



Police Remuneration  
Review Body

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Eleventh Report  
England and Wales 2025

*Chair: Zoë Billingham CBE*



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Eleventh Report  
England and Wales 2025

*Chair:* Zoë Billingham CBE

Presented to Parliament  
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department  
by Command of His Majesty

July 2025



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OPRB  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor,  
10 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0NB

[OPRB.enquiries@businessandtrade.gov.uk](mailto:OPRB.enquiries@businessandtrade.gov.uk)

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# Police Remuneration Review Body

## Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup>

The Police Remuneration Review Body<sup>2</sup> (PRRB) provides independent recommendations to the Home Secretary and to the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice on the hours of duty, leave, pay, allowances and the issue, use and return of police clothing, personal equipment and accoutrements for police officers of or below the rank of chief superintendent and police cadets in England and Wales, and Northern Ireland respectively.

In reaching its recommendations the Review Body must have regard to the following considerations:

- the particular frontline role and nature of the office of constable in British policing;
- the prohibition on police officers being members of a trade union or withdrawing their labour;
- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified officers;
- the funds available to the Home Office, as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits, and the representations of police and crime commissioners and the Northern Ireland Policing Board in respect of local funding issues;
- the Government's wider public sector pay policy;
- the Government's policies for improving public services;
- the work of the College of Policing;
- the work of police and crime commissioners;
- relevant legal obligations on the police service in England and Wales and Northern Ireland, including anti-discrimination legislation regarding age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and belief, and disability;
- the operating environments of different forces, including consideration of the specific challenges of policing in rural or large metropolitan areas and in Northern Ireland, as well as any specific national roles which forces may have;
- any relevant legislative changes to employment law which do not automatically apply to police officers;
- that the remuneration of the remit group relates coherently to that of chief officer ranks.

The Review Body should also be required to consider other specific issues as directed by the Home Secretary and/or the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice, and should be required to take account of the economic and other evidence submitted by the Government, professional representatives and others.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms of reference were set by the Home Office following a public consultation – Implementing a Police Pay Review Body – The Government's Response, April 2013.

<sup>2</sup> The Police Remuneration Review Body was established by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, and became operational in September 2014.

It is also important for the Review Body to be mindful of developments in police officer pensions to ensure that there is a consistent, strategic and holistic approach to police pay and conditions.

Reports and recommendations of the Review Body should be submitted to the Home Secretary, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice (Northern Ireland), and they should be published.

### **Members<sup>3</sup> of the Review Body**

Zoë Billingham CBE (Chair)

Andrew Bliss QPM

Professor Monojit Chatterji

Richard Childs QPM

Mark Hoble JP

Jacqui Siggers FCIPD

The secretariat is provided by the Office for the Pay Review Bodies.

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<sup>3</sup> Members of the Review Body are appointed through an open competition adhering to the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/578090/Public\\_Appointments\\_Governance\\_Code\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578090/Public_Appointments_Governance_Code_.pdf) [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

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## List of Abbreviations

APCC	Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
ASHE	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings
AWE	Average Weekly Earnings
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPI	Consumer Prices Index
CPIH	Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs
CPOSA	Chief Police Officers' Staff Association
CRTP	Competence Related Thresholds Payments
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
FYE	Financial Year Ending
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
HMRC	HM Revenue & Customs
IDR	Incomes Data Research
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LRD	Labour Research Department
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
NHS	National Health Service
NPCC	National Police Chiefs' Council
OBR	Office for Budget Responsibility
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OPRB	Office for the Pay Review Bodies
PAYE	Pay As You Earn
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PFEW	Police Federation of England and Wales
PPS	Pay Progression Standard
PRRB	Police Remuneration Review Body
PSA	Police Superintendents' Association
RTI	Real Time Information
SSRB	Senior Salaries Review Body
TVP	Targeted Variable Pay
UK	United Kingdom

## Foreword

This is our 11<sup>th</sup> Report to the Home Secretary. The Home Secretary's remit letter of 30 September 2024 asked us to make a formal recommendation on the police officer pay award for 2025/26 to all ranks up to and including chief superintendent. We are grateful to all parties who took part in the review process. We were pleased that we also received some insightful and informative material from the Police Federation of England and Wales, which shone a spotlight on the issues of importance to its members, and we hope it will formally rejoin the pay review process next year.

In our report, we comment on the bravery shown by officers in dealing with the unrest and violent disorder that broke out in towns and cities across the UK in the summer of 2024 after the tragic events in Southport. We understand that around 300 officers were injured during the course of those events. In our consideration of a pay award for 2025/26 we have given weight to officer wellbeing and the impact of the policing role on private lives.

We are writing this year's report against the backdrop of what we understand will possibly be the biggest modernisation to policing, its workforce, and law enforcement since the 1960s. In announcing the programme for police reform, the Home Secretary said that without a major overhaul to increase public confidence the British tradition of policing by consent would be in peril. We welcome the Home Office's announcement of the Police Reform Programme which we understand will lead to the strengthening of neighbourhood policing, police performance standards, national policing capabilities and the modernisation of its workforce.

In our previous reports, we have raised serious concerns about the undermining of public confidence and trust in policing. We have emphasised the need for a competitive remuneration package that supports the wellbeing of officers in order to attract and retain high-calibre recruits able to develop, with training, the relational skills required to manage complexity, respond to vulnerability, de-escalate social tension, and build and sustain public trust and confidence. In our view, recruiting and retaining such officers will be critical to both maintaining police officer numbers and the successful delivery of the police reform agenda especially the expansion of neighbourhood policing. A more diverse workforce is an important building block of police legitimacy and vital to the delivery of the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. We trust the lessons of the Uplift Programme will be learnt and the police reform agenda will provide an opportunity to improve the diversity of the police service through recruitment, retention and promotion.

In our last three reports, we have emphasised the importance of a workforce strategy for the police service and we welcome the intention to develop one as part of the police reform agenda. We hope it will be ambitious and enable the police service to evolve into a flexible modern workforce. This strategy will provide important context for our future considerations and therefore it is vital that a workforce strategy, or at least a draft, is made available to us early in 2026 in good time to inform the next pay round.

There have been significant geopolitical changes since we received our remit letter. The international diplomatic and trading environment remains uncertain and there is a risk that this may lead to a further period of economic instability. Inflation has been lower over the last year than in preceding years. However, this represents a slowing in the rate of overall price increases and not a fall in prices, and officers continue to experience the effect of past high inflation in their cost of living. As we complete our 2025 Report, the latest Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rate of inflation is 3.5% and CPIH (including owner occupiers' housing costs) is 4.1%. We are also conscious that the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) and the Bank of England expect CPI inflation to peak in quarter three of 2025 (the OBR at 3.7% and the Bank of England at 3.5%) before declining again. We observe that energy price inflation is higher than the overall rate.

We also considered developments in pay across the UK economy. Median pay settlements, which HM Treasury described as the most comparable data with Pay Review Body decisions, ranged between 3.0% and 3.8% in the three months to April 2025. These were predominantly in the private sector. We are mindful of the 2025/26 pay awards recently announced by Government for other parts of the public sector. These included: around 3.25% for civil servants (with additional flexibility for departments to have up to an extra 0.5%); 3.6% for NHS Agenda for Change staff; 4% for teachers, prison staff and most doctors (with resident doctors getting an average award of 5.4%); and 4.5% for the armed forces.

In reaching a pay recommendation for 2025/26, we are aware of evidence that morale remains low. Morale and motivation can be damaged by a failure to take adequate action on pay. A pay award that is judged unfair by officers, particularly in comparison with other parts of the public sector, will do nothing to ameliorate the existing low state of morale and motivation. Nor will it assist with the retention of the high-calibre, experienced officers on which the service relies. Voluntary resignation rates from the police service, although rising, remain low in comparison with other public sector organisations, but we are concerned that the sergeant and inspector ranks have seen a growth in resignations in the last three years. The pay award needs to recognise, and be seen to recognise, the efforts of officers who did so much to keep the public safe last summer often at a cost to their own safety.

We give weight to the requirement in our terms of reference to consider the fact that police officers are prohibited from taking industrial action and that this year policing parties, both the employer representatives and the staff associations, have emphasised that, in the interests of fairness, this restriction must be recognised in setting a pay award for police officers. We considered the implications for policing of pay settlements that have been offered by the Government, particularly to the NHS, following industrial action.

The most conspicuous instance of this, and the one which was cited most frequently by police officers on our visits programme as an example of a pay deal that had been boosted as a result of strike action, was the award for resident doctors. Resident doctors in England secured an additional 4.05% funding for pay for 2023/24 on top of the previous

uplift set out in July 2023. We note that, including the 2024/25 pay uplift, this meant the combined average pay award for resident doctors in England across 2023/24 and 2024/25 totalled 22.3%.

We are also conscious that over 77,000 officers (around 53%) in our remit group are at the top of their pay scale and will not benefit from pay progression. We judge this year that it is vital that they receive a pay award that is demonstrably above forecasts for the CPI rate of inflation when the award takes effect, particularly given increasingly attractive opportunities for flexible working offered by other employers. Even after a workforce modernisation programme we recognise that the nature of policing will inevitably constrain the degree of flexibility it can offer its officers. We are also mindful of the impact of the unique pressures of the operational side of policing, the totality of which leads to significant disruption to personal lives which in turn affects officers' wellbeing.

Given these factors, and considering all our terms of reference, we conclude that an annual pay uplift of 4.2% for all officers up to and including the rank of chief superintendent is the most suitable approach this year. In addition, we are recommending that London Weighting be uplifted in line with the pay award.

We recognise that, alone among police forces in England and Wales, the size of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) workforce remains significantly below the Uplift Programme maintenance target set by the Home Office. We are conscious that the challenges facing the MPS may have consequences for the police service as a whole, as the MPS accounts for around a quarter of all police officers in England and Wales, and there are risks of crime 'radiating out' from the capital if issues are not tackled effectively. However, we also observe that, given the financial constraints it is facing, the MPS has reduced its recruitment targets, and is expecting to meet those lower targets in 2025/26. The changes to starting salary and the London Allowance announced by the Home Secretary last July were not implemented until April 2025. In our view, the impact of these need to be evaluated before any further measures to support the MPS are put in place.

In considering the outcome of, and making recommendations regarding, the first year of the National Police Chiefs' Council's review of allowances we have given weight to the wellbeing of officers. In addition to ensuring officers are fairly compensated, the promotion of officer wellbeing, welfare and work-life balance should be driving the review of allowances. While we acknowledge the unpredictable nature of policing, we note that in some cases allowances may be providing compensation to officers for poor management practices, possibly the result of resourcing pressures, that are having an impact on their wellbeing and work-life balance. We request that specific work be done to address the underlying problems with the way that allowances are used operationally by forces and to ensure transparency and consistency in relation to the use of allowances.

We understand that most police forces have built pay pressures of between 2% and 2.8% into their forecasts for 2025, and that the Home Office considered 2.8% to be an appropriate pay increase. We are also aware that forces are under different levels of

financial pressure and that this is complicated further by the current Police Funding Formula, which in our view is outdated and has not been adapted to take account of either changes in population or the nature of crime. We are mindful that pay (for officers and staff) accounts for around 89% of budgets and that forces' management of their budgets is constrained by the need to maintain officer numbers. We are conscious that this means some forces have to reduce costs by cutting police staff numbers and that this, according to some evidence, is forcing the police service to focus on the higher-risk harms at the expense of low-risk everyday issues and thereby undermining confidence in policing.

While we recognise the financial pressures facing police forces, we observe, as we have done in previous reports, that affordability is about choices. Although those choices may be difficult, there are always options for prioritising spending, particularly at the central government level. In that context, we highlight the fact that the UK Government recently announced 2025/26 pay rises for other parts of the public sector which were significantly above levels within its original affordability evidence of around 2.8%.

Finally, we understand that the Government's work on police reform will look at structures – national, regional and local – and the balance between them. This will require an examination also of funding flows. We observe that this is an ideal opportunity to tackle and review the Police Funding Formula.

Zoë Billingham (Chair)

Andrew Bliss

Monojit Chatterji

Richard Childs

Mark Hoble

Jacqui Siggers

*5 June 2025*

# POLICE REMUNERATION REVIEW BODY

## England and Wales 11<sup>th</sup> Report 2025

### Executive Summary

#### Our 2025/26 recommendations (from 1 September 2025)

- 1. A consolidated increase of 4.2% to all police officer pay points for all ranks up to and including chief superintendent.**
- 2. On-call Allowance to be increased from £25 to £35.**
- 3. The current three bands for the Motor Vehicle Allowance essential users' lump sum, linked to engine size of the vehicle, to be replaced with a single allowance of £1,239 irrespective of the engine size.**
- 4. The Away from Home Overnight Allowance to be increased by £10 from £50 to £60.**
- 5. The Hardship Allowance to be increased by £10 from £30 to £40.**
- 6. London Weighting to be updated by 4.2%.**

1. We received the Home Secretary's remit letter on 30 September 2024 asking us to make a formal recommendation on the police officer pay award for 2025/26 for all ranks up to and including chief superintendent. The letter also asked us to consider proposals resulting from year one of the National Police Chiefs' Council's (NPCC's) review of allowances, taking into account the views from policing stakeholders.
2. We are writing this year's report against the backdrop of the forthcoming Police Reform White Paper, and of what we understand may possibly be the biggest modernisation of policing, its workforce, and law enforcement since the 1960s. In announcing the programme for police reform, the Home Secretary said that without a major overhaul to increase public confidence, the British tradition of policing by consent would be in peril. We welcome the Police Reform Programme which we understand will lead to the strengthening of neighbourhood policing, police performance standards and national policing capabilities. In our previous reports, we have raised serious concerns about the undermining of public confidence and trust in policing and we have emphasised the need for a competitive remuneration package that attracts and retains high-calibre recruits that are able to develop, with training, the relational skills required to manage the complexity of modern policing. We return to these issues in this year's report and we draw attention to the need for the police service's employment offer to promote the wellbeing of its officers and an acceptable work-life balance.

3. The unrest and violent disorder that broke out in towns and cities across the UK in the summer of 2024, after the tragic events in Southport, exemplifies the unforeseen public order challenge that the police service can face. In our report, we commend the bravery shown by officers in dealing with the incidents. We also discuss less visible challenges facing the police including the increasing complexity of demand driven by both technology and changing social attitudes. We highlight the ambitious targets announced by the Government to halve knife crime and violence against women and girls in a decade alongside the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. We also reiterate our views around the challenges of increasing trust and confidence in the police. We point out that alongside this, the police service must also commit itself to deliver the changes that will result from the major reforms to policing, the details of which will be set out in the forthcoming White Paper on Police Reform. Those reforms are expected to include a commitment to develop a national police workforce strategy.
4. In Chapter 2, we consider Government pay policy and the performance of the wider economy and labour market. The chapter describes the economic climate at the time we submit our report in June 2025, including that the CPI rate of inflation was 3.5% in the year to April 2025 and the CPIH rate was 4.1%. We highlight that, at the time we submit our report, the OBR and Bank of England expect inflation to peak in quarter three of 2025 (the OBR at 3.7% and the Bank of England at 3.5%) before declining again. On affordability, we point to the differing financial positions of forces and the difficulties of us taking these into account in recommending a pay award. We set out the information we received from the NPCC that forces had built between 2% and 2.8% into budgets for a pay award for 2025/26 and draw attention to its assessment that a 2% award would still have implications for forces in terms of service delivery. We also set out the evidence we received from the Government that a pay award above 2.8% would require difficult reprioritisation decisions for the Government and policing. In that context, we highlight the fact that the UK Government recently announced 2025/26 pay rises for other parts of the public sector which were significantly above levels within its affordability evidence of around 2.8%.
5. We consider the policing workforce and environment. We set out long-term changes to police earnings and the workforce, and the likely recruitment and retention challenges the service will face over the next few years as it strives to maintain officer numbers at the level achieved through the Uplift Programme and recruit additional officers to deliver the Government's commitment on neighbourhood policing. We highlight that only the MPS is expected to be significantly below its maintenance target for police officer numbers, and we have seen little evidence to suggest that the police service as a whole, with the exception of the MPS, is developing a problem with recruiting the volume of officers needed to maintain current police officer levels. However, we point out that recruitment is about more than numbers and that pay and reward need to be sufficiently competitive and

facilitate a reasonable work-life balance to enable the police service to attract and retain high-calibre recruits with the right attitudes, aptitudes, resilience, motivations and maturity to respond to vulnerability, de-escalate social tension and manage complexity. In our view, this is critical to the successful delivery of the police reform agenda. In that context, we note voluntary resignation rates, although low, are rising which may have implications for the future. We highlight that the sergeant and inspecting ranks have seen a growth in resignations in the last three years and express concern that there is a risk that this is the beginning of a significant change to previous relatively stable patterns of retention above the rank of constable.

6. Chapter 2 also sets out results from staff surveys showing low levels of morale, although we note there has been some slight improvement in the latest data. We also received evidence that sickness rates are stable. However, we point out that officer wellbeing is another significant driver of motivation and morale, and is key to productivity as well as retention. The staff association surveys show a downward trend in the wellbeing and mental health of police officers. In a new section in our report covering officer wellbeing, we acknowledge that policing is a profession where unexpected events require the cancellation of leave and rest days and disruption to shifts. However, we urge forces to minimise this through effective workforce planning and workload management and to create the environment in which officers are able to take their full annual leave allocation.
7. The chapter also presents the information we have received on diversity and draws attention to our concerns about the evidence of higher resignation rates among women and ethnic minorities, and lower promotion pass rates for ethnic minorities. We again observe that a more diverse workforce that is representative of the communities it serves is an important factor in maintaining police legitimacy and will be critical to the successful delivery of the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
8. In Chapter 3 we comment on various aspects of pay and workforce modernisation. We note that in our last three reports we have emphasised the importance of the development of a long-term workforce strategy. We note that the White Paper on Police Reform will be published later in the year and welcome the intention to develop such a strategy as part of the wider police reform agenda. We set out the key questions that should be considered in developing such a strategy, which we understand will be done jointly by the Home Office and the NPCC. We also observe that in future the way employers manage their workforce will need to be more flexible and innovative and that this needs to be reflected in the police service's culture. We point out that the work on the strategy needs to be properly resourced and observe that some additional resources have been sought as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. We acknowledge that the development of a workforce strategy is a very significant piece of work but emphasise that it needs to proceed at pace. We observe that this strategy will provide important context for our

future considerations of pay and pay reform and therefore it is vital that the workforce strategy, or at least a draft of it, is made available to us early in 2026 in good time to inform the next pay round.

9. In Chapter 3 we also note the concerns expressed by parties over a number of years regarding the operation of the Police Funding Formula and the implications for some forces. We set out our view that the Funding Formula is outdated and does not reflect the current reality of the costs of policing. We strongly agree with the conclusions of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services that fixing the Funding Formula is one of the most obvious and worthwhile changes the Government could make to policing. We point out that the Government's work on police reform will look at structures – national, regional and local – and the balance between. We observe that this work will also require an examination of funding flows and therefore this is an ideal opportunity to review the Funding Formula.
10. In Chapter 4 we summarise the issues we took into account in making our recommendation for a basic pay award for police officers in 2025/26 and for changes to police allowances. We focus first on the performance of the economy. We note that inflation has been lower over the last year than in preceding years. However, we emphasise that this represents a slowing in the rate of overall price increases and not a fall in prices, and officers continue to experience the effect of past high inflation in their cost of living. We observe that energy price inflation is higher than the overall rate. We also point out that there continues to be uncertainty about the economic climate, particularly given the recent geopolitical events. We also note trends in private sector pay and median pay settlements which ranged from 3.0% to 3.8% in the three months to April 2025.
11. We point out that the service needs to ensure that the officers it is recruiting and retaining are those with the attitudes and skills to deal with evolving social norms and the ever-increasing complexity of demand driven by technology, and to continue the process of rebuilding the trust in their communities. We highlight that the police service still needs to recruit in significant volumes to maintain officer numbers at the new level following the Uplift Programme as well as deliver the additional officers required for neighbourhood policing. We also give weight to the need to retain the high-calibre, experienced officers on which the service relies. We highlight our concerns that voluntary resignation rates from the police service, although low, are rising and in particular our concern that the sergeant and inspector ranks have seen a growth in resignations in the last three years. We point out that over half of officers in the federated and superintending ranks are at the top of their pay scales and that they will not benefit from pay progression. We conclude this year that it is vital that they receive a pay award that is demonstrably above forecasts for the CPI rate of inflation when the award takes effect, particularly given the increasingly attractive opportunities for flexible working offered by other employers. In this context, we also

reflect on the pay awards recently announced by the Government for other parts of the public sector. We are also mindful of the impact of the unique pressures of the operational side of policing, the totality of which lead to a significant disruption to personal lives which in turn effects the wellbeing of officers.

12. We give weight to the fact that police officers, unlike the vast majority of employees in the public and private sector, are prohibited from taking industrial action and highlight the information we have received from policing parties this year regarding the importance they attach to this factor. We also highlight that over the past year some employers, including in the NHS, have agreed significantly enhanced pay deals as a result of industrial action or the threat of such action. We were also mindful in setting a pay award of the practicalities and pressures of policing on officers' personal lives. Some of these are referred to in police regulations as the 'exigencies of duty' and are compensated for through the allowance system but others are not.
13. After taking the above factors into account and balancing against affordability, we conclude that a pay uplift of 4.2% across all ranks up to and including chief superintendent is the most suitable approach.
14. We again highlight the important role of the MPS in UK policing and we note the challenges it continues to face in recruiting in sufficient volume to meet its maintenance targets and aspirations for growth. However, we point out that the MPS may be affected by the review of national capabilities which is part of the wider police reform agenda. We also point out that given the financial constraints it is facing, it has reduced its recruitment targets and it expects to meet those lower targets in 2025/26. We observe that the changes to starting salaries and the London Allowance announced by the Home Secretary last July did not take effect until April 2025 and the impact of these needs to be evaluated before any further measures to support the MPS are put in place.
15. We then set out our views on the first year of the NPCC's review of police allowances. We observe that in addition to ensuring officers are fairly compensated, the promotion of officer wellbeing, welfare and work-life balance should be driving the review of allowances. While we acknowledge the unpredictable nature of policing, we note that in some cases allowances may be providing compensation to officers for poor management practices, possibly the result of resourcing pressures, that are impacting on wellbeing and work-life balance. We emphasise that these underlying problems should be addressed and request that some specific work be done in relation to the On-call Allowance and that the scope for some form of allowance that compensates officers when their shifts are changed at short notice should be examined and proposals developed. Our strong view is that these types of allowances should be set at a level that deters such practices and encourages effective management of police resources. We are not convinced this is the case at the moment.

16. We then set out our recommendations on police allowances. These include the uprating of London Weighting by 4.2% in line with the basic pay award and we set out our thinking behind our decision to return in 2026 to the issue of whether to increase the maximum limits for the London Allowance and the South East Allowance. We recommend increasing the On-call Allowance from £25 to £35 and a £10 increase to both the Away from Home Overnight Allowance and the Hardship Allowance, thereby uplifting these two allowances to £60 and £40 respectively. In the interests of transparency and consistency, we also ask that the coherence of the overall package of allowances available to those deployed on mutual aid be reviewed. We recommend replacing the current three bands for the motor vehicle essential users' lump sum, linked to engine size of the vehicle, with a single allowance of £1,239, irrespective of the engine size. Finally, with regard to allowances, we set out our continuing concerns around the difficulties of recruiting and retaining detectives. We therefore invite the NPCC to explore the options, including the creation of an allowance, for strengthening the financial package for detectives in a way that will create a consistent approach across the service. We ask parties to provide evidence on this in 2026.
17. At the end of Chapter 4, we welcome the implementation of changes to annual leave for police officers and the NPCC's intention to carry out a further review of annual leave policy in two years' time. We request further evidence regarding the ability of officers to actually use their new annual leave entitlement. We also set out our consideration of proposals by the Police Federation of England and Wales for the introduction of a period of long-service leave and recuperation leave and invite the NPCC to provide evidence on the scope for the former in the next pay round.
18. In our Forward Look (Chapter 5) we set out the issues we will want to consider in future pay rounds. These include the outcome of the workforce aspects of the Police Reform White Paper and as part of that we ask parties to update us on plans to strengthen diversity and improve officer wellbeing. We reiterate the importance we attach to the development of a workforce strategy as part of the police reform agenda and emphasise our view that it provides an essential foundation for subsequent reforms including to base pay. We also highlight some of the wider trends that are affecting the world of work and explain that we would like to see evidence that the police service is thinking about the implications of these for policing as it develops a workforce strategy and its plans for the long term. We again observe that the workforce strategy will provide important context for our future considerations of pay and pay reform and underline the need for the workforce strategy, or at least a draft of it, to be made available to us early in 2026 in good time to inform the next pay round.
19. We also highlight some of the concerns we have raised in previous years regarding base pay for constables and base pay and workload for the inspecting ranks. We

observe that we will return to these issues in future years should workforce reform not proceed at pace.

20. We also seek an assessment of the impact on recruitment in the MPS and City of London Police of the changes to starting pay and the London Allowance implemented in April 2025. We set out the additional work we are expecting to see on police allowances that we described in Chapter 4.
21. Finally, we invite parties to provide evidence in the next pay round on how the wider implications for officers of opting out of the pension can be mitigated, especially ways to ensure that death-in-service and medical retirement benefits are available for any officer killed or injured as a result of incidents they faced in the line of duty, regardless of pension membership status. We also urge the Government to work with parties to consider the scope for more substantial changes to the pension scheme to make it more affordable and appealing to young-in-service officers and those considering shorter-term policing careers, such as through having significantly reduced contribution rates in early years, flexible contribution rates (with adjusted benefits) or a defined-contribution option.

# Chapter 1 – Introduction

## Introduction

1.1 This is our 11<sup>th</sup> Report to the Home Secretary following our establishment in 2014, and in it we make observations and recommendations on the matters referred to us by the Home Secretary in our remit letter.

## Our 2024 Police Remuneration Review Body Report

1.2 Our 10<sup>th</sup> Report was submitted to the Home Secretary on 31 May 2024 containing our recommendations on police officer pay and allowances (Appendix A). The recommendations set out in our report were:

1. The Home Office, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to work together as a matter of urgency to undertake a Comprehensive Review of police remuneration focused on examining pay and the mechanics of the coherence of pay scales, allowances, rewarding performance and the mechanism for progression, in order to produce a costed plan in preparation for the next Comprehensive Spending Review. As part of the review, the police service should ask itself some fundamental questions regarding the skills and capabilities it requires to deliver the best outcomes for the public, and how it can attract and retain those skills. We invite the Home Office, NPCC and APCC to provide a plan we can consider by January 2025.
2. A consolidated increase of 4.75% to all police officer pay points for all ranks up to and including chief superintendent.
3. The chief officer of police in each force be given the discretion to set the starting salary for new constables at either pay point 1 or pay point 2 on the constable pay scale.
4. The Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police Service and City of London Police be given further discretion to set the starting salaries of new constables at pay point 3 on the constable pay scale. This additional flexibility should be limited to a period of two years, and be reviewed after one year.
5. The allowances set out in the NPCC's schedule for the review of police allowances be reviewed in their entirety in 2024/25 as part of the Comprehensive Review of police remuneration. A coherent and equitable package of proposals for changes to those allowances should be presented to us in the next pay round for implementation in 2025/26.
6. On-call Allowance be increased from £20 to £25 as an interim measure pending the outcome of the NPCC's review of allowances in 2024/25.
7. London Weighting be uprated by 4.75%.

8. Dog Handlers' Allowance be uprated by 4.75% and the additional rate for officers with more than one dog be raised from 25% to 50% of the rate for the first dog.
9. The time it takes the federated ranks to reach the maximum annual leave entitlement of 30 days be reduced from 20 to 10 years. Implementation of this change to be in line with the proposals put forward by the NPCC. In advance of that, from September 2024 the annual leave for new entrants also be increased from 22 to 25 days.

1.3 The Home Secretary responded on 29 July 2024 by:

- accepting in full recommendations 2 and 6 to 8;
- accepting recommendation 3 but making implementation subject to detailed proposals from the NPCC and APCC on the circumstances in which the discretion should be used, along with transition arrangements for constables on pay point 1, to inform amendments to Police Regulations 2003;
- not accepting recommendation 4 but instead increasing the maximum rate of London Allowance for officers appointed on or after 1 September 1994 by £1,250;
- accepting recommendation 9, subject to the submission of a satisfactory Equality Impact Assessment by the NPCC to the Home Office and implementing the increase in the annual leave entitlement for new entrants from 22 to 25 days from 1 April 2025 rather than 1 September 2024; and
- welcoming recommendations 1 and 5 but requiring them to be aligned to a police workforce strategy and making them subject to further discussions.

## **The 2025/26 remit**

- 1.4 The Home Secretary's remit letter of 30 September 2024 (Appendix B) set the context for our 2025/26 review. It asked us to make recommendations on how to apply the pay award for all police officers in the ranks up to and including chief superintendent. The Home Secretary separately remitted consideration of pay for chief police officers to the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB).
- 1.5 The letter also asked us to consider proposals resulting from year one of the National Police Chiefs' Council review of allowances, taking into account the views of policing stakeholders.
- 1.6 The Home Secretary's remit letter provides a primary focus for the Review Body. However, it is open to us to consider any issues that fall within the broad scope of our formal terms of reference.

## **Our approach to the 2025/26 pay round**

1.7 We have reached recommendations and made observations this year following our close examination of evidence from a range of sources. These include not only the written and oral evidence submissions from the parties and the Home Secretary's remit letter but also our analyses of police workforce and pay statistics, the economic and labour market context and external independent reports.

### *Our visits*

1.8 We conducted visits to the following police forces in the autumn of 2024: Bedfordshire; Lincolnshire; Merseyside; the Metropolitan Police Service; and North Wales. We were able to meet a range of police officers in a variety of roles and hear their views on pay and allowances and about their working lives and the challenges they faced. We are grateful to all those who organised and participated in our visits and look forward to visiting a range of other forces in the coming year.

1.9 These visits supplement the formal evidence that we receive and are a crucial part of our consideration and decision-making process. We have set out some of the key messages arising from the visits in the appropriate chapters of our report.

1.10 A number of recurring themes arose on our visits. These included:

- While welcomed overall, a number of officers observed that the 2024/25 pay award had not furthered pay restoration and was lower than the awards to other public sector groups.
- The most frequently expressed view on the pay uplift for 2025/26 was that it should at least match inflation.
- There were reports of new recruits in particular struggling financially on starting salaries, and increases in police pension opt-outs.
- Comments were made on the impact on officers' working lives and the provision of police services since the increase in officer inexperience levels following the Uplift Programme (2019–2023).
- A significant number of individuals said they had taken an overall pay cut to enter policing (including from police community support officer or police staff roles), or that the loss of overtime payments meant a pay cut on promotion to inspector rank, which amounted to a considerable disincentive.
- We were told that an alternative was needed to the current police funding method in England and Wales.
- We heard repeatedly that neighbourhood policing, an activity vital to crime prevention, remained under threat from high levels of abstraction and short-termism.

- There was a need to recognise ‘super constables’ to help retain them in neighbourhood policing teams and for their work in building trust and confidence and good relations with the public over time.
- There were several reports on the impact of high and unsustainable levels of cancelled leave, unused rest days and overtime on police officer wellbeing.
- Concern was expressed about the disruption caused to officers’ lives by the use of on-call duties, the resultant lack of individual control of working hours and the detrimental impact on work-life balance.
- There were many references to excessive working hours and workload in the inspecting ranks.
- The large pay gap between the chief inspector and superintendent ranks was described as unwarranted.
- A continuing requirement for the police service to fill gaps left by other public services such as health and social care was often mentioned, and related funding complexities were raised, particularly in Wales.

#### *Parties giving evidence*

1.11 In February 2025 we received written evidence from the parties listed below. We have summarised the key points from each party’s evidence in Appendix C, and links to the submitted evidence are provided in Appendix D:

- the Home Office;
- HM Treasury;
- the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC);
- the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC);
- the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS); and
- the Police Superintendents’ Association (PSA).

1.12 We held a series of oral evidence sessions with the parties in March 2025. These were attended by the Minister for Policing and Crime Prevention; Home Office officials; representatives from the NPCC, APCC, MPS and PSA; and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the College of Policing.

#### *The Police Federation of England and Wales*

1.13 The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) withdrew from the Review Body process in 2021 and confirmed that it was not formally participating in the 2025 pay round. However, the PFEW sent us a pay positioning paper in February and later briefed us on this paper.

## **Environment for our considerations**

- 1.14 We have reached our decisions at a time of considerable uncertainty on the future direction of policing in England and Wales. In November 2024, the Government announced a programme of change to create a police service fit for the future and it committed to publishing a Police Reform White Paper. In addition, on 25 February 2025, the Prime Minister announced plans to publish a new National Security Strategy. These will both have significant implications for the future strategy of policing across the UK.
- 1.15 Underpinning these reviews is the multi-year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), which the Government launched in July 2024 and which will conclude in June 2025. The CSR will set out plans for day-to-day spending for four years to the financial year ending (FYE) 2029, and for capital spending for five years to FYE 2030.
- 1.16 All these plans are being developed in the context of wider geopolitical changes and global uncertainties.
- 1.17 In Chapter 2, we consider the implications of the broader policing environment, Government pay policy, and the performance of the wider economy and labour market. We also examine the indicators on changes in the policing workforce and police recruitment, retention, motivation, morale, and wellbeing. Chapter 3 contains our observations and commentary on modernising the police workforce and police pay.
- 1.18 We set out our pay recommendations in Chapter 4, and in Chapter 5 we look ahead to the possible context for the next pay round and highlight issues that are likely to be of interest to us in future.
- 1.19 The work of police officers is important, difficult, complex and often dangerous. We would again like to acknowledge our remit group for their contribution this year and in particular commend the bravery shown by officers in the summer of 2024 when dealing with the tragic events in Southport and their aftermath. We would also like to express our gratitude to all the parties for engaging with us this year and for the high quality of their input.



## **Chapter 2 – Analysis of the 2025/26 Evidence**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 In this chapter we analyse the key points from the evidence as they relate to our standing terms of reference and matters referred to us by the Home Secretary. More detailed summaries of each party's evidence are in Appendix C. Our conclusions from the evidence and analysis in this chapter are carried forward to our consideration of pay proposals in Chapter 4 and our Forward Look in Chapter 5.

### **Police environment**

- 2.2 The Home Office said that the Government valued the vital contribution of police officers across the country. It considered that police officers had a crucial role to play in delivering the Government's manifesto commitments to restore neighbourhood policing and keep streets safe. It added that the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee would include, among other things, restoring patrols to town centres, delivering an additional 13,000 police officers, police community support officers and special constables in neighbourhood policing roles and ensuring every community had a named and contactable officer to turn to.
- 2.3 The Home Office cited the latest estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales that showed 9.2 million incidents of headline crime in the year ending June 2024. This was 18% lower than the year ending March 2017 (the earliest comparable year) but 10% higher than the year ending June 2023.
- 2.4 The NPCC reported that crime was more complex and that digitally-enabled crime now made up over half of all crime. It also said that non-crime demand had broadened in scope and that there was evidence to suggest that non-crime demand was representing an increasing share of what the police did.
- 2.5 The NPCC advised us that the workforce had been largely stable over the last year but that the caseload through the police element of the criminal justice system had increased, as had the volume and rate of charge/summons outcomes.
- 2.6 The MPS reported that demand on policing had gone up and that it was being contacted by more people than ever before. The total number of recorded crimes (excluding fraud) that it had to respond to had increased year on year (except during the Covid-19 pandemic). The MPS explained that the nature of crime was also shifting, and the modern policing environment needed to respond to high-harm crime like child sexual abuse and domestic abuse, cyber and online crime, and serious and organised crime. The MPS also said that it was unique among forces in the demand it faced, as it had additional requirements as a capital city.

2.7 The PSA told us in oral evidence that police officers do a job like no other. It highlighted that the events following the Southport attack last summer, when officers had been mobilised to respond to disorder and riots, had provided an example of the crucial need for a police service that could deliver in emergency situations, while managing daily complex and rising demand. The PSA also stressed the need for financial investment in a long-term commitment to the provision of neighbourhood policing, and an end to the current levels of abstraction of neighbourhood officers. It said that a superficial approach to neighbourhood policing would only damage public trust and confidence further.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

2.8 The PFEW explained that the role of a police officer was like no other, that the responsibilities of warranted officers rarely stopped within normal working hours, and that the demands on them were increasing all the time. It also highlighted restrictions on police officers' lives and their inability to take industrial action.

2.9 The PFEW drew attention to the role police officers had played in keeping order on the streets during the social unrest of 2024. It stressed the effect this had on officers and their families – rest day cancellations, mandatory overtime, and deployment to other forces.

2.10 The PFEW observed that the service had lost its 'humanity' by being data-driven. It meant the service valued speed over quality of service and the public was losing confidence in policing; police officers were going from call to call and for example had no time to spare to assist a victim of crime after a burglary. It said that this was happening just as crime levels were going up, especially retail crime, while the complexity of crime was also increasing. It pointed out that it did not help public confidence levels that the police service was so stretched that it did not even attend shoplifting incidents. It emphasised that policing by consent in England and Wales was under threat because not enough officers were out engaging appropriately with the public.

#### *HMICFRS State of Policing Report 2023<sup>4</sup>*

2.11 The annual report on the State of Policing in 2023 by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) highlighted that the level of crime was on a long-term downward trajectory, but some crime types such as violence against women and girls, were still highly prevalent in society. The report also stressed that police leaders could not be complacent about the challenges they faced in increasing trust and confidence in the police and considered that effective neighbourhood policing was the best way to restore public confidence.

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<sup>4</sup> HMICFRS (July 2024), *State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2023*. Available at: <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/publications/state-of-policing-the-annual-assessment-of-policing-in-england-and-wales-2023/> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

## *Our comment on the police environment*

- 2.12 As in previous years, we recognise that the work of police officers is important, difficult, complex and often dangerous. This has been particularly highlighted to us again by the events that followed the Southport attack last summer, which led to the NPCC activating its national mobilisation plan. The Home Affairs Committee report into the police response to these events<sup>5</sup> said that 246 events (including protests, counter-protests and incidents of disorder) took place in the aftermath of the attack, 88 of which were deemed significant.
- 2.13 In previous years we have highlighted the decline in public trust and confidence in the police and the effect this has on officer morale and motivation. We note the HMICFRS comments on this matter and consider that the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee may help to improve trust and confidence. However, we have heard different views over the definition of neighbourhood policing during our evidence collection, which will need to be resolved to ensure the effectiveness of the programme.
- 2.14 We have continued to hear evidence this year of how demand on the police service and the complexity of that demand has continued to change, with non-crime seemingly representing a greater share of workload. Policing needs to be able to react to that changing demand, and we expect the Police Reform White Paper that is intended for publication later this year to look at how this can be done effectively.

## **Government pay policy and affordability**

- 2.15 HM Treasury said that the 2024 Autumn Budget had set the spending envelope across the parliament, and that public sector pay awards for 2025/26 and beyond would need to be funded from departmental settlements. It highlighted that there would be no additional funding for pay if pay recommendations exceeded departmental affordability. It also explained that departments would have to consider the justification if Pay Review Bodies recommended awards above the level budgeted for by departments, and whether the additional costs could be borne either through offsetting savings or through further productivity gains. HM Treasury also considered that, in the medium to long term, real-terms pay increases were only sustainable if they were matched by productivity gains.
- 2.16 The Home Office said that the police funding settlement for FYE 2026 provided funding of up to £17.5 billion to police forces, an increase of up to £1.1 billion compared with the FYE 2025 police funding settlement. The Home Office explained that £500 million of this increase was earmarked for specific purposes, with the remainder available to support underlying cost pressures.

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<sup>5</sup> Home Affairs Select Committee Report (April 2025) *Police response to the 2024 summer disorder*. Available at: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/8606/summer-2024-disorder/news/206380/quick-fixes-not-enough-to-address-policing-lessons-of-summer-2024-disorder/> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

- 2.17 The Home Office reported that an award above 2.8% would require challenging and difficult financial reprioritisation for both policing and the Government. It explained that forces had made workforce reductions and savings on non-pay budgets to afford three years of above affordability pay awards, and that the Government had reprioritised funding from other programmes to provide additional support. It said that financial pressures remained a significant concern for the majority of forces for FYE 2026, and that there would already be some challenging trade-offs, including on workforce numbers and mix, at a local level to set a balanced budget even with the increased funding in the police settlement.
- 2.18 The Home Office confirmed that HM Treasury had been clear that there would be no additional funding to departments for pay awards in 2025/26. The Home Office said that any additional funding that it would be required to provide to support the pay award would impact directly on its ability to deliver across the department's priorities as a whole. It stated that difficult reprioritisation decisions had already been made to help reach the current proposal, so any settlement above this would be extremely challenging.
- 2.19 The Home Office stressed the importance of maximising the value of any new investment within policing, and said it was driving work to reduce inefficiencies and maximise productivity, to free cashable savings and officer time to reinvest in frontline activities. This included:
- working with the College of Policing to support forces in ensuring officers were able to use their time more productively;
  - investing in improving the technology available to policing; and
  - mobilisation of a Commercial Efficiencies and Collaboration programme focussed on delivering the savings and efficiencies outlined in the Government's manifesto.
- 2.20 The APCC expressed concern about the consequences of any pay award above what police forces had budgeted for, which in some cases was 2%, unless there was guaranteed additional central funding. It also highlighted that allocating additional funding on the basis of the Police Funding Formula rather than officer headcount would not fully compensate many forces. The APCC went on to say that the consequence of an above-affordability award without additional funding would be fewer police officers and staff which would impact on service delivery to the public. In oral evidence it told us that virtually all Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were planning to use their maximum flexibility in raising the Council Tax precept, and that doing so was a requirement in order to access the neighbourhood policing grants.
- 2.21 The joint statement by the NPCC, Chief Police Officers' Staff Association (CPOSA) and PSA recognised that decisions around public spending were extremely difficult and that the financial challenges facing the Government were significant. It said that

requirements for efficiency savings had resulted in forces having substantial concerns over their financial sustainability and some were facing significant deficits. They said this impacted on forces' ability to: deliver on local demand; retain the workforce strength required; and deliver ongoing savings. The joint statement reported an unfunded budget gap estimated at £500 million in FYE 2026. It also highlighted that forces had largely factored in 2% for the annual pay award from September 2025, but that this was not affordable for forces without implications for service delivery.

- 2.22 The NPCC informed us that about 61% of police force budgets in FYE 2025 were accounted for by officer pay, with police staff and community support officer pay accounting for a further 28%. It said that estimated pay had risen from £12.9 billion in FYE 2023 to £14.6 billion in FYE 2025 and that this was driven by pay awards, increases in pension costs, incremental growth and rank changes. The NPCC reported that workforce costs and inflation had, and would continue to have, a significant impact on force budgets.
- 2.23 The NPCC explained that forces were at different points in terms of their relative funding, debt and reserves, as influenced by decisions taken locally. However, the general trend and future planning showed an increase in long-term borrowing, impacted by capital grants having been withdrawn, a reduction in total reserves and general reserves being maintained at a minimum for financial prudence. The NPCC advised that in FYEs 2024 and 2025 the allocation of additional funding for the pay award was based on the grant allocation and that this had resulted in 18 forces' pay awards not being fully funded. However, in oral evidence it informed us that funding for National Insurance increases had been done on the basis of force headcounts and that it hoped this would set a precedent for the allocation of future workforce funding.
- 2.24 The MPS reported that its budget for FYE 2026 and beyond assumed an unfunded pay award of 2%, and said that any pay award above that was unaffordable without additional funding or further cuts to services. It explained that its budget was predicated on a reducing workforce to address structural funding gaps, the impact of demand increases, inflationary pressures and other growth. It explained that any unfunded increase beyond 2% risked leading to further reductions in the workforce. The MPS also informed us that every 1% added to pay cost equated to approximately £22 million a year for police officers alone.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

- 2.25 The PFEW advised that around 80% of the police budget was spent on the police workforce, and that this meant the workforce needed to be valued and invested in.
- 2.26 The PFEW noted that it had long been governmental position that affordability was the primary driver for sub-optimal pay increases, but the PFEW argued that affordability was a political choice.

### *Our comment on Government pay policy and affordability*

- 2.27 There appears to be more divergence of views on affordability this year than in previous years: the APCC said that nothing more than 2% was affordable without additional funding, the NPCC said that even 2% would have implications for service delivery, while the Home Office said that 2.8% was affordable.
- 2.28 In previous years, extra funding has been provided by the Home Office when our recommendations have exceeded affordability. We have heard the evidence of challenging budgetary restraints faced by the Home Office and across Government more widely that mean this extra funding may not be forthcoming this year.
- 2.29 We observe that HM Treasury noted in its evidence that, in the medium to long term, real-terms pay increases were only sustainable if they were matched by productivity gains. We note that forces are hampered in their ability to drive efficiency savings or make productivity gains by the proportion of their budgets that is spent on workforce, and by targets on officer numbers. Furthermore, the measurement of productivity in policing is complex and there is no agreed method for doing so. We note that the Police Reform White Paper may lead to streamlined costs. We ask that parties provide evidence on work to drive efficiency savings and improve productivity in future submissions.
- 2.30 As in previous years, we highlight that affordability assessments stem from choices and prioritisation made at multiple levels, from central government down to individual forces. We have also pointed out in the past that the effect of any pay award will be different for each force depending on their financial circumstances. This was a key message from this year's visits programme and we are conscious that a pay award above that budgeted for by many forces may have potentially serious consequences for them and the outcomes delivered to the public, as highlighted publicly by some police leaders in recent weeks. However, we reiterate again this year that we do not make overall recommendations based upon separate assessments of affordability in each of the 43 forces. We have concluded in previous years, and the same applies this year, that it is neither feasible nor realistic for us to take account of the possible range of priorities and flexibilities which each force will assign to police pay, or to take account of the potential trade-offs that might exist between pay and other possible expenditure.
- 2.31 We observe that affordability is about choice. In that context, we highlight the fact that the UK Government recently announced 2025/26 pay rises for other parts of the public sector which were significantly above levels within its affordability evidence of around 2.8%. In practice, there are degrees of flexibility at each of these levels in how budgets can be constructed or how money is spent. We would not properly discharge our remit if we were to base our recommendations on pre-determined budgetary considerations alone. We also have to consider the needs of the police

service and its ability to deliver the best outcomes in terms of public safety, alongside the other, sometimes competing, factors set out in our terms of reference.

