

CHAIRMANS REPORT

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OVERVIEW

SOS - Save Our Service!

In the Chairman's Report in January 2010 I wrote of a meeting I had with the then Shadow Home Secretary, Chris Grayling, and reported that; ***'He (Chris Grayling) confirmed there would be a two year pay freeze which would coincide with the end of our three year pay deal. Clearly, we cannot comment on our position in relation to any proposed wage freeze a year and a half away from any proposed implementation date as we do not know what the economic conditions will be then.'*** You will recall that in the autumn of 2009 David Cameron announced that if he was elected at the General Election he would introduce a two year public sector wage freeze in 2011. At the time he announced the policy, the economy was in deflation and everyone seemed to accept his proposition as a reasonable statement. I didn't and I have likened it to saying you are going to go sunbathing on 7th July 2012, without knowing what the weather would be like on the day.

A history of recessions show that when growth in the economy starts up again inflation almost always follows. At present the Consumer Price Index stands at 3.7% and the Retail Price Index at 4.8%; both are rising. Utilities, such as gas and electricity are rising at double digit rates and to presage what is coming to a shop near you later this year, factory gate inflation; the cost of buying the materials to manufacture the goods we buy is at 11%.

So, what will the rate of inflation be if the Coalition presses ahead with their two year pay freeze? Well, a previous deputy governor of the Bank of England has stated that inflation will be above 5% and Policy Exchange, one of the government's preferred think tanks, has said it might top 10%. Taking the average, this would give a 7.5% rate of inflation per year and a real cut of 15% in the real buying power of the money in our wage packets.

The *Sunday Times* reported wage rises averaging 2% in the private sector and that this was causing real hardship as the cost of living was inflating rapidly. They said this was making people feel miserable. However, this is in relation to the average worker out there, not necessarily the public sector, and certainly not us. The government is still proposing that we suffer a wage freeze. To compound this we are awaiting the first part of the review of our pay in the Winsor Report (due out on 28th February), the outcome of the Hutton Report on pensions and the Neyroud Report on promotion and leadership.

If the government had said that pay would be pegged at X% below the rate of whatever inflation was at the time of the proposed wage freeze, I might be a little more sanguine about their proposals. However, now is the time to point out publically the unfairness of a proposal made at a time when no-one had any idea about the rate of inflation 18 months ahead. When these factors are put together with the many unknowns that might come out of the three reviews (above) it makes for a very unsettling and unattractive picture.

We have been engaging with Tom Winsor and have submitted evidence in relation to our pay and conditions. We have also submitted our report and supplementary commentary as well. Copies of these can be seen on our website; www.polfed.org. We would like to thank Raj Jethwa and his team in the research department for the first class work they have done.

Earlier this month I gave oral evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC) on the effects of the Comprehensive Spending Review and the real consequences of the decision to cut policing budgets by 20%. Too many members of the Coalition seem oblivious to the consequences of their actions and the deep unrest in many of their constituent's minds about the scale of the cuts. Even ACPO gave evidence stating that the cuts would affect front line policing. But the real irony for me was the stance taken by Dr Julian Huppert¹ who supported Mark Reckless² in pushing the idea of introducing redundancy for police officers; you will recall Mark Reckless has introduced a private members bill to allow officers to be made redundant. The irony of Dr Julian Huppert's stance is that the Liberal Democrats manifesto promised there would be 3,000 more police officers if they got into government, whereas the reality is that we face losing 25,000 police officers over the next 3 – 4 years. I don't know how the Liberal Democrats are going to explain the 28,000 difference in police officer numbers to the voters at the next election, never mind the police officers who face the prospect of losing their jobs. The Labour opposition have picked up on this and senior shadow cabinet members now take the opportunity to mention police cuts in every interview they give.

¹ Julian Huppert, MP, Liberal Democrats julianhuppertmp@gmail.com

² Mark Reckless, MP, Conservatives contact@markreckless.com

Another irony is that it will be us who will be expected to clear up the mess of protests by other groups in society when those policing the demonstration will be facing some of the deepest cuts of all. As police officers we will clearly carry out our duty, but, if as the *Sunday Times* predicts, the average member of the public will be miserable with their lot, the Coalition should expect us to be a little bit more than miffed with an imposition that will see many of our members facing real, deep and prolonged hardship.

An analysis of data by the Police Mutual Friendly Society found that a significant number of officers already face financial stress, and this before any cuts have been introduced by the Coalition. I believe this is one reason why ACPO's leadership seem to be slowly waking up to the fact that their previous support for the cuts (with one or two notable exceptions) might actually have had an enormously detrimental effect on the police service and their officers. It is a shame ACPO's leaders didn't realise this before the CSR and fought for the service like the military chiefs fought for their forces and the NHS leaders are fighting for their service now.

Remember, the NHS has a budget *freeze*, not a cut and The Ministry of Defence got a 7% cut. The Police are suffering 20% cuts and our leaders are still not putting up resistance. Why? Surely it's ACPO's duty to point out the dangers inherent in government policies? ACPO's leadership has to wake up and realise it is not unprofessional to point out that the King has no clothes on, rather, it is unprofessional not to save the King's embarrassment by pointing out the King's state of dishabille.

A report by CIVITAS, the centre right think tank, showed a direct correlation between police numbers and the level of crime in countries across Europe. They also used a technique that we have used as well - instead of looking at the total number of police in each country, they looked at the number of police per 100,000 of the population. This is a more accurate assessment of police officer numbers than the crude total figures that seem to reflect a rise over the years. When commentators say that police officer numbers have gone up since 1991 they fail to take into account that we have also had a major rise in population in the UK.

