

# Police & Justice

The magazine for all UNISON members working in Police and Justice



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- 26 March round-up
- Cut crime not police staff
- Coping with cuts
- Photographer with focus and much more...



# There are alternatives

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The Conservative LibDem coalition uses several arguments to justify the axe it has taken to vital public services. First it says that there is no alternative, and second the public will not notice these services when they are gone. Thirdly it argues that there is broad support for savage cuts - based on a careful, selective reading of opinion polls.

A half million or so marchers in London in March knocks the third argument out cold. Thousands of people from every walk of life and every part of the United Kingdom crowded into the Embankment. The queue was so long that many demonstrators at the back had to give up on Hyde Park because their chartered coaches were leaving Wembley at 4 pm.

UNISON was massively present and police, probation and Cafcass members were strongly represented. Justice and policing, key elements to a decent quality of life for millions of citizens, including the most excluded, are taking a body blow. Every offender, diverted from crime by probation staff saves the state thousands of pounds. Yet the service is being radically pruned. House of Commons committees have repeatedly criticised Cafcass senior management (see page 11). Senior police officers have warned that the service will suffer. PCSOs live in constant uncertainty despite their valued work.

But it is true that only now, as *Police and Justice* goes to press, will the real impact of reckless service reductions be seen and understood by many people who use them services. Government complacency may be harder to sustain once the gaps in George Osborne's scorched earth plan appear.

He should be thinking of alternatives, despite past denials of a Plan B. Because there are, indeed, alternatives – strategies that tax rich, irresponsible financial organisations and greedy individuals, promote jobs and growth, plan a green future and protect those who suffer most from inequality. These alternatives benefit the whole of society, not a narrow privileged section of it. That may be why Mr Osborne has difficulty in supporting them.



Up for it: Leicestershire probation staff show they have plenty of determination to fight back

Laurence Pollock

## Police to cover staff posts

Warwickshire police officers will be taken out of the front-line and moved to staff posts, the authority has admitted.

The force has to save £23 million by 2015 and has invited staff with two years continuous service to apply for voluntary redundancy. It aims to replace the vacated posts with up to 150 serving police officers.



‘We don’t like it, I don’t think the public will like it, but at the end of the day we have no option,’ Ian Francis, the chairman of Warwickshire Police Authority told the BBC.

A delegation (left) from the Warwickshire Police UNISON along with Police Federation representatives recently met Warwickshire MPs to discuss and explain the impact of the comprehensive spending review.

The UNISON delegation said a loss of 450 posts could not be achieved without having a direct impact on frontline services. The branch believes the meeting was a useful dialogue that could provide foundations for further discussions.

## Wales Assembly support for PCSOs

UNISON Cymru/Wales welcomed Welsh Labour’s election pledge that an extra 500 police community support officers would be recruited in Wales. Linda Sweet, UNISON Police and Justice representative, said it was really good news.

‘Many police staff in Wales would have faced job losses as a result of the Westminster spending cuts, but this commitment from Welsh Labour would go some way in minimising the impact of those cuts.

‘An additional 500 PCSOs would make a real difference for Welsh communities – allowing Wales to be a safer place to work and visit.

‘Commitments such as these blow holes in the ConDem argument that there is no alternative. Welsh Labour is demonstrating that it understand the needs of Wales and the importance of investment in our communities.’

However the Local Government Association in England and Wales has declined a Home Office request that it urges members to continue part-funding PCSOs. The LGA says councils should make their own decisions.

## Forensic cuts in the east

Some police forces may skimp on evidence because they are trying to cut forensic science costs.

The Forensic Science Service (FSS) at Huntingdon used by forces in the east of England, has publicly warned that cuts could lead to failed investigations and miscarriages of justice. Forces acknowledge that the use of forensic services has dropped for financial reasons but say standards will not fall. The FSS reports a reduction of just under a quarter in the average number of samples sent to laboratories in the past year.

## Crime opportunities warning

The Government’s 20 per cent real terms cut in police funding could mean a ‘bonanza’ for criminals. The prediction comes from independent think tank Civitas. In its recent report Civitas says there will be dramatic staff reductions.

