



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP25/06

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL -
17 JANUARY 2025**

SUBJECT: WORKFORCE REPORT

SUMMARY:

1. A workforce summary which is provided six monthly to the Accountability and Performance Panel (APP). This report focusses on the themes of (1) our changing workforce (numbers, diversity and attrition) and (2) learning and development.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is asked to consider the progress made by the Constabulary and raise issues with Chief Constable as appropriate to the PCC's role in holding the Chief Constable to account.

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to explain how the Constabulary attracts, recruits, retains, and develops its capacity and capability to provide an effective police service, and manages and understands its workforce, to deliver its duty of care as an employer and meet the needs of the organisation. In a change of format from previous reports, this report will break down, on a two year cycle, the areas mentioned in 1.2, on a six monthly basis.
- 1.2 This report supports the Police and Crime Plan commitment in that Suffolk Constabulary will:
- Develop the professionalism and diversity of the workforce by:
 - Focussing on attraction, recruitment, retention and workforce development.
 - Making the workforce more representative of the communities it serves.
 - Delivering the requirements of the Policing Education Qualifications Framework.
 - Ensure the approach to people management supports the health, well-being and welfare of the workforce.
 - Provide opportunities for young people through apprenticeships, internships and graduate opportunities.
 - Make best use of volunteers to support and improve capacity and capability.

2. WORKFORCE NUMBERS

- 2.1 As at the end of November 2024, the Constabulary had a police officer establishment of 1,368.82, and a strength (FTE (full time equivalent) of 1,373.69. In terms of strength, this is a decrease of 6.04 FTE on the figures at the end of June 2024. Workforce Planning forecasts the strength at the end of this financial year to be 1,416.56.
- 2.2 The Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) establishment at the end of November 2024 was 39 and there was a strength (FTE) of 26.7. This is a decrease of 1.63 FTE from the reporting point in June 2024.
- 2.3 The police staff establishment was 1,030.05 at the end of November 2024, a decrease of 10.32 since the start of June 2024. There was a strength (FTE) of 935.52, a decrease since the last reported data in June 2024, of 5.83 FTE.
- 2.4 The Constabulary has maintained its “uplift” and “stretch” levels for 2023/24 meeting the headcount target of 1425. The Constabulary is projecting to achieve this again in March 2025.

3. WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

- 3.1 Data at the start of June 2024 shows that the percentage of officers who have shared with us that they are from a minority ethnic group is 2.86%, which has remained stable over the past five years (between 2.8% and 3.2%). This is a slight decrease compared to the 2.89% reported rate in June 2024. The proportion of officers who have not provided this information to the Constabulary is now just 1.43%.
- 3.2 The proportion of staff who are from a minority ethnic group is 2.29%, an increase on June 2024 (1.99%) and the proportion of staff who identify as being from any other white background is

2.19%. The proportion of those who have not provided this information to the Constabulary is 4.57% in November 2024.

- 3.3 The proportion of officers who are female has grown from 35.19% (June 2024) to 35.47% (November 2024). The proportion of female police staff has remained constant from 64.3% (June 2024) to 64.48% (June 2024). Both showing better representation of women within the Constabulary.
- 3.4 The proportion of officers who are aged 25 and under is 14.35% (November 2024) compared to 6% five years ago. This significant change is the result of the increased number of recruitment intakes, and targeted recruitment using the apprenticeship entry scheme, and a lower average age of those applying and being selected.
- 3.5 The proportion of officers who identify as Lesbian/Gay or Bisexual is 4.57% (November 2024). This is similar levels yet increase from June 2024 (4.43%). The proportion of officers who have not shared this information with us has decreased from 19.85% (June 2024) to 18.99% (June 2024). Owing to improved recruitment processes, the Constabulary is more effective now in collecting the information from new recruits.
- 3.6 Officers who have shared with us that they have a disability is 2.78% (November 2024). The number of individuals who have not shared this information with us is 19.99% (November 2024) reduced from 20.67% (June 2024). The proportion of staff who have shared this information with us that they have a disability is 5.14% (November 2024), the number of individuals who have not shared this information with us sits at 20.67% (November 2024) compared to 20.74% (June 2024).

