

West Mercia Police Equality and Diversity Report | 2015



West Mercia
POLICE

#WeStandTogether



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Foreword

I am very pleased to present this annual report outlining our Equality Objectives and demonstrating our continued commitment to Equality and Diversity. Our Officers and staff have worked hard to engage, understand and involve our diverse communities over the last twelve months to promote equality and diversity and ensure positive outcomes across West Mercia.

West Mercia Police serves over 1 million people across a diverse region of 2,868 square miles, making it the fourth largest police area in England and Wales. We operate through five local policing areas - Herefordshire, North Worcestershire, South Worcestershire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.

Our recent review of our Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) across the Alliance has enabled us to establish a model that is more attuned to the communities we serve through the introduction of Local IAGs. Our IAG members worked closely with on this difficult but necessary piece of work for which I am extremely grateful. IAGs continue to work with us to ensure our services are fair and accessible and our work has contributed to the national guidance issued by the College of Policing in 2015: [J:\Enabling Services\SS\Equality & Diversity\Strategic Diversity\IAGs\Independent Advisory Groups Advice 2015.pdf](#)

I am particularly proud of the achievements of our Diversity Delivery Group and the enthusiasm and professionalism of all officers and staff involved. As Finalist in the 2015 Race for Opportunity Awards competing against organisations from every sector, this is strong evidence of our commitment to addressing under representation and working harder to ensure diversity within West Mercia Police. We have recruited 47 BME student officers across the Alliance which is a tremendous achievement.

In October, working with other agencies and our communities we re-launched our Hate Crime initiative. Hate Crime is vastly under-reported, particularly Disability and LGBT Hate Crime. Our message is simple, we do not tolerate any form of Hate Crime and we will work closely with all agencies to tackle all types of hate crimes. Reports of Hate Crimes have increased across West Mercia, demonstrating increasing levels trust and confidence. I am also pleased with our work to bring different faiths communities together under the national campaign of #We Stand Together, an initiative aimed at encouraging people from different faiths to combine efforts to tackle hatred and intolerance.

Of course our staff are absolutely critical in helping deliver these changes so it is essential that we listen to and respond to their needs, concerns and ideas. We have carried out an Internal Staff Survey as part of our commitment to staff health & wellbeing. We have established a Wellbeing Board that looks at all aspects of how we care for, develop and support our teams and individuals.

Along with our Police and Crime Commissioner we have also signed up to the 'Time to Talk' pledge. This entails making a commitment to work to de-stigmatise mental health and provide help and support to all staff, engendering a culture where staff can talk openly and honestly about their health and wellbeing.

Finally I want to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have worked so hard to help us deliver even better policing in this vital element of our work. The last year has produced some really tangible improvements. However, there is still much to do. We are never complacent, we never say "job-done" and we will continue to work hard in line with our Code of Ethics to serve our communities with professionalism, respect & integrity.