2.32 We are concerned that the additional funding provided for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 pay awards was allocated in a way that meant many forces did not receive sufficient funding to cover all the additional costs. We discuss our concerns about the Police Funding Formula in more detail in Chapter 3. Having heard that the funding allocation for the increase in employer National Insurance contributions was based on workforce size rather than the Police Funding Formula, we encourage the Home Office to consider whether this might be an appropriate route to continue with for allocation of future, workforce specific, funding.

## **The economy and labour market**

2.33 HM Treasury reported that across different indicators, 2024 data had shown a decline in earnings growth. It also pointed out that wage growth was forecast to moderate over the coming months, and be materially lower over FYE 2026 than FYE 2025, at 3.0% according to the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR).

2.34 The NPCC reflected that inflation had fallen since the previous year, but was forecast to increase by the third quarter of 2025. It said that pay settlement medians had fallen from 5% to 4% through the previous year and were expected to be in the region of 3–4% in 2025.

2.35 The MPS highlighted that the cost of essentials was significantly higher in London than the rest of the UK: house prices were up to 80% higher than the national average; rental costs sat 60% higher than the rest of the UK; childcare could cost up to 40% more in the capital; and wider consumer prices ranged between 20% and 40% above the national average.

### *Information from the PFEW*

2.36 In the economic dashboard of its Pay Positioning Document, the PFEW set out that HM Treasury's average of independent forecasts for average earnings growth in the fourth quarter of 2025 was 3.5%.

### *Our comment on the economy and labour market*

2.37 We set out below the latest economic and labour market indicators (summarised in Table 2.1) as at 4 June 2025, available to us when finalising our recommendations:

- *Inflation.* Inflation was falling as we wrote our last report and continued to do so until September 2024, before starting to pick up again. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) increased by 1.7% in the year to September 2024 (when the 2024/25 police pay award took effect), and the CPI including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) increased by 2.6% over the same period. In the year to April 2025 the CPI increased by 3.5% and the CPIH increased by 4.1%.

- Core CPI (which excludes the effects of price changes in energy, food and alcohol) was higher at 3.8% in the year to April 2025, while core CPIH was 4.5%.
- The Bank of England base interest rate decreased from 5.25% in July 2024 to 4.25% from May 2025 as inflationary pressures eased. However, it will take time for falling interest rates to affect mortgage payments.
- In its March Economic and Fiscal Outlook<sup>6</sup>, the OBR expected CPI to peak at 3.7% in the third quarter of 2025 driven by higher energy prices, higher food prices, and the increase in regulated water bills from April 2025. However, it expected CPI to fall back to 3.1% in the fourth quarter of 2025 and to be around the 2% target from 2026 onwards.
- In its May 2025 Monetary Policy Report<sup>7</sup>, the Bank of England's median projection expected CPI to peak at 3.5% in the third quarter of 2025, before gradually falling back to the 2% target at the start of 2027.
- *Economic growth.* UK real gross domestic product (GDP) figures showed that the UK economy grew by 1.1% over 2024 as a whole, but was flat over the second half of the year. The first estimate of GDP for January to March 2025 showed growth of 0.7% on the previous quarter and 1.3% on a year earlier. Real GDP per head of population was unchanged over 2024 as a whole, while the first estimate for January to March 2025 showed increases of 0.5% on the previous quarter and 0.3% on a year earlier.
- In March 2025, the OBR estimated that annual real GDP growth would be 1% in 2025 and would increase to 1.9% in 2026 reflecting monetary policy loosening, falls in energy prices, and a gradual easing of uncertainty resulting in spare capacity in the economy being used up. It estimated that real GDP per head would increase by 0.3% in 2025 and 1.5% in 2026.
- *Labour market.* Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) indicated that the number of employees on payrolls in April 2025 was 30.3 million, 0.3% lower than a year earlier. Estimates from the Labour Force Survey<sup>8</sup> (LFS) put total employment at 34.0 million in the three months to March 2025, 1.9% higher than a year earlier, with increases in both the number of employees (up 1.5%) and self-employment (up 2.5%). The LFS unemployment rate (for those aged 16 and over) was 4.5% in the three months to March 2025, 0.2 percentage points higher than a year earlier. The Claimant Count rate in April 2025 was 4.5%, 0.4 percentage points higher than a year earlier. The Office for National Statistics

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<sup>6</sup> OBR (March 2025), *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*. Available at: <https://obr.uk/efo/economic-and-fiscal-outlook-march-2025/> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

<sup>7</sup> Bank of England (May 2025), *Monetary Policy Report*. Available at: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy-report/2025/may-2025> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

<sup>8</sup> The ONS advises that increased volatility of LFS estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, means they should be treated with additional caution, and it recommends using them as part of a suite of labour market indicators.

(ONS) recorded 761,000 job vacancies in the three months to April 2025, 14.7% lower than a year earlier.

- *Average earnings.* In the three months to March 2025, Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) annual growth for the whole economy was 5.5% for total pay (including bonuses) and 5.6% for regular pay (excluding bonuses).
- Including bonuses, AWE annual growth in the three months to March 2025 was 5.4% in both the public and private sectors. Excluding bonuses, the figures were 5.5% in the public sector and 5.6% in the private sector.
- In March 2025, the OBR estimated that average earnings growth would fall from 4.7% in 2024 to 4.3% in 2025 and then average just over 2% a year from 2026.
- *Pay settlements.* The latest estimates for median pay settlements in the three months to April 2025 ranged from 3.0% to 3.8%. Pay awards made during this time period will have been predominantly in the private sector. Our analysis of Brightmine data indicated that around one-third (33%) of the pay awards it recorded so far in 2025 had been worth 4% or more. The National Living Wage increased by 6.7% from 1 April 2025.
- In May 2025 the Government announced 2025/26 pay awards for many other parts of the public sector. These included: around 3.25% for civil servants (with additional flexibility for departments to have up to an extra 0.5%); 3.6% for NHS Agenda for Change staff; 4% for teachers, prison staff and most doctors (with resident doctors getting an average award of 5.4%); and 4.5% for the armed forces.

**Table 2.1: Latest economic and labour market indicators, as at 4 June 2025**

	Figure
Inflation indicators	
Annual CPI inflation	3.5%
Annual CPIH inflation	4.1%
Annual Retail Prices Index inflation	4.5%
Pay settlement indicators	
Brightmine median pay settlements	3.0%
Incomes Data Research (IDR) median pay settlements	3.2%
Labour Research Department (LRD) median pay settlements	3.6%
LRD lowest basic rates median pay settlements	3.8%
Earnings indicators	
PAYE median annual change in pay	5.0%
Annual growth in AWE – public sector	5.4%
Annual growth in AWE – private sector	5.4%
Annual growth in AWE – whole economy	5.5%
Annual growth in AWE – public sector excluding bonuses	5.5%
Annual growth in AWE – whole economy excluding bonuses	5.6%
Annual growth in AWE – private sector excluding bonuses	5.6%
PAYE annual change in median pay	6.4%
Labour market indicators	
PAYE employees on payroll annual growth	-0.3%
LFS annual employment growth	1.9%
LFS unemployment rate (aged 16 and over)	4.5%
Claimant count rate	4.5%
LFS employment rate (aged 16 to 64)	75.0%

Source: ONS – Labour Market Overview<sup>9</sup>, Consumer Price Inflation<sup>10</sup>, Claimant Count<sup>11</sup>, and Earnings and Employment from PAYE RTI<sup>12</sup>; Brightmine<sup>13</sup>; IDR<sup>14</sup>; and LRD<sup>15</sup>.

Note: The employment rate measures the proportion of the population (aged 16 to 64) in employment; the unemployment rate gives the number of unemployed people as a proportion of the total number of people (aged 16 and over) either in work or unemployed; and the claimant count rate is the number of people claiming unemployment benefits as a proportion of the total number of workforce jobs and claimants of unemployment benefits.

2.38 We note that inflation has been lower over the last year than in preceding years. However, we continue to emphasise that this represents a slowing in the rate of overall price increases and not a fall in prices, and that officers continue to experience the effect of past high inflation in their cost of living. We observe that energy price inflation is higher than the overall rate.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/may2025> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/april2025> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/outofworkbenefits/datasets/claimantcountcla01/current> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/realtimeinformationstatisticsreferencetableseasonallyadjusted/current> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

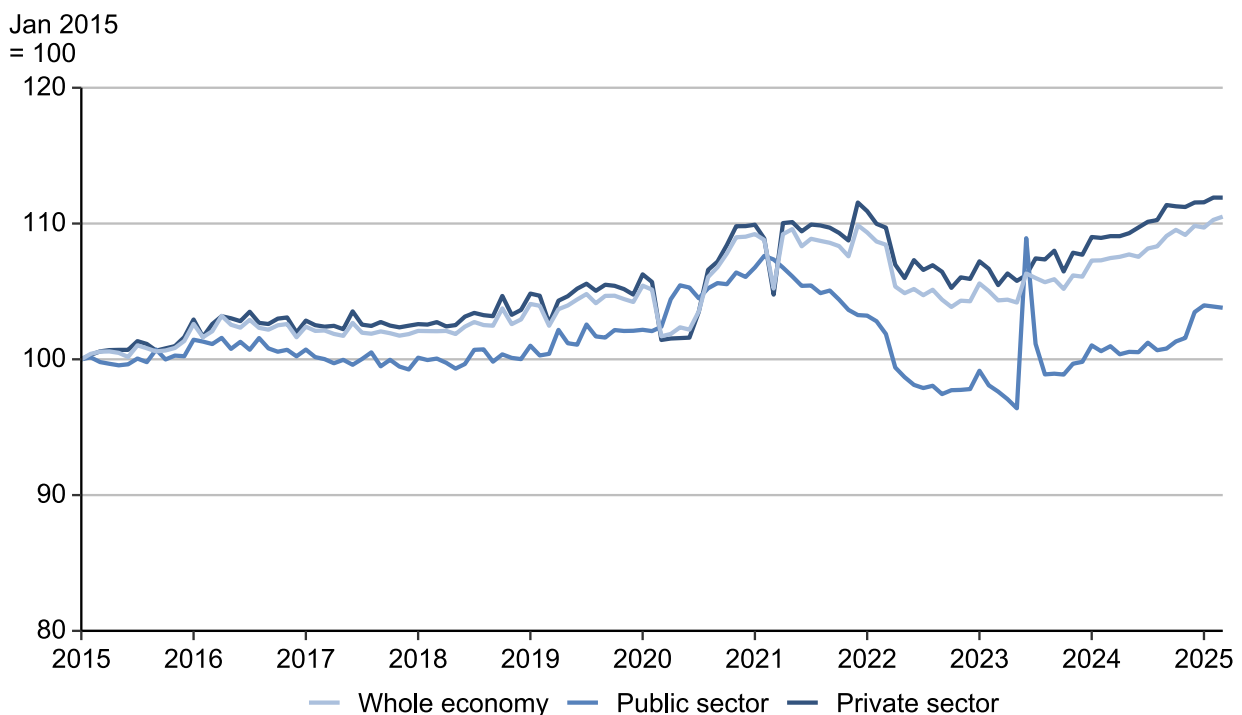
<sup>13</sup> <https://www.brightmine.com/uk/products/hr-compliance-centre/> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.incomesdataresearch.co.uk> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.lrd.org.uk/index.php?pagid=29> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

2.39 We also observe that measures of average earnings growth and median pay settlements have not fallen as quickly as inflation. Furthermore, there has been a significant increase in the gap between private and public sector pay over recent years, with Average Weekly Earnings in the private sector having grown by 11.9% in real terms since 2015, compared with an increase of just 3.8% in the public sector (Chart 2.1). Developments in private sector pay continue to play a role in our considerations. However, AWE are only a part of these developments and we are mindful that pay settlements are more akin to the pay award recommendations we make each year, as pay settlements look at recent pay awards whereas average earnings figures reflect historic pay growth. Furthermore, average earnings figures are affected by structural changes in the workforce and hours worked in addition to changes in underlying rates of pay.

**Chart 2.1: Real Average Weekly Earnings (January 2015 = 100), by sector, 2015–2025**



Source: Office for the Pay Review Bodies (OPRB) analysis of AWE and CPI, ONS.

2.40 Our recent reports were produced in periods of significant economic uncertainty. This year, we observe that there have been significant geopolitical changes since we received evidence from HM Treasury. The international diplomatic and trading environment remains uncertain and there is a risk that this may lead to a further period of economic instability.

## Police earnings

### *Our analysis of police earnings*

2.41 We have set out our full analysis of police earnings data in Appendix E. We highlight some of the key points below.

2.42 The distribution of officers on the pay scales highlights that the ranks of inspector and superintendent were the only ones to have fewer than half of officers at the pay scale maximum (Table 2.2). Overall, more than 77,000 officers (around 53%) in the federated and superintending ranks were at the top of their pay scale in March 2024, of which over 57,000 were constables.

**Table 2.2: Distribution of officers on pay scales, England and Wales, March 2024**

	Constable	Sergeant	Inspector	Chief Inspector	Supt.	Chief Supt.
0	..	–	18%	–	–	–
1	10%	–	17%	21%	20%	24%
2	12%	15%	17%	22%	23%	26%
3	8%	15%	48%	57%	20%	50%
4	8%	70%	–	–	37%	–
5	8%	–	–	–	–	–
6	5%	–	–	–	–	–
7	50%	–	–	–	–	–
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: OPRB analysis of Police Earnings Census data, Home Office.

Notes:

– Percentages represent proportions of all officers in each rank.

– ‘..’ represents a non-zero percentage less than 0.5%.

– ‘–’ represents non-applicable pay points.

– Pay point 0 of the constable scale was removed on 1 September 2023. Pay points 0 and 1 were removed from the sergeant pay scale on 1 April 2014 and 1 September 2020 respectively.

2.43 Our analysis of how the police officer pay scales compare with the distribution of earnings in the whole economy (Chart 2.2) has shown there was a gradual decline between FYEs 2015 and 2022 for the ranks of constable and sergeant, but that they have been relatively stable between FYEs 2022 and 2024.

2.44 Pay point 1 of the constable pay scale has dropped from the 34<sup>th</sup> percentile of whole economy earnings in FYE 2015 to the 26<sup>th</sup> percentile in FYEs 2022 to 2024. That is to say an officer on point 1 in FYE 2015 would have basic pay that was higher than the earnings of 34% of employees in the whole economy, whereas in FYEs 2022 to 2024 the basic pay of an equivalent officer was higher than 26% of employees. The introduction of flexibility on starting pay to pay point 2 from 1 April 2025 will increase the starting range on the earnings distribution in future years – for FYE 2024 point 2 on the constable scale was at the 29<sup>th</sup> percentile of whole economy earnings.

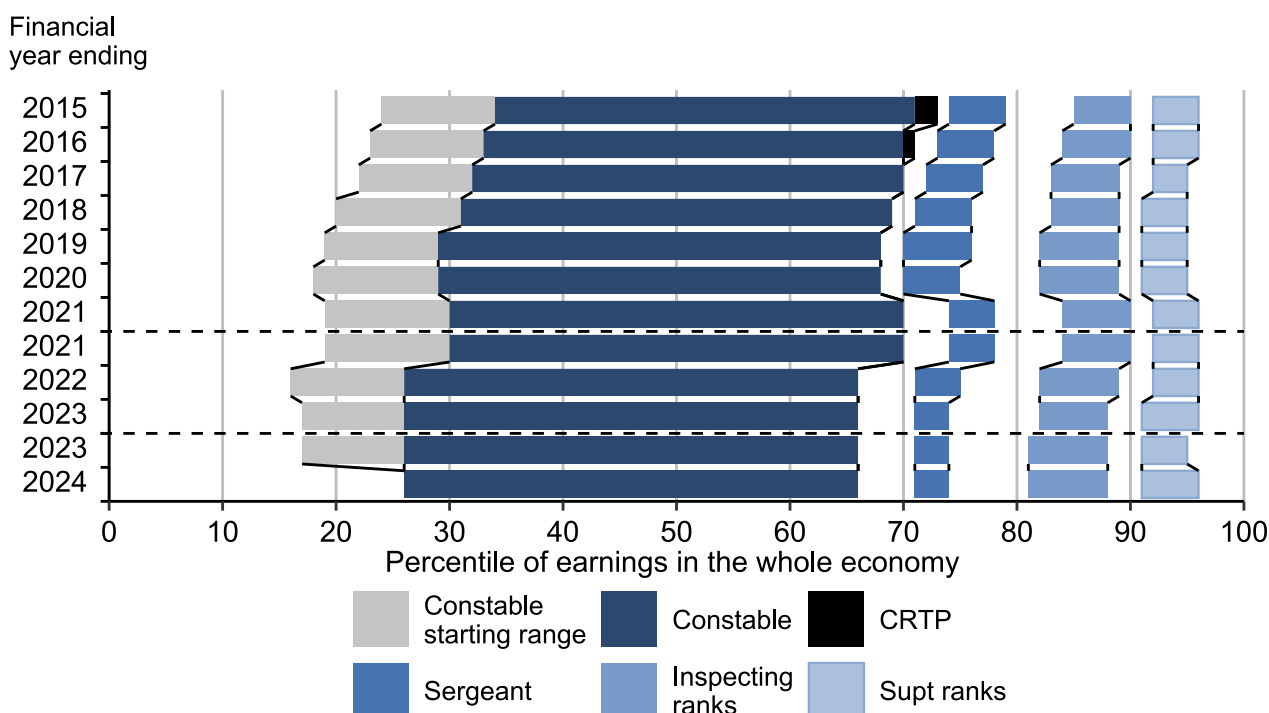
2.45 The top of the constable pay scale follows a similar pattern, it dropped from the 73<sup>rd</sup> percentile to the 66<sup>th</sup>, when Competence Related Threshold Payments (CRTP)<sup>16</sup> are included and from the 71<sup>st</sup> to 66<sup>th</sup> percentiles when they are excluded.

<sup>16</sup> CRTP acted, in effect, as an additional point on the pay scales for the federated ranks before being removed in April 2016.

2.46 The bottom of the sergeant scale has been less affected, due to the removal of the bottom pay point in 2020. However, the top of the scale has reduced from the 79<sup>th</sup> percentile (with and without CRTP) in FYE 2015 to the 74<sup>th</sup> in FYEs 2023 and 2024.

2.47 Pay scales for the inspecting and superintending ranks have been more stable against the distribution of whole economy earnings over the same time period. The inspecting ranks have seen the minimum fall from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile to the 81<sup>st</sup>, and the maximum fall slightly from the 90<sup>th</sup> to the 88<sup>th</sup>. The superintending ranks have been broadly unchanged relative to whole economy earnings.

**Chart 2.2: Police pay scales position in the percentile distribution of earnings in the whole economy, England and Wales, FYE 2015–2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of police pay scales and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

Notes:

- Pay scales are as from 1 September in each financial year. Therefore, the 2024 pay scales are as from September 2023 and do not show pay point 2 as part of the starting range for constables as this discretion did not take effect until 1 April 2025.
- CRTP has been included in the scales for constables, sergeants and the inspecting ranks for FYEs 2015 and 2016 as this was effectively an extra pay point on the scales.
- The ranges shown for the inspecting ranks cover both the national and London pay scales.
- There are discontinuities in the series due to changes to the Standard Occupational Classification in FYE 2021, and methodological changes in FYE 2023.
- Data for the latest year are provisional.

### *Evidence from the parties on police earnings*

2.48 The joint statement by the NPCC, CPOSA and PSA highlighted that the service continued to operate in a context of year-on-year real-terms pay cuts for officers. However, the NPCC reported that pay awards over the last two years had gone some way to restoring some of these real-terms pay cuts.

- 2.49 The NPCC highlighted that, across the economy, earnings growth had been strongest for those with lower earnings. It said that the effects of the National Living Wage and ‘Real Living Wage’ were likely to continue this trend, and would affect the competitiveness of base pay for those entering the police service.
- 2.50 The NPCC cited the results of benchmarking it had commissioned from Korn Ferry which showed that the ranks of constable, sergeant, inspector and superintendent were only comparable with public and not-for-profit organisations at the top of the pay scale (taking into account a 13% P-factor premium), while the chief inspector and chief superintendent ranks were not comparable at any point.
- 2.51 The MPS reported that the median salary for full-time workers in London was £47,455, which was 27% higher than for the UK. It pointed out that although median earnings for a constable in the MPS were £52,546, new constables would take about five years to reach the London median.
- 2.52 The MPS asserted that its officers were still bearing the effects of public sector pay austerity, which had led to the value of officers’ salaries being degraded by around 16% in real terms over the last 12 years.
- 2.53 The PSA reiterated its concerns about real-terms reductions in police pay since 2010, and highlighted that the 2024/25 pay award was 0.75–1.25% less on average than other public sector bodies. It also cited a 2024 study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies that showed police officers lower down the pay scale had seen their pay deteriorate more than those higher up the pay scale, and that this was in contrast to other areas of the public sector.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

- 2.54 The PFEW calculated that between September 2010 and December 2024 constable pay had fallen behind CPIH inflation by 21.2%. It also calculated that an officer would have to work for a minimum of six years as a constable in order to reach a point where their basic salary covered the average household expenditure of families in the eighth decile of household gross income.
- 2.55 The majority of respondents to the 2024 PFEW Pay and Morale Survey<sup>17</sup> expressed dissatisfaction with pay: 76% were dissatisfied with basic pay, and 65% with overall remuneration (pay and allowances). However, both these proportions were lower than in 2023.
- 2.56 The proportion of respondents who said that they were never or almost never able to cover their monthly essentials was 15%, down from 18% in 2023. Over half of respondents (52%) said they worried about money every day or almost every day, down from 58% in 2023. The proportion of respondents who said that they felt

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<sup>17</sup> Which received around 35,000 responses.

worse off financially compared with five years ago was 79%, down from 87% in 2021.

- 2.57 The PFEW compared the pay of experienced constables with that of experienced teachers and nurses. It pointed out that police pay had fallen behind since FYE 2011, and highlighted that, unlike police officers, teachers and nurses had the right to strike and had engaged in much-publicised industrial action over recent years. Results from the PFEW Pay and Morale Survey showed that 70% of respondents felt they were paid unfairly compared with other key workers.

*Our comment on police earnings*

- 2.58 We have continued to hear from parties about the decline of pay in real terms since 2010. These comparisons have focussed on comparing police pay awards with inflation. We acknowledge this, but question the relevance of using 2010 as a starting year given that over half of officers have less than 10 years' service. We also highlight that many officers will have received progression and/or promotion during the period since 2010, which means that their earnings will not have declined in real terms to the same extent as the pay scales have, and in many cases their real-terms earnings will have increased.
- 2.59 We note that officers may have had an expectation that the pay scales would increase in line with inflation and they may, therefore, be earning less than expected in real terms. However, we observe that comparisons against inflation vary depending on which starting year is chosen. The NPCC itself acknowledged this point in its written evidence – its estimate of pay erosion based on CPI varied from around 9%, using a base year of 2010/11, to 1%, using the base year of 2017/18.
- 2.60 We also recognise that the 2024/25 pay award for police officers was lower than for many other areas of the public sector. However, we highlight that the 2023/24 police pay award was higher than many other areas of the public sector. Our analysis indicates that the cumulative value of pay awards received by police officers since our formation is similar to those received by the remit groups of other Pay Review Bodies.
- 2.61 In making our pay recommendation each year we consider what the appropriate annual award should be based on the factors in our terms of reference, as informed by the evidence provided to us and our own analysis. Our recommendations are driven by this evidence at the point of our consideration, rather than designed to meet any particular position relative to changes over time against inflation or comparator organisations, or to set a long-term pay strategy. However, we observe that long-term decreases in real terms, or in comparison with other sectors, have potentially negative implications for the morale and motivation of officers and for recruitment and retention, especially given the prohibition on officers withdrawing their labour. This has been highlighted to us by the results of staff association surveys.

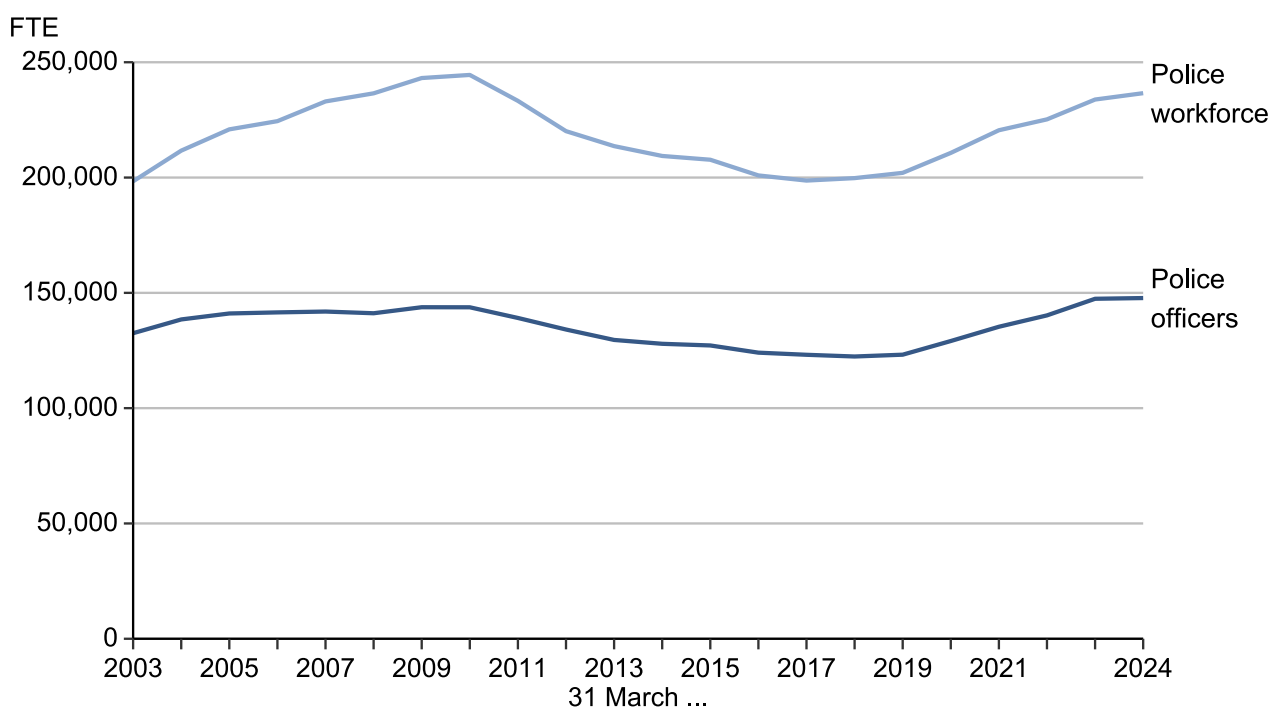
## Police workforce, recruitment and retention

*Our analysis of police workforce, recruitment and retention*

2.62 We have set out our full analysis of police workforce data in Appendix E. We highlight some of the key points below.

2.63 In March 2024, police officers accounted for just over three-fifths of the police workforce. Between March 2018 and March 2024, full-time equivalent (FTE) officer numbers increased by 25,300 or 21% (Chart 2.3). At the end of March 2024 there were 147,700 FTE police officers, the highest number since the comparable data series began in March 2003. The overall police workforce increased by 19% (37,900 FTE) between March 2017 and March 2024, to 236,600 FTE. However, it remained nearly 8,000 (3%) below its 2010 peak.

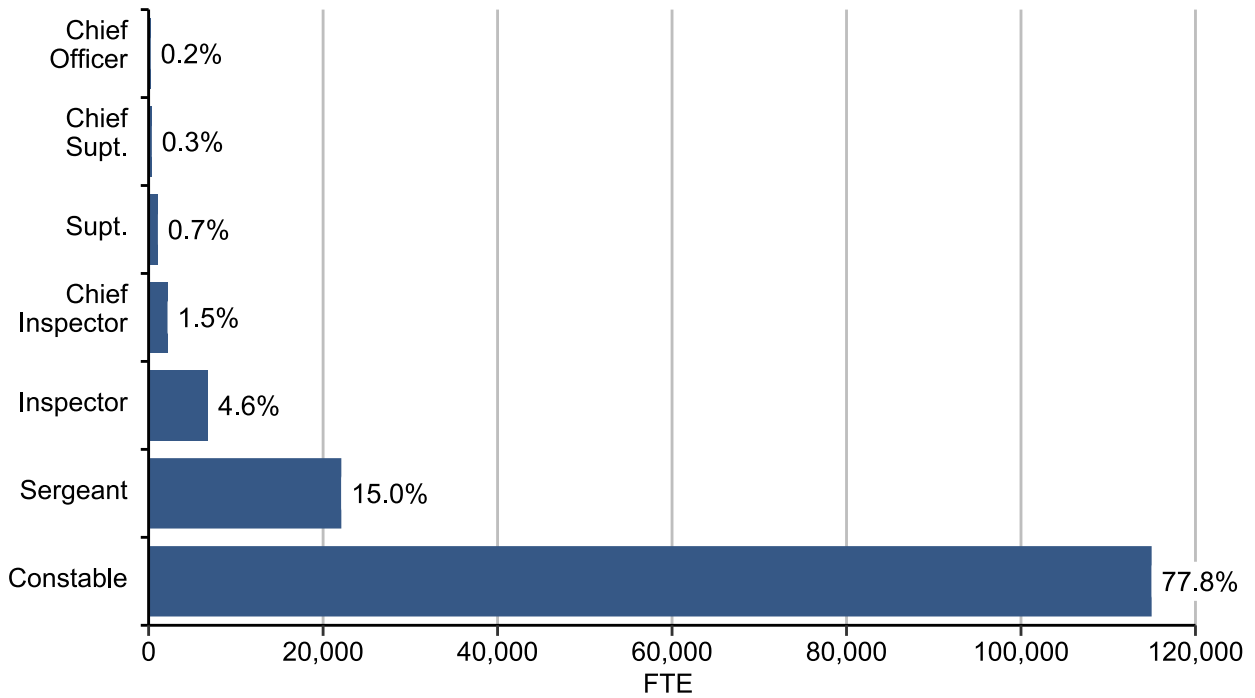
**Chart 2.3: Strength of police workforce and number of police officers (FTE), England and Wales, March 2003 – March 2024**



Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

2.64 In March 2024, nearly four-fifths (78%) of police officers were constables (Chart 2.4), and just 7% of officers were in the ranks above sergeant. The proportions in each rank have been relatively stable since comparable data started in 2003.

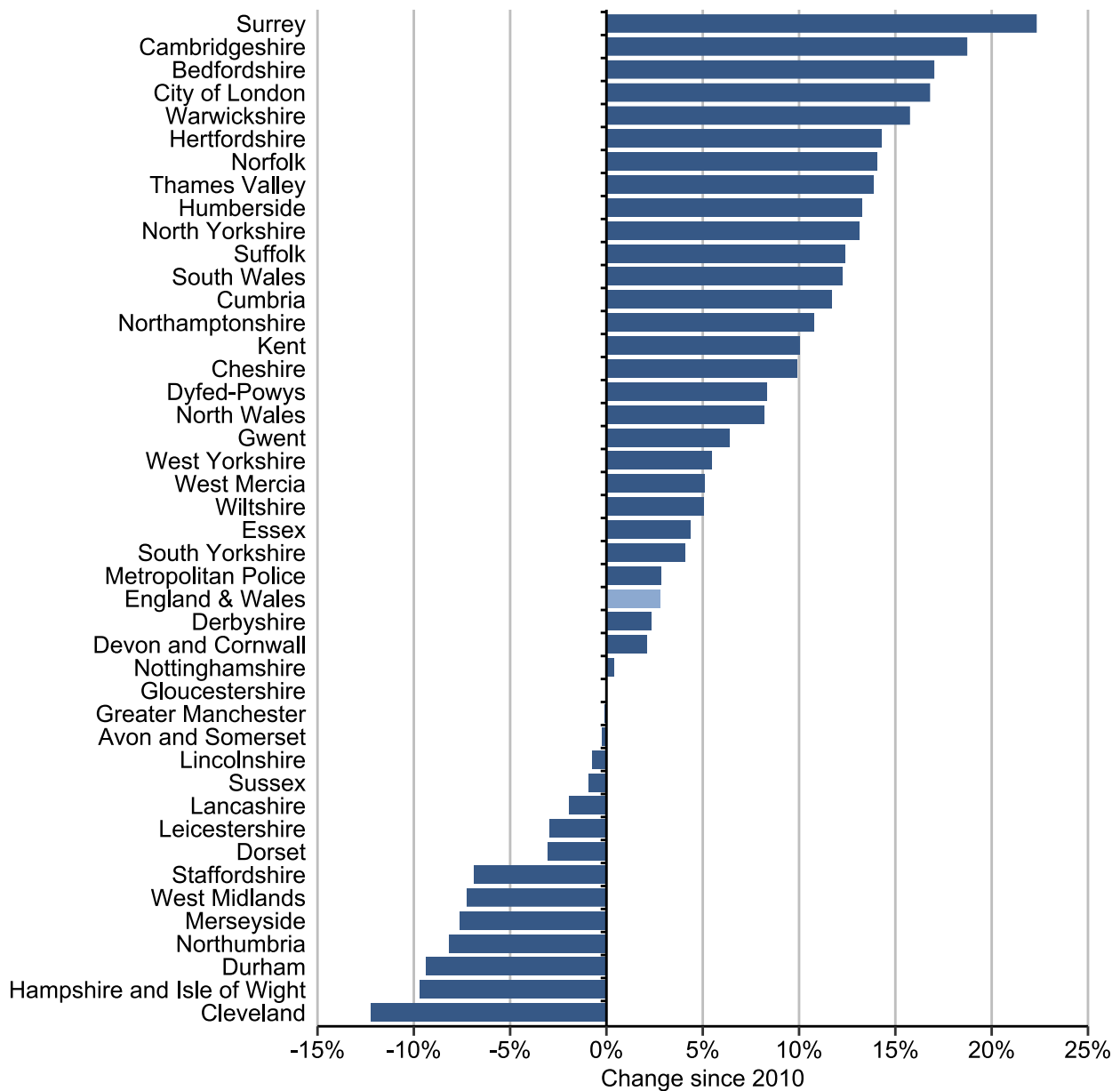
**Chart 2.4: Number of police officers by rank, England and Wales, March 2024**



Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

2.65 While overall police officer numbers were higher in March 2024 than March 2010, this was not the case in all forces (Chart 2.5). Officer numbers remained below 2010 levels in 15 forces, despite these forces meeting their recruitment targets under the Uplift Programme.

**Chart 2.5: Percentage change in police officer numbers, FTE, between March 2010 and March 2024, by force, England and Wales**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

2.66 The announcement of the Uplift Programme in 2019 led to a sharp increase in the number of police officer joiners (Chart 2.6). The number of joiners (excluding officers transferring between forces) dropped in FYE 2024 to around 9,500. This was 42% (6,800 FTE) lower than the previous year as a result of the recruitment focus in the police service moving away from the Uplift Programme and towards maintenance of officer numbers. The number of joiners during FYE 2024 was 6% of the total number of police officers in March 2024.

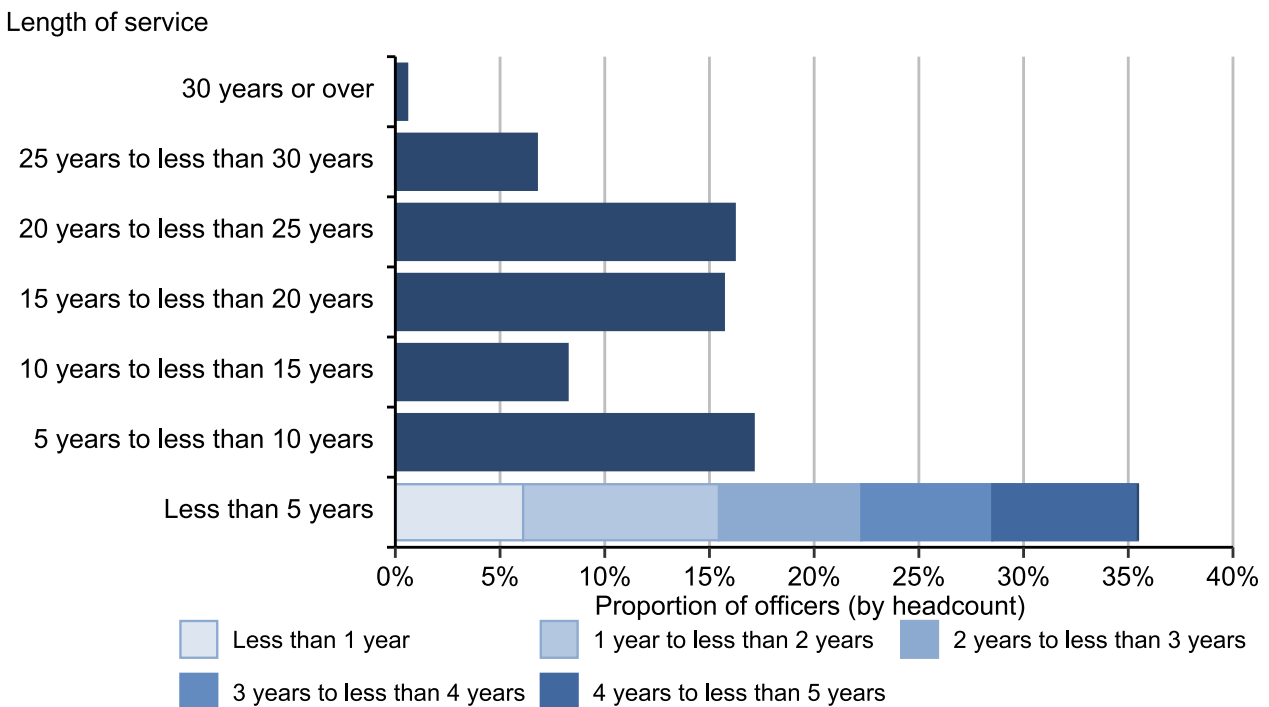
**Chart 2.6: Police officer joiners excluding transfers (FTE), England and Wales, FYE 2007–2024**



Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

2.67 Historic recruitment trends tend to get reflected in the length of service distribution of officers. Officers with less than five years’ service accounted for 35% of all police officers in March 2024 (Chart 2.7) as a result of the scale of recruitment during the Uplift Programme, while low recruitment in the early 2010s has led to a relatively small cohort of officers with more than 10 but less than 15 years’ service.

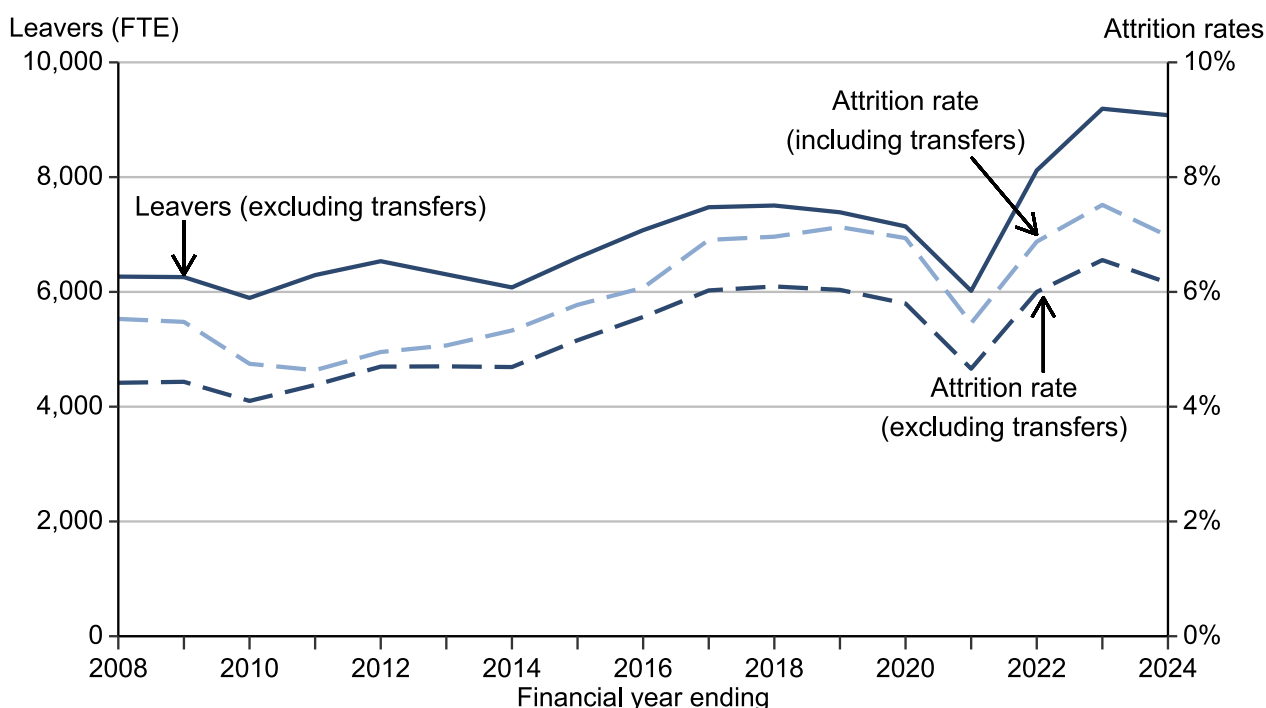
**Chart 2.7: Length of service of police officers, headcount, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

2.68 Excluding transfers between forces, the number of officers leaving the police service in FYE 2024 was 9,100 FTE (Chart 2.8). This represented a fall of 1% (100 FTE officers) compared with the previous year. The overall attrition rate<sup>18</sup> fell to 6.2% in FYE 2024. Including officers who transferred to other forces rather than leaving the service altogether, the attrition rate was 7.0% in FYE 2024, also a drop on the previous year. The voluntary resignation rate<sup>19</sup> increased to 3.4% in FYE 2024 while the normal resignation rate<sup>20</sup> fell to 2.2%, these were the highest and lowest rates (respectively) since the data series began in 2008 (Chart 2.9).

**Chart 2.8: Police officer leavers and attrition rates (FTE), England and Wales, FYE 2008–2024**



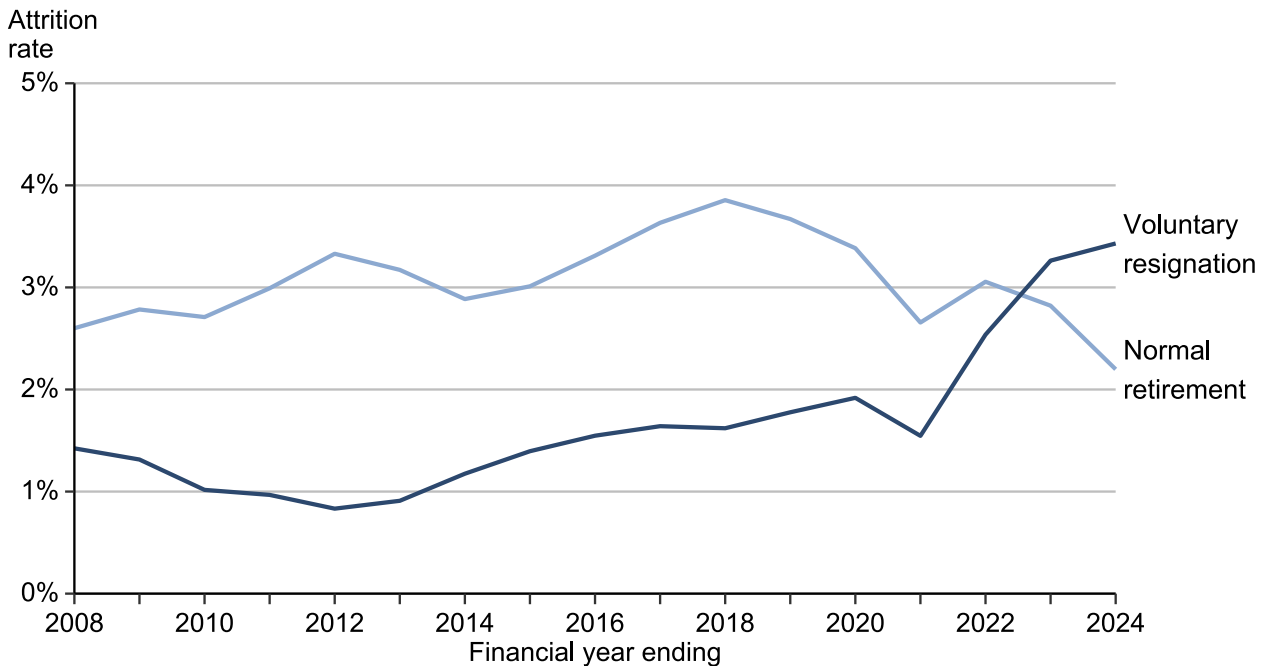
Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

<sup>18</sup> The total number of police officers leaving the service in the financial year as a proportion of the total officers in post in the March just before the financial year began.

<sup>19</sup> The number of officers who voluntarily resigned as a proportion of the total officers in post in the March just before the financial year began.

<sup>20</sup> The number of officers who have retired, not on ill-health grounds, as a proportion of the total officers in post in the March just before the financial year began.

