

federation



West Midlands Police Federation

April/May 2020

Policing through a crisis

– see Pages 4 and 5



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Welcome

Welcome to the April/May 2020 edition of *federation* - the magazine for members of West Midlands Police Federation.

We are always on the look-out for good news stories so please get in touch if you have something to share with colleagues. It does not have to relate to your policing role – though we are definitely interested in hearing about what's going on around the Force. Do you have an interesting hobby or perhaps you are involved in sport locally, as a player, a manager, a coach?

Just get in touch and let us know.

We would also be interested to hear what you would like to see featured in your magazine.

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'Officers are in the front-line but they are not super human'



By **Jon Nott**, chair of West Midlands Police Federation

We have often talked about the challenges police officers face in their daily duties.

And we are aware that years of cuts to our budgets have put the whole of policing under added pressure.

However, as a nation, we are now facing an unprecedented crisis on a scale that I don't think any of us could have envisaged even a few weeks ago.

Boris Johnson's speech to the nation on Monday 23 March will go down in history as one of the most momentous announcements by a British Prime Minister, certainly in peace time.

In an attempt to at least slow down the spread of coronavirus, the PM pretty much

put the country on 'lockdown' – though he did avoid using that actual word. Everyone was urged to stay at home for a period of at least three weeks other than for very limited purposes: shopping for basic necessities; one form of exercise a day; a medical need, or providing care to help to a vulnerable person; and travelling to and from work where this cannot be done from home.

All non-essential shops and community spaces were closed and all gatherings of more than two people in public were banned.

I appreciate there were initially some grey areas within the guidance. For example, the following day even Government ministers were unclear about what arrangements could be made for children with separated parents. Were they to stay

put with the parent they were with or could they move between homes? One said one thing, another said the opposite. This has now been cleared up, I believe.

However, there were some areas where there was absolutely no ambiguity whatsoever. Take for instance, the ruling that there should be no more gatherings of more than two people in public.

Yet, just a day after Mr Johnson's historic speech, officers working in Coventry found themselves giving advice to a group of more than 20 people who seemed to think that the rules didn't apply to them. They were enjoying a barbecue together. What part of the advice did they not get?

Police officers are going to be in the front-line, trying to enforce the rules that have been put in place to try to protect the

“Police officers are going to be in the front-line, trying to enforce the rules that have been put in place to try to protect the nation. They need the support of the public. We hope, as time goes on, they will heed the advice to stay at home, but I am sure there are still going to be occasions when police officers have to step in to ensure that everyone does their bit to help us through this crisis.”

nation. They need the support of the public. We hope, as time goes on, people will heed the advice to stay at home, but I am sure there are still going to be occasions when police officers have to step in to ensure that everyone does their bit to help us through this crisis.

Of course, police officers are not superhuman and they too will be affected by the coronavirus. We will have officers who have to self-isolate, we will have officers who will get unwell due to the virus and we will have officers whose family members become ill. We can expect to see our numbers depleted and that will make it even harder for us to match resource and demand.

But, as a backdrop to this, we will also see officers being put under huge mental and emotional pressure as they try to balance the needs of policing with the needs of their families. Officers working on the front-line know there is a risk they will come into contact with people who have the coronavirus and they will fear taking it back to their families, especially where they have family members with other health issues. I know many have grappled with the idea of continuing to send their children to school under the provisions for pupils whose parents are critical workers or attempting to keep them at home. Tough times lead to tough decisions.

There are also financial issues to consider. While police officers will not be made redundant or may not be losing their businesses unlike other workers right now, many will see their household incomes suddenly plummet as their partners stop bringing in their usual wage. At a time when we are already aware that police officers have been struggling to make ends meet, we appreciate there are some real financial difficulties on the way for many of our members.

As a Federation, we want to give an assurance that we will do all we can to support our members. We can put you in touch with organisations offering support from a mental wellbeing perspective and we can also link you in with a number of organisations that can offer help with managing your finances.

So, I would just like to end with one plea: if you are struggling, in any way at all, please get in touch with the Federation. Do not suffer in silence, do not think this will just go away. There is always a way through these difficulties and the Federation can help you find it.

Finally, I would just like to thank all members for their unstinting hard work to protect the communities they serve. Stay safe, and stay well.

Coronavirus – Federation updates

The Police Federation of England and Wales has set up a website page to bring together all the advice on the development of the coronavirus outbreak.

The page covers financial advice and tips for wellbeing as well as providing links to Government guidance and the latest NHS advice.

“Information and advice seems to be rapidly changing and it can be difficult to keep up to date so the Police Federation nationally has put together this page to bring everything together for members,” says Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation.

“As a branch, we have been attending all the Force’s Gold and Silver meetings to help co-ordinate the Force’s response to the crisis.

“We need to ensure consistency in terms of how the Government and Public Health England’s guidelines on self-

isolation and social distancing are implemented. The Chief Constable has supported us on this and appreciates we can’t afford any deviation from the expert advice being given.”

The national Federation chair, John Apter, has acknowledged the current ‘unprecedented and uncertain times’ and explained: “Keeping the public safe is the number one priority for police officers but policing is already under a huge strain from the everyday demands, in addition to dealing with this current crisis.

“While new laws might be necessary, we must have clear guidance for officers about how we deal with people who are affected with the virus. We must ensure that officers dealing with COVID-19 related incidents receive the protection and support they need.”

Keep up to date with developments on this website and also at the national Federation’s dedicated [COVID-19](#) page.

Office closed

The West Midlands Police Federation office at Guardians House was closed on 24 March in line with the Government’s latest announcement on efforts to control the spread of the coronavirus.

However, the office team will be working from home and taking all steps to ensure that members can access the help and support they might need during this crisis.

“It is essential that we follow the Government guidance at this time and ensure everyone who can work from home does so,” says Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation.

“I want to assure members that our team will be doing all they can to adopt a ‘business as usual’ approach despite these new working arrangements.

“Our primary focus remains on supporting members through what are incredibly challenging times. We appreciate our members are in the front-line of the nation’s response to this crisis and we remain steadfast in our commitment to representing and supporting them at all times.

“Throughout the current ‘lockdown’ and the enforced closure of our office, the Federation officials and workplace representatives will continue to engage with the Force at all levels to represent members and work on their behalf. Members should contact us via the office email address or via the contact details available through our ‘Meet the team’ or ‘Find my rep’ website pages.”

Federation staff working remotely will have access to all systems but the office telephone lines will not be operating.

Please contact the office team by email as follows:

westmidlandspf@polfed.org

Contact details for our officials can be found on the [Meet the team](#) page where there is also a link to the contact details for our workplace representatives on the [Find my rep page](#).

We will continue to post news updates at polfed.org/westmids and through our social media accounts. There is also a range of advice and information on a [dedicated coronavirus page](#) on the national Federation’s website.

Freddie shows his support for policing and especially his Uncle Ben!

Three-year-old Freddie Pollard showed his appreciation for the efforts of his uncle Ben and his West Midlands Force colleagues with this brilliant picture.

Freddie drew Ben in his patrol car with the message "Thank you West Midlands Police Force".

The picture was shared with the Force on social media by his mum Tiffany and has received more than 100 interactions on Facebook and Twitter.

Ben, who is currently on response at Stechford Police Station, said: "Ever since he was old enough to understand the concept of police, he has found it really cool and exciting.

"Seeing me in my uniform and talking about work with my family he has picked up on things about the job and asked for police toys like Lego police cars and policemen, which he always plays with.

"Whenever he sees a police car on a blue light run he always shouts 'it's uncle Ben', which is adorable.

"And with most of my family being involved in careers in the public service – my sister, Freddie's mum, is a district nurse; my eldest brother is a paramedic; my other brother is ex-forces, and my mother is a retired paediatric nurse for 25 years – it has always been something he has showed an interest in and spoken about.

"He has always liked drawing. I believe it was a joint effort between my sister wanting

to spread a positive message and Freddie just doing what he enjoys that created the nice gesture."

Ben, who has been with the Force for one-and-a-half years, added: "I feel very proud that I play a prominent role in Freddie's life and to know he is proud of what I do.

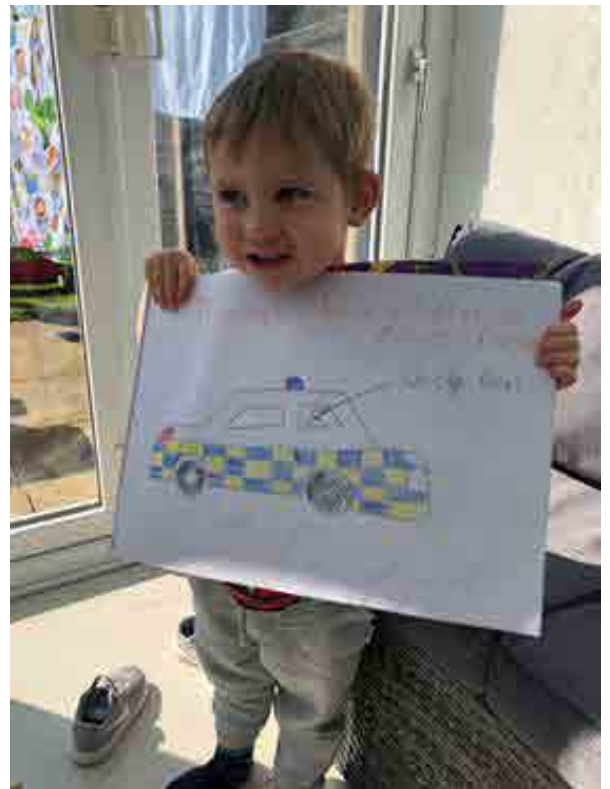
"He talks about my job all the time at nursery and the fact he finds enjoyment out of it too is nice to see. Knowing he loves it just as much as I do doing the job made me feel great.

"It was a great gift and message that won't be forgotten. I have always wanted to be a role model for my nephew and to know he looks up to me the way he does fills me with pride.

Ben is currently social distancing from Freddie during the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

And he encouraged everyone to follow the Government guidelines to help stop the spread of the virus.

Ben said: "At times like these when day-to-day life is becoming tougher and it's difficult to tell how long the tunnel will be before we reach the light at the end of it, community support makes a difference and



creating the right image and message for the next generation is only going to make the future brighter.

"He is always told by family the police are there to save the day helping to reinforce positive community engagement."

Ben added: "If I can stop myself from seeing his precious face every day while following the rules set by the Government and continue putting myself at risk along with all my colleagues trying to help day to day at work preventing the spread of COVID-19, then I'm sure everyone else can follow the guidelines."

“Whenever he sees a police car on a blue light run he always shouts 'it's uncle Ben', which is adorable.”

Look after yourself, look after your finances

We are all very good at looking after other people, but are we good at taking care of ourselves?

Last year, the findings of the Police Federation's pay and morale survey for respondents from West Midlands Police revealed:

- **75 per cent felt they were worse off financially than they were five years ago**
- **47 per cent worried about the state of their personal finances daily or almost daily**
- **13 per cent never or almost never had enough money to cover their essentials.**

While no one ever wants to get into debt, owing money is becoming a frightening reality for many people and, although police officers' own income may not be affected by the current coronavirus outbreak many of them will find their household incomes reduced as their partners' wages are cut or they are unable to work.

75 per cent of respondents in the Police Federation's pay and morale survey felt they were worse off financially than they were five years ago

Despite the reality, not many people seek help if they are struggling financially.

Sometimes it can be easier to pretend everything is OK and avoid opening up about debt problems to escape tough questions. This is not because we want to cause harm, but because we want to protect those close to us from our problems or we are concerned about being judged.

However, this does not solve the issue, it only makes it worse.

Don't suffer in silence with serious money problems, if you're trapped in a spiral of overdrawn credit cards, unpaid rent or mortgage, bills and more – there are ways to deal with it.

