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# INSIGHT

Magazine of Merseyside Police Federation

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# Secretary's Update

Ian Leyland reflects on the month of May; a momentous month in the history of the Police Federation, and probably the Police Service.



By Ian Leyland,  
Secretary

On 10th May the largest demonstration by police officers took place in London. Over 30,000 off-duty police officers responded to a call by their representative body to protest against the cuts to policing and the reforms to pay and conditions, which are clearly unfair and will have significant changes to the makeup of the service and the way it is delivered.

The following week the Home Secretary attended the Police Federation Annual Conference and was widely reported to have been heckled and booed. In fairness, it was a small minority of the officers present who took part in that behaviour and I personally do not believe that it served our cause well.

However, the Home Secretary should also take some responsibility that a small number of officers' frustrations got the better of them. She clearly came to speak at us and not engage with anybody that may hold a different view to her own. She has a path for reforming the police service and does not appear to want to listen to anybody who may

hold a different view, or can suggest an alternative approach to saving money whilst maintaining the service to the public. It is a frustration that arose from individuals who care deeply about the service we deliver and who are seeing it slowly dismantled before their eyes. It is a reflection of the dismay they feel in ACPO who they consider culpable, as many of them continue to sit silently by and pray that the inevitable ensuing problems do not arise 'on their watch'.

With a few exceptions, gone are the chief constables of old who had long term contracts, could take a strategic view about the service to the public and were able to speak out on behalf of the service they represent and the people they lead. The majority of the current ACPO members across the country are on short term contracts and need those contracts extended to enable them to reach maximum pensionable service. They also now have one eye over their shoulder wondering whether they will still have a job once the politically appointed police and crime commissioners are elected. No wonder their voice has been largely shackled.

The reaction of some of the press to the conference was to be expected and quite frankly typical of their biased reporting. They claim that the response to the

Home Secretary, and other government ministers at the nurses and teachers conferences, was the response of the public sector unions who have a vested interest. They seem to ignore the fact that the Police Federation, and other trade union type bodies, are the voice of the people they represent. Those representative bodies are there to reflect those views – and the views expressed in parade stations across the country are ones of anger, fear, frustration and confusion.

Of course, the press and the Home Secretary try to claim that this is all about vested interests and a resistance

*“...we need to make our message very loud and clear across the organisation and out in the public arena – we are not against reform of the service.”*



to reform and that they need to make us change. In response we need to make our message very loud and clear across the organisation and out in the public arena – we are not against reform of the service.

Indeed, it was the Police Federation who led the calls for reform of the Police Service and asked for a Royal Commission over 12 years ago; we have been told that they take too long to research and implement. However, how far down the line would we now be if the government of the day had listened to those calls and got on with a proper programme of research, consultation and ultimately change management? How many missed opportunities to deliver sustainable reform would have been avoided and how much money could have been saved? Even Sir Ian Blair, former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police

Service, has acknowledged in a recent column in The Times Newspaper that a Royal Commission is the way forward – it’s just a pity he didn’t support that view when he was in office and could do something about it!

I spoke at the conference and questioned both the Home Secretary and the Police Minister, Nick Herbert, about the nature of the change management process and the pace of change, which in my view borders on reckless.

I think we all need to send a message that this government is going about reforming the service in completely the wrong way.

It is common knowledge within the business world that change is unsettling in any organisation and the reasons for it need to be understood and managed

in a way that people can cope effectively with it. Change can be unsettling, so the manager logically needs to be a settling influence. We need to ask the question; is the Home Secretary acting as a settling influence to the service?

Senior leaders need to check that people affected by the change agree with, or at least understand, the need for change, have a chance to decide how the change will be managed, and to be involved in the planning and implementation of the change. We need to ask the question; is the Home Secretary engaging with our representatives to ensure that this is done?

If a leader believes that change is needed quickly they should probe the reasons - is the urgency real? Will the effects of agreeing a more sensible time frame really be more disastrous than presiding over a disastrous change?

Quick change prevents proper consultation and involvement, which leads to difficulties that take time to resolve. We all know that the country needs to save money but we need to ask whether slowing down the pace of change will really make such a massive difference to the amount saved. We need to point out that in the long run a more considered approach could prove more cost effective and deliver change that is sustainable.

To implement change effectively, business leaders advise involving and informing people to create opportunities for them to participate in planning and implementation of the changes. This lightens the burden, spreads the organisational load and creates a sense of ownership and familiarity among the people affected. Is this what the Home Secretary is doing?

The Home Secretary should realise that consulting with people and helping them to understand does not weaken her position as a leader – it strengthens it. Leaders who fail to consult and involve their people in managing bad news are perceived as weak and lacking in integrity. Treat people with humanity and respect and they will reciprocate.

The difficulty that many have is that the Home Secretary does not appear to want to understand policing and what it delivers. In her own words she sees the Police Service as crime fighters and nothing else. We all know that policing is much more complex than that, but the Winsor reforms ignore that fact. They will deliver a police service that is predominantly young, predominantly white, predominantly male and with no place for the disabled. It will give senior managers even more power and lead to a management style that is based on control and direction rather than innovation and empowerment. Ultimately we must ensure that our message is heard: This change will be bad for the service and bad for the public.

Heckling people, insulting them and scoring points often means that the message is lost. We must avoid doing this no matter how frustrated people



feel. This does not mean being weak but means asking hard questions in a way that cannot be ignored.

Over 30,000 officers protesting about the changes being imposed on the Police Service should not be ignored. The way the change process is being implemented certainly feels like it is imposed and transactional rather than transformational. The overwhelming numbers taking part should make the Home Secretary and ACPO sit up and listen. They should reconsider the pace of reform and follow best business practice. If they do this then they may yet achieve reform that the service buys into at every level and that is sustainable into the future. I fear for the alternative if we continue on the current path of imposing change from the top and not taking the service on that journey.

 *The Home Secretary should realise that consulting with people and helping them to understand does not weaken her position as a leader – it strengthens it.*

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# LONDON MARCH

## 10TH MAY 2012



**CUTTING POLICE  
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# New Chairman (elect) for Merseyside Police Federation

Merseyside Police Federation has recently elected a new chair to replace Kath Kane as chairman when she retires in the autumn; Peter Singleton will take over at this time.

**P**eter is currently our Health and Safety Leader, and Chairman of our Sergeants' Branch Board, and represents Wirral BCU Sergeants.

Peter joined Merseyside Police in 1989 and has experience in uniform patrol, plain clothes, CID, and ISB. He was promoted to sergeant in 2005 and has experience in custody. He remains operational until his full time posting to the Police Federation. He is a very experienced police officer and has a wide range of policing skills. He is also a public order tactical advisor, a public order instructor, PSP instructor, CBRN responder and DVI mortuary responder.

