

News Beat

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News from the Constables' Central Committee



Warning signs

As a country, as a service and as a rank the coming year poses a formidable challenge as we all face up to the reality of the deficit cuts and the numerous changes being made. From A19 and recruitment freezes to the public sector strikes now stirring across the country, the writing is on the wall that changes are fast becoming a reality. But perhaps the biggest challenge over the coming months is for the service to stand united, demonstrating exactly why the British police service remains envied and respected across the world and that no matter what is thrown at us public safety will always remain the number one priority.

The first real signs of trouble for the service were confirmed in October with the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) handing the police service top heavy cuts of 20% over four years. But instead of putting up a fight our service leaders offered on a plate areas where these cuts could be made.

Now it doesn't take a genius to realise that if those at the top put up no resistance and also offer up areas that can easily be hived away then this presents an easy win for the government. ACPO's stance has stood in stark contrast to that of the Army and NHS chiefs who respectively received a 7% cut and a budget freeze after fighting to defend their services.

In a bid to play further into the hands of government, at the Home Affairs Select Committee on the 11th January where national Chairman, Paul McKeever was among those giving evidence on Police Funding, ACPO once again sold the service down the river when CC Peter Fahy said that, 'an obsession with the number of police officers.. has meant that

we've kept that number artificially high' and that despite the cuts the same service can still be delivered, just differently.

At the same hearing when the issue of A19 was being discussed it became clear that in particular two MP's Mark Reckless (who has already tabled a private members bill on police redundancy) and Aidan Burley clearly see police redundancy as an area that needs to be reformed arguing that redundancy shouldn't just be for those at the end of service but that the special protections making the police different from the rest of the public sector should end and redundancy be an option for all the service with no more job for life.

Then as if to confirm all the warnings we've issued, last week (27th January) figures published by the Home Office showed that as a service we have already seen a drop in numbers of 2,500 and with the use of A19 and forces using recruitment freezes, our strength and skills will continue to be attacked.

These threats to the service are even more alarming when we know three reports on police terms and conditions are due to report in coming months – all with the potential to have profound and detrimental effects on the service.

These are incredibly difficult times but we are a service worth fighting for. The government clearly need reminding just how vital a role we play in these uncertain times. Sadly it seems we also need to remind our leaders of the same.

Stay safe,

Julie Nesbit
CCC, Chairman

The three reviews;

The Winsor Review which has looked broadly at police pay and conditions publishes its first report on February 28th, 2011. When published the CCC will use the day to consider the report and its implications and it will then be discussed the following day with the CBB chairs and secretaries.

The Hutton Review of pensions will be out

in March. Once we have sight of it we will again need to fully assess the full implications and we will circulate our views as soon as possible.

Peter's Report, by Peter Neyroud, formerly of the NPIA could come at any day, though we are still to see a draft. The rumour which abounds is that the main theme is professionalising the police.

In the diary;

7th Feb – Constables Secretaries meeting
10th Feb – Julie meeting Baroness Harris re police reform
28th Feb – Winsor part one reports
1st and 2nd March – CBB form views on Winsor
5th March – Julie speaking at UKIP

Police Rehabilitation Centres

Will Riches of the CCC is the newly elected Trustee to Flint House. Here he tells us why cuts to budgets must not equal cuts to support for injured officers.

Flint House is a magnificent building in a beautiful part of the country with fantastic rehabilitative facilities and a team of wonderful people who make a huge difference to police officers lives every day.

You will understand from my opening paragraph that I am something of a fan of the place. As a Met officer I have never had the pleasure of visiting the Harrogate rehabilitation centre but from colleagues who have I am assured that both facilities

are equally excellent, providing a vital life line for officers who get ill or injured during their service.

It is incumbent upon us all to make those we are elected to represent fully aware of the centres. Their on-going success is reliant upon us ensuring that every officer contributes to the fund.

For the sceptics you may encounter I am sure you will have a plethora of examples to change their views or colleagues who will give testament to them because we all must ensure our rehabilitation centres continue to be there providing the excellent service that our members so desperately need in their hour of need.