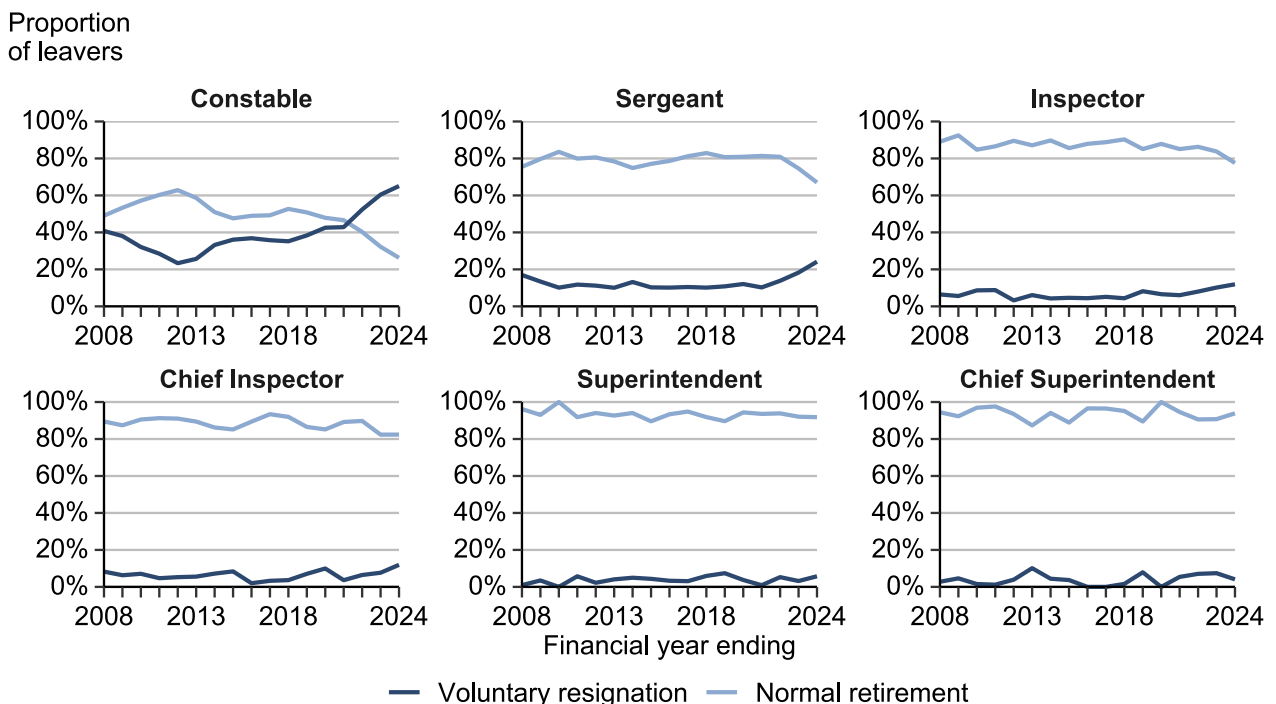
**Chart 2.9: Police officer attrition rate, by selected leaver type, England and Wales, FYE 2008–2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

2.69 The proportion of leavers (excluding transfers) that were voluntary resignations was highest for constables (Chart 2.10), accounting for nearly two-thirds (65%) of constables who left in FYE 2024. For all other ranks, normal retirement was the most common type of leaver. However, voluntary resignations have been increasing as a proportion of leavers from the sergeant and inspecting ranks in recent years.

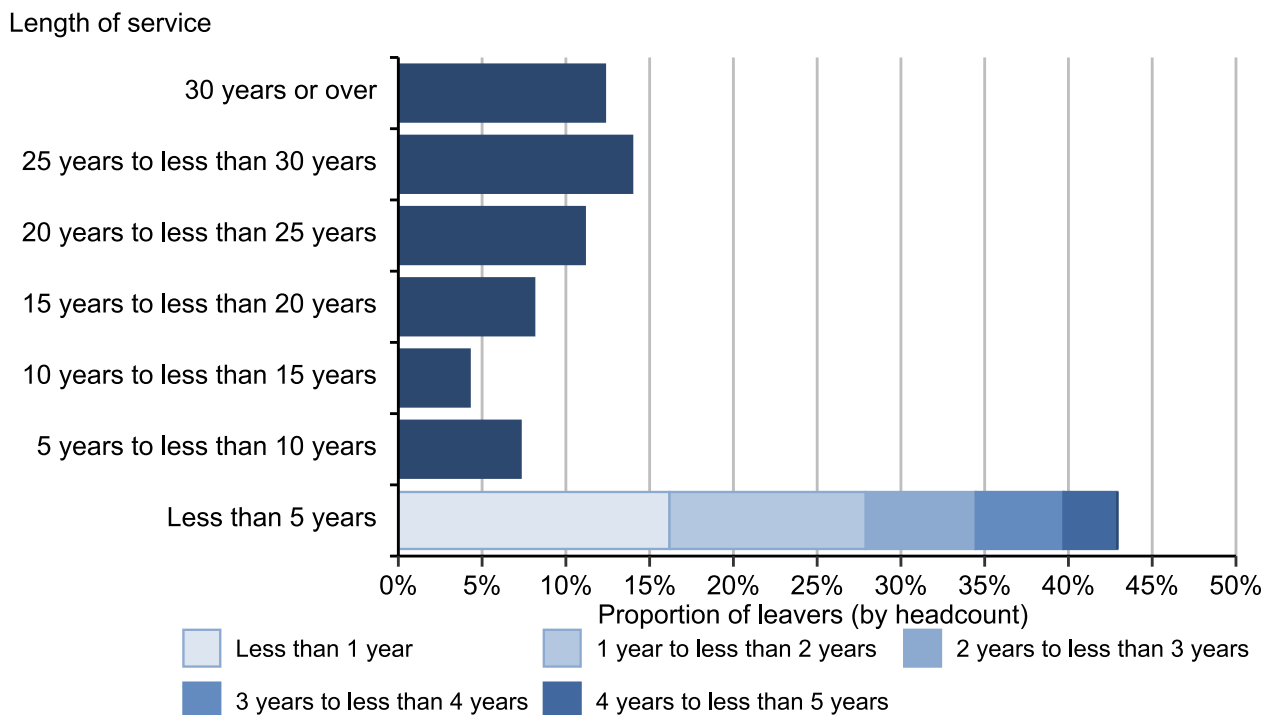
**Chart 2.10: Police officer leavers (FTE), by leaver type and rank, England and Wales, FYE 2008–2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

2.70 Data on the length of service of leavers show that in FYE 2024 16% of all leavers (on a headcount basis and excluding transfers between forces) had less than one year’s service and 43% had less than five years’ service (Chart 2.11).

**Chart 2.11: Police officer leavers (headcount), by length of service, England and Wales, FYE 2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

*Evidence from the parties on police workforce, recruitment and retention*

2.71 The Home Office explained that the Government’s expectation was that police forces in England and Wales would protect police officer numbers. The latest data showed that at 30 September 2024 there were a total of 148,886 officers (headcount) across England and Wales. The Home Office stressed that the retention of officers was an important element of managing the police workforce, and reported that the 3.4% voluntary resignation rate in England and Wales for the year to March 2024 was low compared with other sectors.

2.72 The APCC told us in oral evidence that PCCs and chief constables had raised concerns with the Home Office about the unintended consequences of focussing on officer numbers. It explained that this approach discouraged forces from reducing the number of officers and frequently led to a loss of police staff in order to balance budgets.

2.73 The joint statement by the NPCC, CPOSA and PSA reported that after the rapid growth in officer numbers between 2019 and 2023, the service was slowly maturing and building its experience and skills. However, it said that instability and uncertainty remained as one-third of officers had under five years’ service, and one-fifth of new officers were leaving policing within the first three years. The joint

statement said that parties were yet to receive the detail needed to understand how officer numbers would be affected by the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, and the commitment to recruit an additional 13,000 special constables, police community support officers and neighbourhood officers. It also highlighted that an appropriately resourced service, with a skilled and diverse workforce, was a critical component to achieving the ambitious targets of the Government's Safer Streets mission.

- 2.74 The NPCC reported that the total workforce (officers and staff) was still short of numbers seen in March 2010, but that the number of officers was the highest on record. However, 29 forces had lower officer numbers per head of population than in 2010, and 12,000 more officers would be needed nationally to return to 2010 levels.
- 2.75 The NPCC advised that analysis had been undertaken to assess whether reverse civilianisation (replacing police staff in non-warranted roles with warranted officers) had taken place and this would be tracked going forward, given concern in relation to budgetary pressures and workforce flexibility. This had focussed on local policing, investigations and business support functions and the results had suggested that officer bolstering (forces adding additional officers without reducing staff posts) had been a more common pattern than reverse civilianisation. There was a mixed picture across forces and in some results had suggested possible reverse civilianisation.
- 2.76 The NPCC reported that application rates had remained healthy since the end of the Uplift Programme in March 2023, and that nearly all forces had received sufficient applications to complete their recruitment ambition. However, it flagged that there was uncertainty around the phased recruitment of the additional 3,000 officers linked to the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
- 2.77 The NPCC told us that attrition in policing compared well with other public and private sector organisations and that the attrition profile remained largely in line with previous years. It explained that the attrition profile was driven by the service profile and the proportion of the workforce with less than five years' service. The NPCC said that officers with less than five years' service had consistently accounted for over two-thirds of resignations and that as the proportion of officers in this group had increased, so had attrition. The NPCC also advised that resignations in the MPS were previously below the national average but had risen and were now in line with the national average.
- 2.78 The NPCC informed us that resignations were low in ranks above constable where attrition was primarily made up from retirements. However, it highlighted that there had been an increase in the number of resignations from the sergeant and inspector ranks over the last three years.
- 2.79 The NPCC reported that increasing to two sergeant promotion exams a year had increased the numbers taking the exams but that the pass rate had fallen, so the

numbers passing were largely in line with previous years. However, the numbers passing the stage exceeded the annual turnover. The NPCC said that some forces had seen significant falls in the number of applicants for promotion to the ranks of sergeant and inspector, with reasons ranging from concern over postings, insufficient financial reward and loss of allowances.

- 2.80 The NPCC told us that the National Leavers' Framework had been introduced in 2022 to capture data on reasons for leaving, but the reasons for 55% of resignations remained unknown. Where data were available only 1.6% of resigning officers since December 2022 had given pay and remuneration as their reason for doing so. However, the NPCC recognised that pay could have provided an influencing factor in more cases once officers had made a decision to look for other opportunities.
- 2.81 The MPS said that it would have to recruit fewer officers in the next twelve months to close the budget gap for FYE 2026. It reported receiving sufficient applications to meet the lower recruitment target but that it needed to continue to attract applicants in order to build a healthy recruitment pipeline to allow for growth if more funding became available. The Commissioner had stated a need to grow by 5,000 officers to meet demand.
- 2.82 The MPS advised us that resignations now accounted for 50% of all leavers, and that officers in the early years of service were still resigning at a higher rate, although there were some signs that the interventions it had put in place were having a positive impact. The MPS expressed concern at a recent trend of increased resignations, particularly from constables at all lengths of service. It said it thought this was in part due to its competitiveness in the London employment market and the cost of living.
- 2.83 In oral evidence, the CEO of the College of Policing said that it would be helpful to have better information on why officers left the police service. He explained that there were expectations on forces to conduct exit interviews but that the information provided was not always of a high quality.
- 2.84 The PSA reported that the majority of respondents to its 2024 Pay Survey<sup>21</sup> intended to stay in policing until they were 55 and could claim their pension or had 30 years' pensionable service. Respondents indicating that they would be inclined to leave before being able to claim their pension cited the impact of their job on their family and personal life, and morale as the main factors having a major effect on that intention.
- 2.85 The PSA presented further results from its 2024 Pay Survey that showed 29% of respondents did not intend to apply for further promotion and 28% were undecided.

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<sup>21</sup> Which received around 800 responses.

The most common reason for this was that respondents believed that promotion would have a negative effect on their work-life balance.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

- 2.86 The PFEW reported that attrition was a growing problem and a risk to the future sustainability of policing. It considered that the trend in increasing voluntary resignations was alarming, and highlighted results from its Pay and Morale Survey that showed 23% of respondents intended to leave policing either within the next two years or as soon as they could.
- 2.87 The PFEW estimated that a minimum of 55,000 officers would need to be recruited over the next five years to maintain officer numbers, and this would require the service to attract 440,000 candidates. The PFEW said a more likely scenario was that forces would need to attract between 500,000 and 600,000 candidates depending on the Government's growth ambition and the rate of attrition.
- 2.88 The PFEW pointed out that experienced officers were more likely to engage with the public in a way that inspired confidence, avoided conflict and de-escalated situations. It expressed concern that the increase in the numbers of inexperienced officers was affecting public confidence in the police.
- 2.89 The PFEW considered that the increasing attrition rate demonstrated that improvements needed to be made to police conditions. Annual leave and family leave were highlighted by the PFEW as supporting retention, particularly among female officers.

#### *HMICFRS State of Policing Report 2023*

- 2.90 HMICFRS recommended the abolition of the Government's fixed police officer numbers target so that forces could build a more balanced and effective workforce. It highlighted that linking funding to the maintenance of police officer numbers restricted the ability of chief constables to decide on the best workforce mix to police their local communities or develop the right skills in specialist areas. HMICFRS said it also made the regressive step of replacing civilians with police officers more likely.

#### *Our comment on police workforce, recruitment and retention*

- 2.91 We note the NPCC's evidence that application rates have remained healthy since March 2023 and that nearly all forces have received enough applications to complete their recruitment ambition. We observe that only the MPS is significantly below the targets the Home Office has set for forces to ensure they maintain the number of police officers at Uplift Programme levels. However, this is concerning as the MPS makes up around a quarter of officer strength in England and Wales.
- 2.92 We have continued to hear this year about how the focus on officer numbers, combined with budgetary pressures, is leading to reverse civilianisation in some cases whereby police officers are being put into roles that would be better suited for

police staff. As we have said in previous years, we do not consider this to be an effective use of public funds, and affordability constraints mean these pressures are unlikely to ease in the short term. However, we hope that the workforce strategy being developed as part of the Police Reform White Paper, will look at the appropriate shape of the police workforce. We understand that the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is likely to further affect the workforce balance as it aims to provide 13,000 new neighbourhood officers through redeploying 3,000 existing police officers and recruiting 3,000 new police officers, 4,000 new police community support officers, and 3,000 new special constables. We expect that, in recruiting these officers, lessons will be learnt from the Uplift Programme in terms of seizing the opportunity to improve diversity and of ensuring effective levels of supervision are arranged. We note that the number of sergeants and inspectors are still below 2010 levels.

- 2.93 We also point out that recruitment is about more than numbers and that pay and reward need to be sufficiently competitive to enable the police service to attract and retain high-calibre recruits with the right attitudes and maturity to respond to vulnerability, de-escalate social tension and manage complexity. In our view this is critical to the delivery of the wider police reform agenda and especially the strengthening of neighbourhood policing. We remain concerned at the increasing levels and rates of voluntary resignations in recent years. We understand that this is partly due to the increase in the number of officers with less than five years' service as a result of the Uplift Programme, and the higher resignation rates associated with officers with this length of service. We observe that voluntary exit rates are significantly lower for ranks above constable, but are concerned that levels of resignations for sergeants and inspectors have been rising.
- 2.94 Last year we welcomed the introduction of the National Leavers' Framework to capture data on reasons for leaving. However, we are disappointed that the reasons for 55% of resignations remain unknown, meaning that this is yet to provide the data we hoped for. Without fuller data on the reasons for resignations and what officers intend to do after they resign, it is difficult to assess the role that pay and reward play in retention, and to understand the drivers behind emerging trends such as the increasing resignations for sergeants and inspectors. We urge the NPCC and forces to improve this data collection to inform future submissions.

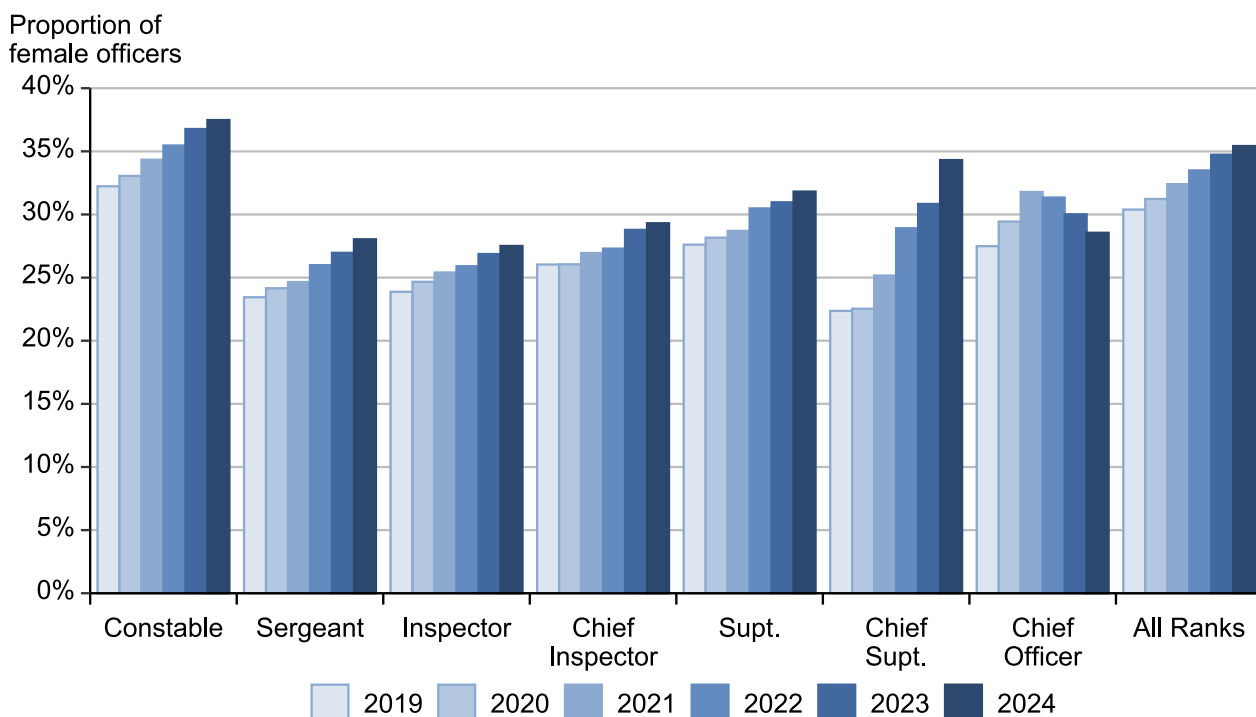
## **Police officer diversity**

### *Our analysis of police officer diversity*

- 2.95 We have set out our full analysis of police workforce diversity in Appendix E. We highlight some of the key points below.

2.96 The overall proportion of officers who were female<sup>22</sup> (Chart 2.12) increased from 30% to 35% between 2019 and 2024, but the proportion of female officers for ranks above constable was lower than the overall proportion. The overall proportion of ethnic minority<sup>23</sup> officers (Chart 2.13) increased from 6.9% to 8.4% between 2019 and 2024, continuing a steadily upward path over the past decade, but again the proportion of ethnic minority officers for ranks above constable was lower than the overall proportion. These indicators show improvement in diversity across the officer workforce in recent years, but remain below levels representative of the communities served by the police.

**Chart 2.12: Percentage of female officers (FTE), by rank, England and Wales, March 2019 – March 2024**



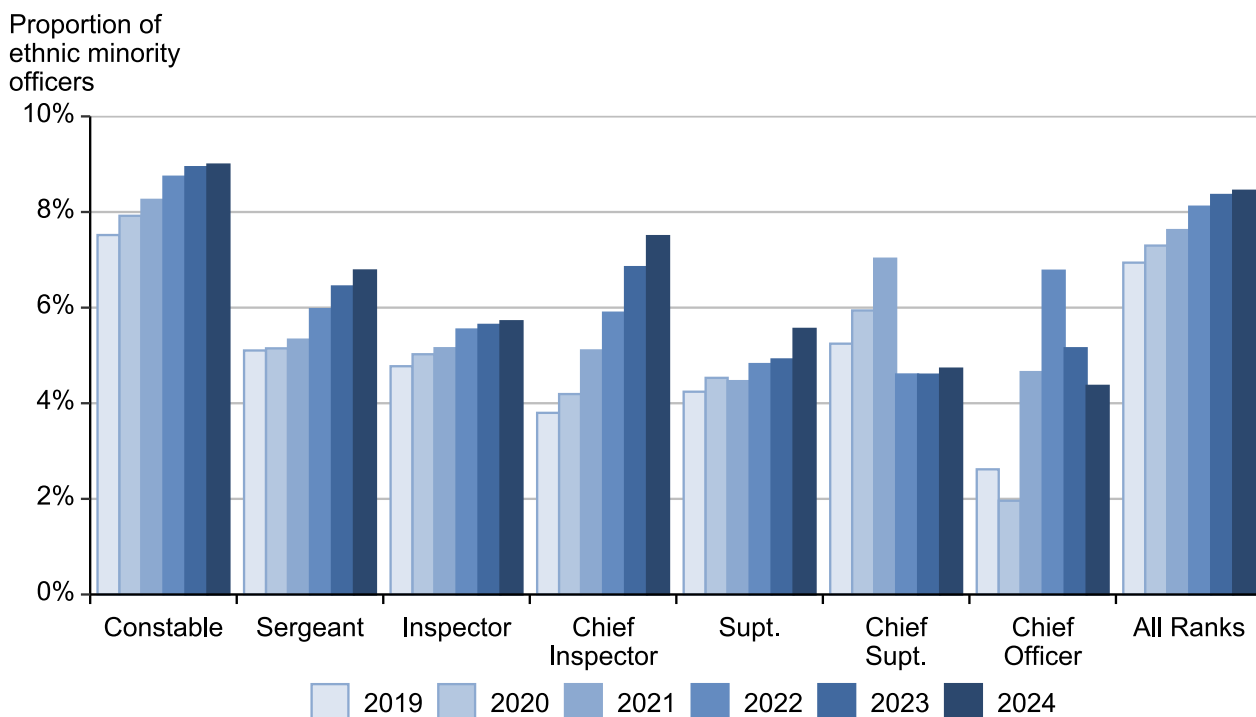
Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

Note: Officers who did not state their sex are excluded from calculations.

<sup>22</sup> Proportions of female officers exclude officers who did not state their sex from the denominator.

<sup>23</sup> Proportions of ethnic minority officers exclude officers who did not state their ethnicity from the denominator.

**Chart 2.13: Percentage of ethnic minority officers (FTE), by rank, England and Wales, March 2019 – March 2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

Note: Officers who did not state their ethnicity are excluded from calculations.

*Evidence from the parties on police officer diversity*

2.97 The Home Office reported that the proportion of officers identifying as an ethnic minority had been increasing each year since March 2007. However, it highlighted that representation of minority ethnic officers was lower among senior ranks (chief inspector or above) compared with constables and other ranks. The Home Office also pointed out that the number and proportion of female officers in March 2024 were the highest since comparable records began in March 2003.

2.98 The joint statement by the NPCC, CPOSA and PSA highlighted that an appropriately resourced service, with a skilled and diverse workforce, was a critical component to achieving the ambitious targets of the Government’s Safer Streets mission.

2.99 The NPCC said that the growth in recruitment between 2019 to 2023 had impacted positively on workforce representation. However, it considered that the pace of change was likely to decrease given the fall in recruitment levels. The NPCC said that attraction and positive action remained priorities but that ethnic minority recruitment levels had reduced from a peak of 13% in 2021 to 9.8%.

2.100 The NPCC reported that ethnic minority officers resigned at greater rates than white officers both overall and in the early years of service. It informed us that research had shown that feelings of inclusion, opportunity and organisational justice and support were key factors affecting retention of these officers. The NPCC explained

that the overall attrition rate of female officers was higher than for males, but that the gap in rates had not widened over time. It said that attrition analysis had shown that female officers were more likely to stay in the first few years of service, but more likely to resign mid service (10–20 years) compared with male officers. The NPCC told us that the police service had sought to promote flexible working policies to support a work-life balance as a key part of retaining female officers.

- 2.101 The NPCC informed us that females were applying for promotion to sergeant in proportion to males but had a higher pass rate, while ethnic minority officers were applying at a proportionate rate but had consistently lower pass rates.
- 2.102 In oral evidence the CEO of the College of Policing told us that the College's Aspire programme was designed to provide bespoke support for underrepresented groups. He emphasised that chief constables and local leaders had an important responsibility in this area.
- 2.103 The MPS told us in oral evidence that the successful pool for promotion was now the same composition as the eligible pool and that this was partly as a result of positive action measures taken over recent years. It explained that these had been most successful at the constable rank but less successful at sergeant and inspector level.
- 2.104 In oral evidence the PSA explained that increasing the representation of ethnic minorities in the superintending ranks required more mentoring, support and shadowing opportunities in addition to greater efforts to recruit ethnic minority officers in the lower ranks. The PSA also considered that it would be necessary to demonstrate that the police service was a viable employing body that treated ethnic minority officers fairly and provided recruitment, development and progression opportunities.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

- 2.105 The PFEW noted that the Policing Vision set out an aim for policing to be a representative workforce in all ranks by 2030. The PFEW observed that policing was unrepresentative in numbers of women, particularly at senior ranks and that women did not achieve promotion in the same proportions as men and had shorter lengths of service. It also reported that the rate of voluntary resignations was highest among women and ethnic minority officers.

#### *Our comment on police officer diversity*

- 2.106 We note again this year that overall indicators of diversity have shown improvement, but that the numbers of female and ethnic minority officers remain below levels representative of the communities they serve, particularly in the ranks above constable. Last year we flagged that policing had missed an opportunity to make more progress in closing the diversity gap during the Uplift Programme, and this is

highlighted by the expectation of slower improvements in diversity as a result of lower recruitment.

- 2.107 We are particularly alarmed by the evidence of higher resignation rates among women and ethnic minorities, and lower promotion pass rates for ethnic minorities, and note the challenges this poses for further increasing the diversity of the workforce. Much more rigorous steps need to be taken to ensure a better diversity balance through recruitment, retention and promotion. We consider that this will be critical to the success of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, as the new officers recruited will need to represent the communities they serve if they are to restore trust in the police.
- 2.108 We continue to encourage the Home Office and police forces to work to improve the completeness of data on disability, sexual orientation and other protected characteristics not yet published, so that we can use them in future.

### **Police motivation and morale**

- 2.109 The APCC stated that year-on-year real-terms pay cuts were damaging to the police service in terms of recruitment, retention and morale, and said it was important that officers felt they were receiving fair pay for the demanding work they did.
- 2.110 The joint statement by the NPCC, CPOSA and PSA said that the reward package played a central role in the workforce feeling valued and supported, and that it affected the feelings of value, workforce morale and wellbeing, and personal financial stability. It highlighted that police officers did not believe their reward package was fair, and that as a result, alongside the demand they were facing, morale was low.
- 2.111 The NPCC informed us that plans were underway to develop a National Workforce Survey which would draw together the aims of the Wellbeing, Black Workforce and New Recruits' Survey into both annual and pulse surveys to improve workforce insight.
- 2.112 The MPS said its recent staff survey had shown engagement levels were declining among its officers, with pay being the main reason for considering whether to leave.
- 2.113 Results from the 2024 PSA Pay Survey showed that slightly lower proportions of respondents reported low personal morale than the previous year, but that half of respondents reported lower morale than twelve months previously. The top reported factors negatively affecting morale were: how the police were treated by the Government; uncertainty regarding their pension; and taxation policies.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

- 2.114 Results of the PFEW 2024 Pay and Morale Survey showed 57% of respondents reported that their morale was low. This was similar to the level in 2023 (58%).

Furthermore, 88% said morale in their force was low (87% in 2023) and 92% said morale in the police service as a whole was low (91% in 2023). The top reported factors negatively affecting morale were: how the police were treated by the Government; how the police were treated by the public; and pay and benefits.

2.115 The PFEW 2024 Pay and Morale Survey also showed that 23% of respondents intended to resign from the police service either within the next two years or as soon as possible. This had increased slightly from 22% of respondents in 2023. The top reported factors having a major effect on that intention were: morale; the impact on mental health; how the police were treated by the Government; and pay.

#### *Our comment on police motivation and morale*

2.116 High morale and strong motivation drive productivity. We remain concerned by low levels of morale shown in staff association surveys, although note there has been some slight improvement in the latest data. We also observe that the low levels of morale picked up in staff association surveys do not appear to be leading to widespread recruitment and retention difficulties, although the voluntary resignation rate has been increasing over recent years. We welcome the development of the National Workforce Survey and hope that the results will help to provide a more rounded assessment of morale and motivation in future years.

2.117 We also flag that it is difficult to draw comparisons between the morale and motivation of police officers and other areas of the public sector due to inconsistent surveys of each workforce. We encourage the Government to introduce a survey of all public sector workers that will enable such comparisons to be made.

2.118 We note the evidence from parties on the link between the reward package and morale. However, we consider that drivers of morale and motivation go much wider than reward, and note that staff association surveys appear to be showing pay is declining as a driver of low morale and intention to leave. A significant driver of motivation and morale is officer wellbeing. We have received an increasing amount of evidence on wellbeing in recent years and consider this separately in the next section.

### **Police officer wellbeing**

2.119 The Home Office set out the Government's commitment to continue to support the wellbeing of all who work or have previously worked in policing, and said this included support for the Police Covenant. The Home Office said it continued to fund the National Police Wellbeing Service which provided support to forces and individual officers.

2.120 The NPCC reiterated evidence from last year that the 2019 National Police Wellbeing Survey had highlighted issues of workforce fatigue, and that the PFEW

Pay and Morale Survey had shown a downward trend in the wellbeing and mental health of police officers.

- 2.121 The NPCC recognised that sickness absence could be an indicator of motivation, morale and general workforce conditions, and that greater demands had led to the health of the police workforce becoming an increasing strategic concern, with rising levels of reports of mental health issues associated with the psychological trauma of the role. The NPCC said the nature of policing meant that officers were exposed to high levels of threat and traumatic incidents, in largely confrontational situations, which affected long-term health. However, it reported that sickness absence, both long- and short-term, had remained static over time.
- 2.122 The NPCC informed us that, with respect to on-call duties, chief constables should consider the work-life balance implications for officers, and have mechanisms in place to ensure compliance with the 1998 Working Time Regulations. It cited data from the Police Earnings Census that showed the proportion of officers in receipt of On-call Allowance was higher in the more senior ranks, and that the median value of payments to those performing on-call duties was equivalent to between 2.6 and 3.6 periods a month. The NPCC reported that the proportion of officers in receipt of On-call Allowance had remained relatively stable over time for constables and sergeants but some other ranks had seen increases.
- 2.123 The PSA reported that its surveys, and those of other organisations, had shown repeatedly that the wellbeing of police officers was low and decreasing, and that the work they were delivering had an effect on their mental health and family lives. Results from the PSA Pay Survey showed that 84% of respondents believed that being on call was comparable with a normal working day in terms of demand, and that being on call essentially represented an expectation of working 24 hours a day, often on consecutive days at a time. In oral evidence, the PSA said that officers in the superintending rank potentially worked 60 hours each week when on-call duties were factored in.
- 2.124 The PSA informed us that officers who were impacted by the greater demands of being on call and being responsible for Force Coordination and command roles often built up Rest Days in Lieu and that its survey highlighted the challenge of getting these back once accrued. The PSA also said that officers risked losing Rest Days in Lieu due to different force practices and limited time scales that some forces tried to implement.

### *HMICFRS State of Policing Report 2023*

- 2.125 HMICFRS reported that many officers had high workloads and did not feel valued enough for the work they did. It encouraged forces to do everything they could to better lead and support their officers and staff.

### *Information from the PFEW*

- 2.126 The PFEW stated that police officers were people that had families and caring responsibilities, and suffered mental and physical health challenges associated with their work and a myriad of other pressures. It considered that the service's inability to act quickly to improve their conditions resulted in the loss of experienced and talented officers. It also called for meaningful progress on the Police Covenant.
- 2.127 The PFEW also considered that the regulations the inspecting ranks worked under were no longer fit for purpose and it pointed out that they had not been reviewed for 31 years. It wanted to see protections put in place so officers were not forced to work long hours. These included: a requirement for the inspecting ranks to have regular shift patterns; and interim arrangements to recognise the long hours that officers were currently undertaking.
- 2.128 The PFEW highlighted that assaults on officers were commonplace and worsening, with 46,064 assaults on officers recorded by the Home Office for the FYE 2024. This was an increase of 13.6% from the previous year and 48.7% higher than the year to June 2018. The PFEW observed that the figures indicated that every day an average of 32 officers were injured through assault and a further 94 were assaulted but not injured.
- 2.129 Results from the PFEW Pay and Morale Survey showed that 44% of respondents viewed their job as very or extremely stressful. The survey also found that 81% of respondents indicated that they had experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the last twelve months, and of these respondents 93% had said this had been made worse by work.
- 2.130 Nearly two-thirds of respondents to the PFEW Pay and Morale Survey said that their workload over the last twelve months had been too high or much too high, and around one-third said that they had often or always been pressured to work long hours over the same period. Around one-third of respondents had not taken all their annual leave in 2024. The PFEW Inspecting Ranks Survey found that, during a four-week period, 67% of respondent had worked up to 20 additional hours and 23% had worked an additional 21–40 hours.

### *Our comment on police officer wellbeing*

- 2.131 We are concerned by the evidence we have received showing decreasing wellbeing and seemingly increasing working hours and instances of cancelled rest days and altered shifts.
- 2.132 We recognise that the nature of policing means there will always be occasions when unexpected incidents require forces to cancel rest days and alter shifts, as demonstrated by the events following the Southport attack last year. However, we are concerned that in many instances officers are having their rest days cancelled

and shifts altered as a result of poor workforce planning and poor workload management. We return to this in Chapter 4 as part of our consideration of police officer allowances.

- 2.133 Last year we recommended an increase in the amount of annual leave for new entrants, and that officers in the federated ranks reached their maximum annual leave entitlement more quickly. We remain concerned at the evidence suggesting officers have difficulty taking their leave entitlements and rest days and stress the importance of being able to do so for officer wellbeing. We strongly urge forces to create the environment in which officers are able to take their full annual leave allocation.
- 2.134 The PFEW's pay positioning paper included a number of proposals around terms and conditions that could help improve officer welfare. We have also received a proposal on paternity leave from one of the APCC joint workforce leads. We comment on these in more detail later in our report, but welcome the innovative thinking on proposals that go beyond reward, and encourage the NPCC to consider these in a timely manner.
- 2.135 We have previously stated that the work of police officers is important, difficult and often dangerous, and this was highlighted by the unrest and violent disorder that followed the Southport attack last year. Many police officers were injured in the line of duty and some were hospitalised – the Home Affairs Committee reported that 302 officers were injured and between 54 and 69 taken to hospital. We have again seen the dedication of officers committed to serving the public on our visits to police forces. In this context, we stress the necessity of forces looking after their officers, being mindful of their work-life balance and considering how the work affects physical and mental health, in order for officers to be most effective in their jobs.
- 2.136 We are particularly concerned about the workload of officers in the inspecting ranks, and the effect this has on their wellbeing. The PFEW survey of inspecting ranks highlighted the number of additional hours that these officers work, and we note that this may be one of the factors behind the increasing levels of voluntary resignations in the inspecting ranks. We also observe that some inspectors are likely to earn less than sergeants who work similar hours, since sergeants are entitled to overtime and inspectors are not. As we discuss later on in this report, we think it is more important that forces take steps to improve the wellbeing and work-life balance of officers, rather than provide them with compensation for poor management practices. However, we are concerned that progress on restructuring and rebalancing of the pay and workload of the inspecting ranks is some distance away. It is essential that this is expedited, once a workforce strategy is in place. As a last resort, stop-gap measure until this is implemented, we invite the NPCC to work with the PFEW and other representative groups to explore the introduction of temporary, time-limited payments for the inspecting ranks to compensate for high workload where this is unavoidable.

## Pensions

- 2.137 The Home Office reported that it had launched a consultation in November 2024 seeking views on changes to the structure of member pension contributions with a view to continuing to encourage participation in the police pension scheme. It explained that potential changes to the current three-tier structure might include the contribution rate for each tier, the differences between contribution rates in different tiers, the tier boundaries, and the number of tiers.
- 2.138 The Home Office also provided an update on the McCloud/Sargeant remedy and said it was working with HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs to support the resolution of a number of technical and complex tax issues arising from the remedy process.
- 2.139 The NPCC advised us that the 2024 survey of the police pension scheme had shown 7.2% of officers had opted out, up from 6.2% in 2023. It highlighted that the highest opt-out rates were for those with less than five years' service, and that work was ongoing to understand why ethnic minority officers had higher opt-out rates. The NPCC considered opt-out rates to be comparable with other sectors.
- 2.140 The NPCC explained that it intended to scope the benefits and impact of allowing officers to opt in and out of the pension scheme more than once in twelve months. It also intended to work with forces in 2025 to encourage participation and explain the breadth of the benefits available to officers from participation, and the risks of opting out.
- 2.141 The NPCC said it was considering the options in the Home Office consultation, referred to in the Home Office evidence above, but pointed out that any uplift would mean an increase in cost for affected officers.
- 2.142 The MPS reported that the opt-out rate for its officers was 10.7% in 2024, up from 10.2% in 2023. It cited the 2024 Metfriendly survey that had shown just under half of officers had considered stopping paying into their police pension over the past twelve months and that younger officers were more likely to stop contributions.
- 2.143 The PSA said that pension changes were causing significant stress and having a negative impact on the morale of its members. It explained that the situation prevented its members from being able to plan for their futures, and that many felt in a 'pension trap' of having been unfairly penalised but having no viable option to leave without incurring further losses. The PSA called for recognition, support and assistance for those impacted by pension remedy through no fault of their own. It pointed out that police officers were impacted more than other public sector members due to there being different rates of contributions for each pension schemes. Furthermore, each force administered its pension scheme separately, which meant there were varying levels of support and assistance available.

2.144 The PSA also cited results from its 2024 Pay Survey that showed: the most likely thing about their pension that would increase respondents' intention to leave was concern about potential future changes which could negatively affect the pension; and if the amount that could be taken as a tax-free lump sum were to be reduced, then the vast majority of respondents would be more likely to leave.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

2.145 In the 2024 PFEW Pay and Morale Survey, 7% of respondents indicated that they had opted out of the pension scheme, unchanged from 2023. A further 15% indicated that they were considering opting out, down slightly from 18% in 2023. The main reason given for having opted out was that the contributions were too high and/or unaffordable (71% of officers who had opted out).

#### *Our comment on pensions*

2.146 While pensions are not directly in our remit, our terms of reference do state that it is important for us to be mindful of developments in police officer pensions to ensure there is a consistent, strategic and holistic approach to police pay and conditions. We are conscious that pensions form an important part of the overall remuneration package, and that changes to police pensions can affect morale, motivation and retention.

2.147 We continue to be deeply concerned about the proportion of officers opting out of the police pension scheme. We recognise that the main reason for this is likely to be affordability concerns, but questions remain as to whether officers are receiving sufficient information about the consequences of opting out of the pension, in particular the loss of deferred remuneration and the forfeiture of benefits linked to death in service and medical retirement.

2.148 The loss of death-in-service and medical retirement benefits are particularly concerning given the often-dangerous nature of police work that we have already acknowledged. We heard evidence that the opt-out rates among police officers are comparable with other areas of the public sector, but we highlight that other areas of the public sector do not necessarily face the same dangers as police officers. We urge parties to give consideration to ways to ensure that death-in-service and medical retirement benefits are available to any officer killed or injured as a result of incidents they faced in the line of duty, regardless of pension membership status. We recognise that some forces currently provide group insurance, but there needs to be consistency across all forces.

2.149 We welcome any steps that may increase pension take-up. However, we are concerned that it may also become easier to opt out under the NPCC's suggestion of allowing officers to opt in and out of the pension scheme more than once in twelve months.

2.150 We note the recent Government consultation on changing the officer contribution rates for officers, and welcome any changes that may encourage more participation in the pension scheme. However, we observe that this consultation has been driven by actuarial requirements and any potential reductions in contribution rates for lower earners are likely to be small.

2.151 It is our strong view that the Home Office and NPCC should make every effort to reduce the risk of officers, particularly those who are young in service, from opting out of the scheme. We urge them to ensure that the benefits of the pension and risks associated with opting out (particularly those linked to death in service and medical retirement) are better publicised to all officers and especially to those who have chosen to opt out. We also urge the Government to work with parties to consider the scope for making substantial changes to the pension scheme to make it more affordable and appealing to young-in-service officers and those considering shorter-term policing careers. Such changes might include having significantly reduced contribution rates in early years, flexible contribution rates (with adjusted benefits) or a defined-contribution option.

## **Legal obligations on the police service in England and Wales and relevant changes to employment law**

2.152 The NPCC informed us that there were several statutory and non-statutory special leave provisions in place that supported the workforce to manage work-life balance, promote wellbeing and aid the retention of a diverse workforce. These included: carer's leave and pay; neonatal care leave and pay; police maternity and adoption support leave and pay; the provisions of the Paternity Leave (bereavement) Act 2024; death of premature baby maternity pay; and still birth and officers' entitlement to leave and pay. It explained that changes to legislative provisions coming into effect have been considered to ensure: forward planning in relation to making changes to determinations or regulations in a timely way; policy decisions complemented existing policies; and that forces were able to plan for any additional provision.

2.153 After oral evidence, we also received a letter from one of the APCC joint workforce leads outlining an additional proposal relating to paternity leave for police officers. The letter set out data from 38 forces (excluding London) regarding paternity leave. This showed that in 2024/25: 1,581 officers only took one week of paternity leave; 1,241 officers took one week paid and a second week paid at the statutory rate; and 459 officers took two weeks fully paid. We were asked to consider the case for the implementation of a consistent national policy of two weeks fully paid paternity leave. We were told that the financial cost to forces of providing a second paid week would be minimal although there would be a small operational matter of cover to be considered for those officers.

*Information from the PFEW*

2.154 The PFEW advised that policing needed a reward and benefits framework that attracted and retained a more representative workforce and recognised that officers' needs may vary throughout their career due to changes such as becoming a new parent, dealing with family illness/death or increased caring responsibilities. It advised that some aspects of the Children and Families Act 2014 had still not been implemented in police regulations. The PFEW highlighted that this could lead to inconsistent decision-making both within and between forces, and urged that specific provisions should be made in regulations and determinations for all family type leave in order to ensure consistent decision-making and transparency, and avoid potential litigation.

*Our comment on legal obligations on the police service in England and Wales and relevant changes to employment law*

2.155 We note the information provided by the NPCC on special leave provisions. We are deeply concerned by information provided by the PFEW on continued delays to the legislative changes from the Children and Families Act 2014, and the potential inconsistency, uncertainty and unfairness this creates for officers. We urge the parties to work to implement necessary legislative changes in a much timelier manner.

2.156 Such inconsistency was highlighted by the information we received through the APCC on paternity leave. We were attracted by the proposal to develop a consistent national policy and we invite the NPCC to consider quickly the case for measures being introduced to ensure that officers receive at least two weeks paid paternity leave and to subsequently explore the scope for increasing this further over the next few years. However, we are conscious that paternity leave is only one of several statutory and non-statutory special leave provisions in place that support the workforce to manage work-life balance. We ask the NPCC to review the implementation of these provisions by forces to ensure there is a coherent, consistent and transparent approach by forces across the country which supports officer wellbeing.

2.157 We are also aware of the Employment Rights Bill that is currently progressing through parliament. We encourage the parties to work together proactively through the Police Consultative Forum to consider the potential implications for policing and to ensure that any necessary changes to police regulations are made in a timely manner.

## **Chapter 3 – Police Workforce and Pay Modernisation**

### **Introduction**

- 3.1 In this chapter, we comment on the evidence that we received on police workforce and pay modernisation as it relates to our standing terms of reference.

### **Our previous commentary on workforce and pay reform**

- 3.2 Our 2024 Report was the 10<sup>th</sup> in which we considered evidence on progress in police workforce and pay modernisation. We commented that in the 13 years since the Winsor Report too little had changed in terms of the modernisation of police pay. We recognised that there had been piecemeal reform but observed that this remained too slow and lacked ambition given the challenges the police service faced in terms of rebuilding public trust and acquiring the skills and capabilities it needed to fight the ever-growing complexity of crime. We noted the Government's plans for a CSR. We explained that our strong view was that in order to seize the opportunity presented by the next CSR, there needed to be a clear and compelling articulation of the case for reform. The police service needed to have a costed plan in place setting out the reforms it needed. We recommended that this should be the product of a Comprehensive Review of police remuneration. We observed that the CSR would have clear and Government-wide timelines. We pointed out that it was vital that the police service's plans were prepared in good time. We invited the Home Office, NPCC and APCC to provide a plan we could consider by January 2025.
- 3.3 We advised that the police service in undertaking the review ask itself some fundamental questions regarding the skills and capabilities it required to deliver the best outcomes for the public, and to attract and retain those skills. We also proposed that work on Targeted Variable Pay (TVP), the Pay Progression Standard (PPS) and the P-factor should be considered as part of that review. We encouraged parties to think creatively about how the PPS could be made a meaningful tool for improving performance and how the unique aspects of a police officer's role, which the P-factor has striven to capture, could be incorporated into base pay scales.

### **Modernising police workforce and pay: future direction**

- 3.4 In response to the recommendation in our 2024 Report for a Comprehensive Review of police remuneration, the Home Office told us that the Government was clear that reforms to pay and remuneration structures must be aligned to a police workforce strategy. It said pay and reward played an important role in ensuring the service had, and could retain, the right skills and was able to respond to future changes and demands. Going forward, the service needed to be able to articulate how pay and reward played into building its future workforce.

