

Enhancing Diversity in Policing

Final Report

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Executive summary

Background and methods

This research was carried out to inform a review of the implementation of the diversity agenda across UK police forces. The research involved three phases of secondary data collection:

- A landscape review exploring current policies and documents embedded within UK policing diversity strategies;
- A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) to identify appropriate peer-reviewed and grey literature exploring diversity in policing in the UK; and
- An external review which explored what strategies non-policing bodies (nationally and internationally) implemented to their workforce.

The first two phases were complimented by a series of focus groups to discuss facilitators and barriers to ensuring a diverse workforce. The first series of focus groups were largely built around the themes and findings from the landscape review about what was currently in operation; the second series of focus groups involved a presentation of the emerging REA findings, and participants were encouraged to discuss these and their views on evidence gaps.

The research sought to better understand the evidence on how diversity is enhanced (or could be enhanced) across recruitment, retention, progression and service delivery and community engagement in policing. The research aims and objectives were to:

- provide a critical analysis of the work being undertaken in delivery of the diversity agenda within UK policing;
- rapidly identify and assess the evidence of existing literature regarding diversity, with a focus on ongoing practices, policies and procedures in relation to recruitment, retention, training and development, service delivery and where possible, community engagement; and
- externally review other non-police organisations to understand how issues relating to workforce diversity are undertaken.

This summary is structured as follows:

- Perceived impact of national diversity strategies;
- Practical measures and practice examples; and
- Challenges and barriers.

Recruitment

Impact of national diversity schemes

- The diversity agenda could, with amendments, be more effective. Focus group participants perceived that the culture within police leadership may at times be too conservative and consider diversity as an 'add-on' as opposed to a central value within policing.
- Police Now, a graduate leadership programme aiming to recruit diverse and outstanding graduates to join the police, saw an increase of successful BME

entrants following its initial implementation in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). However, evidence suggests that Police Now has had limited success in attracting and recruiting diverse candidates in other areas. For example, focus group analysis suggested that one police force recruited nine new officers through Police Now and none came from protected groups¹. No additional information about the impact that Police Now has had was provided in the evidence.

- The BME Progression 2018 programme was developed by the College of Policing (CoP) to improve the recruitment, development, retention and progression of BME officers and staff. However, it was poorly communicated to police forces nationally. Without sufficient oversight and awareness of national schemes, it is difficult for strategies to be effectively implemented across forces.

Practical measures

- Community awareness campaigns for careers in policing, which often encouraged applications from underrepresented groups, was perceived to be effective. Strategies used by Staff Support Associations included sending police staff and officers to major religious or community events. The involvement of SSAs in recruitment efforts was considered a promising way to support the recruitment of individuals from protected groups.
- Representative Workforce Teams or an equivalent ‘buddy system’ are currently being used by some police forces to keep potential recruits engaged and supported throughout the recruitment process. Focus group participants suggested that individuals who received this support were more successful with their applications.
- Using ‘positive action’ – which involved taking lawful measures to support individuals from underrepresented groups in overcoming disadvantages in competing with other applicants – was considered useful in improving the chances of BME individuals to pass assessment tests through ‘positive priming’. A particular intervention by the Behavioural Insights Team (Ruda et al. 2015) demonstrated that the decision to include more information about the assessment questions in a pre-assessment email had a positive impact on BME individuals passing an online situational test.
- Practical measures to enhance diversity can be helped and driven by national initiatives. The core strategies implemented in England and Wales have been shown to increase the proportion of female and/or BME representation within the force.
- Charter marks and schemes that organisations are signed up to, such as Stonewall Champions (e.g. Royal Bank of Scotland), Disability two ticks scheme (e.g. Ernst & Young LLP), Athena SWAN (Edinburgh Napier University), Times Top 50 Employers for Women (British Army), are made visible in recruitment materials to indicate commitment to these areas.

Barriers and challenges

¹ Protected groups are defined as the nine protected characteristics as listed in the 2010 Equality Act. This included age, disability, gender re-assignment, race, religion/belief, sex/gender, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity.

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- Educational requirements for entry into policing have been increased, and now often require degree-level qualifications. There is concern that underrepresented groups who may be less likely to achieve academic qualifications would be disproportionately affected, such as the Romani Gypsy Traveller community.
 - Recruitment efforts within BME groups may have a limited impact due to (historic) negative perceptions of police and policing, such as disproportionate stop and search practices. As such, there was a sense among BME communities that becoming a police officer was not worthwhile and families discouraged their children from joining.
 - Vetting by association has led to candidates being excluded from entry into the police force due to their social or familial relationships with those from criminal backgrounds, including dismissing 'promising' candidates. Steps to accommodate cultural differences and potential anti-social associations need further attention.
 - Work to increase diversity in policing is being undertaken among forces country-wide, however it can be patchy and sporadic. This was attributed to the lack of formalised frameworks and processes to address diversity and a lack of senior leadership buy-in.
 - A lack of understanding about positive action could act as a barrier to delivering positive action initiatives, as such initiatives could be seen as controversial and deemed as positive discrimination. Stakeholders discussed how this lack of understanding was common.

Retention

Impact of national diversity schemes

- Evidence of good practice is limited, partly due to their lack of evaluation. The research suggests that the police diversity agenda has focused overwhelmingly on recruitment, at the expense of ensuring diversity in relation to retention and progression. This is supported throughout the landscape review. This means that the diversity agenda has resulted in diversifying the workforce in more junior roles in the police and less at senior levels.

Practical measures

- While it was acknowledged that flexible work opportunities existed in the force, it was also noted that more groups needed to be included.
- Diversity training within policing was described as not always being administered appropriately. Those delivering diversity training were from majority groups and often perceived not to possess cultural awareness around issues such as faith-related symbols, such as the hijab or daily praying routines.

Barriers and challenges

- Female officer retention was seen to be impacted by resource pressures; the high demands put on the workforce meant that applications for reduced or flexible hours requested by mothers were considered unrealistic or implausible.

Based on the literature, it does not appear that such requests for flexible work are considered by fathers.

- Organisational divisions within policing were identified as difficult to overcome. For example, the literature suggested that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), who are visible in the community and frequently interact with members of the public, often reported not feeling accepted within the police. PCSOs also have a high intake of women and BME citizens. The lack of perceived acceptance within the wider workforce could deter PCSOs from entering the police force as police constables.

Progression

Impact of national diversity schemes

While not explicitly designed to enhance diversity, there is some evidence that the Fast Track programme has benefited underrepresented groups. For example, the involvement of the National Black Police Association in advertising the fast-tracks scheme led to fourfold increase of success rate for BME applicants to the Fast Track programme (from 5 % to 20 %)².

Practical measures

- Promotions processes have been overhauled by some forces to create a fairer system. Application forms have been removed in favour of assessment centres, staffed with trained assessors from underrepresented groups. Assessment pools have also been tailored to ensure a set proportion of candidates and assessors are from protected groups.
- Some forces have a more transparent selection and promotion procedure, so candidates are aware of potential opportunities due to the emphasis on merit.
- Internal BME assessors within forces have been said to have had a positive impact on BME applicant's promotion prospects. It was perceived that a lack of internal BME assessors might result in implicit bias against BME applicants, and that introducing them may counteract this.
- Line manager support within the promotion process required further attention to ensure that their views were still sought as part of the process, but should be evidence-driven.
- The internal promotion process was contrasted with the approach to standardised external recruitment through the use of the Police SEARCH® Recruitment Assessment Centre. Participants recommended unifying the internal recruitment process and introducing clear guidance to provide a promotion process that was fairer and more transparent.

Barriers and challenges

² Oral evidence gathered and presented in the Home Affairs Committee Report on Police Diversity (2017). Available at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/27/27.pdf>

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- Attempts to increase promotion and progression prospects for members of underrepresented groups are effected by three factors. Firstly, BME candidates are disproportionately subjected to misconduct hearings which can have an adverse impact on their progression prospects. Second, underrepresented groups in the force perceived specialist units as 'closed shops' only available to individuals who meet the stereotypical profile. Lastly, a lack of financial resources resulted in reduced opportunities for promotion and, by extension, intensifies competition between groups for opportunities.
 - The lack of ethnic and religious diversity in specialist units was seen as concerning considering its impact on the ability of the police to perform their duties. For example, units working within counterterrorism, honour-based violence and surveillance were in need of individuals from relevant ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Community engagement

Impact of national diversity schemes

- Community engagement as a focus was largely absent from the current diversity agenda in policing – the emphasis was on the police workforce itself.
- The Equality Improvement Model developed by the College of Policing aimed to enable forces to implement and evaluate their own progress against meeting the equality objectives under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). There is however a lack of information about how widely and in what capacity the Equality Improvement Model is used across police.
- It was perceived by participants that the effectiveness of the PSED has been limited due to austerity measures as well as a reduction of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's monitoring and enforcement function.
- The introduction of PCSOs and the emphasis on neighbourhood policing over the past decade has led to a greater diversity within policing. The REA suggested that this is important given the better service delivery and decision-making that results from the police workforce being more representative of the community it serves.