4. DIVERSITY EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVITY AND POSITIVE ACTION

- 4.1 Jointly with Norfolk, the Constabulary continues to work on their Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Action plan, which is managed internally by the Joint People Directorate. Governance is through a Joint ED&I Board chaired by the Deputy Chief Constables (DCCs). Suffolk also has a Suffolk ED&I board, chaired by DCC Rob Jones.
- The People Directorate continue to roll out our Right Education package for first- and second-line supervisors, focusing on culture and incorporating upstander training.
 - Work is ongoing to develop the ED&I strand of the Leading with Care programme and to better support development and promotion opportunities for underrepresented groups.
 - Work has been undertaken to review the results of the People Opinion Survey from the perspective of underrepresented groups and results were presented at the most recent Joint ED&I Board.
 - Regular meetings are held with staff support networks to understand the concerns and issues facing staff and officers from underrepresented groups.
- 4.2 The Recruitment team has a Positive Action Advisor (PAA) working with and for Suffolk to engage with the public at recruitment and community engagement events, supporting attraction into the force and engaging with diverse communities to build relationships and understanding of the various career options within the Constabulary. The PAA has continued to deliver engagements at Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) institutions.

Recent community events include:

- One Big Multicultural Fest – in collaboration with community policing
- Magistrates Court Open Day – for heritage week in collaboration with the Dog Unit and Stalking Protection Order officer

- Tackling Poverty Together – Diverse community leader networking event
- The Hive community space jobs event
- Future Female Society community event
- Portman Road Jobs Fair

Recent education events include:

- Abbeygate Sixth Form Fresher – in collaboration with Citizens in Policing and Cyber Crime
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- Suffolk One Freshers – in collaboration with Citizens in Policing and Cyber Crime
- Ipswich High School and Holbrook Academy Careers fair
- Abbeygate Sixth Form Apprenticeships week
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking sixth formers workshops: Norwich City College, East Coast College
- Holbrook Academy Careers Week
- Copleston High School Careers talk – in collaboration with Schools and Young Persons Officer

Internal events:

- National Disability in Policing Conference – best practice regarding Stay interviews shared with recruitment from Greater Manchester Police
- New PC recruits - induction events
- New staff member induction events
- PC new recruits -Interview Panels
- Positive action support now replicated on Citizens in Policing and staff applications
- Contacting all candidates who have requested PA contact and following up on queries
- Pre-Assessment webinars for prospective candidates
- Support staff support networks and connecting candidates and existing staff to networks

Education events coming up include:

- Ipswich High School careers talk – in collaboration with community policing
- Woodbridge School careers fair – in collaboration with Schools and Young Persons officer
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking sixth formers youth group
- Police Taster Week – preliminary planning, details to follow in future reports

4.3 The dedicated recruitment events continue to be held bi-monthly to provide advice and guidance to existing or potential candidates applying for the apprenticeship (PCDA (Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship)) and DHEP (Degree Holder Entry Programme) candidates pathways. These webinars provide information on the recruitment process, the various staff support networks, and support available once they join.

4.4 The PAA supports under-represented individuals through the Suffolk recruitment process who applies to be a Police Constable/Detective Constable or staff role. This includes contact (at minimum) at each stage in the recruitment process, general queries:

