



## **Chairman's Speech to Conference Edinburgh, 13 March 2019**

Conference, may I extend a very warm welcome to Mr Humza Yousaf, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice in Scotland; to the Deputy Chief Constable Adrian Hanstock, to the Chair and the Interim CEO of BTPA Mr Barclay-Smith, Mr Pigden-Bennett and to all fraternal guests and colleagues.

Welcome to this year's British Transport Police Federation Conference. Another extraordinary year for the British Transport Police and for our Federation.

Firstly, may I offer my warmest congratulations to Wayne Marques on his George Medal and Leon McLeod on his Queens Gallantry Medal. My admiration for them and their incredible bravery knows no bounds.

May I also congratulate PC Jessica Bullough on being awarded the QPM and PC Mark Renshaw on being awarded the BEM, both in the Queen's New Year's Honours list. A wonderful achievement by both!

Although not our members, it is important that we also acknowledge BTP PCSO's Jon Morrey, Lewis Brown and Police staff Alan Smith all for being awarded the BEM, to William Bryden for being awarded the OBE and finally our very good friend from PSD Dick Gill for being awarded the MBE, all recognised again in the Queen's New Years Honours List.

Policing is a team game and we know how important our support staff are to our officers. It was marvellous to see that their work has also been valued and rewarded.

### Excellence

It is great to see our officers being publicly recognised but it also gives me pleasure to congratulate and thank all the British Transport Police officers for their excellence and professionalism in policing the railways and keeping the public safe.

It was a real privilege last night to recognise just some of those officers. It was a fantastic night and it is always great to recognise the highest standards in policing but as I say every year, their achievements just serve to highlight the debt of gratitude we owe to all our police officers carrying out their daily duty without fear or favour, just because they care for and value the job they do and the people they serve.

### Value

That brings me on to the theme for this year's conference, which is **Value**. We as police officer hold values; we believe we offer the public value; but I can't help wondering if we are valued in return.

**What are the values of a police officer?** Too many to list them all but many will say compassion; bravery; honesty; looking after the vulnerable; standing up for what is right, a real sense of justice.

**What do we value most?** I would say fairness. Of all the values that police officers have, the one that most of us would recognise is a strong sense of fairness.

Policing is a vocation. No-one joins the police service to become rich but **we do expect to receive a fair day's pay;**

**We do want to be treated with fairness and respect; we do want to be valued for the work we do serving and protecting our communities.**

**BUT** do politicians truly value us? Do Chief Officers and the NPCC value us? Does the media value us? **And most importantly do the public value us?**

**Police Officers have values but are we valued?**

### **Politicians**

When a major incident occurs, we have all seen the politicians rushing to tell everyone how proud they are of Britain's police, how brave and wonderful they are. **Great thanks for that!**

But where are those same politicians when Chief Officers up and down the country are telling them that the cuts they are imposing **ARE** affecting front line services.

**These cuts ARE reducing the number of officers available to protect the public.**

**Crime is back on the increase, particularly violent crime on the railways.**

I am tired of listening to politicians of all persuasions who don't seem to understand policing. How many times have I heard frontline officers say a politician wouldn't last one night shift in one of our busy cities? How many of them would last one day in a proper job? Come to think about it, how many of them have ever had a proper job.

**How can they understand what we do?**

When asked about policing, they never actually answer a question; they like to quote vague and misleading data about funding designed to hide the cuts; and they trot out ideological claptrap and point the finger at all the other political parties.

**I cannot remember the last time I heard a politician being interviewed and felt that I believed or trusted them to do the right thing when it comes to policing.**

### **Counter Terrorism**

Take the BTP as a case in point. Everyone knows that transport and transport hubs rank right at the top of terrorist targets. Nearly every terrorist incident in recent years has occurred within our jurisdiction. The BTP is expected to deal with this.

**How many people realise that the BTP is the only public facing police force that does not receive any money from the government for fighting terrorism?**

We have, quite rightly, introduced our own counter terrorism unit and this unit will help to keep the travelling public safe.

As policing budgets are being cut to the bone, the Home Secretary happily announced that some extra money for Counter Terrorism had been secured from the Treasury.

