

Criminal intent – the consequence of cuts?

We knew that whichever party won the general election last year, attempts to bridge the glaring deficit gap would have to be made and that all constituent parts of the public sector would have to play their part in sharing the burden this would place. What we hadn't bargained for however was that the police service would take the biggest hit and that the approach to change would be so ferocious in its attack; not seeking to improve what the service could offer but making what the service offered fit what it could afford.

Determined and dogged as this government seem to be to pursue their long seated policy ambitions, they are wilfully ignoring the view of the frontline, their advisors and factions of the public; 86% of whom in a recent Mori-Poll survey stated they didn't want to see any erosion of the service they receive from the public.

The first real signal that change was afoot came with the Comprehensive Spending Review in October. The review proposed 20% cuts to the police budget, front loaded for the first two years and ignored the government commissioned report by Sir Denis O'Connor, 'Valuing the Police', which warned that policing cuts over 12% would not be achievable without damaging the frontline.

Paul McKeever, Chairman, Police Federation of England and Wales says, "let's be clear here. The government has chosen to make these cuts which stand in

stark contrast to other sectors; the NHS budget has been ring-fenced, cuts to defence are 7% and there has been an increase in the overseas aid budget by billions."

To top this, the government gave £650 million to Pakistan and accepted liability in excess of £4 billion for the bailout of the Portuguese economy, failing completely to recognise their first duty is in fact to the safety of this country's citizens.

Mr McKeever adds, "This government is driven by a long seated objective on policing using carefully placed think tank advisors (Blair Gibbs, Policy Exchange) to try and rubbish any view held by officers on the front line."

In March within the space of weeks the police service then faced Tom Winsor's review of police terms and conditions, Lord

Hutton's review of public sector pensions and the Home Office published Peter Neyroud's report on police leadership and training. Not forgetting that over the horizon, we also have the introduction of directly elected police and crime commissioners coming in. This attack by government is not just on the pay of police officers but on the whole framework of the service; the people it employs and the people it serves.

The consequences of making the changes that this government seems determined to make are wide reaching and extremely dangerous. There will be a huge impact on the service police can deliver, there will be less visibility and a much harder job recruiting and retaining officers who at the very least expect to be fairly rewarded for the job they do.



Tom Winsor's review of police pay and conditions

It is the biggest overhaul of police pay and conditions in over 30 years and will potentially remove £500 million from the police pay bill. After months of consultation, detailed submissions, inevitable delays, not to mention government spin, the Winsor report on police pay and conditions finally made its appearance in March.

At first glance, some of Winsor's recommendations may be welcomed including the unpopular, morale-lowering bonuses handed out to chiefs and superintendents would be abolished. The idea of an additional shift premium may also find favour among some officers. But, the Federation warns, the recommendations are not all that they seem. The introduction of an additional shift premium at first sounds attractive, particularly as Winsor proposes that officers should receive an additional 10 per cent of their basic pay.

According to Ian Rennie, General Secretary of the Police Federation of England and Wales, "Unfortunately this is not the shift allowance that he states so many officers have told him that they want. It is in fact paid on an hourly basis only for the hours that you work outside of 6am and 8pm. As a police officer you can be directed to work at any time, but if this proposal is introduced it would result in you suffering a financial detriment if your duties are changed by management to work between these hours."

Other proposals will also lead to a cut in overall pay. These include an 'Expertise and Professional Accreditation Allowance' which replaces the current SPP scheme in all but name. The removal of the 'Hertfordshire Agreement' that currently remunerates officers who

are on mutual aid or held in reserve, replacing it with a system of paying only for the hours that are worked, will significantly reduce the amount of compensation that officers receive for being directed to work anywhere in the UK and the subsequent disruption to an officer's family life. Changes to allow payment at double time if required to work on Christmas Day and seven days chosen by the officer is also a reduction by stealth in officers' pay for working public holidays, says Mr Rennie.

"Given that all officers will not be able to nominate the actual public holidays as part of their seven days, you will end up working on those days without any compensation for the disruption of having to work on what is your current entitlement to paid family leave.