Chief Constable, David Shaw
West Mercia Police

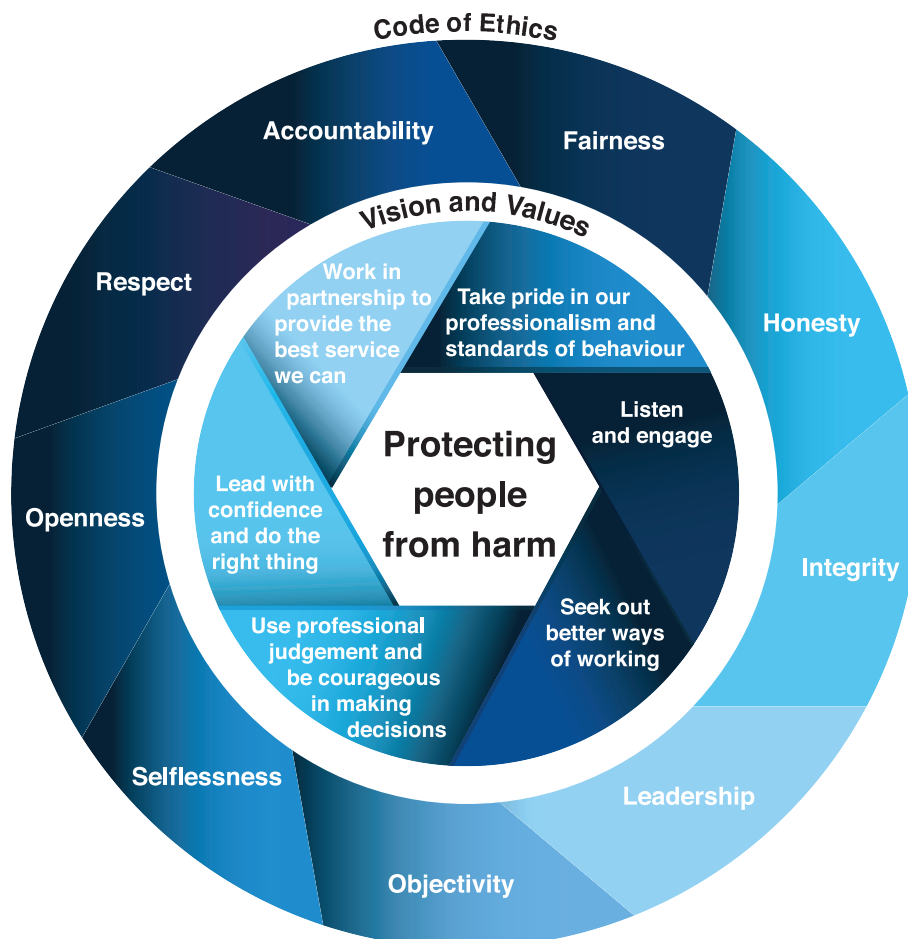
Equality & Diversity Governance and Review

The aim of the Equality Duty is to embed equality considerations into the day to day work of public authorities, so that they tackle discrimination and inequality and contribute to making society fairer. As a public body, we are required to publish Equality Information which demonstrates our compliance with the General Public Sector Equality Duty.

Our **Strategic Diversity Group**, Chaired by the Chief Constables, meets quarterly to review current equality priorities and objectives as well as looking at national and regional issues to ensure we are better sighted on, and, responding to the emerging and evolving issues. Details of the meetings can be found on our website www.westmercia.police.uk

The membership of the Strategic Group consists of Chief Officers, representatives from our Independent Advisory Groups and internal staff networks and senior officers responsible for relevant strategies. There is also representation from the Police & Crime Commissioner's Office and other partners such as the Crown Prosecution Service.

A key role of the Strategic Diversity Group is to ensure that at the heart of our decision making and in everything we do and deliver, that we are focussed on our vision to **'Protect People from Harm'**.



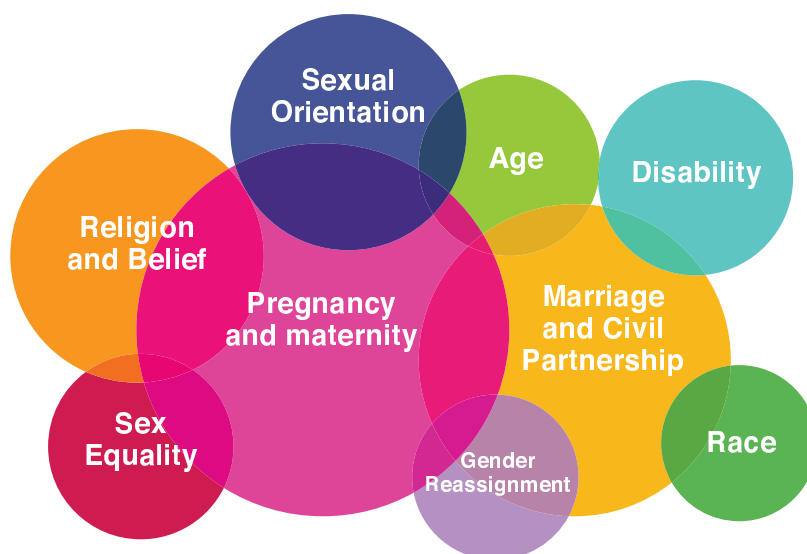
Meeting our Legal Requirements

The Equality Act (2010) is the UK's discrimination law, which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fairer and equal society and it protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation in work, education and when accessing services.

