it will be absolutely essential. So, if any of you reading this have been offered the training but haven't done it yet, I would advise you do so soon. It will be interesting to see how we all fare with the changes.

Talking about training, I'm due my annual

PSU 'beasting' later this month. I'm getting on now and so it doesn't fill me with glee the same as it did when I started it in 1990.

One thing I am concerned about is the fact that, despite having highlighted this a number of times since I transferred here in 2002, the cricket box provided as part of my PSU kit won't stay in place; NWP still won't provide me with the necessary 'strap' which would hold the box in place nicely.

My previous force provided said strap and so it was a bit of a shock when I was told NPW didn't. I have never actually understood why. The advice given to me to ensure that the box stays in place has been to make sure I wear two pairs of tight underpants...

As an inspector you tend to run around with a round shield. This doesn't offer much protection. I won't wear two pairs of underpants so, apart from when I am being petrol-bombed, I won't wear the box as frankly it hurts if I do and I can't run with it on.

In my previous force, this was never an issue as I was provided with the necessary equipment. Last year, as I ran around I attracted, again, a number of wooden blocks by the 'rioters'.

I normally hold my shield low to protect my unprotected 'bits' but being older, I've become slower and so I was too late to prevent a brick hitting me right where it hurts and down I went.

Ten minutes later when I was able to stand up I re-joined my laughing colleagues. On reflection, I cannot be the only officer to have been hit in that location and not been wearing a box; or perhaps everyone is wearing two pairs of pants?

I did submit a Health and Safety form and

my line manager, when she stopped laughing, duly supported it and fully backed my request that straps are issued. That was last August. I've yet to hear anything as to whether this will happen.

The senior officers I have since spoken to have all agreed that straps should be issued. But I would imagine if I am the only person who is raising this subject as an issue then it might be difficult to persuade someone who has never been a PSU officer and so has no idea of the dangers faced in training and real life. I hope NWP sorts this soon.

As I said earlier, April brings new unwelcome legislation. It also brings the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) to the Federation. I was actually stunned when I heard this. I understand the police service is a public body, but I can't get my head around the fact that the Government has decided that the Federation is as well.

I don't think this is fair. We are not a union and so have little in the way of rights, but can you imagine how the unions would take it if they were told they would be subject to FOI? They wouldn't wear it. It seems we have to.

I find this ridiculous. Like you, I pay my own private money (subscriptions) to the Federation. How the money is spent is mine and other members' business. It is a private issue between me and the people we have voted to represent us. It is not the public's money so why should they be able to ask what the Fed does with it? Could they ask a union what they do with theirs? No, of course not.

How long before the act is used to undermine the Federation's mission to protect their members? It won't be long. I have seen many different requests made to the police service and many of them are later used to put the boot in.

I believe that that the Federation has been unfairly picked on by the Government. I do hope we won't take this lying down and put in a legal challenge as soon as possible. This is the thin edge of the wedge. If they do it to us, who will be next? The Fire Brigades Union?

“ I believe that that the Federation has been unfairly picked on by the Government. I do hope we won't take this lying down and put in a legal challenge as soon as possible. This is the thin edge of the wedge. If they do it to us, who will be next? The Fire Brigades Union? ”

Is it getting hot in here or is it just me?

By Kim Owen,
Chair, Sergeants'
Branch Board



Over the last year I have attended several meetings in my Federation role as Equality Lead where the subject of the menopause has appeared on the agendas both nationally and locally.

Menopause can, in fact, be classed as a disability under the Equality Act as it can last for an average of four years and there have been several stated cases around discrimination in the workplace towards women who are going through this period in their life.

As we are all facing having to work longer at some point most women will go through this huge change in their life while working within the police service.

It's always appeared to be a taboo subject that everyone avoids talking about but, as times are changing, we have to start the conversations and raise awareness around what the menopause is, how it will impact on us all and how we can support people through it.

I will first look at the issues of women's menopause before looking at the male menopause.

Menopause is different for each woman. Some women may suffer severe symptoms while others could find themselves enjoying a new sense of freedom and energy.

Menopause is a normal part of life, the average age for it to start is at around 50 but some women may go through it in their 40s and some may be even younger. The symptoms, caused by changing levels of the hormones oestrogen and progesterone, can begin several years earlier for some and can last for months or years after.

Changes include:

- Less regular periods, shorter or longer periods, and more or less bleeding than usual.
- Hot flushes. These sudden feelings of heat affect the upper body, causing the face and neck to become flushed. You may

also see red blotches on the chest, arms, and back.

- Night sweats which can interfere with sleep.
- Problems affecting the genital area – including pain during intercourse, more infections and trouble with bladder control.
- Insomnia/fatigue - In addition to night sweats, some women find it harder in general to get a good night's sleep at midlife.
- Some women become less interested in sex and can find it painful, while others may feel more free to enjoy it.
- Some women become more moody or irritable around the time of menopause. And some may suffer anxiety and palpitations.
- Loss of muscle and gaining fat or becoming thinner, as well as stiff, achy joints and a wider waistline.
- Loss of skin tone which also increases wrinkles. Dry skin and dry eyes are other effects that may be suffered.
- Many people find that their memory changes with age. Normal memory problems are short-term and relatively minor (like not being able to immediately recall a familiar word or occasionally misplacing the car keys).

There are also certain health concerns that can accompany the change as oestrogen levels decrease and other changes related to aging occur. Two common concerns for women include osteoporosis and heart disease.

Osteoporosis. At the time of menopause, women may be at risk of osteoporosis, a condition where bones become weak and break easily. The body continually breaks down old bone and replaces it with new, healthy bone. Because oestrogen helps control bone loss, when you lose oestrogen during menopause, the body isn't able to replace as much bone as it loses.

Heart disease. A woman's risk of heart disease increases after menopause. This is likely the result of changing oestrogen levels and the aging process. Factors associated with increasing age – like weight-gain and high blood pressure – raise your risk of heart disease.

