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Lancashire
Constabulary
police and communities together

25th August 2010

John O'Reilly
Chairman
Lancashire Police Federation

Mark Sweet
General Secretary
Lancashire Police Federation

Dear John/Mark

ACPO's paper on the Future of Policing

I write on behalf, and with the full agreement, of all Lancashire Chief Officers in response to your joint letters dated 17th August 2010, sent to each Chief Officer.

I note your concerns relating to the apparent lack of consultation prior to the document being made public. However, and as you know, this is an area of strength for Lancashire Constabulary, in terms of how we conduct our business. As you are aware, one of the main positives of the relationships between Chief Officers and the Police Federation in Lancashire is our collective ability to maintain an open and honest dialogue on all issues affecting policing in Lancashire and Lancashire police officers. Whilst we may, from time to time, have different views on certain issues, I am confident that we can, as we always have done, deal with them in an open, transparent and professional manner whilst retaining mutual respect for each other's position.

You refer in your letter to having grave concerns over some of the recommendations, and query whether full consideration has been given to the subsequent repercussions of some specific recommendations.

Before dealing with the specific concerns, I should say that in general terms, Chief Officers in Lancashire are supportive of the ACPO position and recommendations. However, as you are aware, many of the recommendations are lacking in detail and, therefore, it's not possible at this stage to properly assess the potential benefits or impact.

Let me try to explain Lancashire Chief Officers' positions for each of the recommendations you have highlighted in your letter.

Recommendation 23. The development of a more flexible framework for employing and rewarding police officers.

ACPO firmly believes that the status of the office of constable is essential and should be preserved as a fundamental tenet that supports operational independence (recommendation 22). Alongside this, ACPO and Chief Officers in Lancashire consider that there is scope to create a simpler, less bureaucratic and more flexible framework for the employment of police officers.

In principle, therefore, Chief Officers agree that there is merit in flexibility and a more simplified employment framework.

Recommendation 24. An urgent review of the UPP

As I think you will remember, Lancashire was the first force in the country to successfully use the Unsatisfactory Performance Procedure. As we know from our experience it is a highly bureaucratic, time consuming process and as such is hardly ever used.

A more simplified process to address under performances is fully supported by Lancashire Chief Officers.

Recommendation 25. A complete overhaul of the flexible reward mechanisms that are currently in place, including SPP

In principle, Chief Officers, support the recommendation, although it is recognised that some elements particularly the proposed reductions in compensation for working overtime, rest days, public holidays and annual leave will be contentious. Other specific recommendations to abolish the special priority payment (SPP), competency related threshold payments (CRTP), superintendents' post related allowance and performance related bonuses and the Chief Officer performance pay scheme are all supported.

Recommendation 26. Replacing the Police Negotiating Board with a Pay Review Body.

Whilst recognising that there could be a risk from a loss of control and hence there is a little apprehension, the potential benefits of an independent review body, with an ability to make quick decisions in what will be a critically demanding period for the police service, appears a positive move and one that is supported.

Recommendation 27. A review of the rank structure and ratio's

From a purely local perspective, we have no burning desire to see the rank structure change.

However, mindful of the difficult financial challenge we face, we are open minded for any possible initiatives that could provide improvements to service or cost savings. We would need to see the details of any proposals, following the review, before commenting further.

Recommendation 28. A clearer national framework for police staff.

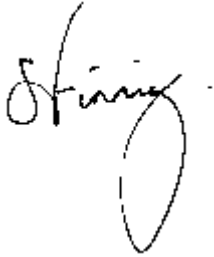
Similar comments to Recommendation 27. No burning desire for change but willing to consider any options that could give either service improvement or cash savings.

Recommendation 29. A national review of police staff role profiles and extension of the role of PCSO's without increasing their powers.

Supportive in principle to police staff roles providing greater mobility and flexibility. However, we have no desire to see either the role or powers of PCSO's in Lancashire being extended.

I fully recognise that the responses in this letter are relatively brief and, therefore, I am very willing to discuss in greater depth those specific issues which cause you the most concern.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Finnigan', with a large, stylized flourish extending downwards from the end of the name.

**Steve Finnigan
Chief Constable**