- 3.5 The Home Office explained that the forthcoming White Paper on Police Reform would, among other issues, consider a national police workforce strategy. It said that it was engaging with the NPCC and College of Policing to develop early thinking about the approach that was needed to develop a long-term workforce strategy and what such a strategy would include. It explained that it was important that the strategy covered all members of the workforce, including police staff who delivered a vital role in protecting communities as part of police forces. The Home Office said that this would ensure that policing was prepared to respond to the many demands it faced, both now and in the future. It observed that the nature of crime and policing demands had changed, yet police workforce structures and areas of deployment had remained largely the same as a decade ago.
- 3.6 The NPCC set out its approach to developing a long-term workforce plan and aligned reward strategy, within the new context of the proposed White Paper on Police Reform. The NPCC described its short-, medium- and long-term ambitions. The NPCC outlined the immediate work it was undertaking to prepare the ground for the workforce plan and reward strategy. In addition to its review of allowances, this included:
- Continuing to develop its Strategic Assessment of the Workforce.
  - Accelerating the development of a long-term workforce plan by designing a proposal for inclusion in its CSR submission.
  - Consulting with service leaders on wider pay reform to inform the development of a reward strategy.
  - Setting out the principles and proposals for the realignment of the existing pay structure. Costed options would be included in its CSR submission.
- 3.7 The NPCC explained that the timeline for the work was dependent on the outcome of the CSR, the Government White Paper and Government decisions on legislative change.
- 3.8 The NPCC set out its concerns about the overall structure of the base pay framework and the options for reviewing base pay that it intended to include in its CSR submission. The NPCC invited us to endorse its proposals for reform.
- 3.9 The APCC told us it welcomed the opportunities presented by the CSR, and the forthcoming White Paper on police landscape reform, to address some of the inherent weaknesses in the current pay structure and to progress towards a longer-term workforce strategy.
- 3.10 The MPS told us it supported pay modernisation. In its evidence, it set out its early thinking, which it had shared with the NPCC, about the concept and themes it would wish to see reflected in the reward strategy and pay model. It also explained that it

wished to pilot the NPCC's proposed changes to base pay for constables. (See Chapter 4, paragraphs 4.52–4.62)

- 3.11 The PSA said it supported any review of remuneration as set out in our 2024 Report and stated it would welcome an opportunity to engage in any consultation around this in order to support the best and most appropriate outcome for its members and policing as a whole. It asserted that a long-term workforce strategy that considered the inclusion of allowances in pay would be of considerable benefit to officers.
- 3.12 In oral evidence, the Home Office explained that it was unable to give any details about the forthcoming Police Reform White Paper, other than to recognise the fundamental importance to policing of having the right workforce. It said that diversity, leadership and the right skills and training all mattered, as did attracting the right recruits and encouraging them to spend their working life in the service including by providing officers with opportunities to progress their careers.
- 3.13 The NPCC acknowledged in oral evidence that our 2024 Report had criticised the lack of ambition in policing on workforce reform. It said it was working with the Home Office to develop the first police workforce strategy and that it was part of the NPCC's CSR bid. The NPCC informed us that it hoped that by March 2026 the police service would have a workforce plan. The NPCC stated that the police needed officers who were trusted and capable. It observed that entry standards and the vetting process needed to support this ambition.
- 3.14 In oral evidence, the APCC told us that it was happy to work with the NPCC on developing a strategy for pay and reward. It said that any move away from the current framework, which was based on time served, would be complex and would require investment. It would also be a significant cultural change. It emphasised that creating greater flexibility within the police workforce to attract people with life skills was a priority for the APCC. However, it pointed out that PCCs were inevitably concerned about how any changes would be delivered as it would be up to them to balance the books. The APCC stated that workforce reform was an opportunity to rebalance policing by creating a better mix of police staff and officers which would also improve productivity.
- 3.15 The MPS said in oral evidence that a more differentiated approach by the police service was required to meet the challenges of a technology-enabled world. It observed that such an approach to reward was required to attract and retain the key skills required. It told us that the police service and the MPS needed officers who were resilient, empathetic, adaptable, trustworthy, dedicated and committed to upholding high standards of professionalism.
- 3.16 In oral evidence, the College of Policing described its aspiration to increase professionalism in policing. It set out the challenges of delivering a workforce strategy within the existing national structures.

3.17 The PSA also told us in oral evidence that it had not been involved in the work on the Police Reform White Paper and that it wanted all superintending rank allowances, such as On-call Allowance, to be captured and taken into account in any pay reform proposals. The PSA did not want its members to be worse off after pay structure reform than they were now.

*Information from the PFEW*

3.18 The PFEW directed our attention to the analysis it had commissioned to review constable base pay and its concerns regarding the base pay of, and the differentials between, the ranks of inspector and chief inspector. It drew our attention to its survey of the inspecting ranks and highlighted its concerns regarding the excessive hours worked by both inspectors and chief inspectors. It proposed an interim payment be made to those ranks in advance of the reform of inspecting pay to encourage promotion into the rank and to assist with recruitment and retention.

3.19 It observed that the key to police reform would be the development of the main policing asset, police officers. It suggested that they should be allowed to move more quickly into specialist roles. The PFEW also argued that there needed to be consolidation of forces and specialist services and an emphasis placed on improving public confidence, as well as investment in a smarter and better use of technology, including Artificial Intelligence.

*Our comment on the future direction of modernising police workforce and pay*

3.20 We welcome the Home Secretary's announcement of an ambitious programme of reform to policing, and the forthcoming Police Reform White Paper which will set out how the challenges that policing faces are being addressed and develop a system that is modern and fit for the future. We note that funding for some key aspects of this work is being sought by the Home Office through the CSR which is due to report in June 2025.

3.21 We note that these reforms are part of a strategic reset in the relationship between the Government and policing. We welcome that the work will aim to drive improvements, including in performance, efficiency and productivity, and ensure policing is set up to succeed rather than be frustrated by weak national structures. We observe that this will have implications for the nature of the police workforce and, in due course, pay and reward. We were therefore very pleased to learn that the White Paper will consider a national police workforce strategy. We observe that this is the first time all the parties have committed to the importance of delivering a workforce strategy.

3.22 In our previous reports, we emphasised that the development of a workforce strategy for the police service was a vital step in pay and workforce modernisation. We agree with the Home Office that a "proper police workforce strategy is important to support the police, deal with new threats and crimes, raise standards, improve

mental health support, and train and develop the talent of the police workforce and diversity of forces”. We note that this work is vital to ensuring that outcomes for the public are improved and for that reason it is important that it proceeds at pace.

- 3.23 That workforce strategy needs to consider what is required for the police to deliver the Police Vision for 2030 and beyond and the outcome of work on the Police Reform White Paper. In our view it is an opportunity to step back and think broadly about the challenges the police service faces and what this means in terms of professionalism, the skills and capabilities, attitudes, attributes and motivations required and diversity. This would then inform decisions about the roles and structure within the service and the way they are rewarded.
- 3.24 As we said in our 2023 and 2024 reports, the workforce strategy needs to address a number of fundamental questions:
- What skills and capabilities does the police service require to deliver the outcomes the public expects, to address concerns about police legitimacy and rebuild the trust of communities?
  - What combination of police officers and police staff are needed to deliver these skills and capabilities?
  - What can be done to increase, at pace, the diversity of the police service both on entrance and at higher ranks?
  - How will the police service attract and retain high-calibre applicants from diverse backgrounds with the right skills, commitment and attitudes to deal with the changing nature and increasing complexity of demand driven by both technology and evolving social attitudes?
  - What type of organisations inside and outside the public sector should the police service be comparing itself with, given the skills and capabilities it requires? What is the market practice/analysis of such organisations telling us about the police service’s approach to pay and reward?
  - How can pay and reward assist the development of these skills and capabilities? What degree of additional flexibility and differentiation should be built into the reward framework? What contribution can direct entry play to increasing flexibility?
  - What type of organisation is the police service aspiring to be? How should it foster professionalism? What should be its culture and what are the implications of that for the way it deals with the public?
  - How can movement across the wider law enforcement community be encouraged?
  - How can the workforce strategy and its implementation help improve officer wellbeing and work-life balance?

- Over the long term, how will the police service develop and retain the large group of officers with a similar length of service recruited under the Police Uplift Programme?
- How should pay and benefits be adjusted to reflect the shift towards portfolio careers which means that many new recruits may not view policing as a career for life as many previous generations have done?
- What do previous recruitment exercises, such as the Police Uplift Programme, tell us about the way that changes to the workforce should be delivered?

3.25 We encourage the police service to be ambitious and think broadly about the future employment proposition for the police. In addition to the questions above, the police service will wish to future-proof its strategy by considering some of the developments we describe in paragraph 5.9 of Chapter 5 which are driving the profound transformation that is occurring in the modern workplace. The management of future workforces will need to be more flexible and innovative and this needs to be reflected in the police service's structure and culture.

3.26 We observe that delivery of the strategy and the scale of the changes that will be required across the 43 police forces in England and Wales will be a significant challenge. In developing the strategy, thought should be given to the cultural change and leadership skills that will be needed to ensure the police service has the broad spectrum of capabilities it needs to deliver the transformation.

3.27 We understand from the information we received in oral evidence that it will take time for the full impact of the White Paper reforms to be realised. We recognise there will be a need for both consultation and legislation, although the scope of the latter and its implications for the workforce strategy are unclear at this stage. However, while we acknowledge that the development of a workforce strategy is a very significant piece of work, that work needs to proceed at pace. We observe that this strategy will provide important context for our future considerations of pay and pay reform. It is therefore vital that the workforce strategy, or at least a draft, is made available to us early in 2026 in good time to inform the next pay round.

3.28 We note the work underway by the NPCC to consider the options for the future reform of base pay, and the NPCC's intention to progress this work in parallel to the police reform agenda. We also note the helpful analysis undertaken by the PFEW. However, we agree with the Home Office that the development of the workforce strategy should be the foundation on which subsequent reforms are built. On that basis therefore, while we welcome efforts by the Home Office and NPCC to begin the process of developing a workforce strategy, we are not going to comment on the detail of the NPCC's proposals for the reform of base pay until we can consider them in the context of the workforce strategy.

- 3.29 In Chapter 5, our Forward Look, we highlight some of the concerns we have raised in previous years regarding base pay for constables and base pay and workload for the inspecting ranks which we consider must be addressed in the workforce strategy. We also reiterate the point we made in our last report, that the police service should explore how the unique aspects of a police officer's role, which the P-factor has striven to capture, should be incorporated into the pay scales. We will return to these issues in future years should reform not proceed at pace.
- 3.30 We also note that as part of the police reform agenda there is an intention to draw up a new police performance framework to monitor and improve performance across the country. We hope that this work on performance will also consider the impact of nationally-set recruitment targets on the delivery of outcomes and the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces.
- 3.31 The Police Reform White Paper will set out the Government's ambitions for the police service including for workforce reform. The police service, including its senior leaders, needs the capacity and capabilities to deliver reform. This will be a significant additional burden on top of its operational responsibilities. In our 2024 Report, we said that we recognised that steps had been taken to increase resources within the NPCC's National Reward Team to build capacity. The police service needs to ensure sufficient resources are in place to support the reform programme and senior leaders.
- 3.32 Finally, we note the Prime Minister has also announced a change to the UK national security posture. In addition to the increase to defence spending and the Strategic Defence Review, he explained that a number of other reviews relevant to national security were underway and a single National Security Strategy would be published before the end of June. We note that aspects of this work may also have implications for policing.

## **The Police Funding Formula**

- 3.33 In its evidence this year, the NPCC told us that central funding for pay purposes proportioned by grant had resulted in nearly half of forces not having pay awards fully funded for the last two years. The APCC echoed this concern. It pointed out that any additional central funding to support this year's pay award would need to be baselined against officer headcount to potentially fully fund the extra costs. HM Treasury has been clear that there will be no additional funding to departments for pay awards in 2025/26.
- 3.34 In oral evidence, the Home Office told us that as part of the Police Reform White Paper it would consult on the future of the police service. It said this would include the role of the national centre for policing and it was inevitable that the issue of how to allocate funding would arise.

### *HMICFRS State of Policing Report 2023*

- 3.35 The State of Policing Report explained that the main source of funding for most police forces in England and Wales was government grants. It pointed out that these were allocated to forces using the police allocation formula but that it had not been updated since 2013. The report explained that this meant that, every year since then, each force's percentage share of the government grant had not been adjusted to account for changes in local need or population. The report concluded that some forces were not getting their fair share of the funding, while others were getting too much.
- 3.36 HMICFRS pointed out that PCCs could also raise money through council tax bills. It said that the proportion of overall police funding that was raised by local council tax had been rising. HMICFRS observed that areas with a higher proportion of properties in the highest council tax bands, which were usually the wealthier areas, could raise more money through those increases. It also pointed out that this put police force areas with fewer properties in the highest bands at a disadvantage, as they were usually more deprived, and had higher population densities and higher crime rates. HMICFRS concluded that the result of both the Police Funding Formula and the council tax system was that the more grant-dependent, deprived and urban parts of England and Wales were more likely to be underfunded compared with their needs. The report also explained that money to support the Uplift Programme had also been distributed unfairly. HMICFRS observed that fixing the Funding Formula was one of the most obvious and worthwhile changes the Government could make to policing.

### *Our comment on the Police Funding Formula*

- 3.37 In Chapter 2, we set out the financial pressures on forces in the context of the affordability of the 2025/26 pay award. We note the concerns expressed by parties over a number of years regarding the operation of the Funding Formula and the implications for some forces. We recognise from the evidence we have seen and also from our visits programme that the impact of the Funding Formula on forces varies.
- 3.38 We observe that the Funding Formula has been in place for many years and has not been adapted to take account of either changes in population or the nature of crime. However, in our view the position is becoming increasingly acute, as shown by the financial pressures on forces we have already described and the initial decision by the APCC not to support a pay award greater than 2% in 2025/26 since that was the maximum amount that around half of police forces had allocated in their financial plans. As we set out in Chapter 2, the APCC was concerned that central funding would not be forthcoming or, that if it was, it would be allocated via the Funding Formula which would leave certain forces with significant deficits. We observe that it told us in oral evidence that such deficits grew higher with each passing year and led to further cuts in police staff in some forces. We were concerned by its view that

this situation was also having a negative impact on the service that forces delivered to the public.

- 3.39 We observe that there may be scope for more burden-sharing across forces to ease immediate pressures. However, in our view the Funding Formula is outdated and does not reflect the current reality of the costs of policing. The nature of policing demand has changed significantly in the last two decades. We observe that new priorities have emerged such as violence against women and girls and neighbourhood policing, as have new structures such as the National Crime Agency and Border Force. We therefore judge that there is a pressing need for reform. As the APCC has pointed out, the difficulties for forces created by the formula are beginning to impact on the service delivered to the public. The APCC told us in oral evidence that the cuts being made by forces as a result of the formula forced the police service to focus on the higher-risk harms rather than the low-risk everyday incidents which irritated the public and that this undermined confidence in policing.
- 3.40 We strongly agree with the conclusions of HMICFRS that fixing the Funding Formula is one of the most obvious and worthwhile changes the Government could make to policing. We note the Home Office's decision to use police headcount to distribute funding to cover the cost of additional National Insurance payments. However, we are aware that a number of commitments have been made by Governments since 2015 to reform the Police Funding Formula but no changes have taken place. We understand that the Government's work on police reform will look at structures, national, regional and local and the balance between them. This will also require an examination of funding flows. We observe that this is an ideal opportunity to tackle and review the Funding Formula.

## **Pay Progression Standard**

- 3.41 The NPCC set out the key findings of its review of the PPS. It told us it was looking at measures to increase the effectiveness of the PPS in the short term as well as considering options for the long term. The NPCC said that over the long term, the PPS would support the strategic aim of having a pay mechanism for determining pay progression linked to productivity and competence. In the short term, the NPCC reported that it was commissioning research on wider market practices and was also consulting stakeholders on a number of options including:
- Extending the PPS to probationers. The NPCC explained that it would like to apply the PPS to officers subject to an extension of their probationary period due to performance matters, with exemptions available where appropriate. It told us it would also consider whether all probationers should be included within the PPS.
  - Extending the PPS across all pay points including to those on the top of their increments (excluding deputy chief constables, chief constables and

probationers). It added that over the longer term, consideration would be given to linking it to a financial element.

- Encouraging forces to apply a local training requirement to the PPS.
- Reducing the requirement to give notice to officers of any changes to the PPS from twelve months to three months in relation to local training.

3.42 The MPS told us that it supported the NPCC's proposals on the PPS. It said that in its proposed pilot on constable base pay it wanted to use the PPS package of measures.

#### *Our comment on the Pay Progression Standard*

3.43 We welcome the NPCC's position that, over the long term, the PPS will support the strategic aim of having a pay mechanism for determining pay progression linked to productivity and competence. We agree that a move away from time-served progression should be the police service's goal. Forces implemented the PPS in April 2022. Over the last three years we have expressed our disquiet about the lack of rigour and challenge in the standard and that the bar officers need to meet in order to pass the PPS is not very high. We welcome the NPCC's decision to commission work on wider market practices and we note the recent review of the PPS and options for change. However, we urge the NPCC to seize the opportunity presented by the wider police reform agenda and the plans for a workforce strategy to review the link between progression and performance. We encourage it to develop the PPS into a meaningful competency related tool which is clearly linked to continuous professional development (CPD) and strengthens the professionalisation of the police service.

3.44 In our view, the NPCC will want to ensure that there is a clear link between its proposals to strengthen the PPS and its plans for promoting CPD, including through the work of the College of Policing, on accrediting key roles and the development of professional programmes such as the one for neighbourhood policing. We observe that CPD is particularly important for career constables and that a meaningful competency-related tool could be part of a development package that is introduced alongside reformed pay scales. As we said in our last report though, we do not support the introduction of additional payments for those at the top of the pay scale who pass the PPS.

3.45 However, reforming the structure of the PPS will not, of itself, effectively strengthen the link between performance and progression. The process needs to be properly resourced. This means building time into police officer schedules to make the PPS process meaningful. It also requires experienced well-trained supervisors. This will require careful management given the leadership and supervisory challenges faced by the police service following the Uplift Programme, with one-third of its officers having less than five years' experience.

## Targeted Variable Pay

- 3.46 The NPCC sought our support for its request that TVP became permanent in legislation before 30 June 2026. In its evidence, the NPCC set out the results of a review it had undertaken on the implementation and effectiveness of TVP in driving skills, recruitment and retention. It also set out the data it had received on the use of TVP by forces.
- 3.47 The NPCC summarised the payments for certain key functions (investigations, firearms, public protection, tutors) based on practice up to March 2024. It explained that going forward, the monitoring of TVP by the National Reward Team would continue. In future, the NPCC would make information available to forces annually on the typical payments made to these officers in the key functional areas. It was hoped that this would encourage the appropriate use of TVP by forces and enable them to moderate their payments in relation to those made by other forces while retaining local flexibility.
- 3.48 In its evidence, the MPS partly attributed the decline in its rate of attrition to its decision to use TVP to bring the pay for new entrants level with pay point 2 from week 30 of their training.

### *Information from the PFEW*

- 3.49 In its pay positioning paper, the PFEW set out its concerns about the disproportionate impact of TVP on officers with protected characteristics. It also expressed disquiet about the lack of quality data to enable evidence-based decision-making with regards to the future of the scheme.

### *Our comment on Targeted Variable Pay*

- 3.50 We note the findings of the review of TVP that its use aligns to the strategic priorities of both the service and Government, with investigators making up over half of Service Critical Skills Payments, and firearms and public protection also forming a considerable portion.
- 3.51 In our previous reports, we have raised concerns about the use of TVP and the consistency of its application. We welcome the work underway to promote consistency of payments in key areas across forces and the ongoing monitoring of TVP. We urge the NPCC to review the impact of this new guidance on forces' use of TVP.
- 3.52 We note the PFEW's concerns about diversity and the NPCC's evidence that the roles that attract these payments are often underrepresented by certain groups which may impact pay differentials. We also note that the NPCC's Equality Impact Assessment shows a higher proportion of females and ethnic minority officers receive Service Critical Skills payments at all ranks when compared with the majority groups, but for both groups the average payments made in FYE 2024 were

slightly lower. We understand that all chief officers are required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and complete their own equality impact assessments before awarding a payment. We observe that it is very important that the police service can demonstrate that these assessments take place.

- 3.53 We note the conclusions of the NPCC's review that Recognition of Workload Payments are used less consistently and that the implications of changes to the base pay of chief superintendents, introduced as a result of our previous recommendations, are now being considered by forces to help to ensure payments are more targeted. We note that the NPCC anticipated that changes to base pay may in time reduce the need for widescale use of Recognition of Workload Payments. We would like an update on this next year.
- 3.54 Our position remains that TVP has an important part to play in the police service's current reward and remuneration framework including in supporting the MPS' recruitment. However, in our view TVP should be extended for a further three years rather than being made permanent so that the future of TVP can be considered in the light of the outcome of the wider Police Reform Programme, the workforce strategy and possible changes to the structure of base pay.

## Chapter 4 – Pay Proposals and Recommendations for 2025/26

### Introduction

- 4.1 In this chapter we make recommendations on police officer pay and allowances for the 2025/26 pay year.
- 4.2 In our remit letter, the Home Secretary asked us for a recommendation on how to apply the police officer pay award for 2025/26 for all ranks up to and including chief superintendent.

### Basic pay award

- 4.3 The Home Office anticipated that a pay award for the police of 2.8% in 2025/26 would be appropriate, as it would ensure police officer pay remained competitive, while also delivering a real-terms pay rise in the context of CPI forecasts of 2.4% from quarter 4 of 2025 to quarter 3 of 2026. The Home Office told us OBR forecasts made in October 2024 estimated that earnings growth from quarter 4 of 2025 to quarter 3 of 2026 would be around 2.1%. It said that this would still require the delivery of significant efficiency savings and challenging prioritisation decisions for many forces. It asked that in making recommendations on the remuneration for officers in the federated and superintending ranks we had regard to the views of the SSRB in respect of chief officers.
- 4.4 In oral evidence the Minister for Policing and Crime Prevention said that the Home Secretary was very conscious that police officer pay needed to remain competitive so that the best could be drawn into policing and the necessary staff, skills and experience were retained. The Minister said that this was in the context of being financially prudent in the Government's approach to public spending. She pointed out that a new priority had been given to defence spending to ensure that the country was kept secure.
- 4.5 The Minister also explained that if the Home Office and/or forces had to find extra resources to fund a pay award above 2.8% it would lead to undesirable cuts to services. The Minister asserted that there would be implications for the Government's bold and ambitious target on violence against women and girls because it would struggle to make the necessary progress without sufficient resources. She said that the early intervention prevention work to divert young people identified as being at risk of entering the criminal justice system would be affected too. She reported that the Home Office was already tackling big challenges on immigration and asylum, and it would be difficult to reduce spending in those areas in the context of the unpredictability of international events.
- 4.6 In their evidence, the NPCC, MPS and PSA drew attention to the decline of police pay in real terms. The NPCC told us that the estimates of base pay erosion based

on CPI varied from around 9% using a base year of 2010/11, to 1% using the base year of 2017/18. It told us that erosion since 2017/18 represented a large portion of the current constables. However, it pointed out that officers with longer service would continue to experience the larger relative loss. The MPS argued that over the past 12 years, the police officer salary offer had lost real-terms value. It asserted that other public sector workers had been able to access greater pay increases to address this reduction through industrial action but that approach was not open to police officers. It pointed out that we had a duty to make the case on officers' behalf.

- 4.7 The PSA also described the real-terms decline in police pay since 2010. It also cited a 2024 study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies that showed police officers lower down the pay scale had seen their pay deteriorate more than those higher up the pay scale, and that this was in contrast to other areas of the public sector.
- 4.8 The joint statement by the NPCC, CPOSA and PSA said that, outside of constables at the top of their pay scales, base pay and total cash reward for most officers were not comparable with the median of other public sector and not-for-profit organisations. This was when taking the P-factor – the very distinct factors linked to policing – into consideration, especially with limited opportunities for wider cash remuneration outside of the constable and sergeant rank. The NPCC highlighted the results of its benchmarking exercise to support the joint statement's assertions regarding the comparability of police base pay. The NPCC acknowledged that the position was different when total cash was considered for constables and sergeants; however, it pointed out that this was payment for additional roles and working hours, and unsocial hours.
- 4.9 The joint statement went onto say that there also needed to be recognition that police officers had no ability to withhold labour or negotiate their pay package and were subject to the highest levels of scrutiny and accountability. It argued that the remuneration offering had to improve if the police service wanted to drive standards and recruit a skilled, diverse workforce, including those with additional skills who were changing careers.
- 4.10 The NPCC described cost-of-living pressures and set last year's pay award against average earnings growth. It added that overall pay awards were expected to be in the region of 3% to 4% in 2025. The NPCC told us it was seeking an annual pay uplift of 3.8% from September 2025 with funding provided centrally over 2%. The NPCC stated that forces had built between 2% and 2.8% into budgets. The NPCC told us that a 2% award would still have implications for forces in terms of service delivery.
- 4.11 The NPCC, in oral evidence, said it had proposed a pay award of 3.8% in 2025/26 primarily to attract, retain and progress quality police officers. It pointed out that policing was fundamentally different from any other part of the public sector and it had experienced long-term pay erosion because of pay rises repeatedly being lower

than the CPI. It added that pay had been eroded by 1% in real terms since the start of the Uplift Programme and this needed to be addressed, in addition to a cost-of-living increase. It said that CPI had been 2.8% in January 2025 but had since risen and was likely to continue to do so.

- 4.12 The NPCC highlighted that police officers did not have the right to strike and were subject to dangers, trauma and harm in their operating environment, as demonstrated in summer 2024. It said once the P-factor was taken into consideration, it was clear that police officer pay was not comparable with that of other public sector workforces.
- 4.13 The NPCC emphasised that affordability was a significant challenge for policing and could lead to an erosion of service levels and the use of debt to fund capital investment in order to enhance productivity. It reminded us that 89% of police funding went on officers and staff. It reported that a number of forces were expected to make very difficult decisions in FYE 2026, especially those with a low precept and council tax base. It said that one small force it was aware of would lose 120 staff posts in FYE 2026, with police officers expected to replace them. It admitted that there was some trepidation around its proposals for a 3.8% pay award but the NPCC considered it to be the right thing to do based on solid evidence. It reiterated that central funding would be needed above a 2% pay award.
- 4.14 The MPS endorsed the proposal for a 3.8% pay rise in 2025. It emphasised that any pay award beyond 2% was unaffordable without additional funding or further cuts to services.
- 4.15 In oral evidence, the MPS said that HM Treasury's position on affordability was understood. However, the first priority of police leaders was to ensure the service could recruit and retain the right people to run the organisation effectively. It said that there was also a desire to do something to offset the historic pay degradation both in terms of the decline in pay in real terms and in relation to other occupations. It added that given those factors, police leaders considered that a 3.8% pay uplift in 2025/26 looked to be a sensible approach. It observed that the Government had set a number of ambitious targets for tackling knife crime and violence against women and girls. It argued that the Government would not be able to achieve those targets if police officers did not get a pay award that allowed the police service to sustain recruitment and retention. The MPS added that it wanted to build its recruitment pipeline to enable future growth to 38,000 officers by 2029. A suitable pay award was critical to delivering such growth.
- 4.16 The APCC told us in its written evidence that without the guarantee of additional central funding, it could not support a pay award above 2%. It observed that the inevitable consequence of a 3.8% pay award without additional funding would be even fewer police officers and police staff with an inevitable impact on service delivery to the public.

- 4.17 In oral evidence, the APCC said that it understood the importance of a good level of base pay to recruitment and retention and the creation of a diverse workforce with real world experience. The APCC emphasised that it wanted officers to be properly compensated for the risks they faced. It explained that it accepted in principle that a 3.8% pay award would be a suitable award for police officers. However, in considering affordability, the APCC had looked not just at the affordability figure set by the Government but the local challenges of PCCs. It pointed out that many forces had budgeted 2% for an uplift to pay in 2025/26. It explained that PCCs faced constraints on their funding as a result of the Uplift Programme and the current Funding Formula.
- 4.18 The APCC said it was concerned that central funding would not be forthcoming or, that if it was, it would be allocated via the Funding Formula which for previous pay awards had left around one-third of forces with significant deficits. The APCC observed that such deficits grew higher with each passing year and had led to further cuts in police staff in some forces. It asserted that previous approaches to pay awards were no longer sustainable and said that it was time to stop the cycle of above-affordability pay awards which were not properly funded leading to further deficits. The APCC highlighted that this situation was also having a negative impact on the service that forces delivered to the public as the cuts which certain forces had to make meant that public expectations of the police were not being met. It explained that cuts forced the police service to focus on the higher-risk harms rather than the low-risk everyday incidents and this irritated the public and undermined confidence in policing.
- 4.19 Following oral evidence, the APCC wrote clarifying its position and told us that it strongly believed that police officers deserved an above-inflation pay award. It explained that it would welcome a consolidated 3.8% pay award for officers in 2025/26, if extra resources were provided by central government. The APCC emphasised that the additional funding must be provided on a headcount basis and not on the basis of the Funding Formula. It said without additional central funding its position remained that a 2% pay award was at the limit of affordability within the current funding settlement, and to propose anything higher would be abdicating its responsibility to secure an efficient and effective police force, despite its conviction that police officers deserved more.
- 4.20 The PSA sought a fully funded, above-inflation pay award of 4.8% applied equally across all ranks. The PSA explained that the 4.8% was due to the historical below-inflation awards since 2010 and was higher than the NPCC's proposal due to the fact that in 2024 the police service was awarded 0.75% to 1.25% less on average than other public sector bodies. The PSA said it was also expecting inflation to rise by the time the 2025/26 pay award took effect in September 2025.
- 4.21 The PSA said in oral evidence that it had baselined its proposed pay award on the Bank of England CPI forecast, which had been 2.8% for the third quarter of 2025, at

the time of submitting evidence. The PSA asserted that an award less than 4.8% would again increase the real-terms pay cuts suffered by the police workforce.

- 4.22 We also received a range of views on our visits programme this year regarding the pay award for 2025/26. A number of officers mentioned the need to catch up on years of real-terms pay degradation. Others highlighted the pay awards of the last three years and said that awards need to continue at this sort of level. Many officers said the award needed to at least match inflation.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

- 4.23 The PFEW, in its pay positioning paper, explained that frontline officers were now 21% worse off in real terms than at the start of austerity measures and it sought an immediate closing of the pay gap.
- 4.24 It stated that real-terms pay decreases for constables at pay points 2, 3 and 4 had averaged 26% over the last 15 years, compared with an average of 21.2% for the rank as a whole. The PFEW advised that a fair pay award in 2025/26 for that group of constables would be particularly useful and helpful. It explained that this would assist with achievement of the Government's Safer Streets agenda, which hinged on the retention of experienced police officers.
- 4.25 The PFEW recognised that funding was not unlimited but stated that police officers felt unsupported by Government, partly because of their remuneration package. It emphasised the importance of officers being remunerated fairly for the difficult job they did, and indicated a pay award above inflation, as high as possible, would be positive as it would make inroads into restoring real-terms pay. However, the PFEW emphasised that this would need to increase year-on-year until the current problems with recruitment and retention in policing disappeared. It also underlined the importance of the 2025/26 pay award being funded entirely by central government, rather than by the police service.

#### *Our comment and recommendation on the basic pay award*

- 4.26 In making our pay award recommendations we considered a number of factors which we discuss below.

#### *Economic factors*

- 4.27 The wider economy including the increased cost of living and the level of pay settlements are factors in our deliberations. We note that inflation has been lower over the last year than in preceding years. However, we continue to emphasise that this represents a slowing in the rate of overall price increases and not a fall in prices, and officers continue to experience the effect of past high inflation in their cost of living. The CPI rate of inflation was 3.5% in the year to April 2025 and the CPIH rate was 4.1%. The OBR and Bank of England expect CPI inflation to peak in quarter three of 2025 (the OBR at 3.7% and the Bank of England at 3.5%) before

declining again. We observe that energy price inflation is higher than the overall rate. In addition, there continues to be uncertainty about the economic climate particularly given recent geopolitical events.

#### The labour market

4.28 Recent data suggest that the labour market continues to weaken, with vacancies falling and the unemployment rate rising. The OBR considered that the increase in employer National Insurance contributions was likely to be contributing to falling recruitment and rising redundancies. However, average earnings growth remains strong: annual growth in Average Weekly Earnings excluding bonuses was 5.6% for both the whole economy and the private sector in the three months to March 2025. The OBR expected average earnings growth of 4.3% in 2025. Median pay settlements ranged between 3.0% and 3.8% in the three months to April 2025.

#### Policing environment

4.29 The unrest and violent disorder that broke out in towns and cities across the UK in the summer of 2024, after the tragic events in Southport, exemplifies the unforeseen public order challenge that the police service can face. Many police officers were injured and some were hospitalised. We agree with HMICFRS that “officers displayed immense bravery in the face of extreme violence. It is to their enormous credit that they kept the public safe”.

4.30 Maintaining public order is one of the challenges facing UK policing that is most visible to the public. In our recent reports, we have commented at length on less visible challenges including the increasing complexity of demand driven by both technology and changing social attitudes. To that must now be added the ambitious targets announced by the Government to halve knife crime and violence against women and girls in a decade alongside the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. In that context, we note the view of HMICFRS that police leaders cannot be complacent about the challenges they face in increasing trust and confidence in the police and that effective neighbourhood policing is the best way to restore public confidence. Alongside this, the police service must also commit itself to deliver the changes that will be set out in the forthcoming White Paper on Police Reform. The police service needs experienced high-calibre officers if it is to tackle this myriad of challenges effectively and deliver the reforms required by the Government.

#### Recruitment and retention

4.31 We are aware that the police service will need to continue to recruit at levels that will enable forces to maintain officer numbers and there are financial penalties if forces fail to meet those maintenance targets. We understand from the NPCC evidence that only three forces will not meet those targets and only the MPS will be significantly below. As we said in our previous report, we have seen little evidence to suggest that the police service as a whole is developing a problem with recruiting the volume of officers needed to maintain current police officer levels.

- 4.32 However, we recognise that the challenges facing the MPS may have consequences for the police service as a whole as it employs around a quarter of police officers in England and Wales and accounts for around a sixth of total recorded crime in England and Wales. We are also mindful of the risks of crime 'radiating out' from the capital if issues are not tackled effectively. In addition, we are conscious that the police service will need to recruit additional officers to meet the commitments of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. We also understand that different forces will face differing employment markets and in recognition of this we made a recommendation last year that chief officers be allowed to start new recruits on either pay point 1 or 2. This measure was accepted and became available to chief officers from 1 April 2025. It will be some time before the impact of that measure can be evaluated. We set out our views on the challenges facing the MPS in paragraphs 4.52–4.62 below.
- 4.33 However, recruitment is about more than numbers. The police service needs to recruit officers with the potential to develop the skills to tackle the challenges we have outlined above. As we said in previous reports, today's police officers are required to respond to vulnerability, de-escalate social tension and manage complexity. The training and supervision provided by forces can enable high-calibre recruits with the right attitudes, aptitudes, resilience, motivations and maturity to develop these skills, but pay and reward needs to both support modern ways of working and be sufficiently competitive to attract and retain such officers in policing. In our view, this is critical to the successful delivery of the police reform agenda.
- 4.34 We recognise that the voluntary resignation rates from the police service, although rising, remain low compared with other public sector organisations. However, we are concerned about the medium to long term. The voluntary resignation rate is highest for constables and remains high in the early years of service. One-third of officers have less than five years' service. We are aware from the evidence provided by the NPCC, that the first two years of service remain the key risk in terms of attrition, as officers go from classroom to on-the-job training, but we note the NPCC's concern that the service is starting to see a greater proportion of those with between three and five years' service resigning. The NPCC has told us that the reasons for this are unknown but we observe that this may partly be a reflection of the attractiveness of portfolio and varied careers to the new generation of highly mobile, young workers. The reform of constable base pay may, in due course, help to mitigate this to some extent but that awaits the outcome of the Police Reform White Paper and the development of a workforce strategy. In the meantime, it is important that base pay remains sufficiently attractive to retain experienced officers. We are also conscious that the sergeant and inspector ranks have seen a growth in resignations in the last three years but we understand that, leaving aside the general results from the exit survey, the cause of this is unknown. We note that there is a risk that this is the beginning of a significant change to previous relatively stable patterns of retention above the rank of constable. We note the results from the PFEW's 2024 Pay and

Morale Survey of the inspecting ranks that concluded that 84% of chief inspectors and 77% of inspectors were dissatisfied with overall remuneration compared with 65% of the federated ranks overall. We are also conscious that over 77,000 officers in the federated and superintending ranks are at the top of their pay scales, of whom more than 57,000 are constables. Given these experienced officers on which the service relies will not benefit from pay progression, we judge this year that it is vital that they receive a pay award that is demonstrably above forecasts for the CPI rate of inflation when the award takes effect.

- 4.35 As we make clear in other parts of this report, we recognise that the wider world of work is changing both in terms of the opportunities being offered by employers that enable their staff to work more flexibly and the premium that employees are placing on work-life balance and wellbeing. While we are encouraging the police service to be ambitious as it modernises its workforce through the police reform programme, we recognise that the nature of policing will inevitably constrain the degree of flexibility it can offer its officers. Police remuneration needs to recognise this constraint.
- 4.36 We also observe that though the attrition rate for the police service remains low, any turnover is a substantial cost to the police service. Minimising that attrition allows scarce resources to be used to ensure the police service delivers the best possible service to the public.

#### Morale and motivation

- 4.37 Morale is important because it affects productivity as well as retention, and the police service remains heavily reliant on goodwill. We observe that an above-inflation pay award, requested by many parties and officers during our visits programme, will be viewed by many as the minimum award needed to deliver a fair outcome for a police service which did so much to keep the public safe last summer often at a cost to the safety of individual officers.
- 4.38 As we noted in Chapter 2, staff association surveys continue to show low levels of morale, although we note there has been some slight improvement in the latest data and sickness rates are stable. We are also conscious that the surveys show that pay remains a driver of low morale and intention to leave, alongside other factors such as the way the police are treated by Government and the public. This suggests that both pay and non-pay issues need to be addressed by the Government and the employer. However, we observe that morale and motivation can be damaged by a failure to take adequate action on pay. A pay award that is judged unfair by officers, particularly in comparison with other parts of the public sector, will do nothing to ameliorate the existing low state of morale and motivation. In this context we are conscious of the 2025/26 pay awards recently announced by the Government for other parts of the public sector. These included: around 3.25% for civil servants (with additional flexibility for departments to have up to an extra 0.5%); 3.6% for

NHS Agenda for Change staff; 4% for teachers, prison staff and most doctors (with resident doctors getting an average award of 5.4%); and 4.5% for the armed forces. These awards cover around 3 million public sector workers.

- 4.39 Another significant driver of motivation and morale is officer wellbeing and the staff association surveys showed a downward trend in the wellbeing and mental health of police officers. In our view, among other factors, the wellbeing of officers is significantly affected by disruption to personal and family lives and we discuss this further below.

#### Impact on personal lives

- 4.40 Parties have told us about the unique aspects of policing which should be taken into account in police remuneration. However, we are also concerned about the impact of the practicalities and pressures of policing on officers' personal lives. Some of these are referred to in police regulations as the 'exigencies of duty' and are compensated for through the allowance system but others are not.

- 4.41 Police officers, like the military, can be redeployed at short notice. In some instances, this is in response to unforeseen events such as public order requirements such as those that occurred following the tragedy in Southport last summer. We have also been told that resourcing pressures within forces make planning challenging, leading to last minute changes. In those circumstances, a number of allowances come into play to compensate officers for the immediate upheaval. But alongside events of this kind are more minor disturbances, the totality of which can have a very disruptive effect on officers' lives and those of their families. These include officers being redeployed to a different police station, requiring changes to travel arrangements, or being posted to different roles which place new demands on the officer's time and ability. We have also heard from officers of all ranks during our visits programme about being at 'full stretch'. We frequently hear from forces, for example, about the abstraction of officers from neighbourhood policing to response teams. While this impacts frontline delivery, it also affects the officers concerned. We recognise that effective police officers are both adaptable and resilient; nevertheless, these pressures, when combined with the more traditional exigencies of duty such as court attendance, intelligence-led crime operations and essential training, amount in totality to significant disruption to personal lives which in turn affects the wellbeing of officers. We also note that the scope for hybrid working<sup>24</sup> in the police service is limited. We were mindful of these issues in setting a pay award for 2025/26.

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<sup>24</sup> We define hybrid working as a flexible work arrangement where employees divide their time between working remotely (often from home) and working in the traditional office or workplace.

## The absence of the right to industrial action

- 4.42 As part of our work, we considered the impact of pay negotiations and recent industrial disputes across the public sector. This is an important factor in our deliberations, given the prohibition on police officers from taking industrial action in contrast to the vast majority of employees across the public and private sectors. We agree with both the employer representatives and the staff associations that in the interests of fairness this restriction must be recognised in setting a pay award for police officers. We were struck by information we have received on this including the joint statement from parties which highlighted the need to “recognise that police officers have no ability to withhold labour or negotiate their pay package, and are rightly subject to the highest levels of scrutiny and accountability. If we want to drive standards and recruit a skilled, diverse workforce, including those with additional skills who are changing careers, our offering simply must improve”.
- 4.43 As we have said in our previous reports, it is our strong view that the NPCC as the employer, the Home Office and we as the Pay Review Body have a moral obligation to deliver a just, fair and equitable pay award. We are conscious that over the past year some employers have agreed significantly enhanced pay deals as a result of industrial action or the threat of such action. The most conspicuous instance of this, and the one which was cited most frequently by police officers on our visits programme as an example of pay that has been boosted as a result of strike action, was the award for resident doctors. Following the submission of our 2024 Report, resident doctors in England secured an additional 4.05% funding for pay for 2023/24, on top of the previous pay uplift set out in July 2023. We note that, including the 2024/25 pay uplift, this meant the combined average pay award for resident doctors across 2023/24 and 2024/25 totalled 22.3%. Given these outcomes, we have therefore given weight to the inability of police officers to take equivalent action in formulating our recommendation for a pay award for 2025/26.

## Affordability

- 4.44 We balanced all these factors with affordability. We note the evidence from the NPCC that forces have largely factored in between 2% and 2.8% for the annual pay award from September 2025 but that forces generally regarded 2% as being more affordable. The NPCC has also told us that 2.8% is not affordable for forces without implications for service delivery. We observe that in proposing a pay award of 3.8% it has sought central funding above 2%. We further note that the NPCC’s caution is echoed by the Home Office, the APCC and the MPS. The Home Office told us that a pay award of 2.8% was appropriate, as it would ensure police officer pay remained competitive but that it would require the delivery of significant efficiency savings and challenging prioritisation decisions for many forces. We observe that the APCC was only prepared to support a pay award above 2% if additional central funding above that level was available and if those extra funds were provided on a headcount basis not on the Funding Formula.

- 4.45 We observe that reaching a view on affordability is not straightforward. In our last report, we drew attention to the evidence we received from the Home Office that there were no additional resources available in its budget to fund a pay award for 2024/25 above 2% and that the prioritisation exercise that it undertook to partially fund the 2023 police pay award could not be repeated in 2024. We note that the Home Office and HM Treasury has told us this year that there would be no additional funding available from HM Treasury for a pay award. They also told us that any money put forward by the Department for a pay award above 2.8% would have implications for the delivery of the Government's target on violence against women and girls and that the early intervention prevention work to divert young people identified as being at risk of entering the criminal justice system would be adversely affected too. However, we observe that, in spite of the evidence we received in 2024, the Home Office later announced that it would provide £175 million additional funding in FYE 2025 to forces to help with the cost of the 4.75% pay increase that we had recommended.
- 4.46 We observe that assessing the impact of an award above 2% or 2.8% on the police service is complex. We note that the NPCC has told us that overall the police service has an unfunded budget gap estimated at £500 million in FYE 2026. However, the ability of police forces to fund a 2.8% pay award or a pay award above that level will vary from force to force. As always, we received very limited evidence on the detail of the choices individual forces are likely to make in managing their 2025 budgets. We are conscious that the NPCC has told us that most forces have planned revenue deficits going forward in the short term, which will require efficiency and savings plans to deliver existing levels of service. Individual efficiency targets have not been set for forces but we note the NPCC Commercial Efficiency and Collaboration Programme.
- 4.47 We are aware of the complexities of the current Police Funding Formula and that the proportion of funding coming from council tax precept varies significantly between forces. We are also mindful that pay (for officers and staff) accounts for around 89% of budgets and that forces' management of their budgets is constrained by the need to maintain officer numbers. We are conscious that this means many forces frequently have to reduce costs by reducing police staff numbers. We note that the NPCC told us about one small force which, because of existing financial pressures, would lose 120 staff posts in 2026, with police officers expected to replace them, and about a medium-size force that would lose up to 65 staff posts. We recognise that a pay award above that budgeted for by many forces may have potentially serious consequences for them and for public outcomes. We remain concerned about the risks of reverse civilianisation whereby police officers are put into roles that would be better suited for police staff and which can lead to increased costs.

- 4.48 It is also difficult for us to assess the impact that financial pressure on force budgets has on the service received by the public. We observe that the APCC described to us the impact of previous above-affordability pay awards. The APCC told us in oral evidence that the cuts being made by forces forced the police service to focus on the higher-risk harms, rather than the low-risk everyday incidents which irritated the public and that this undermined confidence in policing.
- 4.49 We observe that further efficiencies may be delivered by the Police Reform Programme but that this will take time. We also observe that if the police service meets the ambitious targets on knife crime and violence against women and girls, forces may be delivering better outcomes with the same resources, but this will also be over the medium term rather than the short term.
- 4.50 However, while we recognise the financial pressures facing police forces, we observe, as we have done in previous reports, that affordability is about choices. While those choices may be difficult, there are always options for prioritising spending, particularly at the central government level. In that context, we highlight the fact that the UK Government recently announced 2025/26 pay rises for other parts of the public sector which were significantly above levels within its affordability evidence of around 2.8%.

