

GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

Date: 11th June 2024

Subject: Police Officer Recruitment and Wider GMP Recruitment

Report of: Chief Resources Officer Lee Rawlinson

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Deputy Mayor and members of the Panel on the Police Uplift numbers / progress alongside broader GMP staff recruitment, retention and diversity.

Recommendations:

The Panel is requested to:

1. Note the contents of the report.

Contact Officers

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

All recruitment is in line with the Greater Manchester Police (GMP) standards on diversity equality and inclusivity to improve diversity across the Force so this work will have positive benefits.

Risk Management

Decreasing risks across the Force on issues of workload overtime etc through increased numbers.

Legal Considerations

Nil to report.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Finances not described within the content of the report however all new police officer posts come with funding for GMP.

Financial Consequences – Capital

Finances not described within the content of the report.

Number of attachments to the report:

None.

1. Overview

The Policing Uplift Programme (PUP) was a three-year national programme established to support the government plan to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers in England and Wales by the end of March 2023. As part of this programme, GMP was set a target to increase overall police officer headcount by 1,155, from 6,787 officers in March 2020 to 7,942 officers by the end of March 2023.

A robust delivery plan saw GMP make strong progress and having the ability to exceed target. This resulted in GMP being able to secure further funding. GMP made a successful bid and were set a new target by the Home Office.

In year 4 of extended uplift, GMP had a further headcount target of 8,131 by 31st March 2024

GMP achieved 8,189 by the 31st March 2024 putting the Force in a strong position of achieving its September 2024 and March 25 target of 8,151.

The Force recruited 684 Officers in to GMP during 2023-24

1.1. Recruitment Process

Recruitment of police officers is a complex process with a number of mandated stages requiring significant input and processing from various parts of the Force and partners. The national average time to hire for police officer recruitment is 6 months from the time of application to commencement.

Police officer recruitment also experiences a high attrition rate as candidates are unsuccessful at assessment stages or withdraw from the process. Experience shows that the national average is a 10:1 ratio between the number of initial applications and the number of officers recruited.

The core stages in police officer recruitment are:

- Eligibility checks to ensure candidates meet the requirements to join a Home Office Police Force

- Online National Sift assessment run by the College of Policing
- Online National Assessment Centre run by the College of Policing
- In force selection interview
- Fitness and medical checks
- Vetting
- References including absence checks

1.2. Police Officer entry routes and recruitment

There are a range of entry routes which can be utilised to recruit new student police officers or to recruit experienced police officers. GMP are currently using the following:

1.2.1. Police Constable Entry Programme (PCEP)

The Police Constable Entry Programme (PCEP) This is the new police officer training route introduced by the College of Policing. All Police Forces have had to develop revised training programmes and apply to the College of Policing to obtain a new training licence. GMP have successfully secured their training licence in April 2024 and will be starting the first intake of student officers on 10th June 2024. The whole of the training delivery is delivered by GMP within the training estate. This is a two-year training programme.

1.2.2. Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA)

Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA): a three-year training programme with time spent at university and time in operational policing delivery. At the end of year 3, officers achieve a Professional Policing Degree. Training is delivered in modules. GMP's Higher Education delivery partner is the University of Salford (UoS).

1.2.3. Transferees

Movement of existing, qualified and experienced police officers between Home Office forces.

GMP has had some success in attracting transferees from other forces, particularly around specialist roles.

Dedicated resources have now been assigned to this workstream to ensure that any enquiries and applications are processed in an efficient and effective manner.

The team will ensure that there is effective coordination within the recruitment process and streamline activity where possible.

Dedicated district and branch single point of contacts (SPOC) have now been identified to support the recruitment process and subsequent on boarding. The transferee team will develop strong working relationships with the SPOCs to support this.

The team will review and amend the transferee training course to ensure it is fully fit for purpose and timely in delivery.

1.2.4 Re-joiners

Recruitment of individuals who have previously been police officers, generally within the last 5 years, to rejoin policing as a career.

1.3. GMP Police Officer Uplift

As a large force, GMP experiences a natural attrition averaging 550 to 600 police officers per year, primarily through retirement, resignation or transfer to other forces.

A robust plan and governance structure was implemented with all of the above entry routes being utilised.

The delivery plan saw GMP make strong progress and having the ability to exceed targets. This resulted in GMP being able to secure further funding. GMP made a successful bid and were set a new target by the Home Office.

In year 4 of extended uplift, GMP had a further headcount target of 8,131 by 31st March 2024

GMP achieved 8,189 by the 31st March 2024 putting the Force in a favourable position of achieving its September 2024 and March 25 target of 8,151.

