‘Trust what we say’
Home Secretary told

The Home Secretary has been told to trust what officers tell her, or risk damaging her relationship with the police.

She was also told the constant stream of cuts had left officers feeling ‘totally dejected’.

Police Federation chairman Steve Williams delivered the news to Theresa May at this year’s annual conference.

He said: “I need to tell you how it is because I would be failing in my duties and responsibility to my members if I didn’t. What they are saying in loud and strong terms is that they feel let down by a Government that supposedly puts law and order at its heart.”

He continued: “We are the voice of the police service. Our members can tell you about what is going wrong on the ground and suggest ways of putting that right. Prove to them that you value what they do by taking what they say seriously and listening to them.”

And he told her: "What you want to change might not be those things that we want to change but let’s at least discuss the issues rather than things being imposed upon us. Let’s find the areas that we can agree on and identify the areas where we can’t.

“Let’s have a meaningful, timely dialogue and let’s accept that we will not always agree. We want to be in at the start and help shape the police service and how it develops and delivers on its crucial role to society, not at the end when the debate has finished.”

Speaking on the future of the Police Federation, the chairman said he believed the organisation needed to work together to build something everyone can be proud of.

He stressed that members were committed to protecting the public but that Fed reps would fight for officers’ pay and conditions.

“Policing is the best job in the world and we need to recognise that the vast majority of our members feel this way. Of course, we want to protect the public and we must keep our costs down, but let’s not forget we have a duty to ourselves too.”

Continued on Page 2
‘Trust what we say’

Continued from Page 1

will fight for the right to their pay and their conditions. But we will not be responsible for giving anyone the impression that our members are self–interested,” he said.

“They are committed to protecting the public and this must not be lost in the way we present ourselves as their representatives. I want to see us not as an organisation that’s stuck in the past but as an organisation that is looking constructively to the future.

“I want us to maintain advocacy for British policing. To speak up for our members but also to speak up for our public who rightly deserve a police service that’s the best in the world.”

He explained: “Home Secretary, last year you said that you’ve always believed it is important to tell it like it is, not how you’d like it to be and I couldn’t agree with you more.

“Policing is the best job in the world.”

“So in that spirit, and in my role as representative, I want to tell you how it is, currently, for our members.

“We are often told that you have had to make some tough decisions. Well, Home Secretary, on a daily basis our members are having to make tough decisions that protect the public, restrict people’s liberties and undertake our work under the public spotlight.

“Yet they do this whilst budgets are shrinking and their terms and conditions are constantly scrutinised.

“We understand the financial realities. The police service has taken its share of the pain, some would argue more than its fair share. But what has not helped is that at times it has felt more like a punishment rather than an exercise in frugality.

“The result is that officers feel totally dejected. An unintended consequence maybe.”

He asked for compulsory severance to be taken off the negotiating table or, the onset delayed, until there was a proven case for its necessity.

He concluded: “It is up to us as the Police Federation to do all that we can to support our members who are finding it tough, to keep them informed, to speak up on their behalf and to ensure that they have what they need to deliver the best possible service to the public. Surely that is a goal we can all agree on and one we all want to achieve irrespective of our political differences.”

Life should mean life for police killers

Home Secretary Theresa May has announced proposals which would see criminals convicted of killing police officers automatically sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.

Mrs May avoided a second year of booing at the annual Police Federation conference in Bournemouth and said, subject to consultation with the Sentencing Council, the law would be changed to ensure that life should mean life for anyone who kills a police officer.

“Being a police officer is a tough, dangerous job. Those of us who work behind desks should never forget that you face the possibility of an encounter with lethal danger every day. You know it the moment you leave the station to do your job,” she told conference.

“The murder of a police officer is a particularly appalling crime. To attack and kill a police officer is to attack the fundamental basis of our society. We ask police officers to keep us safe by confronting and stopping violent criminals for us. We ask you to take the risks so that we don’t have to. And sometimes you are targeted by criminals because of what you represent.

“We are clear: life should mean life for anyone convicted of murdering a police officer.”

