

Return to work meeting part 2

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more likely what was discussed. Yeah, and at trained school Elliot, we do our best to kind of have lessons, breaks happening every 45 minutes to an hour, but sometimes they're all over. So I'm supporting one lad here who, I'm going to do a load of mentoring when he goes off to teach, which I think is phenomenal.

He's come from a really tough background, he's doing really well here, but needs a little bit more and I've totally invested in him. So when he goes off to teach, mentoring, but every about 45 minutes where the classes continue or not, he has to stand up and he has to get out, you know, fair enough. The trainers know that and they don't take offence.

We try and get the catch-ups all sorts of fluently, trying to get it in tune, but you know, sometimes the lessons go over, but there's always that flexibility and we can let everyone know who's in class, you don't have to explain yourself each time, what we're going to put in place for. So again, let's take that weight off your shoulders, let's take that weight off your shoulders. We could have it set up as well, that he sits near the door so he can get in and out without- We do that, yeah, that's what we've done as well, yeah, near the fire exit.

Okay. Again, you know, this is the theme with all of the adjustments I requested. Again, aggressively generic request because I had no input to support me with it when I initially made it.

It's not, the reasonable adjustments are not necessarily the issue when it comes to the return to work. They aren't necessarily the issue when it comes to training school. It is the support, the reasonable adjustments are going to be the most critical, a district.

So again, I guess the conversations have been had with you. I bet Chris from the FED probably can comment on this. The role of police constable is the role of police constable.

I think it's developed a lot since I went through training 20 years ago. However, it's still at times, you are the only person, you are the only unit, you are going to be doing that. And ultimately, you have to take a deep breath and say, is this the job for me? If they can't always promise these things and it's always in stone that you get that, is this for me? I would say in a lot of jobs, there's probably a little bit more flex, but in every job I've worked and I've had a great variety of jobs outside of police force, there is always a point where you are the person, you're going to have to do that.

And I have reasonable adjustments myself. So for me, I'll let you know, I've got dyscalculia, dyslexia and ADHD. So I've got some reasonable adjustments I've put in place and sometimes, yeah, sometimes it works really well, other times it's a bit tougher.

But there you go, you have to have a think about that. But I would suggest, let's get you back into work first of all, let's get you doing this job, then let's get you into the training cohort, get you through there, and then we can have a look at district there. But if at this moment in time, you're saying, listen, in the future, I don't think you'd be able to do these adjustments without these, I can't be a police officer, then that is a really tough one.

And you speak to Chris about that and have a chat, because that's how it's coming across to me at the moment in this meeting. I don't know if I'm getting the wrong end of the stick though, because it is over Teams and it's the first time we've spoken. Sergeant, you have hit the nail on the head there.

The bottom line is, I require reasonable adjustments to be a police officer. The organisation to date has rejected every request for reasonable adjustments as completely unreasonable. But we haven't said that at all today, Elliot.

We've been listening very attentively to what you've said, and Matt and Lara have tried to come up with things to help you from things you've previously said. We really just want to help you. This is one meeting, all meetings prior where I have discussed reasonable adjustments.

Those reasonable adjustments have been either completely rejected with regard to district or have just not been addressed. I've not been completely disregarded in it, and I absolutely don't want to get in a sort of tip-tap thing. But things like the regular breaks, when it's been explained, when it would have been explained, what we don't want to do is say, yes, we can promise you that every 15 minutes past the hour, you'll get five, 10 minutes break just to walk about, just to sort of decompress.

Because I do not want to turn around and say, yeah, of course we're going to do that, because I know full well, and Matt knows full well, and Chris will know full well, that as a police officer, that's not always going to be possible. What we don't want to do is give you false promises. So when we say that it's not reasonable, it's for a reason.

Ultimately, adjustments have to be reasonable adjustments, and there's certain things. There are a multitude. I have reasonable adjustments.

Matt has them. There are all sorts of people who have reasonable adjustments, and we'll cater for whatever we can cater for. But when you say that everything's been rejected, I don't want to get in an argument with you about it.

I won't get in an argument about it, and it's all we've ever wanted to do is see you succeed. But things weren't, it wasn't black and white, no, we're not doing that, we can't do that. There has to be, they have to be reasonable, and we have to find a way that we can support you without, one, impacting on operational demand, but two, being unreasonable and setting you up for an expectation that may not be delivered.