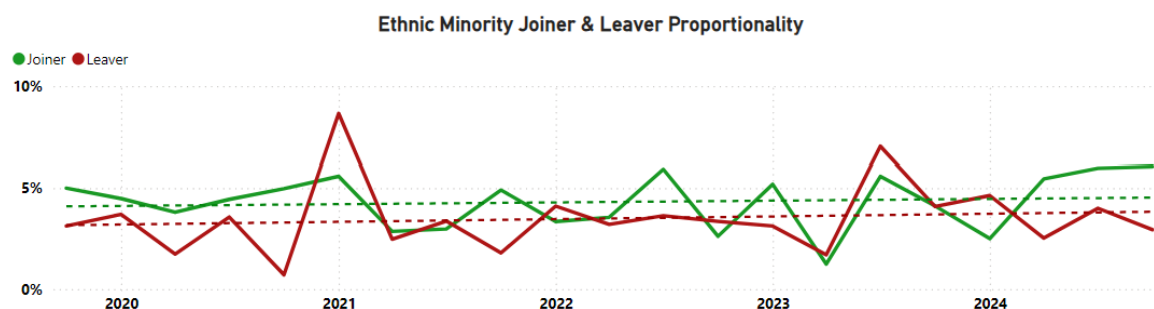
- Characteristic related queries;
- Recruitment process queries;
- 1:1 Email/ Microsoft Teams/Calls;
- Invitations to bespoke webinars to support with the online assessment centre and board interviews;
- Pre-employment support and onboarding/introductions to staff support networks upon joining.

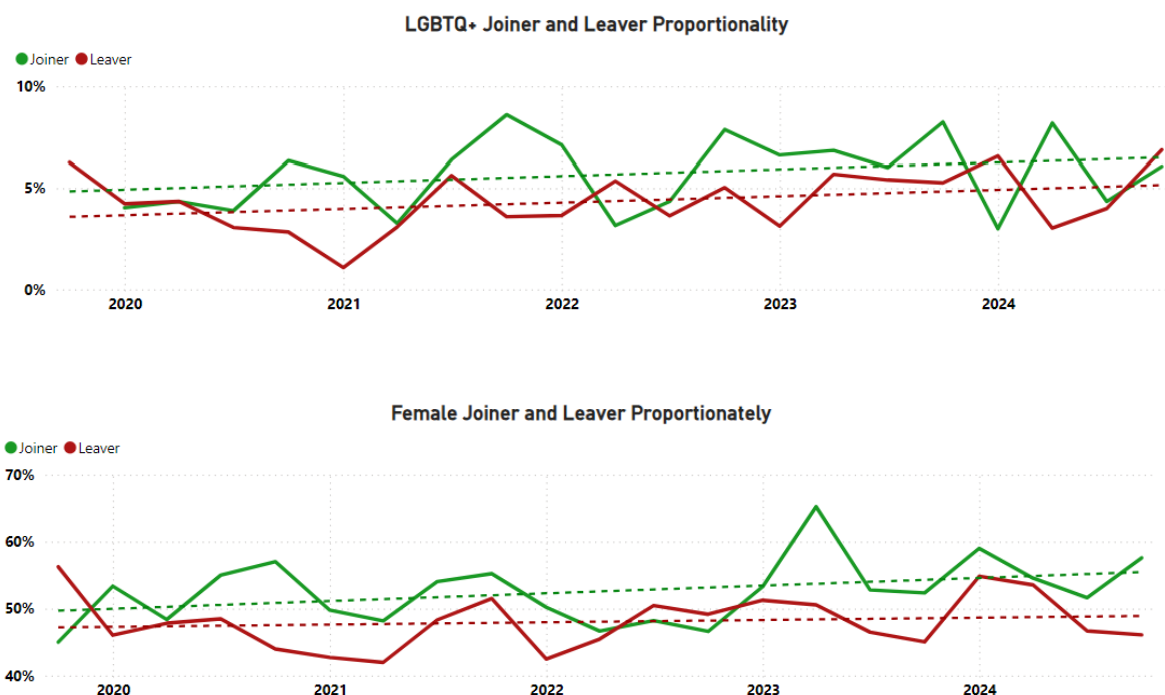
From December 2024 - Positive Action support is being offered to Internal and External candidates applying through a promotion process by asking candidates through the application/monitoring process if they would like support, as well as providing a contact email for PAA.