She pointed out that since the beginning of police budget cuts recorded crime has fallen by more than 10 per cent and is now at the lowest it has been for 30 years - a statistic she said was verified by Crime Survey for England and Wales.

And she was quick to point out that she trusted officers to use their ‘professional discretion’ and had started to allow the police to prosecute some cases in court rather than handing them over to the Crown Prosecution Service.

She said she wanted to increase the scope of police-led prosecutions to include shoplifting of goods worth £200 or less – which means up to another 50,000 prosecutions being led by the police.

She announced that she was currently looking at ways to reduce the amount of time police officers spend dealing with mental health patients as research commissioned by Matthew Ellis, the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner put the estimate at somewhere between 15 to 25 per cent of police time.
Mrs May also paid tribute to officers who have lost their lives in the past 12 months and made special mention of former Federation chairman Paul McKeever, saying: “Everyone here knows that Paul and I did not agree on everything - and he sometimes enjoyed a good joke at my expense – but I always respected his skills as a negotiator and valued his decency, honesty and sincerity as a police officer and as a man and I was honoured to take part in his memorial service.”

Finishing her address to a packed hall, she concluded: “While I’ve been Home Secretary, I haven’t often been able to come here with good news. I haven’t often been able to tell you what you have wanted to hear. But that isn’t what I’m here to do. I know that change is hard, reform can be painful, and given the state of the public finances the policing budget will be very difficult for many years to come. But we are coming through.

“I know that change is hard, reform can be painful, and given the state of the public finances the policing budget will be very difficult for many years to come. But we are coming through.”

“Yes, we’ve had to cut spending. But thanks to our tough decisions, strong leadership from chief constables, and you – the best police officers in the world – crime is still falling. Let’s be proud of that achievement, let’s work together, and let’s make British police even better still.”

- In her speech, the Home Secretary called for an end to frivolous legal claims by officers if they are injured on duty. She warned that members of the public in need of emergency assistance could be put off from dialling 999 for fear of being sued.

Our reps say...

“Steve was very clear and spoke exceptionally well. The content was relevant and was balanced against the issues the Federation has faced in the last 12 months.” Vickie Day, Gwent PF JBB secretary

“A very good address to conference under difficult circumstances. It was interesting, relevant and funny.” Becky Doonan, sergeants’ representative

“Very well presented, under very difficult circumstances and in the footsteps of Paul McKeever.” Mario Burke, sergeants’ representative

Police officers are not doctors

Home Secretary Theresa May told conference that she was working on new proposals to reduce the amount of time police officers spent helping deal with people with mental health problems.

She explained she, police and justice minister Damian Green, health secretary Jeremy Hunt and the Department of Health were putting together a plan of action.

She told conference: “Police officers have many skills, but they are not in a position to be psychiatrists diagnosing and treating mental illness – nor are you meant to be social workers or ambulance drivers.

“You are thrust into that role because when members of the public have concerns for an individual’s safety, they do not know who to call for help – except the police.

“But police officers are not doctors, and it is quite wrong that in more than a third of cases where mentally ill people are detained for their own safety, the place of safety is not a hospital but a police cell.”

Plans include:

- An urgent assessment of the availability of current health-based places of safety with results due in the next two months, and the findings acted upon quickly
- A rigorous inspection of places of safety by the Care Quality Commission over the next year
- Action to fill known gaps with the NHS exploring interim options to ensure that police stations do not remain the default destination
- Steps to ensure police officers do not have to step in to act as ambulance drivers for mentally ill people
- The extension of partnership working between police officers and health professionals on the ground. In Leicestershire, Cleveland and North Yorkshire, police are running street triage services, where mental health nursing staff accompany officers to incidents which look likely to result in a detention under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act.

Delegates question Home Secretary

Home Secretary Theresa May was asked to recognise the “good work of the Police Federation” and to publicly show her support for the organisation, following her address to conference.

During the ‘Questions and Answers’ session, she said she does recognise what the Federation does for its members at local level in addition to what it is doing at national level in terms of policy setting for the future of policing, adding: “We don’t always agree but it is important that we sit down together and talk and that we understand each other.”

