

WARWICKSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY – 26 May 2010

Local Employment Targets for Under - Represented Groups in Warwickshire Police

Report by the Chief Constable

Summary

This report proposes the adoption of local employment targets for the Force.

Recommendation

That approval be given to the local employment targets as set out in paragraph 5 of the joint report.

1. Introduction

From 1999 to 2009 the police service has worked towards national stretch targets set by the Home Office to recruit more Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) officers and staff. Over that period Warwickshire Police has doubled its numbers of BME officers and staff and has achieved much higher proportions reaching supervisory and senior posts. The Government green paper '*From the neighbourhood to the national: policing our communities together*' (Home Office, 2008) has proposed that new, local employment targets for under-represented groups should be agreed locally by police authorities and forces. The Association of Police Authorities (APA) has issued interim guidance on the process that should be followed in setting suitable targets, suggesting these are set annually from 2009 onwards up to 2012. Authorities and forces are required to set targets for race and gender as a minimum, but are encouraged to consider all under-represented groups as part of the process.

2. How the proposed Warwickshire targets have been reached

The Warwickshire Police Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Unit has carried out research in consultation with the force directorates and Police Authority Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Panel. The overall work has followed the APA guidance, including a community mapping exercise and analysis of force employment data. The work has taken into consideration all equality strands. An in-depth review of the force's progress on the Macpherson recommendations has also informed the process. The purpose has been to identify key areas of under-representation in the workforce, for which suitable numerical targets can realistically be set and progress thereby accurately measured. The proposed targets complement and support the priorities set out in our Combined Equality Scheme 2009-12. They targets have been discussed by the Police Authority Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Panel and have been agreed at force level by ACC Brunton and Assistant Director of Resources (HR). Liaison with representatives of the Workforce Management Group has also taken place. The proposed employment targets set out in this paper are now presented for consideration of formal adoption.

3. Achievability of the proposed employment targets

The proposed targets are based on detailed research and modelling of data on future recruitment, retention and progression of officers and staff within the force. The overriding principle has been to set targets that are realistic and achievable but move the force forwards in relation to becoming more reflective of the communities we serve. The targets, whilst challenging for the force, have been chosen in the context of the current policing environment, recognising the uncertainty and constraints around recruitment and the ongoing programme of work under 150 plus to achieve a sustainable workforce. It is believed that the adoption of these targets will ensure that the force moves forward in this important area and that the achievements of the previous ten-year period are sustained and further developed.

4. The proposed employment targets 2010-2012

Target 1 - Recruiting and retaining BME officers and staff

To increase the overall proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic officers and staff by the end of 2011/12, against the current baseline of 4%.

Rationale

Increasing the numbers of minority ethnic staff was previously a national ten-year target for all forces. Warwickshire Police doubled its BME representation (to 4.1%) but still has more to do to attain a workforce that is reflective of its community (6.9%). The target will therefore help focus activity on retaining and increasing the representation of minority ethnic officers.

There is very little actual potential for recruitment of BME police officers in 2010/11 (possibly one intake, with 34 individuals on the waiting list who have passed the assessment centre, none of which are BME) and the implementation of 150Plus will naturally limit any potential for police staff recruitment. Potential to recruit may improve during 2011/12 but this will be limited. Therefore, there will need to be a focus on good retention of officers and staff as the main means of achieving this target, coupled with an element of potential police staff recruitment in 2011/12. A two-year target has been set, rather than an annual one, to give more flexibility to the achievement of the target against the constraints posed by the next two years. No specific numerical target has been set because of the uncertainties around recruitment and the fact that we are committed to working through the current waiting list of applicants– the target therefore is to achieve the best possible increase in BME representation, compared to the current baseline of officers and staff.

The Equality Diversity & Human Rights Board will agree and oversee a force strategy for the achievement of all employment targets. To achieve this target the strategy will include the use of coaching, mentoring and personal development plans for each officer and member of police staff.

Target 2 – Progression of BME officers and staff

To increase the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic officers at substantive sergeant rank and above by the end of 2011/12, from a baseline of 4.5%. To increase the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic police staff in posts at Grade PO and above by the end of 2011/12, from a baseline of 3.6%.