Practical measures

- The police are members of the community and stakeholders believed it to be important that they – as members of the public with protected characteristics - felt adequately represented within their working environment. This was partly supported by SSAs, who were able to provide support to those from protected groups and acted as a visible sign of inclusion in the workforce.
- Police forces' Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) – tasked with the responsibility of scrutinising the police - provide another example of the police forces' drive to enhance legitimacy and police by consent
- Increasing transparency and community stakeholder involvement is important to improve relations between the community and the police. Activities such as 'inviting the community in' could also be explored. It was suggested that it could be useful to form strategic boards formed of individuals (such as doctors and

Imams) from different parts of the community to scrutinise the procedures and actions of the police

- Involving community stakeholders was seen as crucial to provide the police with an understanding of the needs of the communities they serve and protect. Moreover, to maintain relationships and increase trust, it was felt to be critical that such interactions with community stakeholders were a regular feature.

Barriers and challenges

- A lack of resources due to wider austerity poses a threat to community policing and PCSOs, with a focus instead on what is considered urgent and reactive policing
- The changing demographics of local communities brings with it challenges that the police need to be able to respond quickly to, such as language barriers and ease of communication.
- Some police practices, such as stop and search or policies that are felt to target marginalised groups, such as Prevent, may have a negative effect on police and BME relations.
- A level of cultural knowledge, particularly in relation to faith is required for successful engagement with communities.

Implications

- Equality and diversity training could be integrated into the core activities of police forces. The research suggested that this may not be undertaken as diversity is not seen as high importance in policing.
- Highlighting key areas of contention in any training, such as vetting, supervision and flexible working may illustrate the consequences of not ensuring diversity.
- Ensuring robust and useful data capture and robust and rigorous research on process and impact would be useful in order to demonstrate 'what works' and what changes need to be made in terms on enhancing diversity across the key areas discussed.
- Binding recommendations and accountability in addressing diversity could provide support for those individuals with protected characteristics, overtly demonstrating active participation by senior staff and overt displays that diverse needs of the workforce are considered may provide added benefits to those staff.

Recommendations

- Embedding equality and diversity:

- **Training as core:** Placing it centrally to all training undertaken could lead to its embedding within the police workforce, and the service delivery of staff.
 - **Representative mentors:** Invite and utilise individuals who have or share a protected characteristics to deliver training and/or lectures across all forces for all members of staff and officers.
 - **Dismissal of hierarchies of protected characteristics:** This needs careful reconsideration within the police force as it could lead to further exclusion, isolation and issues within recruitment and retention.
 - **Workforce statistics:** Consider how to collect more statistics on 'hidden' protected characteristics in order (i) have a clearer picture of workforce diversity and (ii) lessen the perception of BME and gender being at the top of the equality hierarchy (see previous recommendation). It is also recommended to collect more workforce statistics on back-office staff and PCSOs.
 - **Establishment of networks:** Build on already existing informal networks among HR and equality leads and establish formal and coordinated networks for information sharing across forces. These networks could feed into training programmes for new staff, and assist or support with recruitment drives targeting different groups of individuals.
- Practical measures to enhance diversity within the workforce
 - **Vetting:** Review the recent changes made to the vetting process to examine whether it has had the desired impact in mitigating the disproportionate levels of BME individuals who currently do not pass the vetting stage.
 - **Entry requirements:** Reconsider the proposed introduction of requiring applicants to have a university degree, as this is likely to disproportionately affect underrepresented groups.
 - **Flexible working:** To maximise retention and attract applicants, increase part time and flexible working opportunities as well as parental leave.
 - **Resources:** Include more resources (money, time and capacity) to ensure that existing schemes have the desired impact. Equally, make sufficient resources available to SSAs in order to mainstream equality and diversity within and across organisations.
 - **Supervisory discretion:** Reduce supervisory discretion around deployment and promotion to avoid the possibility of unconscious bias in decision-making. This could include the development of supervisors to ensure that they are providing support for the career development of all their officers and staff from diverse backgrounds.

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- Leadership
 - **Accountability:** The 'Workforce Plan' should provide a framework for which mayors and PCCs hold their CCs to account.
 - **Binding recommendations:** Consider making recommendations from the CoP mandatory in order to ensure a level of consistency across forces.
 - **Research and design:** Research into many of the gaps identified in this document would improve the evidence base. This includes a range of methods from feasibility, process and impact evaluations; to better data capture. An improved evidence base can assist with identifying what works and what does not in relation to equality and diversity.
 - **Institutional exclusion:** Further consideration needs to be given to the larger effects of strategies and policies across the PSED. Some provisions could inadvertently lead to unequal opportunities across characteristics.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and context

The Policing Vision for 2025 stated that over the next eight years, police forces across the country aim to become more representative of the demographic make-up of the communities they serve and protect. In doing so, it is hoped that the legitimacy of policing and the confidence of the public in law enforcement will improve

Underlying the Policing Vision is The Equality Act 2010, which agglomerated all previous equality legislation in the UK as well as introducing the Public Service Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED applies to public authorities as well as voluntary and private organisations carrying out public functions and aims to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization;
2. advance equality of opportunity;
3. foster good relations.

The PSED requires public authorities to 'have due regard'. This means that in carrying out their functions, a public authority subjected to the Duty must consciously consider its three general aims outlined above (see Government Equalities Office, 2013). The greater the relevance of a function for equality, the greater attention should be paid. Policing is an area where equality is particularly relevant to the functioning of the service.

The PSED provides the legislative context for achieving the Policing Vision for 2025: a vision that speaks directly to the composition of the police as well as the community it polices. Establishing a good relationship between the public and police is not only important in supporting the victims of crime and community members generally, but also in ensuring effective policing. In the UK, as in many western countries, law enforcement protects the public and combats crime through policing by consent. This means that the police require the public's co-operation and engagement in the reporting of crime and victimisation (Tyler and Huo, 2002). As stated in the Home Affairs Select Committee's 'Police Diversity' inquiry (2016), diversity within the police workforce is central to policing by consent; and is a fundamental part of procedural justice. Ensuring that the police have equal and proportional representation of individuals across majority and minority groups, inclusive of protected characteristics, is critical for both the well-being of those individuals and for an effective force (House of Commons, 2016). The report emphasises the importance of diversity both to ensure the identification of skilled people across protected characteristics, but also in speaking to specific communities. This would be the case if police forces serving communities with a high proportion of BME individuals, for instance, would have a similar proportion of BME individuals within the force.

'Urgent and radical' action is advised by the Committee in speaking to the under-representation of minority groups. The Home Office reported in 2018 that just 6.6% of all police officers in the UK were from a Black and Minority ethnic background (BME).

As of December 2017, women represented 30% of all police officers across the 43 UK police forces (Home Office, 2018); while this is an improvement compared to previous years – in 2010 the number of female officers stood at 25 % - women remain underrepresented considering women make up half of the population. A noticeable gap from these statistics is a focus on issues and data related to ‘hidden’ protected characteristics, such as sexuality, faith/religion or disability which are either not visible or less frequently disclosed.

1.2 Aim of report

This document reports on the findings of work carried out by NatCen Social Research as part of a commissioned investigation into enhancing the diversity of policing across UK police forces. The purpose of this research was three-fold:

- to provide a critical analysis of the work being undertaken in delivery of the diversity agenda within UK policing;
- to rapidly identify and assess the evidence of existing literature regarding diversity, with a focus on ongoing practices, policies and procedures in relation to recruitment, retention, training and development, service delivery and where possible, community engagement; and
- to externally review other non-police organisations to understand how issues relating to workforce diversity are undertaken.

The research was broken up into three phases, complemented by a series of qualitative focus groups. **Phase 1** included a ‘landscape’ review to consider existing literature, policy and practice currently being implemented in UK police forces. This was followed by a series of three focus groups to further explore the findings from the landscape review, which largely centred on national equality and diversity initiatives in policing. Specifically, the aim was to understand the extent to which these initiatives were perceived to be successful and if not, what the main challenges were. The composition of each focus group is described below:

- **Focus group 1: Staff Support Associations (SSA)** – made up of individual representatives acting on behalf of police officers and staff with particular protected characteristics;
- **Focus group 2: Human Resources and Associates (HRA)** – made up of police staff tasked with overseeing equality and diversity-related policies in their respective police force;
- **Focus group 3: Strategic Leads (SL)** – comprised of decision-makers from different national organisations and/or individual forces, tasked with formulating and implementing strategies about equality and diversity and/or other areas relevant to policing.

Further detail on the methodology for Phase 1 can be found in appendix J.

Phase 2 included a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) of peer-reviewed and grey literature in the realm of diversity in policing. The Rapid Evidence Assessment phase of the research aimed to explore the peer-reviewed academic and grey literature in the realm of diversity in policing. The purpose of this was to further explore the evidence base not presented, or scrutinised, in the landscape

review. Where the landscape review allowed for a consideration of current policy and strategy, the REA provided the opportunity to consider primary (and literary based) research that had been undertaken in relation to diversity across policing and in relation to recruitment, retention, training and development, service delivery and community engagement. By considering the peer-reviewed and grey literature, we were able to provide an additional element of evidence that may not have been readily available or considered across enhancing diversity in policing. This was followed by a series of focus groups with (primarily) the same participants from the first discussions. The overall objective for the second series of focus groups was to have participants critically engage with the findings that emerged from the REA. It also aimed to focus on where participants may have identified gaps in the findings presented.

