

Police Pay and Conditions Review

A Response

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First 75 years of the 20th century – only change was the open tunic and then!

Few in number; hardly any specialists; no operational civvies (as they were referred to); police pay so poor it was cheaper to employ PCs as printers, carpenters etc than buy in labour; little training; no radio except in a few vehicles; few cars; very low abstraction rate other than court; no paid overtime; less annual leave; fewer rest days; 44 hour week – highly visible presence; highly regarded and respected as individuals – not much going on!

The Author of this report:

The author Robert Bartlett served in the police for 32 years after joining as a cadet and retired as Chief Superintendent (Operations) in Surrey Police. He also served as the chief superintendent responsible for a territorial division and community affairs. Robert was a Bramshill Scholar to Churchill College, Cambridge University and also attended the senior command course in 1991. He was awarded a Winston Churchill Travel Fellowship to research the prevention of drink-related driving and a Heuni United Nations grant to visit Finland to look at road side breath-testing.

After leaving the service Robert was employed by Surrey Police as a consultant on operations issues but also undertook to train all inspectors and the police staff equivalent on resource management and leadership. He then became a corporate security advisor for 12 years where in addition to standard security work in a number of countries he specialised in crisis management (particularly in the food industry) business continuity and contingency planning. He exercised many management teams to test crisis plans and roles.

Robert is the recent past chairman of a significant local charity in the village where he now lives, a past member of the board of Surrey Crimestoppers, chairman and life vice president of Surrey Police Retired Comrades Association and publisher of a monthly newsletter to 900 ex colleagues. Robert recently completed an electronic history of the Surrey Constabulary which is now on the Open University web site, is the founder of (and now shares responsibility for) the Surrey Constabulary web site and Surrey Constabulary blog. He is at present engaged in editing the history of his village for the parish council web site which is proving to be a major task! With another retired chief superintendent he is developing a self-help welfare scheme for retired Surrey officers wherever they now live and has over 600 volunteers in the UK and in Europe to help where necessary.

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Summary

It is acknowledged that a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in recent years by individuals, police forces and other agencies seeking ways to make the police service more effective and efficient. Any significant budget savings will only come from dramatic changes. A range of issues is addressed but not all those being reviewed. Recommendations are not made but there are a number of highlighted comments accompanying each subject head. It did not seem quite right to make recommendations.

Firstly, the role of the constable needs to be explicit. In the past it did not matter who did what within the overall definition of policing but the present work force mix requires role clarification as from this a realistic pay structure can be agreed.

It is considered that few police officers undertake "the Job" for the pay. Salaries should return to the much more simplistic scale based on length of service as this is fair and less bureaucratic. There is a proposal that officers should reclassify across a range of subjects and skill every five years – training in their own time and expense – pay could be enhanced on reclassifying.

Resource management is seen by all as a huge issue but there seems to be little training or guidance. It is proposed that a resource management package is developed for on line learning and that a qualification is held at different levels before promotion can be applied for.

Overtime is acknowledged as a significant issue and could be the basis for discontent if not dealt with sensitively in the build up to policing the Olympics when many officers will be required to volunteer to work out of their police area. The option of paying an allowance instead of overtime is explored but discarded in favour of the flexibility such payments offer. Officers can take time off instead of taking payment for overtime worked. It is suggested that this time off in lieu as it is referred to, should be stopped although figures for time off owed are not known nor if this will add significantly to the overtime bill. It will increase visibility as there will be fewer abstractions.

Increased salary scales require more responsibility for office-holders and it is proposed that the ranks of chief inspector and chief superintendent be abolished. It is also suggested that the number of ACPO ranks should be addressed. It might be that a limited number of chief superintendents undertake the roles of some ACPO officer thereby reducing numbers.

Dramatic changes are recommended to the structure of police forces leaving police to police and administrators to administrate. The privatisation of large swathes of non front line policing activities is proposed including all training, HR, IT etc. These contracted out functions become the responsibility of a senior member of police staff at ACC level.

A case can be made for amalgamation of police forces although it is acknowledged this is no simple task. Regionalisation of functions is taking place and needs to be encouraged. If privatisation occurs then companies might well seek to respond by involving a number of forces. A good example of this is the payment and administration of pensions.

A range of comments is made about enhancing visibility.

Direct entry is addressed and dismissed as no valid argument can be found to do this. The level of police staff and the seniority of some have brought modern management practices (however they are defined) into the service where for many years a considerable number of graduates serve including many with management qualifications. There is a need to learn the skills of policing before accepting senior rank.

Comments rather than proposals or recommendations

Paragraph 2: The role of a constable

Comment: A detailed role description is developed for police officers from which realistic pay and conditions can be agreed

Paragraph 3: Reduction of staff numbers

Comment: Resource management should become a high priority for all levels within the police and officers should have the skills before they are appointed into a management or supervisory role.

Comment: Research be undertaken to see if the public want Community Support Officers and if they want this option as opposed to a police constable

Comment: If there is a choice, a police constable should always be appointed before Community Support Officers because of enhanced value for money flexibility and credibility

Paragraph 4: Remuneration

Comment: Police pay be based on rank and service

Comment: If officer re-classification is accepted, pay to be increased when completed.

Paragraph 5: Overtime

Comment: Overtime should not be abolished

Comment: Discover what percentage of overtime is accrued to be taken as time off

Paragraph 6: An allowance as opposed to overtime payment

Comment: Overtime is not abolished nor the rates changed but every effort should be made to reduce expenditure through competent resource management

Comment: The option of taking time off in lieu of payment for overtime be abolished

Paragraph 7 Management changes and development

Comment: The police should privatise every function not directly linked to policing communities or specialist police operations thereby reducing headcount, accommodation costs, training and so on leaving police to police and administrators to administer. This includes all training.

Comment: A senior post such as a police staff director at ACC level answerable to the chief constable could be made responsible for letting and managing all the privatised/outsourced contracts for a force.

Comment: A typical force structure would be a chief constable as chief executive, ACC (chief operating officer) as head of policing and a police staff member of similar rank (Director of Support) to manage all contracted out function.

Comment: A resource management qualification be developed for all supervisors and managers

Paragraph 8: Modern management

Comment: Managers have interchange relationships with commerce and industry

Paragraph 9: Reduction in ranks

Comment: Abolish the rank of chief inspector, chief superintendent and DCC. (It is accepted that the Metropolitan Police is a special case)

Comment: Alternatively, in some cases, the number of ACPO ranks be reduced and chief superintendents undertake greater responsibility

Paragraph 10: Enhance cover visibility of police patrols

Comment: Senior police officers and police authorities must continually make the case about the complexity of policing and that visibility is just one, albeit important, part of the whole.

Comment: Introduce national standards for the number of days worked in a year with best practice guidelines.

