

**NATIONAL WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT FORUM**  
**QUARTERLY MEETING**  
**HOSTED AT WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AT TALLY HO! BIRMINGHAM**  
**FRIDAY 1 September 2017**

**1. Introduction and welcome**

Lesley-Anne Knowles (L-AK), NWEF Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting with Stephen Mitchel (SM), as Vice Chair.

L-AK welcomed colleagues from the Federation to the meeting, Insp Adrian Smiles (AS) from Northumbria Police and Lisa Stanhope (LS) from Thames Valley Police. AS introduced himself to the group and gave an overview of his role as an elected regional federation representative. He explained he recognised inconsistencies nationally with approach and processing of the work relating to injury awards and hoped to gain a better understanding of the issues being experienced by attending this forum.

**a) Apologies**

Apologies were noted.

**b) Minutes of Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

It was noted that the meeting scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> June was cancelled due to lack of availability of attendees and the timing of the general election.

Minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

**b) Matters Arising**

Matters arising were dealt with and updated as per the attached action list, see appendix 1.

'Choices' Platform

L-AK updated the group that unfortunately Police Mutual have withdrawn the work they were progressing on the employee benefits platform 'Choices', however forces are encouraged to continue to work closely with Police Mutual in relation to the wider support and benefits available.

SMP Training

L-AK provided an update that discussions were being progressed with the College of Policing, Home Office and HML with the purpose of developing a training programme. An update is awaited from the Home Office to clarify the scope of the training to be delivered in accordance with the PMAB contract which they issue.

## 2. Bluelight Wellbeing Framework

### a) Oscar Kilo (OK)

Jenna Flanagan (JF), Lancashire Police, responsible for the communications and functionality of the Oscar Kilo (OK) website and Dr Ian Hesketh (IH), Senior Policy Adviser, CoP, delivered a presentation to inform the group of progress of the 'OK' project.

JF highlighted the work being led by Chief Constable Andy Rhodes identified a gap in information sharing, best practice and the absence of a single place to store evidence based practice in relation to wellbeing in policing. This led to the initiation of the OK project.

The website will provide a single knowledge base facility where organisations can complete online self-assessments, populate templates with learning points from inspections, develop wellbeing strategies, and illustrate the work being done within the organisation to embed improvements relating to wellbeing into everyday practice.

IH stressed the OK facility is a tool for forces to use as and when they see fit, it is not mandatory and there are no timescales for populating information or completing online self-assessments.

The website has been live for 12 weeks, currently 32 forces have signed up and 5 external groups including College of Policing, HMIC, Ministry of Defence, and units from within the National Crime Agency and Regional Crime Units.

3 year funding is available for the development of the OK website. Initially it is being developed as a strategic tool but plans for the future are to expand the facility for it to be used by first line managers as a point of reference, the development of peer review functionality, recruitment of OK wellbeing ambassadors, and development of training and guidance.

The following questions were raised from around the room:

- 1) Sussex & Surrey – Forces currently have various guidance documents and forms stored on line, will the OK toolkits add an additional place for managers to seek information?

Forces will need to decide themselves what is most useful and identify best practice for access and storage of guidance documents and templates. They may need to consider what requirements have been set by the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable in plans and strategies relating to wellbeing.

- 2) Thames Valley Federation – Seems difficult to register and log onto the website, had to find out from the FAQs there was a necessity to contact the website developers to complete registration.

Feedback will be taken on board to look at making this requirement more obvious at the front end of the website.

- 3) Nottinghamshire – Will there be a change in HMIC PEEL inspections to rate forces against wellbeing?

HMIC currently consider efforts around wellbeing, the framework in OK will give HMC the opportunity to review evidence of the work forces are actually putting in place to support wellbeing of the workforce. However not aware that forces will be rated in wellbeing.

Jf and IH stated the website is in it's infancy and so urged forces to use the online discussion forums to contribute feedback, ideas for development and any gaps identified in the facility. The CoP are keen to understand where they can assist forces with the wellbeing focus and develop work around this.

**ACTION:** All members to contribute feedback in the online discussion forums.

#### **b) Collation of People Data**

IH advised the group that the CoP are intending on carrying out a piece of work to fully understand the current workforce across all forces. He went on to explain the information that will be collated needs to be meaningful to reflect absence, roles which are being carried out by restricted officers, and roles being carried out by fully fit operational officers.

IH advised he is willing to visit individual forces to explain in detail what will be required in these responses.

L-AK suggested she would speak with IH to fully understand the request and how responses would be best co-ordinated to ensure consistency.

**ACTION: L-AK**

### **3. Work Streams**

SM, Vice Chair, reminded members of the discussions held at the meeting in March to identify key issues being faced by forces currently. These key issues were to form work streams for this group to focus on in the future.

