



Strategic Policing and Crime Board

20th October 2020

Police and Crime Plan Priority: *where appropriate*
Title: *WMP Recruitment*
Presented by: *Nicola Price, Director of People and Organisational Development*

Purpose of paper

- 1. This paper is submitted to provide the board with an update on progress against ongoing recruitment activity. There is a focus on elements specifically required for this report, including progress towards the Home Office Uplift.

Background

- 2. West Midlands Police have a large number of Police Officers to recruit before March 2023. Alongside predicted turnover, the precept and the Police Officer Uplift announced by the Prime Minister in late 2019 the volume of recruitment is significant.

Recruitment Uplift

- 3. Our recruitment numbers to March 2021 from the Home Office has been confirmed as 366 additional officers. Numbers for the following years are still to be confirmed, but we have estimated them to be as below based on the 6% of the total picture nationally.

To March 21	21/22	22/23	Total
366 (30%)	480 (40%)	360 (30%)	1206

4. As at the end of July 2021, the Home Office performance report showed that West Midlands Police were 238 additional officers into the 366 target and at the end of August 2021, 280 additional officers against the 366 target. It has been acknowledged West Midlands Police is on track to meet the 366 target.
5. Meeting our recruitment targets though Uplift is governed though appropriate project governance. There are five workstreams running concurrently to ensure the targets are met, risks managed and relevant improvements to process are made.

Recruiting through the Pandemic

6. West Midlands Police were one of the first UK Forces to enrol candidates on the new College of Policing Online Assessment Centre, which was designed due to the need to still assess candidates and recruit during the lockdown period where face to face assessment centres were not possible. Between May 2020 and August 2020, WMP have seen 1780 Police Officer candidates invited to the assessment centre. Early indications from the initial pilot data are that there is very little adverse impact on any groups. A full evaluation is being commissioned by the College of Policing and is due to be produced later in the year.
7. Given the Government guidelines around the pandemic and the NPCC guidance for onboarding activities around medical, job related fitness tests and biometric testing, West Midlands Police have adapted the pre-employment journey to take the guidance into consideration, while ensuring we recruit suitably appropriate candidates and making the candidates feel safe in the environment. Adaptations have included:
 - a. Telephone based medical screening
 - b. Post commencement drug testing
 - c. Post commencement job related fitness testing
 - d. All offers are conditional subject to relevant conditions
8. As the guidance has lifted slightly at the time of writing, we have re-introduced job related fitness testing before offer of employment to ensure candidates are able to complete this appropriately.
9. An amended Policy for dealing with any resulting issues arising from the conditional offers has been developed and will be used as necessary.
10. Due to the pandemic, there have been relatively few face to face engagement events and careers fairs. We have continued our engagement with schools, colleges and universities taking part in a number of virtual events. We have also changed the way we are running positive action workshops, relying on technology, such as Skype, 'meet and engage' and one to one conversations to ensure this could be continued.
11. During the early stages of the pandemic, applications for all roles significantly reduced due to the feeling of global uncertainty. However, from May 2020 onwards, we have seen a steady increase in job applications across the board at WMP for all roles. This

can be attributed both to our increased marketing and job advertising activity and also the perception that joining a public sector entity is a stable employment choice.

12. A record number of Student Officers joined WMP in July 2020. 234 new officers joined the force, demonstrating that recruitment is still very much a force priority through the pandemic.
13. We have seen far less transferes than planned to join during 2020 so far, this is predominantly related to a NPCC agreement that all forces would not actively recruit from the transferee pool due to the pandemic affecting all of the UK and all forces.
14. Once arriving in Force, the Student Officers have been able to start and continue training while social distancing due to the technology we have been using in partnership with Staffordshire University. This means people have been able to participate in training activity from alternative locations and participate fully via technology from their first day with WMP.
15. Personal Safety Training continued to be carried out throughout the pandemic with additional PPE and securing external gym space to ensure social distancing guidelines were met.