Paragraph 11 Reducing abstractions from duty

Comments: Additional ways of reducing abstractions:

- a) Change the mindset that training is always a solution.
- b) Introduce officer re-classification every five years without which they cannot work.
- c) Outsource surveillance teams and work with a mix of police and trained, qualified specialists from the security industry.
- d) Enhance levels of collaboration with local authorities, workers on the street and in the open air of town and countryside as well as with the security industry etc
- e) Issues around part-time working and what duties pregnant officers can perform but in the modern workforce these constraints to visibility most probably just have to be managed.
Only a limited percentage of operational officers should be allowed to undertake part time working duty.
- f) Consider how many officers who work out of uniform really need to.
- g) Ensure the continual battle against bureaucracy is maintained:
- h) Fast track courts to reduce costs and paper work
- i) The development of volunteering not just as special constables but by encouraging volunteers to undertake a variety of tasks
- j) Concentrate on core business by reducing activities of warranted officers associated with schools, crime prevention, partnership etc.
- k) Reduction in “policing in boxes” by returning to the omni-competent officer
- l) Around 3% of officers are on restrictive duties and 2.6% on recuperative requiring that within the employee mix there is space for meaningful jobs for those who are temporarily unable to perform full duties.
- m) “Visibility” does not have to be taken in the literal sense nor does it mean endless or random patrolling.

- n) Other ideas can be explored to raise police profiles in the community including operating a “menu” system where officers are given a list of tasks to be undertaken at a given time.

Paragraph 12: Direct Entry

Comment: There is no sustainable argument for direct entry to the senior ranks of the police

Paragraph 13: How officers enter the police service

Comment: Acquiring a policing diploma before entering the service is workable although there will need to be a police input in selection of students intending to join the service as a constable.

Paragraph 14: Collaboration between police forces and other public services

Comment: There is a need to reduce specialists so fewer resources are allocated to partnership or “social work” roles ensuring that the constable responsible for an area is the link and resolver of problems.

Paragraph 15: Amalgamation

Comment: Have amalgamation placed on the agenda - again.

Comment: If privatisation of training is unacceptable it should be regionalised.

Paragraph 16: Pensionable age

Comment: The upper age for a sergeant or constable should be no more than 55 years.

1. Background

The Home Secretary has initiated this review in the light of the UK's tough economic conditions and unprecedented public sector deficit, and the coalition government's spending review. The author is well aware that over a number of years significant resources have been directed by the police and other agencies into enhancing the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the service. Any new ideas will therefore have to be striking and extremely significant to make an impact beyond the work already undertaken.

No attempt has been made to take account of major or organised crime and terrorism, which in the view of the author should be responded to by national agencies, nor have constitutional issues been addressed. In many ways this is not a strategic paper but attempts to propose solutions to identified problems associated with delivering policing.

This is yet another step in the long pursued aim of having policing for less money, to make the service more effective with better management. The authors of the final report will be aware that any recommendations for significant change, unless handled extremely sensitively, will lead to a mobilisation of discontent within the service concentrating powerful support from the influential and from the public. See what happened to Sheehy and his report!

Not all the issues raised by the enquiry have been addressed. It is recognised that areas covered by the enquiry have been subjected to considerable attention by the police service and others and there is no need to comment for the sake of it. Hopefully the headings are clear and can be put in context of the review by those charged with pulling contributions together.

Police spending significantly increased over the last decade. The police service spent:

- £13.7 billion in 2008/9; 47% more than in 1997/98. Surely it is no coincidence that crime has fallen by 45% since 1995 and recorded crime is down 22% since 2003/4 with a further 8% reduction 2009/2010.
- In 2008/2009 the 43 police forces employed 143,800 police officers, 16,500 Community Support Officers, and 79,000 police staff. Spending on police officers including pensions was £7.8 billion 2008/2009 up by 29% from 1997/1998. During the same period the number of police officers increased by 16,900 (14%).
- Spending on police staff including Community Support Officers reached 3.2 billion in 2008/2009. This is an increase of 92% from 1997/1998. It is difficult to believe that this enormous growth in expenditure cannot bear cuts without dramatic consequence.

As funding reduces the Audit Commission believes forces and authorities need a transformation, a long-term, planned approach that links force priorities and whole systems change. That is translated as meaning that any strategy should not be influenced in the short term by knee-jerk responses to the latest government edict. A long-term strategy demanding significant institutional change, exacerbated by the requirement to save large sums of money, will require very painful upheaval to a police service that will become unrecognisable. It is trite, but this is not just thinking the unthinkable but accepting the unthinkable and

implementing it! Such change will demand firm leadership and courage if transformational change is to be achieved.

2. The role of a constable

The provision of policing has been complicated by the increased use of police staff to operate in the bailiwick of the constable. There have been many attempts to define policing which of course encapsulates the work of police officers, volunteers and police staff. It is now essential to define what the role of the constable is in all of its complexity and specialisation so a realistic long term pay structure can be developed.

Uniquely within the law enforcement establishment the constable is appointed under the Crown and although he has most of the employment rights of a police staff member he has many constraints on his personal life and of course cannot belong to a trade union or strike. His working life is subject to discipline and the constable has to obey all lawful orders including when and where he should work and when he can go home which can vary day on day. The officer can use force provided it is lawful and reasonable and can deprive people of their liberty both powers distinguish an officer from an ordinary citizen and represent a heavy responsibility. The constable as a member of the emergency service can break a number of traffic laws again something that has to be used with great discretion and care. The constable is also expected to undertake many of the uncomfortable tasks that society generally does not want to know about. Ultimately a police officer is paid to put himself in harms way. Like other emergency services a constable goes into the centre of a problem as others move away something that causes stresses with health and safety dogma.

The declaration sworn by a constable on joining has been updated in recent years:

I, of do solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that I will well and truly serve the Queen in the office of constable, with fairness, integrity, diligence and impartiality, upholding fundamental human rights and according equal respect to all people; and that I will, to the best of my power, cause the peace to be kept and preserved and prevent all offences against people and property; and that while I continue to hold the said office I will to the best of my skill and knowledge discharge all the duties thereof faithfully according to law.

This expresses the “what” but it short on the “how” in relation to the constable’s duty. The early Metropolitan Police Commissioners’ dictum on policing is helpful but not explicit as the constable is now only one contributor to “policing”.

The role of the police officer must be clarified because the modern police force mix of warranted, non-warranted and volunteer staff has led to confusion over roles and responsibilities and not just by the public. It is essential to delineate responsibility before a realistic salary can be established. Many have tried to define policing but possibly non have defined the distinct role of the constable in modern times.

Comment: A detailed role description is developed for police officers from which realistic pay and conditions can be agreed.

3. Reduction of staff numbers

The Audit Commission reports that 80% of police budgets go on staff costs which have remained a fairly static percentage for many years. Even before this round of cuts many forces reduced the number of police officers usually in favour of employing police staff.