The Force recruited 684 Officers in to GMP during 2023-24

2023-24 Officer recruitment

By 31st March 2024 GMP had met the 8189 headcount objective and is on course to meet the trajectory of September 2024 and March 25 target of 8,151.

The Force recruited 684 officers from different routes to GMP during 2023-24

Transferee	Police Now	IPLDP	PEQF	Policing Degree	Total
68	11	354	214	37	684

The outcome was also significant for GMP in that the police officer headcount maintained 8000 officers for the first time in over 10 years. GMP was also a net importer of transferees bringing in experienced officers from other forces.

1.4. Diversity

GMP has worked hard to make year on year improvements to increase the diversity of police officers and become more representative of the communities served.

Delivering volume recruitment in a restrictive time scale does make this more challenging.

Over the 3 years of the PUP, and the following year, GMP were able to continue to stabilise the representation of the police officer workforce as shown in the following table:

Officer Workforce Diversity over time:

Police Officer Diversity	% Minority Ethnic	% Female
Mar-20	8.6%	31.9%
Mar-21	9.2%	33.5%
Mar-22	9.9%	35.6%
Mar-23	9.7%	36.2%
Mar-24	9.7%	36.8%

The Diversity, Equality and Inclusive Strategy for GMP is currently being reviewed and will be launched in Summer 2024. This will include new and updated objectives which focus on improvements for the workforce and operationally for the communities the Force serves.

One of these objectives will be that GMP are committed to a cycle of continuous improvements in all activity relating to the recruitment process and that the Force is inclusive in the approach. GMP aims to ensure that candidates receive an experience that meets their individual needs.

GMP currently has the highest number of minority ethnic and female officers than it has ever had before, however, it is recognised that further work needs to continue to close the gap to ensure reflective representation of communities.

The Positive Action Team will be utilised to continue to improve recruitment from diverse backgrounds with numerous initiatives planned to reach out to communities that do not traditionally consider policing as a career.

1.5. Retention

Retention of the workforce is a challenge to policing nationally. Accordingly, GMP have invested in a small team, led by a Chief Inspector, this being the Insight, Support and Engagement Team. The team has developed a life cycle model identifying six key stages as part of the retention strategy:

- Attraction
- Recruitment
- Onboarding and Orientation
- Establish a positive employee experience
- Stay Interview
- Exit Interviews

With the Uplift targets, a key early deliverable was the retention of the existing workforce. As a result, the “Stay Interviews” were launched as an early initiative.

These interviews are conducted by the team and provide a psychologically safe space for police officers to raise their concerns which have led them to considering leaving GMP.

The interviews have proven to be highly successful in resolving issues being experienced by some officers, whilst also providing organisational insight and learning. The interviews have had a 70% success rate to date. This approach has received national interest, including GMP hosting a retention conference at the request of the

National Policing Uplift Team. The scheme is now being widened to include police staff. Organisational learning from the interviews is being used to further shape GMP's leadership training programmes and attraction strategies.

1.6. Current Recruitment

The Home Office have set targets for police officer headcounts for 2024/25. Under this, GMP will be required to maintain the baseline headcount of 8101 officers but has also been given the opportunity to achieve further growth beyond this for a new headcount set for March 2025 at 8151. Recruitment plans are in place and on track to deliver this by the first milestone on 30th September 2024 and again in March 2025.

1.7. Police Staff Recruitment

Beyond police officer recruitment, 2023/24 saw significant investments in police staff recruitment to support the service improvements being delivered by GMP under the transformational Plan on a Page (POAP) programme.

A key area of focus was recruitment to the Force Contact, Crime and Operations (FCCO) Branch. A previous year's total of 489 people were recruited into the Branch which was the highest ever recruited into the department and provided much needed capacity to deliver the required service improvements. Recruitment levels to the branch have now returned to normal maintenance levels for 2024/25.

Police staff recruitment also took place across all enabling services in GMP throughout 2023/24, which again saw significant investment with 545 people being recruited.

The latest workforce diversity data is as follows:

- Police Staff recruitment 2023-24 (across the Force).
- 545 Police Staff recruited during the last 12 months within posts across the Force.
- With 146 of the above recruited in to FCCO.

Diversity of starters during 2023-24:

Year to date starters (Apr - Mar)	Total	Minority Ethnic		Female		Disabled	
	Starters	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Staff	545	61	11.2%	329	60.4%	39	7.2%
Total	1229	117	9.5%	608	49.5%	103	8.4%

As with police officers, work continues to deliver a workforce that is representative of the communities.