

## WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 25 NOVEMBER 2021

### WEST MERCIA POLICE WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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#### Recommendation

Members of the Panel are asked to note this report.

#### Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the panel with an overview of diversity and inclusion related to the West Mercia Police workforce; with a focus on the extent to which the organisation reflects the demographics of the communities it serves.

#### Officer Uplift

2. The table below sets out the significant increase in the West Mercia police officer establishment over the last 4 years. This increase has been enabled by Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and government investment and provides a unique opportunity to diversify the workforce.

West Mercia Establishment	Apr 17	Apr 18	Apr 19	Apr 20	Apr 21
	2051	2145	2176	2238	2329

3. The Government, the PCC and West Mercia Police have clearly committed to ensuring the uplift in officers is used to improve representation across all under-represented groups. It is acknowledged that this is critical to instil public confidence and trust amongst communities. These commitments are set out in:

- The National Police Uplift Programme (PUP);
- The PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan (2017-2021; 2021-25 in draft);
- The West Mercia Police People Strategy; and
- The West Mercia Police Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy.

#### Governance and Scrutiny

4. The PCC holds the Chief Constable (CC) to account for the exercise of duties relating to diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI), including specific commitments set out in the Safer West Mercia Plan.

5. The PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan (2021-25) includes a commitment to hold the CC to account for ensuring officers, staff and volunteers reflect the

demographics of the communities they serve. This commitment is reflected in the force's People and DEI strategies and associated delivery plans.

6. The PCC will build on the commitments in the Safer West Mercia Plan by publishing equality objectives. These objectives will demonstrate how the PCC has due regard for the Equality Act (2010) in the exercise of his functions. The force's equality objectives have already been published as part of the DEI strategy.

7. DEI within the workforce has been subject to a number of formal holding to account processes including:

- Thematic holding to account on workforce – August 2019;
- Virtual holding to account on recruitment and diversity – February 2020;
- Public holding to account on DEI - July 2020;
- Thematic holding to account on internal DEI - August 2020; and
- Thematic holding to account on the year in review 2020/21 – April 2021.

8. This holding to account activity has been informed by engagement with the workforce through existing and bespoke surveys and workshops with the staff networks. The staff networks have regular meetings with People & Organisational Development leads and the Chief Officer team to help inform the force's ambitions in relation to diversity and inclusion.

9. Alongside formal holding to account activity, the PCC routinely monitors workforce data through the national PUP and the force's internal governance boards.

10. The CC oversees the delivery of the force's People Strategy and DEI Strategy through the People Strategy Board (PSB). This is supported by 4 delivery subgroups: Health, Safety and Wellbeing; Fairness, Policy and Standards; Workforce Planning and Diversity, Equality and Inclusion.

11. Each subboard considers issues through the lens of DEI and includes analysis of quarterly data related to workforce composition. The PCC is represented at each of these meetings.

### **New Entry Routes and Positive Action**

12. Increased recruitment activity over the last 2 years has coincided with the implementation of new routes into policing through the Police Education Qualification Framework (PEQF): the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) and the Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP).

13. National data indicates that these new routes are attracting a more diverse range of applicants.

14. In addition, the force has invested in a dedicated positive action (PA) officer. Due to limited capacity, the PA officer has primarily focused on attraction and recruitment of female and ethnic minority officers.

15. A number of initiatives have been utilised by the PA officer through the development of the Step In Programme which includes pre-assessment centre workshops, one to one coaching, mock interviews, and targeted social media recruitment campaigns.

16. The introduction of these initiatives has resulted in an increase in joiner rates for both ethnic minority and female officers (data set out in the next section).

17. The force's aspiration is to broaden the focus of PA to include:

- All strands of protected characteristics;
- Police staff and volunteers; and
- Retention and development activity.

18. To support this, Chief Officers agreed to create an additional PA post in August 2020. Despite a number of recruitment campaigns, the force have not been able to fill this post. This has been subject to scrutiny via holding to account and a further update has been requested for the holding to account meeting in November.

