



PNB official side decision is "bitterly disappointing"

Statement from Paul McKeever Chairman of the PFEW

Today a 'failure to agree' was registered at the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) meeting in relation to the Winsor Part Two recommendations. Responding, Paul McKeever, Chair and Graham Cassidy, Vice-Chair of the Staff Side of the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) said:

" The bitterly disappointing ideologically-based decision today by the Official Side of the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) to reject the Staff Side's alternative offer to changes to police officers' pay and terms and conditions of service demonstrates the total contempt and complete lack of respect and appreciation this government has for police officers in England and Wales; many of whom will be left seriously questioning their futures just days before the Olympic Games.

" The government has a very short memory. Who stepped in to save the day when the safety and security of the public attending the Olympics was severely compromised by the failings of a private company? The Home Secretary must recognise that her government cannot cut the police budget by 20%, oversee the loss of thousands of police officers, putting the public and the police service at risk, and expect officers' goodwill to last indefinitely.

" Let's not pretend today's decision is part of the government solution to tackle the fiscal deficit. The Staff Side alternative offer, whilst protecting pensionable pay for police officers, would have delivered savings to this government of £96 million over the next four years and would have reduced the current gender pay gap for basic pay from 6.6% to 3.2%; whilst providing the reform the government claim they want. Instead they seem determined to throw away such savings and the chance to close the gender pay gap in order to destroy the best police

service in the world and open the door for private companies to step in and pick up whatever pieces are left; jeopardising public safety and the service communities receive.

" We have seen what happens when you drive pay and conditions of service down. The recent G4S fiasco shows that in order to have the long-term commitment of staff you need to ensure fair pay and terms and conditions of service. Driving down the constables' pay scale will see future good quality candidates look towards other professions that reward appropriately and fairly what they do, and other proposed changes will see those already in service looking for alternative careers.

" This decision will do nothing to reduce the calls by some police officers for industrial rights and will leave others questioning what the future holds for them in a police service that demands more, protects less and will be driven by the desire to make profit for private companies, rather than delivering the range of services the public expect and deserve.

" A failure to agree has been registered by the independent Chair of the PNB and the matter will be referred to the Police Arbitration Tribunal (PAT). Regrettably, this news will do nothing to lift morale in a police service which has already played its part to help tackle the country's fiscal problems but feels subjected to a very personal and unjustified attack by the government."



Critical questions left unanswered by PNB deadlock View from the CCC Chair

The 24th July saw the final day of negotiations at the PNB in respect of the below, Winsor Part Two recommendations.

It is a sad reflection on the day that the only recommendation where an agreement was reached was recommendation 114, the collection of management data.

It is beyond comprehension when yet again we show our professionalism and commitment to duty that the official side, which includes two Chief Officers, Simon Ash and Frances Habgood, could not reach an agreement with us that would allow police officers to get on with policing with some clarity about our future. It is time that ACPO gave straightforward and honest answers to the following questions. What is the Constables future role in policing? How are we to deliver policing services to our communities with fewer officers? How will you maintain officer safety? How will you maintain public confidence in the police service? How will you raise officers' moral while cutting our pay and worsening our conditions and leaving us vulnerable while on patrol?

In respect of casual overtime buyout, specialist officers (recommendation 103), more time has been given by the Home Office as requested by the official side to discuss this recommendation. The following saw a failure to agree registered:

- Compulsory severance (recommendations 46-47-48)
- Regional allowance (recommendation 74)
- Constables pay scale recommendation 54)
- CRTP (recommendation 83)
- EPAA (recommendation 94)
- On call (recommendation 112)

Statement on future pension arrangements

You will be aware that the Home Secretary's letter of 3rd July 2012 indicated that her officials and representatives of both sides of PNB should continue discussions to achieve 'an agreed framework for a reformed police pension scheme' by 24th July.

These discussions have continued and at the PNB meeting today it was agreed that there will be further dialogue. We are working extremely hard to get the best pension scheme possible for police officers.

I will keep you informed of any developments.

Ian Rennie
General Secretary

Police Federation of England and Wales

As with last year, these matters will now progress to the Police Arbitration Tribunal (PAT), which will mean more uncertainty about our future pay arrangements. This comes at a time when national security and safety is on the international stage and the finest police officers in the world, the British Bobby, have had to bail out the governments flawed Olympic security plans to restore international confidence in this country's ability to host the Olympic Games.

Police officers are the ultimate public service - we never shy or run away from incidents - and we don't have the rights of other workers when it comes to voicing our anger at our shoddy treatment. If this ethical bond is to continue then those who seek to worsen our terms and conditions of service need to do the right thing and listen to the voice of the Police Officers and support, not destroy us. .

Over the coming weeks as we progress towards the PAT we will provide further information regarding the process and what it will mean to officers.

Julie Nesbit
Chair, Constables Central Committee

Fed to provide support and Helpline for Olympics' officers

The London Olympics 2012 is the largest international sporting event ever to be held in the United Kingdom. It is the largest policing deployment since those seen during the miners' dispute, utilising officers with various skills from throughout the country.

On 13th July the Police Federation opened a 24/7 helpline in order that officers deployed on mutual aid or those working during the Olympic period are provided with welfare support in addition to that provided by the metropolitan police.

The Metropolitan Federation are providing cover for any 'on duty' matters whilst officers are deployed within London and will have representatives at the Muster, Briefing and Deployment Centres (MBDC) – Wanstead Flats, Blackheath and Battersea. The national Federation are providing cover for 'off duty' matters by providing representatives at Mutual Aid venues.

If you require assistance from the Federation please call The National Helpline number 01372 352110 or email Olympics@polfed.org

Paul Davis
Deputy General Secretary, Constables Central Committee

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% to 3.2%.

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.



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