

'Change or we will impose reform'

Theresa May told conference the Police Federation 'must' change, or she will enforce reform.

She issued the warning in her keynote speech to conference, where she also announced that public funding for the organisation would be withdrawn in August.

"Make no mistake. If you do not make significant progress towards the implementation of the Normington reforms, if the Federation does not start to turn itself around, you must not be under the impression that the Government will let things remain as they are," she said.

"The Federation was created by an Act of Parliament and it can be reformed by an Act of Parliament.

"If you do not change of your own accord, we will impose change on you."

She accused officers of treating members of the public with contempt and told delegates it was time the Federation 'faced up to reality' and changed its ways.

She also announced she was willing to grant the IPCC more powers and 'reform the organisation further if that is what is needed' to help flush out corrupt officers.

She said: "It cannot be right when officers under investigation by the IPCC comply with the rules by turning up for interview but then refuse to cooperate and decline to answer questions.

"Such behaviour – which I am told is often encouraged by the Federation – reveals an attitude that is far removed from the principles of public service felt by the majority of police officers."

Mrs May announced the Home Office would use its powers to inspect the Federation's accounts, and announced that she would be bringing forward proposals to make the organisation subject to the Freedom of Information Act both on a national and local branch level.

She also said officers would no longer automatically become members of the Federation, instead having to opt in on joining the service.

The public money previously spent on the Federation will now be allocated to a new scheme called Police First, aimed at



Home Secretary Theresa May addresses conference.

attracting university graduates, she added.

She made a point of listing the controversy that has embroiled the police service and Federation for the past few years mentioning Plebgate, worrying reports about stop and search figures, the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, Hillsborough and the death of Ian Tomlinson to name a few. This is alongside the allegations of bullying within the Federation.

She said: "It would be the easiest thing in the world for me to turn a blind eye to these matters, to let things go on as they are, to deny the need for change. It would be the easy thing to do, but it would also be the wrong thing to do, because I would be letting down the people in whose interests I am elected and you are employed to serve."

She continued: "I know that some of you will find these changes unpalatable. In particular, I know that some of you will find the Freedom of Information Act an unwelcome intrusion. But the Police Federation is an organisation created by statute, it serves a public function and the Normington Review demonstrated very clearly that it is an organisation in need of greater transparency and accountability. So it is a change that I believe needs to be made."

Our rep says...

"I was extremely shocked at the overall tone of her speech." DS Paul Thear-Graham.

Chairman's foreword

By Jeff Mapps, chairman of Gwent Police Federation

Delegates from Gwent Police Federation joined colleagues from across England and Wales for the national Police Federation conference; a conference that will go down in history as a turning point for the organisation.

As the week began, we were all aware that there were important decisions to be made, the Federation needed to embark on a reform programme designed to make it fit for purpose, truly representative and influential and, most of all, efficient and effective in supporting its members.

We were not aware, however, that we were going to be given an ultimatum by the Home Secretary who, in her keynote address to conference, told us we had to reform within a year or the Government would step in.

I do not think the ultimatum was necessary. We instigated the independent review of the Police Federation ourselves, we have debated the review team's report since its publication in January and we embrace reform. I also do not think the content of the Home Secretary's hard-hitting speech, in which she was scathing not just about the Federation but about policing generally, was necessary either.

However, it had the effect of galvanising delegates and, rather than debating the 36 review recommendations, conference instead supported an over-arching motion which will see all 36 recommendations implemented with an Implementation Board, headed by a newly appointed project director, working through the finer details.

It was a momentous day for the Police Federation and I am proud that Gwent Police Federation was part of that historic day.

We will keep you informed of progress, and particularly decisions that will affect you, but first and foremost I want to give you a commitment that we will do all we can to help shape this organisation so that it provides the very best service to members at all times.

We will not remain silent, chair vows

Police Federation chairman Steve Williams asked the Home Secretary for an assurance that she will never introduce compulsory severance.

Making his final keynote speech to conference, he thanked the Home Secretary Theresa May for ratifying the Police Arbitration Tribunal's ruling rejecting the introduction of compulsory severance but said: "It would be remiss of me, if I did not seek an assurance from you that you will never introduce compulsory severance for police officers with less than full pensionable service."