There is no doubt that the seven days that you nominate will be subject to approval as currently applies to annual leave and other time off. They will be subject to minimum staffing levels being available so that there will be no requirement for you to work and be paid double time. This will result in a loss of the remuneration that you currently receive for working public holidays," he adds.

The Home Office insists there are winners, and not just losers, under Winsor's new system of pay and conditions. The Federation begs to differ.

"By removing this amount of money from the police pay bill there will be no winners. There may be officers who appear to benefit from some of the changes that Winsor has proposed, but it will depend on how the recommendations are implemented," says Mr Rennie.

The Home Secretary has now decided to put forward all of Mr Winsor's recommendations to the

Police Negotiating Board for consideration. These negotiations are likely to take months. "These are difficult and challenging times for the police service. Never has there been such an attack on our pay and conditions. Never has it been more important for us to stand together and support each other," says Mr Rennie. "This is one of the most important 'officer requiring assistance' calls you will ever have to respond to as a police officer."

Winsor – the realities

No compulsory redundancy
Chief Officers and Superintendent bonuses suspended
Competence related threshold payments (CRTPs) abolished
Special priority payments abolished
Increments frozen for two years (at 2010/11 levels)
Overtime to remain but rates change, as do qualification periods.
Officer chooses when to take bank holiday leave
Unsocial hours paid at an extra 10 percent of basic pay to officers for every hour worked between 8pm and 6am
A new Expertise and Professional Accreditation Allowance (EPAA) of £1,200 paid to detectives, firearms and public order officers qualified to the appropriate levels as using those skills; allowance paid to neighbourhood police officers in post for at least three years
For police staff, time-and-a-half and double-time pay for weekend day working abolished
National on-call payment of £15 per day for officers
Maternity pay for officers extended from 13 to 18 weeks
Motor vehicle allowance restored to local authority rates
New system of medals and awards for hard work and bravery for all police staff

Winsor – what it means for you

- Basic salaries will be frozen for two years from September 2011. With inflation running at five percent over two years, this would see the value your average salary fall by over 10 percent in real terms.
- Winsor's recommendations will also reduce your pensionable pay on top of that 10 percent cut in the following ways:
- If you have not reached the top of your pay scale, you will be at the same pay point for the next two years. That means an average loss over two years of £2,345.
- If you are at the top of your scale and you are in receipt of a competence-related threshold payment (CRTP), you will lose £1,212 a year.
- If you have not reached the top of your pay scale, the abolition of CRTPs means that you have lost the potential to earn that £1,212.
- CRTP makes up your pensionable pay. Its removal means that your pension when you retire will be over £800 a year lower if this recommendation is accepted. On top of these proposals, if you are an officer who falls into one of the following groups, you may see your pay cut by even more:
- If you work ordinary overtime on a regular basis the change to plain time means that you will lose an average of £430 a year.
- If your force requires you to work overtime on rest days with less than five days notice you could lose an average of £300 a year.
- If you receive a Special Priority Payment, you will lose between £500 and £3,000, although some officers could lose more than this.
- These figures are based on averages and some officers will receive more than the sums

mentioned here, while some will get less or none at all. There may be officers who appear to benefit from some of the changes that Winsor has proposed, but it will depend on how the recommendations are implemented.

Lord Hutton's review of public sector pensions

Public service pensions have come under fire in recent years, not least the police pension scheme. Work carried out by the Liberal Democrats last year revealed the amount paid out in police pensions had risen by 50 percent in the preceding five years to £2 billion in 2008/09, and was projected to rise by a further 14 percent in the next three years.

No wonder then that within weeks of taking office, the new coalition government ordered a review of public sector pensions, appointing former Labour Cabinet Minister, Lord Hutton to do the honours. The results were published in April. Lord Hutton says his proposals "strike a balanced deal between public service workers and the taxpayer". He says: "They will ensure that public service workers continue to have access to good pensions, while taxpayers benefit from greater control over their costs."

The most radical recommendation is the switch from a pension based on final salary to a pension based on career average earnings. Lord Hutton says this approach will be fairer to those that do not have the high salary growth rewarded in final salary schemes.