Debt can be crippling, especially when the bills just won't stop coming. in. Getting a handle on your outgoings is the best way to try to get your finances back on track.

If you have been living on very little money for a long time, it can be very hard to save; you may even find it impossible to borrow at a reasonable cost.

All of these things can act as a trigger to cause your financial wellbeing to suffer. When this happens, you may find that your health will also be impacted. Sleepless nights, stress, weight loss or gain and depression are all common effects of living with problem debt.

How to get out of debt

- **First know where you stand – get all your statements together, mortgage, credit cards, loans, store cards and bank overdraft details**
- **How much do you owe on each?**
- **What are the monthly repayments?**
- **List all regular outgoings – gas, electricity, water, council tax, insurances and so on**
- **Add up all your outgoings and the total amount owed in debts**
- **Do a budget, how much do you have coming in and what's going out?**

Free debt advice is available and will help support you in getting back on track before your money worries become a bigger issue. You are not alone, help is available.

A debt adviser will find ways to manage your debts, even if you think you have no spare money, they can suggest ways to deal with your debts.

Most people who take the step to get debt advice feel less stressed or anxious and in more control of their life again. They often wish they had sought advice earlier.

There is support to help you find a sustainable solution to your debt problem. You are not alone help is available.

Debt advice companies include:

Payplan - 0800 280 2816

Stepchange - 0800 138 1111.

You can also contact the Federation by emailing westmidlandspf@polfed.org the **WMP Benevolent Fund** may also be able to help – email info@wmpben.co.uk

DHEP recruit: 'Being a police officer has a clear sense of purpose'

Unlike many new policing recruits, Pete Bock had enjoyed more than just a taste of civvy street before being accepted into West Midlands Police.

The 26-year-old had worked in both retail and journalism and then settled as an English language teacher, only to decide that a career which served the public in a rather different way was where his future lay.

His most recent role was teaching academic skills at York University and providing supply teaching around York before he pursued an entry into the force through the Degree-Holder Entry Programme (DHEP).

It's a way in for anyone with a degree in any subject and provides a work-based programme supported by off-the-job learning.

The DHEP route normally takes two years to complete and the learning undertaken while doing the course is recognised as a graduate diploma in professional policing practice at the end of a probation period.

As a new recruit from a non-policing family less than a month into the job (he started on 5 March), we will be following Pete's progress along the way.

Originating from York but with a degree from the University of Cambridge in Human Social and Political Science, Pete has already enjoyed feeling part of a family at West Midlands Police along with the 28 others in his cohort.

So, what was it that convinced a man who always wanted to be in the Army growing up, to change course and go through what he calls a 'nine-month job application' to become a police officer instead?

"When it came down to it, policing felt like a better fit for me," said Pete. "I always want there to be that 999 response for my friends and family in case of emergency and, because of this, being a police officer has a really clear sense of purpose for me.

"I also think that, while no police force is perfect, in the UK we get a lot right in policing and the fact we remain a largely unarmed service shows a very positive attitude to how we carry out our public service. Firearms are used only when they are absolutely necessary.



Pete Bock.

"I knew I wanted to work in the West Midlands. I did not really think too much about the course I was on, the important bit to me was to be trained by West Midlands Police. Then I began to learn more about the DHEP option at the pre-enrolment evening.

"The application process was long and I hope I never have to do a nine-month job application ever again.

"The vetting process took about four months first of all and I began to enjoy it once we started doing the role plays. The most challenging part of the process was waiting to find out if I had an offer. It puts you in a work limbo where you can't take any other job offers that might be available because you know there is a chance you will get to be a police officer.

"In the end, it worked out for the best and the small pay cut I had to take from my previous job was negated by the job security and future pension benefits."

Pete is currently in only his first month on the job and, as well as having to adapt to the changes of a brand new career, he is also facing the challenges of tackling the threat posed by COVID-19 on a personal basis, before moving on to take on whatever threat the Coronavirus proves to national security.

"I am writing this on Day 1 of needing to self-isolate for 14 days after having some flu symptoms," said Pete. "Luckily, it's during the distance learning part of the programme but, in the current climate, even mild illnesses might lead me to being advised to stay at home rather than go in to work and

nobody will thank me if I make a whole team ill.

"I think the coronavirus is causing some challenges. Even being sworn in might have to change. Instead of it being a big group event, we may have to enter a room one at a time (although this has yet to be confirmed) so it makes it an unusual time to be training to be a police officer.

"I was supposed to be starting the DHEP programme on 20 February but there were only four of us available for that start date, so we joined the next cohort.

"In that time between 20 February and 5 March when I eventually started, our sergeant organised shadowing days for us which were great. We visited the dog training unit, went to Cosford to see public order training and Taser training, visited Perry Barr custody, LOCATE and Force Control and got to sit in on pursuit training as well.

"We could have been sat on computers for those two weeks, so thank you Sergeant Killeen for organising it all."

It is early days for Pete and his fellow recruits as they work towards getting independent patrol status before moving onto other parts of the course. But he says there is already a strong sense of camaraderie between the group and he also has an open mind as to where this job may eventually take him.

"Meeting the other new recruits has been great. The police family thing happens very quickly," he said. "I am looking forward to PST and being on response and the response element is my main interest at the minute.

"My ambition at the moment is to get my independent patrol status and I am keen not to get too far ahead of myself.

"I am sure the experiences I have over the next two years will give me an idea of the role that would suit me best. At the moment I am interested in response and policing work that is on the front-line. I would also like to learn more about firearms.

"The tutors have been very helpful, the cohort is great, and we have already been made to feel part of the West Midlands Police family, so it was worth that nine-month wait."

For more information on the DHEP, visit the join the police section of the College of Policing website – college.police.uk

'Officers need five per cent pay rise'

Police officers should receive a five per cent pay rise in September this year, according to the Police Federation. The uplift is one of 20 recommendations being made to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) in a joint submission by the Police Federation of England and Wales and the Superintendents' Association.

"Police officers' wages have not kept pace with the cost of living and in real terms we have actually seen their pay fall in recent years. Last year's pay and morale survey revealed that almost half of our members here in the West Midlands worried about their state of their finances either daily or almost every day," says Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation.

"Four out of five members said they were dissatisfied with their overall remuneration - including basic pay and allowances - and three quarters also felt they were worse off financially than they were five years ago with more than one in 10 admitting they never or almost never had enough money to cover essentials.

"This has to be addressed. Police officers have a unique role in society, putting themselves in harm's way to protect their communities and sometimes paying the ultimate price. Their pay should reflect the stresses and strains of their job. The Government

has launched the biggest recruitment drive in more than a decade so we need officers to be paid a wage that helps attract high calibre individuals to the police service and also helps retain the experienced officers we have already."

Other recommendations in the submission to the independent pay review body include:

- **The introduction of a minimum starting salary £24,177**
- **The removal of the lowest two pay points for constables to help recruitment**
- **The shortening of the constables' and sergeants' pay scales so officers reach the top faster**
- **The introduction of new top pay scale points for all ranks, to incentivise retention**
- **The recommendations form part of a 143-page report submitted to PRRB and compiled by the Federation's research and policy support department.**

A series of oral evidence sessions will now take place and the PRRB is expected to make its final recommendation to the Government in July, with any pay award being effective from 1 September 2020.

[Read the full recommendations.](#)

250 more officers to get Taser

The Force is being given a cash injection of £206,250 so that it can equip a further 250 officers with Taser.

All but two forces across England and Wales had bid for a share of the £10 million the Government set aside for the uplift late last year and West Midlands Police received the seventh highest allocation nationwide.

"Taser is an essential piece of equipment for today's police officers. Our officers are increasingly subject to violence while serving their communities and it is only fair that they are access to the equipment they need to help not just protect themselves but also the public,"

says Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation.

"As a Federation, we have been calling for all officers who want to have access to Taser to be trained and equipped with the devices. We appreciate it has been difficult for the Force, which has had to manage competing demands for reduced resources during years of police funding cuts, to find the money for any uplift but we are pleased the Police and Crime Commissioner successfully bid for a substantial share of this ring-fenced fund."

In a Police Federation of England and Wales survey on routine arming in 2017, only 42 per cent of West Midlands officers

who responded said all officers should be trained and armed at all times when on duty. But 82 per cent said they wanted to have access to Taser at all times while on duty, when at the time only 15 per cent of respondents, for whom it was applicable to their role, actually had that access.

Latest figures show that while the Force currently has 6,556 officers with 1,400 Taser trained.

In bidding for a share of the £10 million budgeted by the Government, Police and Crime Commissioners across England and Wales sought a total of 7,923 Tasers at a cost of £6.5m. The new money is intended to cover until March 2021.

New conduct regs aim to promote learning and development

New conduct and performance regulations aimed at changing the blame and punishment culture to one of learning and development came into effect on 1 February.

The new regulations provide officers with the chance to undertake reflective practice with their line manager if their performance requires improvement, by discussing how the issue can be avoided in the future, accepting what happened and then moving forward - instead of facing punitive action for minor issues.

There is also a higher threshold for disciplinary action, meaning conduct proceedings will be only be triggered if the wrongdoing warrants at least a written warning, while low-level outcomes have been removed.

The harsher outcomes are balanced by the fact that more officers will be diverted away from the misconduct arena and only serious matters will be escalated.

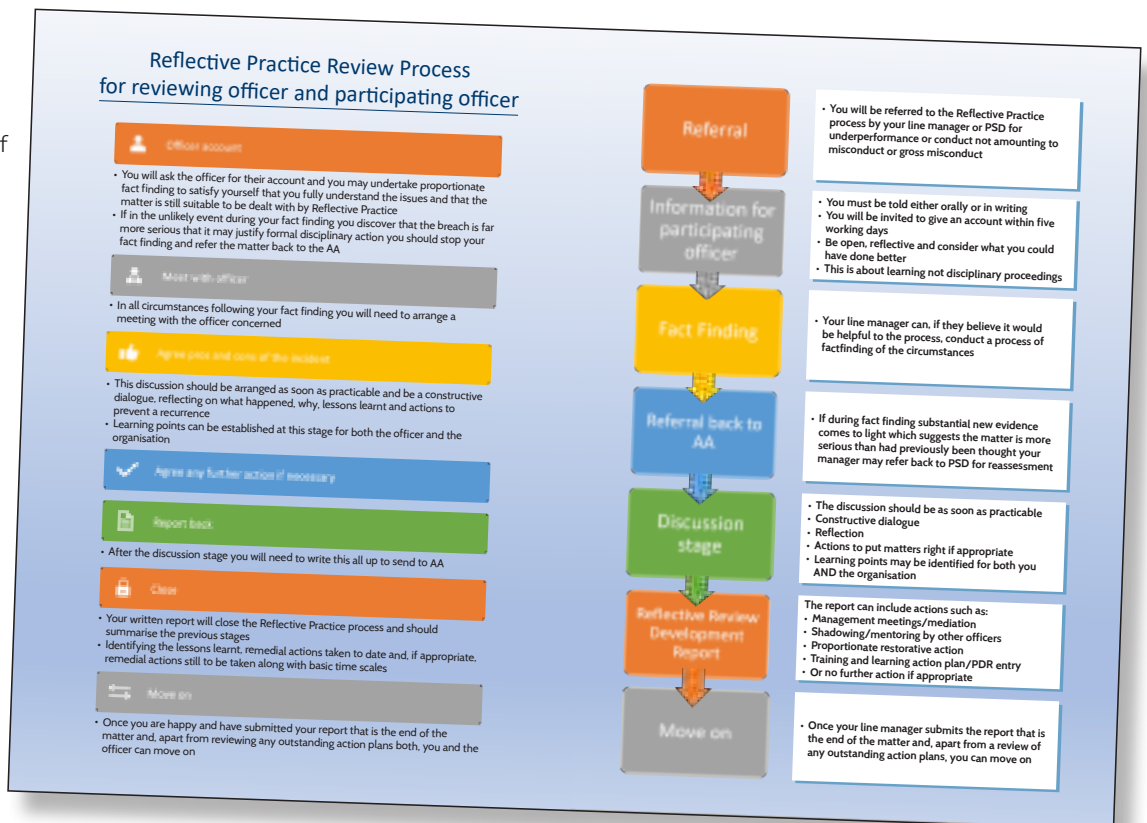
Phill Matthews, the Federation's national conduct and performance lead, said: "The Federation has spent many years lobbying for a culture change in police discipline - away from blame and punishment and towards learning and performance.