It adds: ‘There is a strong relationship between the size of police forces and national crime rates. As a result, the cuts might turn out to be costly for the British public.’

## Winsor prompts anger

UNISON has reacted angrily to the Winsor review of police officers and staff pay and conditions. The review proposes protecting police officers’ immunity from redundancy, awarding a 10 per cent shift allowance and a £1,200 ‘professional accreditation allowance’. But police staff face a two-year increment freeze and would lose key premium payments and nothing definite on job security. See National Officer’s report, page 15.

# Yes to the alternatives — 26 March

The estimates varied but, in the end, who was counting? Probably something like half a million people descended on Central London on 26 March.

The Coalition government and supportive media mocked the public service focus and exploited eye-catching trouble by a microscopic group of anarchists. They wheeled out the old Thatcherite, toxic brand: There is no alternative.

But the TUC-organised event spelt out the many, viable, fairer, less socially destructive alternatives. The hundreds of thousands of people crowding in to the Embankment knew the effect on their communities if proposed cuts went ahead. They also fear stress, overwork and sickness absence interviews for those still in a job trying to shoulder the extra load.

Meanwhile inflation climbs and wages stagnate. Crushing people's lives is no way to cut a deficit – or to pay a banker's bonus.

Police and PCSO, probation and Cafcass members came from all over Britain and quite a few must have been booked on red eye coaches and trains. They fretted their way down the M1, the M6, the A1, the M4 and lesser roads, checking watches and tube maps. In London, they texted and tweeted for Britain's services and local needs.

Many never made it to Hyde Park, the march was so long and return timetables so tight. But every one said loud and clear there is an alternative to dismantling a fair and just society.



Marcus Rose



Police and justice branches, from left: Dyfed-Powys police take a break; West Midlands police; Northwest probation and Cafcass. Tayside police, South Yorks Probation. Top right: Lancs police



Photos: Laurence Pollock and individual branches.

# Cut crime not police staff

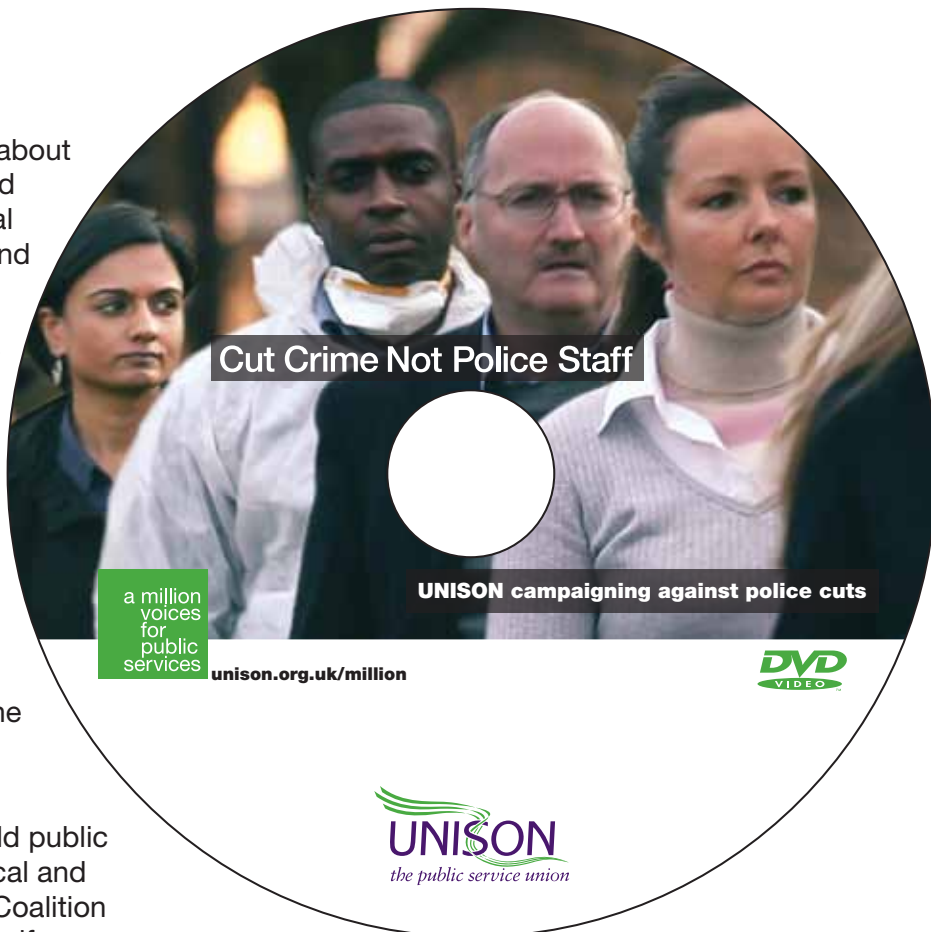
Warwickshire Police (see page 3) have already admitted that police officers will be needed to fill police staff vacancies. UNISON says this is just the start and is spreading the message. Laurence Pollock reports

