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West Midlands Police Federation

June/July 2021

2021 | POLICING UNDER PRESSURE



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Welcome

Welcome to the June/July 2021 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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Policing is under huge pressure



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

This edition of our members' magazine centres around the Police Federation's annual national conference which, just like so many other events over the last 15 months or so, was held virtually.

While it may have been missing the buzz of a live conference, I believe it did throw the spotlight on the key issues that are currently affecting the police service and individual officers.

The theme of conference was Policing Under Pressure and that was a thread that ran through all sessions from the chair's

keynote speech to the update on the new conduct regulations and from the trial by media panel discussion to the focus on investigators.

Policing is very much under pressure and that pressure seems to be coming from all directions and all angles.

Even in areas where there are some reasons to feel optimistic, we are still facing additional difficulties.

Take for example the recruitment drive. The Prime Minister announced ambitious plans to recruit 20,000 officers over a three-year period late in 2019. Of course, we welcomed this. Officer numbers had been plummeting for more than 10 years and that has placed a huge demand on our existing workforce, particularly when you take into account the fact that there was no corresponding fall in crime or calls for assistance over that same period.

We are making good progress with recruitment but it does not end there, of course. Officers who act as tutors are finding themselves with a heavy burden. Tutoring is demanding and it is also critically important. A good tutor will help create an effective multi-skilled officer, equipped with the

training to provide a high-quality service for the public.

Put the tutors under too much pressure and you are creating a system in which they will burn out and both they and the new recruits under their guidance will suffer.

More emphasis has to be put on what is happening behind the scenes rather than just measuring the success of the recruitment drive by the headline figures and this is something we as a Federation are paying close attention to.

Another success has been the campaign led by our own deputy secretary Tim Rogers which will mean, through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, that officers will no longer have their driving measured by the standards of the careful and competent driver. However, as you can find out on Page 32, Tim fears that the current wording of the new legislation could serve to criminalise officers further. Again, the Federation is working on this.

While these are just two current issues, and there are, of course, many others, it is quite heartening to hear that we appear to have the support of the Home Secretary.

Sadly, our conference didn't afford us the

“Policing is very much under pressure and that pressure seems to be coming from all directions and all angles. Even in areas where there are some reasons to feel optimistic, we are still facing additional difficulties.”

option of putting Priti Patel under any real scrutiny and I know there were plenty of questions officers would like to have put to her. So we take on board her warm words but we do need to see more signs of these words becoming actions.

Officers were disappointed not to have been given any priority once the vaccine roll-out programme moved into its second stage and there was further frustration when a police pay freeze was announced so I think the jury's still out on the Home Secretary.

The coming months will be pivotal. She told Tim, who raised his concerns about the drivers' legislation with her at conference, that the Home Office would ensure the law worked in the right way. We will also see further details of the new Police Covenant unfold.

So, to a certain extent, it is a case of watch this space.

- Away from conference, I would like to pay tribute to Steve Grange, who has been secretary of West Midlands Police Federation for the last nine years and who retires later this summer. Steve has been a dedicated servant of the Federation, supporting and representing members, offering wise counsel on so many issues but also providing me a huge amount of support as I took on the role of chair. He will be missed but we are also pleased that he has agreed to come back two days a month to handle members' pension queries.

THIS EDITION: IN NUMBERS

400 The number of learning reports issued by the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

120 The number of pages in the latest Covid-19 regulations.

93 The percentage of delegates who wanted to see more body-worn video released by forces after a vote at conference.

22 The percentage of detective posts currently vacant.

18 The percentage drop in officer pay in real terms over the last 10 years.

£2.5 Million The cost of the extension to the St Michael's Lodge therapy centre.

Stew is honoured by the Queen

A West Midlands PC has been awarded the Queen's Police Medal (QPM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours which were announced at the start of June.

PC Stewart (Stew) Bladen received the prestigious award for services to football policing over the years and his work in behaviour contracts for youth offenders and education for adult offenders.

"I honestly didn't believe it until the Chief's secretary confirmed it the next day. I'm humbled and embarrassed – but it's the best thing that's happened in my career of 27½ years. I never considered that a PC would be considered for a Queen's Police Medal," said Stew, who is a Force football football spotter and liaison officer.

"This award isn't just something for me. It's a recognition for my team, too, which is the best football policing team in the country."

Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police

Federation, congratulated Stew on the accolade.

"I am absolutely delighted for Stew and his family. It is great to see him honoured in this way for his service to the Force, to the communities we serve and particularly to our local football clubs," he said.

West Midlands PCSO Rob Capella has also been awarded the QPM.

He said: "It's a great honour - it's wonderful to be recognised for doing your job and it's not something that happens every day. Ideally, the whole team would be recognised but I'm honoured to take it on their behalf."

Jon added: "Well done, Rob – it is great to see your work acknowledged in this way."



PC Stewart (Stew) Bladen.

Oscar Kilo launches wellbeing toolkit for investigators

West Midlands Police Federation has welcomed the launch of a new wellbeing toolkit specifically designed for investigators.

The pioneering package has been carefully created to make sure anyone who works in an investigative role feels heard, valued and knows where to seek support.

The comprehensive toolkit is available to all officers and staff via the Oscar Kilo website and provides investigators, their line managers and leaders with the information they need to build up their resilience and continue doing the critical jobs they do.

West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott, himself a detective, said: "We are aware of the stresses being placed on investigators within Force due to the increase in workload and the current shortage of investigators and detectives.

"Officers need to be mindful of their own wellbeing through what has been a really difficult period of time. The toolkit is

there to assist officers with their own resilience and wellbeing.

"There are a number of online sessions that people can join and I would encourage them to do so."

The toolkit has been put together after eight months of work by a National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) working group in close collaboration with colleagues from the Police Federation, College of Policing, Oscar Kilo, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and other force champions.

The group drew on research, particularly the National Police Wellbeing Service and the Durham University 2019 Wellbeing Survey, which found investigators experienced the lowest levels of wellbeing across policing, and particularly suffered from a loss of emotional energy.

Deputy Chief Constable Jason Hogg, the NPCC lead for investigator resilience, said: "The role of a detective and police staff investigator (PSI) is incredibly rewarding but can also be extremely challenging and can



have an adverse impact on health and wellbeing.

"It is therefore more important than ever for officers, staff and supervisors to look after themselves and each other and I encourage you to access the resources in this toolkit."

[Find out more.](#)

New pup named in honour of former ACC

The latest West Midlands Police pup recruits have been named after inspirational figures affected by motor neurone disease (MND) including former Assistant Chief Constable Chris Johnson.

The Springer spaniel pups have been named after the 'MND Heroes' as a tribute to them and to mark MND Awareness Day earlier this month (21 June) with one named Cheeky in honour of Chris as that is the nickname his colleagues gave him.

Chris was diagnosed with MND in 2018 but continued working for almost two years after diagnosis before retiring. He and his wife, Sharon, who is also a West Midlands officer, have worked relentlessly since to raise awareness of the terminal disease and funds into research around it.

Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, explained: "Chris initially came



Sharon Johnson introduces Chris to Cheeky.

up with the idea of naming our new pups after MND heroes as a way to honour them but he had no idea there were plans to name one after him to do the same.

"What a great and fitting tribute to our former colleague whose life has been devastated by this cruel disease but who continues to be a hero in so many ways. I have no doubt that his namesake will be

equally inspirational."

The other pups have been named: Doddie, after rugby union player Doddie Weir; Burrow, after Leeds Rhinos player Rob Burrow MBE; Darby, after footballer Stephen Darby; Len, after footballer Lenny Johnrose; Rimmer, after soldier Chris Rimmer (who also set up the MND Warriors support group); Moss, after Emma Moss who runs the Mummy with MND blog; Primrose after Primrose Hospice; Hawkins, after Good Morning Britain's Charlotte Hawkins' work to raise awareness of the disease; Blue, the MND flagship colour; and Rollo, after retired West Midlands Sergeant John Rollason who was also nicknamed Rollo and passed away last month.

Jon added: "We can only hope that Chris's work spreads through these dogs with people meeting them and asking what their names are and learning about this disease. What a wonderful way to raise awareness of MND."

In addition, the inspiration for names for another new litter of police pups has come from Euros football fever. The seven sprockers, Sterling, Jude, Lineker, Rio, Bronze, Keegan and Marcus, were born in mid-June.

They were named following a huge response to the Force's social media request for pup names after past or present England players. They should be operational in around 18 months.

Assaults on emergency workers increase



New crime figures showing a 26 per cent rise in assaults against emergency workers further demonstrate the need for courts to hand down tough sentences on those who carry out these attacks, says the secretary of West Midlands Police Federation.

Steve Grange was responding to new crime figures released by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) with the rise in common assaults thought to be driven by increases in common assaults on the police, including suspects spitting on officers while claiming to be infected with Covid-19.

"During the pandemic it has been shocking to see, despite a drop in crime generally, an increase in attacks on police officers and other emergency service workers," says Steve.

"It seems incredible that people are prepared to assault those who have been on the frontline throughout this crisis, putting their own health at risk, and that of their families, while seeking to serve and protect their communities.

"It is time for the courts to use the increased sentences available to them to

punish these offenders and act as a deterrent to others."

National Police Federation chair John Apter has also responded to the release of the figures.