"There needs to be a shift in mindset whereby forces are alive to the fact that mistakes, errors or poor working practice can be corrected and learned from - not just by the individual but by the whole service - and learnt from quickly. But culture change does not happen overnight and we will need everyone's backing for this to work."

Disciplinary action outcomes under the new regulations starting with the least severe

Misconduct meeting

- A written warning - 18 months
- Final written warning - two years.



Misconduct hearing

- Final written warning two to five years
- Reduction in rank in exceptional circumstances where the rank was an issue
- Dismissal.

The new regulations also bring in other changes including opportunities for early review of allegations. This means that if at any time before a meeting or hearing it appears the allegation no longer meets the high threshold test for disciplinary proceedings the matter can be reassessed and discontinued or moved into the Reflective Practice Review Process

They also set time limits. If an investigation is not completed in 12 months a report detailing why must be sent to the police and crime commissioner from the appropriate authority, and every six months after that detailing why there has been a delay and what is still required. Phill has particularly welcomed this development.

He explained: "We are massively encouraged the Home Office has

acknowledged investigations should normally be dealt with within a 12-month period which is something we will continue to push for through our Time Limits campaign.

"Protracted, disproportionate investigations are hellish for officers and have ruined both the working and home lives of some due to the enormous amount of stress and anguish they are put through.

"But there is still more work to be done and we will continue to work with the Home Office, chiefs, HMICFRS and the Independent Office for Police Conduct to monitor how it's being implemented across forces, so our members are treated more fairly in the future."

All Federation conduct and performance liaison officers have been fully briefed and trained in the new regulations. Members with any concerns should contact the Federation office.

[Home Office Guidance](#) on how they should be interpreted has now been published.

IOPC in pledge to work with the Federation on timeliness of conduct cases

A pledge by the police watchdog to work closer with the Federation to improve the timeliness of investigations has been welcomed by West Midlands Police Federation's conduct lead, George McDonnell.

The pledge is included in a new report by Michael Lockwood, the director general of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) on its efficiency, effectiveness and profile.

George said the director general's comments were encouraging but the Federation would still continue with its Time Limits campaign which aims to bring in a 12-month time limit on investigations.

"We will, of course, work with Mr Lockwood and his team at the IOPC to maintain and build on our relationship so that we can ensure the best outcomes for Federation members," says George.

"It is not in the interests of anyone - including the public, the police service, the Force or individual officers - for conduct cases to drag on and on as we have seen in recent years. These long-drawn-out investigations can have a huge impact on the officers involved and their families.

"I am pleased Mr Lockwood has acknowledged some of the IOPC's investigations have taken too long and that he's looking to address it. It would certainly be a major step forward for the watchdog to put some emphasis on training investigators, particularly around disclosure, and for all outstanding IPCC legacy cases, and other investigations that have been going on for a considerable time, to be reviewed as soon as possible."

“It is not in the interests of anyone - including the public, the police service, the Force or individual officers – for conduct cases to drag on and on as we have seen in recent years.”



West Midlands Police Federation conduct lead George McDonnell.

George added: "We also feel frustrated at the apparent lack of co-operation between the IOPC and our Appropriate Authority around the decision-making for officers being taken to hearings. There are too many cases where our Appropriate Authority does not support the IOPC's decisions on these and this is another area that needs addressing."

Mr Lockwood's report was responding to a letter from Home Secretary Priti Patel asking for a comprehensive plan for delivering improvements in the timeliness and quality of IOPC investigations as well as better scrutiny around any decision-making.

Proposed actions included in the report include:

- **A new streamlined investigation process for lower-risk cases, which has helped to reduce the average time it takes to complete investigations.**
- **Engaging extensively with the Federation and other staff associations to develop a respectful relationship and greater co-operation to action any concerns.**
- **A multi-disciplinary Critical Case Panel, chaired by the director general, which now oversees particularly complex or high-risk cases to ensure cross-organisational support and assurance that work is properly resourced.**
- **New opportunities for users to feedback and challenge the IOPC's work, including the introduction of restorative practice debriefs, which will allow users to discuss any concerns directly with IOPC staff.**
- **An External Stakeholder Reference Group, consisting of a range of statutory and non-statutory external stakeholders, to challenge and influence work.**

Ms Patel, who has requested a further update from Mr Lockwood in May, said: "The vast majority of police perform their duties with the utmost professionalism – and I have been clear they have my full support.

"The progress made by the IOPC on the effectiveness and timeliness of investigations is positive for both officers and the public, but clearly further improvement is required, and I will continue to scrutinise the IOPC's performance."

Mr Lockwood said: "This report highlights the significant progress the IOPC is making in our work as we continue to strengthen our impact and make a real difference to policing, operationally, organisationally and culturally.

"Our plans are ambitious, and we are determined to bring about continued further improvements in our own work and across broader policing practice."

Rock 'n' Roll Marathon postponed for #WMPMND team

The Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon has been postponed until the weekend of 24 to 25 October 2020 as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

The co-ordinators of the #WMPMND marathon team said it was the news they were expecting but they welcomed the fact it had been postponed rather than cancelled completely.

"As the coronavirus crisis has unfolded, we had all been waiting for an announcement from the organisers and, of course, we knew it was highly unlikely that the event would go ahead in May," says Sergeant Trudy Gittins, who set up the #WMPMND team to fund-raise in support of ACC Chris Johnson after he was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease.

"Of course, we are disappointed because so many people had got behind the team and those taking part have put in months of training but we have to put their health and that of the wider public first."

The marathon organisers are acting on directions and recommendations in relation to the coronavirus outbreak from the Government and Liverpool City Council.

"In what has been a continually evolving and challenging time globally, we recognise that the postponement due to the above-mentioned, unforeseen events may come as a disappointment. While we are prevented from holding the event during the original May event date, we are, however, pleased to confirm a new race date later this year," said a statement issued on Friday 20 March.

All registered athletes of the 2020 Rock 'n' Roll Liverpool Marathon and Half Marathon will have their race registration moved to the new 2020 race date.

Any registered runners who cannot attend on the weekend of 24 - 25 October 2020 are being given the option to defer their entry to the 2021 Rock 'n' Roll Liverpool Marathon and Half Marathon.

More than 350 runners – including police officers and staff from across England



Paula Radcliffe with Harry, Chris and Sharon Johnson.

and Wales - had got behind Trudy to sign up for the marathon to raise money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association and the Primrose Hospice in Bromsgrove.

"We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received," says ACC Johnson's wife, Sharon, who had signed up for the half marathon, "It has been uplifting to find so many people training for the various Liverpool Marathon events to not

just raise money but also raise awareness of Motor Neurone Disease.

"I hope the event is able to safely go ahead in Liverpool in October but in the meantime just seeing people's efforts to keep training is inspiring. Before the lockdown I have been running with friends but observing social distancing rules and we have tried some online training with varying degrees of success too."

Charity song has now been released

A West Midlands Police detective inspector has swapped his warrant card for a bass guitar to release a charity single inspired by Assistant Chief Constable Chris Johnson's approach to his Motor Neurone Disease (MND) diagnosis.

Chris Jones, who works in public protection, had initially signed up along with colleagues from the Force and across England and Wales to do the Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon to raise money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) and Primrose Hospice which is supporting Mr Johnson and his family.

But when injury forced him to pull out, he set about thinking how else he could raise money.

He said: "I was the first to sign up to the Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon but also the first to pull out due to a bad knee and ankle injury requiring an operation.

"I'm no good at baking cakes and was thinking of other ways to try to support this fantastic charity initiative. I've been in a band for around 20 years and did a charity song 10 years ago which went down well and raised a good amount of funds.

"In recent years the band members have all been occupied with families, children and our careers, so we have taken a step back with playing music. We have barely played together for four years but we all agreed to dust off our equipment and get back in the studio to write and record a one-off charity song. That has now turned into two but hopefully that will just further boost the money we can raise for MNDA and the Primrose Hospice."

The track 'On The Run' was recorded at Rockfield Studios, Wales where Bohemian Rhapsody was recorded and is being accompanied by an acoustic version, featuring the band members but with Steve

Gittins on lead vocals.

"Steve is the husband of Sergeant Trudy Gittins, the West Midlands Police Federation workplace representative who set up the #WMPND team of runners due to take part in the Rock 'n' Roll marathon events, and it came out in a roundabout way that he could actually sing so we decided to record a second version of our song with him as lead singer," says Chris.

The regular band consists of bass guitarist Chris, drummer Karl Palmer, who works in the banking industry, singer Matt Allen, who works for Tarmac UK, and guitarist Simon Lane, a specialist whisky retailer.

Chris has spent a number of months generating donations from a range of companies and individuals to enable a free prize draw to be linked to his campaign and encourage donations. Anyone who donates to the charity song page will automatically be entered into the draw.

There are a wide range of prizes on offer! In no particular order, they include sports vouchers, Brooks Sports trainers, signed items from Paula Radcliffe, Jessica Ennis Hill and Dame Kelly Holmes, a Land Rover driving experience, laser tag sessions, simulated driving sessions, archery, go-karting, clay pigeon shooting, tickets to the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and a Pro Pulse Roller worth over £100.

There are also a number of holiday prizes – accommodation only - a week in Orlando, Florida and short

breaks in Greece, Malta, Padstow, Scotland and the Yorkshire Dales. At the time of writing, he has more than 35 donated items. The draw will be held in November.

With Chris still unable to run due to his ongoing knee injury, he is planning to be on hand at a charity stand during the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon event and hopes to further boost funds for the charities.

The two songs, which have been sponsored by West Midlands Police Federation and Police Discount Offers, were released at <https://www.facebook.com/charitysongformnd/> on 24 March. Donations can also be made via Virgin Money Giving and there is a link on the Facebook page.

The cover for the single has been designed by Pete Smith, a well-known illustrator.



DI Chris Jones with Paula Radcliffe sporting her #WMPND t-shirt.



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Two officers in line for Police Bravery Award

An officer who feared for his life after he pursued a suspect into a dark, water-filled storm drain, and the PC who came to his rescue, have both been nominated for a national Police Bravery Award.

PC Paul Newman feared his eyes would be gouged out and then thought he would be drowned when he was attacked by a man who had fled a car when officers discovered a loaded handgun.

PC Holly Necchi heard her colleague's cries for help and it was thanks to her that PC Newman survived the attack.

The pair have now been nominated for the national Police Bravery Awards, which are held in London and honour some of the finest officers in England and Wales for performing incredible acts of bravery, while on or off duty.

The incident unfolded on 17 July 2019 at about 11.30am when officers were on an operation on Bescot Retail Park, Walsall. A VW Golf was brought onto the site and PC Necchi spoke to the driver – Calvert Batchelor.

While checking him on the PNC, it was established he had warning markers for possession of a firearm and intelligence linked him to gangs and drug dealing.

PC Necchi got Batchelor, who had started to appear very agitated, out of the car and began a stop and search. Other officers searched the car and, as an officer approached the driver's door, Batchelor ran away.

PC Necchi gave chase into a brook that ran alongside the area where the car had been stopped. Realising he was surrounded, Batchelor turned and ran into the storm drain. At this point, he had been spotted by PC Newman who was a passenger in an unmarked police car involved in the operation and had been alerted to the fact that Batchelor had fled after being stopped for checks.