#### Pay recommendation

- 4.51 After taking the above factors into account, including the economic situation, pay trends in the public and private sectors, the environment in which the police service operates, the pressures on the lives of police officers, the prohibition on the police taking industrial action, the need to both recruit and retain high-calibre officers particularly given the increasingly attractive opportunities for flexible working offered by other employers, motivation and morale, and balancing against affordability, we concluded that an annual pay award in 2025 of 4.2% across all ranks up to and including chief superintendent is the most suitable approach.

**Recommendation 1. We recommend a consolidated increase of 4.2% to all police officer pay points for all ranks up to and including chief superintendent from 1 September 2025.**

#### **Additional support for the MPS**

- 4.52 The NPCC highlighted the continuing challenges facing the MPS. It reported that the MPS was broadly in line with national measures for application-to-hire ratios and assessment centre attrition. The key issue had been application levels against the volumes required. It said that the MPS workforce was significantly below its Uplift Programme maintenance target level. The NPCC set out the advantages and disadvantages of two main options to provide further support for MPS constable recruitment:

- A non-consolidated, time-limited, pay mechanism of £2,300 to support the MPS' recruitment of 2,000 new joiners.
- Giving the Commissioner the discretion for a time-limited period to move starting pay to pay point 3.

4.53 The NPCC also set out the alternative options that had been considered, including piloting changes to the constable pay structure being put forward in its CSR bid, within the MPS. The NPCC observed such a measure could be used in conjunction with either, or both, of the other two options.

4.54 In response to those options, the MPS told us it would resist introducing a short-term incentive like the 'golden hello' in favour of longer-term structural improvements. The MPS said it favoured piloting the NPCC's proposed changes to the constable pay structure. In relation to that proposal, it was formally recommending that it should have a higher starting salary for new recruits delivered through a restructured constable pay scale which would enable the MPS to progress the recruits quickly through the levels. It observed that as this was an option supported by the NPCC it should be centrally funded. However, it also said that it would look to include development of the PPS as part of the restructure in order to make more effective use of the pay envelope.

*Our comment on additional support for the MPS*

4.55 We welcome the MPS' exit from the HMICFRS enhanced monitoring process Engage and its return to default monitoring. In our last report, we set out our concerns about MPS recruitment and retention, in particular its expected shortfall of 1,400 officers against its Uplift Programme target by March 2024. The MPS accounts for around a sixth of total recorded crime in England and Wales and employs around a quarter of police officers. County lines crime (the practice of establishing crime routes notably associated with drugs and modern-day slavery from major cities into other areas) is a significant challenge for the MPS, with around one-third of this type of crime linked to London and exported into other police forces. The MPS is also the lead force for countering some national strategic threats such as terrorism, although there are reports that a number of options for combatting terrorism and serious and organised crime are being considered as part of the Government's review of national policing capabilities. This may have implications for the MPS.

4.56 In our last report, we were very concerned about the challenges the MPS faced in attracting officers of the right calibre with the right skills and attitudes and in the volume needed to address the 1,400 shortfall against Home Office maintenance targets for police officer numbers. We were also alert to the operational risks and the implications for public safety that the MPS told us might arise if the situation was not addressed. We were also conscious that the operation of the MPS had implications for the police service as a whole and we were concerned about the

risks of crime 'radiating out' from the capital if issues were not tackled effectively. We acknowledged that the shortfall in the MPS might be the result of a number of factors and may indeed have been partly the result of short-term problems that would ease over time. However, we concluded that appropriate and competitive starting salaries were part of the immediate solution and we recommended that the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service should be given discretion to set the starting salaries of new constables at pay point 3 on the police constable pay scale.

- 4.57 In response to our recommendations, the Home Secretary agreed that the chief officer of police in each force, including the MPS Commissioner, should be given the discretion to set the starting salary for new constables at either pay point 1 or pay point 2 on the constables' pay scale. However, instead of agreeing with our recommendation to give the Commissioner of the MPS the discretion to set the starting salary of new constables at pay point 3, the Home Office raised the maximum limit for the London Allowance by £1,250. We understand that these measures were implemented from April 2025 and that the MPS raised the London Allowance to the maximum for all officers up to and including chief superintendents and used the new flexibility to start new entrants on pay point 2.
- 4.58 We understand that the challenges facing the MPS on recruitment remain and that by the end of March 2025, it was expected to have an officer strength of 32,752 FTE which was 1,253 lower than the officer strength at the end of March 2024. The Home Office has set targets to ensure the maintenance of officer numbers following the Uplift Programme. We note that, alone among forces in England and Wales, the MPS remains significantly below its maintenance target. We observe the work undertaken by the NPCC that concluded that in terms of time to hire, application-to-hire ratios and assessment centre attrition, the MPS is broadly in line with national measures, but the key variable has been application levels against the levels required.
- 4.59 However, we also note the NPCC's analysis which shows that although MPS resignations, previously below the national average, have risen, they are still in line with the national average. We observe that the MPS' retirement profile is below the national average. We note the MPS' conclusion that overall, the service profile for MPS attrition is similar to the remaining 42 forces.
- 4.60 We are also very conscious of the evidence that we received from the MPS regarding the practical consequences for recruitment of the MPS' current financial position. We note that the MPS has told us that it had to make tough financial choices which meant it would recruit fewer officers in FYE 2026 and that funding constraints, rather than lack of applications, were the driver for the reduction in officer recruitment in FYE 2026. It has told us that it is receiving sufficient applications to meet its significantly lower recruitment target. We note that the MPS wants to grow, if more funding is available, and therefore it wishes to continue to

build a healthy recruitment pipeline, but we observe that the future funding position remains uncertain.

- 4.61 While we considered carefully the options put forward by the NPCC and MPS in their evidence to strengthen MPS recruitment, we observe that there has been no opportunity to evaluate the impact of the changes to starting salary and the London Allowance announced by the Home Secretary last July as they were not implemented until April 2025. Those changes took the starting pay the MPS could offer new recruits at week 1 from £38,269<sup>25</sup> to £40,776<sup>26</sup> (including London Weighting and London Allowance). This will increase to £42,210 from 1 September 2025 if our recommendations for a 4.2% increase to police base pay and London Weighting are accepted.
- 4.62 Therefore, while we understand the MPS' desire for long-term structural measures, such as an adjustment to the constable pay scale and starting salaries, to strengthen its ability to recruit, we judge that time is needed to evaluate the impact of the measures implemented in April 2025. If over the next twelve months, the Commissioner needs to further reinforce the MPS' recruitment toolkit, we observe that there are a number of options available. We point out that, until recently, the MPS made use of TVP to raise the salaries of new entrants at week 30.

## **Review of allowances**

- 4.63 Our remit letter asked that we consider proposals resulting from year one of the National Police Chiefs' Council's review of allowances, taking into account the views of policing stakeholders. The Home Office said in its evidence that any increases to allowances must be funded from within existing budget allocations. It requested that we have regard to the views of the SSRB when considering allowances that also apply to chief officers.
- 4.64 The NPCC set out the results from year one of its three-year review of allowances. It explained that any proposals from the staff associations that allowances/cash payments should be made pensionable was a matter for the Home Secretary and should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.65 The MPS proposed that Protection Allowance, paid to officers on core protection duties, should be included in the three-year schedule. It told us that the allowance had not been considered since it was introduced in 2020. In its evidence, the PSA stated that its members saw current allowances as a supplement to pay. The PSA explained that its discussion with the NPCC about a pay strategy review would be focussed on including allowances in pay.

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<sup>25</sup> Pay point 1 plus London Weighting plus London Allowance pre April 2025.

<sup>26</sup> Pay point 2 plus London Weighting plus London Allowance post April 2025.

### *Information from the PFEW*

4.66 The PFEW's pay positioning paper stated that allowances had been left to stagnate, some for over a decade, to the point that they were no longer fit for purpose. It added that significant increases were desperately needed and that allowances must track inflation, otherwise they would fall in real terms every year. The PFEW also set out its proposals for two new allowances: a shift alteration allowance and an allowance for detectives.

### *Our comment on the review of allowances*

4.67 We welcome the efforts of the NPCC to review police allowances in the round. We were disappointed that it was unable to meet our recommendation to review all allowances simultaneously over one year. We observe that in addition to ensuring officers are fairly compensated, promoting officer wellbeing, welfare and work-life balance should be driving the review of allowances. We set out our concerns regarding the impact of the practicalities and pressures of policing on officers' personal lives in paragraphs 4.40–4.41. While we recognise the unpredictable nature of policing, we note that in some cases allowances may be providing compensation to officers for poor management practices, possibly the result of resourcing pressures, that are impacting on wellbeing and work-life balance. These underlying problems should be addressed.

4.68 We also note that the wider Police Reform Programme is likely to have long-term implications for allowances and the outcome of that work will eventually need to inform the future review of allowances. We observe that many of these allowances have a long history. We suggest the police service seizes the opportunity provided by wider police reform to consider modern ways of working and the opportunities created by recent technological developments that might suggest a new approach to some of the practices that have led to the requirement for such allowances. We observe that other 24/7 organisations might have alternative approaches to some challenges that the police service faces that could be worth exploring. We point out that new approaches might also deliver a wellbeing dividend for officers. We also point out that there have been significant changes to the age profile of the workforce. We observe that the younger workforce may have different career expectations and ways of working that might have implications for allowances. We also point out the increasingly diverse nature of the workforce and observe that today's officers are more and more likely to be juggling their policing duties with carer responsibilities.

4.69 However, we acknowledge that it will take some time for a clear direction of travel for the police service to emerge from the police reform work. We recognise that while some allowances, such as the Dog Handlers' Allowance, automatically increase in line with base pay, many police allowances have not been reviewed for some years.

4.70 In terms of immediate priorities, we welcome the NPCC's intention to review the Protection Allowance and the Acting up Allowance in the course of 2025. We suggest the NPCC consider the PFEW's proposals for the simplification of the Acting up Allowance, temporary salary and temporary promotion.

## **On-call Allowance**

- 4.71 The NPCC set out the findings of the review of the On-call Allowance, which had included work by Korn Ferry looking at current external market arrangements. The NPCC explained that Korn Ferry had found that average weekday rates and typical arrangements for weekends and holidays were noticeably higher than the current value of the police On-call Allowance of £25. The NPCC suggested that an allowance value for the police of just above the weekday average would recognise that officers carried out on-call duties at weekends as a 24/7 service. Therefore, it proposed that the On-call Allowance be increased by £10, from £25 to £35. The NPCC estimated that its proposal would result in an additional cost of around £4.2 million for FYE 2026, and £7.2 million a year thereafter, based on FYE 2023 Home Office data. The MPS told us that it supported the proposed changes to On-call Allowance but for financial reasons it would recommend implementation from April 2026 rather than September 2025.
- 4.72 The APCC said that it recognised the importance of paying a fair rate for the On-call Allowance but expressed concern about the affordability of the increase within the current budgetary situation. It stated that it might be possible to develop more efficient use of on-call arrangements requiring fewer officers to be on call and mitigate increased costs.
- 4.73 The PSA proposed that the on-call rate be increased to £60 for the superintending ranks (which after income tax at the higher rate of 40% would amount to £36 net per 24-hour period of being on call). In addition, the PSA called for the £60 payment to become reckonable for pension purposes. It highlighted the evidence it provided in 2024 which had included a series of statements from PSA members setting out the impact that being on call had on officers' health and family life.
- 4.74 The PSA drew attention to its survey results that showed the vast majority of respondents thought the current On-call Allowance did not adequately reward the on-call duties and demands on them. It reported that respondents also judged that the demands they faced when on call were greater than those facing the federated ranks.
- 4.75 In addition, the PSA highlighted that its members who were impacted by greater demands of being on call and responsible for Force Coordination and Command roles often built-up Rest Days In Lieu. It proposed that those officers who covered the most demand should be allowed to convert Rest Days In Lieu into payment at the end of each year.

### *Information from the PFEW*

4.76 In its pay positioning paper, the PFEW suggested that the allowance be raised to £36.13 in line with police staff and said that this should be doubled on a rest day or public holiday and quintupled if the officer was on annual leave. It called for the allowance to be uprated in line with the annual pay award and made pensionable.

### *Our comment and recommendation on On-call Allowance*

4.77 In our last report, we recommended, and the Government accepted, that On-call Allowance be raised from £20 to £25 pending a substantive review. We note that as part of the substantive review, information on market practice was commissioned and that revealed that the weekday average for on-call type allowances was around £33. We also note the review's proposal that the police On-call Allowance should be just above £33 to recognise that officers carry out on-call duties at weekends as a 24/7 service. We observe that police staff receive a Standby Allowance of £36.13. We note that officers considered the level of the On-call Allowance to be "inappropriate and derisory" during our visits this year to North Wales, Merseyside, Lincolnshire and the MPS.

4.78 We accept the review's argument that the allowance is a compensatory payment as opposed to a payment for work undertaken. We also agree with the review that there should be national oversight and advice on the application and monitoring of on-call arrangements. We are aware of the pressure that being on call places on officers including senior ranks. We are very concerned, for instance, by the information we have seen from the staff associations regarding the practice of officers being on call while they are on annual leave. The NPCC has told us that officers should not be rostered on call when on annual leave, but it understood from staff surveys that this does appear to happen sometimes. The NPCC will shortly issue national guidance on the use of On-call Allowance which will reconfirm the regulations and that officers should not be rostered on call when on leave/rest days. As we said above, while we recognise the unpredictable nature of policing, our view is that in some cases the On-call Allowance may be providing compensation to officers for poor management practices that are impacting on wellbeing and work-life balance. These underlying problems should be addressed. Our strong view is that the On-call Allowance should be set at a level that deters such practices and encourages effective management of police resources.

4.79 We therefore welcome the NPCC's decision to review some of the processes around the application of On-call Allowance in 2025/26. In our view, that review should take account of changes to modernise policing emerging from the wider police reform agenda and give weight to protecting the wellbeing of officers. In that context, we highlight the APCC's suggestion that it might be possible to develop a more efficient use of on-call arrangements requiring fewer officers to be on call. This would indeed, as the APCC observes, mitigate costs but it might also be used to look at ways to reduce the pressure on officers. However, we do recognise that

there are likely to be capacity and budgetary issues that would impact on any significant change to the system.

- 4.80 We note that the recent review decided against establishing a mechanism for uprating the allowance on, for instance, an annual basis on the grounds that On-call Allowance is a compensatory payment. We, therefore, recommend that the current On-call Allowance be uprated by £10 to £35 but we look forward to receiving an update on the further work we have outlined above in 2026.

**Recommendation 2. We recommend that On-call Allowance be increased from £25 to £35 from 1 September 2025.**

- 4.81 We noted with interest the proposals by the PSA and PFEW regarding compensation for Rest Days in Lieu. We were concerned by the information provided by the PFEW that forces are constantly relying on officers working their rest days due to a lack of resources. We note that it advised us that regulations dictate that for constables and sergeants such rest days should be rostered within four days but that in practice this was not the case.
- 4.82 We note that since April 2020, the superintending ranks in England and Wales have been able to carry over Rest Days in Lieu for up to 24 months (in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of a chief officer) and that after that point rest days are lost with no financial compensation. We are concerned by the variation in practice described by the PSA. Some forces allow officers to build up rest days which they take as a block of time off before they retire, other forces impose time limits which means that officers simply lose the days after a period of time. We agree with the PSA that a more consistent approach across forces is required.
- 4.83 The concerns raised by the staff associations were echoed on our visits programme. Officers in Bedfordshire, Merseyside, Lincolnshire and the MPS all raised the issue of leave and rest days being cancelled. One officer described to us the force's "toxic debt" of owed rest days. We observe that the loss of rest days is likely to have a negative impact on the wellbeing of the officers concerned. We observe that issues of this level of detail are often a matter for the employer but in our view this problem needs to be addressed more strategically. We observe that, as a minimum, there may be a case for additional guidance to forces on the operation of the existing regulations. We understand that the NPCC plans to consider the issue of rest days in 2025/26 and we look forward to an update in the evidence it provides to us in 2026.

## **Motor Vehicle Allowance**

- 4.84 The NPCC set out the methodology behind both elements of the Motor Vehicle Allowance (essential users' lump sum and mileage rate) and the outcome of the

independent review it had commissioned. As a result of the review, the NPCC proposed replacing the current three bands for the motor vehicle essential users' lump sum, linked to engine size of the vehicle, with a single lump sum of £1,239, irrespective of the engine size, with effect from September 2025. The NPCC also told us that its review had concluded that the current mileage rate was in line with HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) approved rates and should be retained. The APCC and MPS supported the NPCC's proposals.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

4.85 In its pay positioning paper, the PFEW stated that it did not agree with the outcome of the NPCC review of the Motor Vehicle Allowance, and doubted whether it would properly reimburse officers for the use of their own vehicle. The PFEW sought an increase in both the essential users' lump sum and mileage payments for essential and casual users in order to properly reimburse officers who made their own vehicle available for policing purposes.

#### *Our comment and recommendation on Motor Vehicle Allowance*

- 4.86 We agree with the finding of the NPCC review that the Motor Vehicle Allowance remains an essential benefit for officers who need to use a vehicle for police business. In our last report, we were pleased to learn that an independent review of both elements of the allowance (essential users' lump sum and mileage rate) had been commissioned. We understand that the independent review supported the overall methodology underpinning the allowance. We support the review's conclusion that while an uplift to the mileage rate might be appropriate, the implications of moving away from the HMRC national rate would offset the benefits.
- 4.87 In the interests of simplicity, we welcome the proposals to replace the current three bands for the motor vehicle essential users' lump sum, linked to engine size of the vehicle, with a single allowance of £1,239. We recall the Home Office has previously raised the issue of an essential users' lump sum for electric vehicles, and we note that the review commissioned by the NPCC did not recommend a separate rate for them. We assume that they will be covered by the single allowance. We agree that the issue should be considered again if HMRC add a separate mileage rate for electric vehicles. We welcome the NPCC's proposal to consider further incentives to follow the green agenda in 2026/27. We also welcome the NPCC's plans to review force policies for consistency and issue guidance to forces.

**Recommendation 3. We recommend that the current three bands for the Motor Vehicle Allowance essential users' lump sum, linked to engine size of the vehicle, be replaced with a single allowance of £1,239 irrespective of the engine size, with effect from 1 September 2025.**

## **Away from Home Overnight Allowance and Hardship Allowance**

- 4.88 The NPCC set out the background to the allowances and the challenges it had faced in attempting to evaluate them against market practice. The review concluded that it was difficult to make any market practice comparisons to inform what an appropriate value might be for the Hardship Allowance, other than Police Scotland. The NPCC did not consider it appropriate to mirror Police Scotland arrangements because of, among other factors, the difference in remuneration packages. The NPCC proposed to increase the Away from Home Overnight Allowance by £10, from £50 to £60 and the Hardship Allowance by £10, from £30 to £40 from September 2025. The NPCC also proposed issuing advice to forces that they define in local policy what routine enquiries were, where the Away from Home Overnight Allowance was or was not payable, and standard expectations for accommodation.
- 4.89 The APCC said it recognised the importance of paying a fair rate for the allowances but it was concerned about the affordability of increases within the current budgetary situation. The MPS told us it supported the NPCC proposed changes to these two allowances. However, it said it would recommend that implementation be delayed until April 2026 for budgetary reasons.

### *Information from the PFEW*

- 4.90 In its pay positioning paper, the PFEW sought a move to the Scottish model of two types of overnight allowance: an overnight allowance and a separate held in reserve allowance; with a hardship allowance payable for sub-standard accommodation. The PFEW advised that the NPCC's proposals would have little impact. It pointed out that the proposals did not include an annual uprating mechanism and would not compensate officers adequately for the disruption to their private lives. The PFEW also gave its view that the NPCC proposals did not address inconsistent decision-making across forces.

### *Our comment and recommendations on Away from Home Overnight Allowance and Hardship Allowance*

- 4.91 We recognise that the Away from Home Overnight and Hardship Allowances have not been adjusted since 2012 and we accept that the value of the allowances has therefore deteriorated since then. We note the challenges the review faced in identifying market practice comparators for both allowances. We note the arrangements in place for Police Scotland. We also note the review's conclusion that there were no significant operational concerns with the current system, and there was limited evidence to support the need for a move to the Scottish model. We accept the review's conclusion that the difference in remuneration packages made it less suitable for adoption in England and Wales.
- 4.92 We recognise that these two allowances are operationally essential. We accept the review's conclusions that increasing the values of the allowances by a fixed amount would be a fair and reasonable approach to ensure officers receive adequate

compensation for being held in reserve or not provided with proper accommodation. We therefore agree that the Away from Home Overnight Allowance should be increased by £10, from £50 to £60 and the Hardship Allowance by £10, from £30 to £40 from September 2025.

- 4.93 However, we suggest that the term 'Hardship Allowance' be reviewed in the interests of clarity; other terms such as Supplemental Accommodation Allowance might be considered. We also welcome plans for regular reviews of the allowances and the proposal that advice should be issued to forces to clarify what constitutes routine enquiries and to set standard expectations for accommodation. We observe that this will help ensure consistency and clarity in the application of the allowances across different forces.
- 4.94 However, we understand that these two allowances are part of a package of measures that can be claimed by officers while on mutual aid. Other allowances and payments include, but are not limited to On-call Allowance, Unsocial Hours Allowance, overtime and bonuses. We are concerned that this makes it difficult for officers to clearly understand the recompense that they can reasonably expect when deployed on mutual aid. The coherence of this package should be reviewed and guidance on the package issued to forces. We understand that the NPCC sometimes issues guidance to forces in relation to special national events where mutual aid is required. However, we judge it is important that general guidance on mutual aid is available to ensure consistency and to enable forces to articulate clearly to its officers the financial package available to those deployed to assist another force. In reviewing the package available, thought should be given to officer welfare and in particular to ensure that they receive some uninterrupted rest time while on deployment.

**Recommendation 4. We recommend that the Away from Home Overnight Allowance be increased by £10 from £50 to £60 from 1 September 2025.**

**Recommendation 5. We recommend that the Hardship Allowance be increased by £10 from £30 to £40 from 1 September 2025.**

## **Regional allowances**

- 4.95 The Home Office told us that London Weighting had historically increased in line with annual pay increases. It asked us to consider the evidence put forward by policing partners on whether there was a case for increasing it in 2025/26. It emphasised that any increases to the allowance had to be funded from within existing allocations. It also asked that we have regard to the views of the SSRB

when considering London Weighting for officers in the federated and superintending ranks.

- 4.96 Following a review, the NPCC proposed that: London Weighting should continue to be uplifted in line with the annual pay award; the maximum limit for the London Allowance should be uplifted in line with the annual pay award from September 2025; and that the current maximum values for the South East Allowance should remain unchanged for now but be uplifted in line with the annual pay award from September 2026. It also suggested that the forces eligible for the South East Allowance should be reviewed on a three-yearly cycle. The APCC told us that there was a clear rationale for uprating the allowances annually in line with the pay award to ensure they maintained their value relative to pay awards. The MPS told us it supported the proposal to uplift the maximum limit of London Allowance in line with pay. It also said it would want to see a permanent increase to the London Allowance in line with the previous pay award and a 3.8% uplift to London Weighting in 2025/26.
- 4.97 The MPS pointed out that it was a net loser in terms of transferees to other forces and it needed to ensure that its offer remained sufficiently competitive in comparison with forces covered by the South East Allowance. The 2024 PSA Pay Survey indicated significant levels of dissatisfaction with London Weighting and South East Allowance.

#### *Information from the PFEW*

- 4.98 In its pay positioning paper, the PFEW explained it was seeking the removal of the discretionary element to the London and South East Allowances. It also proposed that London Weighting be uplifted in line with CPI rather than pay awards and it asked that a retrospective review be conducted to determine the amount that the London Weighting should be set at if it had been uplifted in line with inflation.
- 4.99 The PFEW advised that it was dissatisfied that the London and South East Allowances were subject to chief officer discretion. The PFEW also pointed out that the discretion aspect risked the allowances not being increased. This meant the London and South East Allowances would lose value over time. It said that cost-of-living pressures in London – particularly CPI and housing costs – meant that now was the time for a non-discretionary uplift process.

#### *Our comment and recommendation on regional allowances*

- 4.100 London Weighting and the London and South East Allowances make an important contribution to ensuring that policing salaries are competitive in the local labour markets of the relevant forces, although we recognise that the original drivers behind the establishment of these payments were different. We note that London Weighting was designed to compensate officers for the higher cost of living in the capital, while the London and South East Allowances were created to deal with

recruitment problems. However, we note the conclusions of the NPCC's reviews and particularly the findings on market practice. We observe that most employers, driven by concerns regarding the competitiveness of pay, use pay flexibility within a pay range or, particularly in London, a separate pay range rather than a flat rate sum. We also note the NPCC's evidence that regional pay differences have reduced since 2010 – London still has a clear lead but other regions broadly sit within a 10% difference to the national median.

- 4.101 We note the conclusion of the review that eligibility for the South East Allowance should not be extended to other forces. We are mindful that the purpose of the allowance is to address the impact of London on south east forces' recruitment. We accept the review's explanation that outside London, recruitment was not identified as a significant issue and that forces were meeting Home Office maintenance targets for police officer numbers. We also note the review's conclusion that transfers across forces are low overall and fringe forces (Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and non-allowance forces such as Cambridgeshire) have little movement across boundaries. We observe that the MPS is currently a net loser in terms of transfers. We note that the nearest comparators for the South East Allowance are the NHS allowances for outer London and the fringe and that these are comparable or below the current South East Allowance. Therefore, we accept the review's overall conclusions that the current maximum levels for the South East Allowance of £2,000 (3 forces) or £3,000 (5 forces) a year per officer should be maintained and we agree that there should be no uplift to the allowance in 2025/26.
- 4.102 With regard to London Weighting and the London Allowance, we note the findings of the review including its assessment that, while the police like other employers would struggle to recruit without paying extra in London, when combined these allowances are at the upper end of market practice. We note that the review pointed out that combined they exceeded the top rate for Inner London in the NHS, were larger than the salary additions for all except the most senior frontline teachers, and were higher than common practice elsewhere in the public sector and in the private sector. The review also pointed out that "inflating the London element may have a knock-on implication to the South-East Allowance pay structure, as opposed to addressing a recruitment issue."
- 4.103 We set out our view on MPS recruitment and retention in paragraphs 4.55–4.62 above and our conclusion that time is needed to evaluate the impact of the measures implemented in April 2025 to increase starting salaries and increase the London Allowance by £1,250. Therefore, in our view the maximum limit for the London Allowance should not be uplifted in line with pay annually commencing in September 2025.
- 4.104 However, we note the review's observations that the pay gap between London and elsewhere fluctuates and so needs to be kept under review. We also note the evidence presented by the review, from its analysis of market practice, that other

organisations link uplifts to equivalent payments and allowances to annual pay awards as opposed to periodic reviews. Therefore, we propose to consider the review's proposal to uplift the London Allowance and the South East Allowance in line with pay in the next pay round and we invite parties to provide evidence on this to us in 2026. We agree that the policy of raising London Weighting in line with the annual pay award should be maintained.

**Recommendation 6. We recommend that London Weighting be uprated by 4.2% from 1 September 2025.**

## **Proposals for additional allowances**

### *Information from the PFEW*

4.105 The PFEW set out the case for some additional allowances:

- A shift alteration allowance: the PFEW reported that the shifts of police officers were being changed at an alarming rate and explained that officers were entitled to know their shift 90 days in advance. It observed that in some cases changes to shifts were due to unexpected events but often it was the result of poor planning by forces. The PFEW pointed out shift changes had potential financial implications for the officers concerned. It asked for consideration of a payment to be made to officers when shifts were changed within the 90-day window, and observed that such a payment should discourage forces from changing shifts.
- A detective allowance: the PFEW highlighted the shortage of detectives across the police service and proposed a detective allowance to promote recruitment and retention into the role. It observed that those choosing a detective career pathway were financially disadvantaged compared with uniformed officers who were more likely to receive Unsocial Hours Allowance. The PFEW also stated that such an allowance would acknowledge the additional study and accreditation required to become and maintain being a detective.

### *Our comment on proposals for additional allowances*

#### Shift alteration allowance

4.106 As we have said elsewhere, we recognise that the increasingly diverse nature of the police workforce means that today's police officers are more and more likely to be juggling their policing duties with carer responsibilities. We set out our concerns regarding the impact of the practicalities and pressures of policing on officers' personal lives in paragraphs 4.40–4.41. We accept that short notice changes to shift patterns are likely to have financial consequences for officers as well as disrupt personal arrangements and increase stress levels. We agree that a shift alteration allowance, set at an appropriate level, might help to deter poor management practices. We are aware of the 90-day notice needed for a change to shifts under police regulations but we observe that modern workforces need to be agile.

Therefore, while in our view there is a case for some kind of shift alteration allowance to compensate officers for last minute shift changes that may have financial consequences, it may be appropriate that the trigger for payment of the allowance is set at less than 90 days. We ask the NPCC to work with parties to examine the scope for this type of allowance and we look forward to receiving evidence on this in the next pay round.

#### Detective allowance

- 4.107 We recognise that there has been an increase in investigation capacity over the last few years driven largely by those entering the service through the direct detective pathway as a result of the Uplift Programme. However, we are conscious that there are variations in capacity and capability at force level. We are aware of the police service's reliance on TVP to recruit and retain detectives but observe that its use is at the discretion of chief constables. We have received evidence from the NPCC that more than half of total TVP expenditure is spent on detectives. As part of our visits programme, we have heard from individual forces who have struggled to recruit and retain officers into their investigation units.
- 4.108 We agree that further action on this is needed. We note that officers working on response who choose to move into a detective role essentially experience a pay cut because of the loss of the Unsocial Hours Allowance. We observe that this would not happen in some other organisations. We are therefore attracted to a service-wide solution to this issue. We note the attractions of a detective allowance. We observe that it would promote consistency across the police service. However, we recognise that the introduction of such an allowance would have implications for the rewarding of other specialisms within the service, such as firearms. We therefore invite the NPCC to explore the options, including the creation of an allowance, for strengthening the financial package for detectives in a way that will create a consistent approach across the service. We ask parties to provide evidence on this in 2026.

#### **Annual leave**

- 4.109 The NPCC explained that the phased implementation of our recommendation to reduce the time it took the federated ranks to reach the maximum annual leave entitlement would commence from 1 April 2025 and be completed by March 2028. This would mean officers in the federated ranks received 30 days' annual leave after 10 years instead of 20. It also advised that our recommendation to increase the annual leave entitlement for new entrants from 22 to 25 days would be implemented from 1 April 2025 without transition. The Home Office explained that it was currently consulting on amendments to determinations made under the Police Regulations 2003 to implement the new entitlement. The NPCC said it was committed to carrying out a further review of annual leave policy after two years, to consider whether the time it took officers to reach their maximum annual entitlement should be further reduced.

### *Information from the PFEW*

4.110 In its pay positioning paper, the PFEW welcomed last year's changes but argued that police officers were still behind other public sector workers, including officers in Scotland. It pressed for further improvements in annual leave entitlements and for the introduction of a form of long-service leave and also recuperation leave, as well as seeking changes to the process for buying and selling annual leave.

### *Our comment on annual leave*

4.111 We welcome the implementation of our recommended changes to annual leave for police officers and the NPCC's intention to carry out a further review of annual leave policy in two years' time. We will also wish to see evidence that officers have been able to actually use their new annual leave entitlement.

4.112 We considered carefully the proposal for the introduction of long-service leave. We observe that providing experienced officers with a period of long-service leave at a suitable point in their career could be a useful retention tool. We point out that such leave could be linked to the criteria for and awarding of the Police Long Service and Good Conduct medal which officers receive after being in the police service for 20 years. We observe that if such a period of leave was introduced there might be a case for linking it to a 'return to service' agreement. We invite the NPCC to explore the PFEW's proposals for long-service leave further and to provide evidence on that in 2026.

4.113 With regards to the proposal for recuperation leave, we recognise that the nature of policing means that individuals are exposed to high levels of threat and traumatic incidents. However, our initial view is that there would be a number of practical challenges around the operation and monitoring of recuperation leave. In our view, such a measure would need to be part of the police service's broader wellbeing policies. We would expect the NPCC to consider any proposals from parties that would strengthen the support the police service provides to officers who are injured or harmed in the line of duty.

## Chapter 5 – Forward Look

### Introduction

- 5.1 It will be for Government to set the remit for the next pay round. However, the core of the report will be driven by our standing terms of reference. In this chapter we aim to give the parties who provide evidence, and the remit group more generally, some indication of areas which are likely to be of continuing interest to us in future pay rounds.

### The police reform agenda

- 5.2 We are writing this year's report against the backdrop to what we understand will be possibly the biggest overhaul to policing and law enforcement since the 1960s. We look forward to receiving an update in 2026 on the proposals and decisions resulting from the Police Reform White Paper, the new National Security Strategy and the CSR which will have implications for police pay and reward. The outcomes of these three exercises are expected to be published before the summer but after we submit our 2025 Report. We discuss the importance of the forthcoming police workforce strategy below.

### Pay and workforce modernisation

#### *Delivering the wider police reform agenda and workforce strategy*

- 5.3 In our last three reports, we have emphasised the importance of the development of a long-term workforce strategy. We welcome the intention to develop such a strategy as part of the wider police reform agenda. We set out the key questions the work to develop such a strategy should consider in Chapter 3. That includes the need for the police service to recognise the increasing attraction to younger workers of portfolio careers and to offer multiple entry points into policing through direct entry. Workforce reforms should also facilitate movement across the wider law enforcement community. We understand that this work will be undertaken jointly by the Home Office and the NPCC. The work on the strategy needs to be properly resourced. We are aware that some additional resources have been sought as part of the CSR.
- 5.4 We note that the White Paper on Police Reform will be published later in the year and the outcome of the CSR will not be announced until June. Nevertheless, we understand that work on the strategy has begun and in our view should proceed at pace. The workforce strategy will provide an essential foundation for subsequent reforms including to base pay. We observe that this strategy will provide important context for our future considerations of pay and pay reform. It is therefore important that a workforce strategy, or at least a draft, is made available to us early in 2026 in

good time to inform the next pay round. We also look forward to receiving an update on other workforce related aspects of the Police Reform Programme.

### *Tackling pay and workload issues*

- 5.5 In our previous reports, we set out some of our concerns about the pay and workload of specific ranks. For instance, we have highlighted that starting salaries for constables need to be competitive to ensure that the next generation of officers have the capabilities and attitudes to deal with the changing nature and the increasing complexity of demand driven by both technology and changing social attitudes. We therefore recommended in our 2022 Report that the Police Constable Degree Apprentice minimum should be raised to pay point 0 from 1 September 2022. In our 2023 Report we recommended the removal of pay point 0.
- 5.6 In our 2024 Report, we made a recommendation, which was accepted, that additional flexibility be given to chief officers to start new recruits on pay point 1 or 2. This was partly in recognition that police forces across the country experience different recruiting and retention pressures. However, it was also because we were conscious that it would be best to take further decisions regarding the permanent removal of any more constable pay points in the context of wider reform and an overall review of the coherence of police pay scales. Such a review should, of course, include the implications of a shortened constable pay scale for those career constables who make such a vital contribution in areas such as neighbourhood policing.
- 5.7 We also expressed concern about the feedback we had received during our visits programme regarding the pressures on the inspecting ranks and the difficulties caused by the small pay differential between inspectors and chief inspectors and the large pay gap between the chief inspector rank and the superintendent rank. We also pointed out that the pay scales for chief inspectors are the shortest of any rank. We heard of similar concerns during our visits programme this winter. We also note that there are London-specific pay scales for inspectors and chief inspectors.
- 5.8 However, as we said in Chapter 3, we agree with the Home Office that the development of the workforce strategy should be the foundation on which subsequent reforms, including to the inspecting ranks, are built. However, we will return to the issues we have set out in paragraphs 5.5–5.7 in future years should reform not proceed at pace.

### *The future of work*

- 5.9 The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development has outlined the profound transformation that is occurring in the modern workplace driven by changing

demographics, technological advancements and shifting societal values<sup>27</sup>. For instance, the change in demographics will have significant implications for policing. As the working-age population continues to decrease, a more inclusive and flexible approach to recruitment and retention will be required. People will work for longer and employers will need to support this through more innovative career opportunities, promotion and continuous learning and development. The police service will need to attract, and then retain, a more diverse group of recruits from a shrinking pool of potential employees. This will have implications for the police service's current employment offer, internal structures and approaches to promotion and careers. Policing will need to develop a much more flexible approach in order to respond to these challenges. We encourage the police service to be ambitious and think broadly about the future employment proposition for the police. We look forward to hearing from parties about the ways in which these developments might change the nature of policing over the next decades and how the police service is planning to future-proof its workforce and organisational strategies to ensure it can train the current and future workforce to adapt and embrace these changes.

## **Diversity**

- 5.10 Having a more diverse workforce is an important building block of police legitimacy. We remain concerned about the pace of change across the police service. We ask parties to update us on plans to improve diversity that are being developed through the police reform agenda and the forthcoming workforce strategy. This is particularly important given plans to recruit additional officers as part of the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

## **Resourcing pay and workforce modernisation**

- 5.11 The Police Reform White Paper will set out the Government's ambitions for the police service including for workforce reform. The police service needs the capacity and capabilities to deliver it. This will be a significant additional burden on top of its operational responsibilities. In our 2024 Report, we recognised that some steps had been taken to increase resources within the NPCC's National Reward Team to build capacity.
- 5.12 We note that the NPCC has now told us that as part of the wider reform of policing there is a commitment to invest in a central capacity and to further develop an 'NPCC Hub'. We understand that initial funding has been included in the FYE 2026 settlement and wider plans around this reform formed part of the NPCC's CSR submission. We understand that the development of the workforce plan and coordination of it will sit within this central capability. We look forward to an update on this next year.

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<sup>27</sup> Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (April 2022), *The future of work: insights for senior leaders on the drivers of change*. Available at: <https://www.cipd.org/uk/views-and-insights/thought-leadership/insight/future-work-insights/> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

## **Recruitment and retention**

5.13 The changes agreed to starting salaries and the London Allowance following our 2024 Report were implemented in April 2025. We therefore look forward to receiving an assessment in the next pay round of the impact on police recruitment of the ability of chief officers to set starting salaries at pay point 1 or pay point 2. That should include information regarding the number of forces starting recruits at pay point 2. In addition, we would like an evaluation of the impact on recruitment and retention in the MPS and City of London Police of the changes to starting salaries and the uplift to London Allowance.

## **Wellbeing**

5.14 Wellbeing needs to lie at the heart of the police service's workforce modernisation agenda both in terms of promoting the welfare of officers and ensuring that a career in policing remains an attractive option for future generations. In various parts of the report, we have mentioned our concerns about policies and practices that are impacting on officer wellbeing. We set out our concerns regarding the impact of the practicalities and pressures of policing on officers' personal lives in paragraphs 4.40–4.41. We discuss our particular concerns regarding allowances and annual leave in paragraphs 5.15–5.18 below. In addition, in Chapter 2 we also expressed concern about delays reported to us by the PFEW in translating provisions in employment law into police regulations and the subsequent implementation of these policies across the police service. These issues need to be addressed. However, we observe that the promotion of officer wellbeing should be a thread that is woven through the changes emerging from the police reform agenda and we look forward to receiving evidence on this in the next pay round.

## **Allowances**

5.15 We have commented on the proposals from the first year of the NPCC's three-year review of allowances. We have emphasised that in addition to ensuring officers are fairly compensated, the review of allowances should be driven by the promotion of officer wellbeing, welfare and work-life balance. While we recognise the unpredictable nature of policing, we note that in some cases allowances may be providing compensation to officers for poor management practices that are impacting on wellbeing and work-life balance. These underlying problems should be addressed as part of the review process.

5.16 Therefore, while we have agreed changes to the On-call, Away from Home Overnight and Hardship Allowances, we have asked for further work to be undertaken. We have asked the NPCC, in its review of the processes around the application of On-call Allowance, to: take account of changes to modernise policing emerging from the wider police reform agenda; give weight to protecting the wellbeing of officers; and look at whether it would be possible to develop a more efficient use of on-call arrangements, thereby reducing both costs and the burden

on officers. We have also requested that the coherence of the package of allowances available to officers deployed on mutual aid be reviewed and guidance issued to forces to improve consistency and transparency.

- 5.17 Looking beyond the NPCC's schedule for the review of existing allowances, we have requested that it examine the scope for an allowance to deter forces from changing officers' shifts at short notice and bring forward proposals. We have also suggested that it explore options to enhance the attractiveness of the financial package available to detectives. We look forward to receiving evidence on these in 2026 alongside the proposals from the second year of the NPCC's review.

## **Annual leave**

- 5.18 In this report we have welcomed the NPCC's intention to carry out a further review of annual leave policy in two years' time but we emphasised that we will also wish to see evidence that officers have been able to actually use their new annual leave entitlement. We have also invited the NPCC to consider the scope for the introduction of long-service leave and provide evidence on that in 2026.

## **Pensions**

- 5.19 We are aware that changes to police pensions can affect morale, motivation, and retention and our terms of reference state that it is important for us to be mindful of developments in police officer pensions to ensure that there is a consistent, strategic and holistic approach to police pay and conditions.
- 5.20 We remain concerned by the number of officers opting out of the police pension scheme. This is because those officers are losing an important part of the remuneration package and forfeiting benefits linked to death in service and medical retirement. We would also like evidence in the next pay round on how the wider implications for officers when they opt out of the pension can be mitigated, especially ways that ensure that death-in-service and medical retirement benefits are available to any officer killed or injured as a result of incidents they faced in the line of duty, regardless of pension membership status.
- 5.21 We judge that there may be a particular issue in the early years of service. We hope this issue will be considered in the light of the development of a new workforce strategy. As we said in Chapter 2, we urge the Government to consider the scope for more substantial changes to the pension scheme to make it more affordable and appealing to young-in-service officers and those considering shorter-term policing careers. Options might include having significantly reduced contribution rates in early years, flexible contribution rates (with adjusted benefits) or a defined-contribution option. We look forward to receiving an update next year.

## **Engagement with parties**

5.22 We are pleased that the PSA continued to be part of the pay review process in 2025. We were also pleased to have received some information from the PFEW this year. This was very insightful and informative. However, the PFEW has not yet chosen to formally return to the pay review process. We hope it will do so in the next pay round.

## **Evidence gaps and data limitations**

5.23 We appreciate the parties' continuing efforts to improve the evidence base and the additional information that has been provided to us for this pay round in response to the requests in our last report. We have commented in this report on the following specific issues:

- evidence on work to drive efficiency savings and improve productivity; (Paragraph 2.29)
- improved data on reasons behind resignations and what officers intend to do after they resign; (Paragraph 2.94) and
- more complete data on the protected characteristics of officers. (Paragraph 2.108)

5.24 We encourage those responsible for gathering data to consider what improvements can be made to facilitate the provision of data in these and other areas.

## Appendix A – Our Previous Reports

### 2024 Report

We submitted our 2024 Report on 31 May 2024 and the Government responded to the recommendations on 29 July 2024<sup>28</sup>. The recommendations were as follows:

#### **Our 2024/25 recommendations (from 1 September 2024)**

- 1. The Home Office, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to work together as a matter of urgency to undertake a Comprehensive Review of police remuneration focused on examining pay and the mechanics of the coherence of pay scales, allowances, rewarding performance and the mechanism for progression, in order to produce a costed plan in preparation for the next Comprehensive Spending Review. As part of the review, the police service should ask itself some fundamental questions regarding the skills and capabilities it requires to deliver the best outcomes for the public, and how it can attract and retain those skills. We invite the Home Office, NPCC and APCC to provide a plan we can consider by January 2025.**
- 2. A consolidated increase of 4.75% to all police officer pay points for all ranks up to and including chief superintendent.**
- 3. The chief officer of police in each force be given the discretion to set the starting salary for new constables at either pay point 1 or pay point 2 on the constable pay scale.**
- 4. The Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police Service and City of London Police be given further discretion to set the starting salaries of new constables at pay point 3 on the constable pay scale. This additional flexibility should be limited to a period of two years, and be reviewed after one year.**
- 5. The allowances set out in the NPCC's schedule for the review of police allowances be reviewed in their entirety in 2024/25 as part of the Comprehensive Review of police remuneration. A coherent and equitable package of proposals for changes to those allowances should be presented to us in the next pay round for implementation in 2025/26.**
- 6. On-call Allowance be increased from £20 to £25 as an interim measure pending the outcome of the NPCC's review of allowances in 2024/25.**

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<sup>28</sup> House of Commons (July 2024), Police Workforce Update: Written statement – HCWS36. Available at: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2024-07-29/hcws36> [Accessed on 4 June 2025]

7. London Weighting be uprated by 4.75%.
8. Dog Handlers' Allowance be uprated by 4.75% and the additional rate for officers with more than one dog be raised from 25% to 50% of the rate for the first dog.
9. The time it takes the federated ranks to reach the maximum annual leave entitlement of 30 days be reduced from 20 to 10 years. Implementation of this change to be in line with the proposals put forward by the NPCC. In advance of that, from September 2024 the annual leave for new entrants also be increased from 22 to 25 days.

## Previous recommendations

All of our previous recommendations, along with the Government responses, are set out below.