As well as all the physical effects, there are also psychological effects including the loss of a sense of control, feeling increasingly emotional, feeling less feminine, low self-esteem, embarrassment, poor concentration, feeling 'on the edge', loss of confidence and panic attacks.

Male menopause

This is also called andropause. It describes a drop in testosterone levels that many men experience when they get older. The same group of symptoms is also known as testosterone deficiency, androgen deficiency, and late-onset hypogonadism.

Male menopause differs from female menopause in several ways. For one thing, not all men experience it. For another, it doesn't involve a complete shutdown of the reproductive organs. However, sexual complications may arise as a result of lowered hormone levels.

Declining testosterone levels can cause many symptoms. It can cause physical, sexual and psychological problems. They typically worsen as you get older. They can also include:

- Low energy
- Depression or sadness
- Decreased motivation
- Lowered self-confidence
- Difficulty concentrating
- Insomnia or difficulty sleeping
- Increased body fat
- Reduced muscle mass and feelings of physical weakness
- Gynecomastia, or development of breasts
- Decreased bone density
- Erectile dysfunction
- Reduced libido
- Infertility.

They typically affect men at the same age as women entering menopause.

A doctor can take a sample of blood to test testosterone levels to help diagnose male menopause but, unless it is causing severe hardship or disrupting your life, most men will probably manage the symptoms without treatment.

The most common type of treatment for symptoms of male menopause is making healthier lifestyle choices. For example, a doctor might advise eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, getting enough

sleep, reducing stress.

So what are we doing in North Wales Police?

In NWP we currently have 1,233 women (as at 31/03/16) – 642 of these are over 40 representing 52 per cent of the total number of women.

Around 62 per cent of women between 40 and 65 experience symptoms (62 per cent of 642 = 398 women in NWP).

This means 32.3 per cent (398) of the female workforce in NWP are potentially experiencing symptoms.

NWP is involved with a national Menopause Action Group (MAG), which is 'responsible for setting and driving the local, regional and national direction and strategy for managing issues involving the menopause with the police service'.

NWP is looking to further support women experiencing symptoms of menopause by holding its own Force level MAG.

The NWP MAG will seek to:

- Provide initial support to staff and officers who are experiencing symptoms that may be affected by their working conditions.
- Establish a supportive network, with knowledge of conditions and adverse effects of the menopause.
- Identify Divisional representatives who will act as the link between divisions/business areas and the group.
- Assist in Force-wide education of all officers and staff.

So what else can we do?

Get better informed. We need to ensure officers and staff, especially line managers, have an understanding of the menopause and its effects.

Ensure we do not discriminate against officers and staff – both male and female – because they are menopausal.

Show respect and understanding towards colleagues who are going through the menopause.

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

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

Become a 'Champion' at work and join the NWP MAG group if you feel you can support others.

Helpful websites

www.womens-health-concern.org/help/focuson/focus_dietmenopause.html

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

www.project-aware.org/Managing/exercise.shtml

www.menopausematters.co.uk/menopause.php

Points of contact for the NWP MAG :

Lee Bailey	04974
Emma Naughton	88904
Joy Tipton	04046

Pre-retirement seminars: dates set for 2017

North Wales Police Federation, in association with Spillane & Co Wealth Management, is running four pre-retirement seminars in 2017.

Retirement is one of the biggest lifestyle changes any of us will face. As we are all living longer, it is becoming increasingly important that officers and staff prepare effectively for retirement, both financially and in terms of lifestyle provision.

Providing assistance to help you plan for this transition is important, the seminars help people make better informed decisions for a more secure and rewarding retirement.

To that end, the Federation, working in partnership with Spillane & Co Wealth, introduced a new style two day pre-retirement seminar for police officers and police staff in 2014. It's proved to be very popular, with seminars being fully subscribed.

These two days enable participants to consider aspects of life upon retirement and the kind of adjustments they might make after they retire. To help in this process, invited speakers lead relaxed discussions on important topics on retirement-related themes.

The seminar helps you to plan more effectively and manage the key stages of the process, with the needs of the participants of each particular seminar being the key driver. It's very interactive, and our aim is to get the answers to your questions to help you make the most of your retirement.

The programme also provides an opportunity to acquire useful insights into the challenges, as well as the new openings, facing those about to retire.

The two days cover:

- Preparing for the next stage of your life
- Adopting a different lifestyle and considering further employment
- Marketing yourself for the future
- A healthier retirement
- Your pension scheme
- Financial planning
- Investments
- Putting your affairs in order
- The National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO)
- Dealing with your questions and concerns.

To promote an informal atmosphere and encourage group discussion, numbers are limited to 36.

If you're retiring in the next two years, and would like to secure a place, email FedAdmin@nthwales.pnn.police.uk

The next courses available are:

Monday 5 and Tuesday 6 June 2017

Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 September 2017

Monday 20 and Tuesday 21 November 2017.

The June seminar will be held at St Asaph DHQ and the September and November seminars at Force Headquarters.



'A true gentleman'

Police family gather to pay respects to retired Chief Constable David Owen CBE, QPM

Family, friends and police officers and staff of all ranks and grades gathered at Holy Trinity church, Llandudno, to pay tribute to former Chief Constable David Owen at a service of remembrance.

The number of the police family in attendance highlighted the respect felt for Mr Owen.

Mr Owen died on 24 January at the age of 85 after a long illness.

Born in 1931 in Betws y Coed, he was the son of a police sergeant. He served with the Metropolitan, Lincolnshire, Merseyside and Dorset Police before returning to North Wales.

He served as Chief Constable of North Wales Police from 1982 to 1994 and was also appointed as the president of ACPO in 1990.

Married to Patricia, they had a daughter, Gail, and sons Philip and Mark.

Gareth Pritchard, Deputy Chief Constable of North Wales Police, said:

"David will be remembered for his strong and effective leadership.