He explained: "This increased level of violence is not just a one-off. It is becoming the new norm which is completely unacceptable. Violence in our society is not just a policing issue, all parts of Government and society itself must work together to combat this alarming increase.

"Part of this is ensuring those responsible for attacking police officers face a suitable deterrent in court. The sentencing guidelines have been changed, so we need judges and magistrates to use these powers

“It is time for the courts to use the increased sentences available to them to punish these offenders and act as a deterrent to others.”

to set an example to those who are assaulting our colleagues, those responsible must spend time in prison. This unjustified violence is a stain on society and needs to be dealt with robustly."

The latest crime figures cover the four-week period ending 11 April 2021 and are compared with the equivalent period in 2019, rather than 2020. This is to allow comparisons with a more normal time period, since the national lockdown in place at the same time last year (2020) was associated with notable reductions in demands on the police.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Newsnight interview

The chair of West Midlands Police Federation has spoken of his concerns over officers carrying a drug that can reverse the effects of an overdose.

Jon Nott says he supports members who choose to carry Naloxone but he's worried about members being subjected to lengthy and stressful investigations if an addict still dies after being given the medication which blocks the effects of opioids such as heroin.

He was speaking on the BBC's flagship news and current affairs programme Newsnight during a feature on the Force's trial of Naloxone.

[Read more.](#)

Get active

West Midlands Police officers are being invited to take part in the 1Team Active programme – a free family-based activity scheme which could improve the wellbeing of police forces across the UK.

The programme was created by TeamPolice in partnership with Sport England using £348,000 of National Lottery funding and has highlighted two groups to focus on: those who are not normally involved in sport and exercise and those who feel their mental health has suffered due to the demands of policing.

Anyone who does less than 150 minutes of moderate activity a week is encouraged to sign up to receive a physical and mental boost to their health and encourage them, and their family, to become more active in a fun, supportive and habit-forming way.

[Find out more.](#)

Wellbeing dogs

The project lead of a brand-new wellbeing and trauma support dogs initiative says it is vital that everything is done to better support officers with their mental health.

The project was launched by Oscar Kilo (OK), the National Police Wellbeing Service, to tie in with Mental Health Awareness Week in May.

[Read the full story.](#)

Sign up to the PTC

Retired officers, PCSOs, detention and custody officers and Specials wanting to subscribe to the Police Treatment Centres can now take advantage of a new online direct debit facility.

The Police Treatment Centres support present and past employees of the police, as well as their loved ones, with treatment for psychological and physical injuries, conditions or illnesses.

[Find out more.](#)

Treatments resume at St Michael's Lodge therapy centre



We're pleased to announce that St Michael's Lodge, the holistic treatment centre in the heart of the Ribble Valley, Lancashire, has been undergoing a phased re-opening from 1 June.

The therapy centre closed its doors last year due to the Covid-19 outbreak but has now resumed treatment for members of West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund.

St Michael's Lodge offers outstanding breaks for both mental and physical wellbeing and since its £2.5 million extension in 2017 has unveiled a whole range of holistic treatments.

Tailor-made treatment

The lodge offers a four-night residential treatment programme for Ben Fund members (in any 12-month period) as part of their £2 monthly subscription.

Fund chair John Williams explains: "The idea of the lodge is to provide members with a bespoke care package that's tailor-made to offer the best level of support. Policing can be an uncertain job with challenges along the way. Illness or injury may present itself at any time therefore having access to this facility alone should convince serving officers of the benefit of being a member of the Benevolent Fund."

Intensive residential physiotherapy

St Michael's offers intensive residential physiotherapy where members can benefit from a varied exercise class timetable,



The pool.

supported by use of the state-of-the-art gym and swimming/hydrotherapy pool.

An experienced team of physiotherapists are on hand to provide specialist care to patients affected by injury, illness or disability. Bespoke treatment programmes and interventions are supplemented with alternative therapy to enhance treatment and aid recovery.

The physio team holds Pilates sessions in the work-out area and run ai chi strengthening and relaxation sessions in the hydrotherapy pool, which they also use for physio sessions on patients with more serious injuries.

Comprehensive wellbeing programme

St Michael's now offers a wellbeing programme which includes ai chi, stretch, mindfulness sessions and massage to promote positive mood, lower anxiety and combat stress.

The treatment centre will soon be launching a new wellbeing studio that will provide a range of fitness and holistic classes. These will be available to members staying on residential purposes at the lodge



A physiotherapy session.

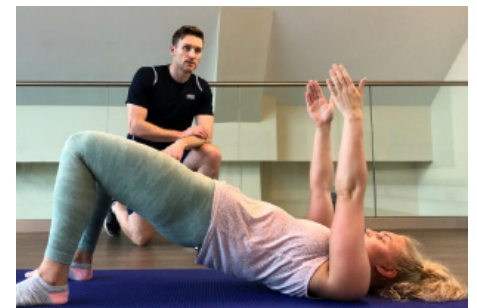
and for those receiving outpatient services such as physiotherapy.

Classes will be held daily and include Pilates, yoga and tai chi.

Full details about the new wellbeing facilities will be available in the next edition of the Federation magazine.

Facilities are designed around wellbeing and recovery

The lodge has 30 en suite bedrooms complete with a TV, tea and coffee making facilities, and a hairdryer, and two of the rooms are accessible for guests with disabilities.



A Pilates session.



The well-equipped gym.



The sun-drenched orangery.



The landscaped gardens.



Bedroom with en suite.

The sun-drenched orangery is a wonderful spot to unwind with comfortable leather sofas, a huge TV screen and free internet access as well as a refreshments area. The views from here are simply breathtaking, overlooking the rolling countryside and stunning Ribble Valley.

There is a fully equipped gym for guests to improve their cardiovascular fitness and physical strength. Relaxation is promoted outside where guests can enjoy the landscaped garden, complete with patio area, water feature and hot tub.

"Everyone who works there is extremely lovely and accommodating and I can't begin to say how much places like St Michael's Lodge are worth their weight in gold, as are all of the people." **Serving West Midlands Police officer**

Pioneering new shockwave therapy



St Michael's Lodge treatment centre is pioneering a faster way of tackling 'Policeman's Heel' syndrome, otherwise known as plantar fasciitis.

The £10,000 shockwave device offers fast and effective treatment to sufferers of this chronic condition, which affects one in 10 people at some time in their lives.

The device can also treat other chronic tendonitis problems. This revolutionary treatment is available to Ben Fund members and is just one of many new therapies on offer at St Michael's Lodge.

If you would like to know more about St Michael's or apply to be treated there, go to www.wmpben.co.uk

How to book your stay

All West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund members can apply to stay at the convalescence and rehabilitation centre.


Your application, however, must be supported by medical evidence from a medical practitioner.

We would like to reassure visitors that the treatment facility will be operating under strict Covid rules and these will be communicated to members at the time of booking.

John Williams, chair of the Ben Fund, said: "You can see from the pictures here that St Michael's Lodge offers pretty impressive facilities and wide-ranging treatment options for members. I'm sure you'll agree that it's a very worthy benefit for the minimal monthly subscription fee to the fund."

[Get more details.](#)





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head in the sand
Your financial future
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Let the Federation help you with a free confidential one-to-one Financial MOT.

Your meeting could help you manage the financial issues that may arise throughout your police career and into retirement.

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 Police Federation and provide detailed information on the range of pensions and schemes available to you.

Contact the Federation to arrange your free, confidential one to one support.

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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, 2021

"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, 2021

"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, 2021

"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, 2021

"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, 2021

"Just spoken to Caroline – not only do pensions make sense for the first time ever, I have been given some additional information I didn't even know I needed! What an asset to Polfed – I am reassured my money is well spent on Fed subs and represents great value with every contact I have. Thank you all."

Serving police officer 2021



GeorgeBurrows 

Police Federation of England and Wales Annual Conference 2021

A conference with a difference

The annual national Police Federation conference has always been a fixture of the policing year.

Slimmed down in the wake of the Normington review of the Federation, it is now held over two days rather than the four and a half days that had been the norm.

But in both 2019 and 2020 the conference was cancelled all together, with the 2019 event being affected by the cyber-attack on Federation systems and last year's conference put off as the pandemic took hold.

So there was understandably a real desire to ensure this year's conference went ahead and the only option really was a virtual event.

Jon Nott, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, said: "The conference brings together all the big names in policing and gives Federation representatives an opportunity to take part in debates on current issues. It is fair to say it was more difficult for delegates to fully engage in a virtual event but nevertheless the content of conference was relevant, topical and interesting.

"In this our conference special, we cover all the conference sessions but you can also view all sessions yourself using the on-demand service. Simply email events@polfed.org and you will be sent a link."

20 21 | POLICING UNDER PRESSURE

PM thanks officers



Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Boris Johnson delivered a message of thanks and support at the opening of the conference.

The Prime Minister issued a 'huge thank you' to officers for their work during the pandemic and praised them for rising 'to an enormous challenge'.

In a recorded message, he said: "Just as I could never have imagined being forced to close pubs and bars and restaurants or tell people how many households could get together, I bet that policing restrictions in that way was not something you ever dreamt you would be doing.

"But you did it because you knew it was how we were going to protect the NHS and save lives."

He added: "You have shown over the past year just why British police are the best in the world, now we are going to make sure you have the tools you need to deal with criminals, make our streets safer, and get on with the job you signed up to do."

