



Police
Remuneration Review Body

Police Remuneration Review Body

Third Report on Northern Ireland 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chair: David Lebrecht

Police Remuneration Review Body

Terms of reference¹

The Police Remuneration Review Body² (PRRB) provides independent recommendations to the Home Secretary and to the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice on the hours of duty, leave, pay, allowances and the issue, use and return of police clothing, personal equipment and accoutrements for police officers of or below the rank of chief superintendent and police cadets in England and Wales, and Northern Ireland respectively.

In reaching its recommendations the Review Body must have regard to the following considerations:

- the particular frontline role and nature of the office of constable;
- the prohibition on police officers being members of a trade union or withdrawing their labour;
- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified officers;
- the funds available to the Home Office, as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits, and the representations of police and crime commissioners and the Northern Ireland Policing Board in respect of local funding issues;
- the Government's wider public sector pay policy;
- the Government's policies for improving public services;
- the work of the College of Policing;
- the work of police and crime commissioners;
- relevant legal obligations on the police service in England and Wales and Northern Ireland, including anti-discrimination legislation regarding age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and belief and disability;
- the operating environments of different forces, including consideration of the specific challenges of policing in rural or large metropolitan areas and in Northern Ireland, as well as any specific national roles which forces may have;
- any relevant legislative changes to employment law which do not automatically apply to police officers;
- that the remuneration of the remit group relates coherently to that of chief officer ranks.

The Review Body should also be required to consider other specific issues as directed by the Home Secretary and/or the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice, and should be required to take account of the economic and other evidence submitted by the Government, professional representatives and others.

¹ The terms of reference were set by the Home Office following a public consultation – Implementing a Police Pay Review Body – The Government's Response, April 2013.

² The Police Remuneration Review Body was established by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, and became operational in September 2014.

It is also important for the Review Body to be mindful of developments in police officer pensions to ensure that there is a consistent, strategic and holistic approach to police pay and conditions.

Reports and recommendations of the Review Body should be submitted to the Home Secretary, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice (Northern Ireland), and they should be published.

Members³ of the Review Body⁴

David Lebrecht (Chair)
Dr Brian Bell
Elizabeth Bell
Anita Bharucha
Paul Leighton
Christopher Pilgrim
Patrick Stayt

The secretariat is provided by the Office of Manpower Economics.

³ Members of the Review Body are appointed through open competition adhering to the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice. Available at: <http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Code-of-Practice-20121.pdf>

⁴ Heather Baily resigned from the Review Body in March 2017.

POLICE REMUNERATION REVIEW BODY

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Our 2017/18 recommendations (from 1 September 2017)

- **A consolidated increase of 2% to all pay points for federated and superintending ranks.**
- **An increase of 2% to the Northern Ireland Transitional Allowance (NITA) and Dog Handlers' Allowance.**
- **The Competence Related Threshold Payment (CRTP) scheme remains open to new applicants pending the outcome of the comprehensive review and that the current level of CRTP does not increase.**

Remit

1. Our Third Report contains our recommendations for 2017/18 for police officer pay and allowances for the federated and superintending ranks in Northern Ireland. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury confirmed that the UK Government's public sector pay policy remained in place, with public sector workforces funded for pay awards for an average of 1%, with an expectation of targeted pay awards to support the continued delivery of public services and to address recruitment and retention pressures. The Minister of Justice's remit letter asked for recommendations relating to: (i) the application of any pay award from 1 September 2017; (ii) whether any increase should be applied to the NITA or other allowances; (iii) whether any increase should be applied to the CRTP, pending its imminent review; (iv) whether the CRTP should be closed to new applicants pending the outcome of the review; (v) whether to consider increasing the annual leave provision for federated ranks officers and to consider reducing the standard number of hours in a working week; and (vi) whether there should be changes in how superintending ranks' rest day working and on-call commitments were managed or any additional financial recompense. (Paragraphs 1.4 to 1.5)

Our analysis of the 2017/18 evidence

2. The evidence provided to us for this pay round leads us to conclude the following:
 - Policing environment – a range of factors all indicate that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) is facing increasing demand, manifesting in police officers needing to undertake additional hours. We

continue to recognise the security situation remains at “SEVERE” in Northern Ireland and the effect this has on the lives of police officers; (Paragraphs 2.14 to 2.15)

