

The reality of the policing demand in the North East

In a snapshot of activity this morning*, Thursday 21 September 2017, the seven forces across the North East** were dealing with over **4000** outstanding calls for service or open incidents, **144** missing persons and **269** prisoners in custody, painting a picture of the demand officers and staff face on a daily basis.

Andrea Breeze, chair of Cleveland Police Federation Police Federation, said:

“These figures of a typical midweek day show that demand is massively outstripping resources. Before we start every day, we are playing catch in terms of dealing with calls. It’s not just about crime, the impact of having to look for missing vulnerable people places a huge burden on already stretched resources.

“Despite the political rhetoric from Government, we are not just crime fighters. We are picking up the burden of many other areas of work from other agencies. This is against a backdrop of continually reducing numbers. The savage cuts imposed on the police service are bringing the service to its knees. We are going back to the days of reactive only policing of the mid 1980’s. This is not good for the service or the public.”

In July, figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) further outlined the demand on police, showing that recorded crime increased by 10% nationally in the previous twelve months with an 18% rise in violent crime.

At the same time, workforce data revealed a further fall of nearly 1,000 officers in the previous twelve months leaving forces to manage with the lowest number of officers since **1985**.

In the North East officer numbers have reduced by **19% since 2010 with the loss of 3,736 officers across the region (19,673 to 15,937)**.

Increasing and unrealistic workloads set against a backdrop of increased crime and reducing officer numbers is taking its toll on police officers in the North East.

Combined figures from the Police Federation of England and Wales’ recent **pay and morale survey** showed that on average, 60 per cent of officers in the North East were experiencing low morale. How police are treated as a whole and workload and responsibility were two of the most significant contributory factors.

South Yorkshire Police (68.3 per cent) and Cleveland Police (65 per cent) had the second and fifth highest number of respondents reporting low morale in England and Wales.

Durham (85.6 per cent) and South Yorkshire (83.2 per cent) were ranked one and two for respondents that stated their workload had increased in the last twelve months, with two other North East forces, Humberside and Northumbria, featuring in the top ten. On average 70 per cent of officers in the North East said their workload was too high.

Perhaps most worrying is that whilst 63% of officers in the region are proud to work for the police, 68% would not recommend joining the police service.

Andrea Breeze, said:

“There is real anger and fury from officers regarding last week’s pay award announcement. The 2 per cent award, consisting of a one per cent pensionable pay rise plus a one per cent non-pensionable additional amount, still falls short of the 2.9 per cent rate of inflation and equates to a real terms pay cut for officers of 16 per cent since 2009/2010.

“The Government have given a pay award which has to be funded from existing police budgets. This means in reality Chief Constables have to pay for it out of current budgets – budgets where they are still trying to find savings from the cuts imposed upon them from No.10, They will have to stop recruiting, and reduce police officer numbers further to pay for this underhand Government pay award. **All this does is weaken the police service further to deal with demand and lower morale.**”

Notes to editors:

*A snapshot of activity for individual forces was taken at approximately 7am this morning. The totals were as follows:

Outstanding / open incidents: 4165

Custody: 269

Missing persons: 144

**North East forces include: Northumbria, Durham, Cleveland, Humberside, North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire.

Separate [pay and morale survey reports](#) for each force can be view on the Police Federation of England and Wales website.

In total 30,557 officers took part in the survey, equivalent to 25% of all federated ranks.

The total number of respondents from the North East was 3,895, also equivalent to 25% of all federated ranks in the region.

Workforce numbers for all forces is available on the [Home Office website](#). A breakdown of the figures for North East forces is as below:

Northumbria

[Total officers March 2010](#): 4187

[Total Officers March 2017](#): 3289

Durham

[Total officers March 2010](#): 1507

[Total Officers March 2017](#): 1144

Cleveland

[Total officers March 2010](#): 1724

[Total Officers March 2017](#): 1283

Humberside

[Total officers March 2010](#): 2058

[Total Officers March 2017](#): 1641

North Yorkshire

[Total officers March 2010](#): 1486

[Total Officers March 2017](#): 1378

West Yorkshire

[Total officers March 2010](#): 5758

[Total Officers March 2017](#): 4720

South Yorkshire

[Total officers March 2010](#): 2953

[Total Officers March 2017](#): 1724