

WELSH MATTERS

News and views from the Police Federation's Welsh Affairs Business Area

FEDERATION AT PARLIAMENT TO CAMPAIGN FOR MEMBERS

THE FEDERATION'S Welsh Affairs lead, Nicky Ryan, has met with MPs at Parliament to make the case for our campaigns, including around police pay.

More than 50 parliamentarians from the Government and opposition, including MPs, peers, and police and crime commissioners, attended the reception in December to discuss pressures faced by police officers and the need for fair pay, conditions and recognition.

The campaigns we discussed included:

#FairPayForPolice – calling for an alternative

to the unjust police pay review mechanism that has been the source of disputes with successive governments. The Federation is calling for a pay rise to cover the cost of living crisis.

#SimplifyDG6 – changes to the Crown

Prosecution Service guidance on disclosure has impeded justice and has seen victims of various crimes withdraw from active participation due to officers having to find at least an extra four hours to spend on redacting case material at the pre-charge stage.

#MedalsForHeroes – our campaign for an Elizabeth Medal to be awarded to officers killed in the line of duty, providing recognition and comfort to families.

Nicky said: "The event at Westminster was superbly well-attended. Police pay was raised with all MPs, including our loss of confidence in the independence of the Police Remuneration Review Body, and the issues that our colleagues potentially face with the cost of living, as well as society's expectation that

the police service can pick up the gaps left by other striking public sectors.

"All were really interested in our #MedalsForHeroes campaign, and you could see the impact that Bryn Hughes had as he described the devastating impact the murder of his daughter, PC Nicola Hughes, a decade ago continues to have on his family.

"It's important that we build on the connections we've made and work with MPs and others to achieve positive changes for police officers."

Clwyd West MP David Jones told Nicky that our #TimeLimits campaign – which highlights the unfairness of open-ended misconduct investigations and their impact on the mental wellbeing of officers and their families – particularly resonated with him as he has met police officers who faced lengthy suspensions.

Nicky also talked about devolution of justice and the fact that Federation is neutral in this area while taking a stance that changes must prioritise service over structure.

She met with Welsh MPs Gerald Jones (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney), Craig Williams (Montgomeryshire), Mark Tami (Alyn and Deeside) and Christina Rees who represents Neath. Nicky's cross-party talks also included former policing minister Tom Pursglove (Corby) and Staffordshire MP Jo Gideon.

The event was opened by the Police Federation of England and Wales deputy chair Tiff Lynch who is also the staff association's Parliamentary lead.



Nicky Ryan (left) and Christina Rees, Independent MP for Neath at the event.

She told MPs: "The thin blue line is broken, and without sufficient investment in policing, officers will not be able to keep up with new technology innovations criminals use, will not be able to stretch resources to attend all crimes and, ultimately, will not be able to keep our communities safe from the rise in violent crime."

Attendees included Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, Tom Pursglove, Minister of State at the Department for Work and Pensions, former Home Secretary Priti Patel and former policing minister Kit Malthouse.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

A message from Nicky Ryan, the Welsh lead for the Police Federation of England and Wales

I WOULD like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year - Nadolig Llawn a blwyddyn newydd dda.

As is the norm at this time of year, I have spent some time thinking over the highs and lows of the year. It has, without doubt, been a challenging 12 months for policing. But I am proud of the way in which officers have responded to that challenge and even the harshest of critics would have to admit that the policing operation for the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II showed police officers at their finest.

In my business area – Welsh policing – I think progress has been made, links between the Federation and politicians are stronger. Our elected representatives have engaged with us and listened to our views on the challenges facing officers. Sadly, we have still heard some speak out on ongoing investigations and inquiries, and therefore without the full grasp of all the facts, and this is something I hope we can address as we build on the relationships we have already developed.

But, as an example of how closer working arrangements have benefited officers

directly, I was really pleased that the First Minister Mark Drakeford hosted a reception for the Welsh nominees for this year's Police Bravery Awards. You can read more about this on Pages 2 and 3.

In addition to liaising with politicians, I have also been involved in meetings with the Welsh chief officers and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC). Of course, we have two new chiefs, a new deputy chief constable and also a new PCC so this too is a work in progress.

Before I wind up I would also like to mention another area of work in which I am now involved. I am the national Federation's lead for Specials who, of course, can now sign up to be members of the Police Federation following a change in the law over the summer. Since Specials so often work alongside regular officers it seems right and fitting they should be afforded Federation representation and I am looking forward to developing my role in this area.