Report	Recommendation	Government response
1 <sup>st</sup> (2015)	A consolidated increase of 1% to all pay points for federated and superintending ranks from 1 September 2015.	Accepted
	A 1% increase to London Weighting (from 1 July 2015) and Dog Handlers' Allowance (from 1 September 2015).	Accepted
	The London inspecting lead retained for now.	Accepted
2 <sup>nd</sup> (2016)	A consolidated increase of 1% to all pay points for federated and superintending ranks from 1 September 2016.	Accepted
	A 1% increase to London Weighting and Dog Handlers' Allowance from 1 September 2016.	Accepted
	The maxima for South East Allowances to be increased to £2,000 and £3,000 respectively from 1 September 2016.	Accepted
	Motor Vehicle Allowances mileage rates for federated and superintending ranks should be the prevailing HM Revenue & Customs rates for essential and casual users from 1 September 2016. The current structure and values for the essential users' lump sums should remain.	Accepted
3 <sup>rd</sup> (2017)	A consolidated increase of 2% to all pay points for federated and superintending ranks from 1 September 2017.	Increased consolidated pay by 1% and, for 2017/18 only, provided a 1% non-consolidated pay award
	London Weighting and Dog Handlers' Allowance to be uprated by 2% from 1 September 2017.	Increased London Weighting and Dog Handlers' Allowance by 1%
	The introduction of appropriate, targeted arrangements in 2017/18 to allow local flexibility for chief officers to make additional payments to police officers in hard-to-fill roles and in superintending ranks. This interim measure should have a time limit through to September 2020.	The Home Secretary welcomed this recommendation

<b>Report</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Government response</b>
	In order to support our consideration of pay and reward, the Home Office, NPCC and CoP should publish an integrated police workforce and pay reform plan through to 2020 which specifies the strands of reform, their purpose, lead responsibilities and the implementation strategy.	The Home Secretary looked to the CoP and the NPCC to take forward this work
4 <sup>th</sup> (2018)	The time-limited 1% non-consolidated pay award received by the federated and superintending ranks in 2017/18 to be consolidated onto all pay points for officers at these ranks with effect from 1 September 2018.	Rejected
	In addition to and following the first recommendation, a consolidated increase of 2% to all police officer pay points at all ranks from 1 September 2018.	Increased pay by 2%
	London Weighting and Dog Handlers' Allowance to be uprated by 2% from 1 September 2018.	Accepted
	Police forces to appoint apprentice constables on a starting salary of between £18,000 and pay point 1.	Accepted
	Following twelve months, and subject to satisfactory completion of Year 1 of their apprenticeship, apprentice constables to move to the next pay point on the existing police constable pay scale.	Accepted
5 <sup>th</sup> (2019)	A one-year pay award for all police officers in 2019/20.	Accepted
	A consolidated increase of 2.5% to all police officer pay points for all ranks from 1 September 2019.	Accepted
	Subject to further review in the next pay round, no change to the current arrangements for apprentice progression, namely that following twelve months, and subject to satisfactory completion of Year 1 of their apprenticeship, apprentice constables should move to the next pay point on the existing police constable pay scale.	Accepted
	Dog Handlers' Allowance should be uprated by 2.5% from 1 September 2019.	Accepted
	London Weighting should be uprated by 2.5% from 1 September 2019.	Accepted
	An increase in the On-call Allowance from £15 to £20 from 1 September 2019.	Accepted
6 <sup>th</sup> (2020)	A consolidated increase of 2.5% to all police officer pay points at all ranks from 1 September 2020.	Accepted
	The removal of the lowest point of the sergeants' pay scale from 1 September 2020.	Accepted
	Dog Handlers' Allowance should increase by 2.5% from 1 September 2020.	Accepted
	London Weighting should increase by 2.5% from 1 September 2020.	Accepted
	The maximum rate of London Allowance should increase by £1,000 to £5,338 a year for officers appointed on or after 1 September 1994 and not receiving Replacement Allowance.	Accepted

<b>Report</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Government response</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> (2021)	The minimum rates for Police Constable Degree Apprentice starting pay and pay point 0 of the constable scale are uplifted by £250, and that all officers with a basic salary above these minima but below £24,000 (on a full-time equivalent basis) should receive a consolidated pay award of £250.	Accepted
8 <sup>th</sup> (2022)	A one-year award for police officers in 2022/23.	Accepted
	A consolidated increase of £1,900 to all police officer pay points for all ranks from 1 September 2022.	Accepted
	The Police Constable Degree Apprentice (PCDA) minimum should be raised to pay point 0 (£23,556 from 1 September 2022).	Accepted
	London Weighting and the Dog Handlers' Allowance should be uplifted by 5% from 1 September 2022.	Accepted
	Parties should review the requirement and appropriate level for the Dog Handlers' Allowance.	Accepted
9 <sup>th</sup> (2023)	A consolidated increase of 7% to all police officer pay points for all ranks up to and including assistant chief constable and commander from 1 September 2023.	Accepted
	The removal of pay point 0 of the constable pay scale from 1 September 2023.	Accepted
	Point 3 of the chief superintendent pay scale to be uplifted by £2,838 from 1 September 2023 and £2,837 from 1 September 2024. These uplifts are to be made before the application of the respective pay awards for these years.	Accepted
	London Weighting to be uprated by 7% from 1 September 2023.	Accepted
	Dog Handlers' Allowance to be uprated by 7% from 1 September 2023.	Accepted
	The introduction of a new pay structure for those appointed as a chief constable or deputy chief constable from 1 September 2023 comprising three pay points for chief constables, and with deputy chief constable pay set at 82.5% of equivalent chief constable pay. Any chief constable or deputy chief constable who resigns or retires from the police service, and is subsequently reappointed to the same post within the same force, is to be reappointed on no more than their previous salary.	Accepted in principle subject to the development of a full and coherent implementation plan
	A consolidated increase of 5% to all existing chief constable and deputy chief constable pay points from 1 September 2023. To start the transition between the existing and new structures, where an existing pay point remains below the pay for the same post in the new pay structure, that pay point is to receive an additional consolidated award of up to 2%, such that the overall uplift does not exceed 7%.	A consolidated uplift of 7% for all chief officers
	Policing parties to bring forward proposals to improve the independence, transparency and consistency of determining and reporting on chief officer pay and allowances. We expect this to include proposals on how to place, in the public domain on an annual basis, a consistent set of data on the total pay and allowances received by each chief officer in each force.	Accepted

Report	Recommendation	Government response
	<p>A consolidated increase of 5% to the pay points of all chief officers in the Metropolitan Police Service and the City of London Police above the rank of commander from 1 September 2023.</p> <p>A consolidated increase of an additional 2% to the Metropolitan Police Service deputy assistant commissioner pay point in order to retain the link with deputy chief constable pay from 1 September 2023.</p> <p>The Relocation Allowance for chief officers to be amended as proposed by the chief officer remuneration review. The impact of the scheme to be reviewed within three years of implementation.</p> <p>Policing parties to bring forward next year additional proposals for a review of the existing power of Police and Crime Commissioners to increase and decrease base pay of chief constables by plus or minus 10% on appointment. As an interim measure, the Home Office to issue guidance to Police and Crime Commissioners advising them against exercising their power to vary starting salaries on appointment until the review is concluded.</p> <p>The National Police Chiefs' Council to provide an interim report by 30 November 2023 on its progress to develop a long-term pay and reward strategy. This should include an update on the work on constable base pay and the back-to-first-principles review of the P-factor.</p>	<p>A consolidated uplift of 7% for all chief officers in London</p> <p>Effectively accepted by the award of a 7% uplift to all chief officers in London</p> <p>Accepted in principle subject to the development of more detailed proposals</p> <p>The Home Secretary said they were content to receive proposals on this but rejected the recommendation that the Home Office should issue guidance to PCCs advising them against exercising their power to vary starting salaries on appointment until the review is concluded</p> <p>Accepted</p>
10 <sup>th</sup> (2024)	<p>The Home Office, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to work together as a matter of urgency to undertake a Comprehensive Review of police remuneration focused on examining pay and the mechanics of the coherence of pay scales, allowances, rewarding performance and the mechanism for progression, in order to produce a costed plan in preparation for the next Comprehensive Spending Review. As part of the review, the police service should ask itself some fundamental questions regarding the skills and capabilities it requires to deliver the best outcomes for the public, and how it can attract and retain those skills. We invite the Home Office, NPCC and APCC to provide a plan we can consider by January 2025.</p> <p>A consolidated increase of 4.75% to all police officer pay points for all ranks up to and including chief superintendent from 1 September 2024.</p> <p>The chief officer of police in each force be given the discretion to set the starting salary for new constables at either pay point 1 or pay point 2 on the constable pay scale from 1 September 2024.</p>	<p>Recommendation welcomed and would be subject to further discussions but must be aligned to a police workforce strategy.</p> <p>Accepted</p> <p>Accepted, but implementation subject to detailed proposals from the NPCC and APCC on the circumstances in which this discretion can be used.</p>

Report	Recommendation	Government response
	<p>The Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police Service and City of London Police be given further discretion to set the starting salaries of new constables at pay point 3 on the constable pay scale. This additional flexibility should be limited to a period of two years, and be reviewed after one year.</p>	<p>Rejected, but London Allowance for officers appointed on or after 1 September 1994 increased by £1,250 with the implementation of this increase being synchronised alongside the wider changes to constable starting salaries.</p>
	<p>The allowances set out in the NPCC's schedule for the review of police allowances be reviewed in their entirety in 2024/25 as part of the Comprehensive Review of police remuneration. A coherent and equitable package of proposals for changes to those allowances should be presented to us in the next pay round for implementation in 2025/26.</p>	<p>Recommendation welcomed and would be subject to further discussions but must be aligned to a police workforce strategy.</p>
	<p>On-call Allowance be increased from £20 to £25 from 1 September 2024 as an interim measure pending the outcome of the NPCC's review of allowances in 2024/25.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
	<p>London Weighting be uprated by 4.75% from 1 September 2024.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
	<p>Dog Handlers' Allowance be uprated by 4.75% and the additional rate for officers with more than one dog be raised from 25% to 50% of the rate for the first dog from 1 September 2024.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
	<p>The time it takes the federated ranks to reach the maximum annual leave entitlement of 30 days be reduced from 20 to 10 years. Implementation of this change to be in line with the proposals put forward by the NPCC. In advance of that, from 1 September 2024 the annual leave for new entrants also be increased from 22 to 25 days.</p>	<p>Reducing the time taken to reach maximum annual leave entitlement accepted subject to the submission of a satisfactory Equality Impact Assessment by the NPCC to the Home Office. Increasing annual leave for new entrants accepted with implementation taking effect from 1 April 2025.</p>

# Appendix B – Home Secretary’s Remit Letter



Home Secretary

2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

Zoë Billingham  
Chair  
Police Remuneration Review Body  
Windsor House  
50 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0TL

30 September 2024

Dear Zoë

## **Police Remuneration Review Body Remit 2025/26**

I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you and the members of the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) for the work you undertook in considering the pay and allowances for police officers in the last pay round.

I write to you now to formally commence the 2025/26 pay round and ask for the PRRB to make recommendations on how to apply the pay award for all police officers in ranks up to and including chief superintendent.

I also ask that you consider proposals resulting from year one of the National Police Chiefs' Council's review of allowances, taking into account the views of policing stakeholders.

During this pay round, you will receive evidence from my department, HM Treasury and key stakeholders. My department's evidence will, as usual, cover the recruitment and retention context for police officers, alongside pay and earnings data, and the expected position following the implementation of the 2024/25 pay award. It will also set out the funds available to the Home Office for 2025/26, which will be finalised through the Spending Review and announced at the Autumn Budget on 30 October. This comes against the backdrop of the challenging financial position this Government has inherited, including a £22 billion pressure against the spending plans set out for departments at Spring Budget 2024.

My department will continue to strive to deliver mission-led public services to ensure they are equipped to efficiently deliver the vital, high quality public service we rely on, whilst ensuring value for money for taxpayers.

We know that public sector workers delivering our vital public services deserve timely pay awards, so as the Chancellor said in her July Statement, the Government's intention is to announce pay awards as close to the start of the pay year as possible for 2025/26. For police officers, this is 1 September.

To this end, where possible, I would be grateful if the PRRB can deliver recommendations to the Government on the 2025/26 pay award for police officers at the earliest point that allows you to give due consideration to the relevant evidence. To support with this, the Government will provide its written evidence as soon as possible after the provisional police funding settlement is published, as this will inform the affordability position.

I look forward to receiving your report in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvette Cooper', is centered on the page.

**Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP**  
**Home Secretary**

## Appendix C – Summaries of Parties’ Written Evidence

C.1 We have set out below our summaries of the written evidence provided to us this year.

### Home Office

- C.2 The Home Office drew attention to estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales which showed a reduction in overall crime since 2017, but recent increases in robbery, violence with injury and consumer and retail fraud. It also pointed to police recorded crime data that showed a recent decrease in the number of homicides and firearms offences but increases in robbery offences and offences involving knives and shoplifting.
- C.3 The Home Office described the Government’s Safer Streets initiative to halve violence against women and girls, halve knife crime, and restore confidence in the policing and justice system within a decade. It highlighted the importance of neighbourhood policing which it described as the bedrock of policing. It described the importance of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and pointed out the Government had injected an additional £100 million for neighbourhood policing, compared with that announced in the provisional police funding settlement. It explained that this meant the funding would be doubled to a total of £200 million available to forces to carry on the fight against crime and keeping communities safe.
- C.4 The Home Office outlined the Government’s plans for police reform. It explained that in addition to the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, reform would also ensure that policing had the national capabilities it needed to fight fast-changing, complex crimes which cut across police force boundaries. It set out plans for a new National Centre for Policing, a new Police Performance Framework, national arrangements on procurement and better access to data to ensure enhanced local performance tracking. It said that its forthcoming Police Reform White Paper would outline plans for comprehensive reform.
- C.5 The Home Office explained that the forthcoming White Paper would also consider a national police workforce strategy. It said that it was engaging with the NPCC and the College of Policing to develop early thinking about the approach that was needed to produce a long-term workforce strategy and what such a strategy or plan would include. It explained that it was important that the strategy covered all members of the workforce, including police staff who delivered a vital role in protecting communities as part of police forces. The Home Office said that this would ensure that policing was prepared to respond to the many demands it faced both now and in the future. It observed that the nature of crime and policing demands had changed, yet police workforce structures and areas of deployment had remained largely the same as a decade ago.

- C.6 The Home Office highlighted the Government's expectation that police forces in England and Wales would protect police officer numbers and it set out the funding available to support that. It pointed out that voluntary resignation rates, at around 3.4%, were in line with modelling and were low compared with other sectors. It told us that it had not received compelling evidence to suggest there were broad issues with recruitment and retention or that targeted pay awards were required. It noted that while there was anecdotal evidence about recruitment difficulties and increased attrition rates for some specialist roles, it had not received any robust evidence explaining the problem or that any pay solutions would be an appropriate response.
- C.7 The Home Office reported that the proportion of police officers identifying as an ethnic minority had been increasing each year since March 2007 (4.7%) until March 2024. In the last year the proportion of ethnic minority officers had remained steady at 8.4%. It said that the representation of ethnic minority officers (excluding white minorities) was lower among senior ranks (chief inspector or above) compared with constables and other ranks. It observed that the percentage of female police officers on 31 March 2024 (35.4% of police officers in England and Wales, where sex was known) was the highest number and proportion of female officers since comparable records began in March 2003.
- C.8 The Home Office confirmed it would continue to work with partners to ensure the Police Covenant was properly implemented and respected. The Home Office welcomed the new national strategy for police health and wellbeing launched in July 2024 by the Chief Medical Officer for Policing and the National Police Wellbeing Service. This had set out clear standards for the sector to help forces build world-class wellbeing support for all who work for them.
- C.9 The Home Office outlined recent changes in the economy, inflation trends and forecasts and labour market trends. With reference to payment settlement data and earnings growth forecasts for 2024/25, the Home Office observed that the award for police officers for 2024/25 had been ahead of the wider economy, which should support recruitment and retention.
- C.10 The Home Office explained total funding to police forces for FYE 2026 would be up to £17.5 billion, an increase of up to £1.1 billion compared with the FYE 2025 police funding settlement. It told us that this included a £757.1 million increase in government grant funding to police forces, and up to £329.8 million additional funding from the council tax precept, based on current forecasts and assuming all PCCs maximised their precept flexibility. The Home Office also set out its plans for efficiency and improving productivity.
- C.11 The Home Office told us that earnings growth from quarter 4 of 2025 to quarter 3 of 2026 was forecast to be around 2.1%. The Home Office said that a pay award for the police of 2.8% was appropriate, as it would ensure police officer pay remained competitive, while also delivering a real-terms pay rise in the context of CPI

forecasts of 2.4% from quarter 4 of 2025 to quarter 3 of 2026. It said that this would still require the delivery of significant efficiency savings and challenging prioritisation decisions for many forces.

- C.12 The Home Office told us that a pay award above 2.8% would require challenging and difficult financial reprioritisation for both policing and the Government. It pointed out that there had been three years of above-affordability pay awards, compounded by the impact of the growth in officer numbers. It reported that to afford these awards, forces had needed to make savings on non-pay budgets but also workforce reductions. The Government had also had to reprioritise funding from other programmes to provide additional support. The Home Office said that financial pressures remained a significant concern for the majority of forces for FYE 2026, and there would already be some challenging trade-offs even with the increased funding in the police settlement.
- C.13 The Home Office emphasised that it had been told there would be no additional funding from HM Treasury and if the pay award was above the level budgeted, the Government would need to consider whether it was justified in terms of recruitment and retention pressures or by productivity improvements that could unlock funding. It said difficult reprioritisation decisions had already been made across the department to help reach the current proposal, and any settlement above this would be extremely challenging and would impact directly on its ability to deliver across the Department's priorities as a whole.
- C.14 It asked that in making recommendations on the remuneration for officers in the federated and superintending ranks we had regard to the views of the SSRB in respect of chief officers. The Home Office also provided an update on the implementation of changes to entry level pay for police officers that had been announced in July 2024.
- C.15 The Home Office pointed out that the remit letter had invited us to consider proposals resulting from year one of the NPCC's review of allowances, taking into account the views of policing stakeholders. It noted that London Weighting had historically increased in line with annual pay increases, and asked us to consider the evidence put forward by policing partners on whether there was a case for increasing this in 2025/26. It emphasised that any increases to allowances must be funded from within existing allocations. It also asked that when considering allowances, including London Weighting, that also applied to chief officers, we had regard to the views of the SSRB. The Home Office also provided an update on the implementation of changes to the London Allowance that had been announced in July 2024.
- C.16 The Home Office explained that it was currently consulting on regulations to implement our 2024 annual leave recommendations. It said implementation would

commence from 1 April 2025 and that some of the measures were being introduced over a three-year period.

- C.17 The Home Office described the overall remuneration package for officers including basic pay, allowances, pensions and annual leave. The Home Office set out median basic pay and median total earnings (basic pay and allowances) for each rank over the last five years in and outside London. The Home Office also described the formal consultation on amendments to the Police Pension Regulations 2015 it had launched in November 2024 and provided an update on pensions and the McCloud/Sargeant remedy.

## **HM Treasury**

- C.18 HM Treasury's evidence set out the economic, labour market and fiscal context within which it asked Pay Review Bodies to consider their recommendations for 2025/26 pay awards.
- C.19 HM Treasury said that the 2024 Autumn Budget had set the spending envelope across the parliament, and that departmental settlements for FYE 2026 and beyond would need to fund the next round of public sector pay awards. It highlighted that there would be no additional funding for pay if recommended awards exceeded what departments could afford. It explained that this meant if Pay Review Bodies recommended awards above the level departments had budgeted for, then departments would have to consider the justification and whether these additional costs could be borne either through offsetting savings or through further productivity gains.
- C.20 HM Treasury considered that in the medium to long term, real-terms pay increases were only sustainable if they were matched by productivity gains. It said that departments would be able to fund pay awards above inflation over the medium term if they became more productive, whether that was through driving better value from existing programmes or cutting areas of wasteful or inefficient spending.
- C.21 HM Treasury reflected that recruitment and retention had generally worsened across the public sector between the early 2010s and early 2020s. It linked the deterioration, in part, to falling public sector pay relative to the private sector. HM Treasury expected that the 2024/25 pay awards should support a partial reversal of the relative fall in public sector pay and therefore anticipated an improvement in public sector recruitment and retention across the coming year.
- C.22 HM Treasury reported that across different indicators, 2024 data had shown a decline in earnings growth. It also pointed out that wage growth was forecast to moderate over the coming months, and be materially lower over FYE 2026 than FYE 2025, at 3.0% according to the OBR's forecast.

## NPCC

- C.23 The NPCC highlighted the decrease in longer-term victim-based crime over the last 10 years, with the exceptions being sexual assault, theft from the person and shoplifting. It also drew attention to the rapid increase in crime involving computer misuse. It observed that crime was significantly under reported with estimates that 1 in every 12 women will be a victim of violence each year. The NPCC also described the increase in non-crime incidents involving people with mental health issues.
- C.24 The joint statement by the NPCC, PSA and CPOSA, which sat alongside the NPCC's evidence, highlighted that the Government's Safer Streets mission contained ambitious targets including the halving of instances of violence against women and girls and knife crime within a decade, alongside restoring public trust and confidence in the criminal justice system. The statement contained the observation that a critical component to achieving those targets was an appropriately-resourced service, with a skilled and diverse workforce that felt valued and supported, at both a local and national level. The NPCC pointed out that there was an expectation that the Safer Streets targets would be met largely from efficiencies but there was concern that the pace and cost of delivery might not meet the funding requirements. The NPCC evidence described the broad outline of its Commercial Efficiency and Collaboration Programme.
- C.25 The NPCC argued that productivity had increased as in the last year the workforce had been largely stable but the caseload through the police element of the criminal justice system had increased, as had the volume and rate of charge/summons outcomes.
- C.26 The NPCC observed that at a national level, following the Uplift Programme, the police service had the highest number of officers on record, but levels remained below 2010 officer numbers for many forces. The NPCC reported that 29 forces had lower officer levels per head of population in 2024 than in 2010, and it calculated an additional 12,000 FTE officers would be needed to match 2010 officer numbers per head. Its evidence suggested that recruitment was healthy nationally, with application to hire ratios having been maintained at approximately 10:1 and assessment centre pass rates having remained stable. The NPCC said this suggested no fall in quality. It reported that application rates had remained healthy since the end of the Uplift Programme and forces appeared to be able to meet their Uplift Programme maintenance targets. The NPCC reported that in FYE 2025 only three forces provided plans which potentially took them below their maintenance targets and only the MPS was significantly below.
- C.27 The NPCC observed that the proportion of officers with less than five years' service was levelling out as the Uplift recruits progressed up the service. However, the NPCC reported that the number of joiners under the age of 26 had increased from

53% in FYE 2021 to 60% in FYE 2023, and this trend had continued since the Uplift Programme to reach 67% in FYE 2025.

- C.28 The NPCC acknowledged that Uplift Programme targets and the drive to maintain them had led to fears that police staff working in non-warranted specialist and back-office roles were being replaced with warranted officers (reverse civilianisation). The NPCC included research focussed on certain functional areas that showed that the number of staff as a proportion of the total workforce had remained fairly consistent during the Uplift Programme. The research concluded that officer bolstering (adding additional officers rather than replacing staff) was a more common pattern than reverse civilianisation. It acknowledged that there was a mixed picture at force levels.
- C.29 The NPCC reported that the attrition profile remained largely in line with previous years. Officers with less than five years' service consistently accounted for over two-thirds of all resignations. It observed that the first two years of service remained the key risk in terms of attrition, as officers went from classroom to on-the-job training, but a greater proportion of resignations were starting to come from those with between three and five years' service. The NPCC stated that the reasons for this were unknown. It explained that outside of the constable rank, resignations were low and attrition was primarily made up from retirements. However, it reported that sergeant and inspector ranks had seen a growth in resignations in the last three years.
- C.30 The NPCC told us that the reasons for 55% of resignations were unknown. It noted that since December 2022 only 1.6% of officers who gave a reason stated 'pay and remuneration' as their reason for resigning. However, it pointed out that pay might also have been an influencing factor in the decision making of those who stated 'personal professional development and training' as their reason for leaving and seeking alternative employment. The NPCC informed us that those officers that were older when joining were more likely to resign in the early years. Nearly 20% of new recruits aged 26–40 and 40% aged 41–55 resigned in their first two years of service, compared with 11% of those aged under 26.
- C.31 The NPCC highlighted the acceleration in ethnic minority and female representation as a result of the Uplift Programme. However, it reported that ethnic minority officers resigned at greater rates than white officers. The NPCC explained that research had been undertaken on the factors impacting retention among ethnic minority officers and the service's Race Action Plan was coordinating interventions to address the identified issues. It also reported that the overall attrition rate of female officers was higher than for males – female officers were more likely to stay in the first few years of service but more likely to resign mid service (10–20 years) compared with male officers. The NPCC explained that the service had sought to promote flexible working policies to support a work-life balance in order to improve retention of female officers.

- C.32 The NPCC reminded us that it had reported last year on the findings from the 2019 National Police Wellbeing Service survey, which highlighted issues of workforce fatigue. The NPCC reported that long- and short-term sickness rates, had remained static over time and the overall rate was 2.1% in 2024. The NPCC noted that the numbers of young-in-service officers subject to long-term duty restrictions had increased.
- C.33 The NPCC reported that the total police funding for FYE 2026 was £17.4 billion. Assuming every force took the full £14 increase in precept, the total amount of extra funding available for forces was £986.9 million of which £329.8 million (33%) would come from Council Tax. The NPCC stated that the unfunded budget gap was estimated at £500 million in FYE 2026. The NPCC also highlighted the 2023 survey of police finance that had revealed that policing had a £3 billion deficit. The NPCC explained that central funding for pay purposes proportioned by grant had resulted in nearly half of forces not having pay awards fully funded for the last two years. The NPCC stated that forces generally regarded 2% as affordable for the 2025/26 pay award, and between 2% and 2.8% had been built into budgets. It also told us that a 2% award would cost around £600 million and this would still have implications for forces in terms of service delivery.
- C.34 The NPCC told us that outside of constables at the top of their pay scales, base pay and total cash reward for most officers were not comparable with the median of other public sector and not-for-profit organisations. This was when taking the P-factor – the very distinct factors linked to policing – into consideration, especially with limited opportunities for wider cash remuneration outside of the constable and sergeant rank. The NPCC included benchmarking data on the comparability of police base pay and total cash reward. The NPCC also described cost-of-living pressures and set last year’s pay award against average earnings growth. It added that overall pay awards were expected to be in the region of 3% to 4% in 2025. The NPCC recommended an annual pay uplift of 3.8% for federated and superintending ranks from September 2025 with funding provided centrally over 2%.
- C.35 The NPCC highlighted the continuing challenges facing the MPS. It reported that the MPS was broadly in line with national measures for application to hire ratios and assessment centre attrition. The key issue had been application levels against the volumes required. It reported that the MPS workforce was significantly below its Uplift Programme maintenance target level. The NPCC sought our views on a number of options for a pay incentivisation mechanism for the MPS.
- C.36 The NPCC set out the results from year 1 of its three-year review of allowances. It proposed:
- that On-call Allowance be increased by £10, from £25 to £35;
  - increasing the Away from Home Overnight Allowance by £10, from £50 to £60 and the Hardship Allowance by £10, from £30 to £40;

- the maximum limit for both the South East Allowance and the London Allowance be uplifted in line with the annual pay award; and
- replacing the current three bands for the Motor Vehicle Allowance essential users' lump sum, linked to engine size of the vehicle, with a single allowance of £1,239 irrespective of the engine size.

C.37 The NPCC envisaged all these changes, with the exception of that to the South East Allowance, coming into effect from September 2025. The change to the South East Allowance would commence in September 2026.

C.38 The NPCC explained that the implementation of our recommendation to reduce the time it took the federated ranks to reach the maximum annual leave entitlement would commence from 1 April 2025 and be completed by March 2028. This would mean officers in the federated ranks received 30 days' annual leave after 10 years instead of 20. It also advised that our recommendation to increase the annual leave entitlement for new entrants, from 22 to 25 days would be implemented from 1 April 2025 without transition. The NPCC committed to carrying out a further review of annual leave policy after two years, to consider whether the time it took officers to reach their maximum annual entitlement should be further reduced.

C.39 The NPCC set out the background to the implementation of the McCloud Pension Remedy and the challenges it had identified. It also provided information on current opt-out rates which it said remained comparable with other sectors. The NPCC explained that Police Regulations restricted officers to only opting in or out once in twelve months. In the absence of an appetite for more flexible contribution levels, the NPCC intended to scope the benefits and impact of changes to the Regulations to enable opting in and out of the scheme more than once in twelve months, and sought our views on that approach. The NPCC also informed us that it was considering its approach to the Home Office consultation on pension contribution changes, including having a single rate of 13.7% for all officers, which would increase the cost for some officers.

C.40 The NPCC sought our views on its approach to developing a long-term workforce plan and aligned reward strategy, and its short-, medium- and long-term ambitions. It also described the steps it was taking within the Government's reform and budget setting processes, these included:

- Continuing development of the Strategic Assessment of the Workforce.
- Designing a proposal to develop a long-term workforce plan for inclusion in its CSR submission.
- Consulting with service leaders on wider pay reform to inform the development of a reward strategy.
- Setting out the principles and proposals for the realignment of the existing pay structure. Costed options would be included in its CSR submission.

- C.41 The NPCC said this work would set the basis for both a clearer remuneration strategy and police officer pay and conditions, delivered against short-, medium- and long-term ambitions. It explained that the timeline was dependent on the outcomes of the CSR, the Government's Police Reform White Paper and decisions by the Home Secretary on legislative change. The NPCC reported that decisions on any proposals to amend police officer pay and conditions in the short term would be set against the NPCC's Reward Framework in the absence of an agreed workforce plan and reward strategy.
- C.42 The NPCC outlined the options it intended to include in its CSR submission. It told us that it would give priority to the reform of the constable pay scale. The NPCC explained that it intended to retain a largely national approach to pay and the pay structure, with the mechanism of different allowances catering for regional pay pressures and additional skills, roles and responsibilities.
- C.43 The NPCC set out the principles behind its review of base pay and then described its evaluation, including against benchmarking data, of the pay of each rank. As a result, the NPCC asked us to endorse the following proposals:
- A restructuring of the constable pay scale, to achieve the maximum salary at five years' service, and with pay points aligned to the level of experience attained at 4 years' service and at key attrition points. The NPCC hoped funding would be provided over the CSR period. This restructuring would include the removal of the current pay point 1.
  - A restructuring of the sergeant to chief superintendent pay scales, to provide a coherent pay structure, with funding to be considered within this CSR period.
- C.44 The NPCC highlighted the key findings of its review of the PPS. It explained that the PPS supported the strategic aim to have a pay mechanism for determining pay progression linked to productivity and competence, moving from an annualised approach based on time served. In the short term, the NPCC told us it was commissioning research on wider market practices and was also consulting stakeholders on a number of options. The options included the extension of the PPS to some probationers and across all pay points including to those at the top of the pay scales (excluding deputy chief constables, chief constables and probationers).
- C.45 The NPCC sought our support for Targeted Variable Payments being made permanent in legislation before 30 June 2026. The NPCC told us it had issued guidance to forces, and within that forces had developed local policies and monitoring processes. The NPCC described the background to TVP, its use and the findings of the 2023/24 evaluation. It also summarised payments for certain key functions (investigations, firearms, public protection, tutors) based on practice up to March 2024.

C.46 The NPCC told us that going forward, it would continue to monitor payments and it would provide an annual update to forces of typical payments, in order to moderate and better equalise payments and to encourage usage where appropriate. Revised guidance with the typical payments would also be provided to forces in Spring 2025 (subject to staff association engagement).

## **APCC**

C.47 The APCC described the role of PCCs and their contribution to policing. It noted the NPCC's proposal for the 3.8% pay award in 2025/26 but expressed great concern about the consequences of an award above the 2% that was in police budgets without a guarantee of additional central funding.

C.48 It shared the NPCC's concern that even a 2% award would be unaffordable for forces and was likely to impact on service delivery. Therefore, it told us that without the guarantee of additional central funding, it could not support a pay award above 2%. It observed that the inevitable consequence of a 3.8% pay award without additional funding would be even fewer police officers and police staff with an inevitable impact on service delivery to the public.

C.49 The APCC also pointed out that additional central funding would not fully compensate many forces for the additional costs of a higher pay award if that additional funding was allocated via the Police Funding Formula. It said that such funding would need to be baselined against officer headcount to potentially fully fund the additional costs.

C.50 It said that there was a clear rationale for uprating the South East Allowance, London Allowance and London Weighting annually in line with the pay award to ensure they maintained their value relative to pay awards. It recognised the importance of paying a fair rate for the On-call, Away from Home Overnight and Hardship Allowances, but it was concerned about the affordability of the increases within the current budgetary situation. It pointed out that there might be scope to develop a more efficient use of on-call arrangements requiring fewer officers to be on call and thereby mitigate increased costs.

C.51 The APCC told us it welcomed the opportunities presented by the CSR, and the forthcoming Police Reform White Paper, to address some of the inherent weaknesses in the current pay structure and progress towards a longer-term workforce strategy.

## **MPS**

C.52 The MPS set out the particular and growing policing demands it faced in London. It described the growth and diversity of its population and the challenges of policing a capital city as well as the handling of the demands of policing in general. The MPS detailed the growth in different forms of crime and it observed that increased

demand had placed an unprecedented strain on it at a time when it had fewer resources to meet demand. The MPS also outlined its continued efforts to transform itself, deliver a 'New Met' for London and embed the improvements advocated by the Casey Review and HMICFRS.

- C.53 The MPS set out its budgetary position. It told us about a budget gap of £450 million. It explained that its budget for FYE 2026 and beyond assumed an unfunded pay award of 2%. It told us that any pay award beyond 2% was unaffordable without additional funding or further cuts to services.
- C.54 The MPS informed us that it had needed to make tough financial choices in FYE 2026 including a reduction in officer numbers to close the budget gap. It said it was receiving sufficient applications to meet its significantly lower recruitment target. However, to meet the growing crime pressures and the growth in London's population it wanted to grow to 38,000 officers by 2029 (a growth of 5,000 officers), if more funding was available. It also felt that further growth would help to make it more representative of the communities which it served. Therefore, it needed to continue to build a healthy recruitment pipeline.
- C.55 The MPS said its attrition rate was at 6.6% with 2,297 officers having left over the last twelve months. It stated that resignations now accounted for 50% of all MPS leavers. It told us that its attrition remained high in the early years, and the force had put in place a number of measures to reduce this. According to the MPS, these were having a positive impact although it was still having problems with the detective cadre. However, it was becoming concerned about the trend of increased resignations from constables at all lengths of service. It thought this was due to its competitiveness in the London employment market and the cost of living.
- C.56 The MPS expressed concern about the economic climate in relation to the recruitment and retention challenges it faced. It pointed out that accommodation, general living and childcare costs in London were higher than in other parts of the UK. It cited a comparative exercise with Birmingham showing consumer prices (excluding rent) were 35.6% higher, restaurant prices were 26.9% higher and groceries were 19.3% more expensive in London. The MPS evidence also contained the early results of a survey that highlighted the financial pressures facing officers. Its evidence also included data regarding the pension opt-outs among its officers.
- C.57 The MPS endorsed the NPCC's proposal for a 3.8% pay award in 2025. It highlighted London data which showed the particular challenges it faced in terms of salaries in the capital. The MPS also set out its views on the options put forward by the NPCC for an additional pay incentivisation mechanism to support recruitment. The MPS explained that it preferred longer-term structural improvements rather than short-term incentives like the suggested 'golden hello'. The MPS informed us it favoured piloting changes proposed by the NPCC to the constable pay structure.

- C.58 The MPS recommended it should have a higher starting salary for new recruits delivered through a re-structured constable pay scale, including the ability to progress them quickly through the levels. The MPS stated that in order to address the twin challenges of a low starting salary and an attrition spike after four years of service, a re-profiled constable salary structure was needed. It told us that such a scale would include fewer pay points across the pay band, focussing on recruitment and early-years retention. It said that as this was an option supported by the NPCC it should be centrally funded. However, it also said that it would look to include development of the PPS as part of the re-structure in order to make more effective use of the pay envelope.
- C.59 The MPS said it supported the NPCC's proposals for changes to the On-call, Away from Home Overnight and Hardship Allowances but explained it was seeking an implementation date of April 2026 for financial reasons. It also endorsed the NPCC's approach to Motor Vehicle Allowance.
- C.60 The MPS told us it also supported the NPCC's proposals for the South East Allowance and the London Allowance. It said it favoured a permanent increase to the London Allowance in line with the previous pay award and a 3.8% increase to London Weighting in 2025.
- C.61 The MPS said it supported pay modernisation. In its evidence, it set out its early thinking, which it had shared with the NPCC, about the concept and themes it would wish to see reflected in the reward strategy and pay model. It explained that it had offered the NPCC support to help drive forward the work on reform. The MPS welcomed the NPCC's proposals to restructure base pay and strengthen the PPS. It also told us that it had looked into including training milestones in the PPS requirements and it was in the process of consulting on introducing a number of courses which would be a pre-requisite for pay progression.

## **PSA**

- C.62 The PSA highlighted the reduction in police pay against inflation since 2010. It referred to a study carried out by the Institute for Fiscal Studies around public sector pay which had stated that police officers, in contrast to other areas of the public sector, had seen their pay deteriorate more for those lower down the pay scale. The study had stated that the pay of constables on the bottom pay grade had gone from being around the 34<sup>th</sup> percentile of the earnings distribution in 2014 to around the 26<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2023.
- C.63 The PSA included a copy of the statement on pay it had agreed with the NPCC and CPOSA. In line with that statement, the PSA sought a funded, above inflation pay award that was applied equally across all ranks, together with a recommendation for a longer-term strategy linked to a future multiyear settlement aligned to the next CSR that continued to reduce the real-terms pay cuts.

- C.64 However, the PSA explained that it was proposing a 4.8% uplift which was above the 3.8% proposed by the NPCC. The PSA explained its higher proposal was due to the below inflation awards since 2010 and the fact that in 2024 the police service was awarded 0.75% to 1.25% less on average than other public sector bodies. The PSA said it was also expecting inflation to rise by the time the 2025/26 pay award took effect in September 2025.
- C.65 The PSA stated that its members saw allowances as a supplement to pay. It explained that in discussions with the NPCC regarding the pay strategy review it would be focussed on ensuring those allowances were taken into account as pay was reviewed. It told us that its 2024 Pay Survey indicated significant levels of dissatisfaction with London Weighting and the South East Allowance.
- C.66 The PSA proposed that the 24-hour on-call rate be increased to £60 for the superintending ranks (which after income tax at the higher rate of 40% would amount to £36 net per 24-hour period of being on call). It also sought that the allowance become reckonable for pensionable purpose. The PSA reported that 96% of respondents to its 2024 Pay Survey did not feel the current level adequately rewarded the on-call duties that they were expected to perform. It said 92% of respondents considered that the risk and demand of on-call responsibilities for the superintending ranks was greater than those for federated officers.
- C.67 The PSA highlighted a group of its members who were impacted by greater demands of being on call and responsible for Force Coordination and Command roles. It explained that these officers often built up Rest Days In Lieu. The PSA proposed that those officers who covered the most demand should be allowed to convert Rest Days In Lieu into payment at the end of each year.
- C.68 The PSA also drew attention to its 2024 evidence which included over 75 impact statements from superintendents. These detailed the impact of on-call duties on family life, sleep, childcare costs, health and finances.
- C.69 The PSA said that it fully supported any review of remuneration as set out in our 2024 Report and that it would welcome any opportunity to engage in consultation around this in order to support the best and most appropriate outcome for its members and policing as a whole.
- C.70 It stated that a long-term workforce strategy that considered the inclusion of allowances in pay would be of considerable benefit to officers. The PSA highlighted that its survey data showed that its members did not consider current remuneration, including allowances, to be fair. The PSA evidence also set out its members concerns around the fairness of the promotion process and the police leadership programme.
- C.71 The PSA, with reference to its survey results, warned of the likely negative impact on morale of the ongoing pension remedy to the discrimination identified in the

McCloud/Sargeant case. The PSA stated that there needed to be recognition, support and assistance for those impacted by the pension remedy through no fault of their own. It pointed out that police officers were impacted more than other public sector members due to there being different rates of contributions for each pension schemes. Furthermore, each force administered its pension scheme separately which meant there were varying levels of support and assistance available.

## Appendix D – The Parties’ Website Addresses

The parties’ written evidence should be available through these websites.

Home Office	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-office-evidence-to-the-police-remuneration-review-body-2025-to-2026">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-office-evidence-to-the-police-remuneration-review-body-2025-to-2026</a>
HM Treasury	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/economic-evidence-to-the-pay-review-bodies-2025-26-pay-round">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/economic-evidence-to-the-pay-review-bodies-2025-26-pay-round</a>
National Police Chiefs’ Council	<a href="https://news.npcc.police.uk/resources/z9mhd-hwori-a18pw-jzyq4-ji2u3">https://news.npcc.police.uk/resources/z9mhd-hwori-a18pw-jzyq4-ji2u3</a>
Metropolitan Police Service	<a href="https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/metropolitan-police/priorities_and_how_we_are_doing/corporate/written-evidence-police-remuneration-review-body-prrb-february2025.pdf">https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/metropolitan-police/priorities_and_how_we_are_doing/corporate/written-evidence-police-remuneration-review-body-prrb-february2025.pdf</a>
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners	<a href="https://www.apccs.police.uk/our-work/workforce/">https://www.apccs.police.uk/our-work/workforce/</a>
Joint submission from the Police Superintendents’ Association and the Superintendents’ Association of Northern Ireland	<a href="https://www.policessupers.com/rails/active_storage/blobs/eyJfc mFpbHMiOnsibWVzc2FnZSI6IkJBaHBBakiDIwiZXhwIjpudWxsLCJwdXliOiJibG9iX2lkIn19--fae7715194b012720c972b16cf097da223431764/PRRB%20Submission%202025.pdf">https://www.policessupers.com/rails/active_storage/blobs/eyJfc mFpbHMiOnsibWVzc2FnZSI6IkJBaHBBakiDIwiZXhwIjpudWxsLCJwdXliOiJibG9iX2lkIn19--fae7715194b012720c972b16cf097da223431764/PRRB%20Submission%202025.pdf</a>

# Appendix E – Our Analysis of Police Earnings and Workforce Data

## Police earnings

### *Sources*

- E.1 We have examined the annual earnings of police officers using results from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) run by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and the Police Earnings Census run by the Home Office.
- E.2 The ASHE is a sample survey of employers covering 1% of employees on Pay As You Earn tax schemes. The results provide earnings estimates by a number of breakdowns, including sex, occupation, industry and region.
- E.3 Our analysis of ASHE is used to look at the earnings of police officers and how they compare with other occupations across the economy. Our analyses focus on the occupational group covering constables and sergeants, as there is more uncertainty around the earnings estimates for the group covering the inspecting, superintending and chief officer ranks due to smaller sample sizes.
- E.4 ASHE estimates are affected by the composition of the employee workforce, which can vary year on year. Differences in levels and growth rates in ASHE estimates reflect both changes in earnings and changes in the composition of the workforce. The ONS advises focusing on long-term trends rather than year-on-year changes.
- E.5 Following methodological changes for 2024 and revised 2023 ASHE data (to address concerns over coverage of high earners in recent years), ONS cautions against comparing these years with earlier years. Our analyses have shown both the provisional 2023 data (unaffected by the changes) and the revised 2023 data to give an indication of the effect of these changes.
- E.6 The Police Earnings Census, conducted in its present form since the financial year ending (FYE) 2011, covers all police officers and permits detailed analysis of their earnings. The data provide a useful insight into the range of earnings received within and across ranks, and the take-up and value of individual pay components.
- E.7 In our analyses of both these sources we focus on median<sup>29</sup> full-time<sup>30</sup> gross<sup>31</sup> annual earnings.

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<sup>29</sup> The median is the value below which 50% of workers fall. It gives a better indication of typical pay than the mean as it is less affected by a relatively small number of very high earners and the skewed distribution of earnings.

<sup>30</sup> We focus on full-time earnings to control for any differences caused by different mixes of full- and part-time workers over time and between occupations.

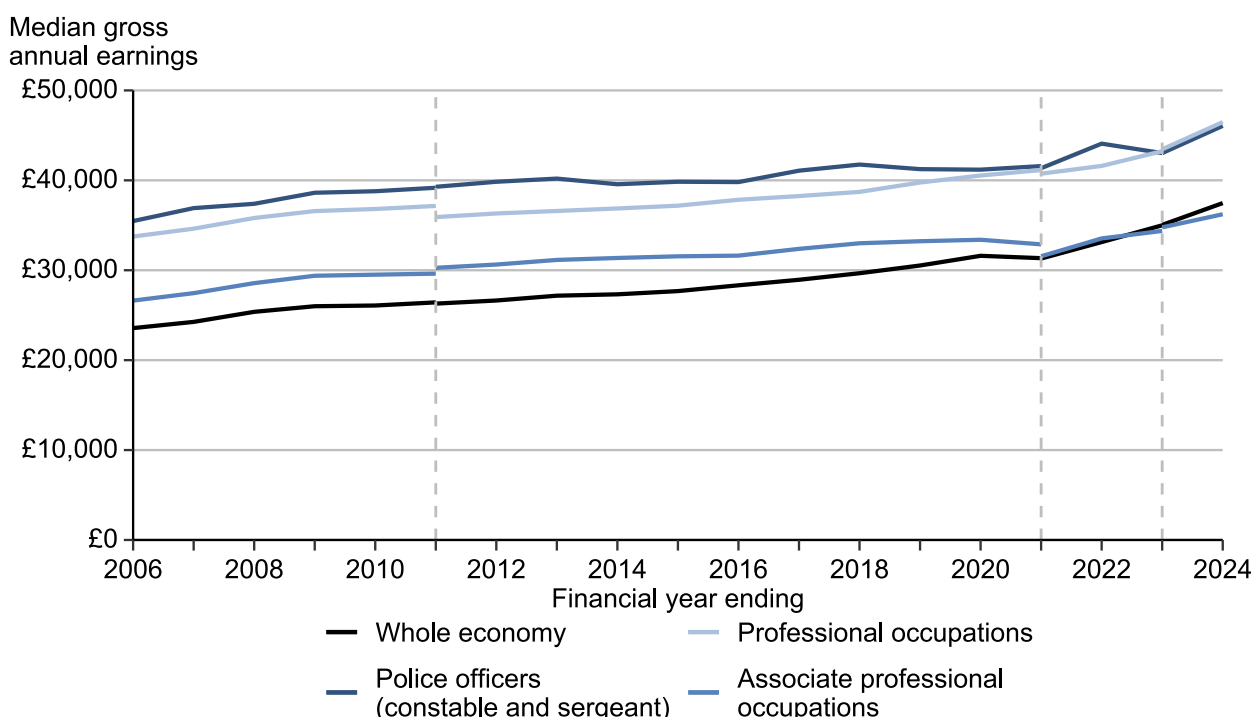
<sup>31</sup> That is before deductions for tax, National Insurance, pension contributions and any other deductions imposed by the employer.