Another proposal is to increase the retirement age to 60 for uniformed workers including police officers who currently retire, on average, at the age of 51. However, despite the 200-plus page report and its 27 recommendations, police officers

are no clearer as to what it will mean to them.

In the recent budget, the government accepted Lord Hutton's recommendations as a basis for consultation with public sector workers, trades unions and others, recognising that the position of the uniformed services will require particularly careful consideration.

The government says it will now set out proposals in the autumn that are 'affordable, sustainable and fair to both the public sector workforce and the taxpayer'. However, police pensions have already come under attack. In the Emergency Budget in June last year the government proposed a move from RPI to CPI for revaluing pension benefits. In addition, in the Comprehensive Spending Review last October, in response to Hutton's interim report, the government proposed an average three percent increase in member contributions to be phased in from April 2012.

Ian Rennie, the Police Federation's general secretary, says any further changes to the Police Pension Schemes must be consulted on within the Police Negotiating Board (PNB), the first relevant meeting of which took place in April.

"We now await direction from the Home Secretary to the Official Side of the PNB on how the recommendations should be addressed in respect of the police pension scheme." So, as far as police pensions are concerned, it is a waiting game.

Did you know?

The government said the gap in public sector pensions was 9 billion. In 2010 the same government subsidised private pension schemes to a figure of 36 billion.

Lord Hutton's main recommendations include;

- Introducing a Normal Pension Age of 60 for those members of the uniformed services – armed forces, police and fire-fighters – who currently have an NPA of less than 60.
- Capping the cost of public sector pensions to the taxpayer.
- Honouring, in full, the pension promises that have been earned by scheme members (their 'accrued rights') and maintaining the final salary link for past service for current members.
- Changing from a final-salary basis, to a pay-out based on average pay over workers' careers.
- Lord Hutton says this would be possible to carry out by the end of this Parliament, in 2015.

Peter Neyroud's review of Police Leadership and Training

Next to land in our in-trays was a report by Peter Neyroud, former Chief Executive Officer of the National Policing Improvement Agency whose remit was the professionalisation of the police service.

The Federation is still considering the full implications of the report, which if implemented, stand to have a huge impact on police officers and the structure of policing in England and Wales. It is important that a document with such a huge impact is considered in its broader context with for example how the recommendations impact with the combination of the proposals of Winsor and Hutton?

We will publish our full response on our website at; www.polfed.org.

Sir Denis O'Connor, HMIC Report 'Demanding Times'

Whilst we are glad that a definition has been sought on what the frontline of policing is, the fact this definition has been sought after cuts have been proposed is like a house built without foundations.

First came the HMIC report commissioned by the government which stated cuts to police budgets over 12% would have a detrimental effect on frontline policing. Then the government's Comprehensive Spending Review announced 20% cuts will be made to police budgets but won't affect frontline response. Swiftly followed by two reports recommending cuts to police pay, allowances and pensions and by so doing; damaging morale on the frontline. And then the latest offering; a definition of what the frontline actually is. Without wanting to state the obvious this approach seems more about quick fix budget solutions than the holistic review of policing that is so urgently needed.

The report rightly recognises that public perception and confidence in the police is determined by visibility and that the average visibility is far less than the defined two thirds in the report. It is simply not right that such major decisions on the home security of this country are being decided in such a backhanded and back to front manner. Review policing as a whole, define its place in its modern context and then decide how and where cuts can be made. This approach is like a poorly written essay where the conclusion is made before the arguments have even been presented.

The right way to reform?

It is absolutely exasperating that for years we have called for a Royal Commission on Policing. The Federation has never been opposed to reform but we believe that changes must be done as a whole not in the disparate fashion currently being adopted. A Royal Commission into policing will in all likelihood throw up some home truths that we would all have to face but at least the right processes will have been followed and no stone left unturned. In the last twenty years there have been too many changes, schemes, initiatives, targets, bureaucratic introductions and too many ill-conceived tampering's by the government presiding. Policing is a-political and as such should be reviewed and reformed in the same vein.