He went on to stress that everything the organisation does is to ensure a more efficient and effective criminal justice system. And, while as a staff association, it directly represents the interests of police officers, the wider interest of the public is also at the forefront of its activity.

Addressing Mrs May, he said: "Home Secretary, we remain deeply concerned that the numbers of police officers around the country continues to fall.

"Cutting police officer numbers today will have a detrimental impact on the service the public receive tomorrow. Yet at the same time, the HMIC and the IPCC grows. If this trend continues we will have more people watching those policing, than those actually doing it.

"There is no magic box of police officers. We do not want to return to the bad old days of boom and bust recruitment."

He raised his concerns that while she was 'quick to review police officers' terms and conditions there was no appetite for a review of policing and the criminal justice system.

During his speech, Mr Williams spoke of pride for the work that Fed reps do and thanked them for their efforts.

And he went on to highlight some of the successes of the past year, including the Police Bravery Awards 2013.

He said: "Home Secretary, when you're told that health and safety legislation prevents police officers from doing their job,



Retiring chairman Steve Williams.

please remember these brave men and women and their selfless acts of courage."

And addressing his colleagues, he said he was leaving the Federation 'confident that we will continue to make a real difference'.

"The independent review is nothing to fear or be suspicious of," he said. "It offers the opportunity to modernise how we do things – not what we do.

"Despite the sullied opinions of those who consider the Police Federation a thorn that has been left untreated, we are much more than stories about Plebgate and Number 2 accounts.

"We are an organisation that demonstrates we can adapt to the needs of our members and the changing demands of the public.

"We are an organisation that stands up for what we believe is right. We know what works and what does not work in policing. We know what really benefits the public and what is nothing more than a gimmick.

"That is why we are not and never will be silent when we believe something is wrong for police officers or the public we serve.

"And while the independent review may change our structures and processes, we will remain such an organisation."

Our rep says...

"This was a very good speech, dignified, bearing in mind the politics. Sorry to see him go. He was still thinking of the organisation first." **Inspector Karen Evans.**

He said: "I am honoured to have been elected chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales at such a pivotal time for the organisation.

"This has been an historic week. We have been given a clear mandate to progress the reforms needed to better represent the hard-working police officers throughout England and Wales. We are all committed to the work needed to implement change to the Police Federation."

Review chair:

Sir David Normington, who chaired the independent review of the Police Federation, faced the difficult task of addressing conference immediately after the lunch break on Wednesday when most delegates were still reeling from the Home Secretary's speech.

He urged reps to opt for reform not just because they had been told to but because they wanted to reform the Federation and set it on a new track so it became modern, representative, influential and above all trusted, professional and united.

Sir David explained that after Theresa May's speech the Federation faced two possibilities – to become even more determined to reform or to channel its anger into an acrimonious and prolonged dispute with the Government.

Explaining that delegates probably felt shellshocked and a bit angry at what they had heard, he said the question was what were they going to do about it.

But he said: "I think the only thing for you to do, in the light of what the Home Secretary said, is to avoid the trap and focus on reform to prove her wrong."

The Federation should show the Home Secretary it was actually an organisation that wants to reform, that it commissioned the independent review and was going to implement it and that the Government did not need to.

"It's the only way," he said, later admitting that the Federation really had far less choice now than it had in the morning before the Home Secretary's speech.

He went on to outline the background to the review and recalled his speech to last year's conference when he gave three commitments – the review would be independent, its findings would be based on evidence and the review team would act in the best interests of the Police Federation.

While the evidence showed a demand for root and branch change, the review team had an unshakeable belief, he said: "That officers in this country need an

New chair elected

"This is not the end of the road; it is the start of the journey." These are the words of the newly elected Police Federation chairman, Steve White.

Steve was elected by the toss of a coin after the 30-strong voting committee was split between him and Will Riches, a constable with the Met.

The 45-year-old has pledged to continue the reforms programme.

Fed membership to be opened up to Specials

Conference voted to allow the 18,000 members of the Special Constabulary to join the Federation.

A motion on the issue was put forward at the Federation's annual general meeting and won overwhelming support from delegates.