"I was proud to see the police family attend in large numbers to pay tribute to our former Chief Constable."

The service of remembrance was held on 9 February.

Tributes to the former Chief Constable included:

"A true gentleman."

"An honour and privilege to have served under him."

"Superb leader who commanded respect and a true gent."



Officers lined the path to the church.

Officers acted as pallbearers.



Retired officers were among those honouring the former Chief Constable.



With a Sea Cadet officer is Sgt Parry.

Chasing the art of the possible with digital evidence

By Andrew Lohman, Project Manager in the Corporate Programme Office

Writing an engaging and interesting article about technology in policing and changes in the criminal justice process that isn't bedtime reading for an insomniac is a tall order.

Behind all the incomprehensible technical babble and acronyms, there is an important objective and purpose which will hopefully help to make some of our most basic investigative tasks a little easier. If you just don't get technology and are frustrated by some of the barriers we presently have, I encourage you to read on.

Policing on occasion has been at the forefront of using technology, from humble beginnings with the first radio equipped patrol cars in the 1920s to advances we now take for granted, like computer-aided dispatch and Automatic Number Plate Recognition.

In most cases, policing has simply adapted everyday technology for its own purpose, I'm thinking of body worn cameras and smartphones. Our next likely advance will be into using drones equipped with thermal imaging technology to help locate missing persons. This has great potential to help us safeguard vulnerable people.

Yes, it certainly is great to be at the cutting edge of what technology has to offer and to be chasing the art of the possible. Yet sometimes what seems to be the most basic and repeated of tasks in policing, e.g. gathering and working with digital evidence, still present a real challenge.

Take for example how we use closed circuit television (CCTV) evidence during an investigation. The nature of this evidence means it arrives in many different digital formats. This is due to the wide range and

non-standardisation of recording systems on the market.

We face a complicated challenge to simply play the footage and interpret it, in certain cases specialist help is required from the Imaging Department. Given the volume of physical media involved in some investigations, it can be difficult to physically manage it all and then produce what is needed at a later stage. When required at key points, like for use in interview, often we have to physically transport it around which incurs a time delay or worse a dedicated car journey just to deliver it.

This seems a strange practice in 2017 given when at home we can stream a vast library of movies and content on demand from our armchair with no physical DVD required.

We also face the prospect of not being able to share the actual footage with the CPS for charging advice. We have to rely on describing the footage hoping that the impact isn't lost in translation. Our last involvement could be being called to attend court, often our criminal justice colleagues have the same struggles we do to make the footage play and rely on us to assist. This is despite us often writing instructions for them to follow. In this scenario, I also failed to mention the multiple failed visits we initially incurred trying to pick up the evidence in person.

This seems like a process of work arounds, inefficiency and barriers to which



we should be actively using technology to solve, giving us more time to focus on things that matter more.

The honest truth is that working with CCTV evidence is far from our only challenge. Technology is changing the nature of crimes and incidents we investigate. We have many more investigative opportunities from digital devices including an increasing volume of publicly captured evidence. The art of the possible in this case would be more tools in our digital evidence toolbox to gather, view, collaborate on with colleagues and make evidence digitally available on demand for interviews and the criminal justice process.

If you hadn't guessed it, this is the part where we really need technology to work for us. I say this because in these times of austerity, all this will most likely need to be achieved without a significant increase in specialist resources. The solution therefore needs to be simple and intuitive.

At the same time unique to our policing world, many challenges arise like the safety of our own computer network from untrusted sources and the minefield which is evidential continuity. Working with digital evidence also needs the standards required by the Forensic Services Regulator to be upheld. All these challenges need to be unpicked and resolved to move forward.

The next complication is that this is something we have been mandated to do and we have a clear timetable in which to achieve it, currently set for late 2018.

THE HONEST TRUTH IS THAT WORKING WITH CCTV EVIDENCE IS FAR FROM OUR ONLY CHALLENGE. TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE NATURE OF CRIMES AND INCIDENTS WE INVESTIGATE. WE HAVE MANY MORE INVESTIGATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FROM DIGITAL DEVICES INCLUDING AN INCREASING VOLUME OF PUBLICLY CAPTURED EVIDENCE.

Digitisation of the criminal justice process has been on the national agenda for a number of years.

The Digital First Programme led by Chief Constable Giles York and the Policing Vision 2025 have set some defined standards for policing to achieve. Alongside this, our criminal justice partners, fresh from having experienced the benefits of digital files, are increasingly keen for the remainder of the process to be fully digitalised.

Some very difficult and complex decisions lay ahead, including some around technology and committing ourselves to significant future expenditure, the cost of which will likely exceed the benefits available in return. My own view, having seen digitisation occur in the criminal justice process up to this point, is that national expectation will force us to act.

Unfortunately, policing exists at the very sharp end of the criminal justice process and is often mandated to make changes which benefit our partners at a later stage. In this case, I hope with the right processes and enabling technology, we can ensure digitisation benefits us practically as much as it does our partners further downstream.

Lastly, we cannot stand still as the public will increasingly expect us to deal with them digitally, as they are accustomed to from dealing with the likes of Amazon and others. When I last renewed my car

insurance online, I had to scan in and upload evidence of my no claims history. It was easier than writing a letter or picking up the phone and I could do it when I had the time outside the working day. These types of technology could help to reduce demands on us and also work better for the public and businesses.

So what have we been doing so far and why raise this now? The Digital First Project chaired by Chief Superintendent Neill Anderson, closely supported by Julie Foster as Head of the Administration of Justice Department and Keith Williams from ICT, have been progressing the technology and new business processes we require.

By the time you read this article, an operational pilot using innovative technology will have commenced in selected sites to digitise and streamline our use of digital evidence. In short, we have developed a response to the problems identified based on learning from operational staff. For those taking part in the pilot, please accept my gratitude in advance for your feedback and assistance.