Allowances and other allowances mostly overtime costs are significant but reductions will not bring the level of savings sought something only achievable by a reduction in employees. If flexibility and visibility are the new mantra, any staff cutback should not be confined to police officers as at present but from police staff particularly Community Support Officers who many argue have not been a success. Seeking greater flexibility and value for money requires an omni-competent police officer not the Community Support Officers with their limited brief. It is accepted that more Community Support Officers can be provided than PCs for the same money but is it possible to equate the roles and establish which provides value for money? In many areas the Community Support Officers “bluff” has been called and it is recognised by the public that they are mainly “toothless”. There are also concerns over a creeping development of the role where Community Support Officers are attending and dealing with incidents instead of police officers. It is recognised that ACPO publicly supports this contribution to policing but it will be very interesting to discover what the public perception is.

An understanding of the role of the warranted officer, the development of long term strategies based around the ever changing threat, harm and potential risk will make deployment decisions clearer which in turn will give an idea of the numbers required and the employee mix between warranted officers, special constables, and police staff – the shape of the future work force will become apparent. Resource management becomes vital as does understanding what the strategy is and how it is to be achieved, the financial implications and managing costs. This paragraph alone reinforces the need for a clarification of the role of the constable.

The average cost of a police staff member is about £32,000 with on-costs compared to an average police officer cost of about £54,000 including on-costs. It is not known if the police staff member costs include shift allowances. The judgement is around the £22,000 or less difference in costs and if the increased powers, skill levels, experience, authority and flexibility of a police officer is worth that differential. The figures are no doubt in existence but it would be beneficial to know exactly what the savings are when employing a Community Support Officers against appointing a police constable.

A guide may be that in March 2009 the Metropolitan Police using the Police Costs to Local Authorities, Section 92 Police Act 1996 charged a London Borough for the full time use of a constable and CSO:

Police Constable £40,000
Community Safety Officer £22,000

It is not numbers of police officers or police staff that count but rather what they do, how they do it, when and with what success. Recent publicity from Hampshire seemed to indicate that there was not a great deal of productivity from CSO however; they did have a presence on the street. Before the latest budget cuts a third of forces reduced police officer numbers in 2008/2009 from 2007/2008 levels. By 2009/2010 over half of forces expected a reduction of police officer numbers from 2007/2008 levels. It is believed that greater productivity can justify the reduction in officers (and therefore costs) and this is accepted. Greater productivity should be supported by an unforgiving determination about where officers are deployed other than on visible policing and their worth in that role as compared to the requirement for visibility on the street.

Comment: Resource management should become a high priority for all levels within the police and officers should have the skills before they are appointed into a management or supervisory role.

Comment: Research be undertaken to see if the public want Community Support Officers and if they want this option as opposed to a police constable

Comment: If there is a choice, a police constable should always be appointed before Community Support Officers because of enhanced value for money flexibility and credibility

4. Remuneration

The more complex the remuneration structures the less flexibility. With such a variety of tasks and responsibilities, enhanced payments for particular roles will do little to improve performance but will exacerbate management bureaucracy and lead to much ill feeling. There are so many more variables within the police role than within the vast majority of businesses where individual work can be identified and rewarded. Much of police work involves contribution from teams. It is better to have a pay structure that rewards loyalty and experience. This can be equated in most circumstance with length of service which allows experience to contribute to a greater contribution to policing. The vast majority of police officers do not do “the Job” for the money but they do believe that they should be adequately compensated for what can be a very difficult and not infrequently an arduous or even dangerous job. Specialists specialise not for financial reward but because they are attracted to their specialist role for a variety of reasons.

Every role has its plusses and minuses. Urban work might potentially be more violent but support is available. In rural areas there is always the potential for violence but support can be some distance away. In the specialist’s role working conditions and opportunities are frequently less harsh than the response driver or foot patrol working shifts and in all weathers and receiving more than their share of abuse. It equals out particularly over a thirty or thirty five year career. The real benefit to the service comes with experience and this is why the traditional enhancement of paying more to those with longer service is fair. It can of course be argued that this is not always the case but the advantages are that it is seen to be fair, and there is no bureaucracy in adjudging a bonus or enhanced payment.

It is therefore suggested that police pay be based on rank and service, it is recognised as a traditional response but that does not make it bad

Below is a proposal that officers have to re-certify every five years by undertaking a range of classification qualifications. If this were to be adopted then upon reclassification the salary could be enhanced or some form of bonus paid.

Comment: Police pay be based on rank and service

Comment: If officer re-classification is accepted, pay to be increased when completed.

5. Overtime

Allowances have been frequently addressed and adjusted if not abolished in recent years so that most that now exist are in line with other public services. It is no surprise that the thorny issue of overtime has been raised yet again. Overtime is an essential but expensive management tool and should be seen as such. For decades since the implementation of paid

overtime, when forces are running out of money they tighten the overtime budget. This always showed that money could be saved but it was never efficient as many hoops had to be gone through to get officers off duty before incurring overtime, replacing and briefing others. Much good-will was eaten into during these not infrequent cut backs. The Audit Commission believe that police forces will always need the flexibility of overtime and that is a cost effective alternative to employing more police officers.

Recent reports indicate an acceptance from forces that overtime can be cut by better management including amended shift patterns saving in the order of £90m. One of the big hits that no doubt most forces have addressed will be shift patterns and how they can be adapted to meet predicted demand. Any shift pattern can be difficult to manage particularly in the smaller stations where the numbers deployed are limited and when training, court, leave or sickness can have a significant impact on staff deployment. Flexibility is all, short notice changes and often overtime is used to overcome shortages. Shift systems and patterns can make savings in overtime and ensure officers are available to meet demand but there must be flexibility to cover shortages often with little notice. A “one size fits all” shift system might not be possible given that the numbers deployed vary from station to station.

Policing is not a profession; it has been referred to as a lower-deck organisation, and therefore it should not be surprising that constables and sergeants believe that they should receive compensation for hours worked. Overtime often not sought is seen as compensation for disruption to family life caused by the loss of rest days and by being retained on duty. Many officers avoid paid overtime for fear of entering a higher tax band and take time off in lieu exacerbating visible policing. (Time off is addressed below)

Overtime can be seen as an easy hit but it is not, particularly if flexibility is demanded without significant changes to police regulations. The total cost of overtime in England and Wales in 2008/2009 was £398,048,000 (Source: CIPFA Police Statistics 2008-09 Actual). The author is not aware if this for warranted constables and sergeants or includes police staff. The total cost of police officer's pay in England and Wales in the same year was £7,810,984,000. This includes, in addition to basic pay, all allowances, employer pension contributions, NI and overtime. Therefore overtime costs represent about 5% of the total police officer's salary bill but of course overtime is paid only to constables and to sergeants so the £398 million is out of a smaller but the most significant proportion of the pot. Cumbria has reduced their overtime so that it represents about 2.7% of the annual officer's salary bill, but it will be interesting to see the latest figures following the flooding and mass shooting. The Audit Commission believe that if all forces could cut overtime as a percentage of officer's annual salary to 4% this would yield £90m. Interestingly annual natural wastage of officers is 5.4% which represents £420m of expenditure or potential savings. What happens to this funding before the officers are replaced – is it added to the overtime pot?