One by one police staff members talk about their roles – taking emergency calls and directing officers and ensuring that vital evidence and documents are secure and accessible. They describe their work, combating anti-social behaviour, out on the streets, meeting the public, day in, day out.

Then they follow a beat officer down the street and gradually fade from view leaving him alone, isolated.

It is a powerful, visual statement of UNISON's challenge to government: 'Cut crime not police staff'. The message is contained in a specially produced DVD aimed at highlighting the devastating impact of massive cuts in police staff.

UNISON has worked constantly to build public awareness of the impact if vital technical and specialist staff are lost. It has faced a Coalition which brands everyone, not in police uniform, as 'back office'.



The DVD was launched at a special event at the Houses of Parliament. Peers and MPs were invited to see the DVD and hear presentations from shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper and UNISON general

secretary Dave Prentis. The reception, hosted by Keith Vaz MP, was thronged with police staff from all over the country. They heard Dave Prentis condemn a 'dishonest coalition' who believed in a chaos theory of reform and front loaded cuts leaving no time for planning.

'It is absolute nonsense to say that policing will not suffer from the massive cuts taking place.'

Forces were facing budget reductions double what HMIC said they could cope with and the progress made through workforce modernisation was being put at risk.

He condemned police minister Nick Herbert for claiming that the public didn't care who ran the back office.

'Police forces rely on the dedication of the public sector ethos of police staff members.'



## Teamwork

Caryl Nobbs (below), chair of UNISON's Police and Justice



executive, introducing the DVD said it showed how much teamwork was involved in policing.

'Those teams are in danger of

being decimated. If it is going to happen so quickly, who will be left at the end? Nick Herbert said that the public want to see officers in the street. But police staff work in the front line – something he has missed.'

Hopefully Mr Herbert has been sent a UNISON DVD and even more hopefully may be he has watched it. It would bring home just how much officers on the street depend on police staff.

## They said – DVD voices

- 'I work at the main control: I get phone calls from victims of domestic violence and assault and anti-social behaviour. I speak to them at length not long after the incident has happened and I make a decision on the best course of action.'
- 'My role provides the initial customer care and reduces the paperwork that police officers on the street have to do.'
- 'I take the police force into the school providing valuable information, advice and guidance. I investigate crime and disorder and I help keep the community safe.'

This role is important because it is about engaging with the community.'



## National impact

Yvette Cooper said there would be an impact on front line policing right across the country.

'In my own constituency a scenes of crime officer can ring up and dictate details straight down the phone to a member of staff who is entering them on a computer. But the staff are going and the scenes of crime officer will have to come into the station every time they want to enter details. If we want efficiency savings we have to plan - over a parliament.

She added: 'UNISON is right about its concern about the impact of cuts. Cuts to youth work, crime and disorder partnerships and mental health all put huge pressure on policing.'



# Weathering the storm

These are grim times as Government takes a scythe to the police service. How does UNISON keep members and its organisation going in this situation? Training and steward recruitment are two areas where it is facing up to the challenge

## Northamptonshire Tailor - made

In Northamptonshire UNISON has facilitated tailor made training for those whose jobs might be at risk. And it has gone on step further, providing new skills to those who hope to stay with the force but may face internal interview.

