



Home Office

National Policing Board Minutes 3 March 2021

Title of meeting	National Policing Board
Date	3 March 2021
Time	10:30 - 12:00
Venue	Virtual meeting via videoconference
Chair	Rt Hon Priti Patel MP: Home Secretary

Attendees

- Rt Hon Priti Patel MP: Home Secretary (Chair)
- Kit Malthouse MP: Minister of State for Crime and Policing
- Victoria Atkins MP: Minister for Safeguarding
- Martin Hewitt QPM: Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM: Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service
- Paddy Tipping: Chair, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC)
- Bernie O'Reilly: Interim Chief Executive Officer, College of Policing
- Dame Lynne Owens: Director General, National Crime Agency (NCA)
- Sir Thomas Winsor: HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary & HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services
- Neil Basu QPM: Head of UK Counter Terrorism Policing
- Matthew Rycroft CBE: Permanent Secretary
- Patricia Hayes: Director General, Crime, Policing and Fire Group
- Chloe Squires: Acting Director General, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism
- Rachel Watson: Policing Director, Crime, Policing and Fire Group

Special invitees

- Rt Hon The Lord Herbert of South Downs CBE PC: Chair, College of Policing
- Paul Griffiths: President, Police Superintendents' Association
- John Apter: National Chair, Police Federation of England and Wales
- Andy George: President, National Black Police Association
- Roger Hirst: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex
- Andy Johnson: Deputy Director, Crime Strategy and Performance Unit

Welcome and Introduction

- 1. RT HON PRITI PATEL MP, HOME SECRETARY** opened the meeting by thanking policing for its role in helping to reduce the spread of Coronavirus, almost one year on since the first national lockdown. She remarked that it is testament to the professionalism and conduct of officers that public confidence has remained stable throughout this immensely difficult time for our country and that this is fundamental to the long-standing principle of policing by consent. Remarking that the Police Uplift Programme is going from strength to strength, with over 120 000 people applying to be officers up to December 2020, she reflected that there is still more to do, particularly around diversity, and this is why it is important that the National Policing Board discusses this issue.
- 2. RT HON THE LORD HERBERT OF SOUTH DOWNS** introduced himself to attendees and set out his aspirations for further strengthening the role of the College of Policing and its relationships with stakeholders to ensure it is a dynamic organisation that is fit for purpose.

Actions from the previous meeting

- 3. KIT MALTHOUSE MP, MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING** welcomed ongoing efforts to further improve collective system leadership through the Home Secretary's Policing Pillars and the review of the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR). He added that the Home Office will continue to work closely with partners round the table to operate as one system, focused on collective performance.

Police Uplift Programme

- 4. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING** introduced the item by highlighting that the Uplift Programme has been a triumph against the backdrop of the pandemic. He informed members that by the end of December 2020, we had reached 6620 additional Uplift officers, exceeding our year-one milestone of 6000 additional officers by March 2021 - three months early. The Minister thanked policing for its collective effort but reminded attendees that we must also focus our attention on the progress being made on diversity, which unfortunately is not as positive across all forces. He emphasised that the next 12 months is critical, and we urgently need to build a sense of momentum as the Uplift window is closing.
- 5. RACHEL WATSON, POLICING DIRECTOR, CRIME, POLICING AND FIRE GROUP** provided further detail on police forces' recruitment. She explained that despite the Uplift Programme delivering volume recruitment and putting in place support for forces to improve diversity, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) police officer representation has only crept up incrementally over recent years (from 3.9% in 2007 to 7.5% in 2021). She clarified that this headline figure also conceals differences at force level and

between groups, for example, when Black officer representation is examined on its own, Black groups represent 3.3% of the population but only represented 1.5% of police recruits from April - December 2020. Her presentation also highlighted the comparative picture between forces' recruitment compared to local populations. It showed that whilst there are clear differences in the scale of the challenge between forces, some forces are doing well, whereas other forces have further to go.