Lastly, **Phase 3** involved undertaking an ‘External’ review. This included looking outside of the policing world at other institutional and organisational diversity agendas. The overall objective of the external review was to identify examples of enhancing workforce diversity across private and public organisations, predominantly in the UK. However, we also considered multinational corporations operating internationally and a US-based company with a good track record of workforce diversity. Moreover, the external review examined a range of national equality duties designed for employment, largely in Northern European countries as well as the US and Canada. This was important to better understand the legislative impact in driving workforce diversity. Further details about the methodology for the external review can be found in appendix D and J.

Across each phase of the research, the team sourced documents on how diversity is enhanced across:

- recruitment
- retention
- progression
- service delivery and community engagement

1.3 Report overview

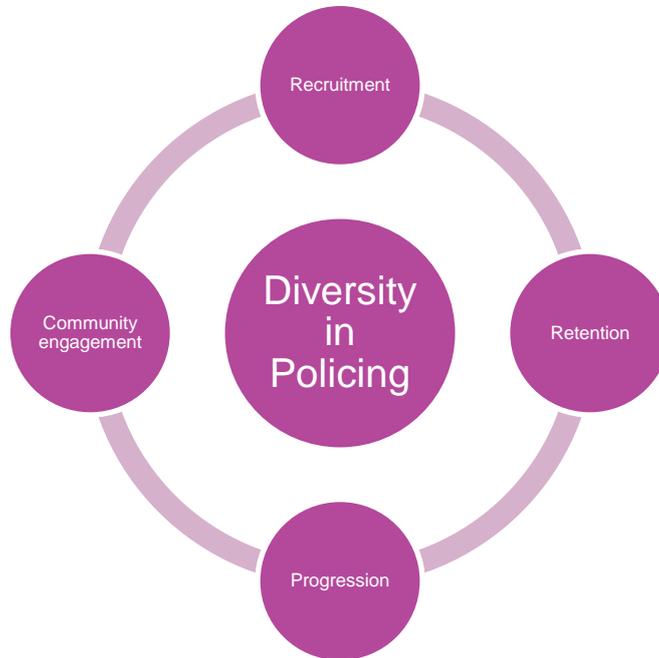
The rest of the report is structured as follows:

- **chapter 2** outlines the findings across research phases related to enhancing diversity at the recruitment stage within police and staff;
- **chapter 3** discusses the findings associated with retention and progression;
- **chapter 4** presents an overview of linked to community engagement and service delivery;
- **chapter 5** provides an overview of key implications and recommendations that emerged from the research.

As already discussed, cutting across the research presented throughout this report are different thematic areas. There are two key considerations while reading through this report. Firstly, although the thematic areas are presented separately in each chapter, it is important to view them as interrelated. For instance, how the police engage with the community can be seen to impact on levels of recruitment from the community itself,

specifically from underrepresented groups. Secondly, the depth of coverage of each theme in the chapters is driven by the evidence base; for instance the emphasis on recruitment in chapter 3 is the result of the evidence base revolving around that area.

Figure 1: Thematic areas



2 Recruitment

2.1 Landscape review

The landscape review evidenced that diversity work has often been directed at recruitment in relation to the policing career. The introduction of national programmes and direct entry schemes; the review of recruitment processes; and the encouragement and provision of guidance on positive action have all been steps taken in attempts to improve diversity within the policing workforce. These are outlined below in more detail.

Two national programmes aimed at diversifying the police workforce were identified – the **BME Progression 2018** programme and **Police Now**. The **BME Progression 2018** programme was developed by the College of Policing (CoP) to improve the recruitment, development, retention and progression of BME officers and staff. The programme was intended to be rolled out in phases and aimed to provide advice to support forces in achieving improved representation; conduct relevant research to expand the evidence base about how to do this; and share practice examples on the recruitment, retention and progression of BME police officers. Actions completed as a result of this programme have for the most part been related to the collection of data and conducting new research. The reviewed documents do not provide insight into the implementation or delivery of the programme.

Police Now is a two-year graduate leadership programme that commenced with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in 2015 but has since been introduced in other police forces across the country. The programme aimed to train university graduates to become police officers and develop the necessary leadership skill to be deployed as police officers to work in deprived communities. Although the programme does not specifically target the recruitment of individuals from specific protected characteristics, it does aim to recruit ‘outstanding’ and ‘diverse’ individuals into frontline policing (Police Now, 2018). The Home Affairs Committee (2016) highlighted how in the second round of the programme in the MPS, 27% of the successful applicants to **Police Now** were from BME backgrounds. No additional information about the impact that **Police Now** has had on other protected characteristics or in other forces was provided in the evidence base.

In addition to introducing specific diversity related programmes, the College of Policing have also introduced a Direct Entry route at both Inspector and Superintendent levels which involves an 18-month training programme. This presents a diversification of the previous single point of entry at Constable level. Although it was not introduced explicitly to enhance diversity in the police workforce, the results from the first round of the scheme were promising, with three of the fourteen participants coming from BME backgrounds (Home Affairs Committee, 2016).

A number of reviews have recently been undertaken to assess the external recruitment process in policing. The CoP carried out a review of initial police recruitment in 2016 (Clemence, Rix and Mann, 2016). The review included an REA which examined existing evidence of good practice in recruitment and provided recommendations about candidate selection processes and procedures. The review also involved engagement

with stakeholders to give them an opportunity to feed in any particular concerns or suggestions. One recommendation was to identify and share effective attraction and marketing interventions in police recruitment; this was felt to be particularly pertinent given the different recruitment drives deployed across the 43 police forces in England and Wales.

A second review of police recruitment was published in 2018 – this examined police recruitment across individual forces and nationally; identified challenges; suggested solutions to these challenges; considered potential merits and disadvantages of the solutions; and provided an action plan moving forward (CoP, 2018). One finding was that the recruitment model itself acted as a barrier to achieving aspired diversity in police forces. This was due to a lack of clarity around the processes and procedures for potential candidates, with the recruitment process being viewed as lengthy and unclear (ibid). The review concluded that the police should not move towards an end-to-end national recruitment platform (where the entire employment processes from the development of job specifications to exit interviews is handled centrally or by the same individuals/teams) at this stage, but that six incremental changes to address the barriers should be introduced instead. The review outlined a plan for four of these to be delivered over the next 6-12 months. These four priorities are:

- providing clear national recruitment guidelines
- running a centralised project that supports forces in making improvements to recruitment
- introducing a national attraction campaign and portal
- modernise and replace the CASA software currently used to support the recruitment process.

Work is currently being done towards delivering these.

The CoP have encouraged the use of positive action by police forces, which involved taking lawful measures to support individuals from underrepresented groups in overcoming disadvantages in competing with other applicants. The CoP (2014b) have produced a guide that provides an outline of the responsibilities and requirements of police forces under the PSED and offers practical advice and examples as to how forces can introduce positive action. They have also collated practice examples with the use of positive action from police forces across England and Wales, in hopes that these can provide assistance to other forces looking to introduce positive action strategies of their own (CoP, 2015b). For example, Merseyside Police have introduced *The Phoenix Leadership Programme* which is a pre-recruitment positive action strategy aimed at increasing the diversity of the force in relation to BME, female, LGBT and candidates with a disability. The programme includes a one-week leadership course, workshops providing information about the recruitment process and a mentor from staff support networks. Another example is an initiative undertaken by Nottinghamshire Police which involves engagement events with faith groups to attract potential candidates. These candidates were then provided with support sessions and mentors to offer them the highest chance of success.

The above examples demonstrate improvements and acknowledgement of problems in the area of recruitment to increase the diversity of the police workforce and there are examples of promising practice on a local level. However, these practice examples are not consistent across the police service as a whole.

2.2 Rapid Evidence Assessment

The evidence on recruitment included a range of practical measures already undertaken across forces in England and Wales to diversify the workforce:

- Steps to accommodate different cultural needs, for example allowing officers to wear a hijab; having prayer rooms; serving halal food (O'Neil 2014; Rowe and Ross 2015). This is important because the absence of accommodating different cultural needs has been a barrier to recruiting underrepresented groups (CoP, YoP 2017; see also Smith et al., 2015). Steps to accommodate cultural differences also need to be seen within a context in which protected groups in the community – of which prospective recruits are a part – harbour negative perceptions of the police, a view held particularly by BME groups and Muslims (Awan, 2013; Ariza, 2014; Rowe and Ross, 2015; Smith et al., 2015; Yesufu, 2013).
- Offering pre-application support and coaching for prospective candidates (Women Police, 2016; Rowe and Ross, 2015; Ward and Prenzler, 2016; Metropolitan Police, 2017; House of Commons, 2016). For instance, recruitment of female police officers in North Wales has been facilitated by the introduction of staff support networks such as the North Wales Police Women's Association, which organises events on a range of topics, e.g. on interview and presentation skills.
- Although not explicitly mentioned, such steps addressed the lack of 'social capital' – having an established network of contacts within the police – and familiarity with certain processes around recruitment among members of protected groups.
- Providing flexible work options and enhanced maternity and paternity pay (Ward and Prenzler, 2016). Forces which implement such policies have a higher proportion of women in the force (Ward and Prenzler, 2016; see also Hargreaves et al., 2017).
- Respect for diversity as a key competency for recruitment and promotion processes (Jones and Williams, 2015). This means that applicants are expected to demonstrate practical examples of their awareness of equality and diversity. While not directly related to recruiting underrepresented groups, such a measure ensures that considerations of equality and diversity are embedded into the recruitment process.
- Improving the chances for BME individuals to pass assessment tests through 'positive priming'. A particular intervention using a Randomised Control Trial has demonstrated that the decision to include more information in a pre-assessment email has a positive impact on BME individuals passing an online situational test (CoP, 2015; Ruda et al., 2015).

