

Warwickshire Police - Special Constabulary Recruitment Activity

The following report highlights the recruitment activities and initiatives that have been and are currently being deployed in order to raise awareness of Warwickshire's Special Constabulary with the overall aim of increasing numbers.

Figures

- Currently 208 Serving Specials
- Target from April 2009 to March 2011 – to reach an establishment of **300**
- Specials recruited 2006/07 - 32
 - May 2006 7
 - July 2006 8
 - September 2006 9
 - November 2006 8
 - February 2007 Cancelled
- Specials recruited For 2007/08 - 30
 - May 2007 17
 - September 2007 09
 - November 2007 14
 - February 2008 Cancelled
- For 2008/09 – 34
 - April 2008 – 13
 - September 2008 - 9
 - November 2008 - 12
- For 2009/10
 - June 2009 – 15
 - Sept 2009 - on target for 14

Specials Action Plan

At the start of the year a workable action plan was formulated in order that our work could be rationalised as well as scrutinised, copy attached. As you will see many areas have already been completed, but work is ongoing and the plan will be reviewed again shortly.

Recruitment Seminar

This is something that was introduced at the start of the recruitment process, a couple of years ago. From feedback and questions asked of us in recruiting, it was felt there was a need for some kind of vehicle to allow people interested in becoming a Special, the chance to find out about the role, the commitment involved, the recruitment process and ask questions face to face.

These are still proving very popular and the feedback we have had has been very positive with people saying how informative, friendly and useful they have found

them. As a result we have found that about 95% of people take application packs away with them.

Over the next 6 months we are piloting running 2 Recruitment Evenings at the start of an intake rather than 1. One will always be held at our Learning and development Centre and one at locations around the county. The first of these is in August in Rugby district.

Recruitment Campaign July 2009 onwards

The aim is to increase the number of Specials within Warwickshire to 300 by mid 2011, as well as raising awareness of the Special Constabulary within our community and generating a wider interest in the role.

A new Recruitment plan taking us into 2011 has been developed, which in the first 6 – 12 months increases the frequency with which we start a process. We will start a process every 2 months; previously it was every 4 months. This will be reviewed at regular intervals.

We have been working with our corporate communications team and have a marketing plan, which will run concurrently with the recruitment plan.

The first stage of this plan starts on Wednesday 15th July, with radio adverts running for 3 weeks. These will be on Mercia, Oak & Touch stations. There will also be newspaper adverts running along side in targeted areas; Nuneaton, Rugby, Leamington and Stratford

In addition there will be a link on our website homepage, which will contain the radio advert and a link to the enquiry form. A press release will be sent out detailing all the things planned, with all the relevant information.

Posters are being produced showing the details of recruitment evenings in August, which will be placed around the region. There are also Specials who are willing to do radio interviews if required as follow up.

Depending on the success of this campaign, and subject to funding it will be repeated at appropriate times in accordance with the recruitment plan.

Funding for this campaign is tight, so we are always open to and looking for sources to gain extra funding to enable us to achieve our goal of 300.

Retention

This has been highlighted as an issue – over the last 4 years we have lost as many specials as we have recruited, making the target of increasing to 300 specials a difficult one.

As discussed we have a sound marketing and recruitment plan which we hope will generate interest, however we also need to address the retention aspect.

The biggest problem is that we do not know exactly why people are leaving. To address this, we are working in conjunction with Coventry University and have developed a satisfaction survey to go to all our specials. This was sent out at the end of June. The last date for returning completed questionnaires is Friday 17 July. The results will then be analysed with a report with findings and recommendations for Warwickshire Police.

As a result of the satisfaction survey, we will be developing a specific exit questionnaire for Specials, which will help us understand the reasons why Specials leave us in the future.

As part of the retention, we are also involved in helping the NPIA with their own research and have sent their leavers' questionnaire to Warwickshire Police Specials who have left in the last 18 months. Although the results will initially feed into the NPIA, results for Warwickshire will be available to us from September. This information will feed into our own results from our existing Specials survey.

Other Initiatives

- Extra leave for all Specials who are also employed by Warwickshire Police.
 - It was agreed in 2008 that any Special who is also contracted to work for the force would receive an additional 6 days annual leave. This is a way of recognising the time and energy people give to the force in a volunteer capacity as a Special. It is also hoped that we can encourage other employers to do something similar.
 - We will be running an internal recruitment initiative later in the year, to raise awareness within our own force.
- Local Employers – This is an area we have tried previously with some good results. We target local larger employers with a view to raising awareness of Specials within their workforce by talking to their employees about the Specials and having an information stand at their work place. This is something that we are considering reviving early next year.

Summary

We have a lot to achieve in the next 18 months, however I feel confident that with the recruitment plan and marketing strategy, the retention work and other initiatives it will be a positive start to increasing our numbers. We will continuously be monitoring the response and readjust initiatives where necessary.

Angie Dumper
Specials Recruiting Officer
Warwickshire Police

July 2009