5. CHANGING WORKFORCE AND ATTRITION

- 5.1 The force continues working towards maintaining the home office maintenance target of 1425, which was exceeded at the mid-year measurement point by +4. Recruitment for growth continues due to the policing requirement of Sizewell C. The establishment is projected to increase by 17 FTE over the twelve-month period, which will require additional staffing through recruitment. The force is projecting a headcount above 1425 at the end of the financial year.
- 5.2 To supplement recruitment intakes, transferee pipelines remain open in Suffolk Constabulary for Constables and Sergeants. In 2023/24, 24 transferees were onboarded, with 19 predicted in the current year, an increase of 2 on what was previously projected.
- 5.3 Annual attrition for Suffolk as of December 2024 was at 9.02%, a reduction of 0.55% on June 2024. For Suffolk officers this was 7.68% and for Suffolk staff this was 10.68%. Between November 2023 and May 2024, there were 58 officer leavers and 47 staff leavers.
- 5.4 The “Say and Stay” retention interviews continue in force – a retention interview for employees that are thinking about leaving to have an open conversation with a HR Advisor (HRA) into understand the reasons why they are considering leaving. Currently, 25 Suffolk employees have engaged in the process, which is believed to be a contributing factor to the reduction in attrition rate. Targeted work has also been ongoing through the People Opinion Survey to address feedback raised by the employees of Suffolk Constabulary. This process has now been running for twelve months and is likely a contributory factor.
- 5.5 The below charts show, during the last six months:

- Proportion of joiners from ethnic minority groups has been higher than proportion of leavers.
- Proportion of leavers from LGBTQ+ groups compared to joiners has remained static.
- Proportion of joiners that are female has been higher than the promotion of leavers.





6. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 The Constabulary is now in its third year of delivery following changes to the police initial learning programme under the Police Education and Qualification Framework (PEQF). In this year, the organisation has seen student officers graduate from their respective programmes and celebrated their success in July 2024. This was an important milestone and will allow us to better understand the longer-term impact on these individuals will have within both Forces.
- 6.2 The benefits of student officers having a structured learning programme through their initial years is beginning to emerge. Student progression and performance based on an entry programme that gives them greater depth and breadth of understanding of the modern police force, is beginning to emerge into improved service at operational incidents. The combination of greater ability to navigate the complex IT systems and processes with greater confidence of policing means that the public and wider Constabulary will start to see and feel the rewards of the investment into these programmes.
- 6.3 This comes at a time when the Constabulary is also seeking to attract more than ever new recruits, through national uplift programmes. Competition amongst wider employers, many who offer greater financial rewards and more sociable hours than policing, means that the Constabulary will need to address challenges around both attraction and retention. More work is needed to help inform potential recruits of the advantages of a police career and the personal and academic advantages of a training programme that provides a lifelong value. Work is ongoing to promote the opportunities within the Forces, doing so in a realistic and pragmatic way to ensure that new recruits join us with a good understanding of what the role has to offer, and its challenges.
- 6.4 Investment is also being made in readiness for new College of Policing programmes linked with personal and public safety training and first aid training that 'Go Live' in 2025. The standardisation of national delivery and governance across policing presents an opportunity to further professionalise these areas in response to the national Officer and Staff Safety

Reviews (OSSR) and the Manchester Arena enquiry. It will also improve trainer delivery and assessment skills whilst seeing delegates being more reflective of their use of force and first aid through a more scenario based learning curriculum. The delivery of this, whilst beneficial in the professionalism of these skills, does mean more time is needed by operational officers and staff for training as well as wider challenges around those not meeting these new standards. Planning for the implementation of new initiatives, such as the new personal and public safety training (PPST) and first aid continues. This presents significant challenges in relation to both cost and time, as new facilities will be required, as well as considerable planning by the Resource Management Unit (RMU) to release officers to attend the training.