Practical measures to enhance diversity can be facilitated and driven by national and sectoral factors. These include:

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- a. 'Gender Agenda' in England and Wales, driven by the British Association for Women in Policing (Ward and Prenzler, 2016);
 - b. Metropolitan Police's introduction of residency criteria, which specifies that potential recruits need to have lived in London for three out of the last six years prior to applying for a police constable role; and
 - c. Government legislation allowing for direct entry (Metropolitan Police, 2017; House of Commons, 2016).

All three measures are perceived to have directly resulted in a higher proportion of female and/or BME representation within the force. For instance, out of the ten candidates selected for the direct entry superintendent scheme between 2015 and 2017, 30% were BME and 60% were female (Metropolitan Police, 2017).

Alongside practical measures and legislative/sectoral drivers, forces have used a business case for diversity as a key strategy to recruit members from underrepresented groups. The idea is that the recruitment of underrepresented groups makes business sense on the basis that a representative workforce both increases police legitimacy and helps build relationships with hard to reach groups, such as the LGBT community (Jones, 2015; see also House of Commons, 2016; Silvestri et al., 2013). One important caveat to the business case, however, applies to members with 'hidden' protected characteristics (e.g. sexuality). As Jones (2015) emphasises, the business case for including more LGBT individuals and its perceived benefits (e.g. building relationships with the LGBT community and victims of crime) rests on officers' disclosure. The business case therefore has different implications depending on the specific protected characteristic(s) in question.

2.3 Focus Groups

Participants felt that there had been limited success in attracting and recruiting diverse candidates in response to existing national strategies. For example, one police force recruited nine people via the Police Now programme; however all of these individuals were White. It was felt that certain schemes were not necessarily relevant to increasing diversity in policing, with Police Now having been modelled on the Teach First programme, leading to scepticism as to whether this was the right mechanism for the police service.

Different awareness levels of the national diversity agenda and schemes, as well as the need for a coordinated recruitment effort among different police forces were acknowledged by participants. In relation to the BME Progression 2018 programme, it was perceived that many forces were not aware that the programme had come into use. Participants highlighted that effective implementation of national schemes was impossible without sufficient oversight or awareness of them. While 38 police forces had signed up to Disability Confident, the government's positive action scheme, few participants in the SSA focus group were aware.

Local recruitment initiatives have focused on improving accessibility for diverse candidates and improving the legitimacy and fairness of the assessment process. This was reported by focus group participants as largely having a positive impact on the number of candidates from protected groups attending, as reflected by a participant who commented that "*our police officers that year were 10 percent BME, 40 percent*

women, so really representative for us” [HRA FG1]. Some forces have overhauled their initial police officer recruitment process, with a growing focus on fairness for candidates with ‘hidden’ disabilities (for example, by ensuring that adjustments were in place for dyslexic candidates including extra time to process written information) and training for interview panel members to improve consistency of the recruitment experience and approach towards all candidates (for example, to ensure that small talk is made with every candidate to help make them feel more comfortable).

Outreach work in the community to raise awareness of a career in the police force and to encourage applications from underrepresented groups was considered to be effective. Strategies reported by SSAs that existed in police forces included sending police staff and officers to major religious or community events.

“We’ll go out in the mobile police stations, hand out leaflets, talk, and arrange meetings in the evening. We’ve developed a course called Insight where people can come in for the day, and they will talk about the application process, they’ll talk about the assessment. They’ll tell people what to expect, so that if they want to join then they know what the process is.” [SSA FG1].

Such outreach work indicates that comprehensive positive action starts before the application stage and involves engaging with community members and making them aware of the need to register their interest. This allows police forces to build a database of potential candidates that they are able to run programme activities for, such as discovery days (described as similar to open days in university, where potential recruits are able to learn about working in the police). Representative Workforce Teams or an equivalent buddy system are also being used to keep potential recruits engaged and fully supported throughout the recruitment process, particularly those without a family connection within the police.

“They kind of nurture those people through the system (...) We’ve looked to give people from communities who wouldn’t have that hand-holding going on for them through a family member, through the representative workforce, and it is proving to be successful.” [SSA FG1].

Work has been done to monitor candidate pools more effectively and to keep track of where candidates ‘drop-off’ from the system, with a particular focus on protected groups.

However, there were criticisms of policies which focus group participants felt indirectly disadvantaged certain protected groups in terms of recruitment and attraction to the police service.

“The disappointing thing is that (...) overarching new policies [are] being brought in now that are going to change the face of police, like the PEQF [Police Education Qualifications Framework], they [College of Policing] still couldn’t understand when we were standing up saying, ‘This will be excluding massive parts of our community, and this is why’.” [SSA FG1].

An example given of this was around officers with colour-blindness being prevented from taking part in firearms training. Another example included officers who disclosed having Type 1 Diabetes being removed from frontline duties for not being able to drive

a police car, despite controlling their condition through medication and other strategies. Moreover, greater educational requirements have been introduced to the police service, including initiatives that among other aims promote diversity such as Police Now and Direct Entry, both of which require degree-level qualifications. The concern is that underrepresented groups who were less likely to have academic qualifications would be disproportionately affected, such as the Romani Gypsy Traveller community.

“They won't even apply 'cause they look at the form and they go, 'I haven't got a degree. I haven't got A Levels. I had to drop out because I had to care or I had to do this or I had to do that or I took a job' and I think that's part of the restriction as well on some of the candidates that we attract into the police service from all different cultural backgrounds.” [HRA FG1].

Recruitment efforts within BME groups may have had a more limited impact due to historically negative perceptions of police behaviour, such as disproportionate stop and search practices, which have created an adverse attitude towards the police and policing as a career. From a BME perspective, there was a sense that becoming a police officer was not worthwhile and families discouraged their children from joining, particularly when there were other professions that they could join with less difficulty (see 5.1). In the same way, there were concerns around the extent to which the police would be able to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.

“I would tell my sons not to join the job at the moment, because they are both disabled, and the police service as a whole is just woefully underprepared to deal with complex disability (...) They are more than capable human beings, but the police force would not be able to accommodate their needs, and I know that from seeing it from within.” [SSA FG1]

Across all the focus groups, the practice of vetting candidates was considered to hinder diversity initiatives, particularly in relation to BME groups. Participants discussed how Black African and Caribbean males in London would be unfairly excluded from recruitment processes because of perceived associations with criminal gangs (see also Home Affairs Select Committee 2016). There were also cases where applicants had forgotten to declare certain matters or there were minor inconsistencies between their application and official records. As such, even though good quality police staff (specials or volunteers) and external candidates were applying to become police officers and passing subsequent assessment stages, they were then failing at the vetting stage due to reasons participants considered to be trivial.

“We had someone, their medical form didn't match with what their GP sent and I was sitting there thinking, ‘cripes, I can't remember every time I've been to the doctor and what I talked about’, but that was the measurement we're using. It was, you've lied then, you lack integrity.” [HRA FG1].

Vetting by association has also led to candidates being excluded from entry into the police force due to their social or familial relationships with someone who had a criminal record or background, even if they did not have any contact with them, *“that becomes a barrier and we lose a really good candidate”* [SL FG1]. This disproportionately affected certain underrepresented groups such as BME candidates,

who were more likely to have come from a lower socio-economic background and neighbourhoods where crime was more prevalent.

Participants discussed the value of setting up ‘buddy’ systems to support individuals from protected groups who were considering joining the police. Participants viewed the provision of this support and mentoring as a practice example that should be used more widely. Forces had taken various approaches to mentoring in the recruitment and application phases. Stakeholders suggested that the individuals who received this buddy network support had been more successful with their applications, though there was no impact evaluation data to support this.

Involving SSAs in recruitment was considered a promising way to support the recruitment of individuals from protected groups.

Case study 1—Supporting diverse recruitment

Following the unsuccessful implementation of a programme to recruit applicants from underrepresented groups, a police force included a number of Staff Support Associations in the construction and delivery of their future programme—this initiative felt it important to include knowledge and competencies about various protected characteristics, from members of those groups throughout the process, and in reaching individuals from specific groups in a more meaningful way. The drive saw an increase in recruitment of individuals from underrepresented groups over their initial programme.

Participants did highlight that there was limited use of SSAs at the application and recruitment stages. This failure to utilise the police forces’ own internal contacts was seen as a missed opportunity for targeted recruitment efforts.

“Why haven’t I got our HR leads coming to us and saying, ‘What can I do?’ Or, ‘What can you do?’ Or, ‘Can you help me understand the [religious] events that are happening and the [religious] things that are going on?’ Or, ‘How can you support us in going to the [religious place of worship]?’” [SSA FG2]

Participants also noted how a lack of understanding about positive action could act as a barrier in delivering the necessary positive action initiatives. Such initiatives could be seen as controversial and deemed as positive discrimination. Participants discussed how this lack of understanding was prevalent not only among police constables and sergeants, but also senior police leaders, leading to internal resistance among staff to deliver positive action work.