Rationale

The overall percentage of BME officers of the rank of sergeant and above is 4.6%, which is below the benchmark of the Warwickshire Census data figure of 6.9%. The target is to increase the proportion of officers by the end of 2012. The ability to promote is dictated by the requirement for potential sergeants passing OSPRE assessment centres in March (OSPRE part 1) and in October (OSPRE part 2). Inspectors attend their assessment centres in May and September. Focused positive action to increase the number of BME applicants for promotion therefore requires an amount of lead in time and for this reason a two-year target is proposed instead of an annual target. Targets for specific ranks have not been set in order to give greater flexibility for achievement. Because of the uncertainty that does exist around the ability of the force to promote and progress people over the coming period, a specific numerical target has not been applied. The target is to improve beyond the existing baseline as far as possible. In order to achieve this target a new strategy for the progression of BME officers will be agreed by the Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Board. The retention strategy mentioned in target 1 is also relevant and important to the achievement of this target.

Analysis of force data shows that minority ethnic police staff are under-represented in the higher pay scales (4.3% on PO grade and 0% at SM grade – combined percentage is 3.6%) and the target is to increase the level of representation through progressing suitable candidates for promotion.

Target 3 – Recruitment and retention of female officers

To increase the proportion of female officers recruited during 2010-2012 from a baseline of 25.4%.

Rationale

Analysis of workforce data has shown that female under-representation is worst amongst police officers (25.4% of officers are female compared to the population figure of 50.6%). The target is intended to increase the representation of female officers amongst new recruits and thereby contribute towards improving their overall representation of women police officers in the organisation. Performance in this area will be dictated by the fact that there are 34 potential new starters through assessment centre who are on the waiting list to join the force. Of these 10 are female which makes the target realistically achievable over the two-year period.

This target therefore focuses on achieving a higher proportion of women amongst those who are recruited over the two-year period.

Target 4 – Progression of female officers and police staff

To increase the percentage of officers at substantive sergeant rank and above who are women by the end of 2011/12 from a baseline of 10.2%. Increase the percentage of women in PO grades and above by the end of 2011/12, from a baseline of 30%.

Rationale

Women police officers are under-represented at the ranks of sergeant and above and women police staff are under-represented at the higher police staff grades. The target here is intended to increase representation through a strategy of developing and progressing officers and staff with the potential to be promoted. As with target 2, and for the same reasons, a specific numerical target has not been set, and the intention is to secure the best possible improvement above the existing baseline.

Target 5 – Recruiting and retaining officers and staff with a disability

To increase the percentage of new police staff starters in the force who have a declared disability for which a reasonable adjustment can be made, to at least 2% over the two – year period ending in 2011/12.

Rationale

As a public authority Warwickshire Police has a legal responsibility to ensure equality of opportunity in relation to the employment of people with a disability and to take positive steps to promote equality. A key priority within our Disability Equality Scheme is to implement a positive approach to all aspects of employing people with a disability, ensuring all barriers to equality are removed. We monitor the recruitment, retention and progression of people in relation to all equality strands including disability and analysis of workforce data shows that the recruitment of people with disabilities is very low (during 2008/09 out of 192 new starters, 1 person had a declared disability – 0.5%) and the percentage of officers and staff with a disability shows under-representation compared to the Warwickshire population (16.7% estimated figure). We therefore have recognised that suitably qualified disabled people have not applied to work for us and this is something we need to address to ensure there are no barriers to the recruitment of people with a disability and that we are taking a positive and proactive stance to securing future applicants, whilst moving towards having a workforce which is more reflective of the proportions of people with a disability in Warwickshire.

The target is intended to ensure that there is a focus on recruiting suitably qualified people with disabilities, which can be achieved through taking positive steps to attract suitably qualified applicants and by working closely with disability organisations and Jobcentre Plus. Through these means we can communicate and emphasise the force's inclusive policy in relation to disability and by providing reasonable adjustments to new starters with a disability.

The target is designed to ensure there is a minimum of at least 2% disabled people amongst the total amount of police staff recruited over the two-year period. Consideration will also be given to extending this target to police officers beyond 2012, or earlier if possible, once the existing waiting list of officers has expired and there is scope to extend a positive action strategy to the recruitment of officers with a disability.