The First Minister Mark Drakeford with the bravery award nominees from the four Welsh forces at the reception.



FIRST MINISTER HOSTS RECEPTION FOR BRAVE OFFICERS

WELSH FIRST Minister Mark Drakeford held a reception to honour Wales' six 2022 Police Bravery Awards nominees.

Mr Drakeford, Welsh deputy minister for social partnership Hannah Blythyn and the minister for social justice Jane Hutt met the officers at the event in Cardiff in December.

Police Federation national chair Steve Hartshorn, Welsh affairs lead Nicky Ryan and National Board member for the Welsh region Zac Mader were also present.

Nicky said: "It was a fantastic event – I am so pleased the First Minister took time to meet and speak to the brave officers who give so much to their communities.

"It is important that policing feels it has the support of the Welsh Government and events like this show the unique and vital role our members play in Welsh society is recognised by our elected leaders."

Nicky praised the six officers who were shortlisted for the national Police Bravery Awards. "Each of them has shown incredible courage in very difficult circumstances and although they have all played down the parts they played," she said.

The winner of the regional award for Wales this year was PC Nathan Davies from South Wales Police. He was called out late at night in a raging storm back in August 2020 when reports came in of a woman

screaming for help in the River Clydach in Swansea.

The trained public order medic made his way down the river bed in treacherous conditions but fell and knocked himself unconscious. After coming round, he crawled on his hands and knees to two casualties and began performing CPR on one of them until back-up arrived about 10 minutes later.

PC Davies was presented with his bravery award by Ms Blythyn at a ceremony in London in July.

He said: "It was an absolute honour to meet the First Minister and certainly a proud day for me and my family. I'm sure this will be a 'career highlight'. It was wonderful to see all the other nominees again and get a chance to hear their stories from them as I hadn't heard them before.

"From the time I was nominated for this award, the treatment from the Federation

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has been fantastic and far more than I would ever have expected.”

Dyfed Powys Police had three nominees this year. PCs Lucy Morris, Nikita Matthews and Paige Morgan showed quick-thinking as well as bravery when they responded to reports of a man with mental health issues making threats and “messaging with petrol”.

When the three officers arrived at the scene - a house in Llandrindod Wells - the man pointed an air rifle at them and forced them to back off.

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Members of the public were in the area and the three officers were doing their best to keep them back, but the man then began to walk towards the centre of the town.

The three PCs took the decision to use their police vehicle to control the man and carried out their manoeuvre in as safe a way as possible, so the suspect sustained only a minor leg injury as a result.

Gwent Police Sergeant Menna Watkins was nominated after she subdued and arrested a knife-wielding thug.

Sergeant Watkins was responding to



Nicky Ryan, the Welsh lead, with First Minister Mark Drakeford (centre) and Zac Mader, Federation National Board member and regional rep for Wales.

reports of a disturbance during which the suspect had threatened a man with a knife. She spoke to the alleged victim at the scene and was trying to get more information about the suspect when he charged through the crowd of onlookers and lunged towards her.

She deployed her Taser as he ran towards her and then handcuffed him and waited for back-up to arrive at the scene.

North Wales Police nominee PC Clare Larkey-Jones was off-duty when she put her own safety at risk by stepping into the middle of a street brawl, preventing serious injury to the victim and what could have erupted into large-scale public disorder.

She saw an individual violently

punching another man, pulling him to the floor and repeatedly kicking him in Caernarfon town centre.

With no protective equipment, PC Larkey-Jones intervened and put herself in the middle of a group of men to diffuse the situation and protect members of the public from becoming embroiled.

Along with nominees from forces across England and Wales, the Welsh officers attended a Downing Street reception hosted by the then Home Secretary Priti Patel before an evening awards ceremony.

The Police Bravery Awards are organised by the Police Federation of England and Wales.



Nicky Ryan takes part in a discussion between the nominees and the politicians.

'TIME FOR CONVERSATION ON WHAT PEOPLE WANT FROM POLICING'

POLICE FEDERATION Welsh lead **Nicky Ryan** called for a nationwide conversation on what people want from policing after a report found most victims of burglary, robbery and theft were not "getting the justice they deserve".

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found a number of shortcomings in some forces across England and Wales in dealing with the offences.

But Nicky said new and ever-increasing demands on the police were having an inevitable impact on how the service was delivered with officers often overwhelmed by extra paperwork or trying to tackle a new wave of online crime.

