



Report of the Police and Crime Panel

Report title: Update report on police recruitment and retention in TVP along with ethnicity representation/positive action initiatives

Date: 15 September 2023

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Purpose of the report: In Nov 2022, the PCC gave a verbal update on police officer recruitment and retention, the Panel require an update report on police recruitment and retention in TVP, which includes further detail/progress of Race/BAME initiatives

Recommendations: Information / Update only

Contents of report

- *Background beginning with the National Uplift announcement in 2019*
- *Attraction and recruitment journey navigating through Uplift and culminating where we are today in relation to national population and police officer representation*
- *Positive Action & Engagement Team, functions, activities and Staff Support Associations; Race Action Plan and the new ACC role*
- *Where are we now? Force representation comparative to bordering forces including representation throughout the rank structure. Live candidates and applicant data - positive trajectory*
- *Officer turnover, Positive Action & Engagement Team refocus, Positive Action coaching programme. Retention realisation and inception*
- *Retention Team - implementation and phase one*
- *Conclusion*

Background

In July 2019, the government announced plans to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers in England and Wales by 31 March 2023. Whilst some saw the plan as contentious, effectively replacing officer numbers that had been reduced by earlier public sector cuts, it presented a welcome opportunity for forces across the country to increase their numbers and a unique opportunity to bring people from a range of backgrounds and communities, with a range of different skills, into policing.

Thames Valley Police's allocation from the 20,000 was to increase our officer numbers by 609; this would be in addition to existing recruitment plans and expected attrition. TVP managed to recruit an additional 785 officers, bringing our total number to over 5000. Thames Valley now has the largest number of officers in the force's history and, in time, we are confident this increase will ease the pressure on our people,



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helping us to continue to protect our communities by reducing crime and improving outcomes for victims.

Attraction and Recruitment Journey

Increasing our recruitment levels on a scale the force has never seen before has been a challenge in and of itself. A true grasp of the magnitude can only be appreciated when we consider the internal and external environments that existed at the time: a national pandemic, coupled with the simultaneous introduction of new officer entry routes and a saturated post-pandemic job market which fundamentally altered employee expectations. Innovation and efficiency have been key to overcoming these challenges. We have been creative and incrementally innovative in adjusting working practices, as well as decisive in implementing new methods to attract, recruit, vet, train and assess student officers.

As a force, we lobbied to bring back the IPLDP+ entry route to complement our PEQF routes and we have this at our disposal until March 2024. Understanding links between socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicity and its overall effects on social mobility has meant we continue to offer variety across our entry routes. We need a broad range of people, skills and backgrounds to be truly representative. It is worth noting the NPCC and the College of Policing are exploring a fourth entry route for the long term (Police Constable Entry Programme).

A positive outcome of Uplift has been greater levels of diversity seen across our force. Women now represent 37.4% of our officers with 43% of current applicants being women. Interestingly the College of Policing has demonstrated that internal culture pertaining to female inclusion is affected when officer numbers exceed 30%¹. We can therefore surmise that we've achieved this tipping point and will, through third and fourth order effects, increase diversity through more inclusive cultures in the workplace. Furthermore, we have now improved the number of officers from ethnically diverse backgrounds, who now represent 11.9% of our officers (inclusive of Black, Asian, Other ethnic minority communities and Any other white background, consistent with Uplift criteria/reporting). Uplift has provided us a springboard, set a new trajectory and we are determined to continue the hard work to ensure we are representative of all communities we serve.

The national ambition is that the Police Service, as a whole, reflects the latest Census data, as shown below. TVP is committed in this ambition and strives to become more diverse and reflective of every community in its force area. This is a key aim detailed