West Mercia Police needs to show it pays 'due regard' to the three aims of the general duty which are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The Equality Act 2010 protects anyone who falls into a 'protected characteristic'



West Mercia Police is fully committed to working with our communities and members of the public, and partners to build a culture through which we treat everyone with Fairness, Respect and Equality.

We ensure that internal policies, including recruitment policies, operational policies such as Hate Crime, Uniform and Equipment policy and the numerous projects underway inline with our Change Programme are fair and transparent and take account of reasonable adjustments, engagement with staff and any adverse impacts upon local protected groups resulting from key changes or reviews.

We also regularly review our victim satisfaction surveys and complaints and suggestions that we receive to the organisation through a number of sources.

Our Equality Objectives



OPERATIONAL

- ✓ Increase in levels of trust, confidence and understanding within our diverse communities
- ✓ Support the most vulnerable and most likely to be at harm
- ✓ Meaningful and targeted engagement, leading to positive outcomes



ORGANISATIONAL

- ✓ Demonstrate leadership and commitment and continuous improvement
- ✓ A workforce that understand and responds to the different needs of society
- ✓ Robust equality analysis to inform our decision making



PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- ✓ Ensure staff feel value and respected
- ✓ Organisation reflects the diverse communities we serve
- ✓ Staff are informed and empowered to innovate

These Objectives were agreed at our Strategic Diversity Group and will continue to be reviewed and amended to ensure that we are focussing on the key issues affecting and impacting on both our communities and staff.

Equality Information

In meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty, we regularly publish information which can be found on our website www.westmercia.police.uk.

Examples of the information available are:

- Stop & Search data via [www. Police.uk](http://www.Police.uk)
- Hate Crime Data
- Complaints data
- Victims Satisfaction data
- Equality Monitoring Data – College of Policing BME 2018 Programme Action Plan

Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs)

Our IAG Review



During 2014 and 2015 West Mercia Police carried out a review of the Independent Advisory Groups (IAG) Framework and working with all our IAG Members, we now have established Local IAGs and an Alliance BME IAG, Disability IAG and LGBT IAG. The Chairs of these IAG are members of an Alliance Strategic IAG.

Our Independent Advisory Groups continue to provide specialist advice and support to the Force. They offer differing perspectives, challenging us objectively and constructively and in doing so, have enabled the force and its officers and staff to have a better understanding of the needs, concerns and expectations of our communities, ensuring we place equality and diversity issues at the forefront of our service delivery model.

“It is my belief that both forces hold a strong commitment to all sections of the people they serve by ensuring they are treated in a way that reflects individual circumstances & needs. With this commitment, the Alliance works closely with both the Thematic & Local IAG’s to help understand the issues that impact on people & to jointly explore the best outcome’s. The groups operate without any fear of speaking out against the police and are willing & encouraged to challenge & bring issues forward which is made possible through a culture of working with IAG’s in both forces. This framework is made possible by the commitment of both the Chief Constables and the senior team”.

Paul Dazemoor, Vice Chair, Strategic IAG.

Our Staff Networks

The Women's Network



The objectives for the network are:

- To provide a network supporting women
- To facilitate women to fulfil their potential
- To work with others to progress diversity issues and to champion issues for women within the organisation.

A steering group co-ordinates activity and provides a point of reference. The steering group is made up of volunteers of all grades and ranks from many departments. The group work very closely with HR, and have the full support of the Chief Officer team.

Minority Support Network - (MSN)

In the spirit of the Alliance, last year saw the successful amalgamation of Warwickshire Police's Black Police Association with West Mercia's Minority Ethnic Resource Group- (MERGe), to form the Minority Support Network (MSN). The aim of MSN is to work to support and promote Black and Minority Ethnic staff and officers within the Alliance and its wider communities.



Key members of MSN have been instrumental in the formation of the Diversity Delivery Group and working across the Alliance to increase representation of members of the BAME community within the Alliance. Members have been role models, engaging communities to promote the policing family. This has resulted in 47 members of the BAME being recruited across the Alliance, in variety of different posts, which was highlighted in HMIC's PEEL Legitimacy inspection 2015.

MSN are involved in policy consultation and very much advance continuous improvement in relation to organisational process and practice. Having a seat at strategic meetings means the group are at the heart of organisational diversity and thereby work closely with both internal and community stakeholders to progress equality and diversity matters.