Attraction strategy – “You’re made for this”

16. The increase of new officers through the Uplift project provides us with many opportunities around attracting people from diverse backgrounds into West Midlands Police. We have worked with a third party to define a renewed Inner Purpose and attraction strategy to ensure our organisation better reflects the communities we serve.
17. Following on from significant research both internally and externally with various audiences, our new force strategy is titled ‘This Work Matters’ – regardless of their role in WMP, people felt a very strong affinity with what the work they were doing was important and the driver to join WMP at the start of their career journey was to make a difference to the people of the West Midlands region.
18. Leading on from this, further research was carried out in relation to the different demographics of Police Officer applicants from across the region to understand their motivations for application and reactions to advertising media and messaging. As a result the “You’re made for this” campaign was launched, which is very different from any previous campaign. We have moved away from images of uniformed Police Officers to images of ‘real’ people with stories where WMP colleagues and officers have helped and supported them, sometimes turning their lives around.
19. We launched a significant targeted social media campaign during August 2020 to encourage people receiving A Level and BTEC results to consider our Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship route as an alternative to University and a career choice. The posts reached over 440,000 people and increase our careers website views by 770%. For this first time since the PEQF launch (March 2019), more applications were

received for the PCDA route, than the DHEP route in August 2020 and to date in September 2020.

20. We continue to ensure we have visible advertising across the West Midlands region and in recent months have advertised on large digital billboards in high footfall areas, bus shelters, on the West Midlands Metro plus an ongoing social media presence.

Enabling the organisation to succeed

21. To enable WMP to recruit the additional Police Officers through Uplift, we have invested in our enabling functions to deliver on this commitment. These are funded through Uplift and the contract duration is relevant to the recruitment process (so for example additional resource in recruitment and vetting will not continue once the uplift is completed, where as additional staff in shared services and commercial service will remain as they are to provide services to the increase headcount.

This includes additional staff members in the following areas:

- a. Recruitment and Onboarding
- b. Positive Action
- c. Vetting
- d. Occupational Health
- e. Learning and Development
- f. Shared Services
- g. Corporate asset management
- h. Commercial services

Fair Representation

22. It is important that the new Police officers that we are recruiting across WMP reflect the communities we serve. We are also working hard to achieve the joint aspiration of the PCC and Chief Constable to recruit 1000 BAME officers during the period of the uplift.
23. Achieving fair representation of colleagues across the force is a key element of the force and people strategy. This aim is reflected in other areas of the strategy, for example ensuring we treat members of the public with fairness and respect and exercise our duties in an appropriate manner.
24. To ensure a concentrated effort on fair representation across our new recruits, we have increased the number of Positive Action co-ordinators so that a focus is maintained on this. The team carry out workshops, coaching sessions and other interventions with candidates so they are better prepared for application and assessment activities. Feedback from candidates is positive in this area.

25. We are continuing to see a consistent number of applications from BAME candidates for Police Officer roles. We continue our efforts to support candidates through attraction and the recruitment process to ensure fair representation.

Month	Total Applicants	Total Female	Female as a % of Total Applicants	Total BAME / White Other	BAME/White Other as a % of Total Applicants
Mar-20	526	176	33.5%	141	26.8%
Apr-20	704	298	42.3%	216	30.7%
May-20	557	232	41.7%	164	29.4%
Jun-20	1019	358	35.1%	293	28.8%
Jul-20	875	321	36.7%	301	34.4%
Aug-20	895	352	40.2%	259	28.2%

26. There is also a focus on supporting individuals from under-represented groups once they have joined from the Positive Action team, so new joiners are supported through their early stages with WMP.
27. We are working with a number of partners to seek alternative ways to support the local population with attaining the educational requirements to join WMP as a police officer. As approximately 50% of applications we receive do not have the relevant qualifications to meet our entry criteria to become a Police Officer.
28. Working with Staffordshire University, WMP are piloting an essay based approach to provide an alternative way to assess prior skills, knowledge and experience which would be equivalent the relevant Level 3 qualifications that are the entry criteria for the PCDA. The initial proof of concept will be with internal colleagues to assist with their development and progression towards becoming a Police Officer, building on our internal talent pipeline. This trial and evaluation of its success will take place towards the end of 2020.
29. The colleges within the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) are working alongside WMP to develop a 'Pathway into Policing' educational route, which will enable prospective candidates to gain qualification at Level 2 and Level 3 following which they will be able to apply for the PCDA programme and become a Police Officer.