A delegate also challenged Mrs May on the Government’s statement that policing “is about cutting crime; no more, no less.”

The officer gave her personal experience of the work involved in an inquiry into a missing man.

The Home Secretary said she recognised that police officers are involved in a number of different roles and areas but that the public are clear that they want to see the police cutting crime.

Gwent Police Federation chairman Jeff Mapps wanted answers on the Commission on Devolution in Wales from the Home Secretary.

“What have you done to fight the corner for Welsh police officers?” he asked, following her keynote speech address to the Wednesday morning meeting.

Mrs May said she would be talking to the Welsh Government and that “we haven’t forgotten”.

Jeff replied: “It does sound as if you have forgotten. Do you think devolving the police service to the Welsh Government is now right?”

To which Mrs May replied: “No. In relation to the Silk Commission, a number of issues are being looked at.”

Jeff said afterwards that his question was about the work she had done to plug the gaps in NHS England to prevent officers using police vehicles as ambulances versus the fact she had completely forgotten about the fact health provision in Wales was devolved to the Welsh Assembly. “She clearly hadn’t done anything,” said Jeff. He added the supplementary question was about policing falling between the cracks of administrations and was it therefore time to devolve policing.

“Her answer conflicts with her party line and it was clearly not something that she considered important. When I asked Tom Winsor a similar question the day after he seemed equally unaware of the Welsh dimension.”

Delegates arrive at the conference venue.
Tom Winsor gives vision for policing

He spoke about his vision for the future of the service, but spent the earlier part of his speech recalling the constants which have always been with the service.

He outlined the bravery, professionalism and dedication of officers and the demands, difficulties and dangers of the work they do.

“Yours is a complex and demanding job. You frequently deal with the public at their worst, and need to make vital decisions at pace, often against a background of long shifts and weekend work; and, like the rest of the public sector, you are having to do more with less,” he said.

He outlined several of the areas HMIC proposes to look at over the coming months, including how the police can make better use of technology.

He also went into detail about how other parts of the public sector are increasing the burden on the police, citing mental health patients as an example.

Mr Winsor said: “Officers told me repeatedly in my trips around the country that helping people with mental health needs consumes a vast and increasing amount of some officers’ time with examples of two constables being taken from their other duties for upwards of eight hours at a time in order to escort a person with mental health problems to hospital.

“I am clear that health professionals must fulfil their obligations in this regard, particularly as undiagnosed or untreated mental illness can, as we know, lead to the commission of serious violent crime.

“The other HMIs and I will work on your behalf with the Home Office and other Government departments on this issue to ensure that each service fully and properly discharges its responsibilities, rather than abdicating duty in favour of the one public service which will never say no.”

He went on to say that other areas to be looked at would be prevention work and the work senior teams are doing to meet the budget requirements and the impact this has on officer time, working conditions and the service received by the public.

He finished by outlining how he sees the future of policing, saying: “That future requires the Inspectorate to work with you – always to listen to you, the front-line officers doing the job day in and day out – to help ensure that systems, processes and equipment are in place, and sensible decisions are made, so that the service is in the best possible shape to face whatever challenges (old or new) it encounters, while staying efficient and effective.

“I read somewhere that police officers make their own luck. Through our inspections and recommendations, I and my fellow HMIs will try to load the dice in your favour, by ensuring you have more time to focus on doing what you joined the service to do.”

Our rep says...

“Tom Winsor was a revelation, devoid of humour and utterly convinced of his rightness in everything he spoke about. An ideal man for the CIC role and will bring no prejudice in his dealings with the Federation or, crucially, ACPO.”

Tim Wilcox, chair of the CBB

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**Conference Briefs**

**Review is independent**

Sir David Normington, the man leading the root and branch study of the Police Federation, has given an assurance that it is a completely independent review.

And he is urging Federation members to get involved and give their views on the way the organisation works either through face-to-face meetings with researchers or through a dedicated online response system.

The Wednesday morning conference session was introduced by Steve Williams, chairman of the Police Federation, who announced the review in December and explained that it was vital if the organisation was to maintain its credibility and effectiveness in what was a rapidly changing world.