Focusing on the future, the group are looking to build on current partnership working with stakeholders to tackle local and national matters around under-representation. This includes involvement in the current BAME progression work developed by the College of Policing and in providing increased positive action mentoring support to new applicants.

The disability network

The disability network is an internal action, networking and representative group for police officers, police staff and members of the Special Constabulary who have a disability, or are caring for dependants who have disabilities. Members of the group are now working with the Alliance Disability Working Group focussing on priorities identified in our recent Health & Wellbeing staff survey.



Protecting People from Harm

- Our Actions

OPERATIONAL



Hate Crime Launch

In October 2015, as part of Hate Crime Awareness Week, we supported a multi agency Hate Crime conference which had a focus on Learning Disability.

There were drama performances by a local learning disability advocacy group highlighting the experiences of victims of disability hate crime, along with a Market Stall event to highlight and promote the various advocacy and support groups available.



The audience was encouraged to interact with the actors to gain a deeper insight of the impact of the hate crimes and why victims are reluctant to come forward.

One young man commented that he had experienced that much hate crime throughout his life that he stopped feeling like a human and identified himself as a robot for many years.

West Mercia continuing to support Safe Places

Safe Places is a nationwide initiative established by Mencap, which is supported by West Mercia Police and other public sector and voluntary organisations. Safe Places is a simple system, where local business and other locations advertise they are a Safe Place by displaying a sticker in their window. This tells people who may become vulnerable whilst out and about, that they can receive support and reassurance at this location.



We continue to be very involved in this initiative, encouraging and providing support to business or organisations who sign up. We now have over 300 Safe Places within West Mercia and continue to work to grow these as places to help and support some of our most vulnerable people. We are working with 'Our Way', an advocacy group to lead this initiative in Worcestershire. www.ourway.org/safeplaces-scheme/

This initiative was launched as part of Hate Crime Week and working with our Communities, Partner Agencies, Independent Advisory Groups and staff we encouraged people to sign a 'Pledge' which stating that we would all work together to tackle intolerance and hatred. This work will continue to be embedded via our Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Working with our Faith groups and communities, we are developing a deeper understanding and also engendering and building cohesive communities, increasing trust, confidence and resilience.



Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Local policing areas are currently piloting this scheme which is training Officers and Staff who have contact with the public in British Sign language. These members of West Mercia are currently learning sign language and will when trained be available to their respective Local Policing Area to assist when assisting members of the public who are deaf or hearing impaired. This pilot if successful will be rolled out across the force and provide us with great links to our Deaf communities. This will enable us to provide reassurance to victims in the first instance, before if required a qualified interpreter can be sourced. It will also provide confidence and enable us to reach out to members in the Deaf community to ensure that we can highlight issues around Hate Crime, Crime prevention and Community Safety.

One trainee said "I have previously had to try and communicate with a person who was deaf and found it very challenging because of my lack of knowledge. Even though I am less than a third of the way into my course, I now feel not only am I better equipped to communicate but also have a greater understanding of the barriers to contacting the police for a person who is deaf."



ORGANISATIONAL



Health & Wellbeing Board initiatives - Staff Survey

One of the key objectives in the development of the Warwickshire and West Mercia Staff Survey has been to develop a **stronger organisational understanding** of health & wellbeing in the workplace, spanning beyond traditional ideas of diet and fitness.

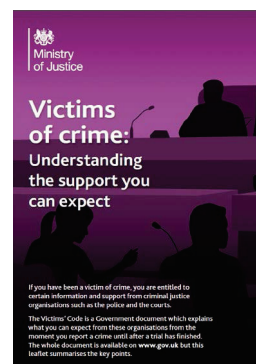
A key focus of analysis has been to understand the factors that most strongly **drive good health and wellbeing** in the workplace which can build a more rounded idea of what health and wellbeing can constitute. One of the themes we have been working on is discrimination and ensuring staff feel valued and respected at work.



Victim Satisfaction Improvement Group

The primary function of the Victim Satisfaction Improvement Group is to identify, coordinate and drive victim satisfaction improvement initiatives (particularly in regard to the Actions and Follow-up stage) across the Alliance. An Action Plan is in the process of being drawn-up; and will contain initiatives based upon benchmarking with other forces.