She said: "There are three main issues, the first one being demand; the second being bureaucracy and bureaucratic processes which are often not created within the police service but are imposed by organisations like the Home Office; and the third one is uplift - the 20,000 Boris' Bobbies we keep hearing about.

"There are not 20,000 new officers and it is not an increase of 20,000 new officers. It is simply taking police officer numbers back to where they were in 2010/2011. We are still 12,000 officers below what they were then."

Nicky warned the solution to the issues surrounding the public confidence in policing was not always as simple as increasing the budget and said other agencies had their part to play.

She said: "Policing is very often the service of last resort and there is a real risk that policing could be expected to pick up gaps in services as a result of other public sector organisations.

"When other agencies run out of capacity and are unable to fulfil the demands on them, that demand comes to the police because it often revolves around the vulnerability of people. We hear a lot about the Welsh Ambulance Service reaching capacity so when there is no ambulance available, quite frequently it is the police service that is sent to provide first aid and (officers) are tied up

with a patient.

"And when there is a missing child, after 4.30pm or 5pm when Social Services finish for the day, that responsibility then moves to policing.

"I think there needs to be a massive conversation throughout the country about what the public actually wants from policing: is it for us to solve crime? Or is it to be all things to all people?"

Nicky acknowledged people expected to receive an appropriate response from the police if their home had been burgled and admitted recent media reports of failures to investigate certain crimes was damaging.

But she said the new and growing range of online crime coupled with the additional bureaucratic demands now placed on everyday policing were taking up a lot of time.

She said: "The Home Office asks us to do a lot of returns on statistics and to record a lot of data which has absolutely no benefit to a member of the public at the end of a crime.

"I think social media has created a whole new range of offences and mobile phones have created a whole new range of offences. We are catching up with the technology but we are never going to be in front of it.

"And it has also made people victims of crime that would never previously have been victims of crime and it makes people perpetrators of crime who would never normally have been a perpetrator of crime.

"And these new offences are very, very resource-intensive to try to investigate."

Andy Cooke, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, warned failing to target burglary, robbery, and theft - classed as serious acquisitive crime (SAC) - was damaging public confidence in policing.

He added: "The response to SAC from policing isn't consistently good enough. Too many offenders remain at liberty and most victims aren't getting the justice they deserve.

"Forces are missing opportunities to identify and catch offenders, from the moment a member of the public reports the crime to the point where a case is finalised."

'UPLIFT GOING WELL, BUT RETENTION REMAINS AN ISSUE'

DATA RELEASED in October showed there were **7,815 police officers in Wales, an increase of 850 since the launch of the Government's Uplift programme.**

Nicky Ryan welcomed the figures but said retention and training remains a challenge:

"We welcome our new recruits to the policing family in Wales, many of whom are already on the ground and making a difference in their force areas and in their communities.

"But this is only the start. We're only making up the numbers we've lost since 2011 and we've lost a massive amount of experience. Some 75 per cent of our workforce has fewer than five years' experience.

"So, we need investment in our new recruits to ensure they receive high-quality training to equip them for the demands of modern policing. It is critical that we prioritise their health and wellbeing to ensure they see policing as a career in which they are valued and cared for, so they want to stay within the police service."

Nicky added that the current entry programme is putting additional pressure on young officers who must balance policing with studying for a degree level qualification. And investment in pay and conditions to ensure that officers feel properly rewarded for their work and properly supported in their roles.

"What we don't need is talk of a return to austerity and massive cuts to services. That would be a disaster for policing and for the people of Wales," she said.

The Home Office figures show that nationally 15,343 Uplift officers have been recruited to September. The target is 20,000 officers.

The figures reveal there are now more female police officers than ever before with 50,364 women in the 43 police forces making up 34.9 per cent of the overall workforce.



ENGAGE WITH THE FEDERATION

YOU CAN find out more about the Police Federation and its work representing police officers by contacting:

Nicky Ryan, the Welsh lead for the Police Federation of England and Wales - nryan@polfed.org

Gareth Jones, chair of Dyfed Powys Police Federation - garethjones@polfed.org

Matt Candy, chair of Gwent Police Federation - matthew.candy@polfed.org

Mark Jones, secretary of North Wales Police Federation - mark.jones@nwpf.polfed.org

Steve Treharne, chair of South Wales Police Federation - streharne@swpf.polfed.org

NICKY'S WARNING ON OVERSTRETCHED FORCES

POLICE FEDERATION Welsh lead Nicky Ryan has urged the Government to look at officers' workload as well as pay and recruitment.