Another challenge that participants discussed was the perceived lack of public awareness about the wide variety of police staff roles available:

“When we said to them [the public], what do you think about who deals with fraud, who deals with international terrorism, who deals - they had no idea. How do you think we gather information on people? They had no idea about surveillance roles, all these things. They didn’t even know that we needed people who were really geeks around technology. When you started to describe

those, they were saying, well actually, I don't want to be that Taser person but I would be really interested in doing that.” [HRA FG2]

Demystifying and explaining what police staff roles involved may serve to increase the diversity in the applicant pool; although individuals from certain protected groups may not want to become police officers, they may be interested in associated non-operational roles. Furthermore, police staff roles are regarded as a potential entry route to officer roles, which may also support enhancing diversity in police officer roles over time.

“The thing is, once you get them into police staff roles, a lot of people then actually look at the organisation and dispel some of the myths and many want to go on anyway to be a police officer.” [HRA FG2]

2.4 External Review

The evidence on recruitment suggested a range of contextual drivers to promote inclusion and diversity in the workforce alongside practical measures particular organisations had taken.

Enhancing diversity within organisations was seen to be driven by national legislation and sector-specific factors. These included:

- a. National equalities legislation (e.g. PSED, UK; Employment Equality Act, Ireland; General Equal Treatment Act, Germany) which identified and defined protected groups/characteristics;
- b. Athena SWAN (gender) and Race Equality charter marks (in UK Higher Education); and
- c. HM Treasury Women in Finance Charter (Finance and Banking sector).

These drivers were referenced in the rationale for strategies and policies and where organisations set out cases for change in their inclusion and diversity approaches. The UK Civil Service, for example, articulated an ambition to improve diversity and inclusiveness in the civil service. They produced detailed targets against key areas for improvement. These included advertising all external roles by default, a full review of the employee experience (including social mobility and inclusion principles), that everyone had the opportunity to progress and a culture was developed which championed and valued difference.

Evidence from international examples suggested the ways in which the law determines the treatment of underrepresented groups in general, and in some cases specifically, with respect to the workforce. For example, Canada, Ireland and the United States all had Acts³ that explicitly prohibited discrimination and promoted equal opportunities in the workforce. However, the legislation did not outline particular practical actions required to do this. Nonetheless, tools/resources to support organisations to implement principles and strategies were provided in some cases. For example, the Irish Human

³ Canada: Employment Equity Act (2005); Ireland: Employment Equality Act (1998); US Federal Law covers a series of Acts (e.g. Equality Act 2015) which prohibit discrimination and require reasonable adjustments on the grounds of protected characteristics

Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) offered a 7-steps framework for building a culture of equality in the workplace (IHREC, 2018). Good practice guides from the Australian Human Rights Commission offered tangible recommendations for employers with a publications series on diverse topics, for example, employing older staff and those with disabilities (Australian Human Rights Commission 2018a, 2018b).

Finally, some organisations in this review from the Higher Education sector (Open University and Equality Challenge Unit) also indicated the need to develop a business case for equality and diversity as part of their strategy to recruit (retain and progress) staff from underrepresented groups. Appendix H outlines in more detail how such measures compare with the current diversity agenda in the police as discussed in previous chapters.

These contextual aspects underpin a number of practical measures (e.g. policies, strategies), some of which used the language of positive action. Examples included:

- Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service set targets for recruitment of underrepresented groups. They also took a positive action approach to recruitment – actively encouraging underrepresented groups to apply and offering special training to assist. Tyne & Wear stated that positive action had helped them exceed their recruitment target for women entering operational service. Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service used positive action in recruitment which meant changes in their communication strategy, directed community-based engagement and using technology and social media to increase their ‘reach’. They also provided a FAQs which they cited as important in reaching a broader group of people.
- The UK Civil Service used a ‘positive action pathway’ – a development programme for civil servants from underrepresented groups. They also used ‘name blind’ and ‘school blind’ recruitment processes and had an apprenticeship programme to support entry.
- The Bank of England (and the UK Civil Service) aimed to recruit from diverse disciplines, ensuring opportunities reached people from a wider range of work backgrounds and experience.
- Deloitte had developed and actively advertise an agile working policy to encourage applications from parents/carers.
- Policies, charter marks and schemes that organisations are signed up to, such as. Stonewall Champions (e.g. Royal Bank of Scotland), Disability two ticks scheme (e.g. Ernst & Young LLP), Athena SWAN (Edinburgh Napier University), Times Top 50 Employers for Women (British Army) are made visible in recruitment materials to indicate commitment to these areas.
- BP diversified their recruitment efforts by working with partners to advertise their opportunities (e.g. REMPLOY (disability) and Race for Opportunity).

Common across these measures was the need to collect data on the existing workforce to understand areas of underrepresentation as well as monitor recruitment and selection processes and set targets for development. Senior leadership buy-in and

commitment were also frequently mentioned and Diversity Councils (e.g. NHS England, Edinburgh Napier University, Ernst & Young LLP) and senior leadership groups (e.g. Coventry University) are considered essential. Within these examples, in national/international legislation and through Charter Marks, external accountability to measure and report on equality and diversity should be required.

3 Progression and retention

3.1 Landscape Review

As progression and retention were often discussed together in the sources reviewed, these have been combined for clarity. Where necessary, distinctions are made.

Progression and retention feature in the **BME Progression 2018** programme. As part of a programme, a survey was sent to all BME officers across the 43 forces in England and Wales to gain a better understanding of their experience of applying for promotion and specialist posts; their experience of the provision of support and development opportunities; their career aspirations; their desires for support from their force; and on their views of positive discrimination (CoP, 2014a). Findings suggested that the provision of development plans is limited and support measures such as mentors or coaches are also limited, especially for officers in lower ranks. Progression and retention are also covered by the positive action guide (CoP, 2014b) and in the good practice examples (CoP, 2015b) discussed previously.

The CoP launched a Fast Track programme which is a training programme for serving police constables attempting to accelerate their promotion to senior ranks in policing. The programme is not aimed explicitly at progressing candidates who are members of groups of protected characteristics, but the existence of an accelerated route to promotion can also benefit underrepresented groups, especially when actively advertised to these groups. For example, the involvement of the National Black Police Association in advertising the fast-tracks scheme led to a 20% success rate for BME applicants to the Fast Track programme, compared to an earlier success rate of 5% (Home Affairs Committee, 2016).

The CoP (2017b) has conducted research to examine the appointment process for the position of chief officer. The research findings highlighted challenges that candidates faced when applying for chief officer positions, which revealed the need to review the Senior Police National Assessment Centre (SPNAC) and Strategic Command Course (SCC) to ensure progression by underrepresented groups. This review was undertaken and revisions to the processes followed. Positive action initiatives were also organised – two Career Development Workshops and a national development centre were held to provide deeper insight into the assessment process for individuals from underrepresented groups such as females, BME individuals and LGBT individuals. Data from the following round of applications demonstrated not only an overall increase in the number of applicants, but more importantly, an increase in the proportion of BME and female applicants (CoP, 2017b).

Similarly to recruitment, the evidence of good practice is limited and has not been evaluated. The Home Affairs Committee (2016) claimed that the police diversity agenda has focused overwhelmingly on recruitment, at the expense of ensuring diversity in relation to progression and retention. This is supported throughout the landscape review. This means that the diversity agenda has resulted in diversifying the workforce in more junior roles in the police and less so at senior levels.

3.2 Rapid Evidence Assessment

Many of the practical steps taken to recruit a more diverse police force are equally relevant for retention. This applies especially to measures such as accommodating different cultural needs or offering flexible work options and childcare vouchers to women (and men). This is relevant because the lack of flexible working opportunities and child care considerations have been key reasons for female attrition in the police service (Silvestri, 2015).

Other practical steps to enhance diversity via retention included:

- Investing in SSAs to create a supportive environment for members of underrepresented groups, such as LGBT individuals (Jones, 2015) and women (Ward and Prenzler, 2016).
- Receiving feedback from exit interviews in order to better understand the reasons why individuals, specifically from underrepresented background, are leaving the force (Metropolitan Police, 2017).

National and sectoral factors could facilitate retention for underrepresented groups. LGBT individuals, for instance, cited *The Police Code of Conduct* as a vital document insofar as it provided ‘the first form of internal redress’ (that is, providing the option to receive compensation for any wrongdoing) (Jones, 2015; see also Jones and Williams, 2015). On a legislative level, the Equality Act 2010 legislative protection has been attributed with increasing LGBT individuals’ confidence to challenge discrimination and harassment (Jones, 2015; Jones and Williams, 2015), therefore potentially increasing the likelihood of individuals staying within the force. The role of legislation was also considered significant against the background of sexual harassment, which constituted a barrier to retaining women within policing (Brown et al., 2017; Silvestri, 2015; Ward and Prenzler, 2016). Other barriers that complicated retention concerned:

- a. the lack of career development opportunities, specifically for BME individuals (Smith et al., 2015). Reduced opportunities for promotion also have the effect of increasing competition between minority groups competing for scarce opportunities and resources (Silvestri, 2015);
- b. Organisational divisions within policing. A case in point is the situation of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), who frequently report not feeling accepted as part of the ‘policing family’ (O’Neil, 2014). Interestingly, PCSOs are also more frequently visible and in encounters with the communities in which they work. The consequence of this might be that PCSOs – who have a high intake of women and BME citizens – are deterred from entering the police force as police constables.