He said the review represented a golden opportunity for the Federation and that he believed they should ’grasp it with both hands and take it forward’. The fundamental role of the Federation was, he assured delegates, not up for discussion but the review needed to ascertain what was working and what was not.

Sir David Normington appeared to be one-up on the Home Secretary when he acknowledged that the review would need to take into account the Welsh Government as well as central Government in England.

Jeff Mapps, chairman of Gwent Police Federation, asked Sir David, on behalf of all four Welsh Joint Branch Boards, whether their unique position had been considered.

Sir David said this had been recognised at the first meeting of the panel and this was welcomed by Jeff.

The day before, Jeff had put a similar question to the Home Secretary in relation to the difficulties caused to police due to the failure of the health service to adequately meet the needs of people with mental health problems, but was not satisfied that Wales had been considered as part of measures for improvements.

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**Police minister under pressure**

Police minister Damian Green found himself under pressure during the conference’s first key debate ‘20/20 Vision Policing the Future Together’.

He was joined on the panel by shadow police minister David Hanson MP; Sir Hugh Orde, president of ACPO; Irene Curtis, president of the Superintendents’ Association, and Ian Johnston, interim chair of the Official Side of PNB, but was asked the most questions.

Journalist and broadcaster John Stapleton pointed out that while the crime figures were down 10 per cent the Federation argued this was because fewer people were reporting crime.

But Mr Green said the fall was also reflected in the National Crime Survey which John Stapleton countered with: “You don’t know what they (the Federation) are saying is not true.”

The shadow minister argued that policing was not just about crime – but it was also about community engagement.
Chief alone in supporting further privatisation

Avon and Somerset Chief Constable Nick Gargan found himself as the lone voice supporting privatisation during Wednesday’s first conference session.

But he made it clear that it was a case of saving money where he could so that he could retain front-line officers.

He began his short speech to the front-line officers.

that he could retain that it was a case of saving money where he could so that he could retain front-line officers.

He began his short speech to the ‘Privatisation – is the police service for sale?’ debate by explaining four key things – there was a lot of rubbish talked about privatisation, the police service did some things very well, it also did some things very badly and that there needed to be some balance in discussions on this issue.

However, he went onto to liken some in the police service to Pavlov’s dogs saying that they had a conditioned response that told them privatisation was bad and profit was evil.

He highlighted a number of forces where the involvement of private companies was working well but admitted G4S did ‘cock-up’ the Olympics.

There needed to be a principled approach, he said, forces could not outsource accountability and core policing functions should be sacrosanct but he concluded responsible partnerships with the private sector can only be good.

During a question and answer session involving the panel, Mr Gargan said that private sector suppliers could be used for cars, for computers, catering services and cleaning.

It was, he explained, important to understand that the next spending review could bring more cuts and therefore greater pressure to make cuts in every sensible way possible.

The session had started, however, with a speech from Paul Nowak, assistant general secretary at the TUC, who delivered a clear message: no to privatisation, no to outsourcing and no to the criminal justice system being run for profit. The Government, he argued, had a manifesto for breaking up public services but its argument was paper thin.

Privatisation was bad for those who used public services, he said, adding it was ‘just plain bad for customers’ with this being no more obvious anywhere than in the criminal justice system.

Rachel Robinson, policy officer at Liberty, also expressed her fears that privatisation would have an effect on the unique constitutional role of police officers, policing by consent and accountability.

For the public to have confidence in the police service, they needed to know officers were impartial and committed to public service not shareholders.

‘Sentences need to deter, punish and help rehabilitate’

There is ‘no satisfaction at all’ when officers achieve a conviction, Federation vice chairman Steve White told conference during the ‘Where’s the justice? Time to re-write sentences’ session.

He outlined why there needed to be discussions around the sentencing of offenders, saying: ‘No satisfaction because we know the offender will be back at our cell doors only too soon. No satisfaction because, with a spring in their step as they walk out of the courtroom, we are the ones left explaining to the victim why the offender is not off to prison or given a punishment they, the victim, understand.

