

## **IAN RENNIE – STATEMENT TO THE PNB FULL BOARD, 24 JULY 2012**

From the outset of these negotiations on Winsor Part Two Staff Side entered with a positive frame of mind in the expectation that we would be able to reach a negotiated settlement which met the requirements of the Official Side while respecting the concerns and legitimate fears of Staff Side and the police officers of England and Wales that we represent.

We were encouraged by the Official Side's stated intention to reach a collective agreement through constructive dialogue. In recent weeks that intention on the part of the Official Side appears to have evaporated as positions for negotiations have been replaced by positions of principle. These really should have been identified at an earlier stage.

The Official Side previously indicated that they hoped to get an early sense of Staff Side's views and also that Staff Side would put forward its own views. Therefore, in the hope of reaching an agreement, Staff Side has made the following proposals in respect of each of the recommendations which the Home Secretary asked the PNB to consider.

### **Compulsory severance**

With regard to compulsory severance, the power already exists within Police Regulations to dismiss officers for professional misconduct or unsatisfactory performance.

That is not the issue here.

A power to make police officers redundant would directly conflict with the Office of Constable.

Staff Side has agreed to changes to Regulation A19 and the introduction of a voluntary exit scheme. Neither of these have been used by forces and the relevant regulations have not even been published yet.

When Staff Side agreed to the changes to A19 and the introduction of a voluntary severance scheme it was on the understanding that there would not be a compulsory severance scheme.

The effectiveness and impact of both these changes need to be considered before deciding if a compulsory severance scheme is necessary.

Furthermore, the election of Police and Crime Commissioners has the potential to change policing forever. The impact that their introduction will have on the service needs to be properly considered before introducing a compulsory severance scheme that could be detrimental to the independence of police officers.

All we ask is that any discussion of the relevant Winsor Part Two recommendations is deferred until the impact of these changes can be properly assessed so that they can be taken into consideration during any future discussions. It is disappointing that the Official Side could not agree to this.

### **Specialist Protection Officers' overtime**

In respect of overtime for Specialist Protection Officers, the Official Side has so far been unable to provide any evidence in support of buying it out. Staff Side cannot, therefore, accept this recommendation on the basis of our concerns that any removal of casual overtime in favour of a fixed allowance would see the excessive working hours of officers in those roles continue or increase.

Staff Side agrees the Official Side's request for additional time to give this matter consideration.

I am sure the fact will not be missed that our position contrasts with that of the Official Side in respect of compulsory severance.

### **On-call**

In respect of on-call, Staff Side is aware of the economic climate forces are operating within. Given Staff Side's concerns, shared by the PAT, about the low value of the proposed on-call allowance, and the 12 occasions which officers would have to do for no payment, Staff Side has agreed not to pursue a national on-call allowance at this time. Forces should, however, be required to collect the necessary management data on the use of on-call which can inform both Sides in the future. I am pleased we have

agreed that this will take place. Not pursuing this claim is a significant concession by Staff Side.

### **Regional allowances**

In respect of regional allowances, Staff Side believes that, in agreeing to PNB Circular 1/11, it has already agreed to the flexibility which this recommendation seeks to introduce.

Staff Side has been clear throughout that removal of this payment should not be a sanction for unsatisfactory performance.

However, to meet the stated requirements of the Official Side, Staff Side signalled its willingness to consider reducing the minimum amount payable subject to there being no reduction in the total value of the amount of money currently allocated for the payment of regional allowances in the South East forces. Staff Side also offered to concede that a regional allowance may be removed from an officer on long-term sickness absence in circumstances where they are no longer in receipt of police pay, a long-standing proposal of the Official Side.

### **Pay reform**

Winsor has already tried and failed to abolish competence-related threshold payments. The PAT rejected this proposal. There is a long-term and permanent impact upon police officer pensions from the removal of CRTPs. All officers who were recruited into the police service under the current pay structure have a legitimate expectation that, as long as they meet the specific criteria, they are eligible to access CRTP. That is why, from April 2014, for serving officers the top pay point should be £37,731, incorporating the value of CRTP.

Winsor also tried and failed to introduce an interim Expertise and Professional Accreditation Allowance for just four roles.

Having failed to convince the PAT of the merits of this allowance, the Official Side has simply proposed it again but at half of its original value.