Chair reflects on challenging year in keynote speech

Police Federation chair John Apter has reflected on an extraordinary year in his keynote speech to this year's annual conference.

John said officers found themselves in unprecedented situations and often felt they were held responsible when things went wrong.

He noted assaults on officers shot up during the coronavirus pandemic as they became the focus of public anger and frustration.

The chair told members: "This past year has been one of the most challenging and one of the most extraordinary for us all in recent history.

"For the past 15 months we have been required to police in a way that none of us ever expected to when we joined the job.

"We knew it was never going to be easy. But our job was made even harder by the ever changing rules and regulations."

He told Home Secretary Priti Patel, who also addressed the conference: "We had officers going out on patrol literally hours after the new regulations were introduced.

"They had often received no detailed briefing because the laws had only just been passed, which meant they were often going out on patrol with no specific detail about what the change meant for policing.

"There was no discussion about how to deal with the new laws or the new guidance. And let's be honest Home Secretary, the rules were not always crystal clear."

Admitting there were 'some mistakes' as a result, he said that the police had unfairly become the focus of blame.

He said: "Despite our best efforts, there were some mistakes and that was inevitable given the circumstances and policing has never shied away from saying so. But my colleagues, who had been put in an impossible position, became the focus of blame.

"My colleagues, who were doing their very best, every single day, in the most



National Police Federation chair John Apter.

difficult of circumstances they became the focus of public anger and frustration.

"And for some perverse reason, some chose to see us as the enemy. We were labelled the villains of the pandemic and that is grossly unfair.

"A minority of people - and let's be honest about this: often agitators intent on causing mayhem - focused their anger and often violence on police officers.

"Well, I have a message to those who goaded my colleagues, a message to those who attacked police officers who were simply doing their job and to those vile people who weaponised Covid by coughing and spitting at my colleagues, often saying they had Covid and they hope the officer caught it and died.

"To those individuals: you disgust me,

you completely disgust me. And I know that you disgust every decent, law-abiding person."

John said officers were also facing 'trial by media' on a daily basis.

He told the conference: "My colleagues are being hung out to dry by the media, by some politicians and by so-called, self-proclaimed experts on policing."

And calling on the Home Secretary for her support, he said: "We need you to speak out when you see footage of police officers being attacked on social media. When we see people reaching for their phone, not to dial 999 for help, but reaching for their phone to film an attack for nothing more than entertainment.

“This past year has been one of the most challenging and one of the most extraordinary for us all in recent history.”

"Social media companies must also take more responsibility and the Government must ensure this happens. What kind of society have we become when attacking police officers is seen as nothing more than entertainment, nothing more than a sport?

"Or when selective clips of video are released without context and then those in positions of responsibility who should know better condemn the actions of officers without knowing all the facts."

John finished his keynote speech by pointing out that police pay had fallen by 18 per cent in real terms in the past 10 years and that most officers were also currently affected by the public sector pay freeze.

He said: "As police officers, we don't have the same rights as others. We can't strike, we can't take industrial action if we feel we have been treated unfairly and we can't withdraw our labour.

"We also have restrictions on our private lives, unlike most other workers. For years, successive governments have respected this. They have recognised that, in the absence of those industrial rights, police officers should be treated fairly, but in recent years this has changed.

"Well Home Secretary, if that is the case, then it may be time for some other changes."

Officer sends clear message in Covid jab row

A question from a Devon and Cornwall officer working at the G7 summit was included in the national chair's keynote speech.

In a pre-recorded video which John Apter introduced as part of his address to Home Secretary Priti Patel, 26-year-old Leanne Gould said: "I'm concerned about the amount of people travelling down to G7 this week and the fact that I have not been vaccinated and many of us haven't, especially with new Indian variant that is spreading.

"When the vaccination programme was confirmed I thought the police would be prioritised after the most vulnerable, like our NHS colleagues on the frontline were. I do feel completely let down by the Government as we've just been left exposed to the enormous risk of catching the virus.

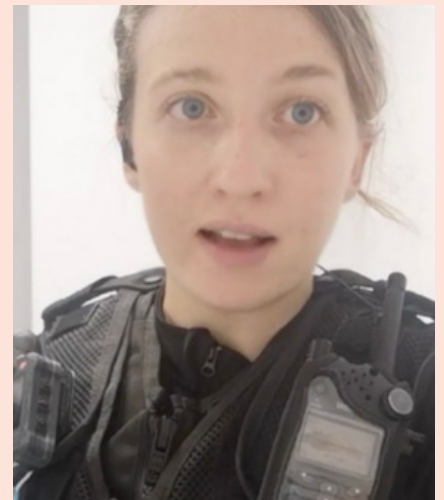
"Day to day we deal with members of the public who do not always respect Covid regulations and PPE restrictions. My colleagues have been spat at and bitten and we are in constant close proximity to the public due to the nature of the job. Where is our protection and why have police officers been pushed aside and our safety not considered?"

John had already told Ms Patel the lack of any officer-specific vaccination programme remained a Government failing he did not understand.

"Home Secretary, I appreciate we may not always agree on everything, but on many areas you have listened and you have acted," he said,

"But there is more needed to protect our members. One such protection was the vaccination of police officers against the deadly virus. Since December last year, we have been highlighting our grave concerns that police officers had not been prioritised for vaccination unlike a number of other countries who did choose to protect their police officers.

"We pointed out that the very nature of policing means officers have to get up close and personal and we can't always plan or mitigate risk. I made very clear the



Leanne Gould.

danger this presents, not only to our officers and their families, but also to the wider community too. I warned you that by the nature of the job they do, officers could be super spreaders."

He continued: "This was never about calling for police officers to elbow their way to the front of the queue - it was right that the most vulnerable and colleagues from the NHS were prioritised for the vaccine but after these, police officers, because of what is expected of them, should have been next.

"You said you understood and you indicated that my colleagues would be prioritised for the vaccine in Phase 2 of the vaccination roll-out. But then, for a number of reasons that still baffle me today, this wasn't progressed. Warm words became lame actions and the result is that that my colleagues feel a deep sense of betrayal by Government.

"We have young police officers who, by age alone, will not have been vaccinated but are working at G7. How can that be right? Leanne and her colleagues are doing their very best and she speaks for all of us about how badly let down we do feel.

"This is a failing of Government and it's a failing that we can never forget."

Home Secretary praises officers and says 'I have got your backs'

Home Secretary Priti Patel has told Police Federation members the country depends on them and pledged: "I have got your backs."

In her keynote speech to the Police Federation of England and Wales' annual conference, the Home Secretary praised the courage shown by frontline officers throughout the coronavirus crisis.

She told them: "On behalf of the whole country, thank you for still being there for us during one of the toughest moments in our country's history.

"You have done it superbly well and courageously."

Ms Patel acknowledged a rise in the number of attacks on officers as protests swept the country last summer and described such behaviour as "grotesque".

She said: "It's a cruel irony that while most crimes naturally fell during lockdown, violence and abuse directed at police officers increased.

"You were spat and coughed at by thugs claiming to have the virus. Some of you were seriously injured and your vans were set on fire during the despicable events in Bristol earlier this year.

"Police were bloodied and pelted with bottles in Hyde Park in April."

Assaults on constables without injury increased by 21 per cent to 25,156 in the year to December 2020 and attacks resulting in injury rose by 2 per cent to more than 11,000, figures branded 'shocking' by the Home Secretary.

She said: "This behaviour is grotesque. And I will never accept that it's simply part of the job.

"It is an attack on the fabric of our society. And every police uniform is worn by a human being who is entitled to dignity and respect.

"The right to protest and speak freely does not include the right to smash up property, or abuse police officers."

Ms Patel confirmed the Government was doubling the maximum prison sentence for common assault or battery against emergency workers from twelve months to



Home Secretary Priti Patel.

two years.

She said: "I will continue to do everything in my power to ensure assaults on our police are treated with the appropriate severity across the whole criminal justice system.

“As we come out of coronavirus, we must cut crime and build back safer - and we can't do it without you.”

"Those who have contempt for the police may be louder and more vitriolic than ever, but they are vastly outnumbered and utterly wrong.

"Far from feeling any shame in being a police officer, you all should feel very proud indeed. We have also acted in response to what you said about the tools and powers you need."

Ms Patel insisted she would not let the police be subjected to trial by social media and said she supported calls to release more

body-worn video footage of incidents.

She told the conference: "That's why I backed the Police Federation's call for forces to share body-worn video footage to counter highly selective, and misleading, video clips uploaded on to social media.

"I want forces to be more proactive in sharing body-worn video footage to highlight the fantastic work of their officers, to build public confidence, and to correct harmful misinformation circulating online.

"It is critical that we work as a system to ensure that we maintain public confidence in policing, which is vital for victim reporting, intelligence-led policing, and to maintain our treasured model of policing by consent.

"As part of this process, we will be looking carefully at strengthening the system of local community scrutiny and the value of body-worn video, because transparency is vital."

Ms Patel said the police had played a heroic role bringing the country through the incredible shock of the coronavirus pandemic.

She told Federation members: "As we come out of coronavirus, we must cut crime and build back safer - and we can't do it without you.

"Without you, we would not have dealt so many recent blows to serious and organised crime, including Operation Venetic - the UK's biggest ever law enforcement operation.

