

WELSH MATTERS

News and views from the Police Federation's Welsh Affairs Sub-Committee

FEDERATION CALLS FOR 17 PER CENT PAY RISE FOR OFFICERS

WELSH AFFAIRS LEAD Nicky Ryan has insisted the 17 per cent pay rise called for by the Police Federation was a fair reflection on the cost of living crisis and the fact that members had suffered real-terms pay cuts.

Nicky said independent research from the Social Market Foundation (SMF) showed pay had lagged behind inflation by around 20 per cent since 2000.

She said this had left many members struggling to make ends meet and in some cases using food banks to help feed their families.

"The Police Federation has announced it is calling for a pay increase of at least 17 per cent for its members," she said.

"This figure takes into account both the cost of living crisis and the fact that police officers haven't had a proper pay rise since 2000.

"Police pay is not only lagging behind inflation but lagging behind the public sector more generally.

"What we ask is that this discrepancy is corrected, especially given the very real risk our members face every day simply by going to work."

The SMF research found other protective services workers had received an average real-terms rise of one per cent since 2000 while other public sector workers had received increases equalling 14 per cent. MPs' salaries went up by four per cent in real terms during the same period.

The report said the decline in police pay was likely to be linked to the restrictions on police officers' right to strike, which puts them at a distinct

disadvantage to all other workers including other emergency service workers.

A key factor in discussions of police pay is the "P-factor" which SMF has suggested should be a figure offered in addition to their findings.

The report references the P-factor as an element of police pay that reflects the unique obligations and responsibilities police officers experience relative to other comparable roles.

This includes their unique risk of exposure to physical and psychological harm, alongside the restrictions that are placed upon their private lives.

The P-factor payment does not feature in the report highlighting that the actual figure of degradation of police pay is significantly higher.

Police Federation national chair Steve Hartshorn said the SMF research should act as a "wake-up call for policy-makers in the UK".

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SPECIALS ARE AN 'AMAZING ASSET'

SPECIAL CONSTABLES ARE an “amazing asset” to policing and the key roles they play should be properly acknowledged, Police Federation Welsh affairs and Specials lead Nicky Ryan has said.

Speaking on TalkTV as part of the channel's Police Week, Nicky said she did not feel the value of Specials was always fully appreciated.

She said: “We need to acknowledge that day in, day out there are Special Constables up and down the country that are carrying out frontline duties, detective roles, fighting cybercrime, roads policing - they cover the whole range of duties.

“The skills that policing gets from them can't be quantified. They are an amazing asset. We have career Specials with 25 or 30 years' service

and they have so much knowledge and experience.”

Nicky said some people joined the Special Constabulary as a route into a career in policing while others chose to sign up because they wanted to serve their community.

She said several current chief constables and senior officers had begun their policing careers as Specials. “We have 7,401 Special Constables in England and Wales and last year they volunteered more than 2.5 million hours to policing which equates to just over £61.5 million,” Nicky explained.

“Special Constables can, and do, perform most of the same duties as their paid colleagues.

“They wear the same uniform, they have the same policing powers and they

are expected to perform to the same high standards - performance wise and ethics wise - as paid officers. The only difference is they are volunteers.”

Nicky said Specials were not paid but were reimbursed for any expenses and often volunteered through a strong sense of community and commitment.

“We have all sorts of people, airline pilots, young mums, students - we have a whole range of people from different backgrounds,” she said.

“People do it for a variety of different reasons and we get to utilise their skills and they learn new skills from policing.

“There are all sorts of areas of policing that are opening up to Specials because we now acknowledge the skills and depth of experience that they have.

“We have people from the banking sector, people from the cyber world with a range of skills that far surpasses what we have in policing.”

The Special Constabulary dates as far back as 1831 but Specials were only allowed to join the Police Federation last summer.

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THE DEVOLUTION OF POLICING TO WALES IS HIGH ON AGENDAS



By Mark Hinge, adviser to the Police Federation of England and Wales

IT IS A fact that all governments inevitably change. We are currently as far as politics/policy is concerned on the 'eve' of a General Election, and, as such, political parties are preparing their manifesto policies.

The Police Federation in Wales operates in a unique environment as it has two governments - of equal power - each in place with ministers and a free hand to create differing policies and primary legislation, including criminal law, quite separately.

With all of this as an initial backdrop, it is important to recognise that over 25 years of devolution many commissions have been set up to look at how devolution can be developed and enhanced; unprecedentedly we are on the fifth version of the Wales Act.

From 2004 to the present day the following commissions have been held: The Richard Commission, Silk Commission, All-Wales Convention and Thomas Commission. Each of these has reviewed policing and in its own extensive deliberations recommended policing should be a devolved function.

The Police Federation of England

and Wales (PFEW) gave written and oral evidence to both Silk and Thomas and indeed was publicly commended for submitting evidence.

We now have another commission jointly headed by Professor Laura McAllister and former Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams which, among vast constitutional issues, is looking at policing and has published an interim report.

However, parallel to this is a recently published report completed by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown. His report lays ahead how Labour, in power, will want to change constitutional matters and how the UK is governed. These are two vitally important reports, now converging, that are of huge significance to PFEW.

The Gordon Brown Report titled 'A New Britain' states: "In Wales, our proposals strengthen self-government for a new era, but we are mindful that the Welsh Government has set up an 'Independent Commission'[McAllister-Williams] to make recommendations on constitutional issues."