Specials will pay the same subscription rates as regular officers and will have access to the full range of membership services.

opt for reform

effective, respected and authoritative body to represent them individually and collectively.”

This, he added, was not a ‘nice to have’ but an essential part of a healthy police service. It was important to have a voice and the review team never questioned the need for the Federation.

But the report was really saying ‘change now or fear the consequences’ so that the Federation could be strong and become a voice that could not be ignored.

The Federation should concentrate on the three key themes – trust, professionalism and unity – and, he said: “There never has been a moment more than today when you need to come together and be on one side.”



Sir David Normington.

He urged delegates to closely consider the recommendations for a revised core purpose, more openness and transparency, professional standards of development, improved diversity, effective local representation and improved governance, with no separate rank committees at any level.

The review team had put forward a four phase programme that would take two years to implement, Phase 1 from now to Christmas, Phase 2 up to October 2015, Phase 3 from October 2015 to April 2016 and Phase 4 from 2016 onwards.

Change needs pace but needs to be properly implemented, Sir David told conference.

“But from what the Home Secretary said, you don’t have much time,” he said, biting off all the recommendations in one go would not be a bad choice now.

“You need to convince the public and Parliament that they can trust you to get on with the job. You need that more than ever now.”

He concluded: “I really, really do wish you well. I hope you do the right thing and take the right decision but frankly now it’s over to you.”

‘Changes would take two years’

The recommendations in the review report are not ‘implementable over a year’ according to the review team’s chair, Sir David Normington.

He was asked by West Midlands rep Steve Rees for his views on the condensed timeline for change put forward by the Home Secretary.

Sir David replied that, while he was trying to avoid disagreeing with the Home Secretary, he also did not want to change the review team’s original timescale of two years.

There were many changes that could be made in the first nine months but there were also some very complicated issues to address and these would need negotiation at a local level and regulation changes. Some changes, he said, would go on after the two-year period too.

“We thought two years was quite tight actually and we thought we were asking you to do a lot in that time so I don’t want to change what we said in the report,” Sir David explained.

Standing ovation as conference remembers murdered officers

In a week dominated by talk of how the Police Federation needed to change, the final session of the opening day of conference brought home to everyone present how truly effective the organisation can be when it gets it right.

The session was led by Chief Superintendent Nick Adderley, Territorial Commander in Greater Manchester Police’s North Manchester Division and the senior operational officer on duty when PCs Nicola Hughes and Fiona Bone were murdered in September 2012.

But, as well as talking about operational events, he also discussed his own emotions around how the day would be forever etched in his memory and revealed that he had offered to resign as he attempted to take the blame for what happened on his watch.

He introduced his presentation by saying he would talk about what happened after the headlines and how the police service and the Police Federation picked up the pieces saying it would show how much power and how much influence the Federation could have and the difference that ‘you people’ make.

The Police Federation of England and



Chief Superintendent Nick Adderley.

Wales and the Greater Manchester Police Federation came through the incident with flying colours, he said.

Ch Supt Adderley outlined the background to the attack in which the two police officers were killed.

Two murders led to a manhunt for Dale Cregan and a reward of £50,000 was offered for information leading to his arrest. Ch Supt Adderley requested that a ‘name your price’ reward was offered to anyone who handed him in.

“I am sorry that I didn’t push harder for that,” he told the conference, “I still believe if we had offered that up the murders of Nicola and Fiona would not have occurred.”

He then paused from telling the story of

the build-up to the officers’ murders to pay tribute to them. Nicola, he recalled, would boost morale on shift no matter how hard it got. She was ‘giggly, lively, absolutely full of life’, always had something to say, a great officer and a really great girl’.

Fiona, he explained, had a real sense of serving the public, he told the conference, with great ideas of taking things forward. A really, really bright officer,” he concluded.

Then he outlined the way Tuesday 18 September unfolded. The usual checks and assessments revealed no direct risks to police officers. He revealed his own feelings about those assessments. “Did I do enough, did we do enough?”

The morning progressed and at 10.55, while he was in a senior officer team meeting, a DS came in and said: “Boss, something’s going on at Hyde.”