The PAT acknowledged Staff Side's concerns that there had been no real analysis of why Winsor had chosen these four particular roles and stated that "*the question of additional reward for expertise or time served in specific roles and/or application of*

*accredited skills or qualifications is inextricably related to issues to do with the design of a new pay structure, including how the value or relative weight of jobs will be determined”.*

Staff Side again rejects the proposed EPAA on the basis that the differences in pay for the roles proposed by Winsor are unfair, unable to be justified and could result in potential legal challenge by increasing the gender pay gap.

However, Staff Side has been willing to engage in genuine reform of the pay structure, including discussion on our long-desired objective of reducing the length of the constables' payscale. Under Staff Side's proposed payscale, as with Winsor's recommendation, following the completion of probation, progression between pay points would take place on the basis of one year's service and a satisfactory box marking in the end-of-year appraisal. The continued retention of the top pay point would also depend upon the achievement of a satisfactory rating in the end-of-year appraisal. This scale allows for the introduction of a Foundation Skills Threshold provided that the service could develop and agree an appropriate basis and mechanism to support this approach. It also allows for a Specialist Skills Threshold to access the top of scale, subject to a proper evaluation of roles to provide a justification for differences in pay and avoid unfairness and potential legal challenge.

From the outset of these negotiations we explained our concerns about the proposals to cut the starting rates for police officers. We believe this will have a damaging impact upon the calibre of recruits to the police service. The starting rate reflects the need to attract mature recruits to the Service the average age being currently 27. We know that many even now take an initial drop in salary with the prospect of earning more as they progress in their career. It therefore seems counter-intuitive in the extreme for the Official Side and Winsor to discuss recruiting a higher standard of recruit whilst recommending less pay to attract them.

Staff Side also believes, in line with the principles it set out at the April meeting of the PNB, that at the end of the progression freeze in April 2014, officers should move to the pay point commensurate with their reckonable service.

In attempting to reach an agreement, Staff Side was willing to extend the current public sector pay freeze for members of the Federated Ranks in England and Wales until April 2015. Not only would this have yielded substantial savings for forces across England and Wales, it would also have achieved Winsor's stated aim of bringing the annual pay award for police officers into line with the majority of groups in the rest of the public sector.

Our proposed changes to the payscale, despite the concessions we were willing to offer to achieve the reduction in its length, would have come at a cost. Of that there is no doubt.

That cost would have been an extra £10 million between now and 2017-18. That should be measured against more than £450 million already due to be removed from police officers' pay as a result of Winsor Part One.

It should also take into account the fact that our proposals actually achieve substantial front-loaded savings up to 2015-16.

Most importantly, it should recognise that Staff Side's proposed change to the Constables' pay scale would reduce the current gender pay gap for basic pay for serving officers from 6.6 percent to 3.2 percent.

To achieve that outcome, officers and the public will be shocked to learn that the Official Side was not willing to make the small level of investment necessary over a six year period.

Within the Home Secretary's letter of direction of 27 March, she indicates that PNB should take into account the impact of the recommendations upon equality and diversity. This appears not to be the case in regard to this recommendation.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout this process, Staff Side has sought to engage constructively, not just in respect of pay, but also in respect of the long-term reform of pensions, on which we can hopefully reach agreement – in direct contrast to the pay negotiations.

We commissioned independent reports which we shared with the Official Side to inform our discussions. The Official Side has

provided no evidence to contradict that professional advice which is critical of a number of the recommendations under discussion.

In summary, can I just point out that the security at the Olympics has demonstrated what every police officer knows – that police officers provide the ultimate flexibility, able to fill the void when the private sector fails.

Police officers who in recent weeks have had their rest days cancelled to bail-out the Home Secretary because of the failure of G4S will rightly ask what more is expected of them – particularly if they are also required to provide cover for industrial action by other workers during the Olympics period.

I would remind you that the Home Secretary's letter of direction also stated that account should be taken of the particular frontline role and nature of the Office of Constable, including the lack of a right to strike. We remain to be convinced that it has.

The last few months have also shown the flexibility of Staff Side. Time and time again, Staff Side has shown its willingness to negotiate.

There is only one message coming out of these negotiations in respect of Winsor Part Two: that the Government and the Official Side does not value the police officers of England and Wales.

This is a truly disappointing day for Staff Side and the police officers we represent, and we will be informing our members accordingly.