There may be days, there may be shifts, where do you know what, they can say, yeah, Elliot,

you're only doing an hour on that scene guard, and we've got somebody to swap you with. There may be days where you've got enough where you can get in that police car, and you can have a break from the radio, and just show yourself away for a little bit, and have that decompression time. But there may be days where they can't.

There's been days, I hope it doesn't happen so much now, where I've spent 10 hours outside somebody's cell because there was nobody else to do it, you know, needing the loo and needing some food, and it just wasn't feasible. I'd like to think that doesn't happen so much today, but I wouldn't be able to guarantee it. So we've always wanted to be realistic with you about what we can and can't cater for.

But things weren't, it wasn't very much along the lines of, no, that just doesn't happen. Yeah, and those situations in the past, Elliot, it comes across to me that there's some trauma there for you. That's something to work through.

We can start to work through on it here. You're obviously doing a lot of work in your own time, which, hats off to you. I'm a full believer in counselling.

I've done lots of counselling myself. It's great, and we'll get through that. But what I'm saying to you is, this is the first meeting you've had with me.

I'm saying, I'll be looking after you whilst you're here at training school. I'll be pushing you as you come along, and sometimes getting back into it. Sometimes getting back into the workflow, coming back into this building, and realising I can do that.

It can be one of the most beneficial things as well, and having an active mind. There's times in my life where being at work's been an absolute blessing, because then I've not had time to think about all my stuff at home, and all my personal stuff. There's other times where it's probably not been the best time for me to be at work, to be honest.

But we'll work with you on it, Elliot. There's genuinely, I can promise you from me, there's no judgement at any of that stuff. And as you get to know me, I'll tell you probably more and more.

I'll share with you, and hopefully you'll share with me. We'll look after you. Yeah? Yeah, one of the adjustments that we have discussed that we would like to offer you as well when you come back this time around is that if you have regular medical appointments, because you've done the training already, so if you missed little bits here and there, I think, unless there's a massive change in the training programme, I would say if you could have your medical appointments at the beginning of the day or towards the latter end of the afternoon, that if you had to miss certain lessons to make sure that you are able to keep on top of whatever medical appointments you need, that's definitely something that we would be able to facilitate.

We ask for all medical appointments, if possible, to be taken outside of work time, but we recognise with some of them, they can't be. But yeah, again, we can talk all the way through that, Elliot. And we'll have to get some course dates, start times from you, and then we'll get

some dates off you for all those bits and bobs.

Again, it's all discussions that we can have. Is there, forgive me, Elliot, don't mind me asking, is there things we could do? Because obviously you wanted to be a police officer, and there was obviously things that were attractive about being a police officer when you left university and everything that you wanted to do. It was a job that you were looking forward to.

Are there things we could do to make it more enthusiastic? What was it about policing that really excited you and that drove you to want to apply? And we would like to help you to feel more enthusiastic about it, if that's possible. What aspects of policing are the ones that particularly interest you? Are you asking this question with a view to applying the adjusted duties policy? I suppose I'm just asking, well, partly, but also because that might help with a future career, in terms of whether it's the DC or the PSEP, the uniform route. But it's more around trying to help you to come back and be positive about things and try and ignite the interest and trying to help with you feeling better towards things.

Police work isn't the issue. I'm as enthusiastic about the role of constable as I have ever been, arguably more so, having been kept from it for so long. The problem I have is that today, it feels that West Yorkshire Police has put up every barrier it could find between me and the role of constable.

And forgive me, but this meeting is one that I have had about half a dozen times, if not more. I can see that because you're in the meeting and I'm not picking up any positivity, I want to move forward, I want to come back, here's my ideas. I'm picking up a lot of kind of like mulling over the past, keeping on going back through the past lots.

I'm trying to get you to move forward. Yeah, I know you're saying I've had this meeting lots of times, but this is the first meeting for me. I'm saying to you, let's move forward.

Let's get this done. And I want you to be coming on that journey with us, is what I'm after here. And I want to stop going into the past all the time.

If you need to deal with that, if you need to put in complaints, put in complaints. Yeah, just get it done. This meeting is about moving forward.