Given the current regulations any savings in overtime will be on the margins as much of the expenditure will be on bank holiday working, rest days and pre-planned or spontaneous major events such as in Cumbria, where staffing requirements are such that the use of overtime becomes essential. Casual overtime may be better managed but the amounts saved although significant will not bring about the level of savings required. Overtime can be said to reduce operational flexibility because of the potential costs involved of using officers say, on a bank holiday. Overtime can be said to enhance flexibility by for example, allowing the deployment of officers at the end of a shift alongside the new shift to staff-up for public order patrols late at night. It is about managing resources within a given budget.

Tinkering at the margins of the £398,048,000 overtime bill will not save a great deal and has the potential to cause unrest. It is recognised that this is a great deal of money and it is acknowledged within the commercial world that every effort would be made to reduce 5% from the cost base. The author has known a managing director spending a significant proportion of his working time trying to shave parts of a penny off the cost of producing a packet of foodstuff – his role was much simpler than that of a superintendent! It is likely that in some areas there is reliance on overtime to maintain service delivery caused by shortages of staff or specialists so by judicial re-ordering of staff these costs could be reduced. The overtime rate could be reduced from double time to time and a half, possibly by a reduction in the minimum number of hours paid if re-called to duty but this is all marginal.

It is not known what the impact is of part-time officers and their claims for overtime for duties such as courts and spontaneous events on days they would otherwise be off duty

To enhance both flexibility and to make a significant saving the payment for overtime could be stopped. This is not just a financial saving but will reduce the hours taken off in lieu of payment a figure not seen by the author and may well significantly reduce operational cover at crucial times. Police officers have always been experts in making a long weekend extend by incorporating time owed, add a days leave, finish on an early start back on a night and that is a week off! This can be of no benefit for the public where an officer has outstanding issues or enquiries. The new child allowance provisions for the higher paid will ensure abolishing time off in lieu will not be popular for some as the option is believed not to attract tax and is not counted towards total earnings.

Abolishing overtime is not considered to be a practical option for operational reasons and the impact it would have on the morale of officers at a time when there is potential for unrest as is happening in France and the loss of good will required for policing the Olympics.

If abolition of overtime is considered it might be argued that it should be replaced with an allowance to be paid to every officer although this could possibly be refined to be paid only to those working unsocial hours. Such a scheme has the potential to become yet another bureaucratic nightmare. In effect all police officers become salaried and do what needs to be done regardless of the hours it takes. To safeguard the ability to reinforce police anywhere in the country it might be that there can be some fall back circumstances for the payment of overtime incurred on mutual aid to be paid.

The so-called “Hertfordshire Agreement”, i.e. 16 hour payment per day retained away from an officer’s home force area, has frequently ensured that officers work for almost that length of time although a part of that duty might be on standby. It could be that mutual aid overtime in excess of 8 hours be paid at a standard rate, and indeed the Official Side has already formally tabled its intention to revisit this issue. This is a most surprising development, particularly bearing in mind the forthcoming 2012 Olympics and the fact that, as the law presently stands, police officers can lawfully refuse to volunteer for the provision of Mutual Aid outside their home force area. If costs have to be considered, the host force might be more realistic in its bid for mutual aid.

Comment: Overtime should not be abolished

Comment: Discover what percentage of overtime is accrued to be taken as time off

6. An allowance as opposed to overtime payment

If it is considered that the pain of abolishing overtime is worth the gain then it is suggested that the only realistic way forward is to pay a non-pensionable allowance. This allowance will need to total a lot less than £398,048,000 and take account of public holiday and rest day working in addition to an element for pre-planned working and casual overtime.

A front line sergeant and constable may expect to work say, five bank holidays in a year and possibly five rest days along with 8 hours additional overtime in a month. (It is likely that these figures exist somewhere!) The formula would therefore be an average of overtime worked: bank holiday + rest day + casual overtime. For many this will lead to a significant cut in take home pay particularly in London where in excess of 7% of annual salary is earned – and that is an average.

The formula could be arrived at: (5BH a year x8x2) + (5RD a year x8x1.5) + (Casual 8 hours a month x12x1.3) = 80+ 60+ 126 = 266 hours which equates to almost two months pay which is unacceptable.

It is probably no more acceptable to calculate 3BH, 3RD + 4 hours casual a month which has a formula (8x2x3=48) + (3x1.5= 36) + (48 x1.3+16 = 64) Total =148 which is about a months pay or about an 8% rise across the board.

So what is acceptable or reasonable for the officer and the public? An additional one months pay per year; four percent of annual salary? Is that too much? How much overtime is now worked to keep policing functioning? How many fixed posts and security deployments could not survive without overtime payments? What is the current overtime expenditure on dealing with spontaneous disorder? Why should officers make themselves available to be called from home for a serious crime, firearms or public order incident if there was nothing it for them? If an allowance is to be paid this could have significant ramifications far beyond the saving in cash and such an option is not considered acceptable.

Any saving on the £398,048,000 is important but the flexibility of the work force is much more important and a careful working of the figures may allow for both. It cannot be stressed too highly that policing is not like running a factory or business where overtime means more profit for the organisation and in the main can be pre-planned and authorised by managers. The opportunity for senior officers to "abuse" the system if payment for overtime is no longer necessary should not be underestimated. Overtime is a cost but is in the main used to ensure the public safety. A further consideration if an allowance is introduced would be differentials between the sergeant and inspector as the sergeant with an allowance could be earning more than the inspector.

Anomalies already exist where an inspector (usually a detective inspector) in charge of a team of sergeants and constables is often the lowest-earning member of that team! Such anomalies also invariably occur for inspectors commanding Police Support Unit (PSU) deployments on Mutual Aid to other police force areas.

Payment of overtime is expensive and there seems to be agreement that it should be reduced. Some of the growth in expenditure is not doubt due to the increase in numbers of officers. However reducing the rate paid would make marginal savings, and cause ill feeling as would the introduction of an allowance. It is better to retain overtime but to manage it more carefully.

Comment: Overtime is not abolished nor the rates changed but every effort should be made to reduce expenditure through competent resource management

Comment: The option of taking time off in lieu of payment for overtime be abolished

7. Management changes and development

Having spent 32 years as a police officer and retiring as a chief superintendent followed by 12 years working as a corporate security advisor across many businesses, including some of national prominence, the author remains convinced that the police have little to apologise for about management. Like most things it could be better but so could management in the military and in business. Policing is vastly more complex and unpredictable compared to many businesses with huge pressures on often limited resources that are spread thinly across numerous ever increasing specialism and demands. If there is a failing it is around accountability being made more complex by modern command structures. The rank structure is extended and the work so diverse at times it is difficult to know who is accountable. The move away from localism exacerbates this issue. There was a time when the local superintendent had responsibility for his area and all that happened. This is frequently no longer the case with “policing in boxes” across police areas within a force diluting responsibility and accountability.

