

IAN RENNIE – STAFF SIDE SECRETARY

STATEMENT TO THE PNB FULL BOARD - 14 APRIL 2011

We are aware that the Home Secretary has set a deadline of 26 July, the date of our next full meeting, for the PNB to complete its consideration of the recommendations in Tom Winsor's first report and reach agreement. Staff Side will fully engage in that process but recognises that the timescales are extremely challenging.

In doing so, Staff Side will table a number of its own proposals as part of this process.

Staff Side recognises the desire of the Official Side to negotiate Winsor as an entire package.

However, Staff Side cannot agree to the Winsor package in its entirety. There are many elements of this package which would cause considerable financial hardship to many of our members, and there are some recommendations which would fundamentally weaken the position of police officers in relation to their work/life balance. Sadly, Winsor has clearly failed to recognise that unlike other workers there is a lack of personal choice for police officers who must obey lawful orders, including being directed by senior officers as to what duty they perform, when they perform it and where they perform it.

We will, though, approach these negotiations in a constructive manner. Where we can, we will seek to ensure that positive changes for police officers are balanced against those which produce outcomes desired by the Official Side.

I note that the letter from the Official Side Secretary tabled at last week's meeting of the PNB Pay and Conditions Joint Working Party refers to the Winsor recommendations as "based on rigorous analysis, widespread engagement and a clear understanding of the challenges facing the police service." I must have read a different report because while he may have engaged widely he has failed to properly understand policing in the modern world and we are disappointed in the extreme with his failure to evidence many of his recommendations. For example:

- Winsor recommends that VSAs should be subject to consultation rather than agreement with JBBs, despite admitting that he had no evidence that a JBB has prevented the implementation of a VSA.
- Winsor found no evidence to support assertions planted in the media that officers' claim a minimum four hours for taking a short telephone call when off duty, but the mere fact that it is "capable of being abused in the way described" is grounds enough for ending the requirement.
- Winsor states that the removal of double time and the five-day notice period for a requirement to work on a rostered rest day will somehow "incentivise

managers” to plan deployments more efficiently, but provides no evidence to substantiate this.

- His one and only reference to part-time officers is to make it longer for them to return to full time working. This is accompanied by no evidence of any problems associated with the need to change.
- Winsor states that while he has not been able to establish the main factors driving what he refers to as casual overtime, he has concluded from his consultations with officers that “the majority of this has probably resulted from officers working beyond their tours of duty, rather than having started their shifts or having been recalled between shifts.” Again, no evidence is provided to substantiate this. In fact there are no transparent calculations on the effect of changes to overtime payments.
- When he writes about mutual aid, Winsor appears to have confused this with being held in reserve, which he compares to being on-call at home with family.

I make these points because Staff Side is absolutely clear that any changes to the existing, negotiated package of police pay and conditions of service must be based on sound evidence.

When we met Tom Winsor for the first time on 4 October 2010 we were reassured by his comments that his recommendations would indeed be guided by the evidence.

At that meeting, he said that there would be an open consultation process, that he wanted to publish all submissions and that he wanted to receive views on each respective submission. Every discussion would be on the record.

As it transpired, the Police Federation of E&W was one of the few organisations that did provide views on those submissions with which we disagreed. No organisation, and certainly no constituent part of the Official Side, provided a critique of either of our submissions.

It is, therefore, a further disappointment that Winsor’s recommendations include proposals on which we have had no opportunity to give our views.

At no point in either the written consultation or during any of the three seminars or four bilateral meetings with Tom Winsor were our views ever sought on the incremental pay freeze.

I should also record that the Official Side in October 2005 tabled three papers to reform pay and reward for police officers. In April 2006 discussions on those proposals broke down when the Official Side refused to honour the index on which police pay had been uprated annually since the Sheehy Report in 1994. The issue of police pay was determined by the Police Arbitration Tribunal in both 2006 and 2007. The three-year pay deal in 2008 provided an opportunity for us to progress the issue of police pay and reward and I have asked the Official Side Secretary on a number

of occasions when we could expect to see the Official Side proposals. Yet it is only now as the Official Side seeks to rely on Winsor's Report to radically alter police pay that the Official Side wants to engage in this process.

I have to ask if the Official Side is fully aware of the impact of Winsor's recommendations, particularly when taken together with Lord Hutton's proposals regarding pensions, as they will no doubt result in large numbers of officers leaving the service in order to preserve their pension. The remuneration package must ensure that experienced officers are retained by the Service.

A number of forces are already indicating that if the Winsor proposals are introduced the administrative processes would introduce greater bureaucracy and the proposed changes would at best, result in them being cost neutral and at worst result in additional costs to forces, something they can ill afford at this time.