But the current governments approach? First a review of pay and conditions, then a review of pensions, next a report on professionalising the police and finally defining what is actually meant by frontline policing.

The right way to approach reform is surely to look holistically across the service in its entirety and do the job properly. The current approach to reform has been based purely on where money can be saved and a drive to fulfil the policy objectives of the party in power and not about service effectiveness.

A Royal Commission will be slightly more lengthy, possibly more costly but if the government continue in the vein they are, not only will they lose valuable skills and resources built up over the last few decades but joining the police will not be an attractive option for future generations who see the police constantly getting knocked by the press and politicians, facing the dangers most run from but with their conditions aimed at reflecting their duties slowly being eroded away.

Recent activity

- The Federation has launched a Judicial Review about the government's decision to downgrade pensions together with five other representative bodies of public sector workers
- With help from local JBBs, we are collating case studies which reflect the general mood and reaction on how cuts will impact the lives of officers across the country, this was done with help from the JBBs. These will be available shortly on the web
- Police magazine articles and news to keep members informed each month
- The national website is getting a facelift and a campaign page for all the work created
- Tabling Early Day Motions in Parliament - we are targeting specific MPs to seek support in tabling a number of motions around 20 percent budget cut, attack on pay and conditions, public safety and the need for a Royal Commission on policing
- Political conferences - looking at a range of options for the autumn political conferences
- A postcard campaign - to support the lobbying activity, asking MPs to support the PFEW campaign and sign an Early Day Motion
- Lobbying MP letter and tool on PFEW website - asking MPs if they agree with the £500

- million being taken out of the police pay budget and asking them to support the PFEW and sign Early Day Motions that we will identify
- Encouraging members to lobby MPs face-to-face: attend MPs surgeries and apply direct pressure to all MPs
- Targeting police authorities - in the main this activity will be encouraged through JBB contacts
- Media - ensuring we take every proactive and reactive opportunity to get our message across via national, regional and trade media. See website for some of the coverage received and our e-zine sent daily
- Open letter to ACPO President asking for ACPO position on £500 million being taken from police pay budget as they once talked of redistribution of monies, not complete removal
- Letter to the 43 Chief Constable to clarify their position on £500 million being taken from police pay budget
- Maximising use of social media, including twitter by comm's and chairman's office. Follow us - @pfew_hq and @policefedchair
- Videos on website - we have started a series of video messages from the Chairman which will be updated regularly with past messages stored on a PFEW You Tube site

- A Virtual March was considered
- London march and/or rally - there will be an event. Exact timing and location are yet to be decided
- Bravery Awards - a week of positive stories about policing that are not solely about 'crime-fighting' activity
- PFEW Annual Conference - our flagship event where national media are present
- National advertisements - we have done our first and are in the process of putting together a series called 'Consequences'
- Lobbying poster
- Use your vote poster
- Our Federation survey of members has just closed with a respondent rate of over 30% (a good survey expects to get a 10% response). We will be using the info for press bits nearer conference

Future activity

We are looking at a number of options on how we can best demonstrate our absolute disgust at the way this government is treating the police service. With little support from ACPO at this time we need to grab the bull by the horns and take matters into our own hands. A number of events are being considered. Please keep an eye on the national website for details or contact your local Fed Rep.

Get involved in our Cuts are Criminal campaign;

- Lobby your MP via www.polfed.org
- Attend your local MP surgery – let them know the reality of cuts.
- Ask them to sign Early Day Motion 1604, calling for a Royal Commission on Policing – the right way to reform.
- Sign the petition on cuts on our website (coming soon)
- Feedback how the cuts are effecting you via campaign2011@polfed.org
- Follow us on twitter @PFEW_HQ and @policefedchair



20% cuts to policing. Criminal?

Ask your MP @ www.polfed.org:
Do you support your local police?
Are the rushed budget cuts the right way to reform the police service?
Is taking £500m out of police pay fair?

If they support us, ask them to:
Sign EDM 1604, to call for a Royal Commission on Policing – the right way to reform.
Make their voice heard on your behalf.

POLICE
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