"Without you, our drive to dismantle county lines drugs gangs would not have yielded such incredible results.

"Without you, thousands of weapons would not have been taken off our streets, as we crack down on serious violence. Without you, we could not combat terrorism.

"Without you, more young people would make bad choices and ruin lives, including their own. Without you, the public would not feel safe. Without you, criminals would run riot and this country would fall apart.

"Our country depends on you. And I have got your backs."

Q and A WITH HOME SECRETARY



National chair John Apter and Home Secretary Priti Patel.

Following the keynote speeches from national chair John Apter and Home Secretary Priti Patel, facilitator Ian Collins remarked on the good working relationship the two appeared to enjoy.

John said: "Our dialogue is positive and open but I don't sugar-coat anything. That works both ways though and I'm often on the naughty step."

The Q & A session that followed their addresses prompted numerous questions.

Ken Marsh, chair of the Metropolitan Police Federation, said colleagues had been forced to 'beg, borrow or steal' vaccinations and treated with contempt.

Ms Patel said she did not recognise his statement, adding: "The Government worked with the committee (the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation) and followed their advice. That's not about letting people down. This time last year people were dying and the elderly and vulnerable were in desperate need so the committee was having to make life and death decisions. Officers are now being vaccinated and are covered by the cohorting and age ranges and the vaccination programme has been phenomenal."

John added: "I felt so let down on behalf of my colleagues. When I had the Home Secretary and chief constables supporting me on getting them vaccinated, I was hopeful. So I felt shattered when it didn't turn into the decision my colleagues

wanted."

Another question from the Met was around the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and its lack of accountability.

The Home Secretary said the IOPC is 'absolutely' accountable to her. She said: "I meet and work with them and we have made great strides. I have told them this end-to-end approach and putting officers' lives on hold is unacceptable and as a result they have changed their practice. But I need to hear from the frontline because if we need to do more, we will."

John said more improvement was still needed, adding: "The IOPC have done well but they must do better. For us, they are on probation."

Another Metropolitan Police question was around police forces being representative of 'the diverse multinational society' of the UK and the Home Secretary responded by saying she was 'really proud of the work around diversity and outreach that takes place in policing'.

A slightly different diversity question came from a Sussex officer who joined at the age of 39. He asked the Home Secretary if she thought the low starting salary meant the job was unappealing to older candidates who 'could bring a great deal of life experience to the job'.

She said "I do want to encourage more people to come to policing later in life because they have the experience that will benefit policing at all levels and in different

ways and as crime changes, policing must change. There are changes being made at the college and it's also about how we invest in officers," she said.

John added: "We changed the way we recruited and attracted and I do think the messaging was wrong from the college because it definitely put people who were more mature off. I want to see more mature

“ We are committed to making sure the lowest paid absolutely do get a pay rise. ”

people coming in but while recruitment is important, retention is as important. We've got to try to harness those people with the skills they've developed over many years."

As the session came to an end, the Home Secretary was asked if she had an over-riding final message. She said: "There's a lot I could say but primarily it's enormous thanks and gratitude for the public service our officers give and have shown over the last 12 months.

"Policing has been front and centre throughout and policing has helped stop the spread of the virus and it has helped to saved lives so thanks to everybody who has been out there.

"We know we've got new challenges as we come out of lockdown but from my perspective that's about backing the police and giving officers all the support they need to get on and do their job. And we are committed to making sure the lowest paid absolutely do get a pay rise."

“ There's a lot I could say but primarily it's enormous thanks and gratitude for the public service our officers give and have shown over the last 12 months. ”

Police minister says service is coming out of the pandemic in better shape than it went in

Policing minister Kit Malthouse has acknowledged the pressure the police found themselves under at the height of the coronavirus crisis but insisted they have always enjoyed the full support of the Government and the vast majority of the public.

Mr Malthouse said he stood 'square-shouldered' with frontline officers who had been asked to carry out their normal duties while also policing lockdown restrictions with great courage and professionalism.

And he told the Police Federation of England and Wales' annual conference that, despite the unprecedented challenges of the last 18 months, officers had managed to maintain and probably improved public trust during the pandemic.

He said: "Policing is coming out of the pandemic in better shape than it went in."

The minister admitted he regretted not doing more to ensure police officers were prioritised in the Covid vaccine programme.

Asked why the Government did not place more pressure on the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to prioritise officers, he told a virtual panel discussion: "We made the case strongly about police officers. We did repeatedly make the case and make the request but obviously the JCVI made the decision that they did."

"From my point of view, it's a point of regret that we didn't manage to make our point strongly enough."

"Having said that, as was said earlier, quite a number of officers managed to get vaccinated with spare vaccines, hopefully now everybody is done or will be done shortly."

The opening event of this year's Federation conference, the theme of which is Policing Under Pressure, saw a live panel featuring Mr Malthouse, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) chair Martin Hewitt, shadow policing minister Sarah Jones and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of



Policing minister Kit Malthouse.

Constabulary Sir Tom Winsor.

Mr Hewitt praised the response of police officers but admitted frequent changes in legislation had presented extraordinary challenges for both the police service and the Government.

He said: "Officers did their job in the environment they were doing it. We were often operating where we had different regulations in different countries."

"At the beginning it was hard to anticipate what was happening – we worked very closely with officials in the Home Office. What we do have to accept is how complex it was for the Government."

"Every force faced different situations - the rules were the same, but every day officers quite rightly used their discretion on the ground."

Labour MP Ms Jones accused ministers of failing to properly support the police as they were forced to adapt to frequent changes to legislation during the three



Shadow policing minister Sarah Jones.

national lockdowns.

Sir Tom paid tribute to the police response during the pandemic and dismissed social media criticism of how officers had handled the ever-changing landscape during lockdown.

He said while not perfect, the police performance had been 'very, very good' and deserved high marks of nine out of 10.

Sir Tom told the panel discussion: "I would give the Government pretty high marks for the way they have handled policing."

"They would lose marks because the pandemic was challenging – the changes in regulations were very rapid. The last set of regulations were 120 pages long."

"Overall, the national leadership and political support was really good. Of course, there were mistakes - the drones in Derbyshire were seized upon by papers, but police officers deserve high marks and the Government credit."

“Every force faced different situations - the rules were the same, but every day officers quite rightly used their discretion on the ground.”

Winner of Women in Policing Award 2021 dedicates title to domestic abuse victims

A former victim of domestic violence has received the Outstanding Contribution to Women in Policing Award 2021 having shared her own experience to help others.

Chief inspector Sharon Baker at Avon and Somerset Police accepted the award during this year's annual national Federation conference.

Ch Insp Baker said she was accepting it on behalf of all the victims who were still suffering.

"I hope this award shines the light on the darkness and shows you that you're not alone," she added.

Ch Insp Baker clinched the title for her outstanding work around domestic violence, including a powerful video she made sharing her own story of living in a controlling and abusive relationship.

The video, which has been viewed by thousands, calls on other victims to open up about their abuse, urging them to find help and support as soon as possible.

"It's such an honour to have even been considered for the award," she said, adding: "I still can't believe it."

Ch Insp Baker said the work she had done has only been possible because of the help she has received from so many others.

"I'll be forever grateful that I was believed, listened to and cared for,"



Chief Inspector Sharon Baker.

continued Ch Insp Baker, who explained that victims of domestic abuse were everywhere.

"There's no them, there's only us. They are our crew mates, our bosses and the people on the other end of the phone.

"This award is really for the victims who are still suffering."

Introducing the award, Dame Cressida

Dick, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, said she was 'absolutely delighted' to be recognising 'outstanding women' in the police service.

"It's been a tough year for everyone," she said, "It's been a year of challenges but also great achievements. Within every rank and role, women have played a huge part in the policing this year."

Brave officers recognised

Police Bravery Award nominees were recognised during this year's conference.

The Police Bravery Awards 2020 ceremony was postponed due to the ongoing pandemic but is hopefully set to take place later this year.

TV's Mark Durden-Smith, who presents the annual Police Bravery Awards, hosted a segment during the first day of conference.

"Every year, we hear about the awe-inspiring actions of these officers," he said, "These awards are a chance to give these people a deserved pat on the back, to honour the bravest men and women who serve our communities.

"Everyone in that room is left in awe of these officers, who continue to show

incredible acts of bravery."

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 ceremony was postponed multiple times but will hopefully be taking place this October.

During the conference, the 2021 event, which is set to take place in December and with nominees yet to be revealed, was referenced.

"There are so many wows when it comes to the Police Bravery Awards," Mark added, "And it's not just the nominees we should recognise. It's all serving officers who put their lives on the line to protect the public.

"Thank you for all you do for us. I look forward to hopefully seeing you later this year."



TV's Mark Durden-Smith.

Pay, conditions and pensions: 'We need to get our message out more'



Facilitator Alastair Campbell (above) and national secretary of Police Federation of England and Wales Alex Duncan (right).

The Federation has to be the unequivocal voice of policing, getting its message out more and rallying together, the Federation's national secretary told a conference session looking at pay, conditions and pensions.

The session was facilitated by Tony Blair's former spokesperson, Alastair Campbell, who recently appeared as a host on the breakfast TV programme Good Morning Britain, and featured inputs from Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) national secretary Alex Duncan and deputy secretary John Partington.