The tunnel of the drain was about 10ft wide and 6ft high and it was only when it came to an end after about 25 metres that PC Newman was able to reach Batchelor.

But, at that point, the drain was shallow and both PC Newman and Batchelor were so



Brave officers PC Paul Newman and PC Holly Necchi.

confined that they were crawling on their hands and knees.

Batchelor grabbed a branch which was about one metre long and 8cm thick and attempted to swing it at the brave PC but he was unable to do so due to the limited space.

By now, PC Newman had realised the danger he was in on his own, with a man who was becoming more aggressive. They were in relatively deep water, mud, silt, rubbish and debris.

Batchelor launched himself at PC Newman, grabbed him with one arm around the back of his head and with the other gouged at his eyes. PC Newman remembers the intense pressure as his attacker's fingers dug into his eye sockets and felt he was trying to 'wrench' out his eyeballs.

He recalls everything going intensely, brilliant white, rather than the blackness he expected, and also the indescribable pain.

When Batchelor suddenly let go, he grabbed PC Newman by the jaw, reaching under his tongue to use his middle finger to

punch a hole through the floor of his mouth, just below his lower front teeth.

PC Newman's instinctive reaction was to bite his assailant but he then found himself being dragged backwards by the jaw, held under water for about 30 seconds at which point he felt exhausted and feared he was about to die.

Somehow he got hold of his torch and hit Batchelor causing him to fall back onto the mud and then fell on top of him.

Luckily, but unbeknown to him, he had been followed into the tunnel by PC Necchi who had heard the panicked shouting from her colleague. She helped PC Newman restrain and detain the offender.

PC Newman feels PC Necchi saved his life as he was physically spent and unable to do anything else to subdue Batchelor.

A firearm was discovered in the driver's door of the car that Batchelor had run from.

At court, Batchelor admitted possessing an illegal firearm and ammunition, plus wounding, and was jailed for nine years and four months.

Federation publishes annual public value report

We have now published our annual public value report covering our work in 2019.

The report gives an overview of the work our officials, workplace representatives and staff carry out on behalf of our members.

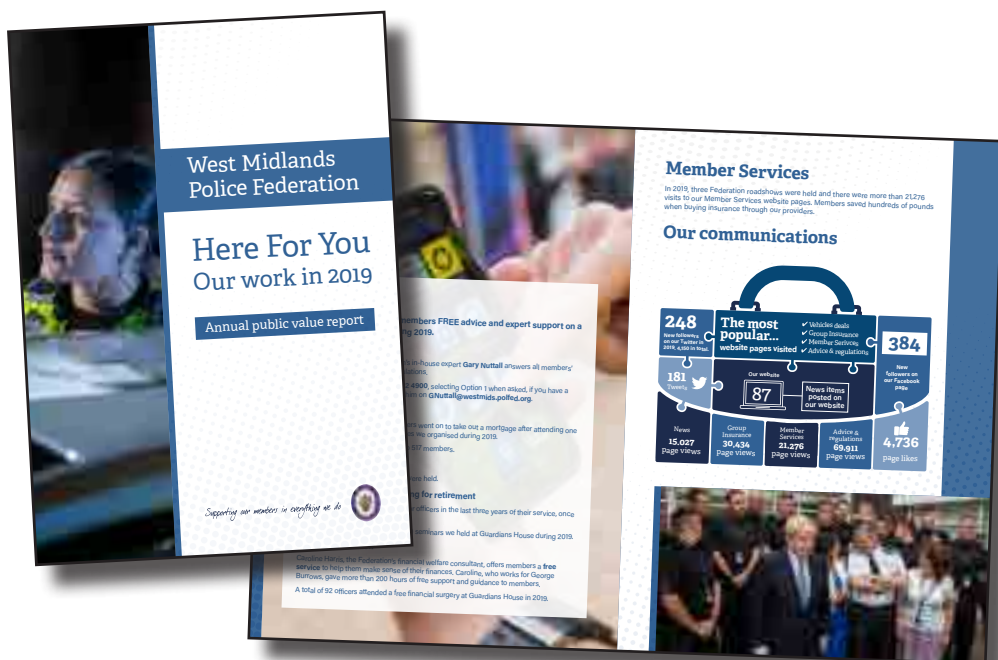
It also sums up the activities of our branch's three key committees - Conduct and Performance Liaison Officers (CaPLO), Personnel and Equalities, and Health and Safety.

There is also an introduction from the chair, Jon Nott, and a summary from branch secretary Steve Grange.

Other sections include:

- Representation
- Professional development
- The legal scheme
- Advice
- The Group Insurance Scheme
- Member services
- Donations and sponsorship.

[Read Here For You: our work in 2019.](#)



Regulations reminder: short notice change to duties

All officers should receive at least three months' notice to any changes in duties – unless the Force deems it to be due to exigencies of duty.

Before duties are published, the chief officer has to fully consult with the Police Federation at least once a year and all duty rosters have to be published no later than one month before the date it starts.

Each roster will set out for at least three months the following:

- Officer rest days
- Public holidays on which they may be required to work
- The time at which their scheduled daily period of duty begins and ends
- Free days for part-time members of staff
- Intervals of at least 11 hours between the end of one shift and the beginning of the next
- An interval between rostered rest days not exceeding seven days.

The only time these regulations can be waived from is due to the officer's

own request, a previous agreement with the Federation or through exigencies of duty.

The term exigencies of duty should be interpreted as relating to situations where a pressing demand, need or requirement is perceived that is not reasonably avoidable and necessitates a change of roster. In this context, the word 'pressing' relates to the expected situation at the time when the duty is to be performed rather than the time when the duty roster is changed, ie the reasons for a change may be known many months in advance but still be pressing.

Changes to rosters should only be made after full consideration of welfare, operational and practical circumstances rather than purely on financial grounds. Because rosters are produced annually a number of unforeseen reasons for changes may subsequently arise.

It is clearly not possible to produce an exhaustive list of all of the potential reasons, which may necessitate changes. However, by way of example, unforeseen

public order situations, court attendance and essential training would justify changes to rostered duties.

An officer should be told as soon as the requirement for the change is known and at the latest by midnight on the calendar day before the changed period of duty commences.

Find the answers to more [Frequently Asked Questions.](#)



'The Force has to listen and make changes'

Deano Walker first became a Federation rep having felt he'd been fobbed off when he turned to his own rep for help.



That was back in 2013, and now, until July, he is in a full-time West Midlands Police Federation role as secretary of its health and safety committee.

It is an area he has fallen in to, but one which he believes can really make a difference.

He explains: "I was happy as a local rep but was convinced to join the health and safety committee by the then secretary. I sat back doing what I could but then due to retirements I was asked to be deputy secretary but, within weeks of that more reps left and I fell as the secretary and the only person on the committee.

"I wasn't attracted to health and safety in any way but I soon realised what a difference you can make.

"The biggest challenge is getting the Force to listen and make changes," he continues.

"Unfortunately, in health and safety you can point out an issue to your employer but if they choose to do nothing then the challenge just sits there. The challenge means something to us when it goes all wrong and we can say 'we told you so'.

"What concerns me is that this may come at a cost to an officer being seriously injured or even worse. Evidence is key to all we do on the committee and without it we are unable to challenge the Force. We know officers are out there not getting refs, we know there are officers out there not getting toilet breaks when sat on crime scenes for hours - and more - but we need the near misses which is evidence. We cannot go to the Force and say 'this is an issue, you're breaking health and safety law' because they just throw it back and say 'where's your evidence?'"

He said he will keep challenging the Force and point out to officers what they are legally entitled to under health and safety legislation.

Since taking on the health and safety role, Deano has completed the national

health and safety course provided by the Federation and is in the process of completing an NVQ 5.

Deano's reasons for running for a Fed rep back in 2013 were simple.

"I was offside for a while and when I returned I asked my local Fed rep to look into something and he insisted that he would sort my issue out," he explains.

"Over two years of asking for progress updates only to be told 'I'm on it' I got fed up and gave up. However, when the triennial elections came up for that rep's election, I went against him and won.

"I just wanted to do what a rep claims they will, I always said I would make no promises and tell no lies. As a Fed rep you have to be upfront with the members or you just get their hopes up only to dash them.

"Sometimes you can put a smile on someone's face and they walk away satisfied that you helped them. That gives me satisfaction."

Looking ahead, Deano said he sees the biggest challenge for the Federation being ensuring members are treated fairly at all times.

He said: "It can sometimes be difficult to manage officer expectations too and we also have to be mindful of the need to balance the individual's needs with the Force's operational priorities.

"But we are here to represent members, negotiate on their behalf and influence decision-makers with a firm focus on ensuring fair treatment for officers. The austerity years have taken their toll on members, who have been put under huge pressure, but there has also been an impact on the Force's buildings and equipment so,

with my health and safety hat on, I would say the Federation has to flag up areas where offices and buildings are in need of maintenance and repair so that they are safe and fit for purpose."

And talking about the biggest challenge for officers, he continued: "Given the loss of officers during the funding cuts, I think officers are going to continue to feel the mental and physical strain of trying to do more with less. We have seen increased numbers of officers off sick with stress and mental health issues and, while we are seeing more wellbeing initiatives introduced, I still think officers are going to be under huge pressure."

And finally, commenting on the challenges for the Force as a whole, he said: "While we all welcome the Government's three-year programme to recruit 20,000 officers nationwide, with more than 350 coming to the West Midlands in the first year of that initiative, I think it is going to be challenging for the Force to firstly ensure it recruits the right people despite the pressures of the timescales involved.

"Then, of course, it has to get these new officers trained and equipped. It is not going to be without its difficulties. While this new influx of officers will make a difference over time, the Force still has to fight increased demand and rising crime, particularly violent offences, with its current establishment of officers.

"We also need to remember that the Force has lost more than 2,000 officers since austerity began around 10 years ago so it simply does not have enough officers to go around."

“I just wanted to do what a rep claims they will, I always said I would make no promises and tell no lies. As a Fed rep you have to be upfront with the members or you just get their hopes up only to dash them. Sometimes you can put a smile on someone's face and they walk away satisfied that you helped them. That gives me satisfaction.”

‘Look out for each other’

New campaign puts focus on officers’ mental health

Officers’ mental health needs to be treated as seriously as their physical wellbeing, according to the chair of West Midlands Police Federation.

But Jon Nott says officers also have to play their part in ensuring colleagues get support when they need it by not ignoring signs of mental ill-health and talking to each other more.

Jon was speaking as the Police Federation of England and Wales launched a wellbeing campaign encouraging members to talk about their mental health.

The campaign is being called Hear ‘Man Up’, Think ‘Man Down’ and its launch coincided with national Time To Talk Day.

Jon explains: “In the police service, we give out protective clothing and equipment and put officers through training courses, all aimed at preventing physical injuries but, all too often, we ignore officers’ mental health and wellbeing so it’s time to change that. We have to end the stigma surrounding mental ill-health.

“Through this campaign, the Federation wants to urge officers to look out for each other, to recognise the signs that someone may be struggling with their mental health and to open up conversations about that.

“There are a lot of organisations – including the Police Federation – that can offer support and we just need to ensure that people get the support they need.

“Policing can be challenging, officers are dealing with traumatic incidents on a daily basis and with increased workloads due to police cuts it’s no surprise that they are feeling the strain. While those suffering from mental health issues may be the last to realise they need help, those closest to them can usually pick up the signs and that is what this campaign is all about – spotting these signs, talking and encouraging people to seek help.”

In addition to encouraging officers to talk, the campaign will aim to raise awareness of what signs to look out for and where officers can get help if they need it.

Belinda Goodwin, the Federation’s national wellbeing lead, said: “It’s about joining up the wealth of Federation support available locally and nationally.”

The campaign follows a study by the Federation’s research and policy support department which revealed the extent to which officers are struggling with their mental wellbeing.