30. The Princes Trust are working with us to potentially develop a targeted programme to prepare individuals for a career in policing. It is likely that the attendees on this programme will go on to attend the 'Pathway to Policing' route with a WMCA college or apply directly to the West Midlands Police PCDA programme if they have the relevant qualifications.
31. Across communities, we are working with organisations such as the Anchor Network, Aspire 4U and Bournville Trust to build relationships and gain access to under-represented community groups.
32. WMP have recently sent out postcards to 150,000 homes across the West Midlands region in areas where there is 50% BAME representation. This is to highlight the career opportunities on offer at WMP and encourage people to consider a career in policing. The new advertising campaign has been used, drawing on the transferable skills people may have.

Internal talent pipeline

33. Since April 2020, a number of internal candidates have moved to become Police Officers. The agreement with a training provider for Level2 qualifications and the entry route option mentioned above will help with transitioning some of our internal talent pipeline.

	PCSO	Police Staff	Specials	Total
New PC Joiners	9	11	6	26

34. West Midlands Police has agreed to be a pilot force with the College of Policing to streamline Special Constables application route to join the regular Police Force. This is in very early stages, but initial communication from the College describes a process where Special Constables who have attained Independent Patrol Status are able to bypass the Police Officer Assessment Centre.

Police Education and Qualifications Framework (PEQF) Current Position

35. A regional PEQF contact is in place between Staffordshire University the four West Midlands Regional Forces; West Midlands Police, West Mercia Police, Staffordshire Police and Warwickshire Police. This is supported by a Section 22a collaboration agreement.
36. The contract was mobilised in June 2019 after a robust procurement exercise with contributions from a range of business areas in all four forces, and is a six year term with break clauses every 2 years. The next break clause is in June 2021.
37. The West Midlands Region were early adopters of the PEQF, and have worked closely with the College of Policing, and the funding body ESFA (Education Skills Funding Agency) to deliver new Student Officer training programmes.