Similar to retention, few studies explicitly addressed (internal) progression. The evidence that covered internal progression, however, highlighted the following instances of promising practice across some forces:

- Offering tailored developmental support and mentoring for members of underrepresented groups (Jones and Williams, 2015; House of Commons, 2016; Metropolitan Police, 2017). The Metropolitan Police, for instance, has

seen some success in the number of underrepresented groups promoted in proportion to the numbers in the feeder ranks (Metropolitan Police, 2017).

- Running reverse mentoring schemes, whereby more senior police officers are mentored by members from underrepresented groups (House of Commons, 2016). While the main aim of these mentoring schemes is to equip senior officers with a better understanding of the experiential knowledge belonging to members of underrepresented groups, it might also be viewed as a pathway for members with protected characteristics to progress within the force.

Nonetheless, attempts to increase promotion and progression prospects for members of underrepresented groups are hampered by three factors. First, the fact that BME are disproportionately subjected to misconduct hearings could have an adverse impact on their progression prospects (Smith et al., 2015; Wunsch et al., 2016). This research focused on both official data held by select police forces, and semi-structured interviews with minority police officers, where it was perceived that their progression could be unfairly effected. Second, underrepresented groups in the force perceived specialist units as ‘closed shops’ only available to individuals whose ‘face fits’ (Bennetto, 2009) Finally, the lack of financial resources resulted in reduced opportunities for promotion and, by extension, intensified competition between minority groups for scarce opportunities and resources (Silvestri, 2015).

3.3 Focus Groups

In response to existing national strategies relating to enhancing diversity in policing, participants across the focus groups felt that while recruits were keen and motivated, there was a lack of infrastructure to support them once they had been recruited. For example, due to lack of resources for supervision or training, one force put their Police Now recruits into a Safer Neighbourhood Team role to complete project work rather than assist frontline policing. Additionally, officers on the Police Now programme in some police force areas had to complete their training in a very short space of time, without the time for practical training or experience. As a result, regular officers in some police force areas considered these Police Now officers to be a burden on their time, as they still did not have the requisite experience to do the job themselves without supervision or further guidance:

“They were seen as a bit of a liability to the officers they went out with, almost like a ride-along or a student, and it just didn't work. I think out of our intake, I think we've already had two of the Police Now recruits leave because they just didn't feel invested in, didn't feel valued, and it certainly wasn't what they signed up for.” [SSA FG1].

Participants were also concerned that the projected loss of BME candidates in higher ranks and the substantial level of turnover of entry-level recruits from the BME Progression 2018 programme meant that the police service would gradually become less diverse over time.

Local schemes and initiatives have also focused on gender-based initiatives to retain and support females in the workforce. Schemes included an online resource for menopause and breast cancer awareness, as there were more women in policing for

longer who were therefore affected by these issues⁴. However, in terms of female officer retention there were issues around resource pressures; the high demands put on the workforce meant that applications for reduced or flexible hours requested by working mothers were often not approved.

Participants felt that police forces generally accommodated different cultural needs, with SSAs again seen as having an important role to play.

Nevertheless, participants recommended that that awareness was raised about SSAs. Currently this information was often only provided via leaflets to new recruits upon joining the police force, a busy period during which joining SSAs was not a priority. Participants suggested that providing additional information at later stages when recruits have eased into their new role would facilitate involvement. This in turn could have a positive outcome on their wellbeing and the embedding of a support network as part of their role.

Participants felt that the police focused their efforts heavily on external recruitment, at the expense of retaining and investing in existing staff. Although participants acknowledged the importance of recruiting a diverse workforce, they highlighted that such efforts would not be valuable in the long run if those recruits then decided to leave the police force prematurely. This was especially important from a diversity perspective as the majority of those leaving the police force early were women and individuals from BME backgrounds. Participants raised the lack of progression opportunities as a key reason for exit.

“The thing is, I think it costs what? £25,000 to train a police officer. That’s all well getting the numbers in, but I kid you not, three years later they’ll be going out the other end.” [SSA FG2]

A lack of flexible work options was highlighted as a barrier for retention, especially for women in the police force, with *“more women leaving now than they ever have done because they just can’t make it work anymore”* [HRA FG2]. Although participants acknowledged that budgetary issues could make the provision of flexible work options challenging, they noted that it was possible to develop systems which both provide flexible work options and take the business need of the force into account. For example, one department trialled a system which allowed individuals to submit requests for flexible shifts if these met the operational needs of the force, where after a flexible working panel matched up individuals accordingly, resulting in newly formed job share opportunities. This system was viewed positively as it not only helped the department retain their employees by supporting their flexible work needs, but also took the operational needs of the force into consideration. It was suggested that similar options be explored across forces.

In addition to providing opportunities for flexible work, participants also noted the need to make these available to a wide range of parent/carer groups, such as caring for elderly relatives or relatives with disabilities, as well as adoptive parents.

⁴ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-cancer/>

Another important consideration relevant for retention was how diversity and difference was addressed in policing. In the current context, participants described diversity as something that was not taken seriously by forces:

“So, when we talk about diversity now in the force, we've harmed ourselves a lot because we use it almost like a punishment, so if you say something wrong now, you may get someone turn around to you half-jokingly and say, 'I'll send you a diversity course for that!' It stops it being a serious issue and having credibility and instead, turns it into something that people demean.” [HRA FG2]

Participants also described how diversity training was not always administered appropriately. Those delivering diversity training in policing were from majority groups and were often perceived to not possess cultural awareness around issues such as *“the hijab or somebody wearing a kippah or what you should do or shouldn't do about somebody's beard or why somebody might actually need to pray” [HRA FG2]*. In other instances, diversity training did not involve any meaningful engagement with individuals and was merely a standard online training package.

Participants stressed that it was crucial to design and deliver diversity training in an appropriate way to ensure that it was taken seriously by others. This could set a precedent for the day-to-day culture in the force, where diversity and equality was central and core. Participants explained that compelling diversity training needed to involve individuals speaking about their lived experiences as well as ensuring they had adequate expertise and understanding of police procedures and practices. Including lived experiences in diversity training was particularly important, as unlike online training, it could encourage understanding and empathy.

Case study 2—Teaching diversity meaningfully

Jane is an operational police officer working in a large force. As part of her diversity and equality training, individuals representing underrepresented groups were brought in to deliver sessions on their experiences both within and external to a career with the police. Jane felt that hearing first-hand the negative accounts from an individual who had directly faced prejudice and discrimination was a powerful, immersive experience. The trainers were considered more effective and believable when they represented groups often discriminated against, and Jane perceived this to make the training more useful for her own understanding and development.

It was recommended that work needed to be undertaken to create an environment that was supportive of having open and honest conversations around diversity. The current culture in policing was described as a barrier to this.

“One of the things I find really strange is that, in all organisations - and I understand, the policing culture is different, if somebody says something that I find offensive or was inappropriate, I'll have a conversation with them there and then and I feel supported in doing that. In the police, it seems like everything becomes - people hold on to things and then it becomes a huge issue (...) How

isn't it a culture where, you make an offensive comment or something I find offensive and I'll tell you about it there and then?" [HRA FG2]

Instances of inappropriate behaviour and comments were often addressed only when they reached a point at which they could be referred to the Professional Standards Department (PSD). Participants noted how this contributed to an unwelcome environment for some officers and there was consensus among participants that creating a culture that welcomed speaking up and challenging day-to-day behaviour would be positive. To achieve this, participants suggested local level education around what was considered appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, and building this around the Code of Ethics to embed it in existing police practices.

"If you were to build development and education, would you probably build it around the code of ethics, so that you start to get people to understand about what's acceptable behaviour, what isn't, how you want to be treated with dignity, respect. So, that might be a better way." [HRA FG2]

It is important to note that although participants stressed the need to move towards a culture that promoted open conversations, they also highlighted how incidents that did warrant escalation needed to be taken more seriously by senior leaders, especially in cases relating to sexual harassment. Participants suggested that some awareness of sexual harassment in the workforce was needed for senior leaders to ensure that cases were dealt with fairly and perceptions of procedural fairness remained favourable among the workforce.

Participants felt that the national strategies involving mentoring had been successful in terms of supporting diversity. For example, reverse mentoring has been introduced by some forces for superintendents who could volunteer to support three individuals from protected characteristic groups within their police force. They then had to actively demonstrate what they had done to help those individuals develop.

Some forces overhauled their promotions process to create a fairer system, removing the application form component and moving to assessment centres for validity and legitimacy, often with trained assessors from underrepresented groups. Assessment pools have also been tailored to ensure a set proportion of candidates and assessors were from protected groups. Increased end-to-end monitoring of the promotions process has led to greater oversight of what needs to be improved. For example, one initiative surveys candidates who have been through the promotions process to ask them whether they felt that it was a fair procedure and why or why not. Such initiatives have yielded a positive impact on representation.