- Pay parity – parity with England and Wales remains a key factor influencing our considerations. While many aspects of policing in Northern Ireland are unique, we cannot currently justify major differences between the two pay and reward systems while the core roles of police officers remain similar across all police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. However, when considering parity we are also conscious of the differences between the two systems arising from the implementation of reforms following the Winsor Review in England and Wales and wish to understand the reasons for Northern Ireland maintaining these differences. We also note the potential for further differences if workforce and pay reforms are implemented in England and Wales; (Paragraphs 2.24 to 2.26)
- Public sector pay policy – we explored the UK Government’s public sector pay policy in our England and Wales Report. We understand that the pay policy is in place to help reduce the budget deficit and achieve fiscal consolidation and was justified in 2015 on the basis of continued low inflation. However, police pay needs to take reasonable account of developments in the wider economy. The increasing rate of inflation and the impact on cost of living put pressure on the sustainability of the pay policy; (Paragraphs 2.42)
- The lack of an individual public sector pay policy from the Northern Ireland Executive continues to hamper our considerations; (Paragraph 2.43)
- Affordability – it is clear to us from the evidence presented that affordability and the level of resources available to PSNI are directly linked. Our conclusion is that the affordability constraint in Northern Ireland is very acute given the limited opportunities for realising efficiencies that are otherwise available to forces in England and Wales. The PSNI would need more flexibility to address any affordability issues it faces without having to consider the level of the policing workforce; (Paragraphs 2.44 to 2.45)
- Economy and labour market – Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rose during the latter part of 2016 reaching 2.3% at March 2017 and was forecast to rise slightly throughout 2017. Average earnings growth was 2.3% and pay settlements were at 2.0% in the three months to February 2017. The economic and labour market indicators in Northern Ireland are generally positive; (Paragraph 2.52 to 2.53)
- Earnings – police officer earnings in Northern Ireland have been falling and we note that the median earnings for police officers in Northern Ireland continue to outstrip those of the general economy in Northern

Ireland and their counterparts in England and Wales (after NITA has been excluded), driven by CRTP and overtime; (Paragraph 2.66)

- PSNI workforce – the resourcing of the PSNI is an area that concerns us greatly. The parties and outside sources appear to concur that there are insufficient resources for the PSNI to deliver what is expected of them without passing the burden of doing so to the frontline police officer. More than 20% of police officers are due to retire in the next three years and, despite no apparent shortage of applicants and stable attrition rates, it is unclear whether the recruitment process or retention of officers will meet current workforce requirements. (Paragraphs 2.86 to 2.91)

Pay proposals and recommendations for 2017/18

3. The PSNI and the Northern Ireland Policing Board proposed a 1% uplift for federated and superintending ranks in Northern Ireland. The Police Federation for Northern Ireland and the Police Superintendents' Association of Northern Ireland proposed a 2.8% uplift which they based on the median value of HM Treasury forecasts for CPI and Retail Prices Index inflation over the next four years. (Paragraphs 3.2 to 3.4)
4. We note that the desire for parity on core pay spines was expressed strongly by all the parties and this carries significant weight in our conclusions. We do not consider that one police force should be singled out for pay differentiation while the differing circumstances within regions and forces in England and Wales are not recognised. We view the police forces as representing a single service to the public, with the same standards and performance expected of a police officer regardless of their location. Therefore, our conclusions for police officers in Northern Ireland are guided largely by our conclusions for England and Wales.
5. We recognise there are difficult pressures facing the PSNI with regard to affordability and resourcing but there is a strong case for pay parity across England, Wales and Northern Ireland as supported by all parties, and therefore we give greater weight to a 2017/18 basic pay recommendation that should provide parity on the level of uplift with our recommendation for those police officers in England and Wales. Therefore, **we recommend a consolidated increase of 2% to all pay points for federated and superintending ranks from 1 September 2017.** (Paragraphs 3.9 to 3.19)
6. We continue to recommend that **NITA and Dog Handlers' Allowance** are increased in line with the annual pay award and therefore **we recommend a 2% increase.** (Paragraphs 3.23 to 3.25)

7. **Given the forthcoming review of the CRTP scheme, we recommend that it should remain open to new applicants. In the absence of evidence to justify an increase in the payment, we recommend no increase to the level of CRTP.** (Paragraphs 3.33 to 3.36)

Forward look

8. We were in the process of completing our final deliberations when the General Election was called. The UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive which will consider our 2017/18 recommendations will also be conscious of the implications for the next pay round, including their approach to policing and to public sector pay. We will continue to be mindful of the prevailing economic conditions going forward, and note the potential impacts of ongoing political uncertainty in Northern Ireland on the PSNI's ability to budget effectively. The evidence has further highlighted the importance of pay parity in both our and the parties' considerations. We look forward to receiving evidence in future pay rounds that fully considers the implications of the terms and conditions available to officers in England and Wales not least the impact of any workforce and pay reforms. (Paragraphs 4.2 to 4.7)
9. We suggest that the parties establish effective supporting processes ahead of the next pay round and we look forward to the continued enhancement of the evidence base. (Paragraphs 4.8 to 4.11)

David Lebrecht (*Chair*)
Anita Bharucha
Dr Brian Bell
Elizabeth Bell
Paul Leighton
Christopher Pilgrim
Patrick Stayt

19 May 2017