Peter has been a Federation representative for 6 years, and has performed the roles of both chairman and secretary to the Sergeants' Branch Board for the last 3. He has performed the role of health and safety leader for the last 3 and a half years. He has also extensively represented members in numerous areas within his roles in the Police Federation. We look forward to Peter joining us at Green Lane and welcome him to his new role within Merseyside Police Federation.

Peter says: "I realise I will be taking



Left: New Chairman Elect, Peter Singleton.

over as Chairman of Merseyside Police Federation at one of the most difficult periods in the history of policing. It is my intention to assist in helping and providing leadership to the branch board

and our membership so that we can grow from our current strong position and to continue the high quality service we provide to the federated ranks of Merseyside Police".

# Difficult times ahead!

Philip Williams and Co. Insurance Management outline the Merseyside Police Federation group insurance scheme and explain how it can benefit you in these challenging times.

**F**ollowing the pay freeze, Winsor's review and increases in pension contributions many of our members will face a real reduction in their income and pockets may be hit hard. It is right and proper that you conduct a review of your personal finances and consider any unnecessary expenses you may be incurring.

The Merseyside Police Federation group insurance scheme offers you a considerable money-saving opportunity whilst providing you with the essential protection that modern life and the job demand.

Please take a moment to consider the cost and value of many insurance products you may, even inadvertently, be purchasing: packaged bank accounts, costing typically £10-£20 per month, may offer motor breakdown, travel insurance, ID theft insurance, home emergency or a combination of these. Alternatively, you may be paying for some or all of these independently. Your group insurance scheme offers all of them, often with much higher levels of cover. In addition to its core benefits of life, critical illness, injury, hospitalisation and disablement cover etc. along with great additional benefits such as Denplan, Red Arc (serious illness support) and legal expenses insurance, all of which elevate our scheme to a whole new level.

The money-saving opportunities are obvious; why pay extra for expensive, often inferior, insurance products when they are included in your group scheme?

## Breakdown Recovery

Since 1st of September last year, breakdown recovery for you and your spouse/partner has been included in the Group Insurance Scheme.

Below is a simple comparison between just a few inclusive elements of the scheme and what you may typically pay for them independently:

Example annual saving opportunities:		
Family Worldwide Travel Insurance	Post Office	£120
Boiler Breakdown & Plumbing Cover	British Gas	£216
Couple Motor Breakdown Cover	AA	£189
<b>Total</b>		<b>£525</b>
Annual Cost of FULL Scheme Membership*		
Member Only	£300	<b>SAVING £225</b>
Member and Partner	£366	<b>SAVING £159</b>

The main points of cover are as follows:

- Comprehensive Motor Breakdown Cover for you and your partner
- Roadside Assistance
- If not repairable by the roadside you will be taken to a local garage or you can be recovered to your home address or original destination
- Home Assistance included
- Alternative travel costs included
- Average 39 minutes response time
- Driver cover so you are included in whatever vehicle you are travelling in, including Motorcycles
- No age limit of vehicle covered
- European cover available.

## Legal Expenses Insurance

You have full legal expenses insurance

within your scheme; here are a few points to draw attention to the main elements it covers:

- Criminal/Motor Vehicle Prosecution Defence
- Police Misconduct issues
- Personal Injury
- Uninsured Loss Recovery (often sold for an additional charge with your motor insurance policy)
- Consumer Protection
- Employment Cove
- Bankruptcy
- Identity Theft
- Education Appeals
- Legal Help Line

There is other cover within the scheme but these are the main points. If in doubt

simply contact the legal helpline: **0844 800 0129**.

### Annual family worldwide travel insurance, including travel disruption

In May 2011 your policy was extended to include a new disruption extension wording, providing cover should members' travel plans be disrupted and they receive no assistance from a travel agent or tour operator. Not only natural disasters are covered by this wording, but also events such as the European air strikes that stranded members abroad.

### Supplementary life insurance

The option to purchase additional (top-up) life insurance cover is available to existing subscribing members of the scheme; we invite you to consider the options to increase your life cover for yourself and your spouse / partner:

#### Serving Officer to age 65

- Additional £25,000 £2.17 per pay period
- Additional £50,000 £4.33 per pay period

#### Spouse / Partner

- Additional £12,500 £1.08 per pay period
- Additional £25,000 £2.17 per pay period

The additional life insurance cover is payable by payroll deduction and ceases upon retirement or age 65, whichever occurs first.

### Financial advice

Membership of the group insurance scheme also entitles you to free financial advice across a range of issues including: help finding a mortgage, advice on issues arising from debt and help with bankruptcy, a free simple will writing service, initial investment advice, understanding your tax entitlements and more.

The advice is offered as part of this package through Kinsella Clarke, Chartered Accountants. 61 Stanley Road, Bootle L20 7BZ. Telephone **0151 933 3400**.

### Home emergency assistance cover

Home emergency insurance is a cost-effective insurance product which provides immediate assistance in the event of a domestic emergency. Home emergencies can be stressful and sometimes difficult to resolve, but with home emergency insurance you will have peace of mind knowing that we are with you every step of the way.

### RED ARC assistance

RED ARC is one of the key components of our group insurance scheme, and many members have used the service, and we continue to receive fabulous feedback

about the service they provide to us.

The scheme is primarily to assist individuals with a serious health condition, although there is no specific list. Whilst this can be quite subjective depending on the individual, minor conditions are generally not covered.

Cover is for all of your immediate family, residing with you.

The RED ARC service is free of charge and confidential. If you think you may be eligible you should ring RED ARC on **01244 625183** in normal business hours.

### Hospitalisation benefit

This important benefit sometimes goes unclaimed by members. Here are the main points:

If you are admitted to hospital as a result of an accident or emergency (unplanned admission), benefit is payable for up to five consecutive nights.

In the event of a planned admission benefit is payable after the first three nights, again up to a maximum of five consecutive nights. Please see your scheme benefits booklet or visit the website for full details.

Full details of the scheme are included in the scheme benefits booklet. Further copies are available for download from the Federation website or by contacting the Federation office.



## Green Lane Staff profile: Terry Atherton – gardener

Terry has been working for us for well over 30 years. As many of you will be aware, Terry maintains our gardens meticulously. He works for us on one day a week and brightens the day of everyone he comes into contact with. He is 76 years of age, and is remarkably fit. Many thanks Terry!



# You protect and serve. We protect and serve you.

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\*Lines are open 24 hours, 365 days.

# Access all areas?

**Nick Holroyd** of Russell Jones and Walker Solicitors explains the law around the accessing of police computer systems.



By **Nick Holroyd**,  
Senior Principal  
Lawyer, Criminal &  
Misconduct

**A** surprising number of police officers are still falling foul of the restrictions relating to access to police computer systems. We have seen officers lose their jobs or even be prosecuted because they don't have a basic understanding of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised access.