"As we come out of the pandemic and we return to normality, I think it's beholding on PFEW to be the unequivocal voice of policing. We need to get our message out more – we will all have different opinions, but it's important we rally together," Alex said.

John added: "We have to realise how powerful we can be when we come together with a united front."

Time was spent discussing the uncertainty around pensions with Alex explained there were officers who had no

pension forecast, no idea of when they could retire and no details of what they would be entitled to.

But he said the Federation was working with the Government and further guidance was imminent, including a pension calculator tool that was being tested.

Asked why the issues had not been resolved by Government, Alex conceded: "I think they want to resolve it but it is incredibly complex."

And he also stressed that he understood why members were frustrated, particularly since some officers were leaving policing on the wrong pension, something that could not be resolved until the Government issued its guidance on the remedy to the

discrimination found in the introduction of the 2015 pension scheme.

Moving on from pensions, both Alex and John were critical of the fact that the Federation had lost negotiating rights in the pay review process, with the Government also being free not to abide by the recommendations of the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) to which the Federation made a submission each year.

John said: "We put a lot of evidence forward each year – the Government can choose to ignore this. We negotiate the best we can, but it's a very complex arena. There is evidence of officers going to food banks, having pay day loans. It's not right for the job they do – they should be given the right amount of pay."

He argued that the Federation put forward its case, backed by evidence and while they were listened to, their views were often not taken notice of or were overlooked.

Officer morale, John said, was decreasing due to pay, pensions and the fact they were not respected by all communities.

Alex added that the Federation's role was being wrongly diminished by the refusal of Government to allow any appeal or arbitration when the annual pay claim is assessed by PRRB.

He added: "The Home Secretary elects the areas they can look at. The Home Secretary can either accept our evidence or not – there's no right of appeal or arbitration."

The issue of further industrial rights was raised by Mr Campbell and Alex admitted: "We have to be careful what we wish for. You don't hear about all-out strikes where it ends well."

He also pointed out that with industrial rights employers would get the right to make people redundant.

“The Home Secretary elects the areas they can look at. The Home Secretary can either accept our evidence or not – there's no right of appeal or arbitration.”

Officer welfare put to the fore in huge policing operations

West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott says he's pleased officers' needs and welfare are being considered by the organisers of two huge events.

Glasgow is set to host the UN's Climate Change Conference (COP26) later this year while Birmingham is due to stage the Commonwealth Games next year.

Jon was part of a conference round table discussion about mutual aid – the provision of policing assistance from one force to another – during which the welfare of officers working at the two events was discussed.

Glasgow is set to host the UN's Climate Change Conference (COP26) later this year while Birmingham is due to stage the Commonwealth Games next year.

“What was pleasing to hear from both speakers was that the Gold Commander from both operations is putting officer welfare as a priority for these deployments.”

Jon was joined by the Federation's national treasurer Simon Kempton and the Scottish Police Federation's Gordon Forsyth, assistant to the general secretary (health and safety), for the discussion.

Speaking after the conference, Jon said: “What was pleasing to hear from both speakers was that the Gold Commander from both operations is putting officer welfare as a priority for these deployments.

“These should be two completely different styles of operations – the Commonwealth Games should be a real community engagement type operation.

“I've personally visited all of the proposed accommodation sites for mutual aid officers and all are single occupancy en suite rooms with hot catering facilities on site.

“The Force has also secured venues near to the deployment sites that officers can go to while on their rest break. This is out of view of the public and will be somewhere they can switch off and relax while on their break and getting their mid-shift meal.

“There will be support for officers at both deployments from Federation reps and welfare vans and, in terms of COP26, there will be dual support due to Scotland having different laws and regulations.

“It's pleasing to see both operations have engaged with the Federation so early on to try to ensure officers needs and welfare are considered and that they can learn from previous deployment to try to make it easier and smoother for officers coming on mutual aid, deployed to the games and carrying on with policing the Force area.”

The discussion also covered changes to and issues involving mutual aid which need

clarifying. These included accommodation, allowances, kit, and subsistence, while vaccinations, social distancing and Covid-secure measures were among the topics addressed.

Simon said many members do not see or understand the work and pre-planning done by Fed reps about mutual aid.

He said: “Mutual aid is not a jolly – our members need to be valued. It's about the Fed challenging – in some cases the planners' assumptions are wrong, and it's the Fed who are the useful critical friend to get the best outcome for members.

“Get the money right, get the accommodation right and get the food right.”

“It's about making sure solicitors, reps and welfare support are available on the ground.”

Simon said the key to mutual aid was down to three main factors - “Get the money right, get the accommodation right and get the food right.”

He also explained members' confusion over overnight allowances was commonplace, and that being away from home was not enough to qualify for the allowance.

But he added: “Mutual aid should mean overnight allowance. It's been £50 for too long – it's out of date. There should be a two-tier overnight allowance and, if members are held in reserve, they should get more than that.

“At PFEW, we're not going to stop pushing the Home Office and chiefs. It is only right members should feel valued.”

Forces urged to be braver in releasing body-worn video

Police forces need to be braver in releasing body-worn video in response to officers being tried on social media, the Police Federation's annual conference has heard.

John Apter, chair of the Federation, said that where it was appropriate and legally sound to do so, body-worn video (BWV) should be made public to counterbalance unfair, edited and out of context social media clips.

John said: "Forces need to be braver in putting body-worn video out to redress the balance. It's incumbent on us as Federations to liaise with our chief officer team and, where we're legally able to do this, we need to push out that body-worn video because what it does show, invariably, is certainly not what is being portrayed in that 20-second clip.

"If you look at the context, it shows that police officers are doing incredibly well in the most difficult and challenging of circumstances."

John was speaking during a session on Day 2 of the conference titled Trial By Media alongside criminal barrister and TV broadcaster Robert Rinder and former BBC home affairs correspondent Danny Shaw.

In a vote of delegates, 93 per cent said they wanted forces to share BWV to set the record straight when footage of incidents were posted on social media.

The session began with an anonymous officer sharing their harrowing experience of being vilified on social media.

“It's about understanding not just the law, but it's understanding you are in the presence of people filming you and that radically changes the complexion of how you police and communicate, and that needs training and thinking.”



Federation chair John Apter (left) with Robert Rinder (centre) and Danny Shaw.

"What myself and my family has gone through is crushing and still haunts us today," they said, "I don't want anyone to go through what I have when I was simply doing my job."

Robert Rinder called for a transformation of the way policing responds when officers are vilified in the media.

He said: "There needs to be better training for young officers, for everybody out there, especially if you're doing on the beat policing. It's about understanding not just

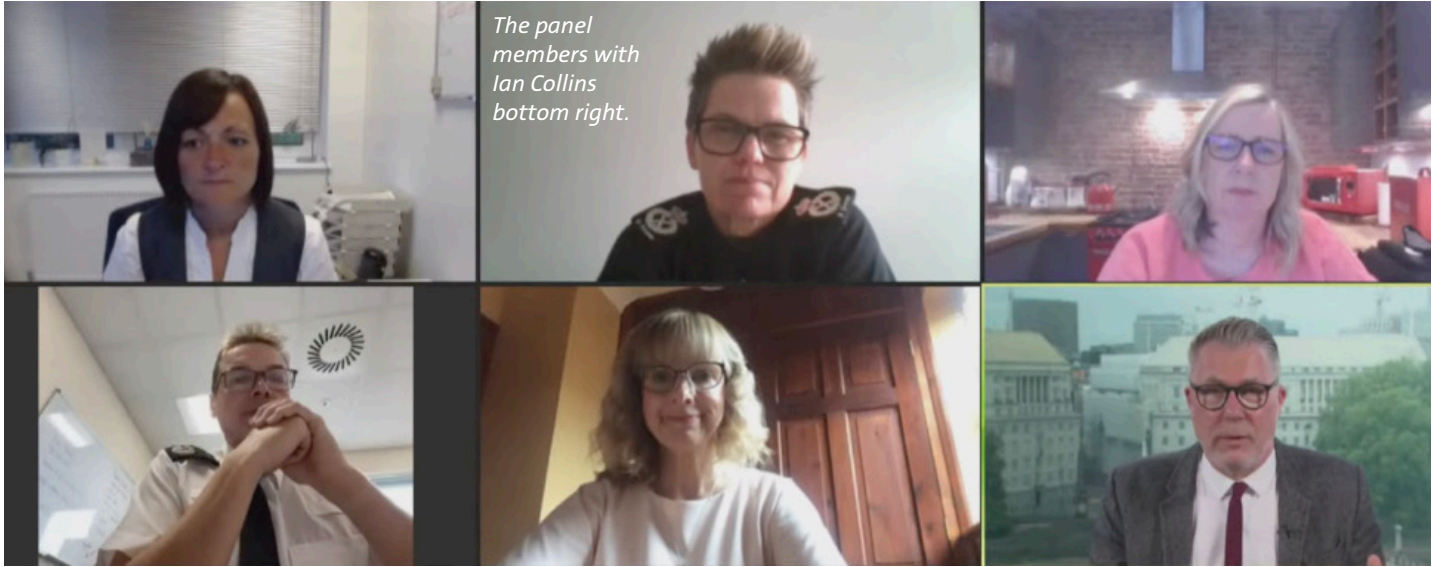
the law, but it's understanding you are in the presence of people filming you and that radically changes the complexion of how you police and communicate, and that needs training and thinking.