So let's, please, let's get us moving forward. Let's get the positivity here. In, aside from the recent adjustments earlier, in your ideal world, what would the path from today onwards look like in terms of like time scales, what you need, what would be, if you sat at home now and went, right, this would be brilliant if I did this, what would you need moving forward? To be honest with you, I can't answer that question right now, because, I just, sorry to, to address you directly to the Sergeant Guy.

I would very much like to move forward. The problem is we're on the same tracks as we were as an organisation, you know, with me and West Yorkshire Police, we're on the same tracks as we were September 2023. We've gone through that, we've done that, haven't we? We have, but my

concern and my worry is that we are effectively, we're going round about a second time.

I think we are, I think we are. You might not, and I understand why you wouldn't, because you're new to this situation, this is, you know, your first meeting with me, this is, you know, your sort of initial interaction with me. The problem is everything that is being talked about now has already been talked about historically in the same kind of manner you have discussed it.

And then issues have arisen, problems have occurred, and we have wound up, or I have wound up, where I am currently. Well, I mean, we are trying to move forward, but if we're going to talk about historic, when these initial conversations all took place, it was very much in the infancy of you receiving counselling, treatment. Has anything progressed then since you first started in the treatment? Have they given you coping? Have you been able to deal with situations differently, cope with things differently? So that's how we can readdress.

Instead of taking it back to September 23, we can use the treatment you've had, the counselling you've had, and move forward with that and start from scratch today. So we are, in effect, drawing a line in the last 15 months? No, we're not drawing a line. I don't know where that comment's coming from.

What I'm saying is, like Matt said, we're here to move forward. We're here to try and put the plans in place. It's not about forgetting anything that's happened in the past.

It's about you opening up now. We can't make the promises, but we can talk about reasonable adjustments. We can bring it all back to the table to discuss now, and we can put the plans in place to move forward.

Everything that we're talking about that you keep coming back to is historic. We're here to start looking at the future, to get you back to training, to do what we can do to support you back into the workplace. I'm not forgetting anything that's happened.

I've not referred to forgetting anything that's happened. I'm asking for us to look at what we can do for you now. That's the point I'm trying to make, is that in order to look at what can be done now, what has happened historically needs to be addressed, because from where I'm sitting, the proposal is effectively, we're going to do it again, but this time, it's not going to go parachute.

No, we're doing it again, and we're making lots of new changes, lots of new choices. You're engaged lots more. Your voice is going to be heard, and we're going to move forward with it, ultimately, you're a cop.

We need you in work. We need you working. That's the job.

Let's get it done, and let's have it. Work-life balance. I think work takes up far too much of my time for me not to enjoy it.

We need you to be in here. We need you to be enjoying it. We need you to want to do the job, and I will do my absolute darndest.

I will motivate and do everything I possibly can to ensure that I give you the best chances of getting that done, as will the team here. I can tell you that now. That's the plan.

I guess, are we just saying that you're going to chat to Chris about this and what we've talked about in this meeting? Is that where we're at now, and then you can come back to me? Hopefully, that's this week, and we can get something in place maybe for next week. If that's a good time frame. If not, it'll be a bit longer, a longer delay.

Chris, would you like to chime in on what we've heard over the years? Yes. I've got a free day on Friday, if that gives you enough time to consider it yourself earlier, and then we can catch up on Friday to discuss what your feelings are. I don't expect to ambush you straight after this meeting to pin down what your opinions and feelings are.

The way I see it, yes, there's historic issues that need addressing, but this isn't the forum for that. This forum is simply about how we move forward, and you and I can talk about addressing the previous issues in that Friday meeting. From the proposal today, unless I've misunderstood it, it's sort of a three-stage process.

First stage is coming back into work in an administrative support role with reasonable adjustments as discussed. During that period, any reasonable adjustments that may need to be put in place for going back onto a cohort in January can be discussed during your period on this administrative role. Then during your cohort training, the 16 weeks plus one week leave, that gives the organisation itself a chance to collaborate on what reasonable adjustments look like for going out on your 10-week long patrol.

When we get to that point, they're either going to be reasonable adjustments that both sides agree, and we give them a shot and see if they are able to meet the competencies that we need to set up during that 10-week period. If they're not agreed, either based on you don't think they're good enough adjustments, or the organisation doesn't think that they are reasonable in the circumstances for the Office of Constable, then we will have to take another decision at that point. But we can't second-guess what that decision will be towards the end of the 16-week training.

