

N.A.R.P.O

Medway and District Branch

Winter 2022

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The Winter meeting of the Branch will be held at, The Appleyard, Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne (opposite side of road to Avenue Theatre), at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 15th November 2022.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

I am sure you all agree that the sad loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11 was devastating news for the whole of the United Kingdom and would join with me in offering our sincere condolences to the Royal Family and wish King Charles 111 a long healthy and happy reign.

Having had restrictions lifted in relation to the Covid pandemic despite cases increasing at this time and flu expected to be more of a problem this year as we all mix more and more I would urge members to get both the Covid booster and a flu vaccination as soon as possible.

Hospitals appear to be reporting more Covid admissions and as a result waiting lists are expected to increase and sadly this could result in the number of deaths increasing beyond the norm expected during the winter.

The war in Ukraine is ongoing with no likelihood of it being resolved and many innocent people have died needlessly owing to civilians being deliberately targeted by Russia and this is causing gas supplies to be restricted and the inevitable vast increases in energy prices for us all. Let us all hope that this needless war is over soon and that Governments all over Europe start to realise they should not be reliant on Russian gas, which at this time is being weaponised by Russia to the detriment of Europe. Governments should and must rapidly start to make renewable and nuclear energy a top priority so we never get into this situation again.

There is not any person that is not aware of the dire economic situation that prevails at this time. The winter will be harsh for many people and especially pensioners and those on low incomes. The Government has realised the massive error in trying to reduce the rate of tax for people earning over £150K a year from 45p to 40p that would have only made those well off even better off when those on the lowest incomes would gain no benefit at all. The Chancellor has been sacked already after only a few weeks in the job following what appeared to be the Prime Ministers pledges on cutting tax rates. Benefits we were told by

the former Chancellor Rishi Sunak that they would raise by the rate of inflation but the new Prime Minister will not say if this is still the case. This could mean if not increased in line with the rate of inflation that those in most need will again be worse off. The Bank of England keep raising interest rates which puts mortgage rates up making many home owners unable to meet the higher payments. The increase in interest rates will also result in higher food prices again to the detriment of pensioners, the lowest paid and those on benefits. It has already been stated that the Government intervention with fuel prices is not sufficient to avert the crises and therefore many people will have to choose between eating and heating. The UK is a civilised nation and there are thousands of pensioners, low income families and disabled people who are already going hungry and cannot afford to heat their homes. Many thousands of children are going to school hungry and this cannot and should not be acceptable to any Government and requires urgent action. I truly hope that the government will raise benefits in line with inflation.

It appears that with many organisations going on strike due to wages not rising in line with inflation then this winter looks to be dire for many people trying to survive in the current climate.

A new Chancellor Jeremy Hunt has been appointed and has reversed the Prime Ministers unfunded tax cuts and ominously has announced that the so called £2500 energy cap will not last for the next 2 years but will be reviewed in April 2023 and then in all probability will only be available to those in most need. He also stated that some taxes may rise and public spending will likely be cut but this statement will be made on 31st October 2022. The markets seem to have reacted positively to these announcements. However these measures will raise some £32 billion which still leaves a deficit of some £38 billion, which will require substantial savings on public services and some tax rises. The Prime Minister however appears to be in a very precarious position due to the extremely poor decisions she made on getting the top job. I believe the last thing the country needs at this time is another Conservative leadership contest which takes many weeks or a general election. The current situation is so dire the country does not want this type of distraction.

We are trying to get the Sengrid group email system approved by NARPO HQ sorted out so that as members have requested an email is sent to all those on the email system informing them that new items have been place onto the website. By inference it appears that some members do not look regularly at our website.

Once again Christmas Gifts of £50 will be delivered to all Branch widows in December by the Secretary. The Committee have all agreed that this payment continue this year.

I would also ask that if any member has difficulties due to the current economic or any other issues that they contact the Secretary to see if anything can be done to alleviate any problems. We are after all a welfare organisation and are here to help and assist!

Finally, may I wish all members of the Branch and their families a Happy Christmas and hopefully a much better 2023?

TREASURERS REPORT

The Branch is in a good financial state with no monies being owed to any person. All payments that are due up to this date have been met and no financial issues are outstanding. It was agreed with the Committee that honoraria and payment to Web provider would remain the same and will be paid in December as in normal practise. The £50 Christmas Gift to widows will also be delivered in December.

2023 NARPO SUBSCRIPTIONS

The CPI for September 2023 is published at 10.1%. This should mean that the annual percentage rise in police pensions will be the same (2022 was 3.1%). This still has to be confirmed by the Government. Therefore the increase in NARPO subs will rise by the same amount and will be £24.60 (previously £22.32) and relates to £2.05 per month (previously £1.86) payable from 1st January 2023. It is hoped the Government will not renege on the rise in police pensions.