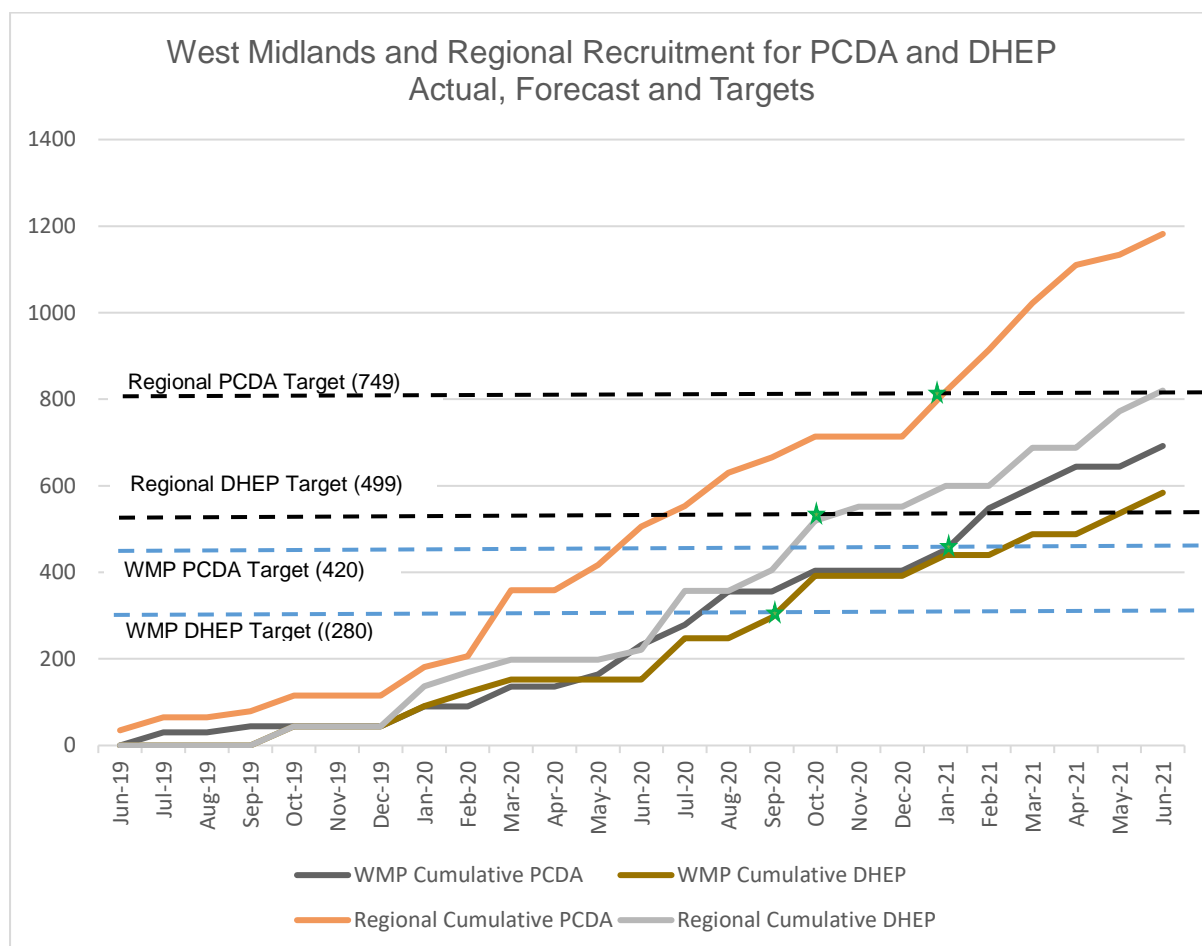
38. The regional PEQF contract enables the joint delivery of the PCDA (Police Constable Degree Apprentice) and DHEP (Degree Holder Entry Programme) Student Officer training programmes aligned to the College of Policing PEQF professionalisation agenda. The programmes are delivered by a combination of Force L&D Trainers and Staffordshire University Lectures, following the College of Policing curriculum, but delivered in new and innovative ways with significantly updated content, applying best practice adult learning design principles.
39. The new programmes are a major changes from the original IPLDP training programme as the student officers are required to complete academic work as part of achieving a vocation degree qualification that formally recognises the complexity and challenges of the role of a Police Constable, creating parity with similar roles in other front-line services.
40. To deliver the new programmes and support the related changes into forces a regional project team was established. The team has completed a progress review as part of a transition to steady state - new functions to be owned and progressed by forces – and has recommended a minimum ongoing requirement of 4 FTE contribution from forces in the region to progress ongoing activities at pace, such as a new PEQF entry route for Specials and Part-Time Constables.
41. The 12 month contact review report is in progress, capturing the performance against commitments of all parties. Added value has been recognised within the contract, capturing the Staffordshire University contribution to:
 - L&D Trainer Upskilling to deliver to degree level,
 - Support in forces for IT through use of Blackboard– now adopted by West Midlands Police L&D,
 - Discounted cost for the DHEP programme,
 - Provision of physical classrooms for group training sessions,
 - Provision of Microsoft 365 licences for L&D to enable the digital delivery.