"What we're seeing is that consistently, we're (...) seeing 33 per cent greater representation coming through all the way through the process. We can see where people drop off and why, our positive action team are really, really keen on that because they will then connect [with] people." [HRA FG1].

Concerns remained around the need for line manager permission in order to apply for the promotions process at certain levels. It was felt that this could lead to instances of unconscious bias and limit the progression of underrepresented groups, particularly candidates with disabilities.

“It's very typical for, certainly at sergeant's level, PC to sergeant, sergeant to inspector, to need to have the agreement of your line managers in order to apply for process (...) They're bound to reject you for pretty much any reason they like, and that will be enough to pretty much stop any disabled candidate going forward, simply because the management don't think that they're as capable as another non-disabled candidate.” [SSA FG1]

Similarly, the ability of senior officers to impose their own requirements on rank profiles could cause inadvertent discrimination against underrepresented candidates. For example, the rank profile for a police officer may require leadership experience, but a senior officer could add the requirement of operational leadership experience to this. While not necessarily intentional, adding this extra requirement to become a police officer may then exclude candidates with a physical disability who are not able to meet it.

Participants highlighted practice examples to support diversity across progression. These examples included SSAs' involvement in the design of the promotion process, which had led to an additional layer of scrutiny around the cultural and faith competence of those seeking a promotion. This was introduced with the rationale that the police should have an understanding of the demographics that they serve. Another practice example was the introduction of internal BME assessors, which were felt to have a positive impact on the promotion prospects of BME applicants. It was implied that a lack of internal BME assessors might result in implicit bias against BME applicants, and that introducing them could reduce this.

However, despite these positive practice examples, participants felt that work to support and improve diversity in the area of progression was overshadowed by a focus on external recruitment. Internal and external recruitment were treated by forces as distinct entities and work undertaken by forces to enhance the diversity through internal recruitment was limited.

“And we talk about internal recruitment I think (...) it looks and feels very different. So (...) it doesn't follow the same positive attitude programmes, it doesn't have anything attached to it. Internal recruitment is pretty much a cycle of decades by the same people recruiting into the same positions in the same way, with the same questions.” [SSA FG2]

Participants viewed positive action programmes as appropriate for external recruitment and that such initiatives should also be considered internally. Participants explained how introducing positive action programmes for internal candidates was met by resistance at mid-superintendent level, often due to a lack of understanding of positive action and a perception that it could undermine a merit-based process. Participants also discussed that the Direct Entry and Fast Track schemes lacked elements of positive action, with the perception that the CoP were not meeting their standard requirements in terms of support.

Participants discussed the need for line manager approval to apply for promotion as a significant barrier to progression opportunities, as it potentially introduced bias to the process, as each manager would bring their own opinions and potentially, implicit and underlying biases. Participants discussed how managers often consciously or

unconsciously favoured individuals similar to them, and held preconceptions about the capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

“It’s a disaster as regards getting protected characteristics into more senior roles, it really is. It’s subjective, it’s absolutely wide-open to bias - conscious or unconscious - or just downright flagrant abuse by which I’m talking about favouritism.” [SSA FG2]

Participants stressed the need for this part of the process to change.

Case study 3—Dealing with barriers

A particular police force has moved line managers’ approval to the end of the promotion process. This helps to ensure that their views are still sought, but that the process focused on alternative evidence available about the candidates’ abilities. The results from changing the process revealed instances of tension between the line manager’s opinion and the high scores the individuals achieved in the evidential selection process. In such cases, the individuals were promoted regardless.

That local managers could add additional requirements for promotion was considered another barrier. This not only caused challenges for individuals with disabilities, but also led to discrepancies in the promotion process in different forces across the country. The internal promotion process was contrasted with the approach to standardised external recruitment through the use of the Police SEARCH® Recruitment Assessment Centre. Participants therefore recommended unifying the internal recruitment process and introducing clear guidance to support fairness and transparency.

For progression into specialist units such as surveillance, the culture of the unit was cited as a barrier. The units were described as very small teams often made up of individuals not readily accepting difference. The lack of ethnic and religious diversity in these specialist units was seen as worrying as it was felt to impact negatively on the ability of the police to perform their work. For example, units working within counterterrorism, honour-based violence and surveillance were in need of individuals from particular backgrounds:

“People are coming to me and saying, ‘We’ve got a problem in counter terrorism and we’ve got no Muslim staff.’ ‘Did you not see this coming?’ (...) We’ve been talking about it for years.” [SSA FG2]

Despite the need for a diverse workforce in specific specialist units, participants felt that more needed to be done to ensure this happened in practice.

“I think police forces address it by saying, ‘We’d really like to encourage people from, the women or BME backgrounds to apply for this,’ but actually don’t follow it through necessarily. It almost becomes a statement on HR policy, if I’m honest.” [SL FG2]

Participants highlighted that there was a natural ‘churn’ for police officers in that they did not usually stay in the same role for more than five years. However, police staff

were believed to stay in post much longer which limited their progression opportunities, as roles did not come up as often as they did for police officers. The lack of progression opportunities for police staff was exacerbated by retired police officers often taking on senior police staff roles. This institutional practice not only limited progression opportunities for police staff in general, but considering that the make-up of police officers was less diverse than that of police staff, had negative implications for enhancing diversity. This is particularly important considering that those taking on the roles were retired police officers, who could be recruited more than 30 years ago at a time when police officer diversity was even more limited.

“The biggest concern for me with that is just the fact that, if we’re giving them out to ex-police officers then by default, it’s a fact that 98 per cent of them will be white. It just makes it impossible to be completely representative if you’ve got a section where the institution you’ve set yourself up with a natural bias already towards people from BAME communities.” [HRA FG2]

3.4 External Review

The context to actions taken to support retention mirrors those discussed in the previous section. Factors identified across the review as relevant to retention included:

- Up to date knowledge of your workforce through effective data monitoring (this is particularly well specified in the Higher Education sector through organisations applying for the Athena SWAN award).
- Consultation and engagement with the workforce. For example, Royal Bank of Scotland operated an annual employee survey to gather opinions on actions taken and planned. The use of equality impact assessments to policy development was also discussed by The Open University, Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service and the Equality Challenge Unit, all of which required staff consultation on measures proposed. In addition, the Irish Employment Equality Act recommended to employers that they conduct equality impact assessments to put equality and human rights concerns at the heart of decision making in organisations.

Specific applications in support of retention included:

- Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service provide bullying/harassment, anti-discrimination and respect and dignity policies to set out expectations with existing staff.
- Staff diversity networks and ‘inclusion champions’ were featured in a range of organisations (e.g. Coventry University, NHS England, Open University, Royal Bank of Scotland, Deloitte, Price Waterhouse Cooper). The number of networks and therefore groups represented through them varied.
- UK Civil Service used mentors to support the retention (and progression) of staff in underrepresented groups. Royal Bank of Scotland also had a mentoring scheme specifically for BME staff.

- Touchstone kept a calendar and blog of cultural days/months for different communities. They also ran a range of training programmes that reflected and incorporated diversity (e.g. learning skills to overcome depression, with a unique 'Islamic perspective').
- Royal Bank of Scotland provided training to colleagues on making adjustments for staff with disabilities and supporting colleagues in gender transition.
- BP run a diversity leadership training programme.
- Price Waterhouse Cooper operated an 'open mind programme' to address systematic barriers to diversity and tackle unconscious bias.
- Deloitte provided coaching for parents and their line managers to address family responsibilities and how to manage this in work.
- NHS England run a staff recognition scheme through an 'everyone counts' award to promote and recognise good practice in equalities. Coventry University run an annual 'Equality & Diversity' awards.
- Royal Bank of Scotland utilise a blog focusing on inclusion priorities, covering ethnicity and sexual orientation for example. The Bank of England run a diversity seminar series and have a 'staff voice' blog on equalities issues.
- Equality and diversity objectives are included in staff reviews at Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service. The Bank of England also requires senior staff to work towards equality indicators in regular reporting.

Fewer targets in this review included explicit evidence or mention of progression. In the examples below, emphasis is on gender and ethnic minority groups. These included:

- The Athena SWAN and Race Equality Charter marks available through the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) required universities to make action plans which included collating data and setting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on progression. For example, Kingston University now provides additional routes for career progression other than purely research-based, including teaching and learning or professional practice. They have also run a number of workshop sessions to shine a light on equality, diversity and inclusion, and panel training to help interviewers recognise their own unconscious or implicit bias (ECU, 2014).
- The Royal Bank of Scotland for example, has set a target of 30% senior women in their top 3 leadership layers by 2030. To support this, the target is sponsored by their CEO and their membership to the HM Treasury 'Women in Finance' requires external reporting, which contributes to accountability. They have also set targets for BME representation at senior levels (not publically stated) and have a mentoring scheme.

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- West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service document an instance of using section 159 of the 2010 Equalities Act to appoint to an internal development opportunity (positive action).
 - The UK Civil Service Workforce Strategy makes public their action plan which includes developing clearer and more transparent pathways for progression.

4 Community Engagement

4.1 Landscape review

In terms of community engagement, the reviewed documents acknowledged that the police need to become more representative of the demographic make-up of the communities they serve and protect to ensure community cooperation and policing by consent. However, other than engaging with specific communities to attract a more diverse pool of potential applicants to the police force, focus on community engagement is largely absent from the current diversity agenda in policing – the emphasis is on the police workforce itself.