There are issues. Less than a third of chief constables in an Audit Commission survey believed that leadership was important in ensuring value for money. Many chief constables believed that local police commanders lack the financial skills to deliver savings. This is an extraordinary admission of failure of selection and training and the lack of emphasis within forces for these important functions is itself an indicator of why such failings exist. Good management is essential but in the police, leadership is vital given the nature of much of the work. Certainly 16/17 years ago the skills of resource management were being taught as was financial management; these were delivered together with financial delegation and the provision of detailed expenditure against budget. It is difficult to see where this was lost and every endeavour must be made to ensure that senior staff are skilled in these areas of management before appointment. It is considered that a resource management qualification should be developed and obtained by all supervisors and management before they can be appointed.

Ground breaking transformation to policing must occur if there are to be cultural changes and significant financial savings. It is proposed that large tranches of what are now seen as parts of the police service be privatised. This will stop once and for all police officers working within administration, reduce costs particularly when considering additional administrative/training tasks, significantly cut the head count and enhance efficiency and cut costs associated with procurement. There is likelihood that there will be a dramatic reduction in bureaucracy if it has to be paid for!

There is no doubt that the management of procurement and back office activities will yield considerable savings. The provision and procurement of ALL the support functions and equipment should be privatised. Procurement of IT, telephony, vehicles, uniform, scenes of crime and forensic examination, fingerprints and helicopter, media and public relations, legal advice *et all* can be undertaken by experts in the field moving beyond framework, collaborative and regional contracts. Talk to Dixons plc about doing procurement deals and the provision of logistical support!

Specialist and non specialist skills can be taught by the private sector possibly at regional level. Courses such as driver, firearms, public order, CID, police dog and surveillance training for example, can all be contracted out to the private sector. The contractors will provide equipment and facilities to standards agreed by ACPO. Again the costs involved in training will make managers think carefully before sending someone on a course which will have a twin effect of enhancing visibility.

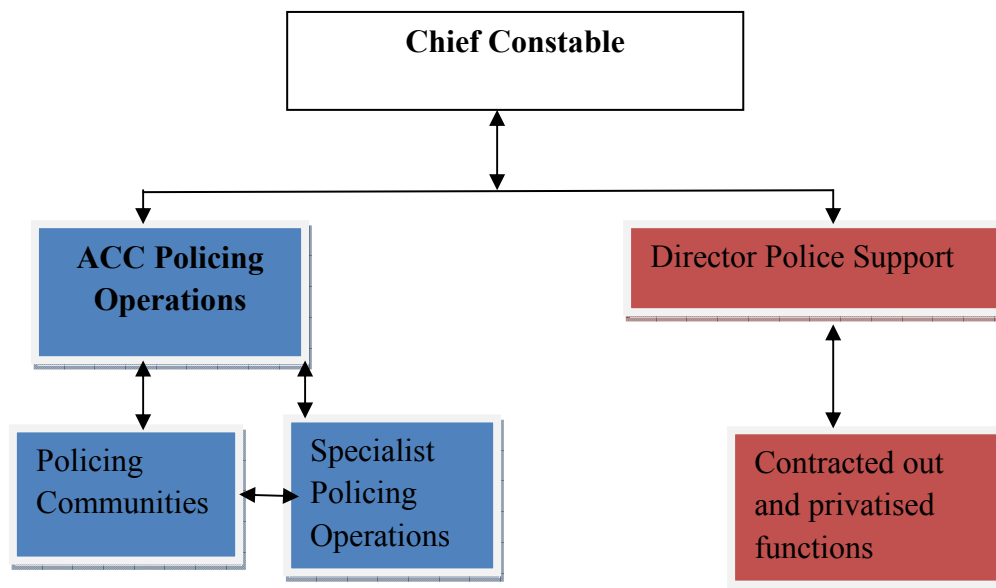
There is no reason to believe that every function will have a different supplier. A few companies will pick up these challenges on a national basis and a part of the deal should be they provide their own premises which might be outside the area of operation. Modern communications should not make this an issue. Staff could be transferred and some functions such as call handling, force incident rooms and cell blocks will obviously retain some police input.

The author worked on many occasions for an international electronics and engineering company with about 60 businesses world wide managed by 25 people in head office. There was no HR department; the philosophy being that personnel issues were the responsibility of the line manager. In head office the legal counsel could offer advice if sought. It is difficult to argue for the retention of large HR departments as what needs to be done can be handled by contractors with a police input at any interview stage.

Recruitment can be contracted out again police officers taking part in final interviews.

The welfare function can also be privatised when any action to be taken is not the responsibility of the line manager. Again costs would ensure that use is kept to a minimum.

It is suggested that this will lead to a change in culture from resolving issues by increased staffing. It is time to move back from the Range Rover to the Mondeo – less comfortable but affordable – but suited the service for many years.



As addressed below, the senior posts below ACC could be held by the high salaried chief superintendent but the number holding this rank would be extremely limited.

Comment: The police should privatise every function not directly linked to policing communities or specialist police operations thereby reducing headcount, accommodation costs, training and so on leaving police to police and administrators to administer. This includes all training.

Comment: A senior post such as a police staff director of ACC level answerable to the chief constable could be made responsible for letting and managing all the privatised/outsourced contracts for a force.

Comment: A typical force structure would be a chief constable as chief executive, ACC (chief operating officer) as head of policing and a police staff member of similar rank (Director of Support) to manage all contracted out function.

Comment: A resource management qualification be developed for all supervisors and managers

8. Modern management

Police management has never been slow to adopt the latest fashion and teaching with management training always a significant part of any command course including those attended by inspectors. Far more training and often management practice in stressful, complex circumstances than the average business manager will ever experience. See also below on direct entry into the service. (Paragraph 12)

No organisation should be so arrogant as to say they have nothing to learn from others and it may be that two-way exchanges of management between the police and commercial and industrial organisations can be implemented. The police can take with them a range of strengths including crisis management, and learn in particular the detail of cost control and financial and aspects of resource management.

One of the most impassioned complaints by the Police Federation about the "police modernisation agenda" is the implication that the service has been resistant to modernisation or has somehow failed to do so. There is also the view the term is used as a euphemism to introduce a fundamentally new two-tier policing system without any public debate about the implications and importance of this

Comment: Managers have interchange relationships with commerce and industry

9. Reduction in ranks

A third of police forces are reducing management numbers mostly chief superintendents and chief inspectors.

Arguments can be made for a return to localism and for the reduction in the rank structure; something tried by Sheehy and lost. However there have been structural and institutional changes since those days and the pay scales have soared requiring greater responsibility and accountability that equates with the pay packet. The enhanced role of the inspector can make the role of the chief inspector redundant. The cost of a superintendent requires that they too should accept an enhanced span of responsibility which questions the need for chief

superintendents. It has long been the role of a superintendent and above to have 24 hour responsibility for his area of responsibility but the working time directive might inhibit this.