To date it has been difficult to determine the actual number of police officers who take their own lives. Police forces have not routinely collected this data and, although the Office for National Statistics (ONS) collects data based on coroners’ verdicts, the figures often exclude either non-residents and/or PCSOs. It is also unclear whether retired or former police officers are routinely included in the figures.

Official ONS figures show that 66 police officers took their own lives between 2015 and 2017.

Although significant improvements in mental health support have been made in recent years, the Federation continues to press the Government and forces to provide earlier, better and more consistent support.

As well as concentrating on mental health, the campaign will focus on physical and financial wellbeing.

The Federation has linked up with Police Mutual to highlight financial issues in a monthly newsletter called Let’s Talk Money. The newsletter will concentrate on a different issue each month for a year.

Officers are being encouraged to support the campaign and to help promote the message that it’s OK to talk. Join in the campaign on social media using the hashtags **#ManUpManDown** and **#PoliceWelfare**.

HEAR 'MAN UP'
THINK 'MAN DOWN'

1 in 4 Emergency services will be busy tomorrow and being 'too busy' to help.

x2 Strategically important officers who have an injury or illness have 2x the risk of mental health problems as a result of being prevented from the ground, yet they are not always given the right support.

FINE 10% of people who say they feel 'too busy' to help.

75% 75% of people say they feel 'too busy' to help.

#1 Rank 1 in the National Mental Health Survey 2017.

SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Talking (or not talking) about working in the force.
- Feeling bored or saying things like 'everything is against me'.
- Drinking more (or drinking alone).
- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Feeling bored or exhausted all the time.
- Loss of personal belongings. Litter scattered than usual.
- Striking a hard to think clearly or work with. An 'off' day.
- Being sarcastic, snide or aggressive.
- Being withdrawn. Working is far less enjoyable today than it was.
- Feeling that life is unmanageable.
- Making more or fewer activities.

RISK FACTORS

- Relationship and family problems
- Low- or no-employment
- Financial issues
- Job related stress
- Location and isolation
- Unprotected
- Physical and/or disabling personal issues
- Heavy use of alcohol or other drugs

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Reassure
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POLICE Federation



Force urged to invest in mental health first aid training

All supervisors and line managers should attend a mental health first aid course to help them identify signs that officers and staff are struggling, says West Midlands Police Federation secretary Steve Grange.

Steve has recently attended a three-day Federation course covering mental health first aid and says it would be valuable for anyone in a front-line supervisory role to put themselves forward for similar training.

All new Federation workplace representatives have a half-day input on mental health as part of their initial reps' course and Steve is encouraging other reps to attend the three-day course but he also wants the Force to provide similar training for officers and staff.

"I believe it would be worth the Force investing in this training; mental health is just as important as physical health. It really would be an investment in officers and staff but could actually lead to cost-savings in the longer-term," says Steve.

"Current sickness levels mean we have 600 people off on any given day, with 30 per cent of those reporting stress or mental ill-health compared to 17 per cent five years ago. In cash terms, the Force is paying out around £3 million a month in wages to people who are not actually at work. If more could be done to train supervisors to see the signs of stress and mental ill-health, then rather than people having no alternative but to take time out, we could put support in place at an earlier stage and prevent them reaching that breaking point."

Steve says the demands of policing, coupled with the effects of the Government's

cuts programme leaving forces trying to do more with less, have certainly had an impact on officers' mental health and general wellbeing.

But he says reduced funding has also led to increased use of single-crewing with officers who are double-crewed having been able to discuss traumatic incidents and support each other, for example. He also cites the closure of canteens and police bars and an inability to take refs together as factors that have limited officers' opportunities to get together, talk about the demands of their shift and de-stress.

Steve has become increasingly concerned about sickness levels. The Force has a target of 97 per cent attendance but this is currently at 94 per cent. This concern led to him attending the mental health first aid course led by former Federation reps Tony Barton, who served with Merseyside Police, and Martin Lally, an officer with Greater Manchester Police.

"It was clearly focussed on prevention rather than cure," says Steve, "The emphasis was on identifying when someone might be showing signs of mental ill-health in the very early stages and then intervening rather than allowing the situation to develop into a long-drawn-out process resulting in someone being off work for months.

"At the last half pay review panel, 50 per cent of the cases being considered were mental ill-health related which gives a shocking indication of just how big a problem we have.

"The organisation has suffered from an inability to address this in an effective way.

There has been a certain stigma around talking about mental health, not just within the Force but generally, and it has been something of a taboo. I think supervisors have been scared to talk to the people they manage about it.

"But the first thing this course teaches you is that you should approach a colleague if you feel they are showing signs of stress or mental ill-health and you should encourage them to speak about it or seek support. As a supervisor, it's critical that you listen effectively and communicate but in a non-judgemental way.

"If a colleague triggers a gut feeling that something is not quite right then you should act on it."

The course helps identify specific mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, psychosis, self-harm and eating disorders.

Clearly, the course does not train officers to become mental health professionals but it does aim to help people identify the signs that someone is struggling and then point them towards appropriate support – through a GP in the first instance but also through the charity sector.

The Force has also stepped up the support it offers with BeWell giving access to a wide range of resources. Care First is also available 24/7 to offer support, advice and counselling on any workplace or personal issue with all its counsellors being professionally qualified and accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

It also reinvigorated trauma risk management (TRiM) support last year. TRiM is used to identify the need for management support, encourage a self-referral to the 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme or trigger a de-brief session based around normalisation which, in turn, will allow individuals to understand if their feelings fit within the 'normal' range given the circumstances.

There are a number of TRiM managers across the Force area backed up by a larger team of TRiM practitioners.

The Federation can also refer officers, via full-time rep and conduct lead Dave Hadley, to the Welfare Support Programme which can help when officers are under stress due to conduct proceedings, suspended or at risk of self-harm.

“Current sickness levels mean we have 600 people off on any given day, with 30 per cent of those reporting stress or mental ill-health compared to 17 per cent five years ago. In cash terms, the Force is paying out around £3 million a month in wages to people who are not actually at work.”

At the end of my money I still have some month left!

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If you're struggling to understand what workplace benefits are available to you and your dependants, George Burrows could help. They have arranged for Caroline Harris, a financial welfare specialist with over 25 years' experience, to work alongside the Federation and provide detailed information on the range of pensions and schemes available to you.

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Appointments to take place over the telephone

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See what your colleagues say:

"Caroline helped me put things into perspective and come away with a plan that will allow me to get back control of my finances. I feel in a good place to move forward."

Serving police officer, 2019

"I am very grateful for Caroline's support. She could see I found the whole situation very stressful but she took that pressure from me and was wonderful. She's a fantastic lady."

Serving police officer, 2019

"Not only did she help me to understand how the new pension will affect me but she also helped me save money!"

Serving police officer Bennett, 2019

"Visiting Caroline Harris was well worth the time. She helped put my mind at rest with informed information rather than guess work."

Serving police officer Skidmore, 2019

"Caroline cleared up any doubts about my pension and helped me understand my tax code better, which has resulted in a tax refund. I highly recommend any officer who is close to retirement come and speak to her."

Serving police officer Shippam, 2019



GeorgeBurrows

Local MP backs Federation campaign

A local MP has voiced his support for the Police Powers and Protections Bill which will establish a Police Covenant and give police drivers better protection in law.

Mike Wood, the Conservative MP for Dudley South and Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Home Office, discussed the bill during a meeting with West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott and deputy secretary Tim Rogers at his constituency office.

"He is very supportive of the bill and doesn't think there will be much objection to it," explains Jon, "He is also very interested in the Police Covenant and agrees that it should be put into legislation to ensure that all forces offer the same level of support to officers."

Tim, who is also the national Police Federation's pursuits driving lead, has spearheaded the campaign for a change in legislation that would see police drivers' skills and training taken into account in law. They are currently judged against the standards of the careful and competent driver often leading them to face criminal investigation simply for doing their job and using the specialist training they have been given.

On the brink of seeing better legal protection for police drivers, Tim has now set his sights on securing an amendment to Section 163 of the Road Traffic Act that would give police officers the power to make someone get out of their vehicle when they have stopped them and discussed this with Mr Wood.

"Essentially, this is all about officer safety. We are seeing more and more people willing to use vehicles in an aggressive way. In our Force area alone, there are three incidents a



Mike Wood, Conservative MP for Dudley South.

week in which someone uses a vehicle against an officer as if it was a weapon. Last year, two of our officers received life-threatening injuries in these type of attacks and they could so easily have been killed," says Tim.

"We need to reduce the danger to officers in that phase of stopping and obtaining more information when they are so vulnerable. Currently, it is all too common for officers to have to deal with people who have seen a YouTube video about freemen on the land or sovereign citizens or they face someone who is just difficult, drunk or obnoxious or a known criminal. They refuse to get out of a

car when asked and then deal with officers conducting a police stop through a 1mm gap at the top of the window.

"This thwarts the development of grounds for breath tests, drug wipes, stop and account, stop and search, and so, in effect, pretty much all proactive policing. It also makes stops on fast roads much less safe and can put police officers at risk as vehicles pass the stop at speed. We have a weight of evidence showing officers being driven at and injured, seriously and otherwise.

"The simple addition of a (1A) to s163 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 could mean that where a vehicle has been stopped by police the occupants must comply with a direction to leave the vehicle. This would be very welcome to operational PCs and many others."

Tim has already put together an initial submission for the amendment required to the Department for Transport and the Home Office and this was well received. He has also gained initial support in principle from the national Federation and has asked national chair John Apter to discuss the issue with the Home Secretary.

During the meeting with the Federation, Mr Wood also agreed that the Government needs to come up with better long-term funding arrangements for forces so they can properly plan to meet future demand.

"Overall, this was a very positive meeting and we were pleased to find a local MP who listened to our views and supported us on so many issues," says Jon.

West Midlands Police Federation wrote to all the region's MPs after the General Election, seeking a meeting to share members' concerns and discuss the challenges of modern day policing.

Police Covenant: **have your say**

The Home Secretary has launched an eight-week consultation period on plans for a Police Covenant which will enshrine the welfare of officers, police staff and their families in law.

The consultation, which ends on 22 April, will seek the views of police officers, their families and other stakeholders on how best to protect the physical health and mental wellbeing of police officers and also recognise their bravery and hard work.

In a written statement to Parliament, Priti Patel said: "Our outstanding police deserve the upmost respect, support and

recognition. Brave officers put their lives on the line every day to keep us safe, demonstrating remarkable courage, sacrifice and public duty.

"We are determined to give our officers the enhanced support they need, so I have accelerated work on this pledge to protect both them and their loved ones. Our commitment to ensuring our police have the recognition they deserve is absolute, so this covenant will be enshrined in law. This will leave no room for doubt, creating a statutory duty to do more to support our police."

Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police

Federation, has urged officers to take part in the consultation.

"It is important that officers have their say," says Jon, "The consultation survey is simple to fill out and ask for people's views on the wording of the covenant and who it should apply to but also asks questions around officer safety and the Government's role in setting standards for safety equipment.

"The Police Covenant could make a huge difference in ensuring police officers have the support, protection and recognition they deserve for carrying out such a unique, and often dangerous, role in our communities."

Could power naps help fatigued officers?



Officers working on night shifts could be encouraged to take power naps to help overcome the effects of fatigue.

That is one of the things being explored by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW), which has been overseeing research into officers' sleeping patterns.

"We're exploring the details around sleeping patterns and naps, and looking at how police officers can take power naps effectively, particularly during night shifts," says Belinda Goodwin, PFEW wellbeing committee secretary.

"It is something that the NHS and the fire and rescue service have been successfully doing for a number of years. It's exciting work which could have a real and positive impact on the wellbeing of our members."

The Federation is working with Dr Paul Jackson, a psychologist specialising in driver impairment and fatigue risk, who gave a talk at the annual national conference in

Birmingham in 2018 and wants to see the idea of power naps trialled in a number of pilot forces.