19. In the interim, the PA officer and People & Organisational Development department have still delivered activity in respect of retention and promotion of underrepresented groups to ensure that the diverse workforce is nurtured and developed.

20. This includes supporting the national 'safe to say' campaign to increase disclosure of protected characteristics, and launching the Positive Action Learning Sets (PALS) development programme aimed at ethnic minority officers and staff at PC and Sgt level.

## **Workforce Data**

21. To be representative of communities in West Mercia, 3.8% of the workforce would need to be from ethnic minorities. The force aim to meet this level of representation by 2025, with the aspiration to see this increase to 5%.

22. The British Association for Women in Policing (BAWP) have set a national target of 35% for female officers. The force aim to meet this level of representation by 2025, with the aspiration to see this increase to 50%.

23. Whilst the force is focused on attracting a diverse workforce in terms of all protected characteristics, high levels of non-disclosure of certain characteristics (e.g. disability and sexual orientation) nationally and locally mean it is not yet possible to set aspirations across all demographics. This is being addressed through initiatives such as the 'safe to say' campaign referenced in the previous section.

24. Current workforce composition by gender and ethnicity as at 01 October 2021 is set out in the infographic below:



25. West Mercia Police now has the highest levels of diversity amongst officers and staff than at any point in its history.

26. This reflects the increase in joiner rates for both female and ethnic minority student officers. Data for the latest rolling 12 months is set out below:

- Ethnic minority joiner rate: 5.6% compared to a previous 3 year average joiner rate of 2.1%. The current joiner rate exceeds the force target for recruitment of ethnic minority officers (3.8%).
- Female joiner rate: 40.6% compared to a previous 3 year average joiner rate of 33.8%. The current joiner rate exceeds the national target for recruitment of female officers (35%).

27. These increases are linked to the introduction of positive action initiatives which have been shown to improve success rates across various stage of recruitment.

28. Ethnic minority applicants rejected at assessment centre reduced from 23.5% in 2019-20 to 5.9% in 2020-21 and interview rejection rates reduced from 9.1% to 5.9%.

29. Female applicants rejected at assessment centre reduced from 14.5% in 2019-20 to 11.4% in 20-21 and interview rejection rates reduced from 8.4% to 2.2%.

30. Success rates associated with positive action initiatives for the year-to-date are set out in the table below. The table also demonstrates engagement across a range of protected characteristics:

Positive Action initiatives and success rates:				
Characteristic Key: Ethnic minority, Female, LGBTQ+, Disability				
Role	Type of Initiative	Total (accepted PA support)	No. successful	
Student Officer	Pre-Assessment Centre workshops and one to one coaching	75	59	78.7%
		20	16	80%
		2	2	100%
		3	2	66.67%
Student Officer	Pre-interview support and mock interviews	40	33	82.5%
		21	16	76.2%
		5	4	80%
		5	3	60%
SC	Pre-Assessment Centre one to one support	1	1	100%
Staff	Pre-interview	1	1	100%
Targeted social media campaign				
Officer	Targeted Social Media Campaign - replaced targeted recruitment events which had to be cancelled due to Covid 19 restrictions	15% increase in applications from applicants who identified as being from an ethnic minority background		

31. The PCC continues to monitor this data on a quarterly basis.

### **Risk Management Implications**

None.

### **Financial Implications**

None.

### **Legal Implications**

None.

### **Equality Implications**

Ensuring that the West Mercia Police workforce is representative of communities is key to delivering each organisation's equality objectives under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 Equality Act 2010).

### **Supporting Information**

None.

### **Contact Points for this report**

For the PCC's office: Andy Champness, Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Executive [andrewchampness@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:andrewchampness@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

For Panel support: Sheena Jones, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager  
Tel: 01905 846011 [Sjones19@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Sjones19@worcestershire.gov.uk)