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News and views from South Wales Police Federation



20 21 | POLICING UNDER PRESSURE

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A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

By Steve
Treharne Chair
of South Wales
Police
Federation



Never have I been so frustrated with the media's continual onslaught on policing. We face daily trial by media, with armchair experts, and some in influential positions, quick to condemn officers without any context to the greater circumstances.

We will at times get things wrong. It would be unusual if we sometimes didn't based on the dynamic situations officers face, often in highly charged circumstances and without the luxury of sitting back in the cold light of day in a comfy chair with a nice drink.

It is easy to get drawn into an online argument and engage with those critics, however, I urge you to ignore the armchair critics and continue doing what you do best - serving your communities.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to change the opinion of those who view us negatively. But remember the vast majority of the public do support, and value, the work you do though this is

easily forgotten when the negative voices are over-amplified.

We are approaching our triennial Federation elections and I encourage as many of you as possible to stand for our reps' positions. The role of a rep is crucial in supporting colleagues experiencing difficult times. There are many personal benefits too with the development that goes with the training you are given. It can be challenging, and the best reps give a piece of themselves in supporting officers. But it is a role where you can truly make a difference and cast some light in the direction of a colleague who only sees the darkness.

With the elections in mind, our daily business and support continue unabated. There are designated reps in each division who are there to support you. Please use their services, whether that is a regulation query, a grievance, H & S, misconduct matter or any of the other areas where we can support you. Your reps are a friendly bunch and will be happy to provide you with any assistance you may need.

On a final note, you have all done a remarkable job during the pandemic. It is important to remember to look after yourselves and each other, so if you see a colleague struggling please reach out to them and the Federation.

I'll finish off by reminding you that you are the best police service in the world and you should be proud of the role you play in society. Take care and keep safe.

PM'S 'HUGE THANK YOU' TO OFFICERS

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'.

He said: "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."



Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

CHAIR REFLECTS ON CHALLENGING YEAR



National Police Federation chair John Apter.

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."

He said the police had unfairly become the focus of blame: "My colleagues, who were doing their very best, every single day, in the most difficult of circumstances, 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 and called 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.

"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?"

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.

WATCH CONFERENCE ON-DEMAND

Key sessions from the Police Federation annual conference are now available to members via a video on-demand service.

Speeches, panel discussions and round table forums covering a wide range of the issues currently faced by police officers can be viewed online.

South Wales branch chair Steve Treharne said: "I hope our members will use the on-demand service to catch up on some of the highlights from the 2021 conference. All the major challenges faced by South Wales officers were addressed in some form and I think members would gain something by going online to watch some of the sessions."

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

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, 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 two years.

She said: "I will continue to do everything in my power to ensure assaults on our police are treated with the



Home Secretary Priti Patel.

appropriate severity across the whole criminal justice system.

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

THOSE WHO HAVE CONTEMPT FOR THE POLICE MAY BE LOUDER AND MORE VITRIOLIC THAN EVER, BUT THEY ARE VASTLY OUTNUMBERED AND UTTERLY WRONG.



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 were treated with contempt, particularly when vaccinations were being offered to anyone in high infection rate areas this week.

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 about the lack of accountability of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).

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

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 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

POLICING HAS BEEN FRONT AND CENTRE THROUGHOUT AND POLICING HAS HELPED STOP THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS AND IT HAS HELPED TO SAVE LIVES SO THANKS TO EVERYBODY WHO HAS BEEN OUT THERE.

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'.

Ms Patel replied: "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

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 save 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."

POLICE MINISTER ADDRESSES OPENING SESSION

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 conference that, despite the unprecedented challenges of the last 18 months, officers had managed to maintain and had 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



Policing minister Kit Malthouse.

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 session of conference, the theme of which was 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 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.

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 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.

'THIS AWARD IS REALLY FOR VICTIMS WHO ARE STILL SUFFERING'

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 of Avon and Somerset Police said she was accepting the award 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.

She said victims of domestic abuse were everywhere.



Chief Inspector Sharon Baker.

"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."

BRAVE OFFICERS HONoured

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 awards ceremony, led a session honouring all nominees.

"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."

The 2020 ceremony is hopefully taking place in October with the 2021 ceremony scheduled for December.

PAY, CONDITIONS AND PENSIONS: 'WE NEED TO GET OUR MESSAGE OUT MORE'



Facilitator Alastair Campbell (left) and national secretary of Police Federation of England and Wales, and (inset) PFEW national secretary Alex Duncan.

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.

WE HAVE TO REALISE HOW POWERFUL WE CAN BE WHEN WE COME TOGETHER WITH A UNITED FRONT.

‘BE BRAVER WITH BWV’



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

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.

“What myself and my family has gone

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.

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.”

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.

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



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

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.

"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 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 at an inquest."

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.

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

He said: "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.

Looking to the summer ahead, John said



Metropolitan Police Sergeant Nikki O'Malley spoke about her experiences of working on the frontline at protests.

forces are committed to protecting 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."

Metropolitan Police Sergeant Nikki

O'Malley spoke about her experiences of working on the frontline at protests, including one in which she was not wearing a protective kit, resulting in her getting injured.

UNDERSTANDING MISOGYNY IN POLICING



The panel members with Ian Collins bottom right.

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."

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."

HAVING A LAUGH IS IMPORTANT FOR DE-STRESSING BUT IT SHOULDN'T COME AT SOMEONE ELSE'S EXPENSE.

PANEL PRAISES PANDEMIC RECRUITS

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'.

With an ambitious target of an extra 20,000 officers 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."

Dave Bamber, national Federation lead for professional development and issues related to the College of Policing, explained: "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."

As well as recruitment, emphasis was



Dave Bamber, national Federation lead for professional development.

also on retention and the significance of finding out why people are choosing to leave the service early.

NEW CULTURE ON CONDUCT?

It is not the end of the 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 requiring improvement and reflective practice procedures introduced with the new conduct regulations in February last year.



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.

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.

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. The IOPC was setting targets for nine and six months next year.

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

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

FED ELECTIONS COMING SOON

Members are being 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.

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.



PFEW national vice-chair Ché Donald.

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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, "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 National Board member and 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."



National wellbeing lead Hayley Aley.

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PRIVILEGE COMES UNDER SCRUTINY

Fairness and equality came under the spotlight 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, who 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."



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

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

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'WE NEED DIVERSE EXPERIENCES'

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.

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

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.

NEW WELLBEING TOOLKIT IS AIMED AT DETECTIVES



Glyn Pattinson, chair of the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum

A unique wellbeing toolkit aimed specifically at detectives and investigators has been 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 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. 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."

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 losing their appeal.

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.

Thames Valley's Deputy Chief Constable Jason Hogg, who is also detectives' lead on the National Police Chiefs' Council, 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'.

His force 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.



FEARS OVER CHANGES TO DRIVING LAW

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."

'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."

He added: "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."

Facilitator 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!"



John Apter sums up conference 2021.