These Recommendations amount to the removal of £485 million from police pay by 2013-14, which according to Winsor are savings he was required to make for the Treasury, although we now understand that assurances have been given by government that this money will be retained in policing. So the reality is that it's not about making savings towards this government's 20% cut to the police budget over the next 4 years, it's simply about reducing police officers' pay.

I have heard Winsor say it, so there really is no doubt – these recommendations will see some officers as much as £4,000 worse off in cash terms.

I do not imagine that such proposals would go down well with members of the Official Side if this was being done to them with inflation currently running at over 5%, with a suggested 2 year public sector pay freeze and also increased pension contributions.

If the Official Side is content to take money from police officers at this time, have they fully considered the impact this will have on police officers and the police service?

The Office of Constable is the bedrock of British Policing and it confers a great authority and power upon citizens who are appointed. With that authority and power comes great responsibility and accountability.

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and other high profile Inquiries have clearly set out what is at stake when police officers fail to properly discharge their responsibilities. The Lord Scarman Report established the need to attract candidates of sufficient maturity into the police service. While there are several references to the 1960 Willink Commission, Staff Side is disappointed at the lack of reference to these much more recent reports. These show the real world within which police pay must be determined.

It is of great disappointment to me personally that Tom Winsor has not grasped this point. I regard this as a terrible missed opportunity. I said it to Tom Winsor during our meetings and I will say it again here today. This is a 'baby and bathwater' moment for the service. We are where we are today because of history. We have evolved as a police service because of the expectations and service demands rightly placed upon us by the public.

These recommendations must be assessed in terms of the calibre of people we recruit into the police service and the impact that it will have upon the communities we serve if we are no longer able to attract and retain them.

Also of great concern for Staff Side is the pace at which the policing agenda is moving.

Together with Winsor, the publication of Peter Neyroud's report and the proposed introduction of Policing and Crime Commissioners have the potential to change policing as we know it. Only last week during the policing debate in parliament I heard it described as the 'perfect storm in policing'. Pay and Conditions of service is only one part of this policing landscape and is being looked at in isolation within PNB. If we don't get this right, just as the public we will all suffer the consequences. If only Tom Winsor had included within his report what he said to me on two occasions 'if there was ever a case for a Royal Commission in Policing it's now'. I personally feel let down by him simply because at our first meeting on the 4th October last year I actually believed him when he told me that everything was on the record. This is clearly not the case.

As we move forward during the negotiations Staff Side will be looking at every proposal from the Official Side in terms of its impact upon officers' work-life balance. We need to maintain the safeguards and protections to the quality time which officers enjoy with their families. We also need to ensure that the service is one which welcomes and accommodates officers, including those with caring responsibilities, many of whom are women who currently make up almost 40% of officers under 5 year's service. The service has benefited from greater flexible working and this must be maintained regardless of the outcome of these negotiations if we are to safeguard the operational resilience of the service with the reducing numbers of police officers in the future.

Any proposals which make it even easier for managers to place impositions on officers' personal time will find little support from Staff Side.

None of these matters have found their way into Winsor's equality impact assessment (EIA). He seems to think that equality means treating everyone badly, rather than assessing how his recommendations will impact on people from different groups. Clearly his recommendations will impact very differently on young single officers, married officers with children, or officers with a disability. None of these differences have been identified in the EIA. Instead, and it would be laughable if it

was not so serious, Winsor alleges that his EPAA will have a positive impact on women even though his analysis was limited by the fact that the data used “was provided by ACPO and the NPIA and did not include a gender or ethnicity breakdown”. Unsurprisingly the EPAA is more likely to increase the gender pay gap that Winsor thinks he addressed by proposing the removal of the SPP scheme.

Winsor’s Report fails to recognise the actual service profile for police officers and has the potential to make women an endangered species in policing. It disappoints me greatly that I have to make this statement on behalf of Staff Side given that the Home Secretary, who has directed the PNB to consider these recommendations, is also the Minister for Women and Equality, something I pointed out to her at our last meeting.

Staff Side is aware of the two-year pay freeze proposed by the Government. Staff Side has yet to make a decision as to whether to table a pay claim for this year, but we believe this must be considered alongside the Winsor recommendations.

In concluding, I should also state that while Staff Side may be able to reach agreement with the Official Side in principle, there are bound to be elements of the recommendations on which Staff Side will not be able to take a final position prior to seeing Tom Winsor’s 2nd report.

We will engage as positively as we can with this process and I trust that these comments have provided the Official Side with clarity on the position of Staff Side.