

WEST MIDLANDS
POLICE FEDERATION

HERE FOR YOU

ANNUAL
REVIEW
2024





PC Glenn Brabham and wife, Becca, outside No. 10 Downing Street where they attended a reception for all nominees for the national Police Bravery Awards 2024. Glenn was the first winner of the West Midlands Police Federation Bravery Awards held in January.

ABOUT WEST MIDLANDS POLICE FEDERATION

West Midlands Police Federation represents the interests of the Force's constables, sergeants, inspectors, chief inspectors and specials. It seeks to negotiate on their behalf and influence decision-makers, locally, regionally and nationally.

Based at Guardians House in Sheldon, the Federation, its full-time officials, staff and workplace representatives across the Force area put members' interests at the heart of all they do and are committed to providing an effective and efficient service. It is also important that the Federation's services represent value for money for the members, for the Force and for the communities they serve.

This annual report gives an overview of West Midlands Police Federation's work on members' behalf during 2024. Of course, it would be almost impossible to give a detailed account of all the time Federation representatives and staff spend talking to members, offering advice, listening to their concerns or sharing information with them.

Nor could we gather statistics on the countless face to face conversations, telephone calls, messages and emails between Federation officials and senior officers and staff or between workplace representatives and their colleagues. But these would, without doubt, add up to hundreds of hours over the year.

The Federation works in partnership with private companies to offer members a comprehensive Group Insurance Scheme and a range of member service discounts tailored to their needs. These are also outlined in this report.



VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

BY JESS DAVIES

While the primary focus of this report is the calendar year 2024, I would also like to give some thoughts on current issues too. But first, let's look back.

Generally, 2024 saw our members facing very similar issues to the year before: stretched resources, increased demand and continued calls for police pay to reflect the pressures and demands of the role.

The General Election in July 2024 brought us a new Government, with many in policing waiting to see if Labour could deliver on its election manifesto which, among other things, had included a pledge to recruit 13,000 extra neighbourhood officers and PCSOs.

Our branch secretary, Tim Rogers, was among those to call for long-term and sustained investment in policing and urge the new Government to introduce a fully independent police pay mechanism, arguing the current system was unfair, unfit for purpose and detrimental to the pay and conditions of police officers.

It came as little surprise when the Federation's nationwide annual pay and morale survey revealed that so many of our officers were considering leaving the police service.

In the West Midlands, 88 per cent of members felt morale in the Force was low or very low and 58 per cent felt their personal morale was low or very low.

While we called on the Government to act, we also looked closer to home, telling our Police and Crime Commissioner, who was re-elected for his second four-year term in May 2024, he needed to get behind police officers and do everything in his powers to combat low Force morale.

Equally unsurprising, in the same month as the General Election, the results of a nationwide survey revealed that Federation members had voted overwhelmingly in favour (97.7 per cent) of the Police Federation of England and Wales re-establishing collective bargaining rights on behalf of police officers.

Yet, the results of the poll and the lobbying of Government still led to disappointment when it was announced, on the same day that junior doctors were awarded a 22 per cent pay uplift, that police officers would receive a 4.75 per cent increase in pay from 1 September 2024.

Despite our frustration, we will continue to represent our members' views, speak up on their behalf and do all we can to influence decision-makers and other stakeholders.

Immediately after the General Election, we launched a campaign to bring about increased engagement between the branch and West Midlands MPs.

This campaign has continued into 2025, and we are slowly managing to arrange meetings between individual MPs and our branch officials so that we can work together to raise awareness of the challenges our members are facing and the issues within the police service.

Also close to home, our branch health and safety lead, Patrick McBrearty, successfully put pressure on the Force to act on staffing levels within Force custody suites. He called for all suites to have two sergeants working a shift together, rather than one - which was becoming a common recurrence - or alternatively, to build a more resilient model whereby there were more locally trained sergeants available to help, when necessary.

Another resounding West Midlands Police Federation success came with the branch's inaugural bravery awards ceremony. PC Glenn Brabham was named the overall winner, taking home the PC David Green Shield. The father-of-two clinched the title having saved the lives of two elderly women who had been accidentally run over in a car park and went on to represent the branch at the national Police Bravery Awards in London.

A notable national Federation triumph came with the announcement, in March 2024, that a new Elizabeth Emblem - named after the late Queen - would be presented to the families of fallen officers and other public sector workers who died in service.



Malcolm Walker was honoured with the new Elizabeth Emblem. His wife Helen and son Sean, who is a Special Constable, received it on his behalf. Malcolm (Mac) died on 4 October 2001 when his motorbike was rammed as he tried to stop a stolen car. He was 46.

