

Research and Policy Briefing

Police Remuneration review Body

Fifth report, 22 July 2019: Headline information



Date: 24 July 2019

Author: Dr Joan Donnelly

The Police Remuneration Review Body report was published on 22 July 2019.

Headline recommendations:

- A one-year consolidated uplift to all officers of 2.5%

This is above the one-year figures recommended by all but one of the employer side stakeholders; NPCC said 2%; APCC 2.1%; MPS 2.5%; and Home Office suggested £70 million was available, equating to approx. 1.2-1.3% uplift. Furthermore, this figure is above the CPIH inflation, which we believe is the appropriate inflationary or metric against which pay should be compared. It is in keeping with the median pay uplifts across the UK for the first quarter of 2019.

- No change to the current arrangements regarding Apprentice (PCDA) progression pay, with PCDA's progressing up the current scale.

The NPCC had sought for PCDA's and degree holders to be paid within new pay bands, with the exact level being at Chief Constable discretion. These new bands were below existing pay points. We sought for the PRRB to discard the NPCC recommendation, and they have done so, and accepted our recommendation. This means each PCDA will retain as of right just over £13,000 more in the first 3 years of service than the NPCC wanted, and those who enter under the degree holder route will also retain as of right approximately £4,000 that the NPCC had sought to make discretionary.

- Allowances (notably Dog Handlers' and London Weighting) uprated by 2.5%.

This is positive: we always seek for allowances to be uprated in line with the overall uplift.

- An increase in On Call from £15 to £20.

This is in line with what the NPCC said was affordable. We had sought for this to be uprated to the same level as staff, i.e. £29.17. Whilst that was not considered affordable, nonetheless the uplift is a 33% uplift.

Main report theme: PRRB comments on the NPCC Pay Reform programme and design:

The main theme of the report is regarding the existing NPCC National Reward Team's Pay Reform programme. PRRB have made a number of observations. These are almost

universally critical. The vast majority echo points that the staff associations have been raising for some time, and that we noted in our submission.

1. The PRRB state that they are still concerned about matters they raised in previous years: notably that the rationale for change has not been properly articulated, nor have the expected benefits been stated. ¹

We have repeatedly called for a benefits realisation plan, outline benefits and unintended consequences, to allow for tracking and evaluation of the project. This is no more than basic project governance. This was in our PRRB submission as long ago as 2016 and we have raised it at numerous PCFs and in letters.

2. The PRRB express their concern that individual forces are not ready for change. *We have raised this on a number of occasions, including at last year's conference. The MOPAC report evaluating force readiness is damning: we referenced that in our PRRB submission too.* ²

3. The PRRB state that they are not convinced that the project can be delivered within the current pay bill.

We have noted in this year and last year's PRRB submission that we believe such significant change cannot be achieved without proper funding, and that the CSR needs to be used to secure adequate funds. ³

4. The PRRB note that “a new pay mechanism built on competence will necessarily require robust performance measurements to be in place”, not least because of the significant cultural change.

For 5 years, during the design of the Assessing and Recognising Competence work, and now the Established Constable project, we have argued that for reasons of fairness, transparency, and to ensure equality issues are addressed, a robust standardised assessment method is needed, where pay – especially significant amounts of pay – is dependent on it. Our fear is that anything less than a standardised measure will result in our having to take a number of legal challenges, as equality considerations arise. The precedent is SPP and CRTP. ⁴

¹ Para 6 and 2.42-2.46

² Para 9 and 2.47-2.49

³ Para 13 and 2.52

⁴ Para 15 and 2.64

5. The PRRB express concern that the Pay Reform timetable doesn't allow time to make the necessary legislative changes.⁵
We have raised this point repeatedly.
6. The PRRB state that the change to a requirement for officers to have degrees is likely to have consequences in terms of changing career expectations. For example, they assume such officers may not want to stay in service for their entire careers. Forces will need to plan accordingly.⁶
Again, this is something the PFEW has raised repeatedly over a long period of time, including in previous PRRB submissions, and with the College of Policing.
7. The PRRB note that the changes to the Constable pay scale are unclear, and present risks. Notably, the route to Established Constable is not clear; the assessment process has not been bottomed out. The shortened pay scale with a huge leap between the second highest and highest point is problematic and may impact negatively on motivation.⁷
We have raised these same concerns.
8. The PRRB reserve perhaps their strongest worded criticism for the NPCC proposals for PCDA progression pay. "Information on the phasing out of existing entry routes and the finalisation of new graduate-only entry routes was not as complete as we would wish, and there is too much uncertainty around the pay rates for degree-holders under pay reform". The PRRB felt strongly enough to insist that, instead of the NPCC recommendations for progression, there should be no change to the existing incremental progression.⁸
We sought to have the NPCC recommendation dismissed, due to the lack of proper rationale: the PRRB seem to have concurred. In this way we have helped protect £13k pay over three years, which PCDA's might otherwise have had removed.
9. The PRRB asked for a full proposal for Superintendents to get On Call to be worked up.⁹
This was a recommendation jointly put forward by the PSA and PFEW.

⁵ Para 16 and 2.64

⁶ Para 17 and 2.57-2.59

⁷ Para 2.55-2.56

⁸ Para 25 and 4.2 -4.33

⁹ Para 26 and 4.71-4.72, and 4.88

10. The PRRB state that there is still a lack of robust evidence to inform the design of pay reform – even though they have drawn attention this in previous years, and previous PRRB reports.¹⁰

This is something that the PFEW drew attention to as far back as year one of the PRRB. We noted the lack of consistent, verified data across forces. This includes recording of decent recruitment and retention measures; workforce modelling; data on sickness levels; data on opt out from police pensions (which should be a mandated dataset); and baseline data about the current state of policing pay, against which to measure expected benefits and unintended consequences. Examples might be measures of diversity, improvements to equality of pay, improved performance (perhaps at force level, rather than individual), measures of public confidence, improved deploy ability, reduced use certain allowances which are actually intended to punish forces for poor planning, etc. Some measures exist, but many do not. There has been no systematic capture of what it is desirable to measure, and to what extent that is possible, or what would need to be done to make it possible.

Additional:

It is indicative of the PRRB's frustration with the pay reform thus far that it suggests a step that is beyond any previously suggested: that is, that **an independent technical evaluation of the programme should be commissioned.**¹¹ By normal pay review body standards this is damning, and betrays a lack of confidence in the programme, that the NPCC must surely find uncomfortable.

The PRRB seek for the new Chief Constable lead to “accelerate momentum”,¹² and state that it has reservations as to whether a reform of this scale can be achieved through the existing structures.¹³

Points where the PRRB view is significantly different to ours:

It should be noted that the PRRB analysis of officer earnings vis a vis others is significantly different to ours. The PRRB use Annual Survey of Hours and earnings (ASHE) data provided by the OME. In their view earnings for police were 41% higher than for the whole economy;

¹⁰ Para 35 and 5.4-5.7

¹¹ Para 8 and 2.45 and 2.65

¹² Para 2.45

¹³ Para 2.46

8% higher than for professional occupations; and 27% higher than for technical occupations.

The difference between their analysis and ours is down to the following:

- They have compared officer earnings today (a single point in time) against very broad external groups; whereas our analysis showing the real-terms loss is based on comparing officers today to officers several years ago.
- Because they use the median, the figures for officers (who tend to have long service) are likely to be higher than the medians in other occupations (where service is shorter). Because of this conflating variable, we would argue it is more appropriate to compare top and bottom of pay scales, than median.
- Clearly, we present the data in a way that we believe shows the gap most starkly, to make the strongest case.