- 6.5 Each of these standards are assessed via national auditing and licensing scrutiny enable the College of Policing to standardise learning so that personal and organisational liability is clear. This replicates the demand and energy that goes into supporting His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspections into additional requirements that fit the College of Policing audits of training licences.
- 6.6 The Constabulary continues to develop its Chronicle System to ensure robust training and accreditation records are aligned to the differing standards across the various licensed policing skill areas. This supports skills monitoring, compliance, and capability, significantly improving the position from when the original HMICFRS Area For Improvement (AFI) was set. The system has now been extended to cover all investigative skills and compliance with the Forensic Science Regulator Act. In addition to this work, work is being undertaken to looks at a "skills dashboard" to provide an overview of skills across the two Forces.
- 6.7 Performance is being achieved and is on an upward trajectory in relation to skills compliance, which has previously been a risk for the Constabulary.
- 6.8 The E-PDR platform is continuing to be modified but is not as intuitive as the constabulary would like it to be, with limitations on drawing out data and analytics; this is essential for our future talent management and succession planning strategy. E-PDR continues to be the recognised central tool to support the College of Policing talent and progression changes as well as subject to external scrutiny from HMICFRS. It is therefore important that we continue to invest in E-PDR and modify and improve the system.
- 6.9 In May 2024, the Constabulary launched the new version of the digital learning platform 'Best I Can Be'; this forms a critical part of our approach to delivering learning programmes at the point of need and in the flow of work. The new platform provides an opportunity to enhance our online learning capability and reporting. The system continues to host Athena training, which is ongoing in terms of upskilling Force wide.
- 6.10 The College of Policing have launched the National Centre for Police Leadership (NCPL) to be the home of police leadership, set the standards for leadership and provide guidance, tools and development opportunities for everyone in policing. The NCPL has set out five leadership levels from practitioner to executive with accompanying Leadership Standards and curricula. Learning and Development have implemented the new process for the selection and development of chief officers, the Police Leadership Programme Level 5. In addition, the NCPL is reviewing officer promotion processes for sergeants and inspectors, developing a new learning management system to host development material, and setting out the requirements for force talent management processes.
- 6.11 The implementation of the new Learning Management System (LMS) enabled a full review of the Leading with Care content and provision. Pathways within the offer have been streamlined and work continues to build on the success of this programme, which support

progression through the Forces, as well as offering development opportunities to those from underrepresented groups.

6.12 Of 2,260 eligible staff and officers, 1,670 had an open PDR in the e-PDR system for the financial year of 2023/34, accounting for 74% of the organisation.

6.13 The People Opinion Survey has highlighted the importance of supporting managers in effective performance management, this will be an area of focus in the months ahead. Work also continues in relation to encouraging quality performance and development discussions. The e-PDR system provides a platform to capture the outputs of these conversations. More guidance and tools to enable good quality conversations will be launched this year.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 There are no Financial Implications associated with this report.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

8.1 There are no other implications and risks associated with this report.

9. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION

9.1 Suffolk Constabulary has invested significantly in improving its insight into its workforce in the last year, and this new format report, with its evidence based analysis, shows the benefits for better understanding our people and planning responsibly for the future.

9.2 What this report shows is that Suffolk Police has a talented and professional workforce which is adapting and growing to meet the demands of modern policing. Looking after our people is a key priority. As the data demonstrates, we are doing well both in attracting new talent and developing the capabilities and confidence of our existing team.

9.3 Overall, our workforce has become more youthful in the last two years – and the apprenticeship scheme has worked very well for us. But we also want to attract more “career changers” into policing, and the launch of a new entry point without a policing degree will provide more choice for those who want to join us. We can also do more - and better - in increasing the diversity of talent in our teams; our local Suffolk Police Race Action Plan is helping us to achieve this.

9.4 We are very proud in Suffolk of the value we place in looking after our people well. We want everyone to enjoy coming to work and understand the contribution they personally make to keeping people safe. Our excellent people opinion survey (we are currently planning for the fourth iteration) designed and delivered by our People Directorate provides insights with which we can do this even better. Future APP Workforce reports will share progress in these key areas.