
Devolution of policing in Wales

Version 3

1. Policy statement

Wales has just under 7,000 police officers for a population of around 3 million people. Huge cuts in the number of serving police officers mean that the people of Wales no longer have the police service they deserve or should expect. Any move to devolve policing in Wales should be done purely with the aim of improving the service to the public.

2. Responsibility

The National Board is responsible for all policy formation.

3. Summary

Wales has just under 7,000 police officers¹ policing a population of around 3 million compared to just over 17,000 officers² in Scotland policing a population of around 5.4 million.

PFEW remains neutral on the devolution of policing to Wales. We have concluded that policing *could* be devolved to Wales, but the question of whether it *should* be devolved is one for politicians, not the Federation.

Any move to devolve policing in Wales should be done purely with the aim of improving the service to the public. PFEW believes that whatever change is proposed, locally or nationally, now and in the future, it is essential that police officers are consulted and listened to. They know policing; they know what works for policing in their local communities; and they know Wales.

Should Welsh devolution of policing occur, PFEW expects that a devolved Welsh police service would deal with all levels of crime in the same way as forces in Scotland or Northern Ireland. Policing intelligence is gathered at community level; it is from the street that the police gather intelligence so there cannot be any separation of the levels of policing.

While a devolved Welsh police service should be responsible for all policing functions, police officer pay and conditions should not be subject to separate regional arrangements and should continue to be dealt with through a national framework. Police officers can be required to work anywhere in the UK, sometimes at a moment's notice. It would be intrinsically unfair to expect officers to perform duty in all parts of the UK at different rates.

¹ Police workforce numbers, England and Wales, September 2018

² Police officer numbers, Scotland, December 2018

We are clear that if policing becomes a devolved policy area that it must be done to improve the public service provided. The sustaining of the current service is not good enough. To get to that position takes resources and the ‘ownership’ of the role of policing by a dedicated Wales policing minister. We need a system that is accountable and allows the public to have absolute confidence in the police. This includes collating Welsh crime figures accurately, ethically and candidly.

PFEW believes that policing could be devolved to Wales without the need to devolve other parts of the Criminal Justice System.

4. Procedures/implementation

If the Governments in Cardiff and Westminster agree to devolve policing in Wales, PFEW will play a full part in ensuring any transition is made effectively and smoothly for the benefit of the public and our members.

Responsibility is delegated to the National Secretary and/or the appropriate sub-committee.

	Author	Date	Date to be reviewed	Change
Version 1	EP-KP	March 2016	March 2017	
Version 2	EP-KP	March 2017	March 2018	Update figures Remove reference to the Silk commission
Version 3	KP	January 2019	March 2020	Minor changes

Signed by:



National Chair



National Secretary