## Analysis

E.8 We used ASHE data to compare the earnings of constables and sergeants with: the whole economy; the associate professional occupations group (the occupational group which includes constables and sergeants); and professional occupations (which tend to be graduate professions).

E.9 Our analysis showed that in FYE 2024 the median full-time earnings of constables and sergeants increased by 7.0% (£3,000, Chart E.1). This is in line with the pay award received in September 2023. In FYE 2024, median full-time earnings rose for all three comparison groups (by 7.0% for professional occupations, 6.9% for the whole economy and 4.2% for associate professional occupations).

**Chart E.1: Median full-time gross annual earnings, England and Wales, FYE 2006–2024**



Source: Office for the Pay Review Bodies (OPRB) analysis of Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

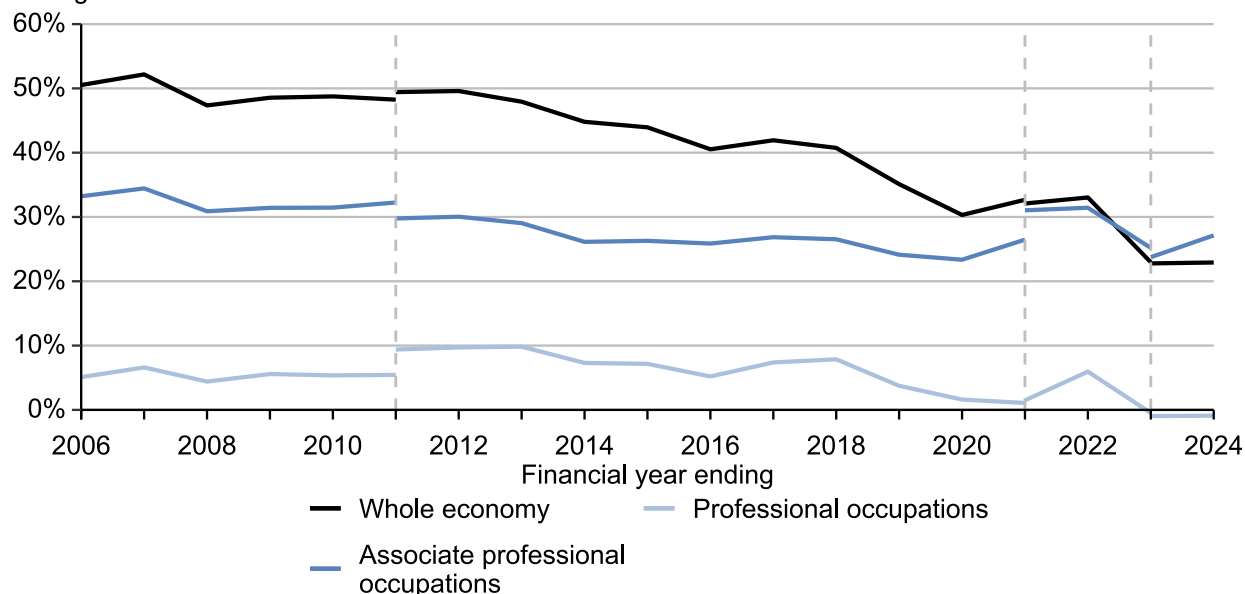
Notes:

- There are discontinuities in the series due to changes to the Standard Occupational Classification in FYEs 2011 and 2021. There is also a discontinuity in FYE 2023 due to methodological changes.
- Data for the latest year are provisional.
- The ‘associate professional occupations’ line represents ‘associate professional and technical occupations’ prior to the 2021 Standard Occupational Classification changes.

E.10 Median full-time gross annual earnings for constables and sergeants in FYE 2024 were 23% higher than in the whole economy (Chart E.2), unchanged from the previous year. In FYE 2024, median full-time gross annual earnings for police officers were 27% higher than associate professional occupations (up from 25% in FYE 2023), and 1% lower than professional occupations (unchanged from FYE 2023).

**Chart E.2: Differentials between police officer full-time median gross annual earnings and those of other groups, England and Wales, FYE 2006–2024**

Police officer  
(constable and  
sergeant) median  
earnings differential



Source: OPRB analysis of Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

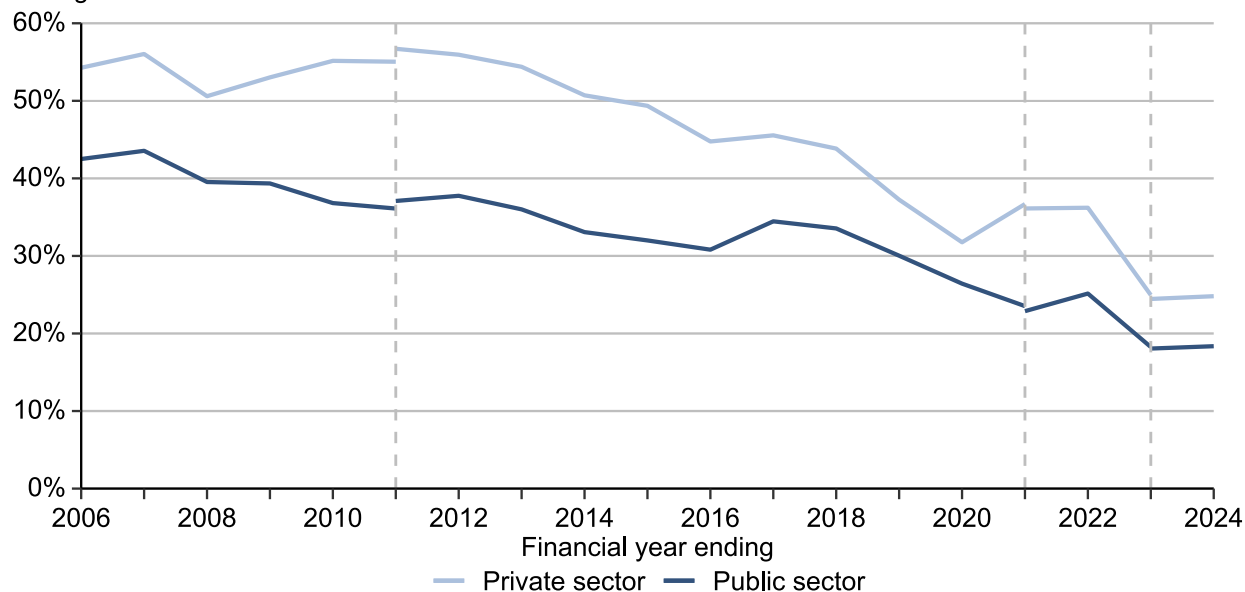
Notes:

- There are discontinuities in the series due to changes to the Standard Occupational Classification in FYEs 2011 and 2021. There is also a discontinuity in FYE 2023 due to methodological changes.
- Data for the latest year are provisional.
- The ‘associate professional occupations’ line represents ‘associate professional and technical occupations’ prior to the 2021 Standard Occupational Classification changes.

E.11 In FYE 2024, median earnings for constables and sergeants were 18% (£7,100) higher than median earnings in the public sector and 25% (£9,200) higher than median earnings in the private sector (Chart E.3). Over time, the differentials with both sectors have been falling, but the differential with the private sector has fallen further than that with the public sector.

**Chart E.3: Differentials between police officer full-time median gross annual earnings and those of the public and private sectors, England and Wales, FYE 2006–2024**

Police officer (constable and sergeant) median earnings differential



Source: OPRB analysis of Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

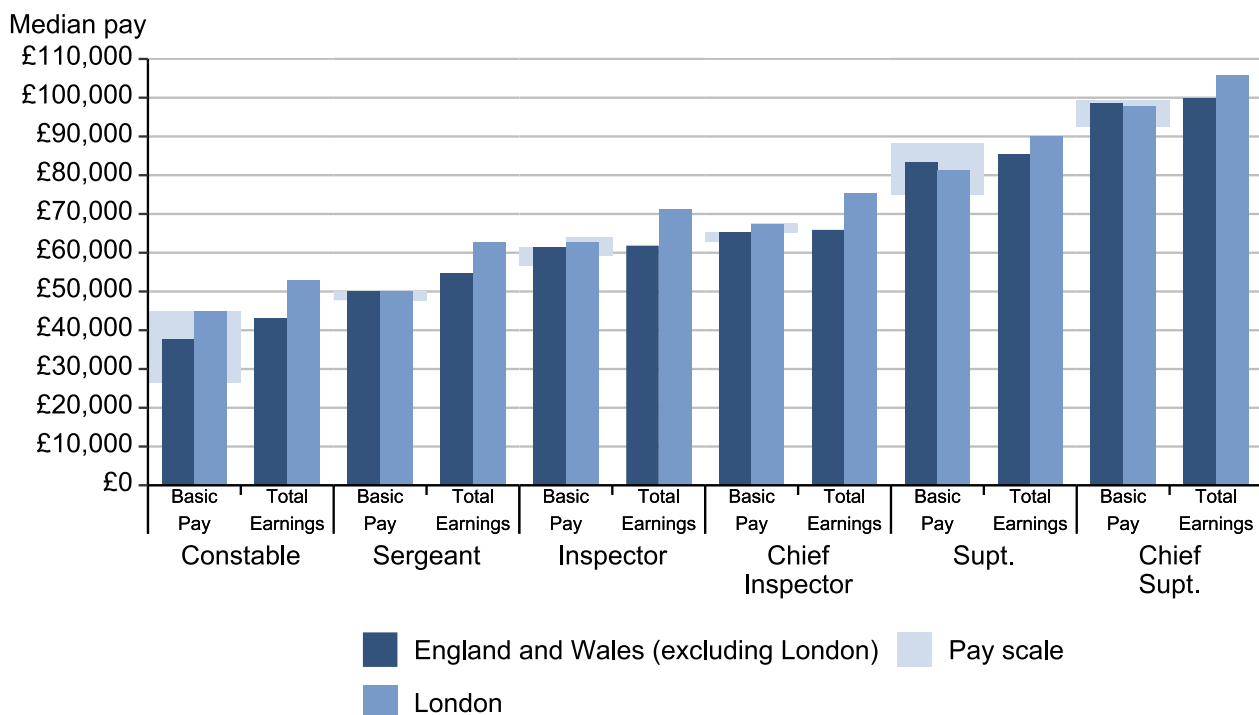
Notes:

- There are discontinuities in the series due to changes to the Standard Occupational Classification in FYEs 2011 and 2021. There is also a discontinuity in FYE 2023 due to methodological changes.
- Data for the latest year are provisional.

E.12 For a detailed analysis of police earnings we used the latest available Police Earnings Census data (covering FYE 2024). Median basic pay for full-time federated and superintending officers ranged from £37,700 for constables to £98,500 for chief superintendents (Chart E.4). Inspectors and chief inspectors are the only ranks to have different basic pay scales in London from elsewhere in England and Wales, resulting in higher median basic pay for those ranks in London. For other ranks, differences in median basic pay between London and the rest of England and Wales are likely to be caused by variations in the distribution of officers on the pay scales.

E.13 Median total earnings for full-time federated and superintending officers ranged from £43,000 for constables to £99,800 for chief superintendents outside London and from £52,800 to £105,900 in London (Chart E.4). Median total earnings are higher in London than the rest of England and Wales for all federated and superintending ranks, due to London-based officers receiving London Weighting and higher rates of Location and Replacement Allowances.

**Chart E.4: Median basic pay and total earnings, by rank, full-time officers, England and Wales, FYE 2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Earnings Census data, Home Office.

Note: Pay scales are averaged over the financial year to be consistent with earnings data.

E.14 Median basic pay in FYE 2024 was close to the pay scale maxima for all ranks except constables outside London and superintendents. This is as a result of around half or more of officers being at the top of their respective pay scales (Table E.1). Inspector and superintendent were the only ranks to have fewer than half of officers at the pay scale maximum.

**Table E.1: Distribution of officers on pay scales, England and Wales, March 2024**

	Constable	Sergeant	Inspector	Chief Inspector	Supt.	Chief Supt.
0	..	–	18%	–	–	–
1	10%	–	17%	21%	20%	24%
2	12%	15%	17%	22%	23%	26%
3	8%	15%	48%	57%	20%	50%
4	8%	70%	–	–	37%	–
5	8%	–	–	–	–	–
6	5%	–	–	–	–	–
7	50%	–	–	–	–	–
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: OPRB analysis of Police Earnings Census data, Home Office.

Notes:

- Percentages represent proportions of all officers in each rank.
- ‘..’ represents a non-zero percentage less than 0.5%.
- ‘–’ represents non-applicable pay points.
- Pay point 0 of the constable scale was removed on 1 September 2023. Pay points 0 and 1 were removed from the sergeant pay scale on 1 April 2014 and 1 September 2020 respectively.

E.15 Our assessment of police earnings included the proportion of full-time officers in receipt of specific allowances and overtime (Table E.2) and the median annual values of those payments for officers in receipt of the particular payments (Table E.3). Key observations include:

- The majority of eligible officers received Unsocial Hours Allowance (92% at the constable rank, although the proportions decreased as rank increased) and overtime payments (93% of constables and 92% of sergeants).
- The proportion of officers receiving overtime was slightly lower than the previous year (down 1 percentage point for constables and 2 percentage points for sergeants). The median amount of overtime was around £530 (20%) lower than in FYE 2023 for constables, and around £600 (13%) lower for sergeants.
- The percentages of officers receiving Location Allowances and London Weighting reflected the proportions of officers working in London and the south east (excluding those receiving Replacement Allowance in south east forces).
- The proportion of officer receiving On-call Allowance generally rose as rank increased. However, among the superintending ranks it was paid to a lower proportion of chief superintendents than superintendents.
- Just over one-quarter of chief superintendents received Recognition of Workload Payments<sup>32</sup> (intended to be paid when the demands placed on the officer exceed those usually placed on other officers of the same rank) with a median value of £1,500.
- Very few officers received Away from Home Overnight and Hardship Allowances, or Service Critical Skills Payments.
- The proportion of officers who received Replacement Allowance (available to officers who joined the police before September 1994) fell with rank, from 8% of superintendents to just 0.4% of constables. As might be expected with a legacy payment, all ranks saw a decrease in the proportion of officers in receipt of Replacement Allowance compared with the previous year.

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<sup>32</sup> Recognition of Workload and Service Critical Skills Payments are collectively referred to as Targeted Variable Pay (TVP).

**Table E.2: Percentage of full-time officers in receipt of additional pay components, by rank, England and Wales, FYE 2024**

	Constable	Sergeant	Inspector	Chief Inspector	Supt.	Chief Supt.
Location Allowance	42%	45%	45%	42%	43%	44%
London Weighting	26%	29%	28%	22%	27%	20%
Replacement Allowance	0.4%	1%	3%	3%	8%	–
Unsocial Hours Allowance	92%	90%	81%	69%	–	–
Away from Home Overnight Allowance	5%	6%	4%	3%	–	–
Hardship Allowance	1%	1%	–	–	–	–
On-call Allowance	7%	17%	39%	67%	86%	76%
Service Critical Skills Payment	7%	8%	3%	4%	–	–
Recognition of Workload Payment	–	–	–	–	14%	28%
Overtime	93%	92%	–	–	–	–
Other payments (e.g. Dog Handlers', secondment allowances)	26%	28%	31%	39%	45%	51%

Source: OPRB analysis of Police Earnings Census data, Home Office.

Note: Percentages relating to fewer than 30 officers are suppressed.

**Table E.3: Median value of additional pay components, full-time officers in receipt of relevant payments, by rank, England and Wales, FYE 2024**

	Constable	Sergeant	Inspector	Chief Inspector	Supt.	Chief Supt.
Location Allowance	£4,921	£4,921	£4,921	£3,000	£4,921	£3,000
London Weighting	£2,807	£2,807	£2,807	£2,807	£2,807	£2,807
Replacement Allowance	£2,845	£2,692	£2,951	£2,910	£2,780	–
Unsocial Hours Allowance	£549	£566	£265	£97	–	–
Away from Home Overnight Allowance	£150	£150	£150	£150	–	–
Hardship Allowance	£120	£120	–	–	–	–
On-call Allowance	£640	£680	£680	£720	£860	£810
Service Critical Skills Payment	£768	£850	£850	£850	–	–
Recognition of Workload Payment	–	–	–	–	£1,000	£1,500
Overtime	£2,182	£3,935	–	–	–	–
Other payments (e.g. Dog Handlers', secondment allowances)	£250	£460	£91	£183	£1,239	£1,239

Source: OPRB analysis of Police Earnings Census data, Home Office.

Note: Estimates relating to fewer than 30 officers are suppressed. Zero allowances are ignored in calculation of the medians. Estimated overtime values exclude forces where one or more components of overtime pay were missing from the Police Earnings Census.

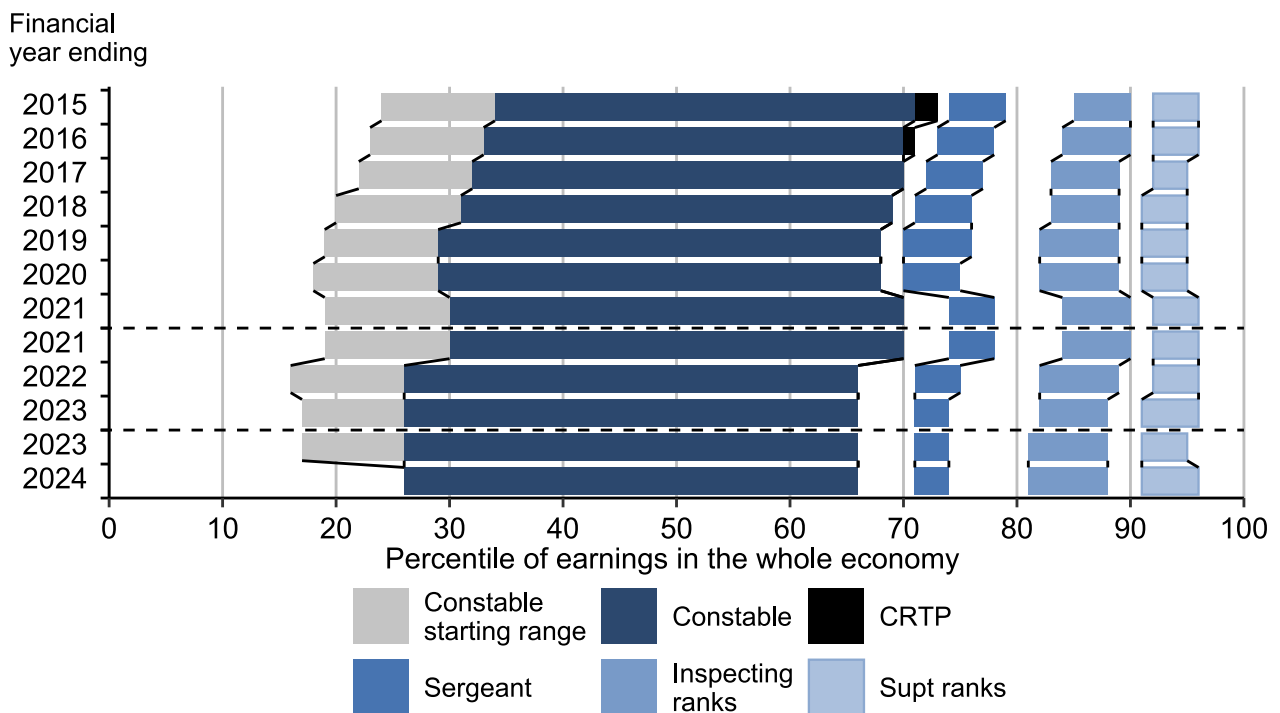
## Police pay scales

E.16 The differentials between police earnings and earnings in the wider economy shown earlier in Charts E.1 to E.3 focused on the median earnings of constables and sergeants. However, changes in the median can reflect changes to workforce composition as well as changes to actual earnings. Another way to compare police

pay with the wider economy is to look at changes in the police pay scales relative to the earnings distribution in the wider economy (Chart E.5).

E.17 Between FYE 2015 and 2023, pay point 0 of the constable pay scale dropped from the 24<sup>th</sup> percentile of whole economy earnings to the 17<sup>th</sup> percentile, but the removal of this pay point in September 2023 meant that the lowest pay point for constables increased to the 26<sup>th</sup> percentile in FYE 2024. That is to say that a new constable starting on the lowest pay point in FYE 2015 had a starting salary that was higher than the earnings of 24% of employees in the whole economy, and in FYE 2023 the starting pay of an equivalent new starter was higher than the earnings of 17% of employees, but then the increased starting salary from September 2023 meant that a new starter in FYE 2024 would earn more than 26% of employees in the wider economy.

**Chart E.5: Police pay scales position in the percentile distribution of earnings in the whole economy, England and Wales, FYE 2015–2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of police pay scales and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

Notes:

- Pay scales are as from 1 September in each financial year.
- CRTP has been included in the scales for constables, sergeants and the inspecting ranks for FYEs 2015 and 2016 as this was effectively an extra pay point on the scales.
- The ranges shown for the inspecting ranks cover both the national and London pay scales.
- There are discontinuities in the series due to changes to the Standard Occupational Classification in FYE 2021, and methodological changes in FYE 2023.
- Data for the latest year are provisional.

E.18 Pay point 1 of the constable pay scale has dropped from the 34<sup>th</sup> percentile in FYE 2015 to the 26<sup>th</sup> percentile in FYE 2024. The pattern is similar when looking at the top of the constable pay scale which dropped from the 73<sup>rd</sup> percentile to the 66<sup>th</sup>,

when Competence Related Thresholds Payments (CRTP)<sup>33</sup> are included and from the 71<sup>st</sup> to 66<sup>th</sup> percentiles when they are excluded.

- E.19 The bottom of the sergeant pay scale has been less affected, owing to the removal of the bottom pay point in 2020. However, the top of the scale has reduced from the 79<sup>th</sup> percentile (including and excluding CRTP) in FYE 2015 to the 74<sup>th</sup> percentile in FYE 2024. The inspecting ranks have seen the minimum fall from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile to the 81<sup>st</sup>, and the maximum fall slightly from the 90<sup>th</sup> to the 88<sup>th</sup>. The superintending ranks have been broadly unchanged relative to whole economy earnings.

## **Workforce, diversity, recruitment and retention**

- E.20 We have examined the police workforce, diversity, recruitment and retention using the Police Workforce Statistics published by the Home Office.

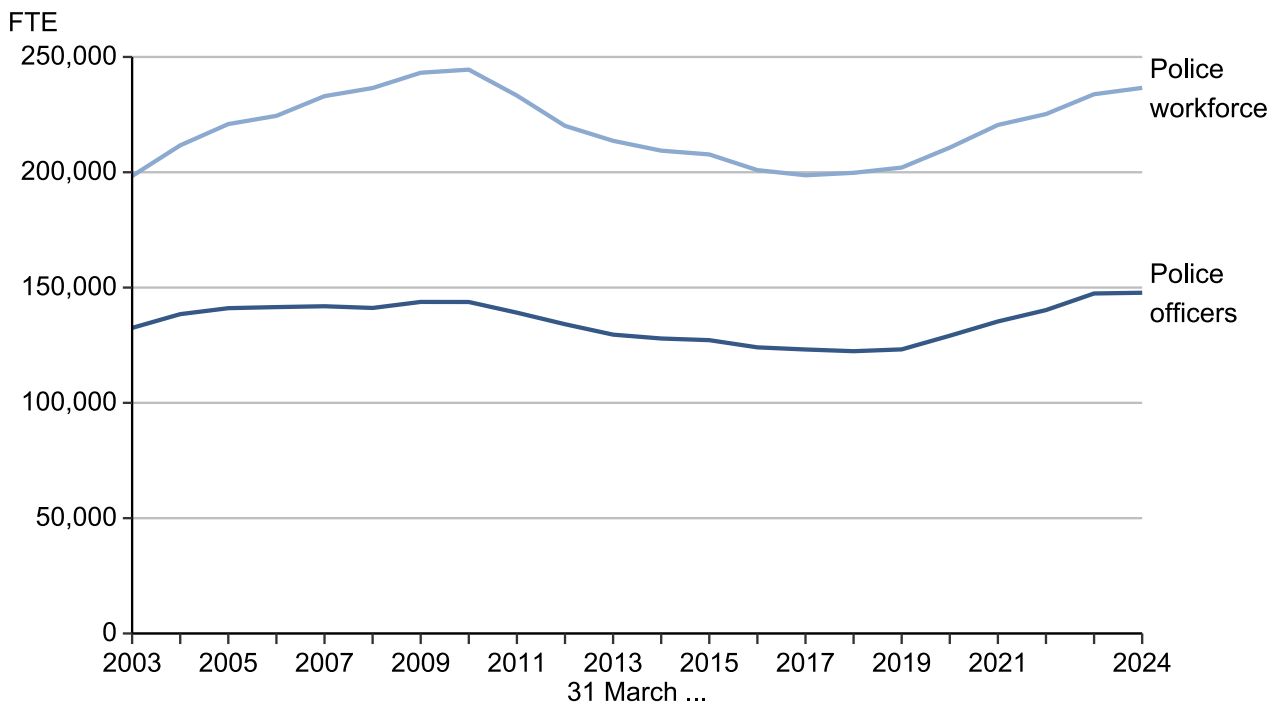
### *Overall workforce*

- E.21 The overall police workforce (Chart E.6) peaked in 2010 at 244,500 full-time equivalents (FTE) before falling by 19% (45,800 FTE) to 198,700 FTE in March 2017, a similar level to that seen in March 2003. Between March 2017 and March 2024, workforce strength has increased by a total of 19% (37,900 FTE) to 236,600 FTE.
- E.22 Police officers account for just over three-fifths of the police workforce. The number of officers fell every year from a peak at 143,800 FTE in March 2009 to 122,400 FTE in March 2018, a 15% drop. Since 2018, officer numbers have increased by 25,300 FTE (21%). At the end of March 2024 there were 147,700 police officers, slightly higher (0.2%) than a year earlier, 3% higher than in March 2009, and the highest number since the comparable data series began in March 2003.

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<sup>33</sup> CRTP acted, in effect, as an additional point on the pay scales for the federated ranks before being removed in April 2016.

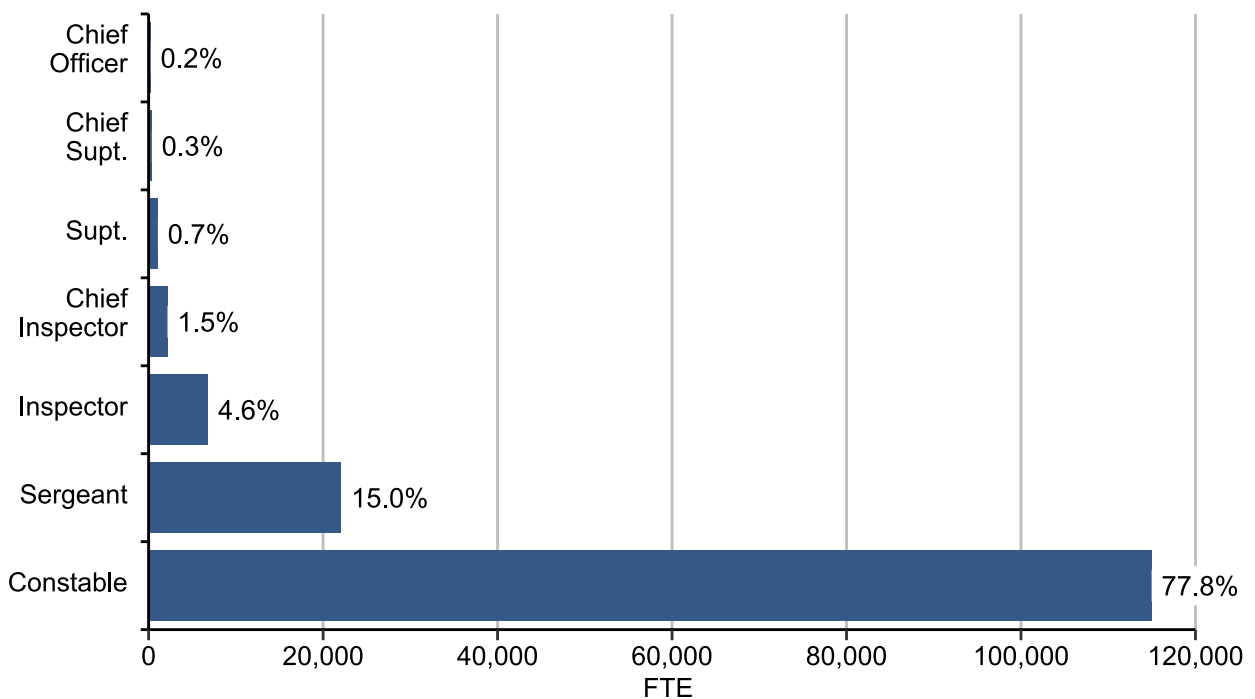
**Chart E.6: Strength of police workforce and number of police officers (FTE), England and Wales, March 2003 – March 2024**



Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.23 In March 2024, nearly four-fifths (78%) of police officers were constables (Chart E.7), and just 7% of officers were in the ranks above sergeant. The proportions in each rank have been relatively stable since 2003 (when comparable data start).

**Chart E.7: Number of police officers by rank, England and Wales, March 2024**

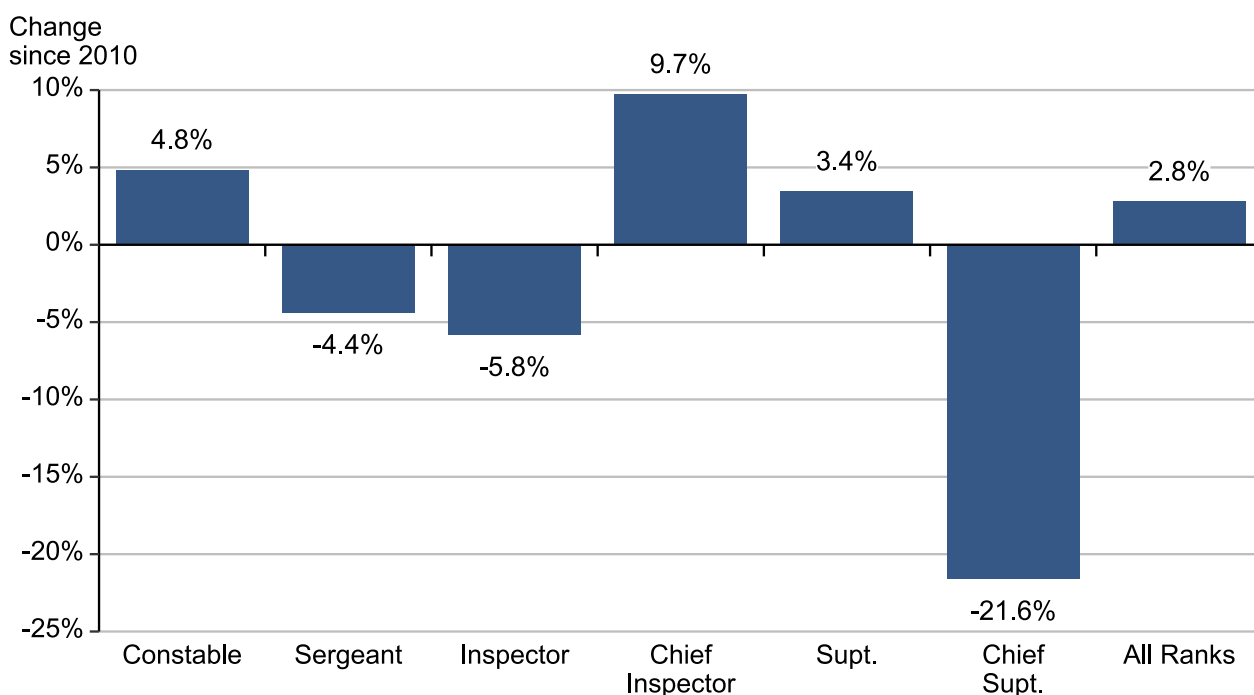


Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.24 Between March 2023 and March 2024, there were increases in the number of officers in all ranks except constables which were down 900 (0.8%). In absolute terms, the largest increase was in the number of sergeants (up 900) while in percentage terms chief inspectors saw the largest uplift (7%).

E.25 Although overall police officer numbers are now above 2010 levels, this is not the case for all ranks (Chart E.8), chief superintendents have seen the largest proportional decrease (22%) but the greatest absolute decreases have been for sergeants (approximately 1,000 FTE) and inspectors (approximately 400 FTE).

**Chart E.8: Percentage change in the number of police officers (FTE) between March 2010 and March 2024, by rank, England and Wales**

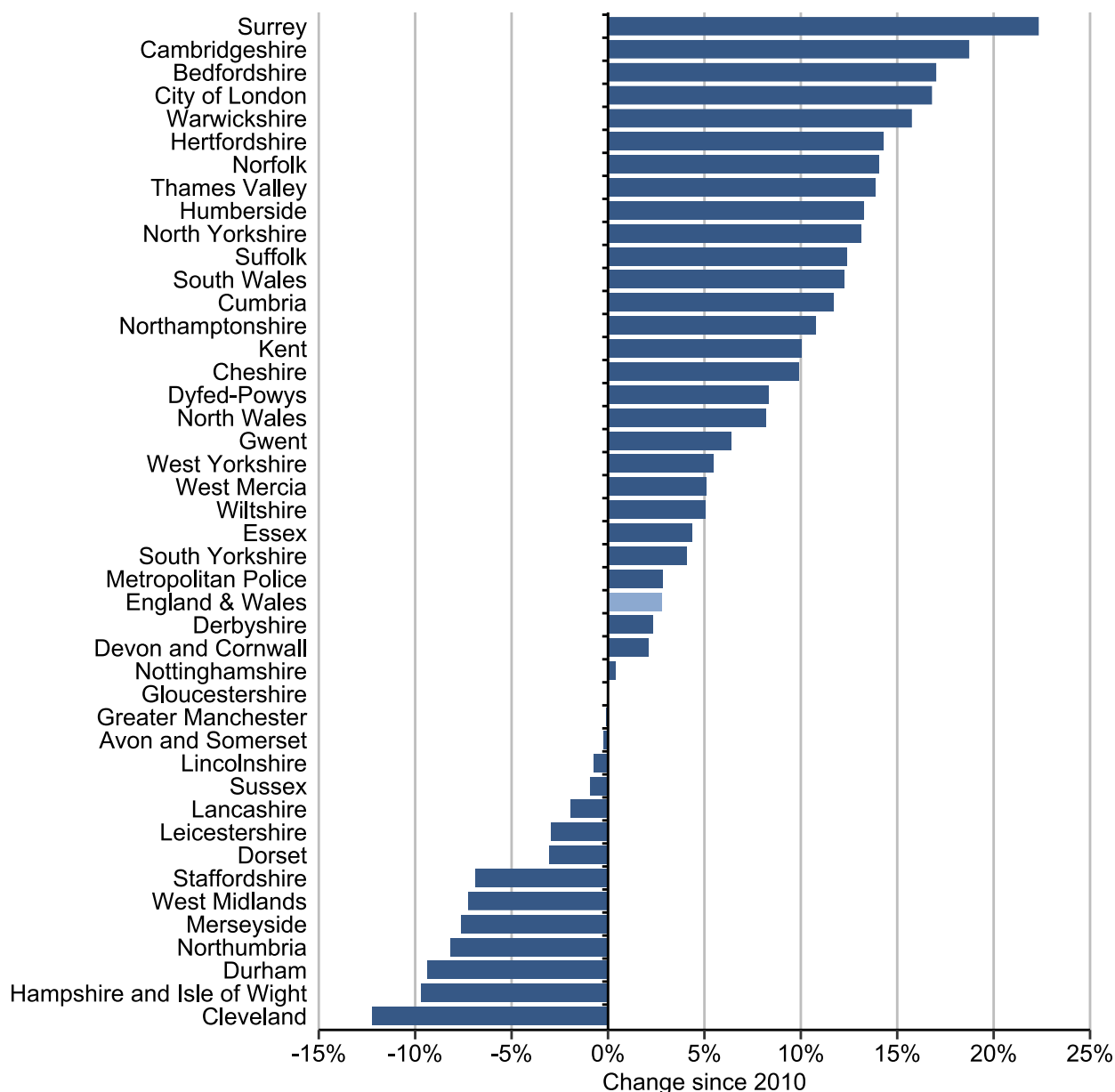


Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.26 Between March 2023 and March 2024 there were increases in officer numbers in 33 forces and decreases in 10. The largest increase proportionally was in Wiltshire (up 5%, 63 FTE) and the largest increase in absolute terms was in Greater Manchester (up 127 FTE, 2%); the largest decrease proportionally was in Northamptonshire (down 2.1%, 32 FTE) and the largest decrease in absolute terms was in the Metropolitan Police Service (down 584 FTE, 1.7%).

E.27 The majority of forces had more officers in March 2024 than in March 2010 (Chart E.9), with Surrey having the largest percentage over this period (22%). However, in 15 forces (including several of the larger forces) officer numbers continue to be significantly below March 2010 levels, with Cleveland showing the largest percentage reduction over this period (12%).

**Chart E.9: Percentage change in police officer numbers, FTE, between March 2010 and March 2024, by force, England and Wales**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.28 His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services assigns the work of police officers to three broad roles – frontline, frontline support, and business support (Table E.4). Between March 2010 and March 2016, the numbers of officers in all roles fell. However, the proportion of officers in frontline roles increased over this period from 91.0% to 93.4%, as a result of proportionally lower reductions in these roles.

E.29 The number of business support roles has been increasing each year since March 2016 and is now above the March 2010 level. The number of frontline support roles has increased substantially over the last four years and is now at the highest level since March 2011. The number of officers in frontline roles continued to fall between March 2016 and March 2019, but saw substantial increases between March 2019

and March 2023. The proportion of officers in frontline roles has fallen from its peak of 93.4% in March 2016 to 90.4% in March 2024, the lowest since the data series started (in 2010).

**Table E.4: Number of police officers by role (FTE), England and Wales, March 2010 – March 2024**

Year	Frontline	Frontline Support	Business Support	Full-time equivalent
				Proportion of officers in frontline roles
2010	123,384	6,499	5,670	91.0%
2011	119,729	6,469	4,912	91.3%
2012	116,122	5,971	4,161	92.0%
2013	113,009	5,215	3,762	92.6%
2014	111,383	4,706	3,309	93.3%
2015	110,853	4,324	3,528	93.4%
2016	106,411	4,087	3,401	93.4%
2017	105,571	4,114	3,471	93.3%
2018	103,837	4,348	4,428	92.2%
2019	103,347	4,176	4,645	92.1%
2020	108,856	4,140	4,846	92.4%
2021	113,645	4,677	5,749	91.6%
2022	117,132	5,478	5,989	91.1%
2023	123,465	5,699	6,352	91.1%
2024	122,249	6,008	6,949	90.4%
<i>2010 – 2024</i>	<i>-0.9%</i>	<i>-7.6%</i>	<i>22.6%</i>	
<i>2010 – 2016</i>	<i>-13.8%</i>	<i>-37.1%</i>	<i>-40.0%</i>	
<i>2016 – 2024</i>	<i>14.9%</i>	<i>47.0%</i>	<i>104.3%</i>	

Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

Notes:

- Data for 2010 to 2014 were collected on a different basis to those for 2015 onwards. The figures presented for these earlier years have been estimated based on a parallel running year (2015) where data were collected on both bases.
- Officers who are classified as being in ‘National Policing’ or ‘Other’ roles are excluded.

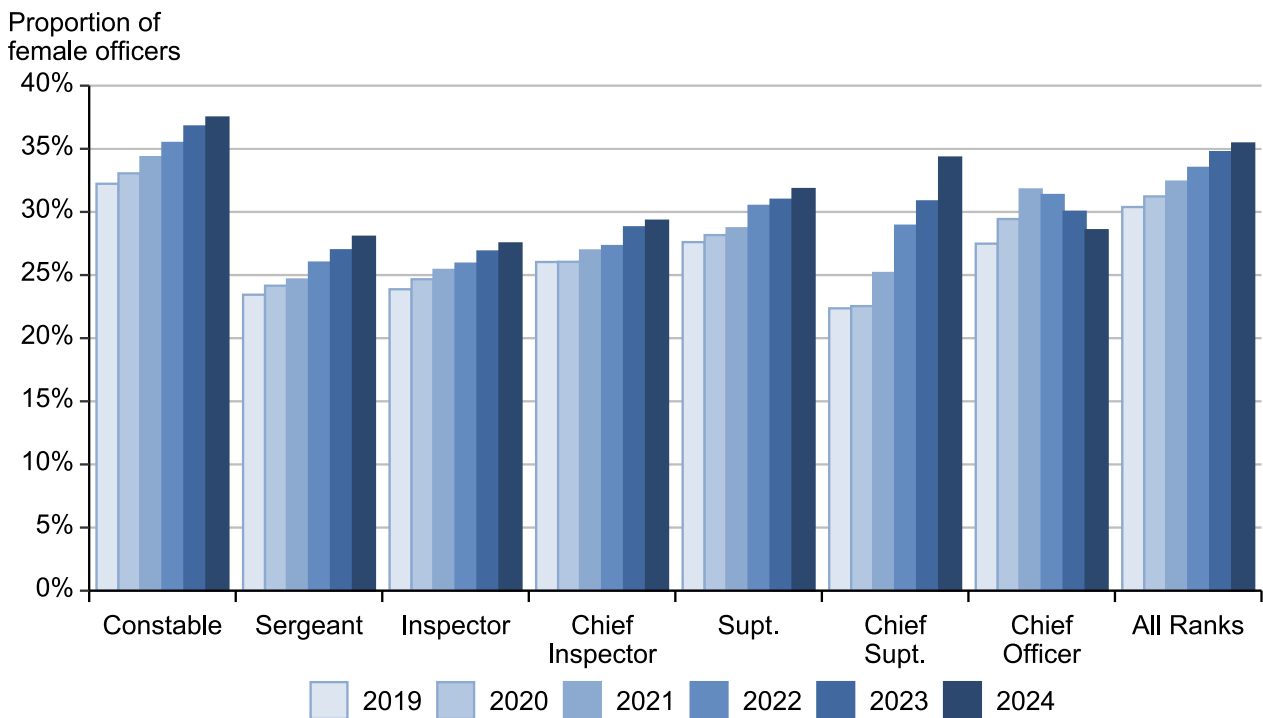
### *Workforce diversity*

E.30 The overall proportion of officers who were female<sup>34</sup> (Chart E.10) increased from 30% to 35% between 2019 and 2024, but the proportion of female officers for ranks above constable was lower than the overall proportion. The overall proportion of ethnic minority<sup>35</sup> officers (Chart E.11) increased from 6.9% to 8.4% between 2019 and 2024, continuing a steadily upward path over the past decade, but again the proportion of ethnic minority officers for ranks above constable was lower than the overall proportion. These indicators show improvement in diversity across the officer workforce in recent years, but remain below levels representative of the communities served by the police.

<sup>34</sup> Proportions of female officers exclude officers who did not state their sex from the denominator.