The nap, which would be taken as part of a meal break, should only be for 20 to 25 minutes with studies suggesting any benefits are negated if someone sleeps for longer.

"While some people might massively frown upon officers taking a nap, if conducted in a controlled way they could actually benefit officers' performance," says Belinda.

The Federation wants to make forces across the country aware of their responsibilities towards the wellbeing of their officers under all four pillars of welfare – physical, mental, financial and general.

Belinda says work around fatigue is definitely on the radar since it can have a huge impact on officers' working and private lives.

"This is not about officers feeling a

little bit tired," she said, "We are talking about officers, who are often placed in high-pressure situations, being at a stage where their judgement might be affected.

"And when decision-making is impaired it can lead to mistakes, which in policing can have potentially huge consequences.

"Fatigue makes it really difficult for police officers to do their jobs to the best of their abilities and for some officers, roads policing for instance, it can make it dangerous.

"It can also have an impact on family and private lives away from work and add to the strains on their mental wellbeing. Extended working days, irregular shift patterns and working on rest days when you should be resting all take their toll."

The Federation's health and safety lead, Clive Knight, has been involved in work around the issue of fatigue in policing and in 2016 First Pillar Health put out a detailed report and recommendations following a study in Hampshire Police.

Managing fatigue in policing

The police service needs to get to the point where officers and staff can be open and honest about the effects fatigue is having on them, according to a leading psychologist in fatigue risk management.

Dr Paul Jackson believes the issue of fatigue is intrinsically linked with the work going on around officers' mental wellbeing and believes the stigma attached to both issues has to be tackled.

"Policing needs to do some work around changing its culture and the Federation's demand, capacity and wellbeing survey is a good starting point," says Dr Jackson.

"There also has to be some training among line managers so that they can better recognise the signs of fatigue in their teams. Crucially, there also needs to be an effective mechanism for recording fatigue which is not about someone reporting that they are tired but about learning why people are fatigued so it can be managed as a team.

"Police officers work in teams, they don't work as individuals. So, when an individual is experiencing fatigue it has the potential to affect the safety of the whole team. So you only have to consider some of the roles police officers are carrying out – in a firearms unit, for example - to see how that can have the potential to have a dramatic conclusion."

Fatigue can have a broad range of effects, affecting safety, driving skills, judgement and risk perception with shift work – any pattern that is not the usual 9 to 5 - having an impact but working through the night bringing particular difficulties.

The dip in alertness that most people will experience mid-afternoon will be a temporary state but working a run of nights can result in cumulative fatigue with the sleep debt that ensues having, Dr Jackson points out, a significant impact on health and safety.

Cuts to officer numbers have added to the problem.

"Police officers are very committed to their roles; they are individuals who want to complete tasks, who are mission focussed and diligent and want to do their best. Strategies for coping with fatigue in other industries are not always possible in policing so we have to try to mitigate in other ways," he explains.

"We need people to recognise the signs of fatigue in others. One sign is increased yawning and yawning repeatedly but there are other cognitive signs too – making silly



mistakes, not being communicative, being grumpy and irritable, not engaging with people and just not being your usual self."

There are ways of responding to signs of fatigue such as taking a break, walking around, getting fresh air, getting out in day light, having a caffeine drink or napping – which Dr Jackson concedes is not always possible in policing.

"There is this cultural misconception that you are sleeping on the job but that argument fails because by allowing someone to have a nap you can actually improve someone's effectiveness and performance and therefore reduce the risk to them and others," he says.

He advocates designated rest areas, away from the public, where an officer could take a 20-minute nap during a half-hour refreshment break.

"When you consider pilots on a flight deck are afforded a 30-minute nap during a flight then you can understand the value of those breaks which help airlines to manage both safety and risk," Dr Jackson explains.

"It would be a big leap for the police

service to get to that point but I would like to engage with forces on an individual level to try to form some ideas around this. When management understand the benefits of effective fatigue risk management it is difficult to justify persisting with old thinking on this issue."

Part of the problem, he believes, is that people do not always fully appreciate the consequences of fatigue and what fatigue is doing to performance and the costs it can bring. In policing, this could be procedural errors, bumps and scrapes to police vehicles, and the 'sub-optimal' driving performance that can have fatal effects."

Beyond training for managers and officers, he sees the recording of fatigue as critical – with data being collected on who is fatigued, why, what is being done to address it and the consequences.

"Talking about being tired or fatigued may have been considered a weakness in the past but we need to move the dial. Left unmanaged, stress and fatigue can combine to have a negative impact on mental health, and we are now having many more conversations about mental health and mental wellbeing," says Dr Jackson.

"We also need to consider sleep – and lack of sleep – which are fundamental to our wellbeing and there is a link with rest days and annual leave, both of which are essential. Reducing the number of rest days or restricting annual leave can reduce the officers' ability to recover."

He suggests that providing education on sleep – advice on getting back into a regular sleeping pattern after a run of nights, finding time to unwind before bed and so on – would also be a step forward.

You can find out more about Dr Jackson's work at www.freshair.training or contact him at paul.jackson@freshairtraining.co.uk

For advice and support, please visit sleepfoundation.org

● Read more about fatigue on Page 25.

“When you consider pilots on a flight deck are afforded a 30-minute nap during a flight then you can understand the value of those breaks which help airlines to manage both safety and risk.”

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Fatigue: the expert's view

The detrimental effects of fatigue on the performance of police officers were laid bare during the Federation's 2018 conference.

With the police service stretched to the limit and media reports of thousands of rest days being cancelled across all forces, guest speaker Dr Paul Jackson from the Transport Research Laboratory, a psychologist specialising in fatigue risk management, said officer fatigue was 'too important an issue to ignore'.

Dr Jackson said: "Fatigue can result in reduced alertness, procedural errors and impairment in risk perception."

He went on to explain: "Fatigued people don't follow the rules but they do have their judgement affected and a fatigued person is more likely to make mistakes. All of this can be exacerbated by operational demands placed upon officers such as shift work and interrupted sleep patterns."

In addition to shifts, extended work days, working at times of the day when you should be sleeping, and then sleeping at times when we are naturally most alert, contrary to the Circadian sleep pattern rhythm, working on rest days when you should be recovering and preparing for your next shift, would all take their toll, conference was told.

The long-term effects, Dr Jackson said, could include injury and serious illness with higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol leading to obesity, cardiovascular conditions and diabetes.

PROFILE:

Dr Jackson is founder and director of Fresh Air Alertness Management, which helps safety-critical organisations to manage workforce fatigue and alertness.

He was also managing director at two fatigue risk management consultancies, Awake Ltd and Clockwork Research.

A chartered member of the British Psychological Society, Dr Jackson is also a member of the Academy of Experts, the Association of Project Managers and the British Sleep Society,

He was head of impairment research at the Transport Research Laboratory and visiting lecturer at Cranfield University.

He is an experienced witness in road collisions where fatigue was suspected and has provided expert witness services for a number of police forces. He also spoke about fatigue and officer burn-out at the national Federation conference in 2018.

His areas of specialism include driver fatigue, managing fatigue risk in extreme operational environments and fatigue management training.

Dr Jackson also has expertise on the effects of drugs on performance.

As part of Sir Peter North's review of the UK laws on drink and drugs driving, he was commissioned to prepare a report reviewing the evidence related to drug-driving in the UK.

He was also appointed technical support to the Department for Transport's drug-driving expert panel, providing the group with analyses of the scientific evidence relating to the effects of drugs and medicines on driving.



Officers are being reminded to look out for themselves, and each other, and speak to a supervisor if they think they could be too tired to drive.

The Force has a driver fatigue policy in which it is 'recognised that officers and staff who work shifts could be affected by fatigue, particularly after a night shift or an extended duty'.

It goes on to say that while exigencies of duty take precedence, officers have a 'significant personal responsibility' to inform their supervisor of any issues affecting their fatigue, including, but not exclusive to:

- Excessive hours worked and/or particular shift patterns being worked
- Work being more physically demanding than normal
- Being under increased stress
- Domestic influences
- Medical conditions and prescribed medication
- Excessive journey distance, and time.

Colleagues also have a responsibility to inform supervisors if

they have concerns about a shift member. And, officers must ensure they inform their supervisor of any planned over-time so an informed management decision can be made regarding their suitability.

The policy sets out some specific measures which it states should be adopted where possible. These are:

- No planned over-time prior to or following a full night shift
 - NPU's and departments should have a system requiring officers to 'check in' with a supervisor for instances that extend beyond 12 hours duty or following a particularly traumatic incident, so that the supervisor can review an individual's fatigue level and specifically address any driving concerns. The supervisor should record this in their pocket note book
 - There should be local arrangements in place to accommodate the rare occasions when an officer or staff member is too tired to drive home, e.g. using public transport, providing a lift etc, and if necessary, the return journey to work.
- It also states NPU's and departments must have managerial systems to prevent tiredness. These may include:
- Staff having access to a 'quiet area' for relaxation during refs breaks or after the end of the shift
 - Supervisors ensuring refs breaks are planned, provided and taken
 - Supervisors promoting the sharing of driving duties where possible
 - Improving awareness by posting information at suitable locations, e.g. exit doors or providing briefings as a training day input.

For further information contact a health and safety advisor or the occupational health team.

'Time to raise the profile of roads policing'

The extra funding being ploughed into the police service presents an opportunity to raise the profile of roads policing.

That was the view of Deputy Chief Constable Terry Woods, the new police driver training lead on the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) who took part in a panel session on the role of roads policing officers on the first day of this year's two-day Police Federation Roads Policing Conference in Kenilworth at the end of January.

He emphasised that 2020 was a key year for roads policing, telling delegates from across England and Wales: "I think we have a real opportunity, with the uplift, to raise the profile of roads policing and to use this extra funding to get our agenda further."

Fellow panellist Dr Helen Wells from Keele University also supported his view, saying: "The tide really has turned. From my perspective, now is the time to push the academic agenda of roads policing - how fantastic would it be to enthuse criminology students to do their third-year project on roads policing?"

However, the opportunities presented by the uplift could also pose new problems according to Michael Collins from the College of Policing who was also on the panel. He highlighted the problem of

accreditation given the intricate and specific specialties of roads policing that make it unsuitable for the Professionalising Investigative Process courses.

Simon Hill from the Police Federation added: "There is no single definition of what constitutes a roads policing officer. What is needed is a single definition with clear criteria that you can take to a force and ask, 'do you have this?' I think it's important that there is some accreditation system that allows officers to gain recognition for their hard work and their dedication."

Earlier in the day, the NPCC roads policing lead, Chief Constable Anthony Bangham, said preventing loss of life should be the top priority of roads policing officers.

Mr Bangham warned that road fatalities had been falling in the first half of the last decade but had stabilised and begun to rise again, with 1,784 recorded in 2018 showing signs of following the upward trend equating to five deaths a day.

He said: "We need to ask questions about what we can do better if we are truly committed to reducing the totally unacceptable rate of deaths on our roads. Twice as many people die on our roads than through knife crime and yet you hear so much about that every day - you can pass through the papers and not read about the

deaths on our roads. Something has to change."

In another session on the first day of conference, Derek Roberts from West Midlands Police gave an update on Operation Tutelage which is tackling uninsured drivers and is now used in 25 of the 43 forces across England and Wales.

Have your say on roads policing

Officers involved in roads policing are being urged to take part in the Government's roads policing review by completing an online survey.

The questionnaire was launched at the Police Federation's annual Roads Policing Conference this week by Glynn Wallis-Jones from the Department for Transport and seeks to find out how officers are spending their time as well as gather information on their training and qualifications.

Mr Wallis-Jones told delegates at the two-day conference in Kenilworth: "This is not the Government 'doing something' to the police - this is an opportunity for you as a service to get involved."

Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and national Federation pursuits lead, believes it is crucial that roads policing officers have an input into the review.

"After nine years of cuts, the Government is now taking us seriously so we have a great opportunity now to get what we want from the review," he explained.