It may be that the reasonable adjustments are revisited and there's something workable which gives you a decent chance of getting your 10-week competencies signed off, or it may be that the reasonable adjustments that you request are not reasonable in the eyes of the organisation, and then we need a further discussion about where we go from there. But to try and pre-empt that conversation, which will be roughly May, about May time, to pre-empt that now would do you a disservice because that's another six months where you're not in the organisation, where you're not engaging with the organisation. There's risk of half-pay issues, that sort of thing.

So I would say following our discussion on Friday, we could probably look at mapping out a route for you. And if you want as well, Elliot, I'll draft up today kind of like a support plan thing that we do here with some of my suggestions of reasonable adjustments. A complete draft.

I'm not asking you to sign it. Have a look at it. Say, I like that.

I don't like that. I like this. I don't want this.

Could you add this? Could we change the wording? I'll send that off so that you and Chris can have a chat. And if you want, I can share it with you and Chris at the end of this meeting. Well, after I've typed it up.

Takes me a bit of time. Yeah? That'd be wonderful. Thank you so much.

Great. No worries at all. No worries at all.

I suppose the bottom line for me is, and again, I do apologise because it is a, delving back into the historic issues, but the things that occurred, occurred. You have effectively come to me today to ask me to trust you. Why, why would I? Why should I? Is that West Yorkshire Police as an organisation? Yes.

Yeah, it's a tough one. Lots of officers struggle with that. And Chris will talk about that.

Martin, Dan, we'll all talk about that. And people do. Stuff happens in the past.

There's a bit of trauma there. There's a bit of kind of conflict. It's a tough one.

And that's about life and about moving forward. So all I can say to you is, me as an individual and Danny Evan on this team, we've worked in numerous times with numerous officers who've all got back in. And I'd say we've got a really high success rate of people coming back in and engaging and doing well.

So at the end of this, you might say, Sergeant Mack guy, useless. I wouldn't trust him again. You might, you might do.

Hopefully not. Hopefully not. But I'll tell you now, I'll do my absolute darndest to make this as good as workable for you as I possibly can.

And my communication will be as clear with you as I possibly can. Yeah. And if it's any reassurance, if the, I mean, I will stand up without going into detail, but I'll stand on and say, you know, we did this best for you before.

And it went on for so long purely because of the medical issues. And there wasn't, there wasn't, you know, very black and white. No, that can't happen.

But I will be stepping away from here from this point. As I stepped away in August, because of obviously potential complaints, it wouldn't be right for me to be involved. So I will have no

involvement with this at all.

Now, when you come to training school, it will purely be Sergeant Guy. And then when you hit a district, your CIU Sergeant will be dependent on what team you end up on. I don't work alongside the team anymore.

At the moment for CIU, but at least the next 12 months, I think I purely do things like regulation, 13s and PCSO assessments. So you won't have any involvement with me. So it will be very much a new team around you.

I suppose that does rather bring us to the elephant in the room, which is the five month gap between our last interaction and this one now. You want to discuss that now? Are you, Chris, are you happy with us discussing that now? Yeah, it's, it's, it's... Okay, so the five month interaction is at the point when we had the meeting with Sarah Brown, where it was your ill health retirement. You'd had a meeting with Dr. Darney, I can't remember the dates.

And then the following day, we had a meeting with Sarah Brown, where she went through with myself, you, and Chris, your Fed Rep, I can't remember his surname. David, yeah, Chris Davey, your Fed Rep. At the point where you were told you were going into ill health retirement, there was nothing really for me to do in terms of that.

There was nothing I could do in terms of that. It's Dr. Darney that makes the decision that we're going to put you through with that. Day-to-day, I didn't speak to you day-to-day, because I'm not your day-to-day, it was down to resourcing.

And at the point where it has then transpired that there is a potential complaint about the DVLA, obviously it's not, it's not suitable for me. And the first I was aware that you were sick, your supervision at resourcing have come and said they will take full ownership of you. So for me not to have any contact with you, whilst you were at work, until I knew that there was obviously, I didn't know there was a problem until you'd gone off, that's why you've had no contact with me.

And then they've actually, there was an email saying that they will take full ownership in October. I've had three weeks off myself in October, so there's no requirement for me. When they're taking full ownership, they've assumed it.

