

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Inspectors Central Committee chairman's speech to conference 2013

Colleagues and Guests

I want to focus on the police and the need for reform. The truth is we won't deal with crime until we reform the police.

This is widely understood, but not acted upon nearly enough. The police know it. The public know it. Politicians know it.

David Cameron, keynote speech 2006.

As an organisation we cannot say we did not see this coming. Yet we did not see this coming. The signs were there. It was clear what was said but despite this we were ill prepared for the onslaught of government reform that was set to besiege us.

We need to learn from the lessons of the past. The main lesson is that we must predict how the words of today will turn into the actions of tomorrow.

We need to start thinking about the future of policing, about our vision, and about where we want policing to be in 20/20. We need to stop looking at what might have been, and be ahead of the game in influencing what might yet be.

It is often said that the past is a place of reference not residency. But before we talk about where we are going, we need to know where we came from.

So, what has happened since Conference 2012?

1. Pensions:

Public sector pensions have been the victim of so called reform, plummeting in value and sky rocketing in terms of contributions. The police service has had to shoulder an unfair burden and what we have now is certainly less than perfect, but we have to remember that it could have been so much worse had it not been for the efforts of the Police Federation.

2. And then of course we have Winsor 1 and Winsor 2, the biggest single attack on police pay and conditions since the Sheehy Report in the 90's. No one would say that the Winsor proposals have been anything less than a means to reduce the police pay bill. But again - through two Police Arbitration Tribunals - the outcomes have been less damaging than what was proposed because of the efforts of the Police Federation.

3. Of course there was the advent of Police and Crime Commissioners, the flagship policy underpinning the law and order agenda of this government. The flag ship obviously had engine trouble, initially announced at the elections in May, then finally taking place in November, with a dismal 15% turning out to wave that flagship off. And with a blast from its whistle, the policy changed policing in England and Wales overnight – although with the constant recruitment and spending on support staff by

PCCs you would be forgiven for not noticing the difference between them and our old friends the Police Authority.

Underpinning all of these changes has been the 20% budget cuts reducing the police budget to less than that which is spent on foreign aid.

The first duty of government is the protection of its citizens, although many would think that the first duty of this government is the protection of itself. Has there been a reduction in the numbers of officers at the Palace of Westminster? Have we seen a cut to MPs pensions in line with the cuts made to ours?

Once a cop always a cop and now you can be a member of CoP. The College of Policing is only just beginning to get to grips with the many responsibilities being heaped on it. The Police Federation is there in the boardroom, in the committee and meeting rooms, ensuring that the opportunities the college bring are maximised for the benefit of our members.

Anyway, before we leave the past where it lies, let's focus on Inspectors for a minute.

There has been a greater proportionate reduction in Inspectors than in any other rank. We are the officers who deliver the crucial link between operational policing and the wider strategic policing function. The impact of this has not yet become clear, but as we turn to the future we need to keep this in mind.

As Inspectors, we need to focus on our vision of the future. To be the strategic link that retains the understanding of the needs of those on the ground.

As someone once said, "The only way to predict the future is to have the power to shape it."

To shape the future we need to engage with key stakeholders within the field of policing. We cannot, and should not, be written off as the “last great unreformed public service.” We need to ensure that our voice is heard and that our views are taken seriously. And most importantly, that our views are realistic, considered and benefit not only us but the public we seek to assist and protect.

We have consulted with you, we will continue to consult with you, but let me outline to you the keys areas of focus for the Inspectors Central Committee over the coming months and years:

- 1. Inspecting Ranks responsibilities for detention and evidence gathering under PACE.*
- 2. Partnership working and vulnerable persons, why are police officers continually picking up where other agencies are failing. We are all under pressure but we need to work smarter together.*
- 3. Command resilience, doing more with less, when will the wheel fall off? Some will say the wheel has already fallen off. In spite of this, we continue to stretch ourselves to the absolute limit of our capacity.*
- 4. Excessive hours, we all know we are working harder and longer than ever before. We need to take stock, examine ourselves and when necessary start saying NO. No one is indispensable – in order to do a good job and make the right decisions, those which ensure our officers and the public’s safety, we cannot work in a way which prevents sound decision making being possible.*

So what am I going to do? I have talked about what we need to do but what is the first thing I can do to make all of the above possible? For me, it is continuing my commitment to joint working within PFEW – to make sure I work with all members of the Joint Central Committee to deliver what you elected me to do. I don't always agree with everything everyone says, but I do commit to the process as it stands – and I respect all views.

Whilst we are individually committed to our work, and to take on the challenges I have outlined, we do it knowing that our structure at times prevents us – all of us – from delivering a truly unified and strong approach.

The Police Federation of England and Wales has a once in a generation opportunity to take a look at itself, to answer the critics and see if there are ways we can do this better.

Be under no illusion, a review of the organisation was going to happen. If not at our suggestion, then at the will of government. The last time they asked for an independent review in terms of policing it was for pay and conditions and we got Tom Winsor.

We have shown the government that we are not resistant to change and the truly independent review is now underway. You must get involved, you must take part, and you must have your say - warts and all.

I am proud to be the Chairman of the Inspectors Central Committee.

I am proud to hold the office of constable and be a member of the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Conference, thank you.

Alan Ogg, ICC chairman