New union learning rep (ULR), Tash Fountain (right), has been running UNISON workshops on developing interview skills and CV writing for individuals in that situation. But it has been it's been a chilling introduction to her work.

'Northamptonshire have only just started learning activities when I was appointed and we have lost several ULRs.

She says it has been a roller coaster ride: 'I hit the ground running. My initial brief was to get the learning agreement underway again, but due to the current climate we feel supporting staff takes priority.

'During the ULR training I met a lot of people, who gave great advice on the interview workshop. I have found a wealth of information without having to reinvent the wheel.'

She has needed all the expertise she can quickly acquire. Some people were only told at short notice that they were at risk and were too late to book onto formal courses at Derby College. Tash has been able to help them and also to support



those who are facing interviews for internal redeployment.

In her workshops staff are emailed a job description to help them prepare for their first interview. She takes participants through 'evidencing the essential criteria' - showing how they can meet the standard required when filling in an application form. Her interview coaching is insightful: 'I advise people to prepare an evening meal the day before or arrange to have a takeaway. Worrying about the shopping adds stress.'

She also warns about emotional reactions to job cuts showing in answers to interview questions.

The CV writing workshop is done over the email with one-to-one support if required.

But there is a personal price to be paid for this commitment:

**It was quite heart breaking, working with finger print technicians knowing that 50 per cent were going to be made redundant**

'It was quite heart breaking, working with finger print technicians who loved their jobs and knowing that 50 per cent were going to be made redundant.'

## Leicestershire Learning centre

Leicestershire Constabulary prodded by UNISON has established a learning centre to help staff who could be hit by the ravages of deficit reduction.

Chief Constable Simon Cole and Alison Naylor, head of HR and UNISON officials signed a learning agreement and officially opened the centre, giving staff access to computers and a range of on-line courses. The centre has plans to set up links with Leicester University.

Gary Jacques, lifelong learning co-ordinator and union learning rep for UNISON, said: 'Regional restructuring, budget cuts and privatisation have hit us all big time. In response we have been helping staff update their CVs and improve their IT skills. The employers have been very supportive and have been encouraging people to make use of the centre. The only good news to come out of this situation has been the setting up of the centre.'

Staff at other locations outside

headquarters have not been overlooked. The learning reps have been using laptops to create a virtual learning centre for staff working in offices outside headquarters. Unionlearn's Skills: Recession & Recovery project has provided support and funding and its learning reps and staff have been co-ordinating the union response.

Niki Reid a union learning rep has been involved in one to one interviews with members at risk of redundancy. She described it as a 'very draining'.

A big issue for control room staff, for instance, has been their computer skills. While highly trained for their jobs they do not have computer skills that the outside world would recognise.



Control room operator Sarah Kirtin (above) says: 'When I started 14 years ago computers were not as widespread as they



are now. And I didn't have a computer at home.

'We were using the computers in the control room but didn't really have time to learn anything.'

Visit [www.unionlearn.org.uk](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk)

## Norfolk and Suffolk Probation Plugging the gaps

UNISON organisation depends on building steward numbers is almost as important as general recruitment.

But police and justice branches are now faced with a struggle just to stand still. Stewards' jobs, along with thousands of others are disappearing so recruitment is now about plugging the gaps.

Lauren Bleach a UNISON senior steward at Norfolk and Suffolk Probation Trust (NSPT) has been working to encourage more members to become stewards. Some members in the public sector might think this is the wrong thing to do in the current climate. But Lauren stresses that the Trust has been supportive.

'No one has declined to come forward because they are

worried about flak from the employer. NSPT is keen to have stewards in all departments, there is 10 hours a month facility time for steward's duties and UNISON training.'

Inevitably the biggest obstacle is time with many staff taking on extra work because of job cuts elsewhere. Lauren tries to target certain postholders.

'I have to think creatively. People working in say, IT or admin/clerical, can get people to cover for them when they go on training but probation staff officers find it much more difficult. And the PSOs are being asked to do new NVQs and the study is taking up a lot of their spare time.

Nevertheless she is having some success.