Ch Supt Adderley retreated to his office with senior police leaders and turned on the police radio to hear: “Officers shot, get an ambulance, get an ambulance.”

Shortly afterwards he was told that Cregan had handed himself in at Hyde Police Station but the comms operator had not put the two incidents together.

Attempts were made to contact the two police officers but, the speaker told conference, “It didn’t take long to realise that this was a day that changed so many people’s lives.”

Our rep says...

“This was outstanding. His presentation moved me immensely and it was a topic that is close to all our hearts.” DS Paul Thear-Graham.

Support for Office of Constable

Shami Chakrabarti, director of human rights organisation Liberty, has pledged to continue to support the Police Federation in its fight against the introduction of compulsory severance.

In a Wednesday morning speech to conference, in which she described herself as the warm-up act for the Home Secretary who was addressing the next session, Ms Chakrabarti found herself with a largely receptive audience which, while perhaps not agreeing with everything she said, respected her views and presentation just the same.

"Compulsory severance is a direct threat to constables and that is why Liberty support you in opposing it and will continue to do so," she said.

"Similarly, direct entry and fast track promotion is just another way to militarise what was consent-based policing. We should watch it with grave caution."

In her 'The Thinning Blue Line: Officer Independence and the Rule of Law' presentation, the Liberty leader said the Police Federation had been a source of irritation to the current Government because it was about checks and balances "as is the rule of law".

"And checks and balances are as essential to your Federation as they are to the rule of law."

She also described PCCs as "politicians' revenge" and said they were a grave mistake

and as much of a threat to the UK's police constables as compulsory severance, direct entry and fast-track promotion.

Ms Chakrabarti said politicians failed to recognise that both democratic politics and independent police officers who are "outside politics" were needed to preserve the rule of law.

She said senior officers being "dragged into" political issues also represented another threat to policing, adding: "There are enough difficulties just doing the job but you can get dragged in deliberately and inadvertently and it's dangerous when chief constables allow themselves to be used by politicians in that way."

She concluded by saying: "People may not agree with all our campaigning but that's the nature of human rights. We may be the grit in the oyster but you'd miss us if we were gone."

And on the subject of the independent review, she continued: "I am most concerned with the Office of Constable. I think you should embrace and lead this reform agenda and go on the front foot so there is as little interference as possible because legislation is a back door way of politicising the service."

"You are independent officers of the law and long may that continue."

● The Liberty director told conference the legal case against Andrew Mitchell should be dropped and indeed that police officers should



Shami Chakrabarti.

not bring any civil suits against members of the public.

"I know how difficult the job of police constable is. I know it's a thankless job and how frustrating it is to be called a liar but that is an occupational hazard," she said.

"However tempting it is, we should not have serving police officers bringing civil suits against members of the public and I think it would be wise to drop the legal suit against Andrew Mitchell before it brings the office of constable in to disrepute."

Our rep says...

"We need to listen to her words and not allow our police service to be made a political organisation." PC Nicky Ryan.

'A moment of inspiration' puts Federation on the road to reform

At 5.06pm on Wednesday 21 May, the Police Federation of England and Wales set itself on the track to reform in line with the Normington report following the independent review.

Backing an emergency motion, put forward by the West Midlands Joint Branch Board and updated by a Joint Central Committee amendment, conference accepted all 36 recommendations in the report.

Conference had originally planned to debate all the recommendations, and suggested amendments to them, but given the Home Secretary's ultimatum had been left with something of a dilemma and general secretary Ian Rennie, for one, seemed grateful for what he called a moment of inspiration from the West Midlands JBB that led to the over-arching motion being put forward.

An implementation board will now be created, headed by an appointed project director, and an Interim National Board and Interim National Council will



Giles Dean from the West Midlands Joint Branch Board delivered a speech supporting the motion.

take responsibility for firming up the finer details of the recommendations.

The decision to back the over-arching

motion followed an emergency gathering of the chairs and secretaries of all branches of the Police Federation in the wake of the Home Secretary's hard-hitting speech to conference on the Wednesday morning.

