

Leadership & Decision Making in Policing

(Martin O'Neill taught me all I know)

Tim Smith

Chief Constable, Kent Police



OFFICIAL SENSITIVE



Protecting and **servicing** the people of Kent

Introduction

Topics

- My personal Journey
- Leadership Behaviours- what makes a good Police leader?
- Leadership Principles
- Leadership Standards



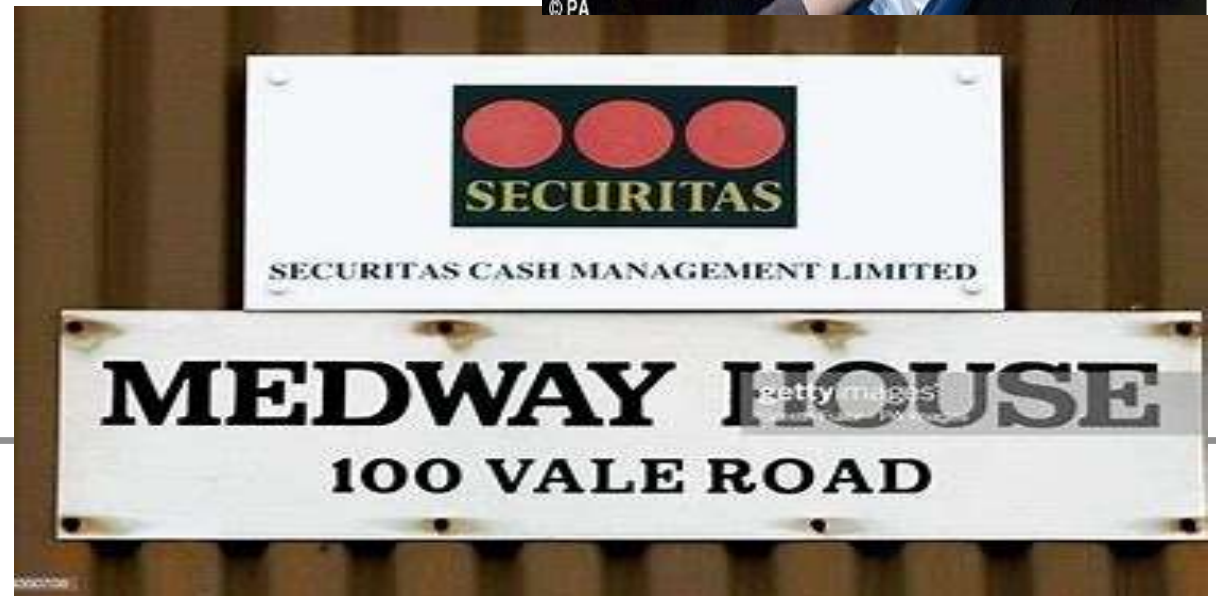
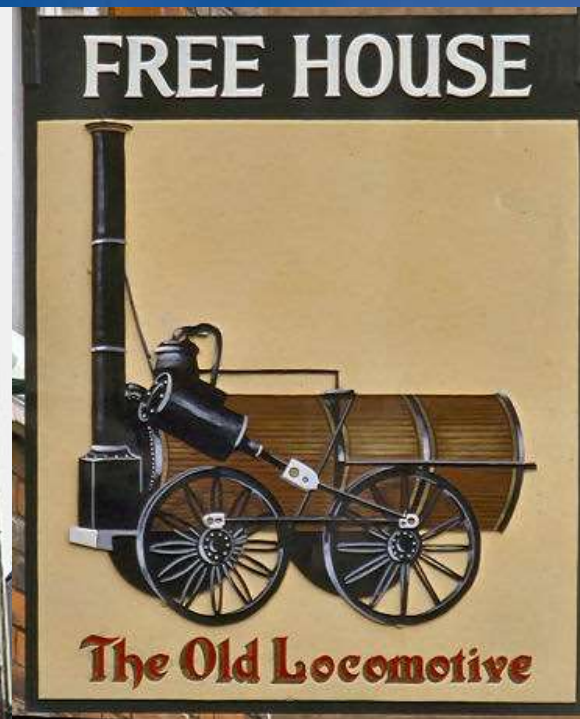
My Roles