## Criminal Offences

There are two statutes that are relevant to police cases:

- Section 55 of the Data Protection Act 1998 makes it an offence to "...obtain or disclose personal data...or to ...procure the disclosure to another person of the information contained in personal data..." The offence can be tried in either the Magistrates or the Crown Court and is punishable by way of a fine.
- Section 1 of the Computer Misuse Act 1990 makes it an offence if a person "...causes a computer to perform any function with intent to secure access to any program or data...or to enable such access to be secured... [when] ...the access...is unauthorised..." The offence is triable in either the Magistrates or the Crown Court and is punishable by imprisonment of up to two years.

Whilst serious offences are rare, it is sad to report that offences of a lesser degree are in fact very common. These might include (but aren't limited to) checking the PNC on the car of a party connected to you; doing a name check on anyone remotely connected to you; or

accessing a CRIS report in respect of a family friend who has been the victim of crime etc.

## Misconduct

In the absence of any evidence of disclosure to someone who is not a police officer the usual process for dealing with unauthorised access is via the misconduct route. This will involve an initial assessment under the conduct regulations. If the decision is taken that an investigation is warranted, a regulation 15 notice will be served and the officer may be interviewed under caution. The allegation would be one of the following:

- Failure to meet standards in relation to following orders and instructions (Home Office Guidance: police officers abide by police regulations, force policies and lawful orders")
- Breach of confidentiality ( police officers treat information with respect and access or disclose it only in the proper course of duties...)
- Catch-all heading of discreditable conduct ( police officers behave in a manner which does not discredit the police service or undermine public confidence, whether on or off duty...)

Any allegation of unauthorised access is likely to be assessed at the more serious end of the scale, and treated as gross misconduct.

## Evidence

An audit trail is left every time you access a computer system, which can be retraced at any time. This can leave you vulnerable if you are asked to recall details of an incident that happened some months in the past as your recollection of the circumstances

surrounding it may have faded, and colleagues you spoke to at the time may have forgotten that you'd done so.

It is important that you record your reasons for conducting a check. You should also record whether permission was sought from a line manager and make sure they sign your record if so.

## Response

If you find yourself the subject of an investigation for unauthorised access, you should always seek advice from an experienced federation friend before responding.

In more serious cases where a criminal offence is being alleged, you should seek the assistance of an experienced lawyer. We have substantial experience advising officers in misconduct and criminal proceedings relating in part or entirely to issues of unauthorised access from the investigation stage through to the Police Appeals Tribunal.

If you are asked questions relating to your access of police computer systems you can – and should always - say that you wish to speak to a federation friend before responding. They will be able to assist you in responding to any questions appropriately even at this early stage, which may assist in avoiding escalation of the incident to a formal investigation.

Always be cautious before accessing any information on the police computer systems. If there is even the remotest possibility that someone may perceive there to be some personal reason for the check, don't conduct it until at least speaking with a supervisor and seeking approval beforehand and recording when you have done so. Seeking and obtaining such approval may save you your job.



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# Merseyside police now in front-line to buy a new home, says Barratt

Men and women who are currently serving police employees or retired members of the Merseyside Police Federation can now take advantage of a unique discount from Barratt Homes, enabling them to save thousands when buying a brand new home from the region's leading house-builder.

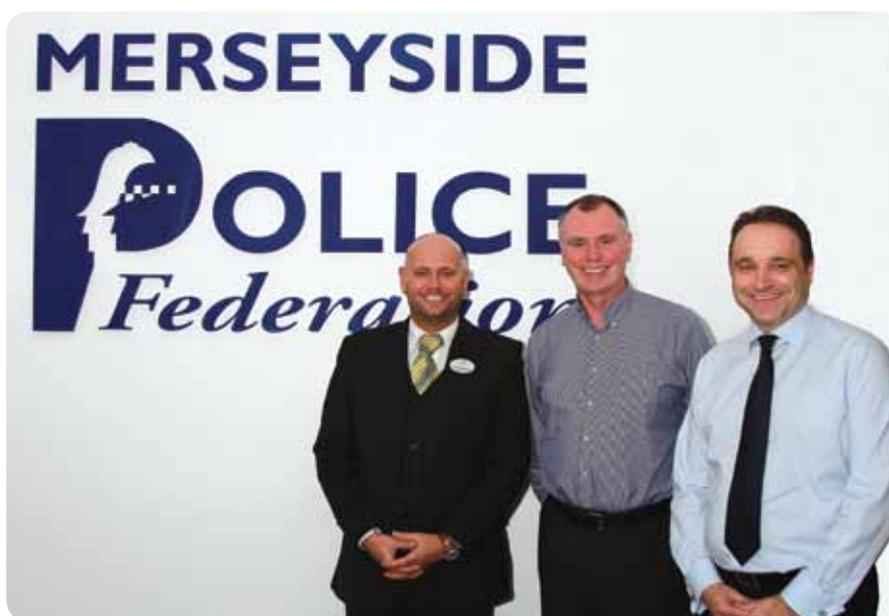
**B**arratt Homes is now offering a £5,000 discount for police employees in the Merseyside area, plus £500 towards carpets when they purchase their new home.

Barratt sales advisor and brainchild of the Merseyside Police Federation discount, Stephen Speed said: "Barratt has always supported groups of servicemen and women by offering unique discounts and products – this is just an extension of that gratitude, and is a way for us to say thank you to the people who protect us on a daily basis."

"As a further gesture of support, we will look to donate £150 to the Federation for every new Barratt home that is legally completed through this scheme."

The offer also applies to retired members of the Merseyside Police Federation. To benefit from this scheme, simply take police ID along to the sales office when purchasing your new property, to prove your status as an active or retired member of the Federation.

Homes currently available from Barratt under the Merseyside Police Federation discount include a stunning range at Tower Gardens, Everton and Delph Wood, Sutton. With developments in Wigan,



Above (left to right): Stephen Fairclough-Speed (of Barratt Homes), Paul Kinsella and Jason Bowers (also of Barratt Homes)

Warrington, Chorley and Manchester, there is a wealth of choice available to those looking to take advantage of the unique Merseyside Police Federation discount programme.

Delph Wood offers a selection of homes and deals suitable for first time buyers, those looking for a stylish alternative to city centre apartment living and those who want to increase their living space.

Tower Gardens, a brand new development

close to Liverpool City Centre, has a range of three and four bedroom homes ideal for families or those looking to move up the ladder.

A range of shared equity and part exchange schemes are in place designed to ease the process of buying a Barratt home. To find out more about Delph Wood, Tower Gardens or any other Barratt Manchester development please call **0844 811 7799**.

