



Strategic Policing and Crime Board

20 July 2021

Title: Staffing and Recruitment

Presented by: Nicola Price

Purpose of paper

1. This paper describes West Midlands Police (WMP) approach to staffing and recruitment, with a specific focus on the Police Educational Qualification Framework (PEQF), includes the Degree Apprenticeship and progress against the Government Police Officer Uplift programme.

Background

2. The paper identifies progress in respect of WMPs Police Officer Uplift targets and ambitions in recruiting a diverse, skilled, appropriately deployed workforce that represents the communities that we serve.

Key points

3. Progress against the Home Office Uplift programme

WMP have a target to recruit an additional 1200 officers during the three year period of the Government Police Officer Uplift programme. The Uplift programme began in late 2019 and is due to conclude in March 2023. When the 1200 additional officers are added to normal recruitment activity in WMP then in addition add replacing leavers through retirement or resignation, this results in the total recruitment of 2800 officers during this three year period. The Uplift target contains an annual growth target of 364 additional officers, to be recruited by 31st March 2022.

This growth, and all police officer recruitment, is scheduled in regular intakes across the year. Based on this schedule and current recruitment performance, WMP are forecasting to be 98 Police Officers over the target by the end of March 2022. This approach offers flexibility in the schedule and supports the advanced recruitment of the subsequent year's target.

The Police Officer Uplift activity is governed through a formal project infrastructure within WMP, that reports into the National Police Uplift Project. The project meets formally on a monthly basis, tracking progress, actions, risks, costs and interdependencies.

In addition, there is regular attendance from and reporting into the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

- **Changes in the Police Education and Qualification Framework (PEQF) contract with WMPs Higher Education Partner**

As at April 2021, WMP has recruited 1,192 officer through PEQF entry routes. 701 through the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) route and 491 through the Police Constable Degree Holder Entry Programme (PC DHEP) entry route.

There is a comprehensive workforce plan detailing planned recruitment numbers and intake schedules for the next two years and beyond. WMP is expecting to recruit 816 officers in 21/22 and 432 in 22/23

The PEQF contract review has been progressed through negotiations between the West Midlands Regional Forces (West Midlands, West Mercia, Warwickshire and Staffordshire) and a partnership with Staffordshire University, focussing on Commercial Costs, the 'Added Value' offer, and a Quality Assurance Action Plan for all PEQF training programmes.

The revised contract reduces force costs for PC DHEP and Detective Constable (DC) DHEP courses, and increases the flexibility to recruit more officers through the PC and DC DHEP entry routes. The previous contract was set at 60% PCDA and 40% DHEP. Added Value services have been revised and prioritised following guidance from forces, and now focuses on widening entry routes to support increased representation, and the further development of WMP Student Officer Trainers and Tutor Constables aligned to support new recruits. Additional services for the development of the wider workforce are also included.

The revised contract and change to the ratio of PCDA vs DHEP student officer numbers reduces the force costs by circa £2,000,000 over a two year period (June 2019 to June 2021).

- **Recruiting and training through the pandemic**

In response to the pandemic, much of the learning delivery moved to online platforms. Student officers completing initial training attend in person for the first week, but classroom sizes have had to be reduced due to social distancing measures. This impacted on trainer numbers required for delivery but has not affected the quality and content of the course. A blended learning approach has

been taken for the rest of delivery, with a combination of online delivery and in person delivery where necessary and unavoidable. Physical training, first aid training and all scenario based assessments have remained in person with appropriate risk assessments in place. Staffordshire University moved entirely to online delivery via Blackboard and Microsoft Teams for their modules.

WMP has maintained strong partnerships with colleagues across the region. There is close collaboration with Staffordshire, West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Forces and all Forces share responsibilities for key workstreams across the project.

- **Apprenticeship Levy transfer opportunity**

Through collaboration with the West Midlands Combined Authority using the apprenticeship levy transfer, WMP has secured additional apprenticeship funding for Student Officers completing the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship from other employers in the West Midlands region who have not used their full allowance of apprenticeship levy. The table below shows how WMP are using the opportunities offered through levy transfer to increase funding available, levy values are for May-21:

Levy Transfers in April 2021	Cohort fte	May 21 Levy Transfers
Transfer received from DPDGROUP UK LTD	5.0	£3,096.77
Transfer received from MARSTON'S PLC	20.0	£12,387.10
Transfer received from PERTEMPS PAYROLL SERVICES LIMITED	15.0	£9,290.32
Transfer received from CAPITA PLC	20.0	£12,387.10
Transfer received from HSBC BANK PLC	10.0	£6,193.55
Transfer received from NATIONAL EXPRESS LIMITED	5.0	£3,096.77

- **Diversity of new Police Officer Recruits**

During the period of Uplift, WMP has recruited 243 new Police Officer colleagues from under represented groups, which is around 17% of all new Police Officers. This is positive progress in relation to WMP representation, however is still some way behind our ambition to recruit 1000 officers from under represented groups as part of Uplift and some way behind the standard expected of being representative of the West Midlands community (based on an assumed 29.9% representation from the 2022 census)

As a result of the progress against the target, WMP instigated a Gold group in April 2021 to:

- a) make a short term improvement in representation for subsequent intakes and
- b) gain some momentum to support the long term ambitions

The Gold group meets on a regular basis to design, develop and implement a range of activities and initiatives aimed at achieving these joint aims. The

activities and initiatives are wide reaching and are based on adopting the best practice from other forces and organisations, tackling the challenge from a range of different angles and using a rapid learning approach to constantly review, analyse and adapt the approaches to best effect.