The pilot will provide the following:

- A dedicated workstation to process any type of digital evidence. This will allow simple viewing, editing with notation and safe uploading to our network associated against an RMS occurrence. Importantly this system has the

capability to re-format originally supplied CCTV into openly playable formats for use during investigation and in court.

- A Force-wide accessible repository system for all evidence types. This will store evidence obtained from the workstation process. It will enable the easy on demand recall and sharing of digital evidence internally. The purpose will be to provide an early experience how digital working will operate.

If you want to know more about the process, the latest information can be found via the intranet by searching 'Digital North Wales'.

Looking ahead, the project is also working to address the remaining requirements of the national Digital First Initiative. These include the ability to rapidly request and obtain evidence online from the public and businesses. Also solutions to share evidence digitally with external partners for aspects like charging advice.

I can honestly tell you this remains a challenging but worthwhile piece of work. Whether these changes excite you or not, after all this is a very dry subject, the future will be different and your input to help shape this is valued. I hope this article provides a worthwhile insight and, for those of you who managed to remain awake while reading, well done.

Widows are being unfairly treated

Pension rules for police widows in England and Wales have been called 'antiquated' and 'manifestly unfair'.

The comments were made by Mel Jones, Assistant Secretary of North Wales Police Federation, who has been interviewed by BBC Wales about the dilemma currently faced by some police widows.

Under the 1987 pension rules, some widows and widowers can lose their pension entitlement if they co-habit or marry a new partner. This leaves an agonising decision for many, who can be left having to choose between financial security or their happiness.

Mel has called for regulations to be brought into line with Northern Ireland, which now grants all police widows a pension for life.

"The present system is antiquated, it needs reforming. It's clearly unfair for individuals to be treated differently depending on which police service an officer served in," he said.

"Sadly, it's widows or widowers who are made to make a very difficult choice. If they want to move on, re-marry or live with somebody, they face losing their police

pension which can cause real hardship."

Debra Poole, from Sarnau, Ceredigion, was widowed when her police officer husband, Russell, died nearly 15 years ago.

She receives about £900 each month and said she 'could not have existed' without the pension as she was left to bring up their three young children on her own.

She explains: "If I choose to find another person, to love again, then my money will be taken from me.

"My husband did work, he retired, he quite often put his life on the line for the job. He loved his job, but he also paid 11 per cent of his pay every month for his pension and for his family.

"So I do feel that this is wrong. We're only seeking parity with the Northern Ireland ladies - our sisters we call them."

Fellow widower Kate Hall felt so strongly about the issue she set up an online petition, calling for police widows pensions to be granted for life.

While Kate was initially able to claim a widow's pension, in 2001 she had to stop claiming as she decided to move in with a new partner. The rules currently state you cannot claim a widow's pension if living with a new partner.

Frustrated by the unfairness of the dilemma she found herself in, during the summer of 2014 she launched an online petition in which she discovered she was not alone in her feelings as the signatures now stand at more than 115,000.

In 2015, the rules were changed by the UK Government to allow widows of police officers killed in the line of duty to receive their pensions only if they remarried or moved in with a partner after 1 April that year.

But Kate, and now Mel, are calling for widows or widowers who lost a spouse from 1 January 1989 to be paid retrospectively, like they are in Northern Ireland.

A Home Office spokesman said: "This Government has made clear its commitment to ensuring that public service pensions are affordable, sustainable and fair.

"That is why we brought regulations into force at the start of last year which mean that widows, widowers and surviving civil partners of police officers who die on duty in England and Wales, no longer lose their survivors' benefits if they re-marry, form a civil partnership or co-habit."



New facilities on track

The new police station in Llandudno is currently on programme and is set to go live in November. As you can see from Photographs 1 and 2, the build is going well.

In Llay, the demolition of the former Sharp warehouse is nearly complete. The waste will be sorted and recycled wherever possible, with the existing slab being crushed and used on site as a piling mat and then later for hardcore for the external site works.

Works have commenced on the staff car park, which will be used as the site compound by Galliford Try. The pre-cast working drawings have been completed and work will soon start on the production of the cells.

And finally, the ecologist is really happy with the efforts to preserve the bee orchid and rare dingy skipper butterfly, as well as mitigation works to protect the newts (Photos 3, 4 and 5).

We'll keep you updated with how both projects are progressing.



Roads policing comes under scrutiny at annual conference

By Barry Andrews

Government ministers, chief constables and good old police constables gathered for two days of chat about roads policing.

The location was a hotel in Hinckley, Leicestershire, and on the agenda at this year's Police Federation Roads Policing Conference, funnily enough, was roads policing – from using phones while driving to fatal collisions and charity awareness days.

The two-day event was opened by Jayne Willetts, the roads policing lead for the Federation, who highlighted the drop in roads policing officers in England and Wales. Current figures show that there are less than 5,000 dedicated RPU officers patrolling the roads and she described how the thin blue line is now almost invisible.

She then asked if using a mobile phone while driving was as socially unacceptable as drink driving. The discussion that followed suggested it most definitely was.

Next up was Suzette Davenport, Chief Constable of Gloucestershire Police and NPCC lead for roads policing, who opened by quoting the drop in fatal collisions between 2011 and 2016. The figures show a decrease from 1,732 to 1,543 in that time. While they have reached a plateau, they are down by 45 per cent from 10 years ago.

Andrew Jones, transport minister, addressed conference and spoke about the increase in the penalty for mobile phone offences and the massive change in detections that has resulted from the Section 5A drug driving legislation.

In 2014 there were 879 drug driving offences. In 2016 there were 8,500. He said that an extra £1 million has been made available to assist with impairment training and he also pointed out that drink related road deaths are down by 80 per cent since the drink drive legislation was introduced.

The speakers then took part in a question and answer session, with a great question

coming in for Mr Jones, asking him whether the definition of using a mobile phone while driving could be changed as forces are having to prosecute drivers for not being in proper control of a vehicle when the evidence is not sufficient for using a mobile phone.