‘And through my own personal experience, no satisfaction at all, when the wife of an officer killed on duty, discovers the death of their loved one is worth only four years’ imprisonment to the person responsible. And we all know that four years really means two if the offender plays by the rules.’

He explained any sentences should address the three key justice issues for society: deterrence, punishment and rehabilitation, and he believed discussions needed to be had around what is the most effective, community sentences or a certainty of custody?

He said: ‘We must not forget that whatever sentence is decided, whether in the court, in the guidelines, in the prisons, or in the Home Secretary’s speech to the conference; there is one public service that will be dealing with the success or failure of it; you, the British police service.’

The session also included input from Judge William Davis QC from the Sentencing Council. Eoin McNellen-Murray, president of the Prison Governors’ Association (PGA), said it was more expensive to jail people than deal with them in other ways and that criminals were more likely to re-offend if they were sent to prison.

Other panellists included Frances Crook, chief executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, and Vikram Dodd, a journalist from The Guardian.

Ballot results ‘will be used’

There may be no mandate to seek industrial rights – but that is not going to stop the Federation using the strength of feeling from those who did vote to hammer home their message to the Government.

Ian Rennie, general secretary of the Police Federation of England and Wales, said the ballot result showed ‘just how strongly very many of our members feel about the way they have been treated by this Government’.

‘Many of those who have voted “yes” in the ballot feel strongly and hold a legitimate point of view. We must find ways of reflecting that view in our work going forward,” he said.

‘And, of course, should the Government change the unique employment status of police officers we may again need to consider all options.”.

‘Government reforms are confused’

The Government has no vision for policing and is confused over its reforms, according to shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper.

Speaking at the conference, Yvette Cooper MP said: “I don’t believe there is a vision for policing right now. And I think one is needed.

“When policing is under such strain from resource cuts, we need more than ever to have determined, motivated, valued police officers, able to go the extra mile.

“But the Government’s reforms are confused. They talk about talents and experience, but they cut starting salaries and make it harder for people with mortgages, experience or families to join the workplace.”

She went on to say Home Secretary Theresa May needed to fight for policing in the upcoming spending review, as she had failed to do so in the first.

And talking about the introduction of the Police and Crime Commissioners, which Mrs May said would secure ‘a strong democratic mandate from the ballot box’, Ms Cooper commented: “She spent £100 million on shambolic elections and only one in eight people turned out to vote.”

Our rep says…

“I least enjoyed the justice session – very pointless.”

Jon Williams, constables’ representative
The Federation and its members needed to fully engage with the new College of Policing, according to Julia Lawrence, who is the Federation’s representative at the college. “We do need to be at the heart of this changing landscape to get the best deal for our members,” she explained, “I can’t stress enough the importance of this college.”

The college, she told the conference, would be unique and would be the professional body for everyone involved in policing with the membership offer possibly including member services and a licence to practise.

Alex Marshall, chief executive officer at the college, praised the ‘good, honest relationship’ established with the Federation and told delegates there was plenty of opportunity for members to get involved.

Key priorities would be the ethics code, the code of conduct, the establishment of a register of officers found guilty of gross misconduct and guidance on public protection.

Stalking – expert calls for more help for victims

Laura Richards.

‘Stalking takes and steals lives’ conference was told in a ‘Stalking – Victims and Risk’ address by Laura Richards, co-director of Paladin, the UK’s first National Stalking Advocacy Service for victims.

Laura, who set up Paladin with co-director Harry Fletcher to support stalking victims and their families, urged police officers to improve investigations with clear objectives in order to avoid more stalking related murders.

She said a key element to stalking cases is recognising ‘set patterns of behaviour’ and she recommended officers name an alleged perpetrator as an initial suspect in a case, something she said happens in any other investigation.

Laura has herself been a stalking victim and said that she had also worked with several police officers who had contacted her after being stalked themselves.

Paladin (the name of the mortal god who protected the vulnerable) was set up with Police Mutual funding and Police Federation support. It is due to launch officially on 11 July this year.

Visit www.paladinservice.co.uk or www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk for more information.

Our rep says...