At the moment in England and Wales we have around 257 police officers per 100,000 of the population, putting us in the bottom third of the European Policing League table. If the cuts in numbers are introduced we will fall below 215 officers per 100,000, lower than the dark days of the 1970's when policing was in meltdown and when we had far fewer responsibilities than we do today. This figure will leave only three very high crime countries below us in the European Police Officer per 100.000 League Table. Unfortunately, the

Police Minister, Nick Herbert³ chose to totally disregard the report. Sadly, he remains convinced he can cut the budget by 20% and decrease crime with a police force that he expects to purely concentrate on crime. We will continue to engage with him to demonstrate some of the many reasons this policy is flawed, not least for its failure to recognise the many non-crime related matters we are heavily involved in such as mental health, shelter and victim support.

In a speech to CityForum⁴ on the 25th January, 2011, Mr Herbert re-emphasised that no U-turn would be made on the proposed budget settlement and spoke about the savings he would make in relation to police officer pay and conditions.

It is alarming that the ink seems already set and the money already banked before the reviews have even reported, begging the question that if the decisions had already been made, why commission the reports at all? What seems abundantly clear now is that any proposals and conclusions made by the report are effectively meaningless as the Coalition has had preordained ideas on how the cuts to the deficit would be reached all along.

Government and ACPO have to wake up to the fact that they are creating a perfect storm for police officers and the communities we serve. The government cannot expect us to take a two year pay freeze at a time when inflation will be above 5%+ each year and at the same time also expect us to suffer a second hit as a result of any outcomes from the Tom Winsor pay review. That is unacceptable and something we must fight. With the other factors put into the equation; pensions reform, increased taxation and national insurance contributions the government must review its position or they will go down in history as destroying the finest police force in the world while at the same time handing the keys of the country to the criminals, bullies and antisocial in society. We can't let that happen. The question you have to ask yourself is, 'are you ready for the fight to save our service.?' I know I am.

I have included the e-mail addresses of some of the MP's at the centre of the cuts in policing in case you wish to contact them.

³ Nick Herbert, MP, Conservatives nick@nickherbert.com

⁴ Nick Herbert, MP's speech to CityForum is attached with the chairman's report

Media Interviews

- 6 - Police Oracle
- ITV Documentaries
- 2 - BBC TV News 24
- 2 - BBC TV News
- 4 – The Daily Telegraph
- 6 - Police Review
- 2 – The Guardian
- BBC Radio Manchester
- The Financial Times
- The Economist
- Bureau of Investigative Journalists
- BBC TV London News
- BBC Radio 5 Live
- 3 – The Daily Mail
- 3 – Sky TV News
- 3 – The Times
- BBC Radio London
- BBC The Politics Show
- 2 – The Sun Newspaper
- 2 - The Mirror
- News of the World
- BBC TV Documentaries
- 2 – The Sunday Mirror
- Press Association
- BBC Radio York
- The Western Mail
- TalkSport Radio

Meetings Attended

- 3 Meetings, Tom Winsor – Pay Review
- Conservative MP's – Carlton Club
Philip Davies MP
Heather Wheeler MP
Andrew Bridgen MP
Deborah Regal
- Nick Long IPCC
- Rob Price (ACPO)
- Baroness Harris
- Carwyn James, Welsh First Minister
- Carl Sergeant, Welsh Social justice Minister

- Ken Hyder
- Nick Hardwick, ex-IPCC, Chief HMI Prisons
- Len Jackson Chairman IPCC
- Policy Exchange Dinner – Bill Bratten, Ex Chief NYPD
- 3 Meetings - All Party Parliamentary Group on Policing
- HMIC, Sir Denis O'Connor
- 2 Meetings, Sir Hugh Orde, President ACPO
- Pat Stayt, Gen Secretary Superintendents Association
- Ed Balls, Shadow Home Secretary, now Shadow Chancellor
- Vernon Coaker, Shadow Police Minister
- Peter Holland, Chairman NPIA
- Steve Corkerton, HMIC
- Baroness Margaret McDonagh (Labour) ex Gen Sec Labour Party
- Paul Cahill/Vic Codling GPA
- Mark Rowley, Ch Con Surrey (ACPO)
- Nick Herbert, Police Minister
- Derek Barnet, President, Superintendents Association
- Home Affairs Select Committee Members, Leatherhead
- KPMG Consultants
- Prisoners Abroad
- North Yorkshire police Authority Meeting, York
- Prisoners Abroad Seminar

Speaking Engagements/Open Meetings Attended

- GMP Open Meeting
- Kent Open Meeting
- Home Affairs Select Committee – Evidence Session on Policing and the Comprehensive Spending Review – 45 minutes
- House of Commons Policing Bill Committee – Evidence Session – 2 ½ Hours
- Speech + Q & A Session – House of Lords – 2 ½ Hours
- Federation Health and Safety Conference, Cotswolds
- Policy Exchange – Seminar on Policing - Westminster

Other Meetings Attended

NPIA – Leadership College (Board Member)

Joint Federation Meeting PFEW/Scottish and N.Irish Feds

Metropolitan Police Friendly Society

NPIA - Council

Skills for Justice (Board Member)

Bravery Awards

The Bravery Awards this year will be held at The Savoy Hotel in Central London. The hotel has been completely refurbished and the ballroom is looks impressive.

Jill Vale is in contact with JBB's regarding nominations.

Paul McKEEVER
Chairman

SIMON REED
Vice Chairman