Mr Jones said that the legislation is more than 30-years-old so he is willing to re-visit the wording and update it if it is necessary.

He was also asked about the sentencing powers for causing death by dangerous driving as not being fit for purpose. In reply, he said that consultation on this matter was due to take place.

Everyone was urged to sign up to Don't Stream And Drive Day on 2 March. This dangerous activity has become more popular and could easily lead to serious consequences.

Mark Aldred QC spoke about the continued problem of officers being pursued through the courts for driving offences relating to pursuits or response drives. He highlighted that exemptions go out of the window where collisions occur and sometimes they do even when there is no collision, if the driving of the officer is deemed to have fallen far below that of a careful and competent driver.

Both he and Tim Rogers of the Federation have been pushing for a change in the wording which would take into account officer driver training. As it stands the law says that it should not be taken into account in any case. He urged all officers to consider the consequences as they could not only lose their job and pension but also their liberty if the court found them guilty.

Chief Constable Davenport said that officers cannot be given the authority to drive dangerously. It was pointed out to her that this was never the case. Mr Aldred merely wanted their driver training to be recognised and said there are currently 130 officers being pursued for driving matters at a cost of £135,000 to the Federation over the last 18 months.

There were some break-out sessions. I saw a presentation on the Older Driver Forum – Driving Safely for Longer. This is a Hampshire project aiming to raise awareness but also offer voluntary assessments and encourages regular eyesight tests.

There are 4.75 million drivers over the age of 70 in the UK. The oldest current driver is 109. Those 85 and over are four times more likely to have a collision. Older females are a higher risk. The older drivers make up 12 per cent of the population, six per cent of the casualties and 20 per cent of the fatalities. Those driving less than 2,000 miles per year at any age are more at risk of a collision.

With this in mind, Hampshire has created its own driver awareness course for the older driver. As a result, the Force has seen a reduction in the number of collisions involving older drivers, while other areas in the country have seen an increase.

Other news included that roadside evidential breath testing is still in the pipeline but no date has been set to implement it. The blood sample kits are being looked at after the issue of obtaining blood from some clients was highlighted and they are looking to have a butterfly needle added to the pack to give a healthcare professional more opportunity to obtain blood. Field Impairment Training (FIT) – a roadside test for impairment due to drugs - becomes the responsibility of the College of Policing from 1 April this year.

Finally, Ruth Purdie (a name you might recognise) from TISPOL – the European Traffic Police Network, joint working between forces across Europe - spoke about enforcement across Europe. There are various enforcement days through the year for drivers' hours, vehicle roadworthiness, drink/drug driving, speeding, phones, seatbelts etc. Education alone has not worked and enforcement is also needed to help change attitudes and behaviours.

Project EDWARD (Enforcement Day Without A Road Death), one of the joint enforcement days, where the aim is to go 24 hours without a road death, will take place again this year on 21 September.

There are 70 deaths each day in Europe and five in England and Wales, but on Project EDWARD day in 2016 this reduced to 42. Let's hope this year's is a success.

THERE ARE 70 DEATHS EACH DAY IN EUROPE AND FIVE IN ENGLAND AND WALES, BUT ON PROJECT EDWARD DAY IN 2016 THIS REDUCED TO 42.

Safonau'r Gymraeg - beth ydyn nhw?

Cyfres o ofynion cyfreithiol rhwymol ydy Safonau'r Gymraeg sy'n ceisio gwella'r gwasanaethau dwyieithog y gall y cyhoedd yng Ngogledd Cymru eu disgwyl gan yr Heddlu a'r Comisiynydd Heddlu a Throsedd.

Mae'r Safonau'n nodi beth ydy ein cyfrifoldebau o ran darparu gwasanaethau a gwybodaeth ddwyieithog i'r cyhoedd ac i'r staff mewn sefyllfaoedd penodol, gan sicrhau nad ydy'r Gymraeg yn cael ei thrin yn llai ffafriol na'r Saesneg. Mae'r Safonau'n cynnig cyfle i atgyfnerthu a gwella ein darpariaeth ddwyieithog. Comisiynydd y Gymraeg sy'n eu rheoleiddio a byddan nhw'n dod i rym ar 30 Mawrth 2017.

Mae gwybodaeth bellach am Safonau'r Gymraeg ar gael ar safle'r iaith Gymraeg ar y fewnwyd <http://fhqweb002/support-services/corporate-services/corporate-communications/cymraeg---welsh-language/safonau-iaith-gymraeg.aspx>



What are the Welsh Language Standards?

The Welsh Language Standards are a set of legally binding requirements that aim to improve the bilingual services the public in North Wales can expect to receive from the Force and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The standards set out what our responsibilities are in terms of providing bilingual services and information both to the public and also to staff in specific situations, ensuring the Welsh language is not treated any less favourably than the English language. The standards provide an opportunity to consolidate and improve our bilingual provision. They are regulated by the Welsh Language Commissioner and will come into force on 30 March 2017.

Find out more on the Welsh language pages on the intranet <http://fhqweb002/support-services/corporate-services/corporate-communications/cymraeg---welsh-language/welsh-language-standards.aspx>

Offering support for people with mental health issues

The Force is committed to supporting the wellbeing of its people and, as part of the work of the Wellbeing Board, is introducing some new initiatives to support officers and staff with mental health issues.

Mental Health Peer Supporters will be launched in April. It's a scheme where individuals who have experience or a good understanding of mental health issues volunteer to become a peer supporter so that they can use their knowledge and experience to offer emotional or practical support to others. This could be listening support or signposting an individual to more specialist or formal support and could be a face to face discussion, over the phone or by email.

The benefits of peer support are wide ranging for those receiving support, for peer supporters themselves and for the organisation as a whole. This support can help improve emotional resilience and wellbeing, increase a person's ability to cope with mental health issues, challenge stigma

and discrimination and reduce sickness absence.