# Do you believe honesty is the best policy? Roland Smith could arrange the best policy for you...

**Paul Kinsella** from the Police Federation puts some hard-hitting questions to **Pam McGaffney**, Customer Services Director at Roland Smith about her views on how their business helps over **64,000** serving and retired officers protect their world every year.

**Paul: Why is Roland Smith relevant to me and others in the Police?**

**Pam:** We work along similar principles to the Police; to help protect you, those you care for, and your property – for your absolute peace of mind. We believe in insurance that has a simple honesty at its heart. So, for example we don't hide administration costs in the small print. So the price we quote is the price you pay.

**Paul: That's interesting, does that mean that Insurers and Brokers can hide additional costs in the small print?**

**Pam:** The short answer is yes. We are seeing more and more Insurers and Brokers adding fees to the cost of insurance cover.

In some cases, simple administrative duties such as changing your car, can come at a price that seems far higher than you'd expect. Another good example is direct debit payments, where it can prove costly if your insurer charges you for the service. At Roland Smith, we understand that some officers prefer to pay for their car insurance on a monthly basis and that these payments

are convenient. That's why we will not charge you for paying your premium via monthly direct debit.

**Paul: What should our members think about when using price comparison sites?**

**Pam:** Price comparison sites have really taken off in a big way over recent times. We all know about the success of the Meerkat.

The worry is that popular as they are, they don't understand your needs as we do. They will include a number of assumptions that aren't appropriate for you and editing quotations can be difficult and unclear.

You should always remember to think about the quality of the policies on offer as well as how much they cost. It's surprising how many times over the years you hear people talking about "I had a claim and I wasn't covered - I'll never buy my insurance based on the cheapest price again". Quality of cover is critical and speaking to someone ensures you get the right cover that is right for you and that you know exactly what is and what isn't included.

**Paul: So, it really is important that you get the right cover at the right price?**

**Pam:** Yes, cheap car insurance may appear worthwhile, but if you have to make a claim what you want is a simple, clear and painless redress. Getting the right level of cover will provide peace of mind and is a sensible approach to purchasing a car insurance policy. Remember, some



Above: Paul Kinsella with Pam McGaffney.

insurance policies are cheap for a reason, and it's best to be mindful of quality as well as cost when it comes to buying cover.

**Paul: How can our members save money on their premiums?**

**Pam:** No one likes paying more for car insurance than they need to - but opting for the cheapest cover is rarely the best option. It can result in you paying for a policy that does not cover all the elements you might expect from your car insurance.

Increasing the voluntary excess on your insurance policy may help to make it cheaper and savings will vary dependent on the insurer – but beware of opting for an excess today that you could not afford tomorrow. If you have to make an insurance claim, you'll need to pay the excess before your provider will foot the remainder of the bill.

 *The cheapest cover is rarely the best option... quality of cover is critical.*

**Paul: Is it worth protecting your no claims bonus?**

**Pam:** Protecting your no claims discount is important and you may regret not doing so if you ever have to make a claim. Many motorists are reluctant to take the risk of losing it and protecting your policy against a possible increase in premium could prove worthwhile.

**Paul: We all know that it's tough out there, how are Roland Smith coping with the current economic climate?**

**Pam:** We have more customers than ever before. With over 45 years' experience with the Police, no one knows more about, or cares more for, Police welfare. Just a phone call away, our friendly expert advisers in Liverpool are always ready to tailor each insurance solution to your requirements. This knowledge and passion is passed by word of mouth – which helps to explain the growing loyalty to Roland Smith.

**Paul: How would you sum up the Roland Smith approach?**

**Pam:** We offer an unrivalled combination of quality products wrapped in a truly personal service and with over 90% of our customers renewing their home and motor insurance in 2011 – we believe we are helping our hard working officers. Above all, we believe in arranging insurance that fits the way you live, saves you time and money – and lets you concentrate on the important things in life.

**Paul: Thank you Pam. If any officer has a question regarding insurance they can email Pam at [pammcgaffney@rolandsmith.co.uk](mailto:pammcgaffney@rolandsmith.co.uk).**

**Pam:** PS don't forget, if it's not the right time to renew, why not just give us a quick call and let us know when your car and home insurance are due for renewal? We'll contact you nearer the time with a fair and competitive quote.

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# All credit unions are not the same

**Peter Evans** of Police Credit Union explains the background of credit unions, where the market is headed and how you can be part of this ever-growing industry.



By **Peter Evans**,  
Chief Executive,  
Police Credit Union

So often, the words 'credit union' bring to mind thoughts of financial difficulty and even financial exclusion. It's true that the origins of credit unions worldwide arise from the desire to help those who have encountered challenges in their financial affairs. That's just the beginning, though.

As the credit union sector has developed in a vast range of countries across the world, the membership has taken on a considerably different nature, moving from the origins to the clearly more financially aware.

The credit union sector in the UK is still in relative infancy compared with countries such as USA, Canada, Australia and even Poland and Ireland. Indeed British credit unions, which attended the first world congress to be held in the UK (in Glasgow last summer), were eligible for a 10% discount on registration because of their 'developing status'.

The UK sector has grown considerably since the 1960s, when immigrants from the West Indies brought the tradition and concept of credit unions with them. There are now over 864,000 credit union members in the UK (plus 120,000

juniors), with savings of £730 million and loans of over £595 million.

The part of the sector that has grown most strongly is that originally or still linked to an employer, mainly with payroll deduction facilities.

Many are or were directly linked to local authority employees and the largest UK credit union is currently Glasgow Credit Union, which now serves anyone who lives or works in the city.

If the membership of the three major credit unions that serve the police family in England, Wales and Scotland were combined, it would be the single largest membership in the UK, being over 53,000 persons - all associated with the police family. Quite why the police across the UK have so embraced the concept and values of credit unions cannot easily be identified, although they did start as individual force credit unions developed by Federation staff and serving very well defined and local needs.

As credit unions have grown, the important factor has been retention of their mutual, not for profit status, and their adherence to the four principles of the worldwide sector, namely 1) the encouragement of saving, 2) the provision of products and rates for sensible borrowing, 3) the mutual use of funds (savers' monies are lent to borrowers who in turn provide, through interest, the means to reward savers with

a dividend) and finally, 4) the education about how to handle finances prudently.

However large a credit union becomes, it remains a credit union in spirit as well as name, as long as it remains true to the above ethos.

Police Credit Union has grown to serve 25 forces and now has 20,300 members, with £45 million assets. It has achieved all of this whilst keeping the faith with the principles of the sector. It has not only developed its products and returns to its members but it also plays a part in the national trade association by trying to assist other smaller credit unions outside the police family to learn from it and become more sustainable for the future.

In the foreseeable future, credit unions will be to the UK population what building societies were back in the 1960s and 1970s.

Police Credit Union intends to be part of that future, providing an ever increasing product range and services to a growing police membership. You can be part of that future.