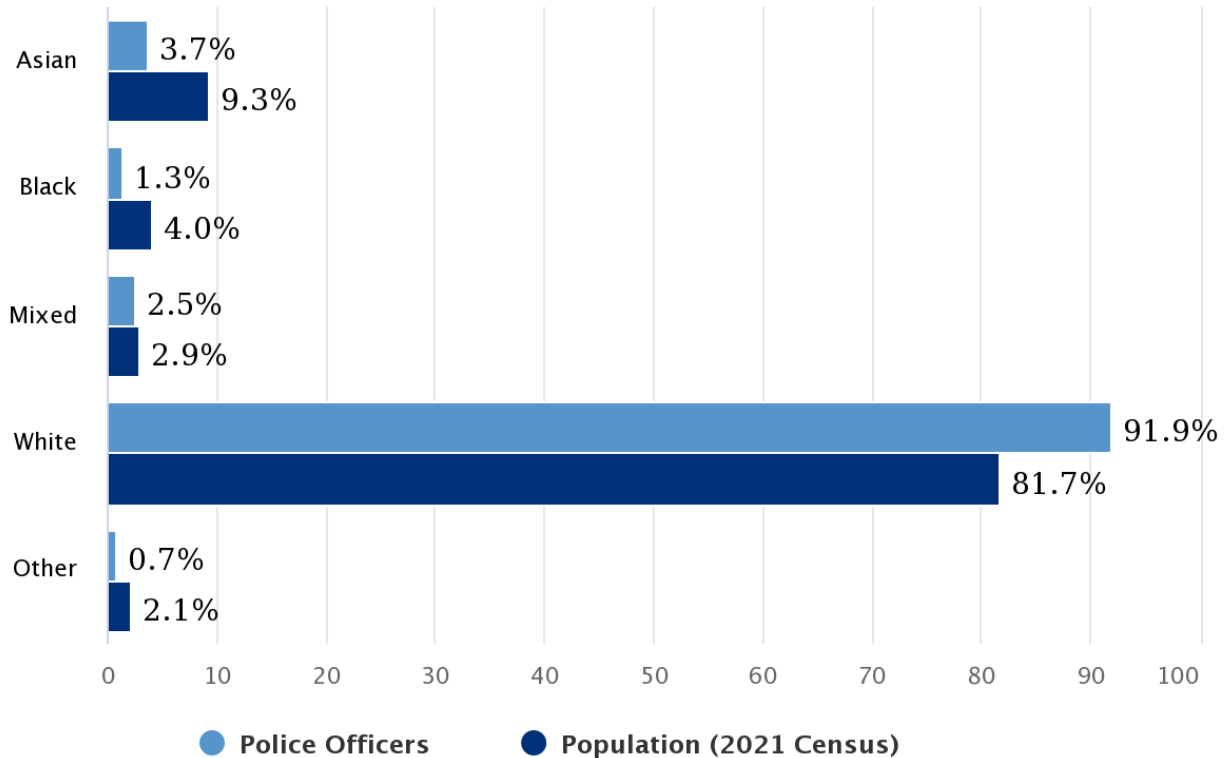
¹ March 2023, DCC McCormak Workforce Survey, Positive Action Practitioners Alliance



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within our Force Strategic Plan 23/24 and People Strategy 21-25.

Title: Percentage of police officers, and percentage of the overall population (at 2021 Census), by ethnicity. Location: England and Wales. Time period: 2022. Source: Police workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2022 | Ethnicity Facts and Figures GOV.UK



Positive Action & Engagement Team, Staff Support and New ACC

In pursuit of a more representative workforce, TVP has dedicated resources to this commitment in the form of the Positive Action & Engagement Team. This is a well-established team of a Sergeant and six PCs, reporting to our Retention and Positive Action Lead Inspector within Workforce Planning.

The team has three main functions and a number of activities and initiatives that are used to meet objectives (see Appendix 5). The Positive Action & Engagement activities are detailed within the attached Tactical Plan (see Appendix 5) and performance is reported on in the form of quarterly RAG reporting (see Appendix 6). Key performance indicators are listed for certain activities within the report, measuring the effectiveness of an activity. These are either quantitative or qualitative in nature depending on the activity itself, (see Appendix 6).

Community Engagement



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- Using a process of repeated targeted engagements to establish new links with seldom-heard communities and fostering relationships with existing ones.
- Organise, plan and deliver a number of people focussed initiatives with the aims of building trust and shifting perceptions through transparency and conversation.
- Working with educational institutions facilitating discussions and presentations around contentious topics.

Attraction












- Encourage, attract and support underrepresented people in joining the police.
- Offer comprehensive support from 'Application to Area'. This includes video package access, in-person workshops, bespoke 121 support and events such as 'Meet the Family'.

Progression/Retention

- Regular drop-in sessions for student officers at Foundation Training.
- Running and maintaining a mentoring programme for diverse student officers, this includes the training and allocation of new mentors into the programme.
- Conducting an 'on boarding' process to ease the transition onto LPAs from Foundation Training.
- Hold progression workshops both lateral and horizontal progression. Bespoke 121 support is also offered.

We have a number of Staff Support Associations and Networks designed to support diverse staff members. They also form part of the Force's decision-making apparatus through their ability to inform and influence.

