

**02/07/20**

## **Local MP calls for more support for retired police officers**

Bishop Auckland MP, Dehenna Davison has recently put on record her commitment to support the mental health of retired police officers, after a meeting with the National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO).

Davison, who is a member of the Home Affairs Select Committee, met with NARPO to find out more about their work and was interested to learn about what support is available to officers after they leave the force.

In April 2019, the Government announced £7.5m to fund the development of a National Police Wellbeing Service and have recently been progressing a Police Covenant which looks to recognise the service and sacrifice of those who work in policing and to deliver the practical support they need. The intended key areas of focus will be physical protection, health and wellbeing and support for families.

During their meeting, NARPO explained to Ms Davison that they have been actively campaigning for the Police Covenant to be extended to retired police officers, in the same way that the Armed Forces Covenant covers veterans. They also shared results of a survey of NARPO members, conducted by De Montfort University in 2018, which found some concerning results, including that half of retired police officers feel that their careers had affected their mental health.

After the meeting the local MP tabled a question to the Home Office to ask what steps the Government is taking to support the mental health and wellbeing of retired police officers.

### **Speaking on the issue, Dehenna Davison MP said:**

*"Our police officers dedicate their lives to protecting us and the challenges of their work will often stay with them long after they retire. I believe it is vital we do all we can in return to protect them with support for their mental health. I welcome the Government's commitment of £7.5 million and would now ask that they consider extending this funding to retired police officers, who often have to rely on charities for mental health and wellbeing support.*

*The Government is leading the way in this area already and it's important we progress the Police Covenant as soon as possible. I look forward to seeing what support is made available through this."*

### **Following their meeting Steve Edwards, CEO, NARPO said:**

*"We're incredibly grateful for the support of MPs such as Ms Davison for this important cause.*

*Mental health and wellbeing support has improved drastically in recent years for police officers. This is an important and welcome move but as soon as a police officer retires, this support stops. For many retired police officers, it is only after they retire that issues around mental health and wellbeing emerge.*

*We look forward to more information on the Police Covenant and welcome the news that mental health and wellbeing support specifically for retired officers will be considered."*

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

For more information please contact [ellie.varley@parliament.uk]

- The Police Covenant is due to put into law as part of the Police Protection and Powers Bill announced in the Queen's Speech, later this session.
- The Government have indicated that they are looking to include retired police officers within its remit.
- The written question mentioned above can be found [here](#).

**About NARPO**

NARPO is a member organisation that represents over 90,000 members spanning all forces across England and Wales.

Formed in 1919 by a group of retired police officers, NARPO is a branch-led organisation with headquarters in Wakefield. Since that time, we have become one of the largest public sector pensioner organisations in the country.

Our members include former police officers, staff, their partners and former partners and those widowed both in and after service. We strive to improve the lives of our members, whether it be in work or leisure, to thank them for the contribution they have made to our society.

**Key findings from De Montford University's survey of NARPO members:**

- Over half of retired police officers said being a member of the police had affected their mental health
- 66% said they had experienced negative or uncomfortable feelings associated with their experiences in service
- 67% said they had unexpected thoughts about their experiences – particularly nightmares and flashbacks

If you require any further information on NARPO, please contact Florence Woodrow via [f.woodrow@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:f.woodrow@connectpa.co.uk) or 07380686655.