"Policing in 2021 needs a meaningful, creative, national strategy about how our community police communicate on social media and use those channels for themselves."

Robert added: "We have a 1990s – at best – media response to a 2021 media landscape."

Danny Shaw, head of strategy and insight at criminal justice and communications consultancy Crest Advisory, said there was a distinction between mainstream and social media, and how they treat the types of clips being discussed.

He said: "There's a difference between mainstream media and social media. It's a bit like walking into a private members' club on a quiet Saturday afternoon and going into a pub at closing time. People are shouting at each other on social media, mainstream media has a filter."



Understanding misogyny in policing

Jokes about gender are as unacceptable as those about race and sexuality, the annual Police Federation conference was told.

The pervasive nature of misogyny came under the spotlight in a session hosted by the Federation's self-organised national women's group.

Members heard how female officers still faced discrimination at work with group chair Zoë Wakefield giving examples of abusive social media messages she and others had received.

Zoë told the session that women often received negative comments from male colleagues about their fitness for the job.

National Police Chiefs' Council gender lead and Derbyshire Chief Constable Rachel Swann said misogynistic comments were too often dismissed as 'banter' which was no longer acceptable.

She said: "It isn't about not having fun. Having a laugh is important for de-stressing but it shouldn't come at someone else's expense.

"We've made other kinds of banter around sexuality and race off limits, but it still seems gender is OK to joke about."

Sue Honeywill, a Devon and Cornwall sergeant, branch vice-chair and member of the national women's group, suggested female officers who opted to work part-

time for childcare purposes often faced discrimination.

The mother-of-five said: "When it happened to me, I was still the same person, with the same abilities to offer the Force. The only difference was, I was part-time."

“ It isn't about not having fun. Having a laugh is important for de-stressing but it shouldn't come at someone else's expense. ”

Federation national wellbeing secretary Belinda Goodwin told the session: "You still get eye rolls when you talk about 'female' issues.

"It's just about creating change and bringing barriers down so we can discuss things properly."

Assistant Chief Constable Mark Travis

from South Wales Police delivered a presentation on gender discrimination in the workplace which revealed as many as 90 per cent of female officers in Wales said they had experienced sexual harassment at work.

Mark said: "When we talk to people who experience this harassment, they don't want things to escalate, they don't want a big, formal process, they just want the behaviour to stop.

"They just want respect, a good attitude, and to be treated professionally."

Our rep's views

"It would be helpful if forces and PSDs actually took reports of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the workplace seriously and dealt with cases robustly rather than seeking to minimise, downplay or even victimise the victim as part of their investigation. This might give female police officers greater confidence in the workplace. Currently there seems to be too much of a focus in my opinion, on getting the language right."

Steve Grange, West Midlands Police Federation secretary.

New recruits praised by panel

There was no shortage of praise for new recruits during a panel session at this year's annual conference, with those who have been forced to complete virtual training due to the pandemic called 'resilient' and 'nothing short of commendable'.

A session on recruitment during the Covid-19 crisis looked at the impact learning virtually has had on the latest officers joining the team.

With an ambitious target of an extra 20,000 officers to have joined the force by 2023, concerns were raised about the impact virtual training has had on new recruits, with Federation roads policing lead and National Board member Gemma Fox recognising that newcomers have been immediately asked to put both themselves and their families at risk.

She said: "What we've asked of them, is to pick up a uniform, to put it on and get on with it. They have done exactly that while putting themselves at risk of coronavirus, as well as risking taking the virus back home with them."

With new recruits forced to learn online for the past 15 months, it prompted Dave Bamber to ask whether new recruits would be 'match fit'.

"We've got to hope they are," continued Dave, national Federation lead for professional development and issues related to the College of Policing.

"What we can't deny is the impact that the last year has had on our officers and members. Young officers have been forced to learn independently, online and virtually. We need to get an understanding of what effect that has had on them.



"What needs to be acknowledged is, none of this is at the fault of our officers."

Deputy Chief Constable Janette McCormick QPM, programme director for the Police Uplift Programme, said that the pandemic has brought with it personal and professional challenges for both current and new members of staff across the force.

"We've all had to adapt, which means we've started recruiting virtually and investing in training online," she added, "What has been fantastic is to have been so supported by the Federation."

Jo Noakes, director of workforce development at the College of Policing supported Janette's comments, stating that she was 'confident' forces would see a set of great quality new recruits.

She explained that they have

'transformed' learning programmes for new recruits: "This gives us hope and certainty that new recruits will respond well as restrictions ease."

As well as recruitment, emphasis was also on retention and the significance of finding out why people are choosing to leave the service early.

“We've all had to adapt, which means we've started recruiting virtually and investing in training online.”

"We really need to understand the reasons why. If we don't understand this, then chief officers won't be able to make the necessary changes," said Gemma, adding: "Lots more can be, and should be, done around retention."

Gemma also highlighted the importance of recruiting more staff from diverse backgrounds, adding: "We welcome anyone from any background into the police service."

Jo echoed her comments, saying: "A really positive thing that the Government has done is to recognise the importance of bringing in minority groups."

She continued to explain that one of the benefits to come from online learning is that it has allowed more recruits from diverse backgrounds to take part.



Dave Bamber, national Federation lead for professional development.



Deputy Chief Constable Janette McCormick QPM.



Metropolitan Police Sergeant Nikki O'Malley spoke about her experience, working on the frontline at riots.

Policing Protests: **national chair urges forces to prioritise officers' safety**

"My view will always fall on the side of officer safety," national chair John Apter told delegates during a conference session on policing protests.

The segment focussed on the protests that have taken place over the past year and whether more needs to be done on educating the public on the role of the police during these sometimes violent demonstrations.

During the conference, John warned against taking advantage of the goodwill shown by officers, who continue to want to protect the public, despite the situation.

"No matter how difficult and dangerous the work is, they love it," he said, "Don't take advantage of that and their willingness to step up. They need to be looked after by all forces.

"We have the best police force in the world. We don't have to do a lot to make people feel valued and wanted."

Speaking about the fact that frontline officers are not always required to wear

protective kit when working at protests, he argued that there were more concerns about how they will look in the protective gear rather than prioritising staff safety.

"That's how it feels," added John, who also voiced his concerns for new recruits, especially the younger ones, saying that public order policing "is a skill and can be scary".

"We have good people on the frontline but there just aren't as many staff anymore and a lot of them are young."

Looking to the summer ahead, John said that the force will 'throw whatever' it needs to, to protect the public.

"Policing reacts to crisis," he explained, "The pressure cooker of frustration has built up and we had a taste of it last summer."

He continued to admit that forces needed to look at the way they respond to protests and ask themselves if it is right.

"What does the future look like for us?" he asked, referencing changes in legislation later this year which could lead to officers

getting extra powers to protect themselves and the public.

Among those who joined John was Metropolitan Police Sergeant Nikki O'Malley, who spoke about her experience, working on the frontline at protests, including one in which she was not wearing protective kit, resulting in her getting injured.

Avon and Somerset Chief Constable Andy Marsh and Inspector Kim Brown of Cumbria Constabulary were also part of the conversation.

CC Marsh defended his Force's actions during the toppling of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol. He insisted that if officers had intervened to prevent the statue from being rolled into the river they may have been seriously injured.

The group discussed whether the public and media should be better educated on the role of the police, especially at protests.

John said: "I've been relentless in my messaging to the media, not only in support of officers but also educating the public too on why we do something in a certain way."

He recognised that some chief officers worked closely with the media, locally, he also said that there is so much more that could be done nationally.

"The Police Federation has got a part to play, and we will continue to do our best to provide that education," he added.

“Policing reacts to crisis. The pressure cooker of frustration has built up and we had a taste of it last summer.”



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New conduct regs – but do we have a new culture?

It is not the end of journey, and adjustments still need to be made but it is absolutely clear that we are moving in the right direction in terms of embedding a culture of learning and development rather than sanction and punishment with police conduct proceedings.

That was the message given to delegates at a conference session asking New Regs – New Culture?

Phill Matthews, conduct and performance lead for the national Federation, said that relations between the Federation and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) had improved and he thanked the police watchdog's director general Michael Lockwood for his efforts to overhaul the system.

As a sign of the progress made, Phill will soon be giving the Federation's first input into IOPC investigators' training.

But he said there were some issues with forces adjusting to the new raised bar for conduct proceedings and the performance improvement and reflective practice procedures introduced with the new conduct regulations in February last year.

Much of the session focussed on the timeliness of conduct inquiries which all agreed was essential for police officers, complainants the reputation of the complaints system as a whole.

Phill explained: "I listened intently to both the policing minister and the Home Secretary yesterday when they were asked about it (a time limit) and they just didn't get the issue, which is a real shame.

"We want them to meet with us because so far we've been asking to meet with them to explain our viewpoint and



Clockwise from top left: the session featured Phill Matthews, Chief Constable Craig Guildford, Ian Collins, Michael Lockwood and Ian Balbi, head of police discipline policy at the Home Office.

they haven't wanted to meet with us. We're not asking for a finite cut off where it goes over this time and you lose it. What we want is something that's fair both to our members and to the complainants".