- **Constable** (1991-1996) – **Detective** Constable (1996 – 1998)
- **Sergeant** (1998-2001) – **Detective** Sergeant (1999-2001)
- Area **Detective Inspector** (2001-2003)
- Area **Detective Chief Inspector** (2003-2005) – Serious & Organised Crime (2005-2007)
- **Detective Superintendent** – Head of Major and Serious Organised Crime (2007-2009)
- Seconded to Australia – Area Commander (January 2009-April 2009)
- Deputy Area Commander Superintendent (2010-2011)
- T/Ch Supt – Area Commander South Kent (2011)
- Supt – Deputy Divisional Commander – East Division (2011-2012)
- D/Supt – Head of Public Protection (2012-2014)
- **Detective Chief Superintendent** – Head of Central Investigation Command – Special Branch, Ports Policing & Public Protection (2014-2016)
- Ch/Supt – Divisional Commander North Kent (2016-2019)
- **Assistant Chief Constable** SCD (2019)
- **Assistant Chief Constable** Crime (2020)
- **Deputy Chief Constable** April (2021)
- **Chief Constable** October (2022)

My Experience

- Command, management of serious crime & criticality at every rank;
 - DI – Murders & Manslaughters (R V Willoughby 2004)
 - DCI – Attempt murder of police officer
 - DCI/Det Supt – Op Deliver
 - Ch/Supt – Divisional Commander and Strategic Firearms Command
 - ACC – Op Melrose
 - DCC - Force Operational Performance Lead and Head of Professional Standards
- Time at senior ranks – DCI – SUPT – CH/SUPT ACC- Value of Experience

Never shy away from the difficult roles = most learning



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Leadership Behaviours

What makes a good leader?

Someone who understands their role

- Someone who develops the right culture - Kent Police Pledge
- Someone who sets the standard
- Someone who has the systems in place to review and address performance
- Someone who looks after staff and their welfare
- Someone who makes effective decisions



KENT POLICE PLEDGE

- Provide a **high-quality** policing service, delivered with **absolute integrity**
- **Support and protect** victims
- **Catch criminals** and solve crime

Kent Police

My Commitment

- I will prioritise your health, safety and wellbeing, ensuring you have appropriate support services, and that those who assault or abuse you in the course of your duty are dealt with robustly.
- I will do all I can through partnerships, technology and process improvement to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and inappropriate demands you face, ensuring workloads are reasonable.
- I will ensure the resourcing of frontline teams is prioritised.
- I will ensure you are all skilled and equipped to perform your roles, with professional continuous development available to all.
- I will ensure selection, promotion, grievance and discipline processes are fair to all.
- I will trust and empower you to make the decisions you need to make. When honest, genuine mistakes are made and you have acted in good faith, I will support your learning and development.


Tim Smith, Chief Constable

Our Commitment

We will deliver the core elements of policing to the highest standards – responding to contact from the public, preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, investigating and solving crime, and relentlessly pursuing those who commit crime. In doing so we will:

- be accessible and visible;
- listen and talk to all communities and ensure the public can have trust and confidence in Kent Police in all that we do; and
- ensure Neighbourhood Policing remains the bedrock of our service to the public, with locally-based named police officers for every ward in Kent.

Our Priorities

- We will respond appropriately and effectively to all contact from our public, always prioritising our response when there is the greatest urgency, risk of harm and vulnerability
- We will focus on solving crimes through thorough investigations, and the relentless pursuit of criminals.
- We will support and protect those that are victims and witnesses of crime, explaining our actions and keeping them informed of progress.
- We will have a clear focus on preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as stopping offenders from causing harm to our public and our communities.
- We will have a relentless focus on eradicating violence against women and girls.

Our Values

- We will always act professionally and with integrity, behaving in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Behaviour.
- We will treat everyone with dignity and respect, without prejudice, whatever the circumstances.
- We will not discriminate or abuse our position of trust and authority in society and will actively pursue those that do.
- We will respect and support each other.
- We will proactively root out racism, misogyny and sexism in our Force.
- We will ensure colleagues feel valued, included, and confident to be themselves in the workplace, and that our Force is representative of the communities we serve.