“An excellent talk, the best of conference.”
Maria Henry, sergeants’ representative
Conduct changes are on their way

Changes to conduct procedures and the difficulties they could bring were outlined to delegates during the Thursday morning ‘Conduct – What does the future look like?’ session led by Steve Evans, the Federation’s national lead in this area.

He explained the background to the current regulations, first introduced in 2008 and amended last year, and said they were ‘good regs’, largely as the Federation had been genuinely consulted as they were formulated. The principle of the regulations was that misconduct proceedings should be fair, proportionate and speedy.

“They show what can be done when you listen to people on the ground,” said Steve.

A few issues had arisen as the regulations were implemented: improper use of the severity assessment, risk averse decision-making, failure to use Regulation 12, effectively a lack of proportionality, leading to lengthy investigations, and too many hearings due to not enough meetings.

But he explained the Home Office, driven by a constant attack on officer integrity, has set an agenda for change including:
- Removing lawyers from the conduct process – although the Federation fears that this will just mean lawyers will get involved later as more cases are referred to the Police Appeals Tribunal process
- Requiring the superintending ranks to sit alone on gross misconduct panels
- Going ahead with misconduct procedures even if an officer resigns
- Setting up a public register of all officers with conduct findings against them
- Allowing hearings to be heard in public.

Steve expects the changes to be implemented later this year or early in 2014.

During the session, he also explained the implications of the Police (Complaints and Conduct) Regulations 2013 which came into effect in February. Under this legislation, police officers are required to be interviewed as witnesses but the Federation believes they are simply being treated as ‘suspects in waiting’.

Steve said that while officers could be ordered to attend, they cannot be forced to speak and the Federation would encourage them to use a prepared statement since the ‘safety of officers’ is the primary concern. See JBB Circular 7/2013 which is available at www.polfed.org for more information.

The session concluded with a round-up of the proposed new powers for the IPCC and an update on G8 conduct issues which are still being negotiated.

Our rep says...

“This was a good presentation, keeping us up to date on proposed changes.”

Maria Henry, sergeants’ representative

A job for the strong, brave, decisive and determined

Police officers are needed in order for society to function ‘normally’ – something which the Government has lost sight of, according to the chairman of the Federation’s Constables’ Central Committee.

Will Riches made the comment while speaking at the rank’s separate meeting at conference where he also said the job was for the strong, brave, decisive and determined.

“We should all take pride in this fact and be assured that we have the right stuff. This is what is needed to serve our communities, and provide the most essential of public services,” he said, “We are necessary for society to function normally.”

Constables’ comments
Police minister Damian Green, Baroness Harris of Richmond and Alex Marshall of the College of Policing took part in the Constables’ Comments question and answer session at the rank’s separate meeting.

However, it was the session’s chairman, broadcaster and journalist Ian Collins, who put one of the key questions puzzling the police service since the start of the Government’s programme of cuts to Mr Green when he asked why money could not be taken off the international aid budget and put into policing. He said it was ‘absolutely bonkers’ to increase international aid funding while cutting police budgets.

Both the police minister and Baroness Harris said that it was right to give money to help starving children.

But Ian Collins countered by asking what would happen in this country if people were to dial 999 for police assistance and then there was no-one to attend.

Minister promises more technology to help free up officer time
Policing minister Damian Green told this year’s sergeants’ meeting that police officers “still spend far too much time at the photocopier and not enough time stopping crime”.

During his address as part of the ‘20/20 Vision – Testing our Rank’ session, Mr Green said it is his job to adapt policing to meet the sophisticated technological challenges of the 21st century while still being able to "break up a Friday night fight".

He said he would ensure forces have the tools they need to work as efficiently as possible and he told them: “You have a clear choice. You can either stand on the sidelines. Or you can use your considerable skills and experience to help shape the police of the future.”

Mr Green acknowledged that the internet has changed society, including how criminals operate, so change is necessary in order to enable the police to evolve.

“This means a number of things. It means mobile devices to capture evidence digitally and real-time access to intelligence and information. It means giving victims more methods to report crime and it means implementing digital working across the criminal justice system.”
Paul McKeever: Gone but not forgotten

Conference was not quite the same without Paul McKeever, the former Federation chairman who died suddenly in January.

