

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



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Our ref: SUB/1355/2016

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David,

POLICE REMUNERATION REVIEW BODY – REMIT LETTER

I am pleased to provide the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) with this remit letter for the review of the remuneration for police officers below the rank of assistant chief constable serving in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

While I am a short time in post, I am aware of the important role performed by your review body in considering these matters – something I am keen to ensure my officials continue to support on a co-operative basis. I look forward to meeting with you on 20 September in this regard.

I would like to acknowledge the challenging nature of the current working environment for police officers, both in terms of public sector financial constraint and implementation of ongoing reforms in police pay, allowances and pensions provision. I am content that the approach taken last year in making recommendations consistent with other forces in England and Wales was helpful and can confirm that your recommendations were accepted in full.

Public Sector Pay Policy

The Northern Ireland Executive has not yet agreed a public sector pay policy applicable to Northern Ireland for 2017/18. In general terms, however, it has endorsed the principle of adherence to the UK Government's public sector pay policies and public sector pay growth limits.

Therefore, in the absence of an amended or alternative policy for Northern Ireland, I ask that the Review Body operates within the parameters set out in the Chief Secretary to the Treasury's letter of 13 July 2016 to pay review body chairmen, noting that these may be subject to further restraint. Any change to the Executive's position will be provided in evidential submissions, or as this becomes clearer.

For 2017/18 review

Within this year's review I would welcome recommendations on the following:

- the application of any pay award for these police officers, effective from 1 September 2017;
- whether any increase should be applied to the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance or other allowances; and
- whether any increase should be applied to the Competence Related Threshold Payment (CRTP), pending its imminent review.

Given the forthcoming review of the CRTP scheme, I ask that the Body considers closing the scheme to new applicants pending its outcome.

I intend to continue the practice of my predecessor in seeking the views of the parties in Northern Ireland on what the pay review bodies might realistically be asked to consider for the PSNI. In that vein, the Police Federation has specifically asked for consideration to be given to an increase in annual leave provision for federated rank officers, and a reduction in the standard number of hours in a working week.

Similarly, the Superintendents' Association has referred to difficulties its members are having with regard to Rest Day working and on-call commitments, as well as access to

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Monthly Rest Days, calling for changes in how they are managed or additional financial recompense.

If you are content that these latter issues fall to your Body, parties will provide evidence supporting their respective positions in these matters.

In conjunction with Treasury instructions, the Review Body will want to consider the full package of remuneration paid to police officers in Northern Ireland and consider any specific challenges facing them which are not already addressed.

When making your recommendations for this year, you were able to retain uniformity with similar ranks in England and Wales, and the recommendations for the Senior Salaries Review Body's pay remit group. It remains important to the PSNI that no barriers to movement are created between forces and so parity in key areas of remuneration remains desirable. I note from this year's report that the question of parity is one which will be pursued further by the PRRB as part of this year's considerations.

I trust that this letter is helpful to the Body as you undertake this year's assessments. I look forward to receiving your recommendations in line with your proposed timetable.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claire Sugden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

CLAIRE SUGDEN MLA
Minister of Justice