6. **RACHEL WATSON** explained that while there has been progress in recruitment of female officers overall, again the picture varies between forces. She detailed the Programme's wide-ranging support to forces to improve diversity as they recruit during the Uplift and beyond. Examples highlighted included the extensive package of support on attraction, close working with staff associations and the tools provided to forces e.g. the *Adverse Impact Tool* which was issued to forces by the College to allow them to test any part of the process against disproportionality.
7. **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING** informed the meeting that he had just written to all forces to remind them of the importance of achieving greater diversity in recruitment. He urged all PCCs and Chief Constables to act immediately with focus and curiosity to work out why some forces are doing well on BAME recruitment and others are not. He provided examples of forces using good practice techniques and stressed that the aim is not to draw attention to particular forces, but instead to encourage all forces to learn from the best.
8. **MARTIN HEWITT QPM, CHAIR, NPCC** reflected that there is no 'silver bullet' solution and we must tackle this issue together from every possible angle. He elaborated that whilst we recognise that different forces are operating under different contexts it was also important to examine how well Chief Constables are adopting what works. He reflected that attracting Black candidates to apply to roles in policing relates to trust and confidence in the police and that we need to build sustainable processes that encourage applications. He then updated on the work the NPCC is doing with the College on Inclusion and Race, in particular their joint '*Police Plan of Action on Inclusion and Race*'. This will focus on three core issues: internal culture and inclusivity; police powers; and community relations and engagement.
9. In speaking about the once in a lifetime opportunity for the Uplift Programme to get this right, **ANDY GEORGE, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL BLACK POLICE ASSOCIATION** explained that the most successful forces tended to be those where senior leaders are invested in this agenda, cautioning that some forces are mistakenly seeing this as a metropolitan issue only. Touching on the importance of ensuring good community engagement, he reminded the board that diversity is an operational necessity, for example in neighbourhood policing where gathering intelligence from communities is vital to preventing harm. He also reflected that police leadership itself should be more diverse and spoke about some of the practical barriers to recruitment that disproportionately impact BAME candidates as well as the issues with this umbrella- term

itself. He emphasised the need for a long-term engagement strategy with real accountability and public scrutiny and said he would like to see that alongside the Uplift Programme. He closed by highlighting the importance of this being reflected in PCCs' plans and HMICFRS inspections and the need to tap into the cultural assets of existing officers and the expertise of the NBPA.

10. BERNIE O'REILLY, INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COLLEGE OF POLICING spoke about the importance of the College in providing an evidence base for understanding what the current barriers are and what the standards should be. He explained that Black candidates are performing well at assessment centres, but there are not enough applications in the pipeline. He highlighted that retention is also an issue and first-line supervisors continue to play a critical part in this. He went on to explain that the College is already working with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on piloting improvements to the assessment process. **LORD HERBERT** elaborated on this emphasising the need to understand the target market for attraction, the barriers to recruitment (particularly what attitudes might be behind any hesitation to apply), and the need for wider cultural change in forces.

11. DAME CRESSIDA DICK, COMMISSIONER OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE welcomed Government's interest in this agenda and spoke about the extensive insights the MPS has gained from analysing candidates' motivations and the barriers they face. She highlighted a number of these and how these barriers may play out slightly differently in the context of different areas or forces. For example, the image of the MPS is more closely tied to major incidents, firearms and public disorder than less metropolitan forces and analysis has shown that this has created barriers with some communities to recruiting female officers. She emphasised the scale of the MPS' ambition, reinforced her support for using data to make recruitment campaigns more tailored and cautioned that the overall task will take time.

12. NEIL BASU QPM, HEAD OF UK COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING spoke about the challenge of getting this issue right at pace, reiterating that the Uplift is a once in a lifetime opportunity that cannot be missed. He reflected that positive community engagement is of course vital, but this is likely to be a more long-term goal especially in the context of relations with Black communities since summer 2020. He stressed that the Government commitment on this issue is welcome, but Chief Constables need tools now to move on this agenda at speed. Referring to the wider, long-established inequalities in society he spoke about considering the use of positive discrimination in a targeted, data-driven way and how the weighting process of candidates could be looked at to reflect more international education backgrounds, for example.

13. PADDY TIPPING, CHAIR, APCC explained that he had been determined to make a difference on this issue and offered to share Nottinghamshire Police's experience with colleagues. He added that he aspires for the force to be genuinely representative of the community it serves but despite a strong start, knows this will not be achievable in the

next two years. He also explained that he has been speaking directly to Black officers about their experiences to enable the force to make progress on retention.

14. SIR THOMAS WINSOR, HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF CONSTABULARY emphasised the importance of data and analysis to form an evidence-based view on how to make the most of recruitment, training and maximise retention. He reminded the Board that Force Management Statements can be used to support self-assessment by Chief Constables, including on recruitment and retention.

15. ROGER HIRST, PFCC FOR ESSEX, emphasised that different communities have different challenges and that strong, visible leadership is vital. He explained that he hopes to see a more diverse cadre of PCCs following the May elections, noting that if a Chief Constable believes in furthering this agenda, the entire force usually follows.

16. JOHN APTER, NATIONAL CHAIR, POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES detailed some of the good work already underway and thanked **ANDY GEORGE** for his positive engagement. He explained that his members have flagged leadership and culture as key factors in retaining staff within forces. He welcomed further College of Policing work on leadership including front-line supervision and continuous professional development. **PAUL GRIFFITHS, PRESIDENT, POLICE SUPERINTENDENTS' ASSOCIATION** spoke about the need for further co-ordination and accountability at a national level to energise the sector on this issue.

17. THE HOME SECRETARY closed the item by welcoming the shared recognition of the need for strong leadership to deliver change. She reflected that while one-size does not fit all, we must all use the levers at our disposal to seize the opportunities the Uplift presents.