The role is designed to complement - but not replace - formal professional support.

Peer supporters can offer a sympathetic ear and be there when someone needs support, but they are not expected to be counsellors or be experts on mental health issues.

If you would like to become a peer supporter then please complete a Peer Support Application Pack which can be found on the HR vacancies page.

Prospective peer supporters will be invited to an informal discussion to ascertain suitability and will be provided with mental health first aid training by Mind.

For any questions about the scheme please contact **Lee Bailey on extension 04974** or **Anna Williams on extension 04174**. Further information can also be found on the healthy mind section of the HR intranet site.



A19 'not unlawful'

Back in 2015 we updated you about Regulation A19 – under which officers were forced to retire after 30 years' pensionable service. An employment tribunal in 2014 had ruled that officers required to retire under A19 were due compensation, but a Court of Appeal ruling was being awaited.

In February this year the Court of Appeal ruled that police forces' use of A19 did not amount to age discrimination.

This ruling upholds a decision by the Employment Appeal Tribunal to overturn the original 2014 judgment that requiring officers to retire under Regulation A19 of the Police Pensions Regulations 1987 is not 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim', a justification for discrimination under the Equality Act.

A19 allows police forces to make an officer of the rank of chief superintendent or below to retire 'in the general interests of efficiency'.

A19 can be applied to those officers who have sufficient service to allow them a pension of two thirds average pensionable pay – arguably affecting middle ranking officers the most.

CROSS POLICE DO NOT CROSS

'Officers need 2.8 per cent pay rise'

The Police Federation has called for all officers to be given a 2.8 per cent pay rise.

The Federation has argued for the rise in its annual submission to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB).

In its joint submission with the Superintendents' Association, it has asked for the uplift, which would be in line with Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation, despite a one per cent public pay increase limit set by the Treasury.

"This year's pay and morale survey, the largest ever undertaken, once again shows that morale continues to be low. Alongside how officers are treated, pay and benefits remains one of the most significant contributory factors to this," says Andy Fittes, general secretary of the national Police Federation.

"Continuing austerity measures, exacerbated by inflation, have seen police officers hit hard by way of a real terms pay gap. The ability to recruit strong candidates, or recruit full stop, may be impacted if this is not addressed.

"Whilst directed to limit any pay award at one per cent, the independent PRRB must be free to draw its own conclusions based on the evidence presented."

One of the issues raised in the report

looked at the impact eight years of austerity had on the relative value of officers' pay.

This includes two years of a pay freeze and several years of below inflation raises which have resulted in a real terms gap across all ranks of about 14.6 per cent. It states that should austerity measures continue, a pay cap at one per cent over the next four years to 2020 would result in an overall gap between pay settlements and inflation of 23 per cent since 2010.

And it goes on to say the situation is exacerbated by the removal of a number of elements of pay, such as Competence Related Threshold Payments and Special Priority Payments. There was also a recommendation that the On Call Allowance, introduced in 2013 and set at £15, was uplifted by the Retail Price Index.

The PRRB asked submissions to consider both the targeting of pay and observations on proposals to introduce police officer apprenticeships, in relation to setting pay.

Explaining the Federation view on these issues, Andy continued: "We are not against change to the pay system and recognise it needs to change as the service changes. However, chief constables should not be given 'carte blanche' to pay at their discretion. Sufficient time needs to be given

for discussions on any new targeting proposals, with clear evidence presented throughout.

"We believe that to maintain fairness, and encourage interest from a range of candidates reflective of their communities, apprentices should be paid in line with existing starting salary bandings. This would allow room for many, especially those with prior policing experience, to attract the higher starting point."

The Police Federation and Superintendents' Association's submission to the PRRB and additional information, including other stakeholder submissions can be viewed on the Federation's PRRB page.



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Face up to festive finances

The beginning of a new year has a great way of evoking the feeling of starting again, a fresh start and looking ahead.

But as many of us turned to credit to fund Christmas, the financial repercussions can end up lasting a lot longer than the festive period itself.

And if you're still struggling to get to grips with your finances three months after the big day, it can be difficult to feel positive about the future.

But you're not alone.

Problem debt can affect anyone for a number of reasons. Thousands of people from all backgrounds and walks of life in the UK are currently experiencing financial difficulties due to the economic downturn, spiralling living costs, static wages and salary levels – and police officers are no exception.

A relationship breakdown or loss of income due to an injury at work are both commonplace within the police and can trigger debt problems. Being a police officer can be extremely rewarding but challenging enough without trying to cope with financial problems as well.

So there's no better time than now to get organised and get to grips with your

finances again.

Jane Clack is a money advisor at debt management company PayPlan and is no stranger to debt herself. In 2001, Jane found herself facing debts of more than £38,000 after a business she tried to set up failed.

Fifteen years later and not only has Jane rebuilt her finances and credit status, but she now works for the debt company that helped her.

"I know what it's like to be in debt, to feel alone and isolated and I wanted to help others in a similar situation," said Jane.

Jane has some tips on how you can go about tackling those post-Christmas debts:

- **Find out what you owe:** To find out who you owe money to, start by pulling copies of your old statements from at least the last year including loan statements, utility bills and your bank statement.
- **Make a list of all your creditors** (everyone you made a payment to in the last year and what you owe).
- **Draw up a budget:** Work out your income and expenditure and see where you can cut down on any unnecessary spending.
- **Pay more than the minimum:** If you can afford to, it's always good to try to pay more towards your debt repayments to reduce the

overall interest.

● **Seek help:** If your debt becomes unmanageable, seek independent advice from a specialist debt advisor or organisation.

If you're struggling with your finances and would like some more information or to speak to someone, call our dedicated police line on **0800 009 4146**.

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New-look conference heads to Birmingham

This year will see a new-look Police Federation annual national conference, which will be held in Birmingham for the first time.

Delegates from North Wales will be making the journey over the border for the two-day event, which is at the city's International Convention Centre (ICC) on 16 and 17 May.

