

Equality and Diversity Report 2017



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Foreword

I am pleased to present this annual report which covers the year we celebrated our 50th Anniversary.

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, and Telford and Wrekin. Our communities are evolving and changing and my officers and staff ensure that they have a rich picture of the communities they serve, understanding and also valuing difference.

Our Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr John Campion, fully supports our equality and diversity work programme and how officers and staff engage with the diverse communities across West Mercia to promote equality and diversity and ensure positive outcomes.

Our Equality Objectives are very much linked to our vision of 'protecting people from harm' and as part of our 'Looking to 2020' change programme we have seen a number of positive initiatives implemented across the force such as the introduction of Body Worn Video.

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One of our goals is to become fully-modernised in our policing, equipping our officers with the right tools to perform their role as effectively as possible.

”

Body Worn Video helps us give victims a higher quality of service, safeguarding them and communities and increases the chance of bringing offenders to justice and securing convictions in court.

This report highlights just some of the achievements over the last 12 months. Our initiatives strive to increase trust and confidence and our approach is to empower communities to actively participate in delivering a fair and accessible police service for all in West Mercia.

I want a key focus for the future to be on addressing under-representation within West Mercia Police across all groups, with primary focus on increasing the number of Black and Minority Ethnic Police Officers.



Chief Constable Anthony Bangham
West Mercia Police

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Our Strategic Diversity Group has given a clear directive, in line with the policing vision 2025, to be representative of the diverse communities we serve.

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Diversity and inclusion

Our strategic intention

Promoting equality of opportunity and celebrating diversity is a fundamental enabler of the alliance's overarching vision 'To protect people from harm'. It is intrinsic to our organisational culture, underpins our objectives and helps shape the way in which our services are designed and delivered.

We serve both our communities and staff and it is essential that we take into consideration and listen carefully to our many stakeholders.

This overarching Equality and Diversity Strategy takes into account external stakeholders and the views of officers and staff that make up our alliance.

There is a statutory duty for police forces to apply the Equality Act 2010. It is our intention to not only continue to meet statutory obligations but, through regular reviews, improve the way we serve our communities via meaningful objectives and measurement of progress.

Our commitment to equality and diversity supports our four corporate objectives and strategic goals as identified in our 2015 - 2018 Business Plan.

The Strategy is consistent with our overarching mission, is informed by appropriate boards and has a formal governance structure. Detailed action plans are managed and reported on to the Executive Board via the Strategic Diversity Group.

Meeting our legal duty

Our statutory duty

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

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

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into force across Great Britain on 5 April 2011. It means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work - in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

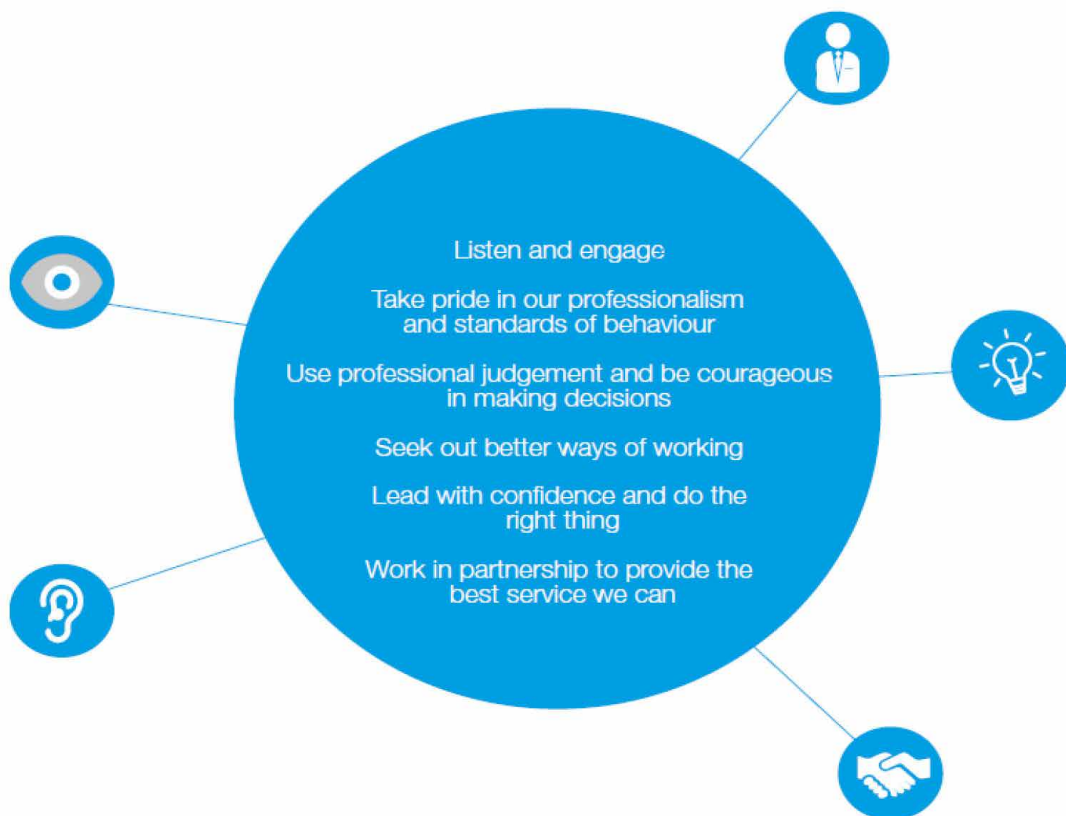
The alliance complies with this legislation by demonstrating 'due regard' to the three aims of the general duty of the Equality 2010 which are:

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

Our values

Through our equality and diversity work we will look to promote our values at every opportunity and specifically to:

- Listen and engage
- Lead with confidence and do the right thing
- Work in partnership to provide the best service we can



Our equality objectives and achievements

Equality objectives

OPERATIONAL	 An illustration showing several orange 3D figures standing around a large puzzle made of blue, green, yellow, and red pieces, symbolizing teamwork and problem-solving.	✓ Increase in levels of trust, confidence and Understanding within our diverse communities ✓ Be great at supporting the most vulnerable and most likely to be at harm ✓ Meaningful and targeted engagement, leading to positive outcomes
ORGANISATIONAL	 An illustration showing a group of colorful 3D figures (red, pink, blue, green, yellow) sitting around a white circular table, representing a collaborative meeting or discussion.	✓ 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	 An illustration showing a group of colorful 3D figures standing in a line, with speech bubbles above them, symbolizing communication and shared values.	✓ Ensure staff feel value and respected ✓ Organisation reflects the diverse communities we serve and actively monitor progress of achieving this ✓ Staff are informed and empowered to innovate

Vulnerability strategy

**SEE PAST
THE OBVIOUS**

The Alliance launched its first Vulnerability Strategy. This is a key strategic plan which seeks to enable Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police to realise our Looking to 2020 ambition of being great at protecting the most vulnerable. By recognising vulnerability at every opportunity together we can start to find appropriate responses and effective outcomes for all involved. Dealing with vulnerability is no longer about specialist teams, it is everybody's business.

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A person is vulnerable if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of, or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation.

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Safeguarding Vulnerable People is everyone's responsibility. Everyone has the right to be safe and to be protected from all forms of vulnerability. All practitioners whose work brings them into contact with the public should be alert to the signs, know where to turn to if they need to ask for help, and able to take positive action or make referrals to the appropriate agency, if they suspect that someone is at risk of harm or is in danger.

Operational

Launch of new Hate Crime policy and procedure

Working with our Independent Advisory Groups and key partners we have a new policy which outlines how we prioritise all Hate Crimes and ensure victims receive a high standard of service. We have established Single Points of Contacts (SPOCs) to ensure all Police Officers are responsible for ensuring that there is on-going contact and support with all victims if Hate Crime.



As part of our initiatives during Hate Crime Awareness Week in October , we supported the re- launch of the Hate Incident Partnership (HIP) on North Worcester which was attended by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid.

The HIP includes representatives from a number of statutory, voluntary and community organisations including Redditch Borough Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Wyre Forest District Council, Local Registered Social Landlords, West Mercia Police, West Mercia Probation Trust, Youth Offending Teams and Victim Support.



Mental health - Surviving or thriving?

This question was the focus of this year's Mental Health Week with all the UK's mental health charities focusing not only on how we can get good treatment and support for people when they have a recognised mental health condition, but also on how we can be better at ensuring good mental health is part and parcel of looking after our overall health.

Staff were invited to take a look at mental health in all its glory - Starting a conversation with colleagues about what supports mental wellbeing, the tricks you use to recover when demands are made on you mentally and emotionally and what things drain your mental resources. Once you discover what makes you mentally tick then you can get the right resources when you need them before things become more serious – thrive not just survive.



Police fly flag to mark 50th anniversary decriminalising homosexuality

The Sexual Offences Act was passed on 27 July 1967, and although it mainly related to men, it also had an impact on everyone who identified as LGBT, nationally and internationally. This legislation was the first stepping stone in paving the way for equal rights for the LGBT+ community. In celebration of this milestone and as a beacon for Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police's commitment to the LGBT+ community, we will be flying a rainbow flag at full mast above the Leamington Justice centre and Hindlip Hall.