DEATH OF BRANCH MEMBERS

It is with sadness that we have lost two Branch members recently. Former DI 5094 William Robson who sadly died on 28th February 2022 and we pass on our condolences to his wife and family for their sad loss.

Former PC 3522 Brian **Bull** sadly died on 28th August 2022 and we pass on our condolences to his family for their sad loss.

OBITUARIES (* denotes Branch Member)

Former Supt 2922 Redvers Laverick	Died 5/2/22	Last served Canterbury
*Former DI 5094 William Robson	Died 28/2/22	Last served FHQ
Former Sgt 6827 Charles Thompson	Died 19/2/22	Last served Lydd
Former Insp 3226 Geoffrey Coles	Died 4/3/22	Last served FHQ
Former Sgt 2436 Cedric Stolton	Died 3/3/22	Last served Faversham
Former Sgt 2653 Gordon Boozer	Died 12/3/22	Last served Rochester
Former PC 3227 Michael Collins	Died 26/2/22	Last served Sheerness
Former Sgt 6260 Trevor Southgate	Died 18/3/22	Last served West Malling
Former PC 2912 Neil Brass	Died 27/3/22	No service history
Former PC 5955 Frederick Coates	Died 3/4/22	Last served Dover SB
Former PC 6213 William Fautley	Died 8/4/22	Last served Tonbridge
Former PC 4457 Colin Collier	Died 3/4/22	Last served Elham
Former DS 3620 Charles Turnbull	Died 26/4/22	Last served Dover SB
Former PC 1737 Hubert Haigh	Died 5/4/22	Last served Deal
Former PC 6021 Alan Davison	Died 16/5/22	Last served Sandwich
Former Sgt 7472 Michael Williams	Died 1/5/22	Last served Channel Tunnel
Former DC 4228 Peter McIntyre	Died 29/5/22	Last served Maidstone
Former Insp 2033 Denis Large	Died 27/5/22	Last served Rochester
Former DC 8621 Martin Mountstephen	Died 10/5/22	Last served Coquelles
Former PC 6711 Stephen Hollingsbee	Died 19/6/22	Last served Coldharbour
Former PC 4874 William Head	Died 14/6/22	Last served Lenham
Former PC 3990 Eric Griffiths	Died 26/6/22	Last served Nackington
Former PC 5698 Graham Edwards	Died 16/6/22	Last served Margate
Former PC 3077 Terence Sweetman	Died 20/6/22	Last served Dover Docks
Former Insp 2211 Frank Boxall	Died 20/7/22	Last served Dover
Former PC 2127 Cecil Hunt	Died 6/7/22	Last served Folkestone
Former DC 5006 Raymond Lavender	Died 2/8/22	Last served Channel Tunnel
Former PC 3299 Derek Dean	Died 6/8/22	No service history
Former DC 7499 Keith Middlewood	Died 12/8/22	Last served FHQ
*Former PC 3522 Brian Bull	Died 25/8/22	Last served FHQ
Former PC 3298 Arthur Cullen	Died 25/8/22	Last served Nackington
Former Insp 1871 Ernest Bunch	Died 31/8/22	Last served Tonbridge
Former PC 6177 Francis Dunn	Died 21/9/22	Last served Folkestone

NARPO CONFERENCE

Conference on Friday 9th September 2022 was cancelled as a mark of respect to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11. I am sure we all wish to pass on our sincere condolences to the Royal Family for this sadist of loses.

POLICE IMPARTIALITY

Alan Lees CEO of NARPO has approved this for circulation to members and I will leave it to members to decide if they wish to sign petition or not.

As a former, once proud, Sussex police officer, along with many others, I am deeply concerned with how 'police impartiality' is now being disregarded and in fact, extraordinary 'favour' is being shown to some minority groups. Particularly singled out for this support are, for example, Gay Pride and Black Lives Matter (bending the knee).

I cast my mind back to 1984, when as a police officer and a Northumbrian coal miner's son/brother; my loyalties were tested when I policed the Miner's Strike in Yorkshire and Kent. I had sympathies for the miner and his cause BUT I disguised them and did my duty. Had I faced the picket line displaying a banner saying, 'Proud to be a miner's son', I'd have found myself very quickly back in Sussex and charged with 'discreditable conduct in bringing the police service into disrepute. Whilst times have changed the concept of British policing, the police oath and disciplinary regulations have not...AND should be abided by.

The news is far too frequently reporting on officers, participating in Gay Pride by painting their cheeks with the 'rainbow emblem' and now videos of them embarrassingly dancing the Macarena. This is not just a show of support; it's turned into the main entertainment.

Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting a female parent, who has no police connections and aptly compared police conduct to this,

' I compare it to a parent neglecting their all-important parenting duties by prioritising and focusing on befriending the child'.

I must make it clear that I am neither homophobic nor racist and therefore I am against ALL and ANY group that is supported by, on or off-duty officers IN UNIFORM participating, in ANY event, staged by a minority group.

Like me, many of my ex-colleagues say that they are now ashamed of the complete disregard shown to the once worldwide respected reputation of the British Police in their policy of TOTAL IMPARTIAL POLICING.

My initial findings are that it appears that the participation outlined is encouraged by chief police officers and PCC's BUT it has clearly gone too far.

Many of the public are simply outraged at being told when reporting crimes such as house burglary and assault, that there is no police available to attend BUT at the same time are viewing uniformed police dancing the Macarena, whilst some say the criminals dance circles around them.

I am not content to merely grumble about the situation and I am prepared to spearhead a fight back to police basics. With this in mind, I have started a petition to restore 'impartial policing.'

However, I need your support in signing the petition and I hope you join me in the signing.

Here is the link to the petition;

<https://www.change.org/p/stop-on-duty-police-from-showing-support-and-remain-impartial-whilest-policing-events?>

Tom Curry (Sussex).

KENT BRANCHES BEREAVEMENT BOOK

A Meeting was held recently to discuss Kent Branches having their own book giving information on all aspects of bereavement and details of agencies to be informed as well giving members the opportunity to enter their service history for the information of next of kin which will assist them when giving information for obituary notice. It will also contain information on wills, lasting power of attorney and probate. Once draft has been prepared a further meeting will be held to discuss how best to proceed.

WIDOWS PENSIONS FOR LIFE

This issue is ongoing we hope in the near future when if there is any justice this matter will be resolved and widows will not have to lead a solitary existence due to this discriminatory rule in the pension scheme. An update on the situation can be found on the NARPO website. Widows should not be expected to choose between financial security and happiness.

THE TRIPLE LOCK & INFLATION

State pensions are we are told by the Government will rise in line with inflation which would appear to be around a 10% rise, which is welcome news for pensioners but would still fall short of that required in the current economic situation. There are several items on line which appear to suggest that the Government are looking into the triple lock system for next year which if done away with would adversely affect people who rely on just the state pension. It is apparent that the Treasury are looking at this and I am sure we all hope that in current situation they do not renege on this year's rise.

HISTORY OF MARGATE BOROUGH POLICE

A former colleague Nigel Cruttenden has written a book on the history of the above from 1858 to 1943 titled 'WATCH & WARD' and is available on line or at all good book shops and is published by Ozaro Books.

POLICE MUTUAL MOTOR INSURANCE

I recently received my renewal notice for my vehicle from Police Mutual which showed my premium had gone up by a fraction below £100. I had made no claims so was a little mystified and telephone to enquire why this was the case and was told that all premiums had gone up and nothing could be done. I contacted other insurers and obtained a price from LV which was well over £100 less than that offered by Police Mutual and gave good cover except that I had to pay a small excess for windscreen replacement. I would advise all members that when there renewal comes in from Police Mutual and get similar rises they check other insurers as what used to be a good insurer appears to be not quite so competitive anymore.

MEMBERS CHANGE OF DETAILS

Should any member change address or other details then please notify the Secretary in order that paperwork arrived at correct site with correct details. Can we also request that all those that have email addresses send these to the Secretary as with 312 members I feel sure some have not provided an email address? The reason for requesting email addresses is to try to save on high costs of printing and postage and thus provide the branch with funds to improve the service we are able to provide to pensioners. As you will be aware postage has risen by a large amount in April 2020

Your assistance in providing these email details will be appreciated. We understand that not all members have email addresses and these will continue to receive newsletters by post as normal.

WELFARE AND BENEVOLENT FUND

The branch runs welfare section and any member with any problems should contact the Secretary for any advice etc. All conversations and dealings are dealt with in the strictest confidence. Welfare representatives are Bruce Goldfarb and Terry Lynch.

BRANCH WEBSITE

Those members that have access to the branch website at www.medwaynarpo.org are reminded to check the website regularly for updates. Should any member wish to advertise items for sale etc on this website, then please contact the Secretary. The website shows all the latest updates for your information.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman - Mr Terry Lynch

Vice Chairman - Mr Stephen Bull

Secretary/Treasurer Bruce Goldfarb

Committee Members:

*Mr Christopher Mayes, Mr Robert Morris, Mr Maurice Baggott, Mr Frank Gallagher
Mr Peter Simmons*

NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Should any member have any item they wish to discuss in the absence of Meetings can they notify the Secretary in order that the matter can be discussed.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at The Appleyard, Avenue of Remembrance Sittingbourne.

B.T. Goldfarb Branch Secretary