While on the subject of our fallen colleagues, we are very proud that Coventry Cathedral will this year host the National Police Memorial Day service.

This service rotates around the four nations of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and when in England has mainly been hosted in London.

We look forward to welcoming colleagues to Coventry to pay their respects to those officers who paid the ultimate price while serving their communities.

Finally, in looking ahead, I would like to put on record my pride at being elected as the first female chair of West Midlands Police Federation. I want to ensure that we are truly representative of the diversity of our membership and build on the branch's legacy of progress, inclusion and bold leadership, ensuring every voice is heard and valued.



SECRETARY'S FOREWORD

BY TIM ROGERS

In much the same way as I reported in our annual review for 2023, 2024 was a challenging, but interesting, year and once again the branch was impacted by issues beyond its own control.

I am, however, pleased to report that the branch nevertheless performed well, particularly in financial matters.

But, before moving on to these in more detail, I want to put on my record my thanks to my full-time colleagues in the Federation office at Guardians House and to the workplace representatives who provide Federation representation to colleagues across the Force area.

For the full-time officials, there were the challenges of managing the absences of several key individuals which, of course, put extra work onto those remaining. We were at times stretched but remained committed to ensuring we provided the best possible support to members and to the rest of the branch team.

The workplace representatives, often the first point of contact for members seeking help and advice, also rose to the challenges the year brought.

Our workplace representatives give up their own time to support their colleagues. It can be challenging, not just in terms of finding the time to carry out their role but also just due to the nature of being a Fed rep.

While some of the time they may just be answering questions about Police Regulations, perhaps about allowances, rest days and the like, quite often they are supporting officers through a difficult time in their careers or their personal lives.

It can sometimes feel like a thankless task, particularly if a rep is unable to secure the outcome a member wants, but it can be rewarding too.

Knowing that you have helped someone in their time of need is part of being a police officer and that is also true of being a Fed rep, the only difference being that you are helping a colleague rather than a member of the public.

I would like to thank all our branch workplace representatives for their work during 2024 and welcome on board those new reps who have started in the role following the nationwide Federation elections that were launched right at the end of the year and continued in various stages through the first half of 2025.

With a new team now in place, including a new Branch Board – essentially the Federation executive body – we are now focussed on not just maintaining the services we provide for the membership but also building on those.

As a branch, we have a rolling programme of reviews with our reps so that we can provide the very best response to members when they come to us for help. These reviews enable us to assess workloads, identify any training needs and offer support and guidance as necessary.

So, back to the finances. Our due diligence enabled us to balance the 2024 – 2025 branch budget after a line-by-line review of the balance sheet. We were able to cut central overheads by six per cent through various initiatives but also managed to protect the essential services upon which members rely.

This same approach, a close examination of costs balanced against the need to provide the very best cover for our members, enabled us to successfully re-negotiate our Group Insurance Scheme package. During 2024, we added worldwide family travel insurance, identify theft cover and on-duty firearms indemnity to the policy, but crucially also managed to hold subscription costs, despite a challenging market.

One of the key issues for members during the year was, once again, the pensions remedy, necessitated by the changes to the police pension scheme. As a branch, we funded front-loaded pension remedy support, issuing 5,700 individual packs and secured an agreement with our pensions administrator - XPS - on a 28-day query turn-round. We appreciate the uncertainty the legal processes around the pensions remedy have caused members uncertainty and therefore wanted to ensure that members were able to get their questions answered in a timely manner.

From my own perspective, during the year I led the Force-wide restricted and recuperative duties project through which every officer on adjusted duties now has an agreed skills profile, suitable posting or phased-return plan and - where needed - has an Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures (UPP) Stage 1

report drafted with welfare input and not punishment.

I also oversaw efforts to meet the challenges of legal invoice backlogs being instrumental in the recruitment of two new regional specialists, one for driver law and the other for equality.

As most members and other stakeholders are probably aware, I led a national Federation campaign which saw legislation introduced to give police drivers better protection in law through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. But the work did not end there. For the legislation to truly deliver, further work was also required. I progressed the Police Driver Training regulations with National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) secured wording that protects our advanced drivers from 'one-size-fits-all' policy breaches and puts the new Section 87A standard on a statutory footing standardising the driver standards unit model nationwide.

My campaigning work helped me secure the King's Policing Medal during 2025, an achievement of which I am incredibly proud. Not only was this an honour for me personally, but also for the West Midlands Police Federation branch since it demonstrated our ability to effectively lobby for legislative change.