Staff Networks & Support Groups

 <p>THAMES VALLEY POLICE NEURODIVERSITY SUPPORT NETWORK</p> <p>Neurodiversity Support Network</p>	 <p>CPA CHRISTIAN POLICE ASSOCIATION</p> <p>Thames Valley Christian Police Association</p>	 <p>Disability Support Network</p> <p>Enable - Disability & Carers Network</p>	 <p>Breaking down barriers & building trust</p> <p>Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Police Association</p>
 <p>THAMES VALLEY LGBT+ POLICE NETWORK</p> <p>Thames Valley LGBT+ Police Network</p>	 <p>MEN'S FORUM</p> <p>The Men's Forum</p>	 <p>Thames Valley Muslim Police Association</p>	 <p>SAME</p> <p>Support Association for Minority Ethnic Staff (SAME)</p>
 <p>TVP Sports and Social Club</p>	 <p>THAMES VALLEY WOMEN'S NETWORK</p> <p>Thames Valley Women's</p>	 <p>EMPLOYEE RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT GROUP</p> <p>TVP Employee Rape and Sexual</p>	



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Finally and arguably most importantly, in May 2022 we welcomed the launch of the NPCC Chief Council’s Police Race Action Plan, which has been developed in conjunction with the College of Policing. There is acknowledgement that previous attempts at similar schemes have not had the desired impact and thus a different approach was needed to make real and long lasting change. In order to effect such change, we realise we must understand and quantify what the impact would be of our intended actions. Consequently, an integral part of executing the plan has been inviting external scrutiny from those with lived experience as well as remaining transparent and accountable throughout. Improving trust and confidence in Thames Valley Police will further ensure we are able to attract those from diverse backgrounds. This will enhance our legitimacy through more considered decision-making when the arithmetic of our workforce changes as diverse officers progress through the service.

Thames Valley Police’s commitment to change and recognition of the task in hand has been further evidenced through the creation of a new governance of Diversity and Inclusion. This governance is focussed both internally and externally and is led by a newly-created role: Assistant Chief Constable for Legitimacy and Public Value.

Where are we now?

Nationally, ethnic minorities make up 8.1% of the general population. Thames Valley currently has 6.5% of police officers from minority backgrounds, compared to 2021 census data of 19.8% of the general population from Asian, black, mixed or ‘other’ ethnic backgrounds.

How do we compare to neighbouring forces on the percentage of ethnically diverse officers in relation to that of the local population? When conducting comparative analysis or comparative benchmarking with other forces, one must be aware of differences before interpreting such statistics, for example, proximity to the capital, population size, workforce size/ratio, transient populations etc. TVP’s area has a high level of higher education establishments, which means a large number of international students are resident who will not be looking for employment with TVP while studying.

Bedfordshire	10.1%	v population 27.9%
Northamptonshire	7.3%	v population 11.3%
Warwickshire	8.2%	v population 10.9%
Wiltshire	3.5%	v population 10.4%
HIOWC	3.5%	v population 9.5%
Sussex	3.8%	v population 9.5%
Surrey	6.2%	v population 4.5%
West Midlands	13.9%	v population 38.7%

The data as of March 2023 indicates that as we progress through the ranks, representation decreases. The number of roles at each rank also decreases, so if one



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Superintendent or above who defines themselves as of an ethnic minority background should retire or leave, this would impact significantly the data. Of note is the particularly low number of those identifying as black at Constable level, which inevitably impacts on the figures as we go up the ranks. The percentage of Superintendents and above who identify as Asian, black, mixed or other is also low.

Rank	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	TOTAL
Constable	117	27	103	17	264
Sergeant	12	3	16	1	32
Insp/Ch Insp	7	4	9	1	21
Supt and above	2	0	1	0	3
TOTAL	138	34	129	19	320

The table below shows that in the last 5 years, we have had a huge jump in the recruitment of officers who identify as Asian, Black, mixed or other background.

Rank	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	31 years+	TOTAL
Constable	168	23	46	18	8	1	0	264
Sergeant	0	14	7	7	3	1	0	32
Insp/Ch Insp	1	0	7	11	1	1	0	21
Supt and above	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
TOTAL	169	37	60	36	12	5	1	320

The breakdown of ethnicity in all ranks is shown below. As you can see from the data, the groups very low in representation are Bangladeshi, Black African/Caribbean, White and Black African and Arab, whilst those with more representation are Indian, Pakistani, any Asian background, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean and any other Mixed Multi-ethnic background.