There is no shortage of work in the present circumstances. Lauren herself is working with members to coordinate protests about plans to change pensions and there are appeals against some recent job evaluation decisions. Meanwhile members are being redirected to new roles and are out of pocket because of extra travel.

# Our first tele-AGM

Is your AGM poorly attended? Cheshire police UNISON got to grips with the problem by using the latest technology

Branch officers will be familiar with scene. The well-announced, flagged up, annual general meeting is about to take place in room 405 with tea, coffee, water and penguin biscuits.

The committee members, plus a smattering of others are waiting. A couple of people look in and ask if this is where the telephone training is happening and disappear. The AGM proceeds but the nagging doubts about involving and engaging the members persist. It's an age old problem – and not just in UNISON.

But in Cheshire police UNISON they have been embracing modern videoconferencing technology and bringing AGMs into the 21st century. They doubled attendance to around 160.

The branch has members at 27 locations and despite a draw for a £250 Asda shopping voucher it was still hard work building attendance. Branch secretary Dave Trussell describes the frustration: 'It was entirely logistical and there was no facility time for attending the AGM.'

'We have tried meetings in the evening and at lunchtime with a buffet to attract people who are giving up their valuable meal break but we still weren't getting anyone from outside stations.'

The force had some time earlier brought in videoconferencing for

questions to the chief constable from staff so there was a network already in place.

'It was a simple process,' says Dave. 'We had a discussion with IT and had a mini-training session. We started up in five locations, an hour before the meeting was due to run. We had posters up encouraging people from each area to come.'

We would take comments, from say, Chester, and a subscreen from there would appear on the major screen that everyone else was watching.

'We took questions from the outlying stations and everyone could hear everyone.'

Afterwards there was strong feedback from members who came. They said it was nice to be involved and it saved travel time.

Dave himself has worked in, in the past, in an outlying location and knows the feeling of remoteness: 'We do care about our membership and we want to get all of them involved.'

For steward Tony Deacon, based in Chester, the video conference was a success.

'Last year I was the only member who attended the AGM at Winsford, more than 20 miles away. Many have family commitments and it would mean three or four hours out of their day. This time there were 28 people.'

Tony reports a positive approach from the Force to booking the



room at Blacon Police station: 'I am not the most technically able but I set up the room and had a quick session with our training department.'

He facilitated the sub-meeting: 'Everyone who wanted to speak could. If there was chat while talking was going on the screen I could hit our mute button and ask them to be quiet', he said with a chuckle.

'I see this as bringing UNISON back to the workplace. We have learned some lessons which we will apply next year.'

The exercise had a small cost but the branch believes there are huge benefits and is even hopeful of picking up a steward it two because of the wider outreach. Numbers rose from about 80 in previous years to 160.

Some methods don't change however. The branch had a draw for an ipod at each location. The element of chance still has a role to play in building attendance.

# Cafcass and probation round-up

## Cafcass update

UNISON is joining with NAPO in a formal dispute about caseload management. A 2010 protocol on this, negotiated between trade unions and management is being consistently breached. It colour coded caseloads: green, manageable; amber, too high and red, unmanageable. The allocation is meant to be through supervision and dialogue but now cases are being remotely allocated without discussion, says UNISON's Cafcass national chair David Jolly. NAPO is at the second stage of the dispute and UNISON is joining with it in a search for a resolution.

The fall-out from business support restructuring with staff 'applying' for their jobs is continuing. On top of that, the recent interim Norgrove review is recommending that Cafcass in England should not continue in its present form and some staff are already leaving on compulsory redundancies. Some of those who have been assessed have not been given the job band they were hoping to get and after 12 months' protection face a loss of income of up to £4,000. This is impacting staff who are already earning under £20,000. The mood is very unsettled.

At the Justice Select Committee in March, Cafcass's draft practice manual was criticised by Claire Perry MP. She said: 'I have an MBA and I find this

almost incomprehensible. I don't know what it is that you are focusing on. I have seen some business flowcharts that, if I was a manager, I would find absolutely impossible to follow. I don't think I would know from this what it is you wanted me to do as a staff member.'