New LGBT Champions - Promoting an Inclusive Working Environment

LGBT Contact Advisers have been selected and will make a positive contribution to the work being undertaken by the LGBT Alliance and to help the Organisation create an inclusive working environment for all officers, staff and special constables. The main responsibilities of the role are:

- To act as a point of contact for individuals who wish to raise workplace issues
- To signpost individuals and line managers to relevant workplace professionals on workplace LGBT issues
- To promote the activities of the LGBT Alliance
- To promote and contribute to the activities contained within the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
- To attend meetings where appropriate or at the request of the LGBT Co-ordinator
- To provide representation at local and geographic level and provide feedback to the LGBT Co-ordinator who may need to raise at the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group

- To assist with the development of local /departmental LGBT initiatives and working practices

LGBT Contact Advisers are located across the four counties.

Shrewsbury officer nominated for National Women's Policing Award



A Shrewsbury officer dedicated to raising awareness about and supporting rough sleepers has been nominated for a National Women's Policing Award following her community service work.

PC Karena Evans, based at Shrewsbury police station, has worked hard and dedicated her time to support the Homeless Outreach Street Triage (HOST) which was setup in October 2016.

Karena committed herself fully to this cause, working before 7am most days so that she can tour sleeping spots, and very often stays late and takes phone calls at weekends. She engages with the rough sleepers finding out what their needs are and what the blockages to them returning to accommodation are.

She provided appropriate support swiftly, along with colleagues from Mental Health Team, Shrewsbury Ark and Shropshire Council colleagues who make up HOST.

On more than one occasion she has found accommodation for individuals within just a few days of them arriving on the streets. She spends time with individuals helping them to complete housing applications, transporting them to view properties, keeping doctors appointments and reuniting them with family members who live out of area. In the face of setbacks Karena does not become disheartened and continues to fight to achieve her aims.

Introduction of Blind Recruitment

Blind recruitment - the practice of removing personally identifiable information from the resumes of applicants including their name, gender, age - is already part of many organisations such as the NHS . It will be used for all police officer and staff recruitment internally and externally across the alliance and elements are also being used in the promotion process.

We must ensure that we do not allow our personal values to influence our decisions in any way. But, it is often difficult to know if any unconscious thoughts are having an effect on our choices. By removing all personally identifiable information from resumes of applicants, we are showing our commitment to promoting diversity within our workforce.

We hope it will also develop confidence throughout the alliance to show that we are taking every step we can to encourage diverse applicants, both internally and externally, to represent the community and public we serve and protect.

Launch of Unconscious Bias training

Unconscious bias training is a tool that can be used in organisations to minimise the likelihood of biases occurring; to ensure they operate fairly and provide fair opportunities for everyone. Unconscious bias training addresses the deeper levels of diversity, and values the differences in all thus supporting organisational diversity and inclusion initiatives.

The importance of unconscious bias training is also recognised by HMIC, who agree that the workforce should be able to demonstrate how they have recognised and sought to overcome biases, to ensure fair decision-making.

For this reason the alliance has created a powerful digital learning tool, helping staff to reflect on how they see the world and the small changes they can make to working practices to reduce the likelihood of unconscious biases occurring at work.

Recruitment Award

Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police are National Recruitment Awards finalists.

Kesh Ladwa, Recruitment Manager for Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police scooped a prestigious award at the 2017 Recruiter Awards in London recently. It is the first time a police service has won the In-House Recruitment Leader of the Year award, rightly recognising Kesh's hard work and his vision for a highly skilled and highly professional workforce that can compete in the market with the private sector.

The award recognises market insight, outstanding service and achievement by an employer's staff (directly employed) recruitment team.



Governance

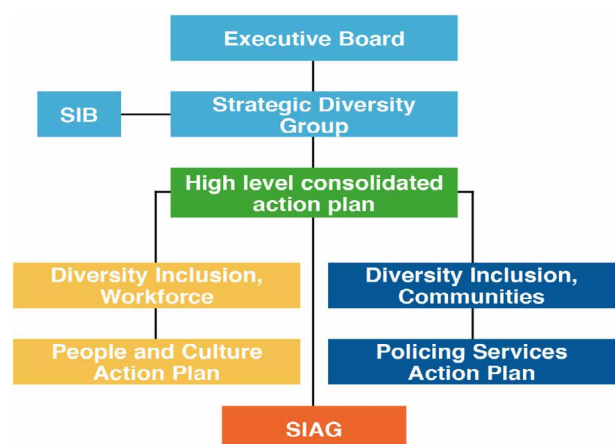
Embedding equality and diversity is the responsibility of every officer and staff. We have a Strategic Diversity Advisor who sits within Analysis and Service Improvement and an Equality and Diversity Advisors who support the local policing teams across Warwickshire and West Mercia.