At the end of Sir David Normington's session after lunch, the emergency meeting was called and after almost an adjournment of around an hour and a half, there was an air of anticipation as national chairman Steve Williams talked about the independent review and stressed that it was important the Federation kept control of the reform programme.

As the conference entered the annual general meeting, the first emergency motion – which related to the review – was withdrawn paving the way for the West Midlands' over-arching motion to be put forward by Tom Cuddeford, deputy chairman of the West Midlands Joint Branch Board.

An amendment to the wording was supported by conference before Giles Dean from the West Midlands Joint Branch Board delivered a speech supporting the motion.

There was a palpable sense of relief when the motion was carried.

Time to build bridges says constables' leader



Will Riches, chairman of the Constables' Central Committee.

Bridges need to be built with the Government if the Federation is to move forward.

Will Riches, chairman of the Constables' Central Committee, spoke at the rank's separate rank meeting on the opening day of conference.

He said the Federation needed to learn from its mistakes and move on to create an organisation fit for the future.

"What has been done to the police officers of England and Wales has been incredibly harsh, but we need to accept that we have not helped ourselves," Will explained.

"We tried playing hardball with Government - our response was first one of shock, then verbally aggressive, and finally crude and disrespectful. We targeted individuals rather than issues, using sound-bites instead of sound judgement. We got so caught up in the fight we lost sight of the prize.

"At the very time when we most needed friends in Government, we got personal and offensive. Goodwill was essential to ensure our case had a sympathetic audience.

"Yet any chance of input, choice or influence into where and how the requisite savings might be made was destroyed by our actions."

He touched on the number of officers who had been forced out due to the 20 per cent cuts and made reference to morale being at an all time low.

"So, we need to re-connect with Government using the language of diplomacy and reasoned argument. We know that this is the only way forward, and it's already working," delegates were told.

"Future dialogue will be mature and constructive; our arguments will be measured and robust, and never again personally abusive or vitriolic.

"We have a clear objective: the restoration

of police pay and conditions to a level which reflects the daily challenge of the public duty we perform."

He continued: "To those who may suggest that we are opposed to change or blockers to reform, I have a message for you. You've got it wrong. To those outside the Federation who refuse to notice or choose to ignore - listen carefully - this Federation embraces reform.

"Our goal is to deliver a long-lasting Police Federation which stands scrutiny, and the test of time.

"We have to look at what we've learned over the last few years, and work together to rebuild our strength through unity and co-operation. Joint working means mutual respect, and a shared regard for our different needs," he said.

"Constables of England and Wales, we have a unique opportunity to drive forward change for the better, for the benefit of everyone. Our destiny is in our hands, and we must all work together to build a better future.

"If we miss this opportunity now, and allow our Federation's future to slip from our grasp, then every one of us will regret it to the last day of our service.

"With strength, with dignity, with integrity and with honour, we will rebuild this once proud organisation."

Reform will increase confidence, sergeants told

The Police Federation has a 'bright future' if it embraces the reforms set out in the review - according to the chairman of the Sergeants' Central Committee.

Speaking at the rank's separate meeting on the Tuesday morning of conference, John Giblin said there was 'much to be positive about,' explaining: "We didn't wait for our organisation to be forced into change; we commissioned the review because we understood that any healthy and vibrant organisation cannot stand still, otherwise we would atrophy, wither and die."

He said the review was an opportunity to put an organisation together that is fit for the next 100 years.

He said: "Change always provokes suspicion and anxiety. No set of recommendations are ever perfect, but the review's findings both support the good work that is already done by many and addresses the weaknesses that have been apparent this last few years."

He spoke of the 'genuine appetite' to embrace the changes which are needed to give both the public and police officers confidence in the Federation.

"The report raises concerns about the Federation's lack of openness and transparency about its affairs and finances, weak accountability to members and the public, its inability to promote good behaviour and professional standards and internal divisions that have hampered its effectiveness and reputation" he said.

"Members, it says, have lost confidence in it and it is losing its influence in representing its members.

"It (the Federation) has to increase its professionalism particularly in its standards of behaviour and conduct. It has to become more unified and speak with a single voice.

"By many, the Federation is seen as a wilful roadblock to reform and change. That is why we must not only show willingness to reform, but actually do so. If we cannot accept the need for reform on our own terms, then the Government will force reform upon us."