**£101 million pounds extra money in 2018. So how much for BTP? Zero – Nada - Nothing.**

To continue financing our Counter Terrorism Unit, we are being forced to cut elsewhere, on top of dealing with budget cuts, sorry “savings”. We are now told that we may have to close one of our control rooms to fund those efficiencies.

**That will leave the force with just one control room for the whole of England, Scotland & Wales. No resilience. No back up. The risk of being dreadfully exposed.**

So, to politicians I say, enough of your words! Talking maybe what you do best, but the time for talking is over, now is a time for doing.

**See it, Say it, Sort it!**

If you value policing and if you value the BTP, then make sure we have the proper funding to keep the travelling public safe from terrorism. The BTP’s Counter Terrorism Unit should not be seen as something the rail companies should pay for. It should not have to be financed to the detriment of preventing and detecting crime, nor from keeping public order.

**It is part of a National counter terrorism network and it MUST be funded by Government.**

### **TFL**

Whilst on the subject of funding, I would also question how much our TOC’s value BTP officers, but most importantly how much they **VALUE** the safety of the travelling public?

They say you can’t undo what you know.

We know that violent crime is on the increase. If we didn't know it already, we read it every day in the papers. We know that the threat of a terrorist attack in the UK is very high.

**So why would any Train Operating Company put profits ahead of public safety?**

We know that Crossrail will place an additional security and crime burden on transport policing with a large rise in passenger journeys and therefore extra profit for the TOC.

So you'd think that additional police funding will be needed? That's common sense?

So why would TFL now propose to reduce funding for policing at other London transport hubs?

**That cut will result in the loss of 160 officers currently policing London. That's 160 fewer police officers looking after the public! A very thin blue line indeed.**

Such an act would not only be foolhardy and reckless, but extremely dangerous.

**TFL - "See it, Say it, Sort it".**

**Police Officers have values but are we valued?**

**Public Perception**

We all know that policing has changed and will continue to change. The avuncular police officer portrayed in Dixon of Dock Green has gone, if indeed he ever existed. The public quite rightly expect police officers to deal with the things in life that just aren't right.

Crime, public disorder, anti-social behaviour and people in distress. They want us to tackle those things that make life unpleasant for everyone else. I strongly believe that the vast majority of the public hold us in high regard and they want to see us tackle those who don't care what misery they inflict on others.

**But** we must also recognise that there has been a change in society. Members of the public are far less likely to stop and assist officers dealing with something, often understandably for fear of being hurt or simply getting involved by putting themselves at risk and too often that's the message we also give them.

**A far more sinister minority however seem to revel in standing by filming officers in action, criticising their every move, sharing those same videos on social media with their own commentary.**

And it is everyday people that view and share them. Many of those videos only show half the picture. Filming only begins half way through the incident. The start of any confrontation is not shown. The complaint made by a scared passer-by is not seen. Only half the information is available to the viewer.

**Police officers are being unfairly judged on half-truths.**

A British Transport Police officer talking to two homeless people sitting on the station concourse and trying to help them find shelter is filmed and portrayed on social media as police picking on the vulnerable.

But who cares? We live in a world of fake news. Sadly, that video will be viewed and shared many times. **What does that say about society's values?**

As my Federation colleague, Ken Marsh, the Chair of the Met Federation, said, **"the mocking of officers being assaulted is disgusting"**. Both Ken and the Met Commissioner called for the public to "get involved and help" instead of standing by, to show that society does not accept assaults on police as normal and **I am calling for the same.**

**Remember what TV personality Nick Knowles said:**

**"Police Officers are not aliens. They are our neighbours, family and friends. Nonetheless they are demoralised & often despised by the public, and they need public support".**

### **Assaults**

Being assaulted should never be considered as “part of the job”. It is quite simply unacceptable. The numbers show that over **21% of British Transport Police officers are assaulted every year.**

### **That’s 15 officers assaulted every week! Think about that for a moment!**

There may be many reasons for this. There are **1.6 billion** journeys made on the railways each year. We deal with a transient population often using the railways late at night after consuming alcohol. Railway stations are now more than transport hubs. They have pubs, restaurants and shopping. They are a magnet for elements of society who are intent on breaking the law and interfering with the travelling public’s right to go about their lawful business.

Our officers deserve the basic right of being supported, properly protected and **valued** for doing their job and protecting communities.