REPRESENTATION

Police Federation representatives do not just represent their colleagues, they also negotiate on their behalf and seek to influence decision-makers and stakeholders.

West Midlands Police Federation has eight full-time executive officers based at Guardians House in Sheldon. They act on members' behalf in dealings with the Force and in discussions around Police Regulations, policies and procedures, locally and nationally.

Each of these full-time officials has their own roles, responsibilities and specialisms covering the full range of Federation work streams including conduct, health and safety and equality. They, along with the 47 workplace representatives, receive full training so they can professionally represent members. The workplace reps are an easily accessible first point of contact for any Federated member with a work-related or welfare issue.

Two representatives from our region, which also includes the Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia branches, sit on the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) National Board, based at the national headquarters in Leatherhead, Surrey. The board takes the lead in negotiations with the Home Office around legislative changes affecting officers.

All branches of the Police Federation held elections for new representatives during 2025. Vacancies may also still arise during the year. Federation members are advised to contact the office or their workplace representative if they want to find out more about how they can help and support colleagues.



CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE

BY DAVE HADLEY AND DAWN MURKETT, BRANCH LEADS

During 2024, we provided a Federation branch response to several consultation processes. These included The Police (Conduct & Performance) Regulations, launched following the cases of Wayne Couzens and David Carrick in the Metropolitan Police. Unfortunately, at the time of producing this report, the final draft of these regulations had not yet been published, but they were expected in the first part of 2025.

Regardless of that over-arching consultation, the Home Office did not delay implementing a change requested by chief officers who wanted to be re-installed in the role of chairs of disciplinary hearings and the Home Office produced The Police (Conduct) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, which came into effect on 7 May 2024. These removed the role of the legally qualified chair and returned the power to chair disciplinary hearings to chief officers, without waiting for the new regulations to take effect.

Further, proposed regulations relating to vetting were published for consultation. We provided a response, raising some concerns about the ability to remove vetting clearance after a misconduct hearing which had determined that the officer should not be dismissed.

Our representations said:

Our view is that where higher (than R/C) vetting clearance is to be removed, following a misconduct finding, then that might very well be reasonable, however, where a disciplinary finding was that an officer would be retained in policing following a finding, the subsequent vetting clearance considerations should afford substantial weight to the misconduct outcome, or at least 'take account' of the findings of the misconduct panel, if they are considering the removal of R/C vetting, which would lead to automatic dismissal.

In our view, it is entirely unfair that following a misconduct panel's decision not to dismiss an officer, based on the hearing, their experience of the live evidence throughout, that an office-based inspector, should be empowered to

effectively review the misconduct panel's decision over whether to retain or dismiss, and on the same facts, without the benefit of having heard live evidence, decide differently and remove all clearance - which under Regulation 20, would leave an officer liable to automatic dismissal - from someone who has already been determined to be someone who can safely remain within policing. There should be some primacy or significant weight applied to the considered view of a properly constituted misconduct panel. ”

We also raised concerns about the ability for vetting clearance to be removed – resulting in dismissal – owing to ‘adverse information’ which cannot be shared. This is suggested to fly in the face of fairness: “We can’t tell you the reason for your vetting removal and dismissal, but you’ll just have to trust us.”

The proposed changes also involved amendments to the Police Appeal Tribunal Regulations, which were responded to as administrative issues were identified in the drafting.

Regulation 13 – Discharge of probationers

The last year has also seen the Force using the Regulation 13 process for matters which previously would have been considered the sole preserve of the conduct regime. We have been working closely with the Force to ensure that, where it elects to take this route, the applicable guidance is enforced, and the process is procedurally fair.

We have acknowledged there has been a gap whereby a ‘victim’ of an allegation who is a member of West Midlands Police, appeared to have been overlooked when it comes to welfare support.

There also appears to be a lack of understanding about how the impact of being a victim of crime as an officer can have an impact of the professional journey – especially those who are young in service.

We had discussions with the professional standards department (PSD) around these gaps and consultations are currently in place whereby officers reporting to be personal victims will be flagged to PSD, and the necessary measures will be put in place.

We continue to have regular meetings with senior leaders in PSD to raise any concerns we have around any specific matters. This has proved invaluable and helps the processes and our members greatly. This continues in 2025.

Looking forward

We are hoping that after the Branch Council elections we will be able to grow the conduct and performance liaison officer (CaPLO committee) to support an ever-increasing workload.