For more information about Police Credit Union, please visit [www.policecu.co.uk](http://www.policecu.co.uk) or contact your regional PCU office based with the Federation at Malvern House, Green Lane, where Carol, Sandra or John will be willing to assist you.

# Conference Update: Constables'

**Kevin Walsh**, Secretary of the Merseyside Police Federation Constables' Branch Board has written for Insight on the speeches made at the PFEW conference.



By **Kevin Walsh**,  
Secretary, Merseyside  
Constables Branch  
Board.

This years' annual Police Federation conference began on the morning of 15th May. Each individual rank held their own separate conference in the morning. Addressing the constables' with his national update was constables' national representative Paul Barker.

Paul began by highlighting the fantastic job by 16,000 police officers from across the country during the riots in August last year. He noted that these officers were deployed at short notice and that many of them had to sleep on floors before going on to work a double shift on the front line. He then issued a reminder to us all: the office of constable is the bedrock of the service.

Paul then went on to talk about the various reviews currently being carried out: Winsor, which is examining our pay and conditions; Neyroud, which is reviewing police leadership and training; and Hutton, a pension review. The upcoming elections for police and crime commissioners were mentioned alongside these reviews, as the outcome will also affect the police in general.

Paul then reiterated something that we have come to know all too well over the past few months: these reviews and subsequent cuts to funding will mean



that by 2015 the service expects to lose 16,000 officers. Coincidentally, this is the same number of officers required to police the front line in London last year.

Winsor Part 1 eventually had to be sent to the Police Arbitration Tribunal (PAT), as agreement could not be reached in discussions with the Government about the level of cuts they wanted to impose. Despite strong counter proposals by the Federation the PAT came to a decision in early January 2012 and, with exception of a couple of points, recommended Winsor's proposals. The Federation asked the Home Secretary to accept the PAT decision in its entirety (she had the right to ignore

the PAT decision, just as Jackie Smith a previous Labour Home Secretary had done). After a number of weeks she agreed to do so; however when her decision had officially been presented in the official document, called the Regulations and Determinations, the Home Office had made changes that significantly differed to that agreed to by the Home Secretary.

The national Federation Secretary, Ian Rennie, has written a letter to the Home Secretary asking her to amend the regulations and determinations as presented to her by the PAT. At the time of writing this article he was still awaiting a reply. What is significant is that the

government refer to the Agenda for Change reforms of the National Health Service (NHS), saying that what is being proposed to the police is no different to that. What is different though is that the Government actually funded the NHS reform by putting more money into it; and that reform wasn't carried out at a time when cuts of 20% were being enforced.

Winsor Part 2 was published earlier in the year and in it were more recommended actions, this time based on the goal of creating a more skilled and effective workforce. In this second part of the review, Winsor has stated that he wants to: 1) reduce the starting pay for police officers to £19,000. He counters this though by saying that he wants to make the incremental points for pay progression

 ...government refer to the Agenda for Change reforms of the National Health Service (NHS), saying that what is being proposed to the police is no different to that. What **is** different is that the Government actually funded the NHS reform by putting more money into it; and that reform wasn't carried out at a time when cuts of 20% were being enforced.



shorter, thereby giving officers full pay sooner; 2) Introduce the yearly PSNI fitness test for all officers. This test will have to be passed by every officer, with no allowance being made for gender or age. This, the Federation believe, is discriminatory under the Equality Act; 3) he wants to remove the CRTP payment and replace it with a professional allowance. This allowance was initially going to be £1200; however it is now to be £600 annually; finally, 4) he informed conference that the government still intends to introduce a new pension scheme by 2015. There have however been no details given as to what the new proposed pension will look like.

We then had an economic update provided by Professor Bob Elliot, advisor to the Constables' Central Committee. Unfortunately Bob had no real good news to give; the recession is the deepest felt of all of the previous three recessions; we've had the worst recovery of the last 6 recessions, which have spanned 100 years, however the public finances are in better shape than expected due to departmental underspend; inflation has fallen sharply, however watch this space – the eurozone situation and large companies are all in a strong position with large amounts of

money to invest. Bob does state though that he believes the way to get out of this current financial situation is to invest in public spending so as to increase taxes and reduce unemployment, not to make cuts, bearing in mind 88% of the cuts the government want have still to be felt by the Police and the rest of the public sector.

We then had a question and answer session with Police Minister Nick Herbert, ACPO Chief, Sir Hugh Orde, HMIC representative, Zoe Billingham, and Chair of the Constables Committee, Julie Nesbit. Most of the questions were aimed at Nick Herbert; he, as ever, was very elusive and gave party line answers. The only thing of any note he did say was that the government intended to preserve the pensions of any officer in the last 10 years of service (they had previously offered a similar deal to the rest of the public sector).

We, as your Federation, will keep taking the message to the Government: enough is enough – 20% cuts are too much. You can help by making sure your local MP is made aware that a re-think is needed by sending emails or letters, or better still, making an appointment to see them in their local surgery next time round.

# A View of the Sergeants' Central Conference

The annual Police Federation conference is designed to take account of the needs of the separate rank boards as well as the Joint Central Committee and thus, as sergeants, we find ourselves at the Sergeants' Central Conference. Here is a flavour of what went on.



By **Pete Singleton**,  
Chair Elect,  
Merseyside Joint  
Branch Board



By **Rob Venables**,  
Secretary, Merseyside  
Sergeants Branch  
Board

The casual observer may identify more than a mere hint of 'The Wheelappers and Shunters Social Club' from the 1970s at the Sergeants' Central Conference (Google it if you are lucky enough to be too young to remember this TV show)! Whilst John Giblin, Chair of the Federation Sergeants' Central Committee is no Colin Crompton, his opening words half in Welsh and half in English immediately make the casual observer realise that this session is going to be led by strict rules and etiquette. The formal roll call by region is followed by the adoption of conference regulations and standing orders, appointment of stewards, appointment of scrutineers etc.

Apart from standing matters such as the annual report of the Central Committee and the Treasurer's Report, the primary motion on the agenda is designed to allow effective application of the policies passed at conference – it is passed with a runaway majority.

Then it was onto reports to conference.  
Darren Harris, Chair of the National



Custody Forum gave an overview of the past year. The Hookway case seems so far away now, but few can forget how this simple case momentarily overturned the application of PACE police bail that had been used unchallenged for the past 25 years. The Government quickly introduced a retrospective piece of legislation to remove the Hookway threat. The big threat on the horizon for Custody is the ongoing threat of privatisation. Recent events in Lincolnshire show that the threat of G4S and their like clearly now extends beyond custody to the whole of the Police Service (although those with an eye to current affairs will note that Surrey Police have just stalled their original plan for extensive outsourcing).