**David Jolly, Cafcass representative on police and justice executive**

## Probation update

At last year's UNISON national delegate conference Dave Prentis said that trade unions were not created for the good times, they were created for the bad times. And he was right. UNISON would be more important in giving hope to workers over the next few years than at any time it was created in 1993.

At times it feels as though we are being hit on both sides at the same time – 10 per cent budget reductions and rapid privatisation of key services.

It is clear from the justice green paper that ideological hatred of the public sector will drive policy – not evidence-based decisions. The supposed rehabilitation revolution is a one-trick pony of outsourcing work despite the repeated failings of this approach in the past.

Payment by results as a concept appears enticing until you start to look at the complexity and how it has been rejected even in the US where the private sector plays a bigger role in justice.



It is clear, however, how damaging the privatisation of Unpaid Work will be. The national directive to hand over control of one of the jewels in probation's crown to multi-nationals sums up, all to well, the future of probation and justice.

If the probation minister really believes the Government can deliver UPW for nothing he is at best being naïve. The way to rehabilitate offenders and make communities safer is to invest in staff who can make a difference. Each offender who is rehabilitated by probation staff saves the taxpayer a fortune and makes the community safer but the essential ingredient in all this is our members who work hard.

They do this because they want to build a better society and they should not be the vehicle for a handful of well paid private sector executives to make even more money and get a bigger bonus. It is not too late. The Government should realise that when it comes to justice someone always pays the price.

**Matthew Lay, probation representative on police and justice executive**

# Job with a focus

It could be a grim job but someone has to do it. Brian Platt however brings respect, empathy and huge technical skill to the work. He talked to Laurence Pollock

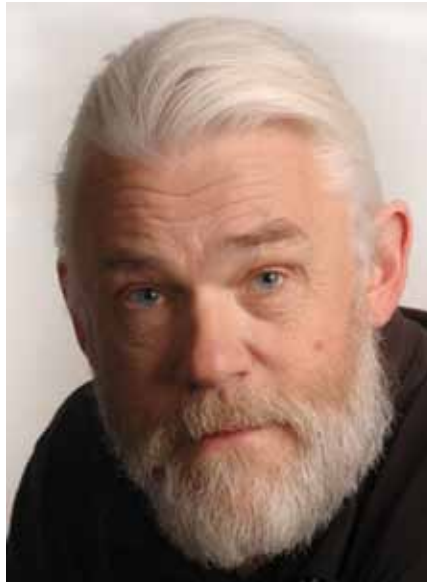
Brian Platt's workspace is cluttered with the paraphernalia of photography, IT and daily living.

He started photography when he was 15 because, he says mischievously, he could enjoy an illegal cigarette in the school dark room. But the hobby grew on him and he worked for the Home Office in forensic science with a little bit of photography thrown in. Eventually he went self-employed. Accolades included Fuji film wedding photographer of the year.

Brian opted back into organisational life when he came to work for Hampshire Police nearly 17 years ago. It was a big change in subject matter and a period of huge technological change but he has stayed ahead of the curve. This year he was in the awards again. This time it was a silver and bronze plus a merit from the annual British Institute of Professional Photographers (BIPP).

This was the first year the BIPP had a forensic photographer category and Brian's entries are haunting while reflecting his professional skill and experience and the value he adds to Hampshire Police's work. His job requires immense clinical detachment combined with an empathy for the people, deceased and still alive he must photograph.

The work is highly technical and the photographer must ensure that all possible information is



available for later analysis and court proceedings.

Like many criminal justice professionals he is frustrated at the way TV drama portrays their work – including photography. He laughs at photographers using a motor drive in *Silent Witness* – ‘you take just one’.

But he is philosophical about the realities of a crime scene: ‘You are expected to be there as soon as possible but then you have wait around until all the other professionals have gone in.’

## Respect

A respect and understanding for others who have died or been injured is essential and part of Brian's every day work. They have lost their lives in tragic circumstances: ‘These are people who cannot do anything for themselves – it is down to you to do the best for them,’ he says.

The team are also an important part of the work of the child protection unit, sensitively recording non-accidental injuries to children who have often survived traumatic experiences.