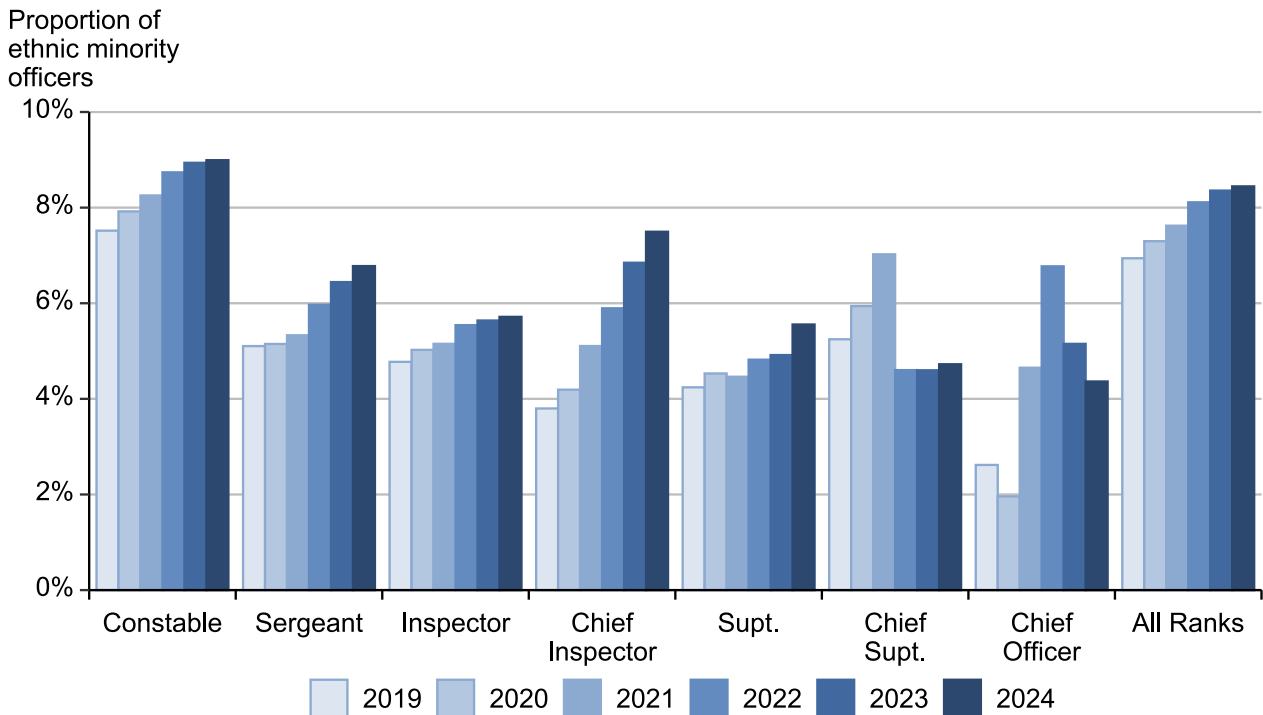
<sup>35</sup> Proportions of ethnic minority officers exclude officers who did not state their ethnicity from the denominator.

**Chart E.10: Percentage of female officers (FTE), by rank, England and Wales, March 2019 – March 2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.  
 Note: Officers who did not state their sex are excluded from calculations.

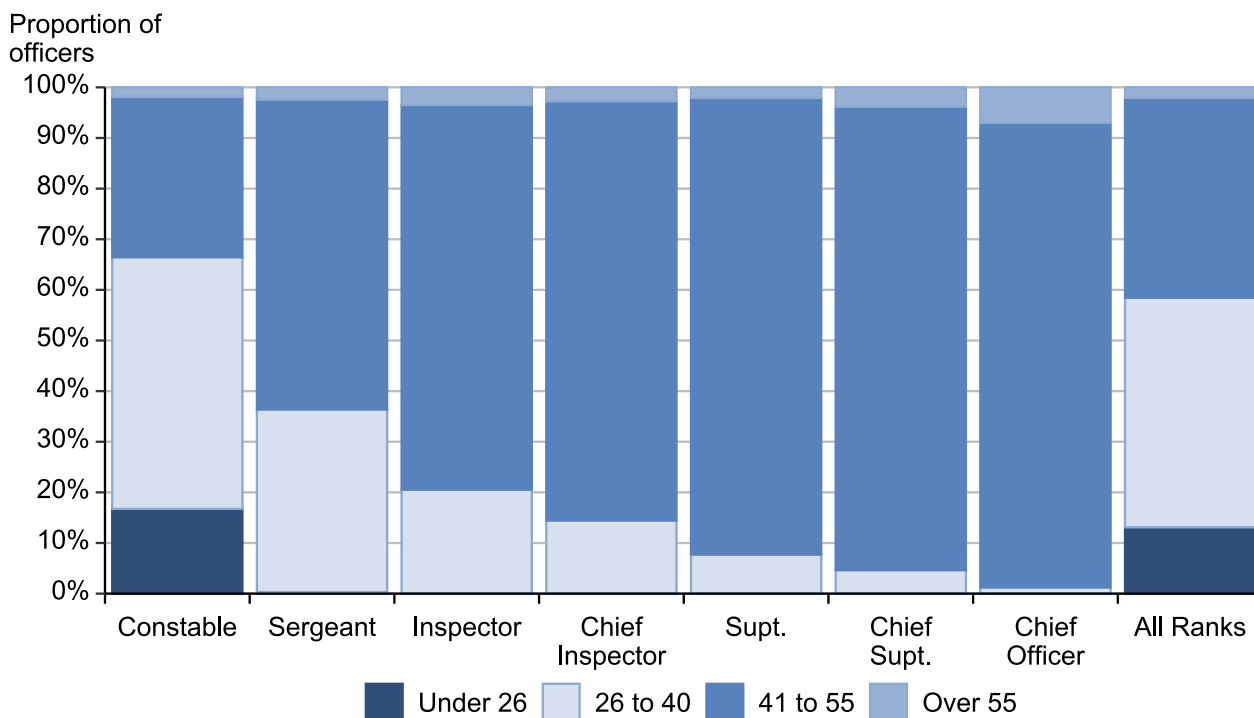
**Chart E.11: Percentage of ethnic minority officers (FTE), by rank, England and Wales, March 2019 – March 2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.  
 Note: Officers who did not state their ethnicity are excluded from calculations.

E.31 Nearly three-fifths (58%) of all police officers (by headcount) were aged 40 or under<sup>36</sup> on 31 March 2024, with 13% of all officers aged under 26 (Chart E.12). The proportion of officers aged under 40 decreases as rank increases: 66% of constables were under 40, but only 1% of chief officers.

**Chart E.12: Age breakdown of police officers (headcount basis), by rank, England and Wales, March 2024**



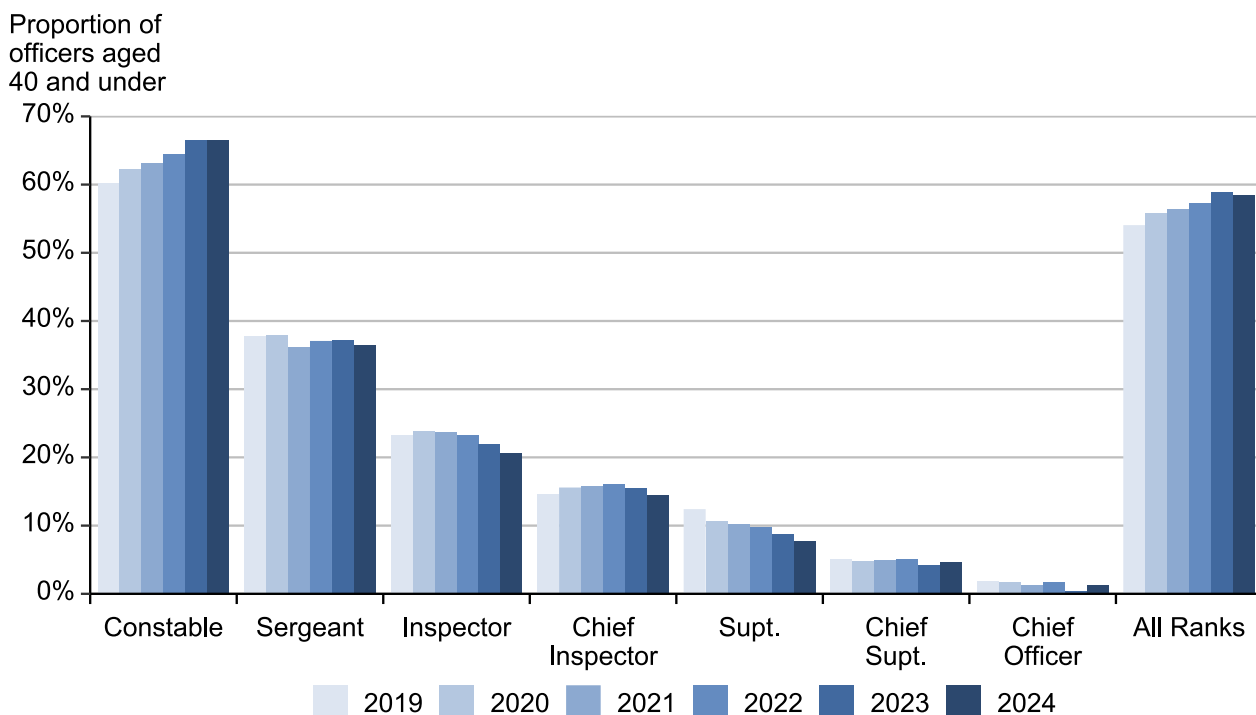
Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

Note: Officers who did not state their age are excluded from calculations.

E.32 Looking at change over time (Chart E.13), the overall proportion of officers aged 40 and under rose from 54% in March 2019 to 59% in March 2023, but fell slightly to 58% in March 2024. Only the chief superintendent and chief officer ranks saw an increase in the proportions of officers in this age group during the latest year.

<sup>36</sup> Proportions of officers by age group exclude officers who did not state their age from the denominator.

**Chart E.13: Proportion of police officers aged 40 and under (headcount basis), by rank, England and Wales, March 2019 – March 2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

Note: Officers who did not state their age are excluded from calculations.

E.33 The Home Office, NPCC and College of Policing have been collaborating in developing a National Standard for Workforce Data, with an aim to bring more standardisation within policing for the collection of data on protected characteristics. The variables currently covered are: ethnicity, age, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex, and gender reassignment. Information on their protected characteristics is self-reported by officers on police force Human Resource systems, and many officers are yet to provide such information. Therefore, the data are not currently complete.

E.34 In addition to the data presented above on sex, ethnicity and age, the Home Office has started publishing information on the proportion of officers broken down by disability status, sexual orientation and religious beliefs. These show that:

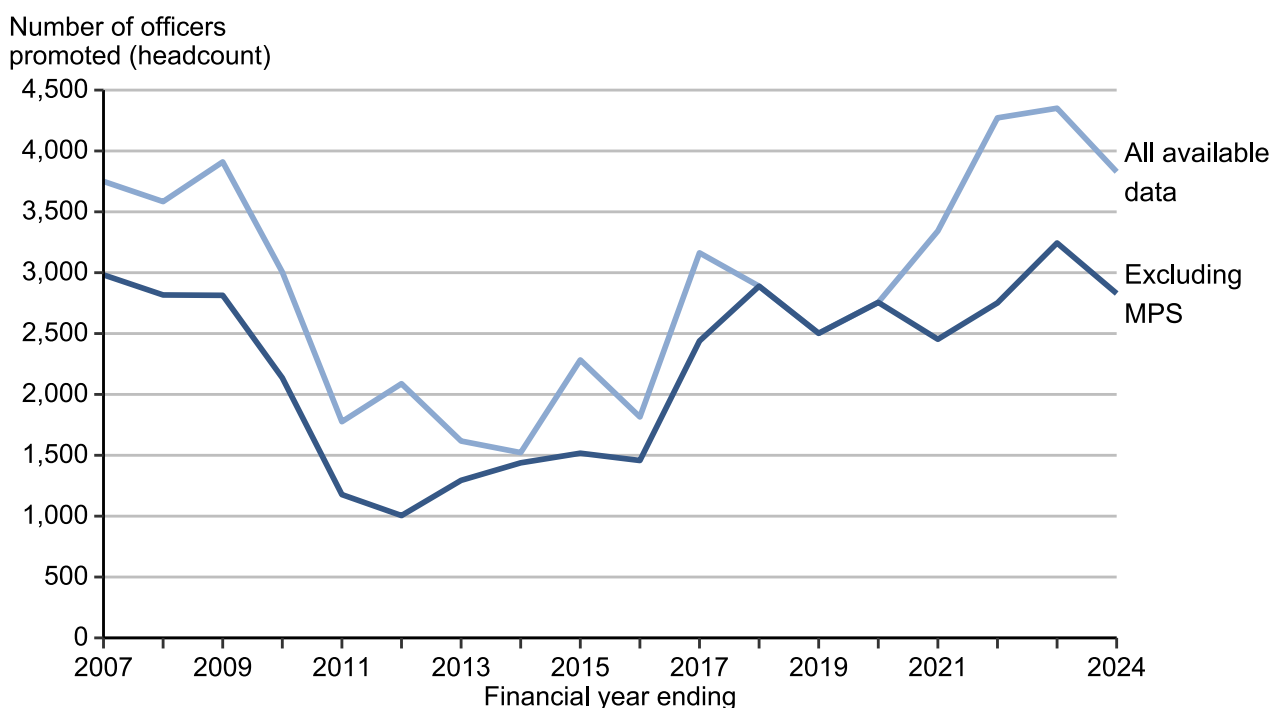
- 61% of officers had declared their disability status, of these 9% reported a disability;
- 66% of officers had declared their religious belief, of these 49% had no religion, 43% were Christian, 3% were Muslim and 5% reported other religions or beliefs; and
- 63% of officers had declared their sexual orientation, of these 5% were gay or lesbian and 3% were bisexual.

## Promotions

E.35 Promotion figures for any given financial year are on a headcount basis, rather than FTE, and exclude officers on temporary promotion and those promoted on transfer from another force. Following the implementation of a new human resource system in 2018, data from the Metropolitan Police Service were unavailable for FYE 2018–2020.

E.36 Around 3,850 officers were promoted in FYE 2024 (Chart E.14). This was a decrease of 12% compared with the number of promotions in FYE 2023. Promoted officers represented 3% of all officers in post at the end of the year.

**Chart E.14: Police officer promotions, England and Wales, FYE 2007–2024**



Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

Notes:

- No data are available for the Metropolitan Police Service for FYE 2018–2020.
- Additionally, some years' figures are subject to more minor exclusions, due to smaller forces occasionally being unable to provide data.

## Recruitment

E.37 Excluding officers transferring between forces, the number of officers joining the police (Chart E.15) fell sharply after FYE 2009, with around 2,000 joiners annually between FYE 2011 and 2013 (due to most forces freezing recruitment as a response to public sector austerity). The number of joiners then increased in most years from FYE 2014 to 2019, before the announcement of the Uplift Programme in 2019, led to a sharp increase. There were around 9,500 joiners in FYE 2024 (the first year after the end of Uplift Programme), 42% (6,800 FTE) lower than the previous year.

**Chart E.15: Police officer joiners excluding transfers (FTE), England and Wales, FYE 2007–2024**



Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.38 The joiner rate<sup>37</sup> (excluding transfers) for FYE 2024 was 6%. Transfers accounted for around 12% of officers who joined a force in FYE 2024.

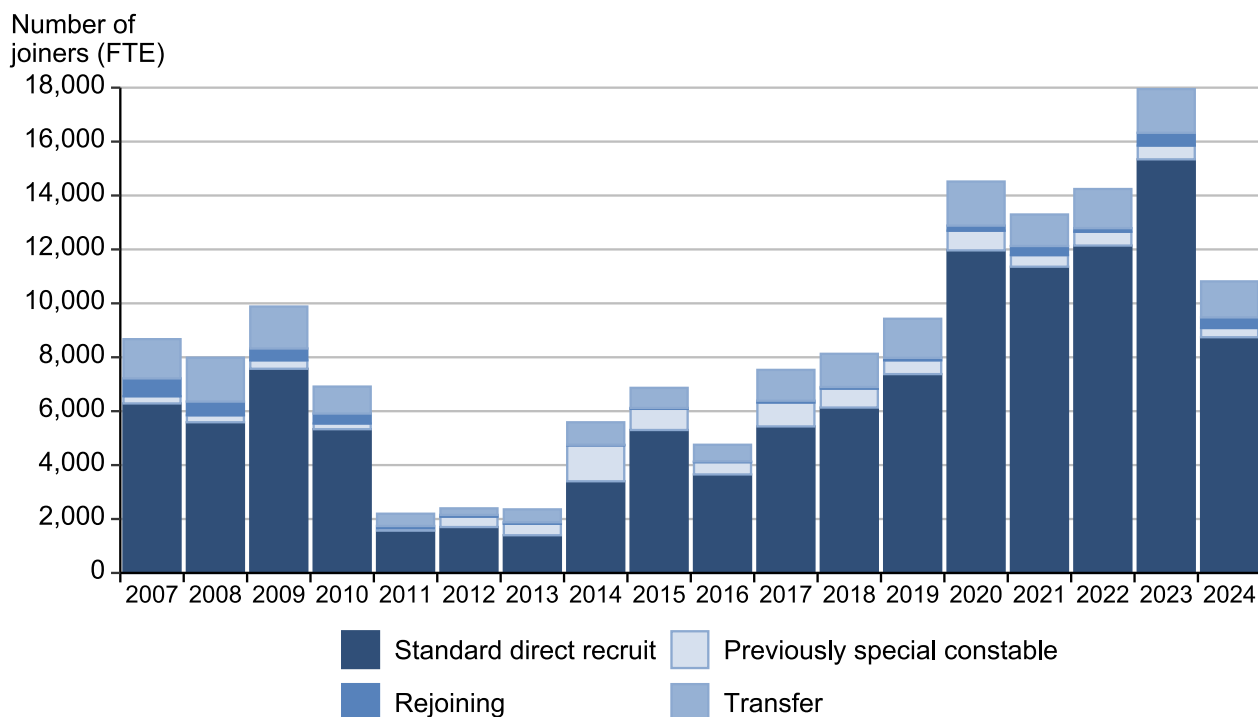
E.39 In FYE 2024, around 8,700 FTE joiners were new recruits joining as an officer for the first time (Chart E.16). This represented 81% of all joiners (including transfers), a slightly lower proportion than was seen during the Uplift Programme (around 85% a year) but higher than the proportion seen between FYE 2007 and 2019 (when it ranged between 59% and 78%).

E.40 The number of officers re-joining the police service in England and Wales fell significantly in FYE 2011 (from around 370 FTE the previous year to around 80 FTE) and had remained below 100 FTE a year until FYE 2019. However, the number of re-joiners increased after the announcement of the Uplift Programme, and in FYE 2024 there were 390 FTE rejoining officers.

E.41 The number of transfers between forces fell from a peak of 1,630 in FYE 2008 to around 240 in FYE 2012, before slowly recovering. In FYE 2024 there were around 1,350 transfers, 18% fewer than the previous year.

<sup>37</sup> The number of joiners during a financial year as a proportion of the total numbers of officers in post at the end of the financial year (31 March).

**Chart E.16: Police officer joiners (FTE), by route of entry, England and Wales, FYE 2007–2024**



Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

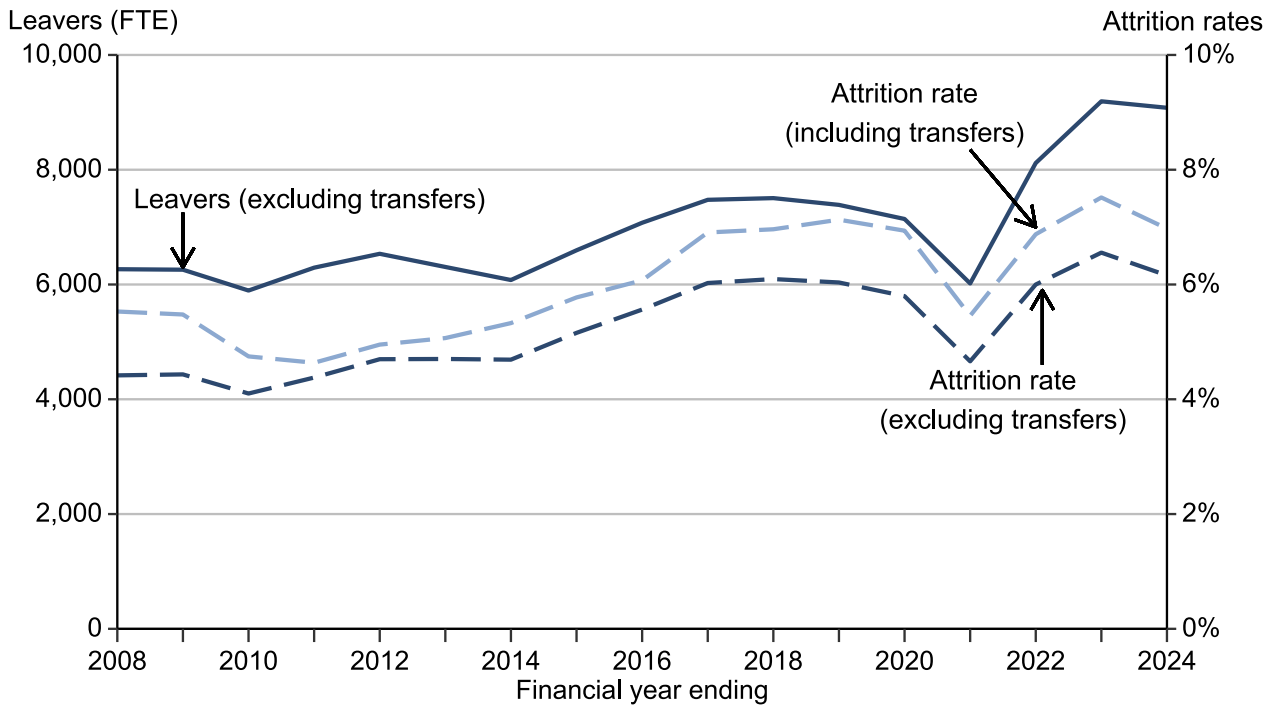
Note: Standard direct recruit includes officers joining via Direct Entry, Fast Track and Police Now schemes.

### Retention and attrition rates

E.42 Excluding transfers between forces, the number of officers leaving the police service in FYE 2024 was 9,100 FTE (Chart E.17). This represented a fall of 1% (100 FTE officers) compared with the previous year. The attrition rate<sup>38</sup> rose each year from 4.1% in FYE 2010 to 6.1% in FYE 2018, but had dropped to 4.7% by FYE 2021 (partly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic). By FYE 2023 it had increased to 6.6%, the highest since the data series started (in FYE 2004), but in FYE 2024 it decreased slightly to 6.2%. Including officers who transferred to other forces rather than leaving the service altogether, the attrition rate was 7.0% in FYE 2024, also a drop on the previous year.

<sup>38</sup> The total number of police officers leaving the service in the financial year as a proportion of the total officers in post in the March just before the financial year began.

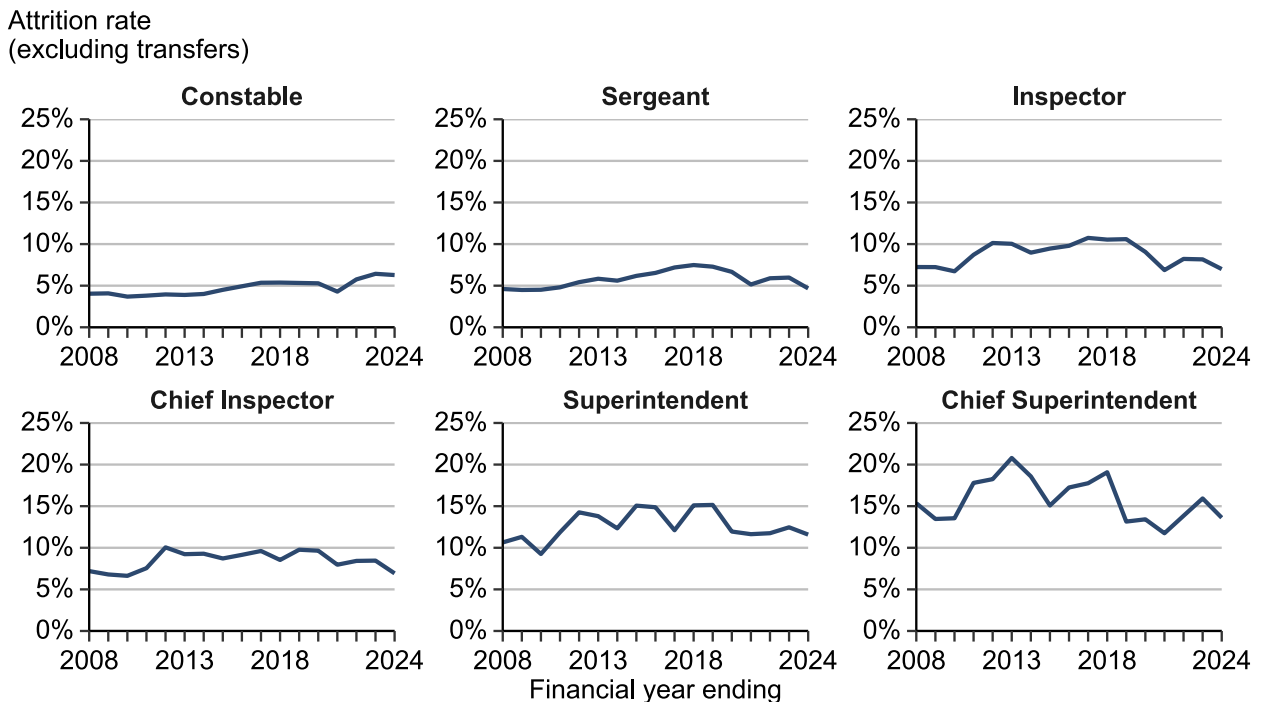
**Chart E.17: Police officer leavers and attrition rates (FTE), England and Wales, FYE 2008–2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.43 By rank, the attrition rate excluding transfers (Chart E.18) in FYE 2024 was lowest for constables and sergeants (6.3% and 4.7% respectively) and generally increased with rank to be highest for chief superintendents (13.6%). This reflects higher proportions of officers with longer service at higher ranks.

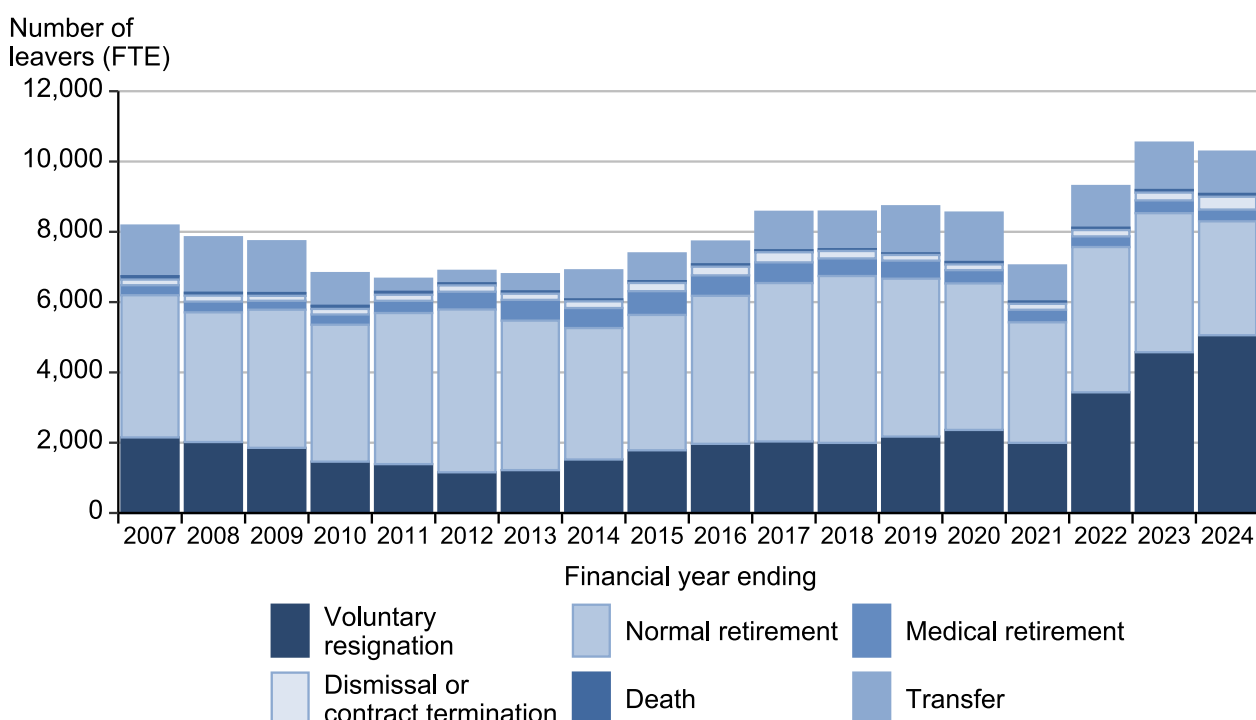
**Chart E.18: Police officer attrition rates (excluding transfers), by rank England and Wales, FYE 2008–2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.44 Both the number of voluntary resignations (Chart E.19) and the voluntary resignation attrition rate (Chart E.20) have been rising since FYE 2012, but these increases have been greater since the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the increasing proportions of officers in the early years of service as a result of the Uplift Programme. In 2024 there were 5,100 voluntary resignations which represented 56% of leavers excluding transfers, up from 33% in FYE 2020 (before the pandemic) and 18% in 2012. The voluntary resignation attrition rate was 3.4% in FYE 2024. While this represents a sharp increase from 0.8% in FYE 2012, it remains low compared with other areas of the public sector.

**Chart E.19: Police officer leavers (FTE), by leaver type, England and Wales, FYE 2007–2024**

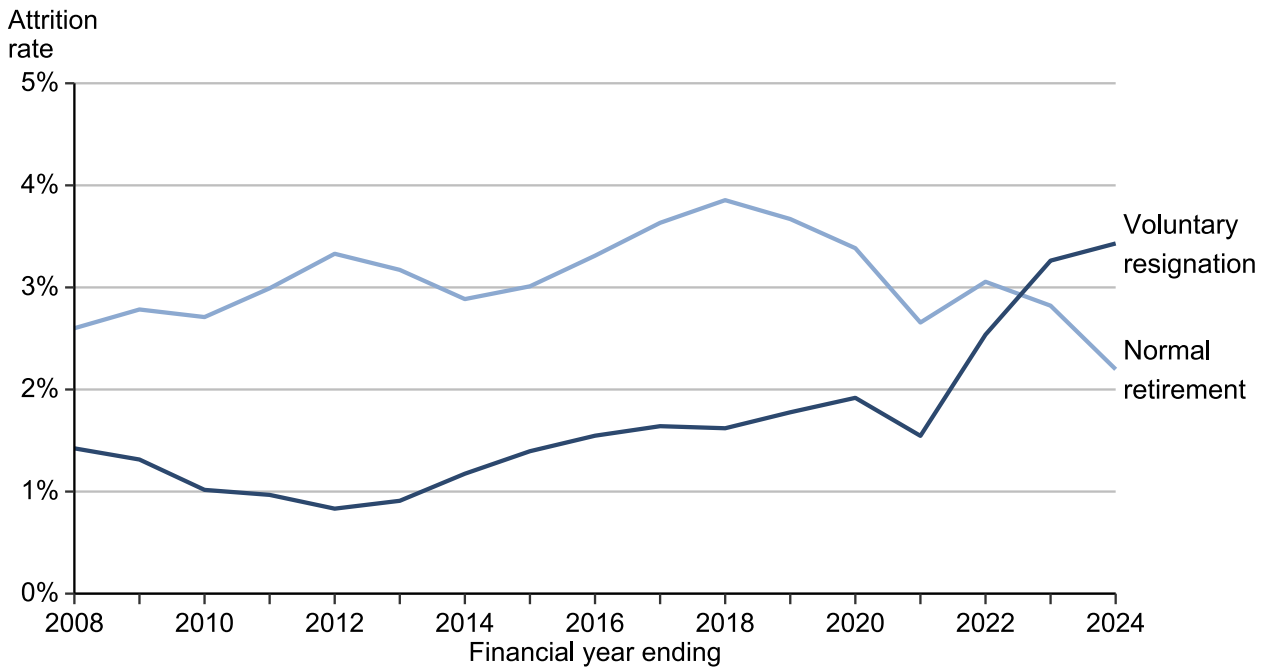


Source: Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.45 In FYE 2024 36% of police leavers excluding transfers were normal retirements<sup>39</sup>. This was down from 58% in FYE 2020 and 71% in 2012. This decrease is mainly as a result of the increasing number of voluntary resignations, but the number of normal retirements in FYE 2024 was also 32% lower than in FYE 2018. The normal retirement attrition rate was 2.2% in FYE 2024, the lowest since the data series began in FYE 2008 (Chart E.20).

<sup>39</sup> Individuals who retired, not on ill-health grounds.

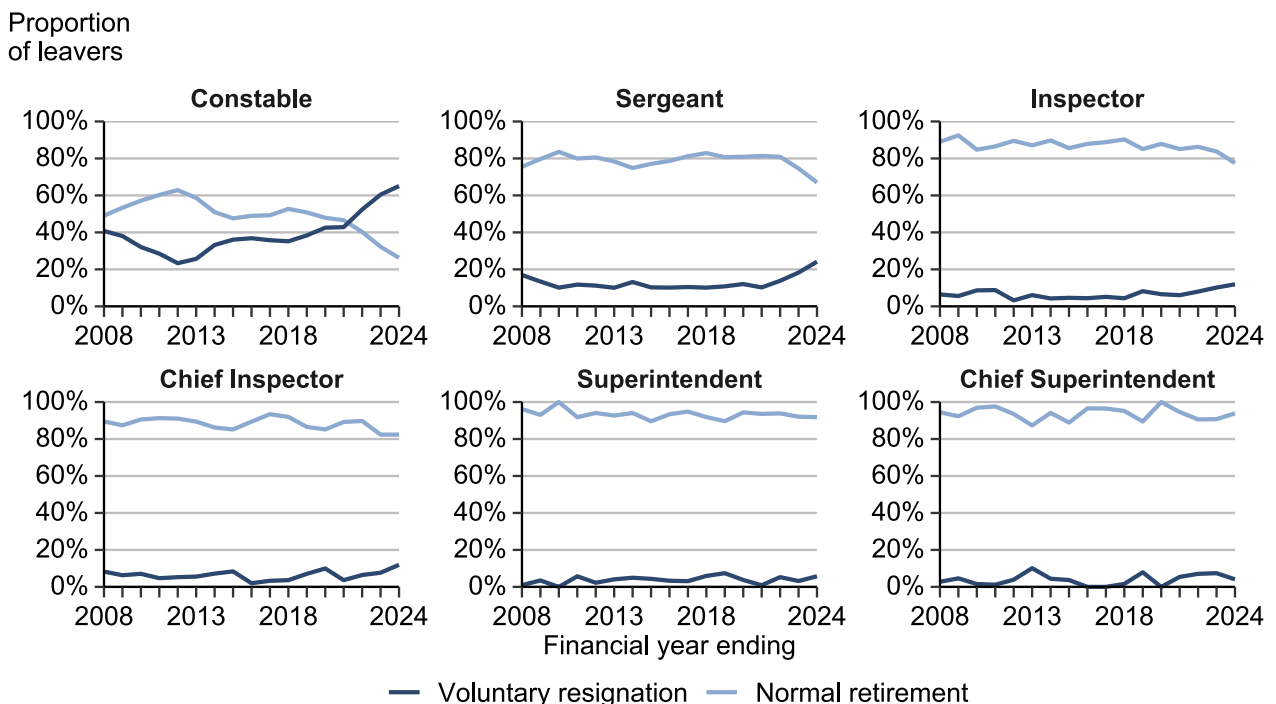
**Chart E.20: Police officer attrition rate, by selected leaver type, England and Wales, FYE 2008–2024**



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.46 The proportion of leavers (excluding transfers) that were voluntary resignations (Chart E.21) was highest for constables (65% in FYE 2024). For all other ranks, normal retirement was the most common type of leaver. However, voluntary resignations have been increasing as a proportion of leavers for sergeants and the inspecting ranks in recent years.

**Chart E.21: Police officer leavers (FTE), by leaver type and rank, England and Wales, FYE 2008–2024**



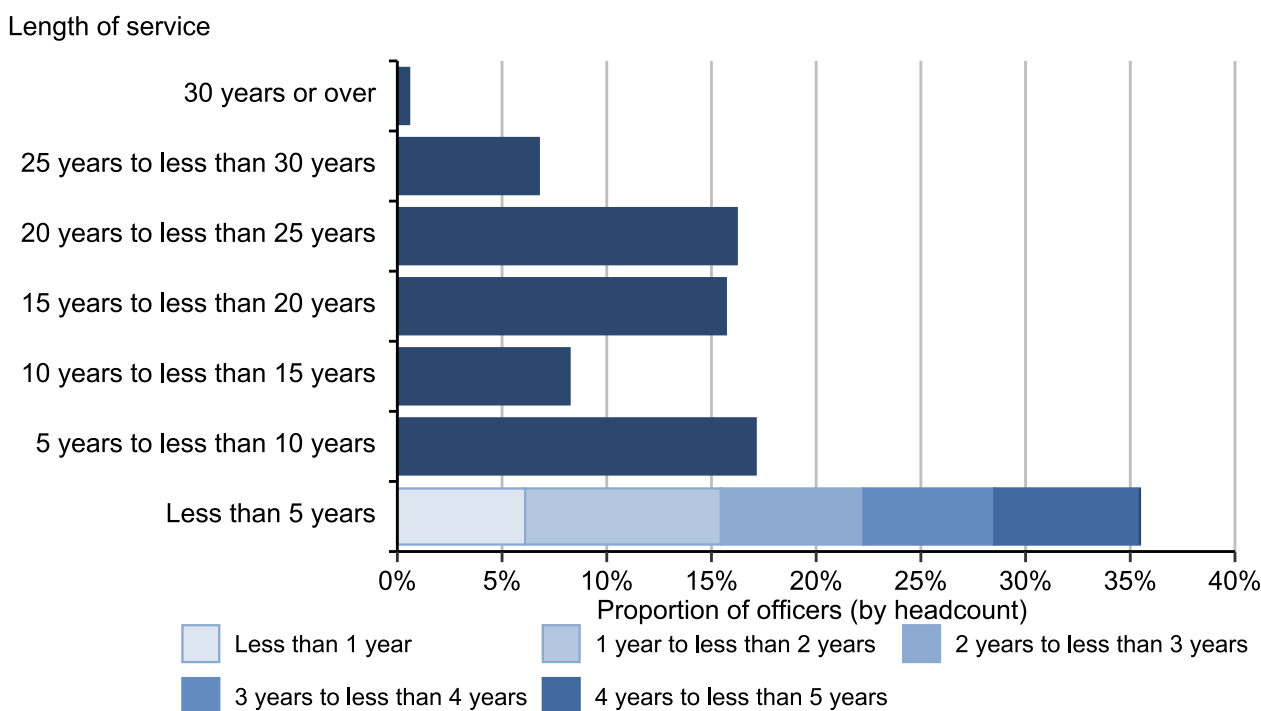
Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

### Length of service

E.47 Length of service data are less reliable than other workforce data. Where officers have transferred forces, or changed roles within a force, some forces record the length of service based on the date the officer started their current role (rather than the date the officer joined the police service). This skews the data towards shorter service periods and under-records longer periods of service where individuals may have moved posts or forces.

E.48 Patterns in length of service data tend to reflect recruitment trends over time. In March 2024 officers with less than five years' service accounted for 35% of all police officers (Chart E.22) as a result of the scale of recruitment during the Uplift Programme.

**Chart E.22: Length of service of police officers, headcount, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2024**

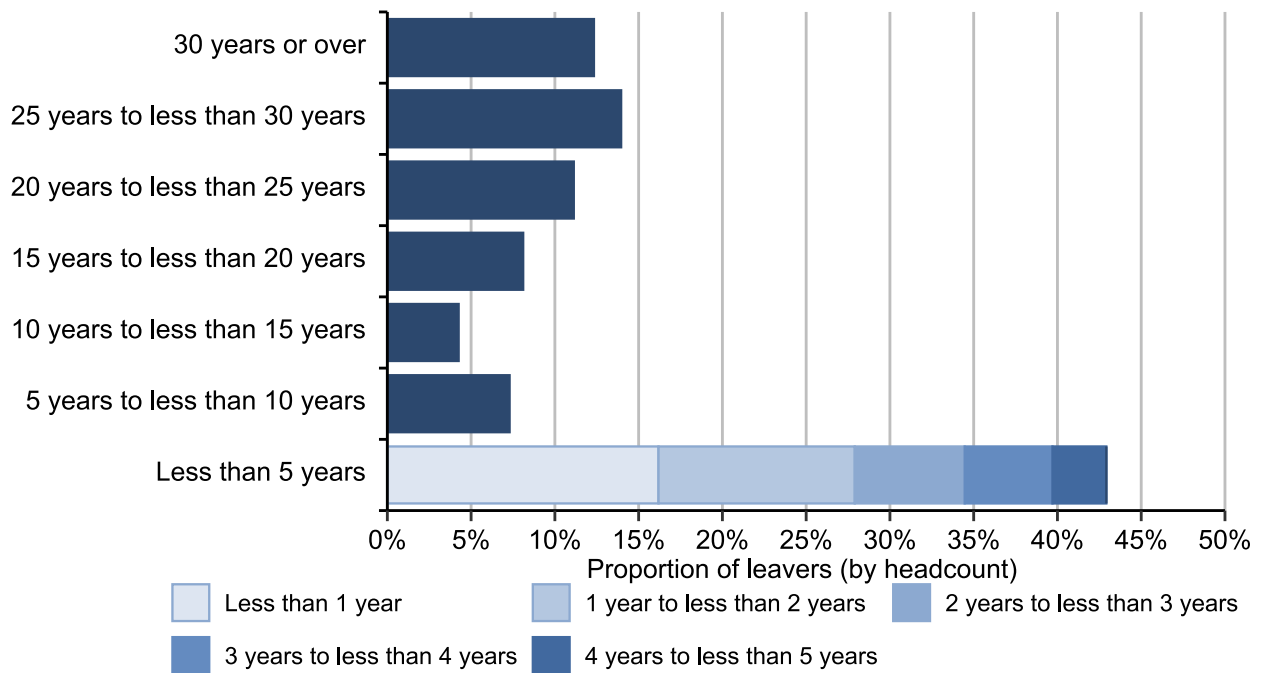


Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

E.49 The Home Office published information on the length of service of leavers for the first time in 2024. This showed that in FYE 2024 16% of all leavers (on a headcount basis and excluding transfers between forces) had less than one year's service and 43% had less than five years' service (Chart E.23).

**Chart E.23: Police officer leavers (headcount), by length of service, England and Wales, FYE 2024**

Length of service



Source: OPRB analysis of Police Workforce Statistics, Home Office.

## Appendix F – Recommended Changes to Police Officer Pay Scales and Allowances from 1 September 2025

### Salary scales

The salary scales for the federated and superintending ranks in effect from 1 September 2024 are set out below, along with our recommendations for effect from 1 September 2025.

#### *Federated ranks*

Rank	Pay point	With effect from 1 September 2024	Recommended for effect from 1 September 2025	Notes
<b>Constable (appointed on or after 1 April 2013)</b>	1	£29,907	£31,164	a
	2	£31,164	£32,472	b
	3	£32,427	£33,789	
	4	£33,690	£35,106	
	5	£36,216	£37,737	
	6	£41,304	£43,038	
	7	£48,231	£50,256	
<b>Sergeant</b>	2	£51,408	£53,568	
	3	£52,458	£54,660	
	4	£53,943	£56,208	
<b>Inspector</b>	0	£61,197	£63,768	
	1	£62,865	£65,505	
	2	£64,527	£67,236	
	3	£66,201	£68,982	
<b>Inspector (London)</b>	0	£63,783	£66,462	
	1	£65,454	£68,202	
	2	£67,134	£69,954	
	3	£68,808	£71,697	
<b>Chief Inspector</b>	1	£67,509	£70,344	c
	2	£68,823	£71,715	
	3	£70,200	£73,149	
<b>Chief Inspector (London)</b>	1	£70,116	£73,062	c
	2	£71,427	£74,427	
	3	£72,798	£75,855	

## Superintending ranks

Rank	Pay point	With effect from 1 September 2024	Recommended for effect from 1 September 2025	Notes
<b>Superintendent</b>	1	£80,784	£84,177	
	2	£84,885	£88,449	
	3	£89,208	£92,955	
	4	£95,025	£99,015	
<b>Chief Superintendent</b>	1	£99,612	£103,797	
	2	£102,903	£107,226	
	3	£111,117	£115,785	

## Legacy pay scales

Constables appointed before 1 April 2013 remain on the old pay scale, and there are also legacy pay points for any chief inspectors who were in post on 31 August 1994. The value of these pay points in effect from 1 September 2024 are set out below, along with our recommendations for effect from 1 September 2025.

Rank	Pay point	With effect from 1 September 2024	Recommended for effect from 1 September 2025	Notes
<b>Constable (appointed before 1 April 2013)</b>	0	£31,497	£32,820	
	1	£34,908	£36,375	d
	2	£36,801	£38,346	e
	3	£38,922	£40,557	
	4	£40,083	£41,766	
	5	£41,304	£43,038	
	6	£44,748	£46,626	
	7	£48,231	£50,256	
<b>Chief Inspector (in post 31 August 1994)</b>	Outside London	£71,316	£74,310	
	London	£73,899	£77,004	

## Allowances

The recommended revised values of allowances from 1 September 2025 are set out below:

<b>London Weighting</b>	£3,150 per annum
<b>Dog Handlers' Allowance</b>	£2,946 per annum
<b>On-call Allowance</b>	£35 per day
<b>Motor Vehicle Allowance</b>	
– Essential Users' Lump Sum	£1,239 for all engine sizes
<b>Away from Home Overnight Allowance</b>	£60 per night
<b>Hardship Allowance</b>	£40 per night

The values of all other allowances and payments remain unchanged.

Notes:

- a. Officers appointed to the rank of constable join at pay point 1. This is subject to (b).
- b. With effect from 1 April 2025, the chief officer of police, on determining that it is necessary to do so in order to meet local recruitment needs may, after consultation with the local policing body, assign all constables appointed on or after that date to pay point 2.
  - i. Where the chief officer determines that officers will be appointed on pay point 2, officers on pay point 1 on the date that the decision takes effect are immediately moved to pay point 2. This date will become their new increment date.
  - ii. Officers move up to the next pay point annually in accordance with the provisions on incremental progression set out in Part 1BA of Annex F under Regulation 24 of the Police Regulations 2003.
- c. Entry point for an officer appointed to the rank, unless the chief officer of police assigns the officer to a higher point.
- d. On completion of initial training, officers will move to pay point 1.
- e. All officers move to this salary point on completion of two years' service as a constable.

Incremental progression through the pay scale is dependent upon confirmation that an officer meets the Pay Progression Standard.