The Chairman's report revisited his much

reported speech from last year when he said that "this Government hates the Police Service and want to destroy it". John Giblin pointed out to the assembled sergeants this year that he had seen no evidence to the contrary in the past year. We have seen a 4% drop in officer numbers, with those left being stretched and the inspector ranks being decimated, and the resultant increased stresses on the sergeant rank. The sergeants are the guardians of excellence in service delivery in the police. Police officers are answerable to the law alone and are nobody's servant.

John emphasised that in his view the current government knows the price of everything but the value of nothing. He quoted Policing Minister Nick Herbert

who said in 2010 that “public safety is the number one responsibility of an effective government – more important than any other”. Sgt Giblin then posed the question – “is this an effective government?”

**ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.**

The Chair finished with a plea to the government; “don’t gamble with the finest police service in the world. Neither we nor the public will forgive you if it goes horribly wrong.”

A session entitled ‘Professional Sergeants – Proud to be Professional’ followed. Chief Constable Peter Fahy, Steve Rimmer of the Home Office, the shadow Police Minister David Hanson and John Giblin took questions from the floor. Areas explored included:

- The economic impact of the changes and the increasing numbers of officers who were experiencing serious financial hardship

- ACPO’s lack of understanding of what is happening at the sharp end and a strong disconnect from the grass roots

- The fact that service quality is failing because everything is now cost driven

- The fact that fewer officers, post Winsor, equals fewer investigations of crime equals fewer detections and more unsolved crime

- The retirement age of 60

- The fact that Winsor has increased bureaucracy but reduced officers

- The fears that levels of training for officers will fall

- The uncertainty over the structure of the policing professional body will look like, despite the fact it is due to start in September 2012

- The fear that the professional body will be another excuse to take money out of the pockets of police officers

- The extra workload on police due to changes in other agencies (e.g. mental health issues in custody)

- Privatisation of parts of the Police and fears about where it will all end

- The proposed introduction of redundancy for Police officers

Thus ended this year’s Sergeants’ Central Conference. The Police Service is suffering an unprecedented level of attack on many fronts and this morning session reflected it. There were so many areas of concern to explore and so few serious answers coming from government and chief officers. The session reflected the chaotic changes that the government is planning to impose on the Police Service. This theme continued throughout the rest of the conference schedule. If you are concerned by what you have read here, please do something about it – do your part to lobby for change – write to or, even better, visit your local MP and voice your concerns about what the impact of these changes will be.

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# Inspectors' Conference

## Bournemouth 2012

**Sean Bell** attended the annual Police Federation conference. He discusses the hot topics of the week for you here.



By **Sean Bell**,  
Chair of Inspectors'  
Branch Board Merseyside  
Police Federation

**S**tar Wars – depending upon your experiences, either a successful series of entertaining films with a cult following, or the current predicament the Bath Star wearing, inspecting ranks find themselves in. Suffice to say the Inspectors' Central Committee have used the Star Wars strap line for the last two conferences because of the threats and increasing pressures placed on the inspecting ranks over recent and coming years. We may not save the galaxy but, even as the Police Minister recognised, inspecting ranks keep the (star) fleet running.

The line-up for this year's conference was varied. We had the benefit of Nick Herbert, Police Minister, in attendance, however we did not learn anything new and could do nothing more than admire his expertise in body swerving and sidestepping; I do admit to being biased but even exercising my best stab at impartiality I could not find a direct answer to any question put to him.

After the usual administrative proceedings, which included the Treasurer's report, confirming that the inspectors' fund is in good health we moved on to the business in hand.

The first and only motion submitted to delegates emanated from the Metropolitan Police Inspectors Board. The Met proposed submitting an application to the Police Negotiating Board (or its replacement)

regarding the uncertainty and misuse of the 1994 inspectors' working hours agreement. The motion sought that it 'be re-examined and if necessary renegotiated in order that clarity can be provided on a number of issues contained within it'.

The basis of the motion will not come as any surprise to the inspecting ranks in Merseyside. The rationale was based on increased workloads, mismanagement, abuse of good will and the extra pressure placed on part-time colleagues. It was pointed out that the initial agreement was never intended to alter average working hours in the rank and that the promised guidance never materialised.

On a local note, as a result of submissions and consultation by local fed reps with chief officers we have secured an agreement regarding TOIL, which will provide clarity to inspectors and managers alike in managing hours worked and officially allow excess hours to be reclaimed. However, this will only work if all time worked is properly recorded. It is the failure to record such hours that has delayed the introduction of such a TOIL policy.

Unsurprisingly, there were no speakers against the motion so it was carried and will be taken to PNB or its replacement, depending upon the outcomes under Winsor 2.

This was followed by the Chair's address, the contents of which will not be unfamiliar to anyone who has kept their eye on government policy and the allegedly independent Winsor Reviews. Time

and time again during the joint central conference (all three ranks), evidence was submitted discrediting Winsor's independence, the similarity to previous proposals for policing by Conservative leadership prior to their election and the link of Tom Winsor to a private company seeking public/private policing contracts to name but some.

In his opening remarks Alan Jones stated that it was justified to ask what is wrong with policing, why the service was being undermined by politicians and what debilitating effect this has on officers and police staff. Since 2010 the service has lost 6,500 officers, with three times that figure expected by the end of this parliament. This is mirrored by a 10% drop in inspecting ranks nationally to date.

Alan Jones challenged Winsor's remarks that policing was an intellectually undemanding occupation and his proposal to introduce direct entry at inspector, superintendent and chief constable level. The ACPO representative Sara Thornton argued later, during the question and answer session, that the proposed inspector direct entry scheme did not differ greatly from the current HPDS, only reducing the timescales, and adding that the proposed superintendent scheme would be very expensive to introduce and administer. During other sessions panel members suggested that such schemes would change the culture of policing and introduce an officer class into the service.

Following on Steve Williams, the General Secretary of the Inspectors Board, gave his address. The themes continued and

he argued that there is a political desire to demolish the terms and conditions of police officers. Privatisation was based on political ideal and not on research or consultation.

He went on to criticise the government, who failed to enter dialogue with the federation or engage in true negotiation. This was based on the fact the Federation submitted a proposal containing £367m savings (£20m short of Official Side), which were wholly ignored by the official side. During PNB, Winsor was submitted by the official side as a 'whole package'. Their approach, being so rigid, ensured that failure to agree at PNB was predetermined. Subsequently the PAT proposals were agreed to be implemented in full by the Home Secretary. However, in a move that was described by Steve Williams as underhand, unethical and lacking in integrity, the resulting determinations and regulations varied from those arrived at by PAT.

The General Secretary urged the Home Secretary to withdraw Winsor 2 and take cognisance of what is happening north of the border where the Scottish Government is engaging with the Federation to reform policing.

On a positive note, reference was made to the success the Federation had on behalf of part time and flexible working inspectors where they will be paid for hours worked, to be back-paid and pensionable.