PEQF programme numbers to date

42. The regional recruitment progress is shown in the table below.
43. West Midlands Police Student Officer intakes accounts for 61.5% of the total regional contribution to the PCDA and DHEP contract numbers.
44. West Midlands Police and regional progress to date against contract targets are:

Intake	Contract Targets	Current Performance	Current Progress	Forecast Numbers	Forecast %
Regional PCDA	749	666	89%	1182	165%
Regional DHEP	499	405	81%	820	209%
WMP PCDA	420	356	85%	692	165%
WMP DHEP	280	296	106%	584	209%

45. The below graph shows the West Midlands Police current and forecast intake numbers for PCDA and DHEP.



46. The table below provides an overview of West Midlands Police progress against the contract forecast, and relates to the graph above. The figures highlighted in green represented the anticipated achievement date of the minimum recruitment numbers as defined by the regional PEQF contract.

Month	West Midlands		WMP Cumulative		Regional Cumulative	
	PCDA	DHEP	PCDA	DHEP	PCDA	DHEP
Jun-19 (Actuals)	0	0	0	0	35	0
Jul-19 (Actuals)	30	0	30	0	65	0
Aug-19 (Actuals)	0	0	30	0	65	0
Sep-19 (Actuals)	14	0	44	0	79	0
Oct-19 (Actuals)	0	44	44	44	115	44

Nov-19 (Actuals)	0	0	44	44	115	44
Dec-19 (Actuals)	0	0	44	44	115	44
Jan-20 (Actuals)	46	47	90	91	181	137
Feb-20 (Actuals)	0	32	90	123	206	169
Mar-20 (Actuals)	46	29	136	152	359	198
Apr-20 (Actuals)	0	0	136	152	359	198
May-20 (Actuals)	28	0	164	152	417	198
Jun-20 (Actuals)	68	0	232	152	506	221
Jul-20 (Actuals)	47	96	279	248	553	357
Aug-20 (Actuals)	77	0	356	248	630	357
Sep-20 (Actuals)	0	48	356	296	666	405
Oct-20 (Forecast)	48	96	404	392	714	519
Nov-20 (Forecast)	0	0	404	392	714	552
Dec-20 (Forecast)	0	0	404	392	714	552
Jan-21 (Forecast)	48	48	452	440	818	600
Feb-21 (Forecast)	96	0	548	440	914	600
Mar-21 (Forecast)	48	48	596	488	1022	688
Apr-21 (Forecast)	48	0	644	488	1110	688
May-21 (Forecast)	0	48	644	536	1134	772
Jun-21 (Forecast)	48	48	692	584	1182	820

Green cells indicate when target recruitment within the Contract to achieved/exceeded.

47. The attrition rate in the region (across all four forces) for both PCDA and DHEP courses is shown in the table below. These are well below the anecdotal national attrition rate.

Student Status	PCDA	DHEP
Totals Students	688	357
Withdrawn Students	15	4
% leavers	2.18%	1.12%

48. To progress to year 2 of the programme Students Officers must pass all modules and achieve Independent Patrol Status (IPS). 100% of PCDA students from the first two cohorts have progressed to year 2.
49. Students that are falling behind on either their academic progress or operational progress are captured as part of ongoing reviews within L&D and are supported by both L&D, tutors and the University as required.

Changes in delivery in response to Covid-19

50. The delivery of the PCDA and DHEP programmes was maintained during the COVID pandemic. The as enabled by the flexibility of the PCDA and DHEP programmes, supported due to around 70% of the course programme being available for digital delivery prior to the start of the pandemic.

51. The delivery of face-to-face training was transferred to the online platforms MS Teams or Blackboard where possible. This transition was supported by Staffordshire University, which made the applications available to additional L&D staff through the provision of licences or the extension of the existing access by L&D staff. L&D upskilling on digital tools was also provided to enable the development of in-house, force owned materials that can be delivered through these platforms.
52. Critical face-to-face training such as Personal Safety Training (PST) was changed to accommodate social distancing measures and ensure trainers and students were protected, whilst delivering the core requirements of the modules. Additional training will be scheduled for students who attended these COVID sessions to ensure they are fully upskilled.
53. Students that were isolating during the pandemic were able to progress their learning through access to online materials.
54. The programme is expected to remain on track. An evaluation focussing on the impact of digital learning delivered as a result of COVID has been progress in Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia with recommendations for all forces expected in early October 2020. West Midlands Police opted out of this review as the Deep Dive evaluation – commissioned by the Chief Constable - was the force priority, however the recommendations remain relevant and will be shared.