The roads policing review, which is being led by the Home Office, will look at eight key areas including driver training, economics, forensic collision investigation, and data sharing.



'I cannot over-state the importance of Sir Henry's support'

Sir Henry Bellingham, the now retired Norfolk MP whose support for the Police Federation's demands for better legal protection for police drivers has been hailed as a 'game-changer', was presented with a National Chair's Commendation at this year's Roads Policing Awards.

Sir Henry, who received the award from national Federation chair John Apter, was nominated for the accolade by Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and national Federation lead for pursuits.

"During a great acceptance speech, Sir Henry said I was 'very naughty' to have nominated him but I just wanted him to get proper recognition for the support he gave to our campaign," says Tim.

"It has taken us 12 years to get to the point now where police drivers will soon be given the legal protection they need to do their jobs. Initially, as a Federation, our focus

was not on a change to the law but other solutions. However, a number of cases in which officers were convicted of dangerous driving led us to re-launch our campaign and seek legislative reform around six years ago.

"Throughout the last 12 years, the Police Federation has had many doors shut in its face as its campaign to keep its members on the right side of the law was met with obstacle after obstacle leaving officers open to lengthy conduct and criminal investigations."

But the Federation was encouraged when Sir Henry got behind its campaign around two and a half years ago.

"He listened to the evidence we gave him, understood the need for a change in legislation and, perhaps most importantly, acted. He was able to put forward our case to MPs of all parties and played an important part in helping us keep the pressure on in Parliament," Tim explains.

In December 2017, two months after the Home Office ordered a review into the current legal situation, Sir Henry, who stood down at the General Election, tabled his Emergency Response Drivers (Protections) Ten-Minute Rule Bill and secured cross-party support for the change in legislation the Federation sought. He then remained a constant and supportive voice in Parliament, rallying fellow MPs.

"In the end, his bill was not to be the vehicle for the new legislation required but nevertheless I cannot over-state the importance of Sir Henry's support," says Tim.

"I do believe it was a game-changer in a campaign that seemed to have faltered so many times over the years, causing many people to wonder if we would ever get the backing we required to ensure that police drivers' unique role and specialist skills were recognised in law."

Protection for police drivers: legislation will change

An official from the Home Office attended the second day of the Roads Policing Conference to discuss progress with the new legislation required to give police drivers better protection.

Steven Toal, who works in the Policing Powers Unit, took to the stage alongside ACC Steve Barry, the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for police pursuits.

"I was really pleased that Steven could attend conference. For many years, officers have questioned whether we would ever convince the Government of the day that a change in the law was required so that the skills and training of police drivers could be taken into account rather than simply assessing them against the standard of the 'careful and competent driver,'" says Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and national Police Federation lead on pursuits.

"Now, with the Police Powers and Protections Bill outlined in the Queen's Speech, we can finally say our campaign has been successful and we have achieved what we set out to do, allowing police officers to get on with the job they are trained to perform.

"I think officers are slowly starting to believe and understand that this change is going to happen."

Tim, who has headed up the Federation campaign for the last six years, is now heavily involved in discussions around how police officers' driving will be assessed.

A common standard is likely to be set by the College of Policing. Tim's counterpart at the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) could then allocate cases to a panel of practitioners, including driver trainer school personnel, and their decisions would then be peer reviewed and peer checked

"With 8 million immediate response drives a year, and a minimum of 12,000 pursuits a year, the change in legislation required to give police drivers the legal protection they require and deserve really cannot come soon enough," says Tim.

"For far too long, officers have faced lengthy conduct and criminal investigations simply for doing the job they are trained to do."

Widow collects award

Hero PC Andrew Harper who was tragically killed on duty in August last year was given a posthumous honour at the annual Police Federation Roads Policing Awards.



PC Harper's widow Lissie – who he married just four weeks before he died – received a standing ovation as she received a National Chair's Certificate recognising that he represented 'the very best of roads policing and policing in general'.

Lissie said: "Andrew wanted to be a police man since he was a little boy, fuelled with enthusiasm and a contagious love for adventure that never left him when he grew into adulthood. I think if you were to have asked Andrew what the most important thing about being a police officer was, he would say protecting the innocent from harm and being the barrier of strength and accountability against the guilty... even if he had to stay on late and buy another kebab from the notorious kebab van that he loved to visit.

"I wish more than you could ever know that I wasn't standing up here accepting this acknowledgement on behalf of Andrew, I wish in so many ways that he had been just a little less brave. But then he wouldn't be the amazing person that he was; the silent protector going about his job without expectation or recognition," Lissie said.

She added: "I, for one, have been touched and overwhelmed with the immense support I have been given from the police family. For that I am eternally grateful. I know deep down in my heart that Andrew had extreme faith in his roads policing team and all that he worked with."

Assault on Police Employees

10 Point Plan



1

Assaults on police officers and police staff should be investigated with the same care, compassion and commitment as an assault on a member of the public. *This sounds obvious, but too often our response to assaults on officers and staff can be rushed or treated as secondary to other offences.*

2

The assaulted officer / staff member must never be the OIC 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 the investigation and the impartiality of the officer could be called into question, which could undermine the case and/or heighten the impact on the employee.*

3

The assault is to be raised as a discussion point at the next available local DMM. *The DMM chair is to ensure that early welfare support is put in place and confirm that the Employee's Supervisor is aware.*

4

Colleagues recover better and more quickly if they receive the right welfare and supervision. *This also helps to avoid long-term negative consequences. The assaulted person's supervisor should contact them as soon as it is practical to do so, preferably within 24 hours. The employee may play down the impact on them, but supervisors must recognise the potential effects of the incident.*

5

The iCASS report must be completed by the supervisor along with, where practicable, the employee, for all assaults regardless of severity. *If the employee is not available, that should not delay the completion of the report.*

6

The supervisor must ensure that the Local Command Team is informed, should the Police Employee be hospitalised then the on call chief officer is to be notified. *This will allow them to provide continuity of welfare support, and to ensure it is discussed at the DMM.*

7

The supervisor must ensure that they notify the Police Federation or Trade Union Representative. *The Staff Associations and trade unions can provide additional valuable support to the employee.*

All assaults on police officers and police staff will be treated seriously and WMP will seek to ensure appropriate redress through the criminal justice system.

8

Charges relating to the assault of a police officer or staff member should not be dropped because charges relating to more serious crimes are being brought. This can send the wrong message to offenders and doesn't recognise the effects the assault could have had on public confidence in the Police Service.

To achieve a successful prosecution, the best evidence must be presented.

9

Victim personal statements should be used and whoever is investigating the assault needs to fully understand the 'points to prove' for assaults on police officers or staff. An officer's self-written statement provided straight after the event could be made in haste and might not contain all of the key facts. As a result, cases sent for prosecution sometimes fail to meet basic evidential needs.

10

The Victim Code applies to all victims and therefore to assaults on police officers and staff. *Complying with the Victim Code means keeping the employee updated, discussing outcome options, and taking account of the employee's point of view before imposing an outcome.*

Officer assaults: offenders receiving average sentence of under 12 weeks

Offenders jailed for attacks on police officers are receiving average sentences of less than 12 weeks, according to newly released figures.

Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, says the new Ministry of Justice statistics highlight the fact that courts are not using the full sentencing powers available to them, and he argues that must change.

The figures cover the period from November 2018 when the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018 came into effect until September last year. They show offenders jailed for assaulting emergency workers received an average sentence of 2.6 months when the maximum sentence available is 12 months.

"These figures are disappointing to say the least," says Jon, "The Police Federation's Protect the Protectors campaign highlighted the shocking rise in attacks on police officers and other emergency service workers and led to the introduction of the new act. We hoped the new legislation would not only lead to suitable punishments for those who seem to think it's OK to assault officers but also act as a deterrent to others.

"However, while conviction rates are relatively high at 80 per cent, we are still seeing more people being fined under the act rather than jailed and even those who

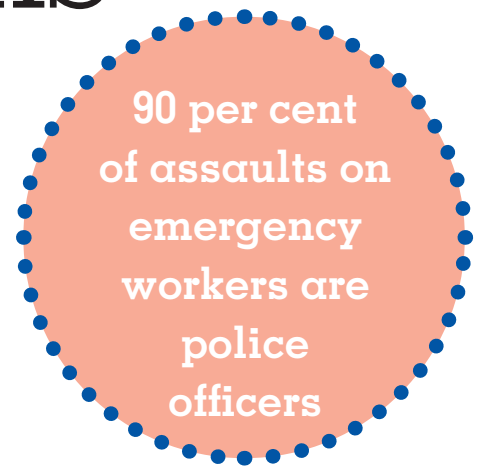
are sent to prison are receiving quite short sentences while police officers and their families are left not just with the physical effects of being assaulted but all too often a psychological impact too.

"The Crown Prosecution Service now has to step up and ensure it is charging people for the correct offence while the courts must make full use of the sentencing powers available to them. Attacks on police officers are an attack on society itself and we have to see those who commit these despicable assaults suitably punished."

Jon's views are in line with those of the national Federation chair John Apter who referred to statistics on assaults on emergency service workers: "From previous Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) data we know 90 per cent of those attacked are police officers and these figures confirm most people who attack them are still receiving nothing more than a slap on the wrist. The fact nearly 9 out of 10 individuals who are charged under the new act walk free from a court is a disgrace and an insult."

Speaking at the Federation's centenary celebration event in November last year, Home Secretary Priti Patel said she would consider doubling the 12-month maximum sentence for assaults on emergency service workers.

Jon welcomed the Home Secretary's



stance but said this would be useless if the courts remained reluctant to hand out the maximum sentences they already had available to them.

The Ministry of Justice statistics compare the rate of court proceedings and outcomes for assault offences in England and Wales. The new act only covers common assault and battery offences, with more serious assaults being charged using separate legislation.

The national Federation chair explained: "The last set of official Government statistics show there were almost 31,000 assaults on police officers in the last year, and we believe from our own anecdotal research that figure represents the tip of the iceberg. These statistics are an indicator of how vast the disparity is between the number of reported assaults, and the number of people actually punished for them."

A total of 8,647 individuals were prosecuted under the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018. In the same period, 3,317 were charged with assault on a constable, while a total of 43,399 individuals faced common assault and battery charges (includes non-police related assaults).

“From previous Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) data we know 90 per cent of those attacked are police officers and these figures confirm most people who attack them are still receiving nothing more than a slap on the wrist. The fact nearly 9 out of 10 individuals who are charged under the new act walk free from a court is a disgrace and an insult.”

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Are you approaching retirement?

The programme of West Midlands Police Federation retirement seminars continues throughout 2020.

The one-day seminars, which are held at the Federation's office – Guardians House, 2111 Coventry Road, Sheldon – are for officers in the last three years of their service and aim to prepare them for life outside the Force, financially and generally.

Officers are welcome to take their husband, wife or partner to the seminars which run from 9am until 4pm. They start with coffee and registration from 8.30am and include a buffet lunch.

Among the topics covered by the facilitators are:

- **Managing change and uncertainty**
- **CV writing and interview techniques**
- **Transferrable skills**
- **Pensions and the state pension**
- **How do I manage money and these financial changes?**
- **Budgeting**
- **Starting your own business**
- **Taxation**
- **New horizons - what's next?**
- **Savings, investments and finances, and**
- **Protecting your wealth.**



Seminars are being held on:
Thursday 23 July 2020
Thursday 20 August 2020
Thursday 24 September 2020
Thursday 22 October 2020

To book, email the Federation office with 'Retirement seminar' and the date you wish

to attend in the subject line. Include your name, work and personal email address, phone number, proposed retirement date, number of places required and dietary requirements in the email.

Book early to avoid disappointment.

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Do you have a will?

Around three quarters of the adult population are believed not to have a will or Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA) in place.