He urged sergeants to remember all the good work they do and not to get too down heartened by the bad press around policing

He said: "When some doubt you, remember, there are many who rely on



Retiring chairman of the Sergeants' Central Committee John Giblin.

you for help, guidance and assistance. You are the life blood of policing and the Federation. And never forget, as sergeants you are the fulcrum upon which the service pivots, the glue that binds it all together, the golden thread in the food chain of operational service delivery to the public that ensures excellence throughout the family of forces."

Mr Giblin used his speech as an opportunity to announce his retirement as chairman of the Sergeant's Central Committee. He has served 32 years in the service, 12 on the Joint Central Committee and six as chairman of the sergeants.

Inspectors need a strong voice in Federation reform



Alan Ogg Inspectors' Central Committee chairman.

Inspectors must have a 'strong voice' to help shape the future of the Police Federation.

Alan Ogg, chair, addressed delegates at the Inspectors' Central Committee meeting on the first day of conference, talking about the independent review, the impending change to the organisation and the role for an inspector or chief inspector in the shake-up of the Federation.

He said: "Our job is to make sure that any

change takes account of our views as inspectors and chief inspectors. As managers in the police service we need to embody the change we want to see. And in many ways we already are.

"Around the country the inspecting ranks are telling us that this change needs to be embraced. It needs to happen if our voice and the voice of our members is to be heard.

"As inspectors, we know that with major change come risks, dangers and challenges. But we also recognise it brings opportunities.

"We need to ensure that we have reps where they are needed. We need to ensure we have sufficient numbers to contribute and make a difference; to represent the views from the front-line; to represent views with local managers; to represent views on local boards and on the national stage. Having fewer numbers does not mean we cannot have a strong and equal voice."

He went on to say the independent review was being embraced.

"No-one objects to change that makes our organisation more open and transparent," he said.

"No-one objects to change that better demonstrates the value for money we provide to forces. No-one objects to change that shows the value we bring to the public through ensuring the welfare of those officers who serve them."

With increasing pressure and workload it is only a matter of time before a force faces the consequences of an oversight or error, he said, adding that a change of Government would not mean an end to reform.

"But being robust in our disagreements with government need not mean pulling down the shutters. It is far better to be in the room discussing the future of policing than observing from outside," he said.

"The reality is that we either build bridges or we fall into the abyss. This week we have an opportunity to bring our knowledge, our experience, and our skills to shape a Police Federation that is truly fit for purpose.

"We must seize the day and embrace the opportunities we have to improve how we represent and influence. We must do what is right to ensure we have a strong voice in government in a changing policing world."

'Government must help'

The shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper told Federation representatives the Government needs to do its bit to put things right.

She said: "It's time the Government and the Home Office looked harder at their own policies, at the problems they have created, and started to do their bit to strengthen effective policing and support public confidence."

And she argued the independent review was a 'Royal Commission in all but name', and praised the Federation for having embraced the process.

Despite promises that the frontline would not be cut she quoted figures stating the number of response officers had been cut from 46,000 to 37,000 in just three years with victim of crimes currently waiting longer for help.

She continued: "It's very good that overall crime figures have

fallen – and tribute to the targeted work so many forces have done. But the Government claim that means no harm has been done by the scale of cuts and policies they have pursued. Here's where I disagree:

"Look at what is happening to justice for serious crimes. Violent crime is going up. Yet the number of violent offenders reaching court is going down.

"Sexual offences reported to the police are going up. Yet prosecutions are going down. Domestic violence cases reported to the police are going up. Prosecutions and convictions are going down."

She called for widespread reform.

"So let's all get on with the reforms we know are needed," the conference heard, "In the Police Federation, in police forces, in Parliament, in Government.

"You have an opportunity. You have a moment. You need to seize it. It's time to rebuild and to champion the principles behind successful policing together."

Olympic gold medalist's inspiring talk

Former Olympic gold medalist Sally Gunnell urged delegates to "go out and get their gold medals in life" when she made a surprise speech at the end of Tuesday's sessions.