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Ethnicity Breakdown - all ranks	Total	% of Total
Asian / Asian British - Bangladeshi	7	2.2%
Asian / Asian British - Chinese	15	4.7%
Asian / Asian British - Indian	43	13.4%
Asian / Asian British - Pakistani	39	12.2%
Any other Asian background - please describe	34	10.6%
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British - African	12	3.8%
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British - Caribbean	18	5.6%
Any other Black / African / Caribbean background - please describe	4	1.3%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian	45	14.1%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African	7	2.2%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean	33	10.3%
Any other Mixed / Multiple Ethnic background - please describe	44	13.8%
Other ethnic background - Arab	6	1.9%
Any other Ethnic group - please describe	13	4.1%
TOTAL	320	100.0%

The below table shows the extent of TVP's improvement in engaging communities and attracting more ethnic minority candidates to apply for an officer role. Between the financial year 2020/21 and July 2023, there has been an 8.4 percent rise in applications from ethnic minorities. In 2020/21 140 of the 942 applicants were from ethnic minority backgrounds (14.86%) and this jumps to 509 of the 3122 applicants (16.3 %) in FY 2022/23. This is a clear upward trajectory and we plan to continue to close the gap with local population demographics.

POLICE OFFICER APPLICATIONS - SUMMARY YTD				
OVERALL	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Jul23 YTD
Total Appls	942	2684	3122	1003
No. Ethnic Min	140	402	509	234
% Ethnic Min	14.9%	15.0%	16.3%	23.3%
No. Female	433	1138	1212	355
% Female	46.0%	42.4%	38.8%	35.4%
<i>Ethnic Min = Ethnic Minorities</i>				

Earlier in the report it was mentioned that we have seen an increase in the number of live candidates within our pipeline identifying as black. Thames Valley Police will often maintain a figure of over 8% of ethnically diverse candidates identifying as black. When you compare this to the 2021 Census data, which uses the following broad ethnic grouping of Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, the Local Authority District of Milton Keynes stands at 9.7% with Slough showing as 7.6%. This clearly means that we have begun to bridge the gap in attracting diverse candidates.



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Officer Turnover, Refocus and Retention Realisation

We have had much success in meeting our targets around recruitment and Uplift, however, we now need to also focus on retaining our workforce. Whilst we have made inroads into becoming more representative, we must also respond accordingly to the continually changing operating environment.

In 2022/23, 367.09FTE officers left TVP (8.69 FTE increase on previous year): the majority (54%) resigned, 25% retired and 20% transferred out.

Officers	March 19	March 20	March 21	March 22	March 23	2023/24 YTD
Total	322.22	299.70	216.05	358.40	367.09	120.16
Monthly average	26.85	25	18	29.9	30.6	40.05

Excludes eternally funded units.

Every year, resignation is the main reason for leaving. In 2022-23, resignations equated to 54.2% of all leavers, retirements 24.5% and transfers out 20%. In 2022-23, 76.3 FTE officers transferred out and 48 FTE transferred into TVP: a net loss of -28.3 FTE.

The year-on-year increase in the number of probationer leavers continues, in part due to the increased overall number of probationers; the number of probationers increased by 60.2% over the last financial year. As of the end of June 2023, 53 probationers have resigned, including 19 in May the highest number in any month to date.

Ethnic minority turnover (June 23) has increased for officers and staff compared to March 23. We are acutely aware that proportionately, more ethnic minority officers are leaving and we are actively analysing the data in order to ascertain the contributing factors.

Ethnic Minority 12 month rolling turnover %	March 21	March 22	March 23	June 2023		
				Ave. headcount	Leavers	%
Officers	8.6%	12.7%	11.0%	291.5	47	16.1%
Staff excluding JPS		22.7%	12.3%	188	30	16.0%
PCSO excluding JPS	8.7%	4.5%	26.3%	19.5	2	10.3%
External Units						
Officers	18.2%	0.0%	16.0%	13.5	2	14.8%
Staff	11.3%	24.5%	4.4%	26	1	3.8%

Ethnic Minority Turnover 12 month rolling % by staff group includes secondments and career breaks.

In August the Chief's Management Team met with HMICFRS leads for a hot debrief ahead of the grading and full report being prepared, which we expect to be published in November. Areas for improvement amongst others will include retention.

As already mentioned, the Positive Action and Engagement Team (PAET) have been focused on the attraction of candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds. This hot debrief has offered a timely opportunity to re-evaluate and assess the current landscape. We are redirecting the team's efforts, evolving the functions and developing new initiatives within the progression and retention pillars of their work. We must be alert to



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the underlying inferential issues surrounding internal culture and its impact on retention as well.