Chief Constable, thank you for your support on spitguards. Thank you for your commitment to issuing TASER and Body Worn Video’s. **Please know, WE absolutely do value this.**

Thank you also for the review you are carrying out on assaults on police. We look forward to any measures that will help reduce assaults on our members. **BUT** we do recognise that this is also a funding issue. These protections come at a cost and you need the necessary budget to meet your commitments.

**So politicians, once again, See it, Say it, Sort it!**

### **Criminal Justice System**

If politicians really value the police, then they must ensure that the Courts are able to pass appropriate sentences. We welcome the private members bill “Protect the Protectors” which makes any assault on an emergency services worker a specific offence carrying a potential sentence of 12 months.

**BUT** and it's a huge **BUT**, the old offence of assault on police carried a potential sentence of 6 months **BUT** the CPS rarely charged the offence and the courts rarely, if ever, gave that sentence.

The Government must ensure that sentencing guidelines for the courts reflect the fact that police officers are employed to uphold the law and keep people safe and those who assault them carrying out their duty, need to know that such behaviour is **completely unacceptable**.

Criminals who feel that it is OK to assault an officer who is simply trying to do their duty, need to know that such action will result in a **tough sentence that will act as a deterrent**.

Surely it is in the interests of the Government, all Police forces, including BTP and most of all the fare paying public, that we all work together to reduce violence, reduce assaults and reduce injuries. Less injuries means less sickness and that equates to more officers being there to protect the public.

It's a win, win

**If we are truly valued by politicians, this is an easy way to show it.**

**See it, Say it, Sort it**

**Police Officers have values but are we valued?**

### **Scotland**

One of the biggest issues we have had to deal with in recent years is the future of British Transport policing in Scotland. At times it has seemed that we were fighting an impossible battle, as the SNP seemed to have decided, come hell or high water, that they were going to subsume BTP Scotland into Police Scotland.

**We are very pleased that finally, our warnings have been listened to and plans have been put on hold. We welcome the Cabinet Secretary decision to explore other options to full integration.**

So to all parties I say that we must ensure that BTP policing in Scotland continues to provide the best possible service and continues to receive the appropriate level of investment.

Its well recognised that BTP Scotland provides an exemplary service to the travelling public. We sincerely believe that a National Integrated Transport Policing Service best serves the travelling public - it's a proven policing model that works.

**We want it to stay that way.**

The Scottish Government are now clear about the risk; clear about the cost of integration; clear about the impact on our members.

Can I remind you Cabinet Secretary, that one of your priorities was to alleviate the uncertainty that our members have suffered for over 3 years? By leaving the legislation on the table, the big dark cloud of uncertainty is still hanging over our members.

**We say to the Scottish government, now is the time to repeal the legislation that would lead to BTP integration with Police Scotland. Now is the time to lift that level of uncertainty if you truly value our officers.**

### **Rules and Regulations**

For some time we have been urging the Chief Constable and the authority to collate and publish a set of rules and regulations, which should be available to all officers.

Everyone should have a basic right to know what they are allowed to do; what is not allowed; what they are entitled to; and what they are not entitled to.

**It's a basic right for all employees.** Unfortunately for too long we have had to deal with different interpretations of the rules. A pick and mix of the regulations.

We totally understand that we are employees not Crown Servants and as such our status, particularly around pensions is slightly different to that of Home Office Forces. We cannot totally adopt Home Office Regulations but we can certainly mirror them.

We paid for independent advice - a comparison of our regulations and Home Office regulations. A comparison of BTP policy and Standard Operating Procedures and those adopted by Home Office forces.

We have paid for an independent barrister to further examine these rules. In the interests of honesty and transparency we shared those findings with the force.

**We are therefore very pleased to inform you that the force has finally listened to our concerns and have now taken on the challenge. We look forward to seeing their draft proposals in the next few weeks. We hope the authority will also act expediently to authorise the issue of this manual.**

Officers have a basic right to access to the rules that govern their pay and conditions and their conduct. So Chief Constable thank you.

**Seen it, Said it, Sorted!**

### **Staff Survey**

Once again, the latest staff survey has shown that morale is low and officers do not feel valued. **There's that word again – valued!**

Chief Constable, thank you for your work attempting to remove so-called “hindrance stresses”. Thank you for the work on issuing new items of uniform, improving the standards of Northwick Park and exploring how assaults on our officers can be reduced.