Technology has added to the complexity of the unit's work. For instance, there is a present day requirement to ‘sanitise’ images because courts do want to show the full extent of injuries if they are not all necessary for proceedings.

On the other hand Brian and his colleagues have developed an innovatory technique, ‘cross-polarisation’ which can show a far greater range of injury details than a simple image would convey. They can even

*A crash scene photographed by Brian Platt*





*Brian is pictured at work*

construct a virtual body from a number of photographs and make videos showing the impact of a knife entering a body.

Some photography, using ultra-violet flash still requires film. 'It's strange,' Brian remarks, 'looking for the image on the back screen.'

The BIPP's awards assess entrants on the basis of composition, print quality, use of colour and professionalism. Brian, when he took his car park suicide image, was under some time pressure and local office workers immediately surrounding were asked not to look out of their windows.

Brian photographed at ground level, covered the body up and then went to the top of the car park. It was important

to capture the viewpoint from which individual had fallen. Both his award winning images were authorised for use by the coroner and Hampshire Police's legal department.

### Humour

Photographing the deceased may be harrowing but taking pictures of the living presents police photographers with a contrasting challenge, demanding skill, patience and sensitivity.

'I build repartee and use some humour. Some children may be badly traumatised. I have been known to talk to a child for a couple of hours to establish trust.'

At the end of a long day job - or night job - how does Brian Platt put aside the human and technical demands of the vital

work he does for Hampshire Constabulary?

He is a man of diverse talents including chairmanship of East Hants and Dorset Rabbit Society and taking part in amateur dramatics. It's all a far cry from the twisted wreckage of a road traffic accident or a homicide. But Brian is still developing as a photographer, working towards fellowship of the BIPP. His submission includes a thesis and a detailed analysis of 20 specimen pictures.

He does wear a uniform but he is not 'frontline' to use the vogue political description. But Brian Platt's commitment and skills are vital to effective policing and irreplaceable. It is vital that that message gets through to government.

**These are people who cannot do anything for themselves - it is down to you to do the best for them**

# Protecting PCSOs in Lancashire

UNISON has welcomed news that funding for PCSOs will be ring-fenced for two years. But anxieties have not gone away. Lancashire Police UNISON launched a passionate campaign to alert the public and politicians to spell out the message



PCSO Nick Stratton patrols the streets of Bacup, a community he is rooted in. He passes the green grocer's shop he used to run, like his parents before him. He has

been a PCSO 'from the start' and a special constable before that for a decade. He knows everyone.

But that will all be lost if his job is axed. Like hundreds of colleagues he now has to hope that national ring-fenced funding translates into real jobs and real safer neighbourhoods.

He became a PCSO to make a difference: 'My beat is where my old shop was and I know people. They trust me.'

But like many hard working, committed police staff he doesn't know what the future holds.

'People have commitments, mortgages, older teenagers looking at uni. But at the end of the day there are no other jobs to go to.'

Last autumn, the Chief Constable served UNISON with a 90-day consultation notice of possible redundancy for Lancashire's 400 PCSOs. But the branch was determined to fight back to protect both the jobs of its members and the valuable services they provide.

## People have commitments, mortgages, older teenagers looking at uni. But at the end of the day there are no other jobs to go to

A wave of unprecedented campaigning followed.

Karen Poole, branch chair, said public support to retain numbers had been overwhelming: 'People are very concerned about the loss of the vital services that are provided by PCSOs.'

Campaigning started in October with branch presence at the TUC's Day of Action on the Preston Flag Market. A petition to be presented to the Home Secretary has already accumulated thousands of signatures. There have been roadshows in nine major towns. Branch officers and members braved the arctic weather to raising public awareness of the trouble ahead.

Branch secretary, Maureen Le Marinel, started an energetic letter writing campaign prompting questions to Nick Clegg at Prime Minister's Questions and an early day motion in the House of Commons.

All North West MPs were asked to support the UNISON campaign and appeal to the Home Secretary regarding the impending cuts.

Maureen also wrote to peers in the region resulting in questions being asked in the House of Lords. There was an increase in media interest

because of these letters. Several newspapers ran stories on job losses and the effect it would have on policing in Lancashire.