It is also timely to mention here that during all three separate and joint conferences warnings were delivered on the lack of any real diversity impact assessment made by Winsor 1 and 2 on terms and conditions, recruitment, role evaluation, proposed fitness testing and reward and remuneration. Such failure will have a detrimental effect on officers with caring responsibilities, female officers, those from protected groups and older officers. Sadly if current proposals go ahead (still to be negotiated) forces will find it nigh on impossible to have a staff mix that reflects the diversity of their communities. Add to the mix the privatisation of roles that don't require police powers. There is a real potential that police officers will perform a purely

confrontational role, changing the culture and face of the service.

... and to the part everyone was waiting for, the Police Minister Nick Herbert. It would be wrong to make use of puns or statements based on a surname, however reference to the devil 'Old Nick' himself would not be far off the mark. The devil is in the detail and no details were provided here. When pushed on privatisation and effects of Winsor 2 he made constant suggestions that responsibility for resources and their distribution was a matter for chief officers, police authorities and the forthcoming police and crime commissioners. The Police Minister said it all and said nothing.

 *Three questions were put to Nick Herbert about slowing the pace of change, diversity and direct entry, and despite my best efforts I could not make out a coherent or relevant reply.*

To be fair, he did recognise the difficulties police officers faced and inspecting ranks in particular. He applauded them for their integrity, courage and commitment. He also mentioned that the Government was fair and treating all the public sector on an equal basis. Then he outlined how we would be subject to a pay freeze, increment freeze and whole-scale reform to terms and conditions, which made the cops present feel pretty queasy. To calm matters somewhat the Police Minister confirmed that the police, because of their unique nature, would remain the best paid of the public services; albeit his interpretation appeared to mirror closely the Winsor 2 proposals, which have, as stated above, yet to be negotiated. He proposed that Winsor 2 is deemed to be

cost neutral. Probably, best for you to make your own mind up on that one!

As would be expected from the Police Minister and his boss, the Home Secretary, he was emphatic that talk of a right to strike was not negotiable and that protection of the public was paramount.

Three questions were put to Nick Herbert about slowing the pace of change, diversity and direct entry, and despite my best efforts I could not make out a coherent or relevant reply (and I assure you I am not alone). However, he did state he would listen to what the Federation had to say and consider any proposals made...and with that the Police Minister exited stage right.

A Q&A session brought out some interesting facts. According to Sara Thornton ACPO don't support the proposed £19,000 starting salary. Other than that she declined to comment on most parts of Winsor 2.

Lord John Prescott, as would be expected, was against privatisation and voiced his opinion that it is imperative to retain the independence and accountability of the office of constable. He also asked what it is that the Government want the police to do – a question we will be asking more and more as resources diminish. He also warned about the effects of any reductions in neighbourhood policing and the impact upon communities.

Derrick Barnett (Superintendents Association) made a plea to chief officers to examine the key role of inspectors and superintendents who daily manage the risk to officers and the public, citing the success of the Manchester City football team and their acknowledgment of the role of back and middle office functions in achieving the Premiership title.

This in effect brought the session to a close.

Star Wars are our wars!

NB The above reflects my recollection and interpretation of the Inspectors and Joint Conferences and not that of the Branch Board.

# National Association of Retired Police Officers

**David Anderton**, Secretary of the Merseyside branch of the National Association of Retired Police Officers, writes for Insight on the history of the organisation and how its members benefit from the array of services it provides.



By **David Anderton**,  
Secretary,  
Merseyside NARPO

The National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO) is made up of retired police officers from all police forces throughout England, Wales and the Isle of Man, together with their spouses, partners, widows and widowers. From an initial membership of 3,000 the Association has grown and now embraces over 100 branches, with a total membership of over 100,000. It is the only organisation that exists to protect the rights of police pensioners.

NARPO was formed in 1919 with the objective 'to safeguard the rights of members and to promote measures for their welfare, with particular regard to pensions'. To pursue the objective, the Association makes representation to government departments and many other groups and organisations and, at national and local level, it provides advice and assistance to members on a wide range of topics, including benefits and pensions.

The Association employs an executive officer and administrative staff who operate from NARPO House (38 Bond Street, Wakefield WF1 2QP), which is owned by the Association. The National Executive Committee is responsible for

the administration of the Association and meets on at least four occasions during the year. In addition there are regular meetings held at various locations throughout England and Wales. The National Executive Committee comprises sixteen members, elected for two-year periods at the Annual Conference, representing eight regions: North West, North East, Midlands, Eastern, South East, South West, Wales and London.

Over the last few years, the Association has realised that there is expectancy amongst members, who have seen enormous changes within the serving officers' associations, to provide them with additional benefits. Accordingly, the Association, whilst it has never swerved from its stated aims, has taken on more member services that now include:

- Special deals on all insurances for home, car, health etc. from our brokers, Roland Smith Limited, who are continually looking to offer the very best quality insurances at the most competitive rates
- Our own travel organisation, Newforge Travel, which brings not only special offers to our members but offers year round discounts on every type of holiday.

In 1995 a new magazine, NARPO News, was launched, which, accompanied by the setting up of a national database of members, enabled the magazine to be distributed directly to members' homes.

Members of the Merseyside Branches also receive a Bulletin that contains local news and information.

The present rate of subscription is £16.92 per annum (increased annually by the percentage increase in pensions) of which 40% is sent to the national office as a precept. The subscription includes a spouses' or partners' membership except where the spouse or partner is also a police pensioner, in which case he or she will pay a separate subscription.

There are four separate branches in Merseyside: Merseyside, Southport, St. Helens and Wirral. Each Branch meets regularly and is separately administered by a committee elected annually by their members at annual general meetings held between January and May each year.

Upon retirement, officers are permitted to continue membership of the North West Police Benevolent Fund, the Merseyside Police Orphans' Fund, the Merseyside Police Sports and Social Association and the Merseyside Police Benefit Friendly Society, and NARPO is represented on these committees.

You are strongly advised to join one of the Merseyside Branches of NARPO upon your retirement; it is a fact that you can recover your membership fee many times over by taking up some of the member services on offer.