Bearing in mind policing was devolved to Scotland in 1999 and Northern Ireland in 2010, importantly it goes on to say: "There is no reason why matters that are devolved in Scotland, including new powers we propose, could not also be devolved in Wales."

It concludes: "Enhanced powers: new powers should be made available to the Senedd and Welsh Governments."

The Wales McAllister-Williams Commission (McW) in its interim report (the full report will be available by December 2023, just ahead of a General Election) states there are "significant problems with the way Wales is currently governed" within the Union.

The commission argues that the "status quo is not a viable option for providing stability and prosperity for Wales".

In the interim report they have been looking at the case for expanding devolved powers, including justice and policing. This option "could provide greater stability and require minimal change for the rest of the United Kingdom".

During the interim reporting of

Constitutional Commission they have studied the 563-page Thomas Commission (2019), and state: "In the next phase of our work, we will consider these areas in the round, from the perspective of strengthening Welsh democracy and the implications for the Union. Of the review, the most comprehensive evidence has been that of the Thomas Commission which unanimously concluded that the present system is detrimental to justice for the people of Wales. The UK Government has not provided a substantive response to this evidence from those with extensive experience of operating the current system. Given the importance of the issues raised by the Thomas Commission and its expertise, this refusal by the UK Government to engage is hard to understand. We will continue our efforts to hear from witnesses who support current arrangements, so that we are able to consider a balanced body of evidence."

Together we see one report published, and another re-looking at policing, both are a significant progression of devolution and, in the event of a change of UK Government, the devolution of policing to Wales is high on agendas therefore, future implications for PFEW.

Mark is the founder and managing director of The Bay. He has previously operated in communications with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and also with the United Nations at British Embassies in Italy, USA, Middle East, Pakistan, Russia and Japan and also within the Ministry of Defence at Whitehall.

Originally from Cardigan, West Wales, Mark grew up in the south Wales valleys. He has operated within public affairs for more than 25 years and is a member of The Institute of Welsh Affairs.

Mark is re-learning the Welsh language and is a columnist in newspapers and magazines, as well as being a regular television and radio broadcast commentator.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: WELSH LEAD SHINES A LIGHT ON FEMALE OFFICERS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WITHIN POLICING



Welsh lead Nicky Ryan.

THIS DAY IS all about celebrating female officers, staff and volunteers, says Welsh lead Nicky Ryan, as she

marked International Women's Day on 8 March.

As part of this year's annual campaign, Nicky reflected on her career, as she discussed the changes over the years for women in policing along with the challenges female officers still experience.

As the Federation Specials lead, Nicky took the opportunity to shine a light on female Specials, as she encouraged other women who want to have a taste of policing to become a volunteer.

"I want to shout about all of the fantastic women we have working and volunteering within policing," said Nicky, who says that policing has come a long way since she joined Gwent Police in 1996, but there is still a long way to go for female officers.

[Read more about Nicky's story.](#)

TIFF SHARES DETAILS OF CANCER DIAGNOSIS



National Federation deputy chair Tiff Lynch.

ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S Day, Tiff Lynch, the first female deputy chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, shared her inspiring story.

Tiff Lynch joined Leicestershire Police as an 18-year-old at a time when the Force didn't usually admit anyone under 21.

It was clear from that day back in 1995 that she would have an exciting career ahead of her.

But Tiff's biggest challenge came after she was flicking through Twitter one night and found a tweet from Sky Sports News presenter Jacquie Baltrao encouraging women to self-check for cancerous lumps. Tiff immediately found two of them and began a battle which put her career firmly on the backburner.

[Hear Tiff's story.](#)

'THERE ARE ONLY SO MANY EFFICIENCIES YOU CAN MAKE'

The Chief Constable of Dyfed Powys Police explained his rationale for calling for the four Welsh forces to be merged into one force for Wales when he was the special guest at the latest meeting of the Federation's Welsh affairs committee.

During a meeting chaired by the Welsh lead, Nicky Ryan, Dr Richard Lewis set out the 'sound operational benefits' of forming a single national force for Wales and stressed that these were very much his own personal views.

The four forces, he explained, had been tasked with saving millions from April this year.

"But there are only so many efficiencies you can make," the Chief Constable told members of the Welsh Affairs Business Area group, saying that with a number of well-established collaborations already bringing savings, the 'next natural step' would be

amalgamation of the four forces.

It was, he said, a 'no brainer', citing the success – after a few initial problems – of Police Scotland which could be used as a model.

"I think I should be the last Chief Constable of Dyfed Powys Police, but not the first Chief Constable of Heddlu Cymru," said Dr Lewis, who believes the forces could be merged as early as 2030.

If police and justice was devolved to the Welsh Government, forming one single force would mean that policing was ready for this reform, he explained, adding that devolution was a political matter for others to comment upon.

After his input to the meeting last week, the Chief took questions from members of the group.

The meeting also included updates from the Welsh lead in terms of her activities in recent months, engagement

with the politicians, liaison with local media outlets and progress with the Federation's Welsh language policy.

Belinda Goodwin, the Federation's national wellbeing lead, talked about progress with the Police Covenant, setting out four areas where work was needed: financial support, including possible funding for police rehabilitation facilities such as the Police Treatment Centres, demand, collation of trauma and the Wounded Blue Line initiative which offers support for injured officers.

Steve Taylor from the Federation's Parliamentary Working Group gave an overview of interactions with MPs and Members of the Senedd and invited chairs and secretaries of the four Welsh Police Federation branches to attend the group's meetings to find out more about making contact with politicians.

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

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