

Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	24 February 2021
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Workforce Diversity, Inclusion and Equality in Policing
Presented By	DCC Taylor, People and Professionalism
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to update the Scottish Police Authority on the work being carried out by Police Scotland to mainstream Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Members are invited to note and discuss the content of the paper.

1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Policing in Scotland draws its legitimacy from the consent of our fellow citizens who we are there to serve.

It is crucial that the culture of Police Scotland is welcoming and inclusive to all and that our people are supported to thrive, flourish and be truly themselves so that policing fully reflects and represents our communities.

With the support and challenge of a number of committed and highly engaged staff associations, strong progress has been made in this regard. However, like many sectors and organisations, much remains to be done to fully and sustainably embed equality, diversity and inclusion in the Police Service of Scotland and this work must be driven forward with urgency and rigour.

This paper sets out Police Scotland's next steps to build on what has already been achieved through the ongoing delivery of the Equality Outcomes which is reflected in the Police Scotland's Police Strategy – Empower, Enable and Develop Our People (2018-2021) and complemented by the recent development of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Employment) Framework, to deliver lasting positive change for Police Scotland.

2. NEXT STEPS

2.1 Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights Strategic Oversight Board

A refreshed, enhanced and robust governance structure will accelerate and embed progress towards mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion. To that end an Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights Strategic Oversight Board, chaired by DCC People and Professionalism will meet for the first time on 1 March. The Board will also benefit from the insight and experience of staff associations.

The Board will draw together current activity and close identified gaps. It will focus on prioritising and giving effect to identified actions; overseeing the delivery of the Equality Outcomes and the Equality and Diversity Action Plans being developed; as well as delivering on the current Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Employment) Framework, engaging with external partners or critical friends and agreeing appropriate, ethical and deliverable measurements to ensure delivery against all of the above.

This work will have regard for complementary progress made by policing in the UK, particularly work under the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) to review data collection and analysis, internal culture and inclusivity, use of powers and community engagement and communication.

The Board will also oversee a comprehensive review of existing governance arrangements to ensure they are fit for purpose to drive forward the current reform agenda. An invite has been extended to the Scottish Police Authority to become members of the Board. The Board will report into the Strategic Leadership Board and the Scottish Police Authority.

2.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Secretariat Support Team

A dedicated team of three officers – an Inspector, Sergeant and Constable – have commenced in post forming a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Secretariat Support Team. The dedicated Team will provide a central resource to co-ordinate activity and provide secretariat support for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion national policing reform agenda.

2.3 Completion of BME Equality Action Plan

A BME Equality Action Plan has already been developed and endorsed through the Strategic Leadership Board following focus group sessions with current and previous Police Scotland employees and the diversity staff association, SEMPER. The focus groups titled 'Talk Truth to Power' were hosted by DCC Taylor.

The Action Plan details how the organisation should deliver key elements of the inclusion agenda in a practical manner and support the mainstreaming of this statutory duty. Fundamentally, it supports the goals set out within the People Strategy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework by outlining actions that will help to create an inclusive culture that attracts, develops and retains a diverse and representative workforce.

The delivery of the action plan will be to support equality, diversity and inclusion mainstreaming into all levels of Police Scotland planning activity including Divisional/Departmental Annual Delivery Plans and local People Plans.

The main findings have been grouped into four key areas, detailed below. While it is recognised that what is done for one protected characteristic often has a positive benefit to other underrepresented groups, the

organisation will tailor the effort to make them fit for purpose, and not assume a 'one size fits all' approach.

2.3.1 Attraction & Recruitment

Currently, the Positive Action Team (PAT) which was established in 2017, leads the effort of attraction and recruitment to the organisation from individuals from minority backgrounds, in conjunction with divisions, and includes a focus on BME, female and LGBT+ recruitment.

The PAT has been consistently successful at attracting recruits from different backgrounds, however while the number of female recruits continues to increase, and White Minority Ethnic recruitment is on a par with society, BME recruitment remains low. There is actually a suggestion, based on the experience of some BME officers that recruitment via the PAT can in itself stigmatise individuals in early service, being incorrectly viewed as 'an easy route into the service' by some colleagues.

Significant progress has already been made in reviewing and updating the Standard Entrance Test (SET) to ensure it is non-discriminatory. The embedding and impact of this new SET will be closely monitored to ensure positive change.

Work is required to understand how attraction activity, followed by successful recruitment can be enhanced. A review of the organisation's positive action strategy for recruitment of officers from diverse backgrounds will therefore take place.

2.3.2 Retention and Progression

Some of the experiences of officers from minority ethnic backgrounds included a lack of consistent tutoring and perceptions of less opportunity to access courses and less opportunity for lateral career progression than their colleagues. There is therefore a need to better understand how local practices affect the progression of minority staff.

There is known good practice and associated initiatives, as well as successful positive action programmes in existence across other organisations, including advocacy associations, such as Stonewall. Police Scotland is keen to learn and benefit from these in supporting individuals to thrive and achieve their potential.

Where colleagues from under-represented groups do resign from the service a more in depth exit interview process will be designed to understand why. This will all form part of a review into the support provided to officers from minority backgrounds, particularly in their early years and to consider the benefits of offering peer and psychological support throughout an officer's career.