Mr Lockwood said there would be times, where a case was complex or there were vulnerable victims, where cases might go over the 12-month limit the Federation would like to see on investigations.

"It's important that we're accountable for those and that's why we will write to the appropriate authority to explain that, but my emphasis is making sure nothing goes beyond 12 months - and to reinforce that we're setting targets for nine and six months for the next year," he explained.

He stressed that there should be a real emphasis on learning not just for individual officers but also for forces themselves.

"I get no satisfaction to keep dealing with things going on – how can we stop them happening? The learning element isn't

just a tap on the shoulder and a little chat but there's actually some rigour behind it," the director general said.

Phill agreed and said the IOPC had now issued more than 400 learning reports, rather than those involved being sanctioned.

"That's key for us because those 400 reports go to changing the underlying policies and procedures of forces which will prevent our members falling foul of the misconduct system in future," he explained, "We need forces to adopt that learning and rewrite their policies and procedures, so our members don't find themselves on the wrong end of the misconduct arena."

The session also included an update from Ian Balbi, head of police discipline policy at the Home Office, who said embedding the new conduct regulations in forces had been affected by the pandemic since they were only launched weeks before the first lockdown which had impacted on professional standards departments.

Craig Guildford, Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire Police and NPCC lead for complaints and misconduct, welcomed progress that had been made but also urged Federation reps to raise with their chief officers any concerns that reflective practice was not being used in the way it was intended.

“ We're not asking for a finite cut off where it goes over this time and you lose it. What we want is something that's fair both to our members and to the complainants. ”

Wellbeing: 'It's the simple things that need to change'

National wellbeing lead Hayley Aley says that 'even the smallest changes made across the force will have a huge impact' on the welfare of officers, as she joined a conference session called Wellbeing – Whose Responsibility Is It?

Hayley's comments were part of a discussion that focused on the wellbeing of officers, which highlighted the demands of the job, pressures felt by staff and solutions that could help combat wellbeing issues.

Looking ahead, Hayley said she hoped to not be sitting here next year, 'saying the same thing over and over'.

"We've only just opened the box, looking at what pressures are affecting officers," she said, adding: "We need to look at the things that need to change to prevent mental health and the physical issues people are feeling. We need to prevent people from walking away from the workplace because they can't cope.

"It's the simple things that need to change, the day-to-day jobs. Those quick changes will have a long-term impact on the organisation."

Hayley was joined by Met officer and national wellbeing secretary Belinda Goodwin, who said that wellbeing can be broken down into four parts, including mental health, physical wellbeing, financial wellbeing and general wellbeing.

"We have to stop just talking about it," she said, "We need to make fundamental changes to impact the wellbeing across forces."

Also joining the conversation was Chief Constable Andy Rhodes, National Police



National wellbeing lead Hayley Aley.

Wellbeing Service (NPWS) service director at Oscar Kilo, who said it is vital officers who open up about mental health are supported.

"We've given officers the confidence to talk," he said, "The data tells us that people are becoming more confident in sticking their hand up and saying they're struggling with mental health. We need to be able to support them."

Several members of West Mercia Police Federation spoke up about the wellbeing issues felt across the Force, with the branch secretary, Steve Butler, highlighting some of the feedback he had received following a recent survey.

Those participating in the survey had all



Steve Butler.

left the Force and, among other questions, were asked what had contributed to their decision to leave.

"Very recently, within the last month, we had one notification saying that it was down to workload, pressures of the job and paperwork kept increasing," he said, explaining that these comments had come from someone who 'takes pride in being an active officer'.

He added: "Taking criminals off the streets, that gave him the motivation, but it was very rare that he could do this. He found that, more often, he was stuck to his desk."

Steve referenced another participant, this time a sergeant, who said he had become 'fatigued by the job' adding that he had 'only just been promoted' and was already 'ready to leave'.

Steve ended by saying: "Let's not lose sight of why we need to get this right. If these officers break, the significance of these breaks is huge."

“It's the simple things that need to change, the day-to-day jobs. Those quick changes will have a long-term impact on the organisation.”

Clarity needed on use of force

Frontline police must be given greater clarity on the use of force with officers at risk of falling foul of the law under existing guidelines, the 2021 Police Federation of England and Wales conference has heard.

The Federation is campaigning for better standards and education for officers who are forced to make split-second decisions to use force or authorise other officers to do so and the issue came under discussion during the virtual conference.

Scott Ingram, lead lawyer on criminal police misconduct at law firm Slater and Gordon, said police officers needed to be clear on how their actions would be judged after a recent court ruling.

“Take advice, get support, and we’ll do the very best to make sure you get the very best legal advice going.”

He said: “An officer’s decision to use force will be justified based on their honestly held belief so if it is their honest belief about the need to use force they are not going to be found guilty of any criminal offence.

“That’s a subjective test - the honest belief of the officer based on their understanding or their perception of the facts.

“But in misconduct proceedings, because of a Court of Appeal decision, even if an officer has an honestly held belief, they can still be dismissed if a view is taken on an objective level that the belief was unreasonable.

“Most police officer decisions to use force are in quick time, they are in a difficult situation, a stressful scenario, so quite how an officer is expected to be able to weigh up the criminal law test and the misconduct test before they decide to use force is really what identifies the problem here.



Federation firearms and less lethal lead Steve Hartshorn.

“It is far from ideal and needs to be resolved by a decision in the Supreme Court.”

Federation firearms and less lethal lead Steve Hartshorn said: “My concern is this decision, which is authoritative at the moment, affects every strand of policing, it affects the frontline officers who are responding to 999 calls, it affects decision-makers at a senior police leadership level, it might affect a chief constable who wants to effect a policing plan.

“So it is only right that everybody involved - at the front end, in the middle and at the very top - knows exactly what standard they are being assessed and held



Scott Ingram, lead lawyer on criminal police misconduct at Slater and Gordon.

to account by because at some point they will have to justify their decisions either in a criminal court, at a gross misconduct hearing or an inquest.”

And in a message to Police Federation members, Steve added: “If our members have any concerns whatsoever they should go and speak to their Fed reps, speak to their local Federation branch boards, their chairs, their secretaries, who will have received information from us about what this case means.

“So essentially take advice, get support, and we’ll do the very best to make sure you get the best legal advice going.”

“Most police officer decisions to use force are in quick time, they are in a difficult situation, a stressful scenario, so quite how an officer is expected to be able to weigh up the criminal law test and the misconduct test before they decide to use force is really what identifies the problem here.”

New wellbeing toolkit is aimed at detectives

A unique wellbeing toolkit aimed specifically at detectives and investigators was previewed at the annual national Police Federation conference.

Details of the specially-commissioned Oscar Kilo Toolkit were unveiled during a discussion which covered issues such as recruitment, retention and growing fears of officer burn-out.

Detective Chief Superintendent Martin Brunning of the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit said the package could be transformative in terms of improving the emotional wellbeing of detectives and stop them leaving the CID.

He told the session: "This is not a one size fits all or a token gesture. It's got real substance as it comes from a group of people who have been through the pain of having colleagues crashing and burning."

The Investing in the Investigators discussion was led by Staffordshire Police Federation secretary Glyn Pattinson, chair of the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum (PFNDF) which has long campaigned for leaders to provide better support for investigators in relation to the unique pressures they face.

He said: "I know that the toolkit is going to get a big launch on 21 June and I am conscious that as senior officers you understand what it's like to be a detective - been there, seen that, done it.



Thames Valley's Deputy Chief Constable Jason Hogg.

"But that's not always the case with some of our senior command team and executive officers across the country.

"So when the emails and correspondence lands with those officers back in their own forces, what can we as Federation reps do to help you help our members?"

Det Ch Supt Brunning said: "I would plead with everybody to get behind this because it is the product of a lot of people with a lot of experience in investigations who also get what it's like to be a young in service new detective or police staff investigator.

"So when this launches, can I ask you to share it with all your members at force level and have conversations with your chief officer teams around their appetite for this because there is a role for them to play in this by getting right behind it?"

The discussion heard how high workloads, the increasing complexity of investigations and the enormous impact on work life balance had led to once-coveted roles in CID lose their appeal.

Thames Valley's Deputy Chief Constable Jason Hogg, who is also detectives' lead on the National Police Chiefs' Council, said some officers also faced a £1,200 pay-cut when they switched from response to a detective role.

DCC Hogg said a survey by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found 22 per cent of detective posts were vacant and had described it as a 'national crisis'.

He said: "We've done a great deal of work through the Recruitment and Retention of Investigators Working Group in overseeing the development of new specialist routes.

"Every force has a developed action plan for consideration by HMIC and we've encouraged forces to provide target bonus payments. A number are doing these bonuses very well."

DCC Hogg said Thames Valley had enjoyed a recruitment boost after highlighting the detective role, introducing flexi-time working arrangements, covering the costs of books for officers studying, giving time off and offering a bonus payment.

He said: "We promoted flexi-working and job sharing. This is one of the reasons we have more than 50 per cent women applying for our roles."

“Every force has a developed action plan for consideration by HMIC and we've encouraged forces to provide target bonus payments. A number are doing these bonuses very well.”

Privilege comes under scrutiny

Fairness and equality came under the spotlight at the Police Federation's annual national conference with a powerful session examining race, policing and privilege and the impact they have on public confidence and trust.