It was intended that a lead for each of the 3 overarching streams be identified and they would take on a co-ordinating role.

SM reported that only the limited duties work stream currently has a lead. He asked members to consider the other 2 work streams and think about whether they are already involved in these areas of work or whether they know of colleagues or teams back in their own forces who may be able to become involved. He highlighted the opportunity this presents to support work on a national basis and support the work CC Andy Rhodes is leading on.

**ACTION: All members**

### **4. Updates following meeting with CC Andy Rhodes**

L-AK advised she wanted to reflect on the key highlights of achievement over the last year as Chair of the NWEF and consider the future format of the meeting as follows:

- Aligned future direction of all forces to the work of IH and CC Andy Rhodes;
- Development of a relationship with Jonathan Houdmont as a critical friend not only to this forum but individually to forces to assist with progressing work around wellbeing;

- Development of links with partners such as Police Federation England & Wales (PFEW) which led to the sharing of key findings in their recent demand and welfare survey;
- Visit from colleagues at the Police Treatment Centre to talk about the work they are doing to support the work of the forum and forces.

Historically the format of this meeting has been traditional and LAK asked members to reflect on where we go from here, how do we align ourselves with national work. She highlighted that CC Andy Rhodes is keen for innovative ways of moving work forward, identifying evidence based output and evaluating what we do.

She advised that CC Andy Rhodes was complimentary of the success of the forum and it was important to reflect on the achievements but at the same time look forward and consider how we can add value to the national agenda.

L-AK empathised with the challenges being faced by members of the group relating to capacity and capability and of the significant new threats being faced by forces. She advised she understands the difficulty in being able to commit the time to the workstreams as key areas to develop and progress. For these reasons she feels it is time for us all to think about the value which is being taken back to senior leaders and consider how the format of the forum could change going forward.

**ACTION: All members to provide views on the future, how can work of the group be evaluated, how can we innovate change.**

## 5. Update from OU Event

Sue Hadden (SH), Northumbria Police, advised she had attended an organisational development and wellbeing event at the Open University. She highlighted key aspects of presentations delivered at the event and confirmed the presentation slides could be accessed from the CoP website.

**ACTION: Link to presentation slides to be circulated with minutes.**

## 6. Call4Backup

Rob Webber (RW), Essex Police, the founder of the registered charity Call4Backup delivered a presentation to provide an overview of the service.

He explained that following a personal experience he set up a Facebook page with the intention of bringing officers and staff together to support each other in a peer network environment. The popularity and support of the network grew rapidly, individuals wanted to give donations to support the development and continuation of the work and many individuals now take part in fund raising events to support the charity.

The service is delivered by volunteer support agents and Call4Backup Champions who are made up of serving and former officers and staff. The service is available to serving officers and police staff, to provide support to enable them to return to work and make progress towards recovery.

Contact can be made by telephone, text, e-mail or via an app, as the service is delivered by volunteers it is not currently 24 hour.

He advised he has briefing sessions organised with some forces and is happy to provide an input to any forces who may be interested in obtaining further information.

Questions from around the room were raised as follows:

- 1) Are there any Call4Backup champions already in place?

Currently 17 champions across 17 forces. Identification of those 17 forces can be provided.

- 2) What kind of training is provided to the support agents?

Training is an in depth online package, which is regularly updated. The support agents work in accordance with a framework to enable them to identify situations or individuals at risk of harm and refer them on appropriately.

- 3) Most forces have various other support volunteers trained as TRIM practitioners or have received bluelight training through Mind, could this service be seen as a duplication of effort?

This charity was started before the roll out of the bluelight training delivered by Mind. The support offered by Call4Backup is not just trauma based and is not solely related to work situations.

## **7. Dyslexia**

Inspector Pete Phillips (PP), Hampshire Police, delivered a presentation on dyslexia. PP informed the group he also is the deputy general secretary for the disabled police association and the lead for dyslexia and disability within Hampshire Police.

PP provided an overview of what dyslexia is and the difficulties individuals may experience. He went on to describe the changes implemented within Hampshire to develop a more effective system to screen for dyslexia using Pico Systems which has replaced the need for assessments and reports from an educational psychologist. Training needs analysis and workplace assessments are carried out by trained staff and officers who understand the needs of the role to allow for meaningful reasonable adjustments to be recommended.

PP outlined key achievements to date and plans for the future to identify a national set of standards, establish a national online support network and support other organisations.

He reminded members of upcoming regional dyslexia conferences which all forces have been invited to attend:

Northern 5<sup>th</sup> October  
Midlands 19<sup>th</sup> October.