We are also committed to continue to maintain the sensible, mature relationship we have worked hard to cultivate with the Force and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) for the benefit of the members.



PERSONNEL AND EQUALITIES

BY JON NOTT AND JULIE FLEMING, BRANCH LEADS

Work continues in supporting those on recuperative but, more particularly, in permanent, adjusted duties.

This follows on from the initiative started by the Force in the latter half of the previous year in terms of identifying roles which can accommodate the needs of officers who find themselves requiring certain adjustments.

It's an ongoing challenge to ensure the officers are protected under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the Force is aware of its duty, but also to ensure adjustments are reasonable, achievable and can be accommodated along with the business needs of the Force. This often means long negotiations and involves support and advice from GPs, occupational health and human resources.

Ever-changing roles, new team structures and changing business needs can affect those who have felt secure for many years. We have many officers who contact us in sheer panic that their agreements are being revoked in an instant, and this means swift action to

try to prevent any long-lasting damage to the officer or the organisation. There can be difficulties finding suitable locations due to many large premises closing and entire teams being moved.

The Force now has to look very carefully at the roles it has and what restriction category they each accommodate as the number of officers with long-term restrictions appear to be increasing.

Ill-health retirement remains a busy area for us as equality representatives as many officers find themselves seeking advice over this.

In addition, although attendance support meetings have been in policy for several years now, it appears the Force is trying to use these more regularly. This is not a bad thing as it is a supportive measure but, again, officers often panic over this. The Federation and the Force have put out communications about these meetings to try to allay fears.

STUDENT OFFICERS

BY JON NOTT, BRANCH LEAD

We continue to see the large intakes of probationers into the Force with the Chief Constable wanting to keep the numbers up.

This is good as the Force is hoping to increase our numbers back to a level seen many years ago, however, it does mean that the percentage of officers with a short level of service is ever increasing.

We have this year restarted our apprenticeship entry routes – the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) and the Degree Holder Entrance Programme (DHEP) after agreeing to work with a new provider, Leeds Trinity University, to provide the academic part of the programme. This is tailored slightly different to our previous programmes and should make the work-life balance for probationers easier to manage, while still being robust.

There are different avenues open to people wishing to join the Force with the non-academic routes still being available – the Police Constable Entry Programme (PCEP). New joiners can also opt for the detective constable route of this, if they wish to concentrate on becoming a detective.

There has been a move within Force so that in the majority of cases officers will complete their probation on one local policing area (LPA), rather than moving around the Force as they did previously. This is good for both the officer and the Force.

For the officer, they will be able to learn one geographical area, rather than just learning somewhere and then being moved somewhere completely new.

They will also be able to build better relationships with colleagues and supervision. For the Force, there is more continuity for officers' performance and the ability to be able to target them to specific areas to help with completing portfolios.

The Chief has reintroduced passing out parades which means at the end of the initial training phase, family are able to come and share that moment with the new officer which we also see as a positive.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

BY PATRICK MCBREARTY, BRANCH LEAD

Custody, uniforms and equipment, training centre classrooms, the seizure of dangerous dogs and staffing levels were just a few of the areas in which our health and safety workplace representatives have been involved during 2024.

Custody

One of the most concerning areas was staffing in custody which it was felt was leading to health and safety concerns.

West Midlands Police Federation issued an improvement notice, reporting the Force to the Health and Safety Executive.

While the Force has made changes, we will continue to treat this as a priority due to custody being a high-risk environment.

The Force has two super blocks and currently four satellite stations, with a fifth opening at Bournville Lane. From June 2024, all satellite stations have had two custody sergeants.

Uniform and equipment

The Uniform and Equipment Working Groups identified ill-fitting vests were causing officers back and neck issues. There were also reports that officers had their view restricted when driving, an issue that was urgently addressed.

Ben Westwood, the Force's uniform and stores manager, was very proactive and supportive in dealing with problems identified by officers. Most have been rectified by refitting or issuing alternative vest covers.

Tally Ho

The Federation was proactive in raising concerns about mould in the classrooms at the Tally Ho Training Centre.

While the Force is engaging with the Federation and reactive repairs have been carried out, this is an area that will continue to be monitored.

Dangerous dogs

With the introduction of new legislation, Force dog handlers have been involved in the seizure of illegal or reportedly dangerous dogs.

But, due to Force policy, handlers were caused mental and psychological and mental strain when they had to take these dogs to a vet and be present when they were put to sleep.

The Federation made representations on these officers' behalf. This is a policy which is no longer in place.