The session was led by scholar, activist and broadcaster Robert Beckford, a professor of black theology.

Prof Beckford said British society remained one of the most unequal in the western world with unchecked privilege leading to financial and socio-economic consequences across the country.

He told the conference: "We have got to address the subject of privilege because we have got the persistence of structural inequality."

Session host Zac Mader, secretary of the Federation's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and BAME Belief Self-Organised Group, asked how the understanding of privilege could be improved within policing.

Prof Beckford said: "It is about talking about it. Part of the problem is it is not talked about. We need to talk and reflect upon it, to see how we can help in certain circumstances."

"Radical honesty is necessary to address these problems in institutions and



Professor Robert Beckford (left) and session host Zac Mader, secretary of the Federation's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and BAME Belief Self-Organised Group.

organisations. In society we find a way to deny things exist, but we need to be completely honest so we can move forward."

He also said officers should try to educate themselves about the issues around privilege and suggested better training and honest answers to difficult questions were needed to tackle bias and inclusion across policing.

He said: "Think about how you can be an

ally and support under-represented groups to ensure there is a real fairness. The fairness we want to see in public institutions and public life."

The professor called for 'really clear and powerful pathways' for career progression among under-represented groups to help improve an imbalance so the police can better reflect the communities they serve.

We need diverse experiences says equality expert

A leading equality expert has identified three key barriers blocking the recruitment of new police officers from black and Asian communities.

Professor Robert Beckford, an academic, activist and broadcaster, pulled no punches when the issue was raised during a diversity session called The Challenge of Difference at the Police Federation annual conference.

Prof Beckford said the first stumbling block was a perceived lack of integrity within the police service.

He told the conference: "There is a lack of recognition of the negative history of policing black and brown communities, particularly black deaths in custody,

particularly around miscarriages of justice.

"If I was running the force the first thing I would say is sorry. It doesn't take much to appease people in this context and sorry goes a long way.

"So firstly there needs to be that kind of acknowledgement."

Prof Beckford said the second key factor in the recruitment of black and brown officers was the idea that the issue could be addressed by simply having more black and brown people in positions of power.

He said: "It's more about having different types of people, having a diverse representation. The problem is that if you are playing with the norm - the white male

norm - it tends to be people who fit the white male norm from black and brown communities at the top of the pile.

"So you end up with a situation where there is less diversity and that is part of the problem - difference isn't the issue, the issue is the norm.

"We need the diverse experiences of black and brown people, women's experiences, LGBTQ+ experiences - that really does matter."

The award-winning academic said the third stumbling block was over-reliance on long-term recruitment targets.

He said: "I think targets help but we have got to understand the targets are a short-term fix because of a long-term problem - I don't think the targets can be there forever.

"I think the targets can be really productive if they are used in the correct way as a short-term fix to build up the numbers, to produce the right kind of diversity, to deal with the skill-sets that need to be there."

Prof Beckford said the challenge now faced by the police service was to simultaneously recruit diverse people while changing the culture of the institution.

“It's more about having different types of people, having a diverse representation. The problem is that if you are playing with the norm - the white male norm - it tends to be people who fit the white male norm from black and brown communities at the top of the pile.”



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Members are encouraged to stand in Federation elections

Members were encouraged to stand in the upcoming Federation elections, with national vice-chair Ché Donald calling his appointment 'life-changing'.

Ché was joined by John Partington, deputy national secretary, at this year's annual conference, ahead of the election process which will be kicking off on 1 July.

The pair called on members to stand in the elections, with Ché referring to workplace reps as the 'lifeblood' of the Federation.

He added: "There are many officers out there who would struggle without them. I really want people to consider it. I found it life-changing.

"As officers, we care for people, that's why we join the police but who looks after us? That's why the Federation exists.

"We're a big family".

Ché said that becoming a rep made him a better supervisor and manager, adding that there are 'more highs than lows' to the role.

Both Ché and John discussed the



Ché Donald.

significance of reps reflecting officer demographics across the police service, stressing how important it was to increase diversity within the Federation.

He advised anyone who was considering

standing to speak to other reps and ask them how they find it, adding: "The best way to sell the job is to hear from the reps themselves."

Ché ended with a message to candidates: "Good luck to all those who are standing again, as well as those who may decide to throw their hat in the ring."

Some of the rules surrounding the elections, including the requirements needed for particular positions, have been reviewed. Those thinking of putting themselves forward are advised to have a read of the changes.

Officers were given the opportunity to meet current reps and ask any questions at two final election cafés.

Find out more about being a rep by speaking to your workplace or divisional reps or the full-time officials.

You can also visit the [Reps@Work](#) page on the national Federation website.

Reps@work

Catch up with conference sessions

West Midlands Police Federation members are being urged to watch the keynote speeches, panel discussions and round table forums from the conference via a special video on-demand service.

West Midland Police Federation chair Jon Nott said: "This year's conference was staged online because of the pandemic but that gives all our members the opportunity to watch the

sessions on-demand.

"I would urge them to do so because they will find the pressures they face every day were all covered in an insightful, interesting and often thought-provoking way and I think our members will find watching them incredibly useful."

To access the on-demand videos, please simply email events@polfed.org and you will be sent a link.

2021 POLICING UNDER PRESSURE

Change to driving law for officers must be fit for purpose

Federation representatives are being urged to implore their chief officers to ensure that changes to driving legislation aimed at better protecting police drivers make the law truly fit for purpose.

Tim Rogers, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation and national pursuits and driver training lead, gave an update on the provisions of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill during a roads policing session at the Federation conference.

The bill, which is due to become law later this year, sets out changes that will mean officers will no longer be judged by the standards of the careful and competent driver, allowing their professional training and expertise to be taken into account.

But Tim fears the wording of the proposed legislation could lead to officer being further criminalised.

"We are very grateful for the support so far from the Government, the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Independent Office for Police Conduct," he said, but adding that an amendment to the bill is now required.

A new legal test will currently be applied so officers' driving will be measured against that of a 'careful and competent police driver', however, this could still leave them exposed.

"An officer will be licensed to drive in accordance with what they have been

trained to do but nothing more. Performing a manoeuvre which is not trained or in policy is likely to fall into the new definition of dangerous and careless driving under a new test against the careful and competent police driver," Tim explained.

"Going beyond the terms of that licence could give rise to criminal liability. I have grave concerns around the practicality of this approach.

"What's a police officer to do if they encounter something which falls outside of this policy? The bill in its current format won't permit a police officer to respond legally when confronted by the many and varied situations officers are likely to encounter while driving police vehicles."

The Federation has raised its concerns with the National Police Chiefs' Council and is pressing the Government to consider adding a reasonableness defence clause to

the bill to give officers flexibility to respond legally to the matters they encounter on duty.

This would take into account what they reasonably believe they are responding to, the threat that is posed and any departure from the relevant standard should be reasonable and proportionate.

During the Home Secretary's Q And A session, Tim asked the Home Secretary to support the Federation's amendment to the bill.

Priti Patel said there was no intention to criminalise officers and that as the bill made its way through Parliament the Home Office would work through how it could make it work in the right way.

During the session, West Midlands PC Vaughan Lowe gave a moving account of being subjected to a seven-year criminal and then conduct investigation after being involved in an accident in which a pedestrian died while driving a police car.

"Vaughan is just one of many officers who have been to hell and back when subjected to these investigations when all they have done is carry out the job the Force and the public expect of them," said Tim.

"This change to the law, which will see their skills and training recognised while acknowledging the unique nature of their role, is critical but we must ensure in preventing one type of jeopardy officers face we don't open up another."



West Midlands PC Vaughan Lowe.

'We made it the best it could be'

The national chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales closed this year's conference by saying the decision to make it a virtual event was the right one.

John Apter told facilitator Ian Collins: "This was our first virtual conference so it has been strange. We would rather not have had to do it this way but I think we made it the best it could be."

"We have had over 1,200 registered delegates, some from Canada, America, all over, so it has been a great opportunity to reach out to more people."

"People asked me why we didn't wait until after lockdown was lifted but we had to make a decision and we didn't know what was going to happen – we still don't – so it was the right decision in the circumstances and the feedback has been really positive."

John read out the names of those workplace representatives retiring, adding: "There would normally be applause but we can imagine it."

Ian Collins said the theme of conference 2021 had been Policing Under Pressure and at times it had also been 'conference under pressure'.

John added: "We had a couple of glitches and some things going on behind the scenes which caused some hairy moments!"

He then thanked Ian for all his 'friendship and hard work' and said he was looking forward to conference 2022.



John Apter sums up conference 2021.



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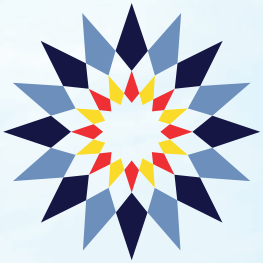
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* Terms and conditions apply. Full details of the cover including exclusions and limitations can be found in the policy wording which is available from the Federation.

**The premium includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) and is correct at 1 April 2021.

The breakdown cover is arranged by George Burrows. West Midlands Police Federation is an Appointed Representative of Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, and George Burrows is a trading name of Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered Office: Spectrum Building, 7th Floor, 55 Blythswood Street, Glasgow G2 7AT. Registered in Scotland. Company Number: SC108909 www.ajg.com/uk

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