He never appeared to be far from people’s thoughts. The new chairman paid tribute to him, as did among others, the Home Secretary and the shadow home secretary.

But it was his own rank, the sergeants, who dedicated the first part of their meeting to Paul.

“This is a very poignant time for me. I have been coming here for 11 years and always not far away was my very great friend, your great friend, and colleague, Paul McKeever,” John Giblin, chairman of the Sergeants’ Central Committee, explained.

“He was much loved, respected and admired. He was kind, courteous and a gentleman, a man with great intellect, phenomenal aptitude, energy and drive and commitment over and above the call of duty. Also, more importantly, he had values, scruples and principles. He was a man who saw good in people, never bad. He is a man we all respected, a man we all lament. He is too good to be forgotten and we will not forget him.”

Cut rate Fed subs for new recruits

New recruits to the police service could soon only have to pay 25 per cent of the usual subscription fee for the first year of their Police Federation membership.

This would then increase to a 50 per cent rate for the second year with the full subs only being payable in the third year of service.

The move comes after delegates backed an emergency motion to the annual general meeting of the Police Federation held at the end of this week’s annual conference. The motion was put forward by Sussex Police Federation.

An earlier motion, put forward by Leicestershire Police Federation, called for all members’ subs to be reduced to £19.89 but this was rejected after the national treasurer argued that cuts in police numbers was hitting revenue for the Federation.

There was a general feeling that the time was not right to reduce subs though there will be no increase for the third year running.

Look to the future, inspectors told

Inspectors are being urged to start shaping the future of policing, rather than dwelling on the past.

The chairman of the Inspectors’ Central Committee, Alan Ogg, told delegates at the rank’s separate meeting on the Tuesday morning of conference week that lessons needed to be learned from the past year but thoughts should turn to the future.

He said: “We need to start thinking about the future of policing, about our vision, and about where we want policing to be in 20/20.”

Conference week starts with women’s meeting

Female officers take equal risks to men so should receive equal pay, according to Sam Roberts, chair of the Women’s Eve of Conference meeting.

Sam got conference week underway with the women’s meeting which had the theme ‘Equal Risk, Equal Pay’, a point poignantly highlighted by a short film featuring the women officers killed in the line of duty since 1944 up until 2012.

Sam explained that the PNB Equal Pay Audit in 2011 had highlighted pay inequality issues and that they “don’t paint a pretty picture”.

Among the speakers at the meeting was Jennifer Brown, director of the Manheim Centre for Criminology at the London School of Economics. Prof Brown is working on Lord Steven’s Labour Party-commissioned independent review of policing and gave an update on its progress, concentrating on organisational justice.

The first guest speaker was Federation equality adviser Jayne Monkhouse, who gave more details of the pay audit.

Later during the meeting’s question and answer session, Jayne said that managers’ inability to see flexible working as a benefit rather than a burden meant that the police service could end up looking like it did in the 1970s, undoing the progress that had been made in becoming more representative of the public it served. She warned it was going to be ‘an absolute disaster’.

The meeting also included an update from Emma Hawkesworth of Slater & Gordon Lawyers (formerly RJW) who gave details of two rulings on sickness absence and work location.

Custody suite stress levels revealed

Dr Jonathan Houdmont of Nottingham University gave a presentation on stress in the custody suite during a conference fringe session.

This was as a result of a survey of custody sergeants in January.

Some of his results revealed:
- 56 per cent of custody sergeants suffer from stress
- 43 per cent would be diagnosed with a mild psychological disorder
- 61 per cent are liable to burn out (emotional exhaustion)
- 43 per cent would leave policing if they could (not just custody but policing altogether).

Our rep says... “Several DVDs shown during the week really told a story and broke up some of the sessions. They were impactive, emotional and completely relevant.”

Vickie Day, Gwent PF JBB secretary

Our rep says... "Several DVDs shown during the week really told a story and broke up some of the sessions. They were impactive, emotional and completely relevant.”

Vickie Day, Gwent PF JBB secretary