**BUT please know that there is much more work to be done!**

Our members are still telling us about many things that cause them stress at work and are hindrances to them doing their job. Bureaucracy, Occupational Health, ILL Health dismissal, Pay, NICHE, to name but a few. Understandably officers are more confident in bringing their concerns to us so we will always have a more precise picture.

**So please listen to us.**

Another hindrance stressor is obvious. Constant budget cuts, with more to come, do affect front line services and our ability to serve the public. The constant changes introduced to facilitate those budget cuts, have an unbearable effect on morale. Like a constant drip and sap on officers' wellbeing.

Police officers join the force to serve the public and to keep people safe. **Crime, particularly violent crime, is again on the rise and the notion that this is nothing to do with budget cuts is just ludicrous.**

We must listen to frontline officers when they raise a hand with real and practical concerns. Officers are entitled to feel alarmed when they hear of more "savings". The mantra of "more for less" is constant. When you try to do more with less, even a child could tell you, you aren't going to get more and there's a fairly good chance, you're going to get less!

Governments and police leaders know that they can rely on our goodwill but when we feel so undervalued, it's not difficult to see why that goodwill is rapidly disappearing.

**Enough is enough! Give us a break, before the damage is so bad that public safety is further put at risk.**

### **Police Pay**

The financial crisis caused by governments and banks demanded a period of austerity. What is most unfair is that the public sector, including policing, bore the brunt of this austerity. Police pay and increments were frozen, coupled with a rise in National Insurance contributions.

Then there were the Winsor reforms. We lost Competency Related Threshold payments and Special Priority Payments further eroding our pay. The overall effect of this combined with derogatory pay rises and creeping inflation has meant that police pay has fallen by over 18% in real terms.

**That means police officers have 18% less to spend in their pockets than they did in 2010. How's that for value! Politicians say they value police officers but clearly not as much as they value themselves.**

And despite this dramatic fall in police pay AND after a year of terrible and heart-breaking challenges for policing, the government decided to ignore the recommendation of the independent Police Pay Remuneration Review body.

They did not award the 2.8% rise that this **independent** body recommended - instead awarding a 2% pay rise. They added insult to injury by consolidating the 1% rise from 2017, so in effect only awarding a 1% pay rise for 2018. **Truly showing just how much the current government value the police.**

### **NPCC**

One could be forgiven that we had reached rock bottom but no. Further pay reform is now being considered by the National Police Chiefs' Council, who in their wisdom have decided that we need a new reward framework. They have commissioned a "National Reward Framework Team" to design the future of police pay.

Words can mean a lot, can't they? The word "reward" sounds promising, doesn't it? Makes it sound like there's something extra? The truth is that the first draft of their proposals suggests that constables serve a 3-year apprenticeship; starting on £18,000 per year, reaching the top of their pay scale in 3 years **BUT** the top of the scale is £24,000.

**I kid you not, £24,000.**

True, there would be different pay scales for those joining with a degree. They would start on £24,000 and reach the top of their pay scale in one year **BUT their ceiling would be £26,000.**

The Reward Framework Team say that their reforms would be cost neutral. Money saved could be used for a competency-based pay structure with certain specialisms receiving extra pay and the creation of a “leading constable” role who would be paid more.

A trainee manager in McDonald’s is paid £22,000, receives 6 weeks paid holiday, free life insurance, performance related bonuses and private health care. So, £18,000 for a police officer being spat at, assaulted, and abused OR £22,000 for listening to someone complain that they had to wait 5 minutes to be served with their quarterpounder with cheese. Difficult choice, isn’t it!

**I have little faith in politicians of any political persuasion but these are not their pay reforms. They are being pushed by senior police officers; our leaders; the very people we expect to understand and value what we do.**

There’s that word again – value. **It’s difficult to conclude anything other than that the National Police Chiefs Council clearly don’t value front line policing.**

**Police Officers have values but are we valued?**

### **Conclusion**

**Police Officers have values and clearly they also give value BUT I ask again - are they valued?** In conclusion Minister, I am and always will be proud to be a British Transport Police Officer. I am proud of my colleagues and the work they do every day displaying their values protecting the community. My colleagues again and again offer value to the public they serve. **Surely it can’t be too much to ask that they are valued in return?**

Thank you for listening.