Leadership Principles

“Leadership is not about a title or a designation. It’s about impact, influence, and inspiration.” (Robin S. Sharma)

- “What sort of environment am I going to create for my staff?”
- Will you live behaviours or play at them?
- They are people?
- Empathy, Kindness are key (never to be confused with weakness)
- Keep personal feelings out of it! (professional relationship – C of E)

Leading People

- Be there when things are bad, take time out when they are good – leading from the front is not a bad thing
- Balance work – home (but take a long term view)
- Always seek compromise where possible
- Work hard in your role – support your staff, peers & boss
- Never take yourself too seriously (but recognise when to be serious!)
- Supervision & Support (How do you balance this?)

Leadership - Effective Decision Making



“People often avoid making decisions out of fear of making a mistake. Actually the failure to make decisions is one of life's biggest mistakes.”

Noah Weinberg

“Inability to make decisions is one of the principal reasons executives fail. Deficiency in decision-making ranks much higher than lack of specific knowledge or technical know-how as an indicator of leadership failure.”

John C. Maxwell



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Operation Melrose – Vietnam enquiries



ILOR

NCA & Embassy – Concerns about long term relationship

Volume of families to see – Geography – Health and Welfare of Staff

Coronavirus – advice changing whilst out there!



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Decision

18.30 1 November 2019 Decision 2: To circulate a media release stating that we believe the victims are Vietnamese nationals.

Rationale: At this time I have had strong representations from the Vietnamese Ambassador to the UK and other Officials asking me not to release the nationality of the victims. I have spent some hours discussing the matter and had ascertained that the reasoning for this request is that it may cause a level of public panic in Vietnam and in Vietnamese communities within the UK and that a Vietnamese delegation will arrive in the UK on Sunday 3 November. However I have balanced this with intelligence that indicates there is unlikely to be any such 'panic'. This is mainly as a result of widespread media reporting in Vietnam and the UK indicating some of the victims are Vietnamese. I have taken the request not to publish at this time seriously but balancing this against the need to progress the enquiry I have decided it is in the victims, their families and wider public best interest that I do so. I rely particularly on the following to support this decision;

- The publication will only name the nationality of the victims, not their identities.
- The publication makes it clear identities have not been confirmed.
- The Senior Coroner has stated it is desirable to make such a release to help try and identify victims.
- Despite several requests over several days the Vietnamese Authorities have yet to furnish me with the validated identification papers needed to formally identify the victims.
- The release will contain contact details for any families of victims to make quick and ready contact with staff working on the enquiry.

Decision Making

- Models to help us: NDM / Conflict Management Model
- What are the priorities? What is the objective?
- What is the impact of the decision? (Pebble or Boulder)
- How will you communicate and record it?
- Pledge / Code of Ethics (your own thoughts/values/morals/experiences/knowledge)
- Sound rationale = reasoned argument =defensible decision
- **Always** consider new information (it may or may not change you mind).....**AND**
- **Always** be prepared to accept a wrong decision – but learn from them
- It **will** stand up to pressure and scrutiny

Ask other people to help you!

(tactical advisors, peer reviews, senior staff, independent advisors)

Leadership Standards

Legitimacy

- Link between professionalism and public trust and confidence
- Can you trust the Police?

Key Issues

- Sexual Misconduct & Abuse of Position for Sexual Purpose
- Corruption – SOC & Data

Setting and Maintaining Standards

- Supervision and Inspection
- Standards of Professional Behaviour – Appearance
- Civility – Both External and Internal
- Agile Working impact
- Code of Ethics – Nolan Principles + 2

What sort of environment am I going to create for my staff?

Will you live behaviours or play at them?

Remember your staff are people. Empathy and kindness are key.

*Keep personal feelings out of it!
Be consistent*

*Have a Professional relationship
(C of E)*

KEY MESSAGES

Be there when things are bad, take time out when they're good.

Leading from the front is not a bad thing.

Balance work & home (but take a long term view).

Never take yourself too seriously but recognise the time to be serious.

*Always seek compromise where possible.
Work hard in your role – support your staff, peers & boss.*