2.3.3 Organisational Culture and Training

Work is required to accelerate Police Scotland's ability to positively and sustainably effect organisational culture change. There will be a significant link to ongoing training provision and organisational dialogue involved in achieving this outcome.

It is vital that the first stage of training for officers effectively instils an understanding and appreciation of inclusion so that officers carry on to become positive role models in the organisation.

Every new officer or member of staff joining the organisation receives a full day training from a competent Equality and Diversity instructor. The training was modernised in 2019 and incorporated into the new probationer training programme in December 2020. This training is currently being reviewed by diversity staff associations to further enhance its development.

A detailed look at how to further enhance existing equality, diversity and inclusion training and foster a genuine understanding of how to create an inclusive environment for first and second line managers will be commissioned. In addition an equality, diversity and inclusion element should be present in all training programmes to promote active engagement, the expectation of challenge and to support managers to ensure they have the confidence to address issues and not unnecessarily formalise them.

Local People Boards will be supported to actively consider equality, diversity and inclusion matters in light of feedback about training and development opportunities locally.

2.3.4 Complaints, Conduct and Grievances

The issue of grievance handling and its intersection with complaints and conduct matters is raised consistently by staff associations and focus group

participants. There is good practice elsewhere in policing, that we will look to learn from.

Dame Elish Angiolini's report on police complaints handling, investigations and misconduct issues makes a number of specific observations and recommendations regarding Police Scotland's Professional Standards Department. Bespoke training for Professional Standards Department officers, is already being taken forward by the Professional Standards Department Leadership.

2.4 Strengthen Collection and Use of Equality Data

Our ability to understand and analyse diversity data is limited, often because of system issues but on occasion by custom and practice. This will be reviewed, together with partner organisations to ensure that enhancements are designed collaboratively, where possible. There is a need to improve the availability, consistency and quality of such data, which should be properly disaggregated to ensure that all decisions are evidence-based.

In recognition of the importance of having the right data to inform decision making and the anticipated increased demand expected in this area as detailed above, this piece of work will form a workstream in itself, overseen by the Strategic Oversight Board.

3. EQUALITY OUTCOMES

The Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Working Group will continue coordinating the review of the Equality Outcomes for 2021. This will incorporate work to define specific and measurable outcomes that are reflective of our wider objectives and activities. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework and our Equality Outcomes will be clearly aligned and the BME Equality Action Plan is also complementary to that process. An update on the Equality Outcomes will be presented to the March SPA Board meeting.

4. INDEPENDENT REVIEW GROUP

During the Authority Board meeting in November, the Chief Constable underlined his support for Dame Elish Angiolini's recommendation that there should be an independent review of equality matters within policing and indicated that, to that end, Police Scotland will commission additional, external, and expert support.

An Independent Review Group with an independent chair will therefore be established to complement and accelerate Police Scotland's activity in mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion and in eliminating discrimination. This will bring considerable value to our approach and understanding of equality matters, including the experiences of minority groups in the service. The IRG will provide critical oversight, challenge, review and assurance as progress is made.

Membership of the IRG will reflect and be representative of society with experience in advocating on behalf of underrepresented communities. The Independent Review Group will report publicly on their findings.

5. CONCLUSION

Work will be taken forward under the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights Strategic Oversight Board with monthly progress updates provided to the Strategic Leadership Board and assurance provided by the Independent Review Group. Early updates will include findings and recommendations for an enhanced governance structure ensuring a robust and fit for purpose mechanism for change delivery and proposals for appointed Chief Officer Leads.

Key to the success of the work will be ongoing engagement with diversity staff associations and the identification of and engagement with external individuals and organisations who are exemplars of good practice and are able to support and challenge policing as we accelerate progress in this area.

Success can only be optimised through a workforce that is reflective of the communities of Scotland. A key driver for the service is to ensure it attracts, develops and retains good people into policing, and enable them to deliver the best service possible. Police Scotland is absolutely committed in the development and progression of our people and to improve the quality of services to realise a modern, national service.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at present, it is proposed these are supported through current budgeted establishment means.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

Some of the activities will have an impact on personnel and the way in which the workforce currently operates. Police Scotland will proactively engage with stakeholders and staff associations to ensure a collective approach in the best interests of the workforce so Police Scotland can best serve the communities of Scotland.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This update and the work contained within supports compliance with The Equality Act 2010.

9. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are reputational implications. Our People Strategy and Annual Delivery Plan operationalises the organisation's strategic priorities and commitments to provide the best possible working environment in which Police Scotland's workforce can thrive. Getting this right enables the workforce to provide the best possible service to the public which will positively enhance the reputation of Police Scotland both in terms of service provision and as an employer of choice.

10. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Police Scotland's plans are designed to further diversify the workforce by encouraging people from under-represented groups to consider a career in policing. Having a diverse workforce that is truly representative of communities will increase public confidence and legitimacy in policing Scotland.

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT

Without a well skilled, supported and motivated workforce the confidence placed in service delivery and the legitimacy of policing communities could be compromised.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The content of this this paper will positively support equality, diversity and human rights in the workplace ensuring Police Scotland is accessible as an employer to all our communities.

13. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to note and discuss the content of the report.