So my understanding there is that they would have advised you of that and told you that I have no involvement from that point on. Does that make sense? It does, yes. It's not that I've disengaged willingly, Elliot.

I would have loved to have supported you all the way through and seen you hit it. But unfortunately, that's the point where it was a resourcing inspector said, we will take ownership. And my supervision said, you now need to step away.

And I will communicate that with him. And anything to do with the ill health retirement is there

moving forwards. And why did you not address with me the extension of my probation? That's not my job to do.

I don't deal with extensions. In terms of extended probations, they will always be done if you've not completed the requirements sufficiently, that we can say that you will be a efficient and well-conducted constable, mentally and physically fit. And I use those words because that's part of the legislation.

So all that will happen, it's quite a generic process. Although it's case-by-case, it's generic in the terms of, we'll have a conversation with one of the sergeants that sometimes work from here, Emma. She takes full responsibility of Reg 12.

And she prepares a letter, gives it to the SLT to sign, and they send it off. The CAU sergeant, the way it works, it's probably easier to explain how it works. When somebody gets recoused or they can't continue with their cohort, the CAU sergeants prepare what's called the changing circumstances form.

So we'll talk about whether they need a break in learning, which is something to do with university funding, which didn't really affect you obviously, whether they need a recourse, and sometimes we'll leave it open-ended. So for things like pregnancy, long-term ill health, we've got a reservist that got called up to Cyprus for a year. We'll leave it open-ended.

What happens is that information will go onto a really sort of like quite simple spreadsheet with the original probation end date, and then 60 days before the end of the probation date, a letter is prepared by Emma Epton, so that's the sergeant that does them, and it gets signed. We don't intend to do immediately at the time. So we obviously knew when you were off long-term, we knew that you were going to need an extension.

Of course, we did at the time, but when it gets done in the first instance, it gets done by either the chief inspector or the superintendent here, so they're allowed to extend one, possibly two occasions, might correct me, and then after that has to be an ACC. So to minimise the paperwork, we'll only ever do it 60 days before your probation ends, but obviously we have to keep you as probationer. We couldn't confirm you in post because you haven't done your 10 weeks, and we haven't seen you in that operational setting, so we can't say that you fit the requirements of well-conducted or efficient or mentally, physically fitting.

I think that's the right wording. So it's quite standard to extend probation. Does that make sense? It does, yes.

Okay. A lot of students will. They get recoused.

We get this an awful lot. They'll get recoused from, I don't know, 20 to 22, and they kind of forget about it because it doesn't, physically, it doesn't really make much difference to them apart from the ones at uni where they have their uni dates changed, but they settle in, and they get very wrapped up in day-to-day life, and then 60 days before the end of the original

probation, they get a letter saying your probation is now extended, and they go, what on earth is this? Where has this come from? Because they forget that they've been recoured. So I think we don't, I don't know how we'd explain it.

We do it the 60 days before just to minimise the paperwork. That's all, but it is a bit for a lot of people. But again, because that's something, the Reg 12s are solely owned by M Reperton.

Once we've handed your details over to go onto that spreadsheet, I don't really keep track of when they send the extension letters. If I'd have known it was coming out, I'd have had a bit of a chat with you about it. But to be honest, at the time, it was a process that we weren't really involved with, and we didn't know they were doing it 60 days before.

They've just found a really efficient way to do it. I didn't know that. Yeah, we didn't.

Sorry to interrupt. I would also suggest that the 60 days is because there might be a further change of circumstance. That extension then isn't required because whenever somebody's off, they come back to work early.

They do get back on track, and they still can meet their original completion date. Yeah, and we do get that, yeah. We do get that, especially with things like the pregnancy maternity.

They will catch up. A lot of them will do the uni work, and they've done their own uni work in their own time. So they've managed to catch up quite quickly.

So that's why we leave it until the last possible minute. And as well, we get some people where we've got a guy that's and the poor lad's been waiting for surgery for nearly 18 months from the NHS. So if we'd have recoured him once, then we have to recourse again and again, depending on how long his recovery takes.

And as you know, any kind of mental, physical health is so unpredictable. So we do it at the last minute with that. I hope that gives you a bit of understanding of the probation extension and the Reg 12.

It does, yes. Thank you. Good, good.

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