# Merseyside Police Federation Insurance Scheme

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Accidental Loss of Use Benefit	£60,000	Sick Pay Benefit (when pay cut to half)	
Infection of HIV/AIDS on duty	£60,000	<i>up to 26 weeks, then a further 4 weeks</i>	
Temporary Total Disablement	£21 per week	<i>when on no pay</i>	
<i>(up to 104 weeks excluding first 7 days)</i>		Family Travel Policy	Worldwide
Critical Illness	£10,000	Legal Expenses including ID Theft Protection	Included
Child Critical Illness	£2,000	Emergency and Injury Dental Benefit	Included
Child Death Grant	£2,000	Home Emergency Assistance	Included
Red Arc Assistance	Family Cover	Free Financial Advice with Kinsella Clarke	Included
		Motor Breakdown Cover	Member and Partner

### CALENDAR MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION

Weeks of Service 1–52  
Weeks of Service 53–104

**£25.00**

£Nil  
£15.20

### COHABITING PARTNER OF SERVING MEMBER

Life Insurance  
Terminal Prognosis Advance on Life Insurance  
Critical Illness

£50,000  
20% of sum insured  
£5,000

### CALENDAR MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION

**£5.50**

NB - Subscriptions for the first 52 weeks of service are free of charge for Serving Members and Cohabiting Partners.

The benefits arranged under this insurance trust are provided strictly under the terms of insurance policies taken out and owned by the Trust. Copies of the policies are available to view at the Police Federation Office. Subscription to the Trust entitles the member to the benefits provided by the Trust but confers no ownership of any of the underlying policies, which are vested in the Trustees.

Where two members are cohabiting spouse/partners and both paying the full member subscription, a reduction for ONE member is available. This is due to the duplication of the family benefits of travel insurance, Red Arc Assistance, Motor Breakdown and Home Emergency Assistance. To apply for this discount, please contact the Federation Office.



# Equality Update

**Rob Venables**, Equality Lead for Merseyside Police Federation, explains why equality and diversity issues affect everybody, especially now that the recommendations from Winsor 2 have been published.



By **Rob Venables**,  
Equality Lead

Welcome to the first of a regular series of equality updates. I am the Equality Lead for the Merseyside Police Federation and I am supported in the role by a number of fed reps who have received specialist training in equality and diversity issues. A short article by one of the support networks will accompany each equality update in this series. This edition features an input from Tracy O'Hara, Chair of the Gay and Lesbian Support Network (GLSN).

If necessary you can access support via your local federation representative or the staff at Green Lane. Where appropriate we can access legal advice from the Federation solicitors and in some cases, ultimately seek redress via employment tribunals. Additional assistance can be obtained from the Merseyside Police support networks.

Some people feel that equality and diversity matters are something that only affect others, but I would suggest that at some time in their careers most police officers are positively affected by equality legislation.

Not convinced? Let's have a quick look at some of the proposals from Winsor 2:

Recommendation 33 – A fitness test should be introduced in September 2013 for all police officers and staff required to undertake personal safety training. Participants should be required to attain

level 5:4 on a 15-metre shuttle run.

Recommendation 34 – states that from September 2018, an annual physical fitness test should be introduced for all police officers in England and Wales, equivalent to the test used for recruits in the Police Service of Northern Ireland, or as one critic called it, a test fit for Crufts! This test is in two parts –part one requires officers to complete a three lap circuit course within three minutes 43 seconds and each circuit requires the following activities: “Crawling, jumping, stair climbing, running along a balance beam, climbing over a wall, weaving in and out of cones, cone lifting and body drag”.

Part two “requires candidates to push and pull for 20 seconds on a purpose-built machine designed to test the candidate's ability to apply force in a manner which corresponds to tasks commonly required in operational police work”.

Tom Winsor includes the following incentive to complete the annual fitness test successfully: from September 2014 those who fail the test three times in one year “formal proceedings under the unsatisfactory performance and attendance procedures should be started on the grounds that the officer is unable to perform the duties of the job he is currently undertaking to a satisfactory standard or level”. This means a pay cut (removal of the X factor payment) and potentially a freeze at the current pay scale rate, or early retirement, movement into a police staff role or dismissal on grounds of capability.

Still not convinced that this could affect you? What happens if you have been



injured or have a disability, perhaps as a result of an on duty injury? Perhaps your injury is as a result of a medical condition that you could never have foreseen or avoided? What happens if you are getting older? Winsor acknowledges that your ability to pass the fitness test diminishes with age. What happens if you are female? Winsor acknowledges that females are less likely to be able to pass the fitness test.

Winsor originally considered short-term contracts for police officers – but rejected them. A cynic may suggest that if Winsor gets his way with these two recommendations, fewer officers will complete their service and thus fewer officers will collect their full pensions. In making these recommendations, Winsor acknowledges that there has been no research to show the effect of the PSNI test on older officers, and also acknowledges that there needs to be further work to establish any equality issues in relation to women and age. Recommendation 39 shows how he would intend to deal with disability.

This is just one of the major equality issues facing the police at the moment. Suffice to say the Police Federation of England and Wales is challenging the universal introduction of these annual fitness tests with a view to getting their introduction rejected.

What is included under the 'equality' banner? The Equality Act 2010 talks about 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), and sexual orientation. As a police officer you are not an

employee and thus some equality related concessions provided by employment law are not available to you as a right. However, police regulations allow concessions for police officers who fall within certain characteristics. Merseyside Police has some policies that deal with both police officers and police staff. Some have included concessions to attempt to harmonise the working practices of both groups, but in terms of individual rights, it is not possible for a force policy to override a police regulation.

If this all seems a little confusing, that is because it is! That is why your local

Police Federation has officers trained in equality matters to guide you through this maze.

Nationally, the Police Federation of England and Wales has seen a significant increase in the number of cases of flexible working and part time working coming to their attention. Many cases have been potentially discriminatory and thus assistance has been provided. Our intention in the Merseyside Police Federation is to work with our members and their managers to achieve fair and non-discriminatory work practices.

# Gay and lesbian support network

**Tracy O'Hara** explains what the Merseyside Police gay and lesbian support network is, the events they participate in and how they could help you to be yourself at work.

**M**erseyside Police's Gay and Lesbian Support Network (GLSN) was set up in 2001 as part of a force diversity project.

Initially a small group of lesbian, gay and bisexual staff were willing to drive organisational change; fast forward 10 years and more staff than ever before are out and open in the workplace. Year-on-year our numbers at Pride events increase, and last year we marched in Pride in our own city for the first time in history.

We are the top Metropolitan Force in Stonewall's workplace equality index, we have achieved star performer network with Stonewall and we are regularly in the top 3 forces with the Pink paper.

In February 2012, GLSN hosted an event to celebrate 10 years as a network. It was

entitled 'Are we over the Rainbow yet?', and looked at whether the police are 'there' yet in relation to LGBT matters. The rainbow motif, borne out of the rainbow flag, is symbolic of LGBT rights and our journey as a force. The answer was that we are going in the right direction.

There are many still unable to be themselves at work but there are more allies than ever before and more importantly, we have strong policies and key people to help us when things do not go as they should.

DC Tracy O'Hara said; "I am proud to Chair GLSN, working with our other networks to raise equality issues and to share our experiences and enabled a stronger, unified voice whilst making some good friends along the way."



Above: Merseyside Police Force are the highest ranked metropolitan force in Stonewall's ranking.

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