The theme will be Protect The Protectors – carrying on the campaign which was launched by the Federation in February and highlights the daily assaults on officers across England and Wales.

Sir David Normington recommended the national conference was 'slimmed down' following his independent review of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) in 2014.

His review panel, which put forward 36 recommendations for an overhaul of PFEW, said the conference should be reduced from three days to two and that fewer delegates should attend.

All recommendations were backed by the Federation at conference 2015 and are now being implemented with this being the first year that the conference has been pared back.

Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales



Theresa May, then Home Secretary, addresses conference 2016.

Police Federation, says the national conference offers an invaluable opportunity for Federation representatives to meet up with colleagues from across England and Wales to discuss best practice and current issues as well as learn about the latest developments in policing.

"Conference is attended by police leaders,

including politicians and chief officers, so it gives delegates a chance to take part in debates on key matters of concern and feedback information to officers back in force," he explains.

"It will be interesting to see how this year's slimmed down conference compares to previous years."

Pensions update

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) has published two updates on pensions.

The two documents, FAQs based on regular queries from members, and a timeline setting out the background to the current situation, were issued at the start of March.

Both documents can be read in full on the Federation website but here are a few of the key points.

What did the PFEW do to prevent the CARE pension scheme?

There was nothing the PFEW could do to prevent the scheme from being implemented. It was the only scheme proposed by the Government and was in line with the CARE schemes proposed for other public service workers. The Government is not required to negotiate with the PFEW on pension provision. It informed us of its proposal to introduce the scheme in 2012, as it needed a "long-term solution to the increasing costs of public service pensions that is fair to public servants and other taxpayers".

We opposed its introduction and its application to existing officers, but it was introduced by the enactment of new primary legislation. The Government has the mandate to govern in the way it sees fit.

Why did the PFEW not challenge the Government?

The PFEW sought legal advice throughout the process and was advised that there were no grounds to successfully challenge the introduction of the new scheme.

All avenues regarding the legality of overall scheme introduction have been considered, including public law (judicial review); European law, human rights and discrimination.

A group of police officers decided to put in a legal challenge to the transitional protections in the 2015 CARE scheme. The PFEW has not followed this course because we are aware of the potential detrimental risks and because we believe that transitional protections are a good thing as we aim to achieve a positive outcome for as many of our members as possible.

In the judges' Employment Tribunal (ET) ruling it was found that the transitional protections in the judges' scheme did not represent a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim and were therefore discriminatory in protecting some members too well.

The subsequent ET ruling in the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) case ruled in their case that while the transitional

arrangements in the firefighters' pensions were discriminatory they were justifiable as they represented a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Did you influence the scheme at all?

Yes. We ensured that:

- Officers have the ability to retire at 55 from the CARE scheme (with their pension actuarially reduced from age 60).
- There was an extension of those covered by full transitional protections and also those within four years of full protection received tapered protection, therefore avoiding a "cliff edge" scenario. This enabled more members to be covered than was the case in the Home Secretary's initial proposal.

PFEW was in favour of transitional protections. Part of these protections have ensured that there is tapered protection for some of those officers in the previous pension schemes, to avoid a "cliff edge" of protection – by which officers could miss out on being able to remain in the old schemes by just one day of service or by being born just one day later. This allows those officers to benefit from continued membership of their earlier scheme for longer.

More than half of members were able to either have full protection or tapered protection, while previously accrued rights were also protected for all officers with Police Pension Scheme (PPS) 1987 and/or New Police Pension Scheme (NPPS) 2006 service.

Unprotected members and those with tapered protection who transfer to and remain members of the new scheme also benefit from the application of 'final final' salary in the calculation of their accrued pension and members who were in the PPS 1987 also benefit from weighted accrual.

If Federation legal advice is wrong, will you fund a legal challenge for all officers?

No. The legal advice is just that – advice – and while we have taken that on board, we do not believe that a challenge based on transitional protections is in the best interests of most members. The debate is not confined to a legal argument, with a number of factors to be considered. The judges' ET ruling was against the transitional protections put in place, stating that those given the protections had been treated better than could be justified based on the evidence.

How many colleagues are protected/partially or not protected?

In total, more than 67,000 of our 121,000 members had either full protection (more

than 49,000) or tapered protection (just over 18,000).

How many members were affected, to a detrimental effect, by the pension changes introduced by this Government?

It is not possible to pinpoint this as not all of those officers in the new scheme will suffer an adverse effect to their future pension accrual. Some people in the new scheme might actually be better off.

What happens next?

We will continue to monitor the situation with public service pensions and await further information on both the appeals which have been lodged. We have chosen not to challenge because we believe that transitional protections are a good thing.

PENSIONS TIMELINE

The timeline covers the period from 2011 to March 2017.

Its first entries are:

2011

March – The final report of the Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, led by Lord Hutton is published. In his report, Lord Hutton spoke of a need for comprehensive reform in order "for public service employees to continue to have access for the foreseeable future, to good quality, sustainable and fairer defined benefit pension schemes".

At Budget 2011 the Government "accepts Lord Hutton's recommendations as a basis for consultation with public sector workers".

May – Home Secretary Theresa May announces at the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) annual conference that she has asked Thomas Winsor to consider police pensions in the second part of his ongoing Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions.

The final entries are:

2017

February – The Fire Brigades Union's (FBU) employment tribunal ruling is handed down and the ruling is in favour of the Government, stating that the discrimination inherent in the transitional arrangements used in this scheme was justifiable on the grounds that they were a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The FBU announce later it will appeal the ruling.

March – The Ministry of Justice announces its intention to appeal against the ruling in the judges' employment tribunal.

The PFEW issues further FAQs relating to police pensions.

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PMGI12374 0117

Custody sergeant... A role that needs to be valued!