Wales' overstretched forces were struggling to cope with the soaring demands and the inevitable impact was now starting to affect the services they provide to their communities, she said.

Speaking to BBC Radio 4's World at One, she said: "Every time a police officer is answering a call that should be dealt with by the ambulance service, that is one less police officer to answer that 999 call or attend that road accident.

"Every time they are dealing with a mental health crisis, that is one less police officer to deal with crime.

"We have lots of internal demand, internal bureaucracy which is put upon us by the Home Office and if you tie up an officer with a case file, a bureaucratic process, they physically cannot be writing a file and answering a 999 call at the same time."

A recent report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found many frontline uniformed response officers tasked with investigating crime said administration and competing demands delayed their investigations.

The report pointed to a national detective shortage and a large number of inexperienced officers as contributing factors to poorer responses, as well as pressure on operators to take 999 calls and collect the "bare minimum" of information from victims.



CARDIFF TO HOST MEMORIAL DAY

THE POLICE Federation's Welsh lead paid tribute to the work of the National Police Memorial Day charity at an event at the Senedd and also highlighted the need for a memorial to fallen police officers in Wales.

Nicky Ryan joined members of the Senedd and South Wales Chief Constable Jeremy Vaughan at the event which aimed to highlight the work of the National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) which will be held in Cardiff on Sunday 24 September 2023.

The family of Terry Davies, a Gwent Police officer who died in August 1990, aged 34, when he was hit by a stolen vehicle which failed to stop as he cycled home after a tour of duty also attended along with John Griffiths, Welsh Labour and Co-operative MS for Newport East.

The proposed National Welsh Police Memorial in Cathays Park was discussed at the event. An appeal has been launched by the Police Roll of Honour Trust to help fund the memorial, which will honour the heroic officers and staff who have given their lives to protect the people and communities of Wales.

Nicky said: "Wales is the only country in the UK without a dedicated national police memorial – and it's something we would love to change."

'FASCINATING READ': NEW BOOK PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON WELSH CJS

A NEW book exploring how the Welsh criminal justice system operates between two governments with opposing views makes for fascinating reading, according to Police Federation Welsh lead Nicky Ryan.

The Welsh Criminal Justice System: On the Jagged Edge was written by Cardiff University academic Robert Jones and Director of the Welsh Governance Centre Professor Richard Wyn Jones and is based on official data and in-depth interviews.

The book takes its title from the "jagged edge" of devolved and reserved powers and responsibilities across which the Welsh criminal justice system is forced to operate.

Nicky, who attended the book's official launch in Cardiff, said it posed some very challenging questions about how the system worked.

She said: "The book asks how can you make joined-up criminal justice policy when you have two different governments with different visions.

"It is the first book of this kind that starts to ask those questions

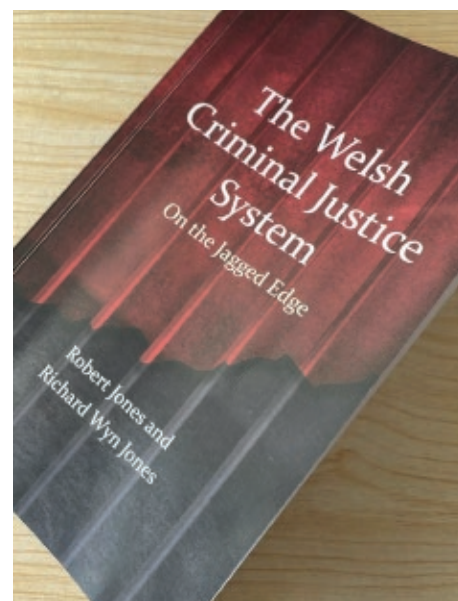
and it certainly starts to open up an understanding of the problems Welsh policing has to deal with as part of a distinct Welsh criminal justice system which itself falls within the criminal justice system of England and Wales.

"There are bound to be conflicts and tensions and the book does an excellent job of highlighting those differences and difficulties

"I found it a really interesting book and I think it is the only one written that explores criminal justice in Wales in this way. Whether or not your views support the devolution of justice, it enhances and challenges your thoughts about the issue."

The book's authors said Wales was the only common law country in the world to have its own parliament and government but not its own justice system and this effectively contradicts the democratic principle that presumes an alignment of the legislature, executive and judiciary.

Wales has a powerful government and parliament but shares its criminal justice



system with London and so there is almost conflict when the Welsh Government tries to implement policies within a system over which it has no control.