Is it really necessary in a constabulary to have three levels of ACPO and in the Metropolitan Police five? If ranks are reduced great care needs to be taken to ensure that pseudo-chief inspectors etc are not brought in with an enhanced pay for “senior” inspectors or superintendents. An officer can be designated senior by appointment. It is unlikely that all will accept this but the often the better more driven officers will, as they might determine this as a route to greater responsibility and job satisfaction. Without chief superintendents it may be that additional ACPO officers could be sparingly appointed at ACC level if the case is made or even retaining a very limited number of chief superintendents.

The pay scale for 2008/2009 shows a top rate chief superintendent earns £78,634 a chief inspector £54,804, Inspector £50,750, a PC on the highest point £36,516. One chief superintendent that is not replaced equates with two constables on the street something understood by police forces A reduction in senior officer numbers to enhance the level of visibility on the street might not always be the case now. A decrease in the number of chief superintendents might be seen as a saving and it might be that guidance could show that if the rank is to be retained no more than one chief superintendent should be appointed per thousand of police officers. This would ensure the role is significant and equates to the salary possibly undertaking the work of ACC/commander (numbers reduced accordingly) leaving a chief executive (chief constable) and chief operating officer (ACC) to run the force under the (chairmanship) of the police commissioner/police authority.

A reduction in ranks will increase savings, enhance flexibility and possibly a reduced level of bureaucracy although this could be over emphasised. These are not quick hits – natural wastage will be the most realistic way of making savings. Redundancy of those with less than full service is possible with a change of regulations, but it not something that the police would find easy to accept. There is something intrinsically unfair that a good officer promoted finds his livelihood at risk when the less ambitious does not.

Comment: Abolish the rank of chief inspector, chief superintendent and DCC. (It is accepted that the Metropolitan Police is a special case)

Comment: Alternatively, in some cases, the number of ACPO ranks be reduced and chief superintendents undertake greater responsibility

10. Enhance cover visibility of police patrols

This is a lengthy quote but it sets out the dilemma surrounding visible policing. The chief constable of Surrey wrote in 2009:

“What are the unseen frontline roles that rob the public of the visible policing they crave? There are now 220000 officers and staff in police forces across England and Wales and it is instructive to divide them in three

- Frontline (some visible and some unseen) – those involved directly in policing the streets, responding to calls, investigating crimes, pursuing criminals and protecting the vulnerable.
- Frontline operational support – those who help set the frontline up to succeed. For example those who train everyone from new recruits to detectives and firearms

officers, and those who sift through intelligence to ensure we identify and tackle the biggest criminal, the worst hotspot or the most intractable neighbourhood priority.

- Organisational support - those providing critical functions such as finance and technology that are essential to all organisations. This has grown too much over two decades of increasing bureaucracy and all forces are working to reduce the on-cost to a minimum.

“The ‘frontline operational support’ has grown substantially. For example, a complex world that is intolerant of failure would not tolerate firearms officers with anything other than weeks of training and constant refresher training. This point applies widely across policing. Furthermore the increased anonymity of criminality requires greater use of data and intelligence. Put most simply, now that the burglar or drug dealer affecting a neighbourhood is from many miles away and is known to no-one locally except perhaps fellow criminals; we need experts in intelligence to tell local officers who and what to look out for.

“Not only does the frontline need increasing operational support to respond to today’s issues but it is increasingly unseen as it deals with the unseen threats that the public assume we will always do.

“Public debate and simplistic political rhetoric still criticises policing on the simple measure of visibility! The most significant failing of police leaders has been our failure to convincingly and coherently describe how the service we provide has changed beyond recognition. Emphasising an earlier point, protecting the public and satisfying them coincidentally once produced a service where most officers were visible. Now it leads us to one where most are unseen!”

Policing is more than visibility and as set out above it is essential for the police and politicians to emphasise continually the complex and widespread nature of policing where uniform patrol is just a part, albeit an important part, of the policing function. There is the need to manage expectations and for politicians to stop saying that all will be right in the world if there were more police on the street. This will never be the case as financial constraints will never allow the allocation of the numbers to this function that could suppress crime and anti-social behaviour. There is also an unintended consequence with more foot patrols as this frequently leads to more reported crime. It sounds odd but it was always thought to be the case, because when police officers are approachable the public report more and extra patrols in an area to prevent crime can show an increase. This is particularly true of criminal damage.

One very surprising and significant figure is how many days a year on average a constable spends at work. If visibility is to be increased then the number of day’s officer’s work has to be addressed although some of the worst figures might be a consequence of extended shifts reducing the number of tours worked.

In the best case officers work 208 days a year with 157 away from duty. (Days away = rest days + annual leave + bank holidays only (not sickness, court appearances or training.)

The worse case is a force where 171 days are spent at work with 194 away from duty.

The varying success of forces in having officers present for duty is quite staggering and extended shifts will not be the sole reason. There is a need to share best practice on how in one force officers worked 208 days and in another only 171 days.

It is obvious that by a significant reduction in days away from duty visibility will be enhanced provided that public presence/visibility is accepted as a key policy by management. Is there a golden bullet that has remained hidden for many years that will allow for greater visibility? If so it has evaded discovery by the police and academics for many years. It is not a simple issue as the chief constable of Surrey makes clear when the varying demands that need not be listed here have to be addressed.

Comment: Senior police officers and police authorities must continually make the case about the complexity of policing and that visibility is just one, albeit important, part of the whole.

Comment: Introduce national standards for the number of days worked in a year with best practice guidelines.

11. Reducing abstractions from duty

Reduction in probationer constable numbers by the new training proposal that officers undertake basic training in their own time and their own expense will reduce abstractions as these trainees will not appear on the establishment.

Greater control of abstractions can be achieved although the issue is constantly addressed by the police and there can be few new ideas but there must be constant pressure to ensure resource management meets value for money requirements. Additionally there remains significant scope for change and for the involvement of the private sector.

Comments: Additional ways of reducing abstractions:

- a. Change the mind set leading to the reaction to a problem or issue that **training is always a solution**. Privatisation of training and then having to budget for each training occasion will drive costs down.
- b. Introduce **officer re-classification** every five years without which they cannot work. This will apply to all ranks. This can be achieved by a series of job related law and procedure training and examinations and would include physical fitness tests, reclassification for the use of the baton, incapacitant spray, etc. Much could be done by distance learning. The curriculum would be rank and age biased. All this would be undertaken in the officers own time and expense thereby reducing abstractions and visibility. The private sector will soon provide all the training that is required and this can be undertaken to a curriculum and standard set by ACPO. Failure to re-classify may well lead to dismissal.
- c. **Outsource surveillance teams** and work with a mix of police and trained, qualified specialists from the security industry. In 2007 one company alone had access to 200 plus experienced military surveillance officers. This could be undertaken at a fixed all inclusive price including the provision of their own vehicles and other equipment. This would offer significant training and equipment savings.
- d. Enhance levels of collaboration with local authorities, workers on the street and in the open air of town and countryside as well as with the security industry etc., to increase opportunities for prevention and detection of crime and anti-social behaviour. The London Borough of

Newham abolished their parks police and used the savings to 'buy' from the Metropolitan Police an Inspector, 5 Sergeants, 10 PCs and 15 Community Support Officers. Those implementing the change felt it was not too difficult by mixing and matching to find a good economic mix for local policing; this mix could be improved immeasurably through **collaboration with local authority resources** that are currently working on similar 'Clean and Safe' agendas. Surrey Police has a watch alert system for all those that work in the countryside that generate knowledge and support within the rural community giving a sense of presence. The wearing of uniforms by local authority enforcement officials will increase the number of authority figures visible on the streets.

