

[Press release: Secretary of State and Justice Minister briefed on investigation](#)

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Chief Constable briefs Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Justice Minister on attempted murder investigation

The Secretary of State and the Justice Minister met the Chief Constable today to receive a briefing from him and senior police colleagues on the ongoing investigation into the attack by Dissident Republicans on a police officer in North Belfast on Sunday Evening.

The Secretary of State and the Justice Minister repeated their condemnation of the attack and highlighted the public duty and service provided by PSNI officers across all parts of the community in Northern Ireland to keep people safe and secure. They also repeated their appeal for anyone with any information to contact the police.

The Chief Constable will continue to keep both the Secretary of State and the Justice Minister fully informed of the developing investigation.

[Press release: Court of Appeal increases the sentence for duo who blew up cash machines](#)

The Court of Appeal has today increased the sentences of 2 men from Sale, Manchester following a referral under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

Mark Marfleet, 37, and Paul Warmisham, 35, were sentenced at Manchester Crown Court for a number of offences including conspiracy to steal and conspiracy to cause explosions.

Between June 2015 and September 2015 the pair stole two cash machines and attempted to steal another, using explosives to blow the front of the machine

to access the money inside.

A woman and her four-year-old son who were living in the flat above one of the cash machines had to be rescued through an upstairs window after the blast damaged their home and filled the property with smoke.

The financial loss and damage caused to property totalled to about £138,000.

Whilst on bail for these offences, Marfleet also robbed a newsagents with another man who remains unidentified. The two men were armed and during the robbery doused the shopkeeper in petrol and threatened to set him alight.

Marfleet was sentenced to 11 and a half years imprisonment, whilst Warmisham received a 7 and a half year custodial sentence.

Following a referral to the Court of Appeal by the Solicitor General Robert Buckland QC MP, the sentences for both offenders were found to be unduly lenient. The judge then increased Marfleet and Warmisham's sentences' to 18 years and 13 years respectively.

Following the hearing, the Solicitor General said:

"The actions of these offenders showed a serious lack of consideration for the safety of those around them. The long lasting effects on the victim and her young son cannot be underestimated.

"I am pleased that the Court of Appeal has agreed that the original sentence was unduly lenient and has sought to increase the sentences given to these offenders."

[News story: Car manufacturers celebrate record year](#)

Last year saw a 17-year high in the number of cars built in the UK, official [SMMT](#) records have revealed. In 2016, 1.7 million cars came off the production line, up 8.5% on the year before.

Demand from overseas has helped to drive this increase with more than 1.3 million cars destined for export to over 160 countries. The manufacture of premium brands has helped make the UK the second biggest producer of premium cars after Germany.

With a car rolling off the production line every 20 seconds, and with over 163,000 people employed in the industry, the UK auto sector has seen a real revival.

Business Secretary Greg Clark welcomed the news:

Our modern [industrial strategy](#) will make the UK one of the most competitive places in the world to grow a business and these figures show why the UK automotive sector has such a vital role to play as we build on our strengths and extend excellence into the future. We are providing long-term investment and support, so that all our auto companies, and the vital supply chain it supports, can strive for even greater success in 2017.

Government is continuing to back the UK auto sector. That is why, on top of the £1 billion government and industry has committed to research and development, a further £390 million, announced at [Autumn Statement](#), will be invested to develop and accelerate the transition to cleaner, connected and autonomous vehicles, strengthening the UK's position as a leader in this vital sector.

Alongside this, the [Automotive Investment Organisation](#), created in 2013, has already helped create or safeguard 20,000 jobs in the UK automotive supply chain and secured £1.5 billion in new capital investment.

[First Minister launches 2017 programme of events to mark centenary of First World War](#)

'Programme 2017' is the latest in the Welsh Government's series of annual Cymru'n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914-1918 brochures which highlight events and projects of Welsh interest taking place in Wales and further afield throughout the year. The launch coincides with the First World War Partnership Day 2017 event held in Builth Wells on 26 January.

The central focus for this year's commemoration is the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele), which will be commemorated at a National Service of Remembrance at the Welsh Memorial in Langemark, Belgium on 31 July 2017.

The Third Battle of Ypres is of particular resonance for Wales as it claimed the lives of many Welsh soldiers including the renowned Welsh language poet, Hedd Wyn. Hedd Wyn was killed on 31 July 1917 and is buried at the nearby Artillery Wood cemetery, close to Ypres.

People are welcome to attend the National Service of Remembrance but must [register in advance](#) (external link) by 26 March 2017. Entry will be by pre-booked tickets only.

Other key events include the re-opening of Hedd Wyn's home following the £3.4m re-development led by Snowdonia National Park Authority and supported

by the Welsh Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Welsh Government will also hold a number of cultural events in partnership with the Government of Flanders on the shared history of Wales and Belgium.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“Cymru’n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914 – 1918 gives us the opportunity to remember the lives of those who served in the First World War.

“The sacrifices the people of Wales made, alongside the rest of the UK and allied forces, should never be forgotten. Programme 2017 is testament to the outstanding level of collaboration and engagement seen across Wales since 2014, which set to continue through the year and beyond.

“It is important future generations understand how this terrible war shaped modern Wales, and we must learn lessons from the past to take us into a more peaceful future.”

News story: Minister encourages students to make their voices heard in upcoming Mayoral elections

The Minister for the Constitution, Chris Skidmore, spoke to students from Long Road Sixth Form college today about how they can raise awareness of voter registration in the lead up to the election for the first mayor of Cambridge and Peterborough.

Students engaged in lively discussion with the minister on what democracy means to young people living in the East of England.

Chris Skidmore, Minister for the Constitution, said:

I was impressed by the level of debate and interest shown by Cambridge’s college students today. This government is committed to a democracy that works for everyone and this means understanding the needs of young people, and other under-registered groups, on their own terms.

Over the coming months, people in Cambridge will be canvassed by different parties in the lead up to the election for the first

mayor of Cambridge and Peterborough.

This is an exciting time in your local history and it's crucial you register to vote so you can have your say. Whoever you are, whatever your background, wherever you live – your voice matters.

Christine Sherwin, College Principle, at Long Road Sixth Form college said:

We are delighted that Chris has chosen to visit Long Road Sixth Form College to hear about our initiatives to ensure that all our students register to vote.

We take our role in promoting democracy with our students very seriously, and our efforts begin on the first day that they join the college, when we show them how to register to vote and encourage them to do so at the same time. Our students are also encouraged to become involved with the UK Youth Parliament, with the majority wanting the Youth Parliament to campaign on obtaining the right for 16 and 17 year olds to vote in all elections and referenda.

The Minister is visiting Cambridge as part of his Every Voice Matters Tour.

The tour will see him visit every part of the country to understand how to tackle barriers to voter registration. As part of his trip to Cambridge, the Minister also visited the Winter Comfort homeless drop in centre to speak to users about how they can register to vote.