Our Strategic Diversity Group, Chaired by Chief Constable Bangham, 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. The membership of the Strategic Group consists of Chief Officers, representatives from our Independent Advisory Groups, Trades Union representatives and senior officers responsible for relevant strategies. There is also representation from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.

The Diversity and Inclusion Board (Workforce) Chaired by Director of Enabling Services has been established to focus on delivering our People and Culture Equality Objectives. Membership includes our Staff Networks, Recruitment Business partner, Head of People Services which includes Learning and Development

We have established a Diversity and Inclusion Board (Communities), Chaired by an Assistant Chief Constable to progress the Equality Objectives which are more operational and organisational and focussed on our Policing Services. Consultation and Engagement, Vulnerability, Hate Crime, Stop and Search for example.

The Strategic Independent Advisory Group (SIAG) is made up of the Chairs from the 3 thematic IAGs (Disability, LGBT and BME) and the Local IAGs across the Alliance. SIAG acts as a group of trusted critical friends and are the crucial link between the community and the police and meets quarterly and each meeting will focus on key areas of work, linking to the Business Planning cycle for the alliance. The chair of SIAG is invited to the Strategic Diversity Group



Our staff networks



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



The disability network is an internal action, networking and a 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 work with the Alliance Disability Working Group focussing on priorities identified in our recent Health and Wellbeing staff survey and advising on police. There are a number of discrete and specialised work strands that sit within this network, for example, Dyslexia and Specific Learning Support Network and the Hearing impairment Network

LGBT Alliance

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Alliance is a proactive staff network across both Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police.

Working to a comprehensive workplan, the aims of the network are:

- To actively contribute to the Diversity and Inclusion agenda
- To improve the working environment for LGBT officers and staff
- To provide and make visible a network for LGBT officers, staff and special constables
- To enable LGBT officers and staff to recognise their talent and maximise their potential
- To be a reference point to colleagues across the Alliance and other stakeholders on LGBT issues in policing
- Support the development of operational policing knowledge that will enhance services provided by the Alliance to the LGBT Community



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. Members have been role models, engaging communities to promote the policing family.

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.



Founded in 1883 by Catherine Gurney, the Christian Police Association (CPA) still has active branches in the majority of police areas in the UK, including Warwickshire and West Mercia Police. CPA is a registered Charity, recognised nationally by the Police Federation and the NPCC, and works in partnership with the national leaders of the various support networks operating in Policing.

Offering encouragement, support, and a National voice for Christians in the Police Service, the CPA also aims to build bridges between the Christian community and the Police, and in the tradition of practical Christianity, promote its good news message to colleagues and the wider community we serve. This involves working with a number of National Charities and organisations who have partnered with CPA, including for example the many Street Pastor initiatives across the Alliance, who patrol the night time economy and help protect the vulnerable from harm.

More details can be found on the National CPA website www.cpauk.net

Independent Advisory Groups



Independent Advisory Groups are made up of trusted individuals who are prepared to listen to, observe and comment on the activities and policies of Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police. The aim of each group is:

To provide advice and constructive criticism to the Forces, whilst remaining sensitive to the needs of the whole community.

To provide independent advice to West Mercia and Warwickshire Police, to help recognise diverse needs of the communities served,(relevant to the police) and to deliver a fair and impartial service that secures greater trust and confidence.

Independent Advisory Groups (IAG) continue to provide valuable support to West Mercia Police. As well as on-going involvement in our policy reviews. here are of some the initiatives that they have been involved in over the last year are:

Development of New Hate Crime Policy

IAG members have supported the development of our new policy and procedure to ensure we are providing timely support to victims of hate crime

and that they are offered a priority service from us and key partners across West Mercia. IAGs continue to provide external scrutiny of our process and progress by reviewing hate crimes at every meeting and tracking the victim's journey and outcome.

Critical Incidents

The advice and support from the IAG following a critical incident is very important as it is one way we can reassure the community but also gain a richer picture. By engaging and involving our IAGs at the earliest opportunity we have prevented increased community tensions by demonstrating an open and transparent dialogue with our communities.

Advice to support Policing Services

We engage our IAGs on a number of issues, facilitated by our Equality and Diversity Advisor and local Policing Teams. Agendas for each meeting are agreed in advance with actions for both police as well as the IAG members. Some key areas of their input are listed below:

- Stop and Search
- Use of Force
- Body worn Video
- Health and Wellbeing
- Complaints
- Recruitment and Marketing
- Learning and Development input

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 and Search data via www.police.uk
- Hate Crime Data
- Complaints data
- Victims Satisfaction data
- Equality Monitoring Data

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is briefed on our Equality and Diversity work and we work closely with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in West Mercia to deliver against our Equality Objectives.

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 are 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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