By Sergeants' representative Paul Anderson

When imparting advice on a strategy for my impending posting as a custody officer a few years ago, a wise mentor of mine told me to 'Forget targets, admin and everything else, just make sure they are alive when you go home'.

By 'they' he was referring to the diverse cross section of people who would stand at the counter of my shiny new custody suite in St Asaph over the next couple of years, some of whom would do their utmost to assault me, assault my colleagues, hurt themselves and, worst of all, try to bring their own lives to an end.

And that was all before I had to worry about other issues, including illness and injury, which could result in the worst case scenario of the death in custody to which my mentor was alluding.

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act has long since established that the custody sergeant is king within their suite and the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice dictates that all custody staff must be suitable, trained and competent.

However, along with this status, comes the responsibility of managing massive risks and the role is simply not given the recognition locally or nationally that it deserves.

Speaking to my colleagues from across the country at the National Custody Forum last week, I was still hearing stories of custody being a hard to fill post, temporary sergeants being used to fill vacancies and one force where the perception of sergeants being moved into the position was that it is used almost as a punishment posting.

We also hear of new draft IPPC guidelines

that get little support from stakeholders and talk about separating officers immediately following death and serious injury cases, which does nothing to entice sergeants to a role that appears only to carry risk and pressure.

I can remember a previous chief superintendent dictating that all sergeants had to have some custody experience before moving up the ladder. It went down like a lead balloon at the time but is that so wrong?

Inspectors are a vital part of the custody machine and shouldn't they have some knowledge of the role that the sergeant undertakes in the suite? If the role was valued in the service this would not be the issue that it was then, should that decision be reconsidered?

I have heard the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for custody, Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave, publicly thank custody sergeants for the invaluable work that carry out on a daily basis.

He also insisted that investigations following adverse incidents should acknowledge the welfare of the staff involved. This is a positive step in the right direction, but needs to filter down across all forces and sideways to the IPCC if we are to see improvements in how this vital role is viewed.

So, is it time for properly accredited custody training along the lines of that in place for detectives? Some would argue that the high turn-over of custody staff doesn't lend itself to a detective or traffic style traineeship.

I would counter that this is clearly a chicken and egg scenario where it is difficult to know whether undervaluing custody sergeants and lack of regard for the role

IF YOU COMPARE THE ROLE OF THE CUSTODY OFFICER WITH THAT OF AN AUTHORISED FIREARMS OFFICER, THE RISK OF SOMEBODY DYING DURING THE SHIFT IS FAR HIGHER FOR THE CUSTODY OFFICER.

causes high turn-over or whether it is the other way round, but the cycle certainly needs to be broken if we are to improve the safety of staff and detainees in the long run.

If you compare the role of the custody officer with that of an Authorised Firearms Officer, the risk of somebody dying during the shift is far higher for the custody officer. However, after an initial training course, it's a one day a year refresher and training is significantly less than for firearms. The service values those officers who carry firearms and rightly so, they do an amazing job. However, custody sergeants are often overlooked and undervalued, and in my experience have saved countless lives.

Thankfully, custody suites in North Wales are, relatively, a very safe place to be detained. That is because they have a dedicated team there constantly trying to do the right thing. I include not only the sergeants in this but the detention officers and the nurses we work alongside.

However, I write that searching for an extra large piece of wood to place my hand upon, knowing that by the time this goes to press any one of my custody colleagues could, for any number of reasons, be facing a lengthy investigation that requires the support of the Federation's post-incident procedure trained officers.

The main benefit of highly trained and valued custody sergeants is clear... improving the chances that 'they' are all alive when we go home and we can all live to fight another day!

THANKFULLY, CUSTODY SUITES IN NORTH WALES ARE, RELATIVELY, A VERY SAFE PLACE TO BE DETAINED. THAT IS BECAUSE THEY HAVE A DEDICATED TEAM THERE CONSTANTLY TRYING TO DO THE RIGHT THING. I INCLUDE NOT ONLY THE SERGEANTS IN THIS BUT THE DETENTION OFFICERS AND THE NURSES WE WORK ALONGSIDE.



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Police pensions on divorce or dissolution

By Roland Humphreys
Principal lawyer in family law at Slater and Gordon



Police pensions are often the most valuable asset on divorce and yet, due to their complexity, a great deal of confusion surrounds them. Officers who do not seek guidance from an expert often find themselves provided with incorrect and often misleading advice from well-meaning others.

Following a separation it is important to get advice about the financial arrangements surrounding your pension including how the courts are likely to deal with the pension as part of any overall financial settlement, as there are various options available including Pension Sharing Orders or offsetting against other assets, such as savings or equity in a family property.

In complicated divorce cases, particularly those where the pension is already in payment due to retirement or ill health, it is not uncommon for it to be necessary to seek advice from a pension actuary who provides a report about the different pension needs and options within the court process. The conclusions reached in such reports may prove critical in informing the court about how issues in relation to pensions held by both parties should be resolved. It is very important you have a lawyer who is confident from the outset, ensuring the correct questions are asked and to vigorously challenge any conclusion, making certain your interests are properly protected.

Because of the various options available for the division of pension assets upon divorce or dissolution, there are many myths surrounding them. For example, the recipient of a Pension Sharing Order in relation to a police pension does not receive an immediate lump sum equivalent to the "share" and will have to wait until their 60th birthday to realise any benefits. Further, if the person having their pension deducted

has already retired, they will experience an immediate deduction in any income they are already receiving, even if the recipient might not receive theirs for a number of years, because they are not yet 60 years old.

When deciding how to deal with your pension, and other matrimonial assets, the Family Court will consider a number of different criteria and it may be that a Pension Sharing Order may not be the best outcome based on the length of your marriage, the value of your pension, your length of service and the value of the other matrimonial assets. For example, if a marriage is short, a court might prefer to "offset" any interest in pension funds generated during the marriage by way of a smaller lump sum. No two situations are the same and you should have a lawyer who understands these complexities and how the different circumstances might affect the outcome.

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.

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