- e. There are issues around **part time working** and what duties pregnant officers can perform but in the modern workforce these constraints to visibility most probably just have to be managed. The large number of young female officers inevitably leads to those on "light duties" because they are pregnant. **Pregnant officers** unable to perform street duty could act as support officers within police stations undertaking telephone and computer enquires for operational officers and even completing paper work to keep others on the "front line". However, particularly for part time workers, the investment in training and equipment being the same as for full time officers, value for money is in doubt and only a limited percentage of operational officers should be allowed to undertake this type of duty. It is also not always to the benefit of the public if an officer is part time and is dealing with an issue or incident but is frequently away from work for extended periods.
- f. Consider how many officers who **work out of uniform** really need to. More uniforms, and more marked cars make for greater the visibility. Undertaking enquiries in uniform enhances public awareness of police activity and encourages "target hardening".
- g. Ensure the continual **battle against bureaucracy** is maintained: CIPFA reported: "When looking into incentives and empowerment, the report noted the Flanagan Review's finding that reducing the amount of non-essential information being captured would free up approximately 40,000 hours per year in a medium sized police force, along with its finding that only a proportion of bureaucracy was imposed by the Home Office, the remainder being "self-imposed" locally within the chain of command." The logic of this is a reduction in the levels of command should show a reduction in bureaucracy possibly saving 5000 working days in one force. It is recognised that in the best forces officers work 208 days a year giving an additional 24 officers.

It is recognised that considerable efforts are being directed at the reduction of paperwork. Bureaucracy has burgeoned with the ever increasing involvement of the CPS and the reluctance to return to the days when officers were given much more freedom of action, encouraged to use their initiative but subjected to tight supervision and a level of quality control. An eighteen-page proforma following attending a "domestic" is a classic example of overkill. Better supervision, quality control and risk management must lead to the reduction in the requirement to record and fill in forms. There is also a need to ensure that the impact of equality and diversity requirements do not lead to more form filling a problem that could probably find a direct link back into a newly established HQ department. Similarly the development of health and safety and risk assessment when every day all day there are risks and threats to the well being of staff. How did we all survive! Rationalise, reduce, manage and accept that all possibilities of things going wrong cannot be covered and excluded. A classic example was carrying hot water in specialist containers for Police Support Unit officers deployed for long hours. There was no incident in many years of deployment but they were removed because of a health and safety threat assessment.

Is there a correlation between the growth in health and safety restrictions and equality and diversity requirements with the vast increase in police staff having no understanding of the business they are now in?

Former DAC David Gilbertson summing up what is happening recently wrote in the Sunday Mail:

“The current Metropolitan Police generic risk-assessment checklist, form RA1, is mind-blowing. It requires officers to choose from a menu of 238 possible hazards before conducting any sort of operational activity. The assessment must be submitted, with covering forms RA2 and RA3, to a senior officer, who then has to consider what ‘control measures’ need to be applied, before submitting his recommendation – with form RA4 – to his ‘portfolio holder’ (jargon for the responsible officer) in order for the risk assessment to be confirmed and signed off. But sweeping away the red tape will make no difference without a complete culture change.

“The police, fire and ambulance services must be made to understand that they owe a duty of responsibility first and foremost to the public who pay their wages, and that leaders, not managers, are needed to drive the message home.

“Rigid adherence to procedure is not the easy way out. A good leader at Aldgate would have assumed authority and ordered his crews in to help injured passengers on a bombed Tube train. He would have dealt with the crisis first and worried about health and safety later.”

Concentrate on what matters!

- h. The USA operates **fast track courts** (next day) without officers preparing large court files is probably effective and in many ways is not dissimilar to the early days in the service of the author. A person was charged and taken before the court and if a guilty plea was entered minimal paperwork was generated. Pleading guilty attracts a reduced sentence or other penalty and importantly saves time and costs. The lawyers will not like this.
- i. The **development of volunteering** not just as special constables but by encouraging volunteers to undertake a variety of tasks as they do in a number of force areas but there is room for more activity. This was seen by the author many years ago in the USA where “greys” were undertaking office work inside the police station including data input. Volunteers could manage neighbourhood watch and countryside watch act as co-ordinators and actively receive and distribute information. Research and telephone enquiries to allow officers to remain on the street could also be explored. Creativity and acceptance of the contribution that can be made by volunteers will save money and allow officers to deploy as well as involving the community in looking after their community.
- j. **Concentrate on core business** by reducing activities of warranted officers associated with schools, crime prevention, partnership etc. It was the case that much of this area of abstraction from visible patrolling had not been shown to be as effective as could be expected. Would there really be a significant impact if police withdrew and policed the streets instead making patrolling constables responsible for problems on their beat/area?
- k. **Reduction in “policing in boxes”** i.e. over specialisation, by returning to the omni-competent officer supported by officers who know and are known within the communities they police.

- l. **Around 3% of officers are on restrictive duties and 2.6% on recuperative.** This must be managed. One of the difficulties for the police is that with ever increasing use of police staff in support roles the type of work available for sick or injured officers is restricted and it might well be that the duties they perform are not providing value for money. This is a significant resource and in many ways the demand for work is predictable and can be managed by **ensuring that within the employee mix there is space for meaningful jobs for those who are temporarily not able to perform full duties.** See also pregnant officers above.
- m. **“Visibility” does not have to be taken in the literal sense nor does it mean endless or random patrolling.** Public awareness that the police are there and operating may well be enough for reassurance and crime prevention though less likely to prevent anti-social behaviour. Implementing email watch, run by the community, based on information from the police will inform the public of threats and successes. Threats lead to target hardening; public watchfulness and reported successes are reassuring and reinforce public support for the police. It is simple and at no cost beyond the occasional email!
- n. Other ideas can be explored to raise police profiles in the community include operating a **“menu” system** where officers are given a list of tasks to be undertaken at a given time, something again from 20 or more years ago, for directing patrolling officers to undertake specific patrols if not committed. For example, being outside schools when children arrive and go home, the good old fashioned pub checks late at night, being in an area at a given time when anti-social behaviour has been reported. Patrolling the High Street on a Saturday morning so many people see the police; standing by a patrol car in areas where complaints of speeding are received or even, speed enforcement. Many will argue they do not have the time for such luxuries. Are they really certain this is the case? The word will soon get around that the police are active. Not rocket science but it does enhance the sense of security and there are more “bangs per buck” with even bigger bangs when the sergeant or inspector are seen and can be talked to.