As part of the 'Valuing the Difference' Women's Reserve session, Sally, who triumphed in the 400m hurdles in Barcelona in 1992, talked about how her journey to success had been tough and littered with challenges and disappointments.

She said ultimately her success had been down to having her own personal goal and having the right people around her to help and support her in achieving that goal.

Her inspiring talk followed the main

debate of the session which was opened by Sam Roberts, chair of the National Women's Reserve Seat.

Speakers included Jayne Monkhouse, the Federation's equality advisor, Claire Burgess, Acting Chief Inspector of the Professional Standards Directorate for the City of London Police, Professor Jennifer Brown, deputy chair of the Stevens review

Our reps say...

"While other aspects of this whole session were not delivered very well, I thought Jayne's input was particularly thought provoking." **Vickie Day, Gwent secretary.**

"I particularly enjoyed the speech by Sally Gunnell which was clearly heartfelt." **PS Carl Williams.**



Sally Gunnell.



The Gwent Police Federation delegates and observers at conference.



Jeff Mapps, Gwent PF chair, addresses conference during an AGM debate.

Fire rescue officers in line for bravery award

Two Gwent police officers have been nominated for a national bravery award after rescuing an elderly couple from a burning block of flats.

PC Greg Eustace and PC Rhys Caddick, who are both part of the Joint Firearms Unit, have been nominated for the national Police Bravery Awards 2014.

The awards honour the courage and bravery of officers across the country.

The pair have been nominated after an incident in the early hours of Saturday 27 July last year.

At around 5am, they were crewed together in an armed response vehicle when they responded to a suspected burglary at a two storey block of flats in Cwmtillery.

On arrival, they were met by the caller, who lived in one of the first floor flats. She told them she had heard noises and seen broken glass from the flat below and had called police believing a burglary was taking place.

Both officers could hear a fire alarm and could smell smoke. PC Caddick ran to the rear of the block of flats, as the windows to the front were obscured, and saw that the flat with a broken window was on fire.

He immediately called for assistance from the fire service, but knew that it would be quite some time before they arrived.



Brave officers PC Rhys Caddick (left) and PC Greg Eustace.

Without any hesitation, both officers entered the communal area of the flats. The door to the flat on fire was locked and the communal area was filling with smoke.

With the help of the caller, PC Eustace began evacuating the residents while PC Caddick returned to the vehicle to get specialist equipment so he could force entry to the burning flat.

The pair were told by witnesses that a man lived in the flat that was on fire, but no one knew if he was home.

By this time the whole building was filling up with smoke, it was very difficult to breathe and visibility was dramatically reduced. PC Caddick forced the flat door open and was confronted by billowing smoke and intense heat.

It was impossible for anyone to enter or even see into the flat so both officers came back out, where they were immediately told by members of the public that an elderly couple lived in the flat opposite and no one had been able to rouse them.

The fire service was still en route to the scene so, despite the obvious risks, the officers entered the building again.

It was so full of thick black smoke that they were unable to see where they were going. Nevertheless, and despite the near zero visibility, PC Eustace and PC Caddick managed to get back to the door of the elderly couple's flat, wake them up and lead them out to safety.

Both officers and residents were treated for smoke inhalation.

Chief Constable of Gwent Police Jeff Farrar said: "Both officers have acted without thought for their own safety and in the best traditions of the service. Their actions at the scene were courageous."

Jeff Mapps, chairman of Gwent Police Federation, said: "These officers demonstrated real teamwork to reach a successful outcome in what was an extremely dangerous situation. Untrained and ill-equipped they risked everything in the interest of others."

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- ▶ Crime & misconduct allegations
- ▶ Personal injury claims - on or off duty
- ▶ Family law
- ▶ Employment law
- ▶ Police pensions
- ▶ Wills, trusts & estates
- ▶ Defamation matters

Offices Nationwide:

Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Newcastle, Sheffield, Wakefield & Edinburgh*

*associated office.

"My claim started under RJW and continued during the merger with Slater & Gordon. During this period I was kept informed and received the professional service expected"

Mr Jones,
Police Federation client 2013

"The communication at all stages of the process was first class"

Mr Sells,
Police Federation client 2013



FORMERLY
Russell Jones & Walker