But, through our Member Services partner Thomson Financial Solutions (TFS) Ltd, Federation members can draw up a FREE 'standard will' and access a range of other essential services for affordable fixed fees.

"It's never too early to make a will but it is often too late," says Bob Thomson, managing director of TFS, which is based in Tamworth.

"You can put off making a will and this can, if you don't get a will in place before you die, pose all sorts of problems for the people left behind. Not making a will could mean that some or all of your inheritance either goes to the wrong person or to the state.

"Making a will enables you to plan exactly what will happen to your property or estate when you die. This ensures that those you would like to benefit actually do so, in accordance with your wishes, and at the same time avoids any possible disputes between relatives. Most importantly, making a will gives you peace of mind."

Without a will

- Your spouse or civil partner will not automatically inherit all your estate
- Common law partners may not receive anything
- Minor children could be taken into care while guardians are appointed
- There could be lengthy delays – and disputes - for your beneficiaries

- You will not be able to leave something to friends, colleagues or charities, which fall outside of the Rules of Intestacy.

In addition to the free 'standard will' service, TFS also offers a 999 package. The package costs £999 plus Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) registration fees for the Lasting Power of Attorney, which are currently £41 or £82 depending on income.

The TFS 999 package includes:

Wills: a will ensures that your assets pass to exactly the people you want to benefit on your death. A well drafted will, drawn up by Society of Trust & Estate Practitioners (STEP) affiliated advisers, appoints guardians for children, gives financial certainty to dependants and nominates someone to carry out your wishes.

LPAs: you can nominate someone you trust to make decisions about your health and medical treatment on your behalf with an LPA which can come into effect if you lose the capacity to make decisions for yourself – through illness, age or an accident.

There are two types of LPA, one for decisions about your property and financial affairs and one for decisions about your health and welfare.

Without both LPAs in place, a loss of capacity on your part could put you and any dependants in a very difficult position, potentially unable to access money for essential day-to-day needs. To gain the authority to pay bills and make decisions in your best interests, an expensive court

application would need to be made, which can be avoided with correctly drafted LPAs.

Bloodline planning: severing property tenancy, to tenants in common allows your individual assets to be distributed to your chosen beneficiaries at the time of death, ensuring assets pass to your bloodline in the future.

Asset protection: providing protection from home and assets being included in future care fee assessments with Property Protection Trusts in wills.

TESTIMONIALS

"More than happy with the service we received from TFS. Our Family Property Trust, Lasting Power of Attorneys and wills appear fine and suit our needs at this time. We're also happy with the documents storage arrangements with TFS at this time." John Tooms, former West Midlands Police Federation conduct lead.

"I started to use TFS through the Police Federation to make a new will after moving house. Bob (Thomson) was brilliant in communications and house visits where the final will was completed to a high standard. Unfortunately, a few days after sorting my will, my father passed away and I asked Bob to sort probate for me as it was a very emotional time and I wanted Dad's estate to be dealt with in a professional manner. Bob dealt with the process in a sensitive manner and sorted the paperwork and any issues that arose. I would recommend TFS 100 per cent and give them five stars for their professional customer service." Federation member.

Find out more about TFS by visiting the company's website, telephone 01827 65107/818718 or 0770 750044, or email.



TFS Protect your family's financial future

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www.thomson-fs.co.uk | 01827 65107 | wills@thomson-fs.co.uk



West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund

The West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund was set up in 1974 when West Midlands Police was formed.

Over the years it's helped thousands of serving and retired officers, police staff and their families through difficult times.

With almost 7,000 members, the WMP Benevolent Fund offers police colleagues' peace of mind that the fund is there to help them in times of need.

For just £2 per month members' benefits include:

- **High street shopping vouchers if you're off work through injury or sickness sick for more than 21 days**
- **Convalescence breaks at the multi-million pound health and wellbeing treatment centre, St Michael's Lodge** - offering stress management, relaxation techniques, pilates, yoga, swimming, complementary therapies, health

promotion, physiotherapy and full use of the extensive wellbeing facilities including hydrotherapy pool, swimming pool, steam room, hot tub, games room, gym and gardens

- **Financial help** - members can access interest free loans or charitable grants in times of hardship or distress
- **Death grant of £3,500** - we will immediately pay out £3,500 to your chosen beneficiary in the event of your death. If you have children, we will pay them £25 per week until their 18th birthday
- **Stay at our holiday homes by the sea** - our members can enjoy discounted rates at our holiday homes just steps away from the sea in Weymouth, Dorset and at Court Cottage on the luxury Hillfields Village in Dartmouth.

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For more details about the fund and how to join visit www.wmpben.co.uk



Expert Hand. Human Touch.

Our family team are hugely experienced in advising and supporting members of the police force dealing with separation, divorce, financial or children matters, including looking after your pension.

For free initial advice call the Birmingham office on **0121 214 5278** and ask to speak to **Clare Wiseman** or **Mark Hands**.

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www.polfed.org/westmids



I am able to have peace of mind for the future





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“It’s nice to relax knowing my divorce settlement is sorted.”

Getting a divorce is never easy, especially on top of the pressures of police work. At Slater and Gordon we offer Police Federation members a free initial consultation, a divorce fixed fee package and discounted hourly rates. We’ll be with you every step of the way so you can focus on your job and let us deal with everything else.

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Choosing the right divorce lawyer

By **Lorraine Harvey**,
**principal lawyer in family
law at Slater and Gordon**



The selection of a strong legal partner can significantly influence the outcome of your divorce settlement. If you want specialist advice for something important in your life then you go to the appropriately qualified professional, such as a surgeon, dentist or optician. Choosing your divorce lawyer is no different and, as a police officer, making the right choice is vital.

Protecting your interests

You need to have trust and confidence that your lawyer has experience of the intricacies of your role as a police officer, how you are paid, your working patterns/over-time and your police pension.

At Slater and Gordon, we have more than 20 years' experience in divorce for the police and our lawyers go through a vigorous police training programme. We'll work tirelessly to secure you the best possible outcome when faced with a breakdown of your marriage.

We appreciate that listening to what you want from a settlement, advising you

on the appropriate legal strategy, putting forward your case fiercely and not being afraid to fight your corner is key to producing the relationship you want and need in your lawyer during what's a highly personal and emotional process.

Appointing a forward-thinking lawyer who solves problems creatively and uses their expertise to provide you with commercially-driven advice to help protect your interests can help you achieve the fair and reasonable financial settlement that you deserve.

Access to the best experts

A lawyer who has experience of police pensions upon divorce and has immediate access to the best pension actuaries is imperative, especially when it comes to such a valuable asset as your police pension that you've worked hard to contribute to throughout your working life and which could be shareable upon divorce.

While an amicable solution will be considered and the utmost will be done to achieve a settlement without the need to attend court, where this isn't possible, you need a lawyer who'll be tough on your behalf and who has experience of proceeding to trial.

Your lawyer should use their expertise to pursue your case vigorously, instructing

specialist barristers who are experts in their field to represent you in court.

An accessible team

Our dedicated family lawyers will work with you to keep you informed, working proactively to prepare you for each stage of the process and provide you with clarity in respect of costs. We'll go the extra mile and allow you to be the one who makes the decisions, while helping you understand the consequences of those decisions and their impact on your divorce.

We appreciate that as a police officer, you're busy and require a lawyer who's accessible, whether that be at the Police Federation office or via email, Facetime, Skype or mobile.

When faced with a breakdown of your marriage, it's vital that you appoint a lawyer you feel comfortable with, who understands what life as a police officer is like, shares and supports your philosophy towards divorce and has a style that works for you. Divorce is our business but, most importantly, we recognise that this is your life.

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

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We hold Mortgage Advice Days at the following locations:

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West Bromwich and Wolverhampton

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For further information, contact the Federation Office on:

0121 752 4900

Contact Warren & Co to find out dates for each location on:

01452 547783 or contact@warrenifa.co.uk



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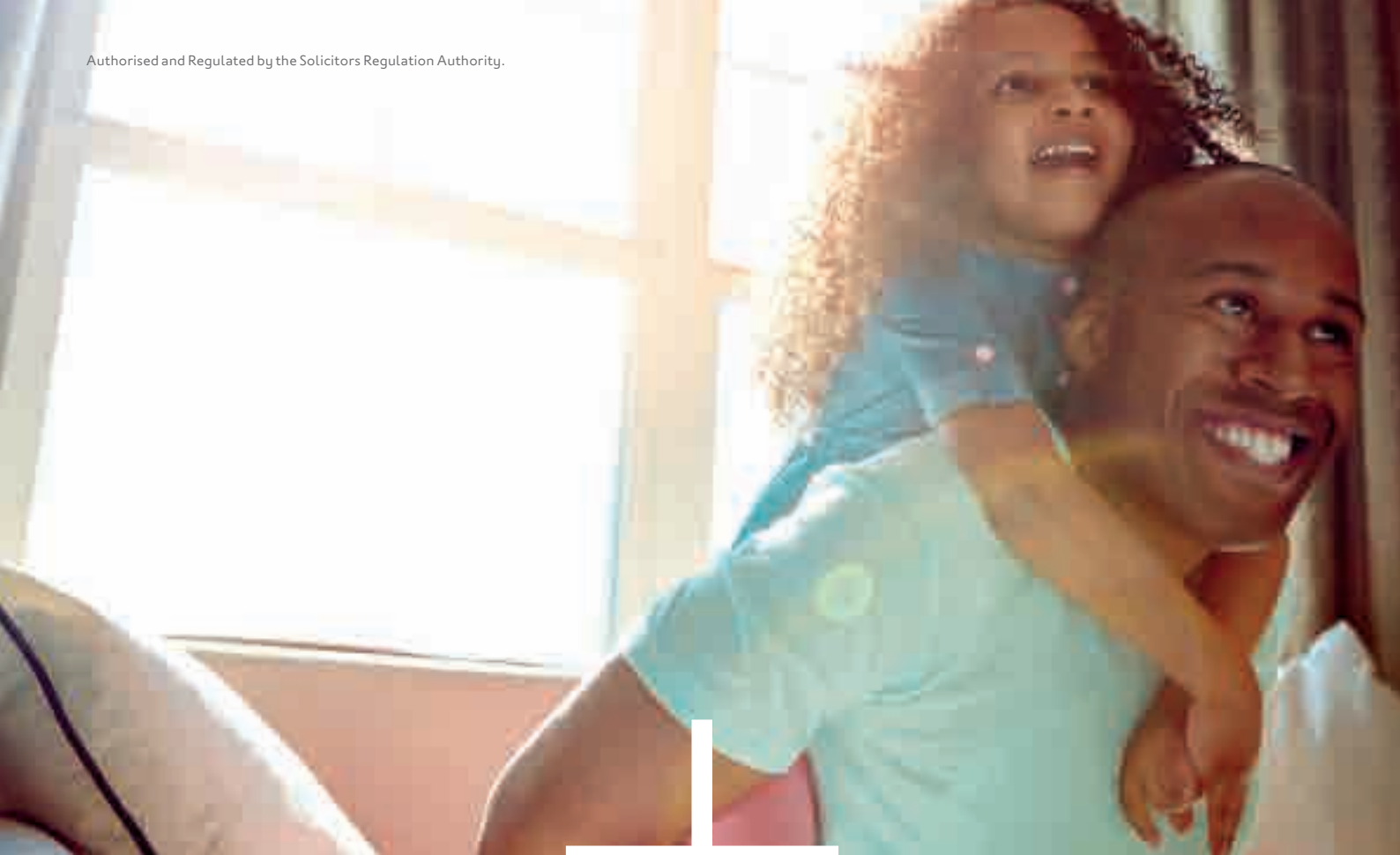
WWW.WARRENIFA.CO.UK

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Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage. Think carefully before securing other debts against your home





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You never know when you’re going to need legal advice. Slater and Gordon have been advising and supporting Police Federation members for more than 60 years, taking the legal stress away and leaving you to focus on keeping people safe.

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