Staffing levels

Officers' excessive workloads in operational policing and low numbers being posted to events when considering the potential risks posed were just two of the concerns in terms of staffing level.

Public perception is important, but the Federation is concerned as to whether perception is prioritised over protection.

Looking ahead

Early in 2025, four new reps joined the Federation's Health and Safety Committee and from May all reps will be sent a newsletter covering current issues.

Health and safety reps will continue to attend various relevant meetings, including the quarterly Force health and safety meetings, the Force Assaults and Abuse Group, the Uniform and Equipment Group and the Vehicle and Taser Working Groups.

The Federation also has representation at estates meetings due to the current police locations being sold and either being replaced or combined with other sites.

Priority areas looking ahead include:

- Assaults
- The Force Contact Centre (fire evacuation)
- eSafety reclassifications with assaults
- Investigations (general and PPU)
- Refreshment breaks.

General ongoing issues include Aston Police Station, Contact Centre information dissemination, officer safety and security, student officers, fleet, transporting prisoners, Airwave and hearing issues, public order boots, custodian helmets and radio signals, both in general and particularly within hospitals.



GROUP INSURANCE SCHEME

More than 9,200 serving and retired officers and staff are covered by the West Midlands.

Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme

Life claims 2024

	Serving officer	Partner	Child	Retired officer under 65	Retired officer 65 – 69	Retired officer partner under 65	Retired officer partner 65 – 69	Grand total
Number of claims	1	0	0	2*	3	0	2	8
Amount paid	£150,000	£0	£0	£66,000	£22,500	£0	£15,000	£256,500

*One being terminal illness

Critical illness claims 2024

	Serving officer	Partner	Child	Staff member	Grand total
Number of claims	4	1	0	0	5
Amount paid	£60,000	£7,500	£0	£0	£67,500

Personal accident

Year	Number of claims	Total paid
2024	65	£8,460.14
2023	73	£19,494.65

Sickness - Regulation 28

Year	Number of claims	Total paid
2024	48	£86,687.45
2023	39	£57,457.28

Care on Demand

A total of 1,226 members used the Care on Demand facility under the Group Insurance Scheme.

The majority of the contact was via telephone (1,116 calls), while 109 used video.

Travel policy

There were a total of 339 claims under the worldwide travel policy, resulting in £249,756.20 being paid out.

RAC

There were 1,940 claims through the RAC breakdown cover. The RAC patrol attendance rate was 93 per cent, with the average time taken to attend being 73 minutes. The patrol fixed rate was 93 per cent.

Legal

Legal claims paid for 2024 amounted to £51,399.45. However, some claims may still be open and, although they may not be settled until 2025, the cost will appear in the 2024 accounts.

Mobile and gadget

There were 211 claims under the mobile and gadget cover, and the average of total cost was £12,961.02.

Critical illness

Four serving officer made claims under the critical illness cover during 2024, with £60,000 being paid out.

There was also one claim in relation to a serving officer's partner, resulting in £7,500 being paid.



ADVICE

Your Federation offered members **FREE** advice and expert support on a wide range of issues during 2024.

Police Regulations

West Midlands Police Federation's in-house expert Gary Nuttall answers all members' questions relating to Police Regulations. You can contact Gary if you have any queries on 0121 752 4900 or GNuttall@westmids.polfed.org.

Mortgages

Free mortgage advice was given to members in person or via a telephone/video call.

Our member service partner Warren and Co spoke to 400 members about their mortgages and wrote 334 cases.

First Call Mortgages handled 86 mortgage cases in 2024.

Family law

Family law surgeries were held in person or via telephone/video calls.

Managing money and planning for retirement

Our pre-retirement seminars, held for officers in the last three years of their service, once again proved popular.

During 2024, 12 seminars were held and 185 officers attended.

Financial education

West Midlands Police Federation retained the services of former branch secretary Steve Grange who has now trained as an independent financial adviser. He provided members with advice on pensions issues.

The branch held 12 seminars for officers in the last 18 months of service and 185 officers attended.

Member Services

Members could access a wide range of offers, discounts and services through our member service partners and via a dedicated section of our website: polfed.org/member-services.





COMMUNICATIONS

Twitter

AROUND
790
POSTS

WEBSITE

238
NUMBER OF
NEWS STORIES

FACEBOOK

262 **597,170** **67,600**
POSTS IMPRESSIONS INTERACTIONS

58,870 **6,739** **2,517**
LINK CLICKS FOLLOWERS AVERAGE POST REACH

24,880
PAGE VISITS



OUR FINANCES

Income

West Midlands Police Federation had a budget of £348,000 for the year 2024.