12. Direct Entry

Enquiries such as this always revisit direct entry into the police with the danger of establishing an officer corps which was always against the principles of the founders of British policing. It is likely this enquiry will do the same. From the outside it is easy to look upon police managers simply as managers as in ABC Limited but the role is far more complex. Those who aspire to and achieve more senior rank must have operational experience and credibility if they are to act as leaders in conflict and dangerous situations. Senior officer must have operational experience in some depth as they will be expected to command on the ground or in a command post for a wide range of difficult and often sensitive events and incidents. Some senior officers have to qualify as firearms and public order ground commanders, senior investigating officers, response to serious and major incidents. It is clear therefore that successful managers in the police service must have a strong level of leadership skills and experience garnered from time spent at more junior levels learning the trade. To believe otherwise is to denigrate those that work within the service. Everyone an expert – as seen on TV! It is not like that at all.

It may be that there have been so many cultural changes in recent years that direct entry will be more acceptable to the workforce but one has to ask what is it intended to achieve – what wrong is intended to be made right by some form of accelerated entry into the service? The vast increase of civilianisation of the force has established a career structure for non

warranted officers and so there is ample opportunity for the latest management and accountancy skills to be brought into the service and in many areas they will have. Possibly there is a perceived failing at ACPO level which will be countered by the employment of a retired major general which would be a real throw back to the past. The police wear a uniform and remain a disciplined hierarchical service by necessity but there the relevance of a military background ceases. A director of ABC Limited will have no concept of understanding for the complexity of the policing function no matter how good they are at producing widgets on time and within budget.

It may be difficult for the non police officer to understand that the skills of policing are many and very complex and have to be learned over a number of years. The sheer venality of the public and all its complexities will not be learned in the military, working in business or the commercial world or at university. For a generation the police have attracted far more graduates than the armed forces and those that aspire to senior rank are extensively trained, exercised and selected with care. Very many of the senior officers are graduates; many with management qualifications who have received accelerated promotion.

The service can always learn but it has to be asked what any form of direct entrant can bring to the party. The job has to be learned at the bottom where recruits become skilled at meeting and dealing with the public, acquire the skills of speaking to anyone, developing robustness and hard edge to deal with suffering and tragedy as well as coping with the complexity of police work. If the individual has talent progress to the top is open. It remains probably one of the few jobs where those joining at the bottom can make their way to the top maintaining the philosophy of opportunities for all.

Comment: There is no sustainable argument for direct entry to the senior ranks of the police

13. How officers enter the police service

Significant proposals have been made for this area many of which will probably be adopted. A parallel can be drawn with nursing or teaching. The traditional development of the police culture will disappear, some may say to the detriment of the service, as this was formed at training school where people learned to become police officers and accepted the disciplines, culture and the concepts around teamwork and responsibility to each other. The danger may well be that a service that relies so much on comradeship and on a sense of selflessness will become no more than a job. In recent years much of this united feeling has been lost because of the breakdown of the section or relief, the significant reduction in police sporting activity, the fact that officers frequently no longer live where they work and the introduction of more and more police staff. And canteens are closing along with bars in police stations!

Are police to remain a disciplined service or a collection of free thinking individuals or somewhere in the middle?

Much nonsense, encouraged by TV is talked about a “canteen culture” which is no more than a close community of like minded people working together often in difficult circumstances for many years. You really get to know those you work with often for many years (you have to be certain they are with you when entering a pub to deal with a disturbance) probably far more than in most occupations. It was a job for life even on into retirement where reunions and old comrade’s organisations still flourish as do self help “welfare” organisations caring for past friends and colleagues. One great advantage of not having formal recruit training

might be that police officers will not be taught to march, something they have never done well.

No doubt diplomas in policing will be or are awarded and there are opportunities for colleges to develop full or part time courses for those wishing to enter the police. There will need to be some involvement with those students intending to enter the police before they spend money on their training to determine they are suitable to be offered a place if they are successful on the course.

Comment: Acquiring a policing diploma before entering the service is workable although there will need to be a police input in selection of students attending to join the service as a constable.

14 Collaboration between police forces and other public services

Given budgetary constraint and the demand for more visible policing there has possibly been too much time spent on collaboration with other agencies and organisation that has produced too little. Working in Partnership has been the mantra for twenty years or more but is there evidence that the time has been well spent? Should the police step back from the “social work” role and return to being “peace keepers”. This does not mean that the police will ignore other useful agencies and organisations but rather will step back and reduce the number of staff operating in this area- not so much time attending meetings. Partnership issues and problems should be the concern of local officers thereby enhancing the status and interest of their role. It might be that managing risks and accepting that everything cannot be done will allow for more officers to be seen on the streets and not in meetings. Enforcement and presence are valuable contributions towards enforcing a “broken windows” strategy and zero tolerance of bad behaviour over time probably reducing the need for intervention of agencies within families. It was always said that the role of the uniform officer was to maintain discipline on the streets; not very fashionable to say but still very true. The police officer might be the first person ever to say “No” to an individual.

Comment: There is a need to reduce specialists so fewer resources are allocated to partnership or “social work” roles ensuring that the constable responsible for an area is the link and resolver of problems.

15 Amalgamation

There are too many police forces but the costs politically and financially of amalgamation probably act as inhibitors. In the long term this will happen but it will take political courage. There might also be opportunities for significant organisational change based around the development of municipal policing supported by national and regional units i.e. roads policing, criminal investigation, public order, air wing, firearms delivered through a form of gendarmerie. It is well known that rationalisation of computing is a current inhibitor to joint working and this difficulty is no doubt being grasped with enthusiasm.

In the south east for example, it is possible to envisage a regional police force of Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and even Thames Valley operating similarly to London with each borough seen as a basic command unit or division. With contracted out support and regionalised specialist functions considerable saving should be made. ACPO will not like this!

Meanwhile forces have developed and are developing joint working but there must be more. If privatisation of training and other functions is unacceptable then it must be regionalised.

Individual forces could lead for a particular function. Regional training will ensure common standards and allow for joint units. A classic example from the late 1980s was the closing of many underwater search units with one force in a region retaining the unit on behalf of all, at a cost. For 60 years Surrey has trained police dogs for the south east and often for overseas forces to a national standard. This type of activity can be extended to other areas.

As this was written, three central London boroughs have announced they will combine to provide all front line services.

Comment: Have amalgamation placed on the agenda - again.

Comment: If privatisation of training is unacceptable it should be regionalised.

16. Pensionable age

All serving officers, regardless of age, can be called upon to perform front line duties but whilst an issue is frequently made of the retirement age for police officers, do we really want to see officers aged 60-plus patrolling our streets? Because of civilianisation there are few if any back-room office jobs for officers who are not fit for full front line duties. It is a young person's job at operational level but it has always been accepted that more senior officers can stay in the service longer – those away from the rough and tumble. Years of shift work wear out the body

Comment: The upper age limited for a sergeant or constable should be no more than 55.