18. ACTION: Home Office to continue to bring partners together to strengthen insights work on attitudes and barriers to boost diverse recruitment.

19. ACTION: Home Office to work with HMICFRS to assess how Police Uplift Programme data can inform development of Force Management Statements in reference to recruitment.

Fighting Crime: Crime reduction & COVID-19 Enforcement

In the interests of time these two agenda items were discussed in parallel.

20. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING opened this item by updating that the work of the Crime and Policing Performance Board (CPPB) is gaining momentum. He explained that the National Crime and Policing Measures have been established to focus effort on key national priorities in cutting crime in support of the

objectives of the cross-government Crime and Justice Task Force (CJTF). He added that the CPPB is working closely with Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer as NPCC performance lead to develop quarterly performance packs to support discussions with the relevant data.

- 21. ANDY JOHNSON, DEPUTY DIRECTOR CRIME STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE UNIT** presented on the impact of the pandemic on crime trends, the approaches taken in response and preparations for easing of restrictions. He focused discussion on two key questions: what are we doing and what more do we need to do to reduce the risk of crime rising as restrictions are eased; and once restrictions are lifted, how can we focus on delivery of the National Crime and Policing Measures? He then concluded by setting out the Measures for members to comment on, reiterating that they are not targets, but instead a tool to assess progress nationally in tackling crime.
- 22.** Opening the discussion, **THE HOME SECRETARY** welcomed the tireless and robust work of policing on COVID enforcement, but as we look ahead to easing restrictions questioned what preparations are being made to reduce the risk of a resurgence in crime.
- 23. DAME LYNNE OWENS, DIRECTOR GENERAL, NCA** endorsed the priority threats highlighted in the presentation, but reflected on the limitations of focusing on retrospective crime data alone. She offered to work with the Home Office to develop a more intelligence-based approach to the data to help predict future trends.
- 24. MARTIN HEWITT** commented that the relaxation of restrictions, coupled with improvements in the weather will inevitably lead to an increase in opportunity for crime so the question for the police is how to exert as much control as possible. He stated that we can expect to see spikes in certain crimes and, potentially, increased public disorder. He commented that we have a good understanding of domestic abuse during lockdowns, but the return of children to schools would likely see an increase in reporting of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- 25. DAME CRESSIDA DICK** highlighted the risk that other agencies the police normally depend on, such as mental health services, have been heavily restricted in what they can provide during the pandemic so there is a need for government support to get services back up and running. She also highlighted the need to maintain police legitimacy, which requires strategic assessment of the role of the police going forward.
- 26.** Highlighting likely trends when restrictions are eased, **SIR THOMAS WINSOR** flagged the increases in serious violence, sexual violence and public order offences when restrictions were eased during summer 2020. He explained that we can expect to see more of the same this year, which will place significant strain on the police and Criminal Justice System. He also commented that HMICFRS is refocusing PEEL to focus on the

Crime and Policing Measures and is helping to develop a performance pack to support their delivery.

27. VICTORIA ATKINS MP, MINISTER FOR SAFEGUARDING, thanked policing colleagues for their role in the successful rollout of the “Ask for ANI” codeword scheme, which has been developed to allow victims of domestic abuse to access immediate support from the safety of their local pharmacy. She added that following its launch in January, the scheme has already supported over 30 victims from a range of backgrounds. She also spoke about how the introduction of the serious violence duty in the forthcoming Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill will be critical.

28. ACTION: NCA to follow up with Patricia Hayes, Director General, Crime, Policing and Fire Group and Andy Johnson on sharing an intelligence-led pack on expected future crime trends to inform discussion at the CPPB.

29. ACTION: All members to provide comments on the COVID-19 Police Enforcement paper shared in advance of this meeting, in correspondence to the NPB secretariat.

Forthcoming Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

In the interests of time this item was not discussed in full and will be covered in correspondence. The Chair did however reflect on the significance of the scope of the Bill and how it will deliver on many of the NPB’s priorities such as the Police Covenant.

30. ACTION: NPB secretariat to share a summary of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill with members and invite members to provide comments to the Secretariat.

National Policing Board sub-governance update

31. As updates from the Police Uplift Programme and Crime and Policing Performance Board (CPPB) had already been covered under previous agenda items **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING** turned attention to the Strategic Change and Investment Board (SCIB). He explained that it seeks to strengthen collaboration and that it will next meet on 8 March when it will look at some of the challenging aspects of the technology programme in fighting crime.

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32. SIR THOMAS WINSOR updated that HMICFRS's '*Policing in the Pandemic*' report will be published before the pre-election period for the May 2021 local elections.

Closing

33. THE HOME SECRETARY closed the meeting by thanking all attendees for their insightful contributions and emphasising the importance of collective effort on the actions agreed. She remarked on how clearly the importance of strong leadership came through in discussions – not least on seizing the opportunity the Uplift provides to increase diversity in policing. She also reiterated her personal thanks for the leadership members have shown throughout a very challenging year for the country.