The Positive Action Promotion Coaching launched in 2022. Over 20 senior officers and staff across the organisation have committed to coaching people from under-represented backgrounds. They are already qualified coaches and have received an extra day's training on coaching people from under-represented backgrounds from an external company that specialises in this area.

If successful, the aim is to broaden this initiative out so that it is not just about promotion and applies to Police Staff as well. We've had to focus our efforts this time around to give us space to learn and improve the initiative for the future.

This initiative is only for those who are actively applying for promotion, OR

- Activity preparing to apply for promotion within the next 12 months; AND
- Have had conversations with their line management around readiness for promotion; AND
- Are from underrepresented communities at senior ranks.

We currently have 25 coaches assigned to positive action promotion including staff and officers and right up to Assistant Chief Constable Level.

A full breakdown of the PAET plan and activity is provided in the appendices.

Alongside the PAET, CCMT approved a paper from Workforce Planning to implement a trial of a new Retention Team (see Appendix 4). They will work toward reducing avoidable turnover. The team's work will also closely align with and enhance the retention elements of the Positive Action & Engagement Team's Tactical Plan (see Appendix 5). This team will focus on ICR officers and student officers, which is where we are seeing the highest levels of turnover. The aim is to gather more information, data and context on why officers are leaving so that we can direct meaningful interventions. This will involve embedding a system of primary data gathering which will lead to exploratory analysis of the main contributing factors. We will be introducing Stay Conversations to try to resolve any issues and provide early interventions, breaking down barriers for our staff and officers prior to them making the decision to leave TVP. The CCMT paper is attached (see Appendix 4) and an Implementation Plan and Strategic Plan are in development and should be ready for Phase 1 on 04 September 2023.

Retention Team Implementation, Phase 1

Immediate next steps will focus on setting up and implementing the Retention Team, as well as the continued analysis of its effectiveness. An APP bid has been submitted for additional funding beyond March '24 in anticipation of a successful pilot so that we can expand the team and focus on wider retention of all officer and staff groups.



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Concurrently, we have the ongoing challenge of managing attraction and recruitment. In the first quarter of this year we were achieving 80% occupancy on our officer intakes due to changes in vetting standards and negative press around policing. Through targeted attraction campaigns, we have increased the pipeline and are now able to forecast 90% occupancy on the remaining intakes for this financial year.

We are also introducing a TVP Assessment Day in addition to the College of Policing Online Assessment (see Appendix 3). This will give us the opportunity to safeguard and identify candidates who may need some additional support with English as an additional language, as we have concluded that their needs are not being correctly identified at the National Assessment Centre Process. The Assessment Day will also provide the opportunity to meet candidates and have an open dialogue about the realities of policing and assess their fit with TVP's vision, mission and values. If we are to continue to build trust and confidence, we must ensure officers are able to demonstrate our values.

As part of our increased partnership working within the attraction, we continue to develop and expand our relationships with the colleges and universities in our catchment area as well as with the military services. Two such initiatives that are in development are a pathway for MoD officers to join TVP into our Firearms Protection Group (see Appendix 2), and a collaboration with the Royal Military Police on an experience exchange programme focussed on Detention Officers and potentially CSIs (see Appendix 2).

The replacement of IPLDP with the new 4th entry route (PCEP) will present challenges due to the College of Policing's timeframes. We do not yet have a confirmed eligibility criteria or curriculum, so are unable to market this as an entry route currently. We are expected however to have our first intake in April 2024 onwards as IPLDP will no longer be licenced by the CoP. We have an Implementation Board governance structure set up and this is highlighted as a risk to our intake plans for next year.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Thames Valley Police have utilised a multi-faceted approach towards representative attraction and more recently retention. We are aware of the challenges and the opportunities presented by uplifting the workforce at such a rapid rate. It is clear that we have been successful in our scanning and assessing of the external environment by being predictive in our approach. We have also demonstrated an internal dynamism by responding decisively to unforeseen changes; this is a testament to the decision-making and leadership within the organisation. This will allow us to continually test what is possible and build on our work towards a truly inclusive service befitting of the communities of the Thames Valley Policing Area.



Matthew Barber

Police & Crime Commissioner
for Thames Valley

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Appendices

1. Attraction, Recruitment and Retention Operational Plan Workforce Planning
2. MOD to Protection Group Programme CCMT
3. Recruit Assessment Day CCMT
4. Retention Team CCMT
5. PAET Tactical Plan
6. PAET RAG Report