Analysis of Partnership Working to date

55. The requirement to partner with an organisation to deliver Student Officer training has been a cultural and organisational challenge to all forces in the region. L&D has been required to re-focus their training on delivery of core areas; upskilling of trainers has been achieved to comply with subcontracting requirements, and IT capability has been enhanced.
56. West Midlands Police were the first regional force to recognise the need for PDUs and worked with Response and Force CID to implement these at multiple sites, requiring significant support from CAM, Estates and IT&D, along with recruitment, training and retention activities for the tutor requirement, though tutor resourcing remains a challenge in all regional forces.
57. Partnership working with the university has enabled L&D upskilling, both at pace to maintain the training programmes in response to COVID, and to develop in-house capability to develop accredited Level 7 teaching skills.
58. A review of the PCDA and DHEP programmes Commissioned by CC Thompson in July has recommended 12 areas to improve the programmes. The force is working with the University and colleagues in the region to progress the associated solutions, including changes to both the university and force led elements of the programmes. Learning is being shared between all forces in the region, in line with the learning organisational culture of continuous improvement.

59. The regional collaboration has enabled the first joint delivery of training for PCDA students – successfully piloted by West Midlands Police and Staffs Police.
60. Additional entry routes are being identified and progressed, such as the DC DHEP programme, with further working being done to progress the Part-Time programme and Special Constables entry routes.
61. Regional forces are subcontracting L&D staff to support the delivery of the PCDA programme to Staffordshire University. In FY 20/21 West Midlands Police L&D have generated £119,847 revenue through this route.

Use of Apprenticeship Levy

62. The WMP levy has drawn down £666,064 to date, with an expectation that a total of £2,295,948 will be drawn down for the financial year.
63. The current levy forecast anticipates that the WMP levy will be depleted in June 2022 at which point the force will be required to pay 5% of the cost of all ongoing apprentice training, with HM Government covering the other 95%. Levy transfer opportunities are being progressed to avoid this ongoing cost to forces and HM Government.
64. An early opportunity with Deutsche Bank funding the apprenticeship training for 48 Student Officers; transferring £1,152,000 of their levy over 3 years, would save the Force £4,797 and save HM Government £91,148. Further opportunities for levy transfers for all apprentices in the region are being explored through the West Midlands Combined Authority that are expected to provide significant savings for future apprentice training.

Data and analysis of Cadet Units and plans for use of Cadets in recruitment

65. There are currently 268 active cadets in the force's scheme. The scheme was on target to reach the 500 cadet target by May 2020, with a number of additional units scheduled to open, however, as a result of the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that progress has temporarily paused. Although we have received a considerable number of enquiries about our cadet scheme during the pandemic period.
66. We have maintained engagement with our cadets during the period of the pandemic and during summer by running a range of virtual sessions and activities. Some of these have been on a local level with units continuing to meet virtually, some of the activity has been for the whole scheme, with a range of activities, including quizzes, youtube live Q&A events, and poster competitions.
67. When the cadet scheme was established, its focus was on community engagement and life skills opportunities for young people. As the scheme has developed and the cadets have got older and learnt more about policing, we are finding that a growing

number of them are interested in a career in policing. This interest is being supported by their cadet leaders and through referrals into our positive action team or other appropriate internal colleagues.

68. As the scheme develops and changes, especially in light of the COVID-19 restrictions, we will continue to explore opportunities to use the scheme to support young people interested in a career in policing and talent spot potential officers, alongside continuing to support the community, social and life development of cadets.

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