## **8. Legal Updates**

### IOD Awards

Kevin Mckernan (KM), Northumbria Police, updated members of some current developments being experienced with injury award cases, a discussion from the group took place on the following points:

- 1) Audio Recording

The SMPs in attendance advised they would not refuse the recording of their consultations but they would want to know in advance, they would want a copy of the recording and would expect the recording to be of evidential standard, recording the consultation on a smart phone would not be acceptable. The SMPs highlighted that recording the consultation ultimately would not change their decision so were unsure as to the reason for the recording, unless it was to assist the pensioner to recall what they had said during the consultation.

2) Limitation to Disclosure of Medical Records

The general view was that it is the SMPs process so it is up to the SMP to direct what information or evidence they require, if an individual is refusing a step of the SMP process then it could cease.

The Federation disagreed with this view as it was felt medical records were personal and confidential and the individual could choose whether to consent to disclosure or not.

3) Refusing to complete a questionnaire for the purposes of Reg 37(1)

It was felt the exchange of information between the pensioner and SMP is essential to identify substantial change.

There was comment that the case of *Laws* set the principle that a case cannot be referred for degree of disablement to be reviewed without evidence of substantial change; the questionnaire assists with the gathering of evidence.

The Federation highlighted inconsistencies with questionnaires nationally and gave the view that some are more intrusive than others. KM suggested to the Federation whether it was possible that a set of questions could be agreed; Federation agreed this was a possibility with the involvement of NARPO. However it was raised that the process belongs to the SMP and if a standard questionnaire was to be set nationally then all SMPs would also need to agree.

Pending GDPR

It was highlighted that the new General Data Protection Regulations would be coming into effect from May 2018 which would have an impact on consent. Draft guidance notes are on the Information Commissioner's website, members were encouraged to view these guidance notes.

Overview of GDPR – [Click Here](#)

Detailed draft guidance relating to consent – [Click Here](#)

Notes on other relevant cases would be circulated with the minutes.

## 9. Updates from Home Office

Kimberley Reed (KR) introduced herself as a new representative of the Home Office responsible for health policy including mental health, she provided the following updates:

**a) Withdrawal of HO Guidance**

An outstanding action from the previous meeting was regarding the review of existing HO guidance which was in contradiction to case law and exploring whether this could be changed or withdrawn. KR advised the HO Pensions unit required clear identification of the guidance in question where it is published and the issues being caused.

**ACTION:** Northumbria Police to continue to liaise with the Home Office

**b) MIND**

KR advised additional funding had been secured meaning the MIND programme would continue until March 2018. This funding will be used to up skill bluelight champions and roll out 'training the trainers'. There will also be a focus on trauma across all emergency services.

A query was raised as to whether a communication had been sent to forces to inform that additional funding was available, as most did not seem aware and there was a concern timescales for using the funding would expire.

A further query was raised that forces are not provided by MIND, with information as to who their trained bluelight champions are and so forces find it difficult to provide the champions with on-going support.

An issue was highlighted relating to the short timescales involved in taking up free training which is offered.

Feedback was given that the experience from MIND is inconsistent, some forces receive a lot of support and training where as others receive very little.

**ACTION: KR to feedback on these issues, but also for forces to provide feedback of their experiences directly to KR**

KR updated the group that a new Minister of State for policing and the fire service had been elected earlier in the year, Nick Hurd. She advised he had been reviewing the on-going national work being carried out and wished for positive feedback to be relayed.

**10. Any Other Business**

**a) HMIC Updates**

L-AK made mention of survey results which had been published recently and encouraged forces to identify themes and form actions and interventions which could be taken forward to affect improvement.

PFEW Pay and Morale survey

[Click Here](#)

Police Dependents Trust Post-traumatic stress in frontline policing

[Click Here](#)

**b) Extension of Sick Pay – Police Staff**

SM sought views of the group on extending sick pay in circumstances of police staff suffering an injury at work. He queried what forces would constitute as an injury on duty for police staff and whether an extension of sick pay would be granted as general practice.

Views were provided that extension of sick pay should form part of the considerations there should not be an expectation that it will be granted. Views were offered that injury on duty was understood to be an injury sustained in the execution of duty not



just an accident in the workplace, in the same vein as it is for police officers for the purposes of pay.

**c) Limited Duties**

A question was raised as to whether any forces had actioned the x factor pay reduction as of yet. None of the forces had.

Thames Valley Federation advised an update decided by the NPCC which is pending circulation is that decisions on x factor pay reductions would not be an option for another 12 months.

**d) Anti-Coagulants**

Dyfed Powys described a set of circumstances relating to an Officer being diagnosed with a health condition which requires lifelong anti-coagulant medication and enquired whether any new guidance was now in circulation.

It was updated that the NPCC had been advised by HML to review their guidance relating to anti-coagulant medication as a result of a medical appeal hearing earlier this year, discussions are on-going in relation to the review of this guidance which the CoP are addressing.

**ACTION: Obtain update from CoP**

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting

**Date and location of next meeting:**

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017 at 10am, Location TBC**