The Group is chaired by the Victim Satisfaction Strategic Lead - Chief Superintendent Tedds and there is wide representation from across the Alliance, including the Strategic Diversity Advisor.



Independent Advisory Groups – Review

A full review across the Alliance was carried and working with all IAG Members we have successfully establish a responsive and robust framework with encourages communities to engage either at a local level or as part of a BME, Disability and LGBT IAG. The Local IAGs will with work with our Command Teams to address priorities within their communities and help to facilitate better understanding of local issues ensuring we respond appropriately.

Examples of work with IAG work:

- Assisting us on our Estate projects ensuring buildings are accessible and appropriately signposted.
- Working on the design phase of our current Command and Control Project
- Supporting our Strategic Stop & Search Group
- Consultation on our Use of Unmanned Aircraft and raising any community concerns
- Gender Reassignment and Transition Policy
- Delivering Training to new Student Officers and Custody Staff



PEOPLE AND CULTURE



The Princes Responsible Business Network

Finalist in the Race For Opportunity Awards 2015 – Recruiting Diverse Talent Award.

Our Diversity Delivery Group, made up of a small core group of employees from all roles and ranks, has designed and led this initiative.

The Group is chair by the Temporary Assistant Chief Constable, Nav Malik, who is the most senior BME officer within the Alliance. Members are from our BME, Minority Support Network (Police Officers and Police Staff), Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead (BME), Equality and Employee Engagement HR Officer, People Development Business Partner and Police Officer colleagues who are all key members of the group.



The group established a robust action plan as apart of the College of Policing **BME 2018 Programme** with clear Short, Medium and Longer term targets to increase representation of BME employees. We now have 47 **BME Student Officers** who will be joining the Alliance over the coming months.

British Association for Women in Policing Awards

On the year that marks the anniversary of 100 years of women in policing, three members of Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police have been recognised for their work at the British Association for Women in Policing Awards (BAWP).

BAWP Awards are made in the categories of Bravery, Community Service, Excellence in Performance, Leadership, Lifetime Achievement, Mentoring, Officer of the Year, Police Staff Achievement, Volunteer and Special Recognition and were set up to recognise the outstanding achievements of police women and staff from forces around the country and internationally

West Mercia PCSO Susan Tomlinson from Shrewsbury won the Community Service Award. Sue was nominated after she successfully highlighted a large group of vulnerable young girls who were frequently putting themselves at risk by entering into and remaining in violent and/or abusive relationships.



Disability Working Group

This group has recently been formed with T/ACC Amanda Blakeman as the chair. The group is represented by the HR Officer - Diversity and Employee Engagement, Unison and Federation, Health & Safety Officer, Chair of the Disability Network, Disability Officer (Police Staff), L&D Manager and the Strategic Diversity Officer.

The aim of the group to identify issues of concern that have an impact on individuals with a disability to ensure the correct support is provided and actions on reasonable adjustments are put in place within an appropriate time.

The current themes for action are on Dyslexia support and process, reasonable adjustments identifying process and guidance for line managers and current concerns with access to police buildings.

Mentors Supporters network

In April 2015 – we commenced our Mentors (recruitment) courses.

The aim of the course

- To provide individuals with the skills required to be a mentor. These mentors will form a 'supporter's network' to provide advice, support and guidance to future applicants applying to become Police Officers, PCSO, Specials or Police Staff.
- 45 attended to include PCSO, Police Officers through to the rank of Chief Inspector. HR Business Partners, HR Officers, trainers through to Heads of Departments

Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police now have 48 mentors who have received the level of training to be able to support individuals in their career paths either on a short term basis or long term.

Our Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is briefed on our Equality and Diversity work and we work closely with the Police & Crime Commissioner's Community Ambassadors across West Mercia.

Our PCC has supported the various initiatives across West Mercia including our Hate Crime launch and #Westandtogether campaign. There has been representation at a number of events with our local policing teams to show support and commitment to the equality and diversity agenda.

For more information about the Police and Crime Commissioner go to the web site of the office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk.

Contact us

We welcome your feedback in relation to this report and in particular your views on any Equality objectives that should be set by the Force.

If you require any further information, or have specific questions, or require this report in an alternative format please contact:

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