In December Theresa May updated the House of Commons, on Home Office budget cuts. But Maureen warned: 'Over 170 PCSOs employed by Lancashire Constabulary are also part funded by partnership arrangements with local councils, schools, primary care trusts and other agencies and therefore there is still a funding risk.'

'Our campaign will continue with a different emphasis on putting pressure on these organisations to continue with their funding.'

Clive Haslam, branch communications officer, appealed to members: 'There is no doubt that at some point we are all going to have to fight for the public services we rely on not just for employment but for the vital benefits they offer to society.'

As Nick Stratton makes his way through the streets of Bacup he is a familiar, reassuring face flying the flag for effective policing. His presence reminds everyone that there is such a thing as Society. But no one knows how much longer that will last.

# Pay cut is no protection

Ben Priestley's national officer's report

## Pay claims

Police force and probation trust employers might be tempted to use job cuts to warn members

from expecting a pay award. But with the Government ploughing ahead with job cuts, the modest pay rises we are seeking will not affect the number of jobs to be lost.

In April we submitted a flat rate £250 pay claim for all staff, plus the deletion of the lowest pay point of £14,529 for police staff in England and Wales.

UNISON has written to Nick Herbert, the police minister, to ask him to confirm that the Government expects the £250 to be paid to police staff in line with policy. UNISON believes that it is right that all staff get a pay increase, however modest, this year to compensate for rising inflation and to recognise that police staff bear the brunt of cuts to the police service.

Scottish employers have tried to impose a two year pay freeze on police staff. This has been strongly rejected by UNISON, and Scottish negotiators will begin to formulate the union's response to this shortly. The employers had attempted to seriously attack premium payments and contractual allowances and had made a final

offer to abolish shift payments and weekend working allowance. UNISON ran a strong campaign against this including a letter-writing campaign to MSPs, MPs and councillors which led to the proposals being withdrawn.

UNISON's claim for probation staff this year seeks to maintain the principle of incremental progression for members up their pay bands and an increase of £250 for all staff on pay bands 1 and 2 to address low pay. We are also aiming to delete pay points at the bottom of the four lowest pay bands to address concerns about the length of the pay bands and the possible discriminatory effect that this can have.

## Terms and conditions

The Government's Winsor review of terms and conditions proposes to withdraw key terms and conditions from operational police staff including weekend working allowance and a 50 per cent cut in standby allowance and two year increments freeze. Meanwhile Winsor suggests police officers should get a new shift allowance, standby allowance and an expertise accreditation allowance

Tom Winsor's proposals for police staff fail most of the terms of reference he was set by the Home Secretary and even contravene the principles he set himself to govern his review.

UNISON has written to Mr Winsor to make all these points.

We want a national pay and grading scheme for all police staff in England and Wales in which staff doing the same job get the same pay. In light of this we have issued a statement on the review, with UNITE and GMB, which commits us to open negotiations taking into account Mr Winsor's Part 2 report when it is published later in the year. This statement can be viewed at [www.unison.org.uk/policeandjustice/windsor.asp](http://www.unison.org.uk/policeandjustice/windsor.asp)

## Probation privatisation

UNISON continues to argue against Government proposals to sell off Community Service from the Probation Service which will destroy its localism. The work has been chopped up into huge cross regional contracts to appeal to the private sector. These are designed to make it difficult for the probation trusts in each 'lot' to put a bid together. To add insult to injury, the Government is refusing to confirm whether it will protect the pensions of staff who might end up transferring to the private sector.

## Cafcass workloads

UNISON has declared a dispute with Cafcass, alongside sister union Napo, over members' concerns over rising workloads. At the last meeting of the National Partnership in April UNISON stated that the organisation was not operating safely.



Photo: Carol Standish-Leigh



# CONDEMNED

The coalition government's reckless spending cuts will mean the loss of 400,000 public service jobs.

That means fewer 999 operators in an emergency, fewer police community support officers protecting your streets and fewer crime scene investigators looking for critical evidence.

Vital public services should not be condemned. UNISON is speaking up now for the local services that we all rely on.

**To find out more, or to join UNISON today,  
visit [www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)**