The initiatives include, for example;

- A SkyAdsmart pilot, funded by the National Police Uplift Project, which looks to trial the impact of hyper-targeted advertising focused on under represented groups. WMP have run two phases of this initiative, one in communities with high Asian populations and one in communities with high black populations. This pilot has offered insight into the efficacy of this approach and also provided an insight into drivers for applicants.
- Re-engagement of unsuccessful candidates. The WMP Recruitment team have contacted over 650 candidates from under represented groups who withdrew or were unsuccessful at early points in the recruitment process. The outcome has been that 167 candidates have been reinstated back into the process, a significant majority of whom are taking up the additional support we have available. This activity has also identified process improvements and changes we can make to enhance the candidate experience.
- Fast tracking candidates from under represented groups. WMP has used the learning and practice from the Metropolitan Police to explore and implement a mechanism to fast track equally qualified candidates through the onboarding process, to support our ambition to make all intakes representative of the communities we serve.
- Working closely with colleagues in our Diversity & Inclusion team to link up our recruitment ambitions with the wider force agenda around legitimacy. For example, the force ran its first ever Black Inclusion Week from 10-16 May. There were a series of events internally and externally, many of which had a recruitment and attraction focus.
- WMP are in the process of launching a Recruitment Ambassador programme, designed to engage internal colleagues in our recruitment ambition. These Recruitment Ambassadors will be supported to go into communities, engage their networks and assist prospective candidates.

In addition to the activities listed above, WMP are making a range of process and system improvements, developing a summer programme, improving the support offered to student officers, reviewing the activity of our Positive Action team and teaming up with the national project to run a large scale community attraction event later in the summer.

- **Indications of where extra officers will be placed**

WMP have adopted a priority based budgeting (PBB) approach to decide on the allocation of the additional officers from Uplift. This approach was led by the Deputy Chief Constable, in collaboration with the Director of People and Organisational Development and the Director of Commercial Services.

This approach saw executive leads and heads of departments review their current and future demand, service levels, risks and opportunities and present a business case for a growth in capacity or the development of new capability.

The table below provides a high level overview of where the additional officers will be allocated.

Crime 488fte	Operations 252fte	Security 151fte	Local Policing 222fte
Criminal Investigations - 143fte Public Protection - 139fte Complex Crime – 155fte Forensics - 31fte Criminal Justice - 20fte	Response - 252fte	Intelligence - 23fte Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) - 13fte Serious and organised crime and exploitation (SOCEX) - 115fte	Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPT) - 177fte Neighbourhood Taskforce (NTF) - 45fte

There is detailed planning and activity underway currently to review the phasing and implementation of these decisions.

- **Resources including police officers, police staff and special constables.**

The force currently employs 12,714 people (11,559.05 fte) across police officers, staff, specials, PCSOs and cadets.

At a force level, 43.8% of the workforce are female, 14% are from under represented groups, 2.3% identify as white other and 1.6% have not declared their ethnicity.

WMP currently has 33.3 more police officers than the current budgeted establishment, 128.76 police staff vacancies and 21.49 PCSO vacancies.

- **Cadet Units**

There are currently 490 cadets in 16 open units across the force area. There are an additional nine units that are in the process of setting up with host venues and the relevant Neighbourhood Policing Unit (NPU). Over the next year, opening these additional units would take the scheme capacity to 750 cadets. The cadet scheme has progressed significantly in the last year, growing the number of units and cadets during the pandemic, alongside hosting an excellent and engaging virtual, and now face to face, curriculum. Part of that curriculum has been a range of inputs specifically relating to policing careers and supporting the cadets in their ambitions to become police officers.

44% of our cadets are from under represented groups and 9% identify their ethnicity as white other. 48% of our cadets are female.

- **Opportunities for Police Community Support Officers (PCSO), Specials and Volunteers to become Police Officers**

WMP continues to be supportive and encouraging of colleagues to develop their careers within WMP, whether that is in their current role or function or whether that is a change in career within WMP. WMP has run specific, targeted internal police officer recruitment campaigns and also put in place bespoke recognition of prior experience and learning processes to support internal colleagues in their applications to become Police Officers.

Between 1 April 2020 and 31 May 2021 there were 99 WMP colleagues who were successful in their application to become a police officer. 42 police staff, 35 PCSOs, and 22 Special Constables.

- **Ensuring capability and resourcing is sufficient to deliver increased recruitment activity**

As part of the National Police Uplift Project there is an investment for forces to ensure they have the enabling capability and capacity to deliver the recruitment of police officers and to support a larger organisation once the growth has occurred. Through the appropriate Uplift governance, the force has invested in enabling teams to ensure WMP are ready and capable to deliver, we have seen growth, for example, in our vetting, recruitment, training, occupational health and facilities teams.

Next Steps

4. *The board is asked to note the content of the report.*

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