During the last year, several exercises were run to see if the branch has remained on target with its budget submission, and I'm pleased to say all targets have been met.

It's very difficult for the branch to generate funds so the purse strings will need to be reined in, as our only real form of income is subscriptions. Negotiations are underway for all branches to seek a reduction to the budget allocation.

The West Midlands branch will certainly be hit hard on the basis of size. We will endeavour to fight the corner of our membership to ensure we still deliver a great service to the membership.

Expenditure

Wages are still the branch's biggest expenditure – in line with most organisations.

West Midlands Police Federation can proudly say it has the best staff structure with the bare minimum required to run the Federation with maximum output since we have great members of staff serving you to provide a service you deserve.

The breakdown of our budget is as follows:

Personnel: Mainly wages.

Subsistence and travel: Expenses for membership and representatives.

Training: With new workplace representatives, we need to deliver the best service for members and need our reps to be up to date with legislation, health and safety guidance, personal welfare and legal matters.

Office: To provide facilities for our membership to attend and discuss any concerns outside police premises with complete confidentiality.

Events: To provide mobile facilities for road shows and attending major incidents to help the membership.

Marketing and advertisements: When the need arises to provide up to date information to members about issues of concern as well as news and views from the Federation.

IT: Staying current with IT requirements. There has been a recent investment in a state of-the-art database in a central area rather than the old system of various databases spread throughout the country thereby expediting enquiries for the benefit of the membership.

Professional services: Mainly legal to provide and represent the membership.

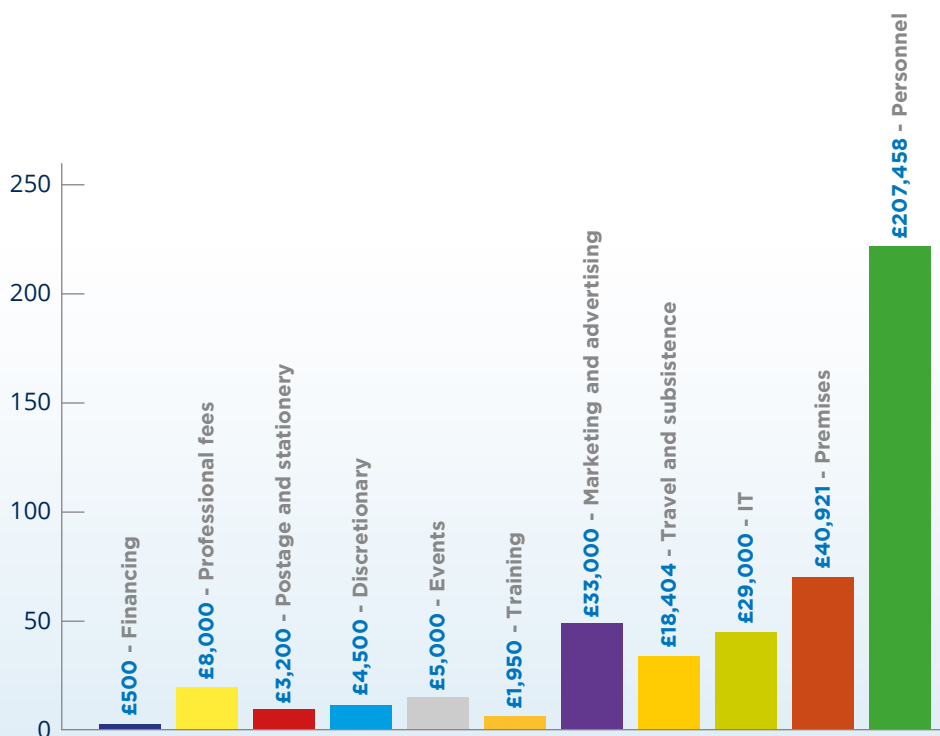
Overview

West Midlands Police Federation branch secretary, Tim Rogers, and the accounts manager will make every effort to ensure the branch receives what it needs to provide a high standard of service for members.

The main core account (subscriptions) is now run by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) in view of changes brought in after the independent review of the organisation commissioned in 2014.

The balance sheet remains strong and the branch continues to provide Member Services.

Although the investments are held by professional fund managers, West Midlands Police Federation continues to look at ways to maximise its investments and talks have taken place to update if necessary.



Supporting our members in everything we do



Photographs courtesy of West Midlands Police.

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