An exception is the Equality Improvement Model (EIM) developed by the CoP. The EIM aims to enable individual forces to implement and evaluate progress against meeting the equality objectives they must set under the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED. Engaging with the community – especially with communities that are marginalised and diverse – and ensuring their satisfaction with the service that the police provide are outlined as indicators in the EIM. Possible measures and activities that forces can undertake to meet such indicators are provided by the model. Examples included using community confidence surveys to gain an insight into the experiences and needs of the community, and monitoring and analysing data on rates of stop and search and arrest to understand reasons behind potential disproportionality. However, the EIM is merely a tool that police forces can utilise for suggestions when drafting their equality objectives and can then use to track their progress against objectives – it is not a national strategy or initiative. There is a lack of information about how widely and in what capacity the EIM is used across police forces in England and Wales and the documents reviewed did not provide insight into how local police forces may choose and implement their equality objectives. It is possible that despite the lack of focus on community engagement in the national strategic documents, the local equality objectives of individual forces have more of a community engagement focus.

Although not emerging from the documents, the website of the **Police Now** programme indicates that it aims to immerse programme candidates into the local communities in order to build relationships and trust with community members (Police Now, 2018). The ultimate goal is to increase the community members' level of the confidence in the police.

4.2 Rapid Evidence Assessment

A workforce that reflects the make-up of the community was a key principle to policing by consent (Awan, 2013; Smith et al., 2015). Other areas which created the conditions conducive to improving police-public relations included:

- Public perception of just and fair police procedures was associated with increased public satisfaction with, and trust of, the police. A just and fair police force fostered a sense of belonging to a host country, for example among recently arrived immigrants (Morant and Edwards, 2011; Stanko et al., 2012; Yesufu, 2013; see also Bradford, 2011). Moreover, procedural justice was a

vital mechanism to rebuild trust with those affected by a legacy of hostile encounters with the police (e.g. BME groups).

- The introduction of PCSOs and the emphasis on neighbourhood policing over the past decade led to a greater diversity within policing. PCSOs tended to have a higher representation of women and BME (O’Neil, 2014), which was important given the link between internal workforce diversity and external service provision (Silvestri et al., 2013; Bullock et al., 2014). Evidence also suggested that Neighbourhood Policing – of which PCSOs form a part - was correlated with increased public confidence in the police (O’Neil, 2014).
- In interactions with perpetrators of crime, women appeared to produce less confrontational outcomes. They were also less likely to attract complaints and allegations of misconduct (Brown and Woolfenden, 2011; Silvestri, 2015; Atherton and Crisp, 2011). This indicated that diversifying the workforce through a more visible female presence could positively change communities’ perception of the police.
- Meaningful involvement and consultation with the community in measures to increase transparency and fairness reflected what was perceived to be good practice. One such example came from West Midlands Police, which used a cohort of community partners as panel members at interviews to ensure local representation (House of Commons, 2016). Similarly, Northamptonshire Police had created a panel with significant community involvement to scrutinise the grounds recorded for every instance of stop and search (Lammy, 2017).

Effective community engagement was met by a range of challenges. First, a lack of resources due to the wider context of austerity posed a threat to community policing and PCSOs at the expense of urgent and reactive policing (O’Neil, 2014; Silvestri, 2015). Second, the rapidly changing demographic make-up of communities brought with it challenges that the police needed to be quick to respond to. Such challenges pertained particularly to language and communication but also perceptions of the police informed by migrants’ experiences in their home country (Bullock et al., 2014; Morant and Edwards, 2011). Third, experiences of stop and search as well as practices related to counter-terrorism (e.g. surveillance cameras, Prevent) led to an erosion of trust in the police among BME communities (Bullock and Johnson, 2016; Choudhury and Fenwick, 2011). Finally, successful engagement with the community necessitated a degree of cultural awareness and sensitivity, in particular in relation to faith (Bullock and Johnson, 2016).

4.3 Focus Groups

Compliance with the PSED was seen as being an important part of increasing legitimacy of the police service within the community, both in terms of increasing representation within the workforce and the way in which police services were delivered to the community to make them accessible for all members of the public.

“You’re not going to get legitimacy with your communities and people are not going to feel positive about policing if 1) you’re not aware of the requirements

[of the PSED] and 2) you're not able to meet them but also, you're not educating our workforce, you're not supporting them, you're not providing them the tools and resources and you're not valuing the workforce itself or the diversity that it brings in the broader sense." [HRA FG1]

However participants believed that the effectiveness of the PSED has been limited. Firstly, because austerity measures have reduced accountability to implement it properly and secondly, because of a reduction of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's monitoring and enforcement function.

"Half of the colleagues I've worked with don't know [about PSED and] they don't realise that they have to make services accessible to people with different needs and it's those sorts of things." [HRA FG1]

The police are members of the community and it was deemed by participants to be important that they felt adequately represented within their working environment. This was partly supported by the presence of SSAs, who provided support to protected groups and acted as a visible sign of inclusion in the workforce. Initiatives used included assigned LGBT representatives throughout different teams who wore a visible 'allies' badge, so that staff could ask them for advice and be signposted to the right source of support.

A key barrier to increasing a sense of representation in the workforce, however, was disclosure. While it was seen as imperative to have role models within the organisation who were openly and visibly associated with an underrepresented group, particularly within senior positions, there could be reluctance for people with non-visible characteristics to disclose them. For example, officers with mental health conditions may choose not to disclose their condition due to concerns around whether it would affect their chances of promotion. This links to the earlier point about officers disclosing disabilities and then being indirectly discriminated against by not being permitted to perform certain duties or training opportunities (e.g. driving, firearms training).

"We've got about a third of them [members] that are still not comfortable, and we've got one person at senior level, we're talking [national level], who, if they were confident enough to come and say they're [omitted], that would be a great role model for us and our community, the hard to reach." [SSA FG1]

Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) were another important element of the police forces' legitimacy work in terms of policing by consent and helping the police around the challenge in scrutiny. These groups provided feedback on new and existing policies or practices and held them to account when proposed changes to policies or practices were made. Across the forces, IAGs were described as having crucial insight into and relationships with the communities that the police needed to work with.

However, IAGs were often not considered representative or reflective of changing times, with some forces describing them as *'the usual suspects'*. This was attributed to the lack of a tenure system to ensure turnover in their composition and a minimal presence of young people.

SSAs have made a proactive effort to engage with the community through the recruitment strategies outlined above, as well as carrying out their meetings in public and starting initiatives which involve interacting regularly with young people, such as an after school football club. These associations were considered an essential link between the police and the public, as they acted as a point of contact for vulnerable or hard to reach groups who might be distrustful of the police or feel that the police lacked awareness and sensitivity to other cultures. For this reason, SSAs were considered an integral part of policing.

“The police service is the only organisation that needs the public to help them do their job. Without the public giving them intelligence, coming forward as witnesses, or reporting crime, and with the police forces the way they are now, they need the public more than ever.” [SSA FG1]

Communities’ perceptions of the police were identified as a barrier to community engagement. The police were perceived by some communities to be racist and Islamophobic. Participants described how media representation was a barrier at improving the community perception of the police.

“We’ve got a lot of things happening on our patch at the moment which involves the media, so we’re constantly up against that from that perspective, so it’s almost that, you’re always trying to play catch-up and something good will happen in the area and we haven’t got time to celebrate and promote that because they’ll pick up another news story and here we go again.” [HRA FG2]

Addressing community perception of the police was viewed as challenging, especially because the public did not necessarily distinguish between forces across the country and viewed all 43 forces as ‘the police’. For example, disproportionate rates of stop and search were not considered to be relevant in every police force; however, the publicity of disproportionate rates in some forces, such as the Metropolitan Police, could “taint” the others. Community memory was also discussed as a barrier; if individuals had grown up in communities where the perception of police was not favourable, this could be passed onto future generations.

Participants highlighted the importance of increasing transparency and community stakeholder involvement to improve relations between the community and the police. Although IAGs were an important tool, participants suggested other approaches to ‘inviting the community in’. These included forming strategic boards with individuals (such as doctors and Imams) from different parts of the community to scrutinise the procedures and actions of the police⁵. Participants deemed increased transparency as crucial to building up trust with the community, as individuals in the community would have the opportunity to personally scrutinise the process, rather than needing to rely on the “police’s word for it”.

⁵ The suggested strategic boards are less formalised but similar in principle to the Community Reference Groups set up by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (now Independent Office for Police Conduct) to gather community concerns and views after a serious incident, such as a police related death.

https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research-learning/NatCen_research_report_March_2014.pdf

“I think scrutiny in general is important, so around all the contentious issues, not just stop and search but as we were saying before, joint enterprise, how's it used, where are the stats for it, some ability for them to scrutinise, ask questions, be accountable for it.” [HRA FG2]

To facilitate increased transparency and accountability, participants suggested using technology to video record meetings and make them publicly available online. This would enable individuals from the wider community to have access to this despite not being physically present. Using technology was also suggested as a fruitful approach to attempt to counteract negative media exposure, for example, by posting videos that market the police service in a positive way on YouTube or Facebook.

“You might put something out there and 10,000 or a million people can share it and it only costs us very little and we just pay for the initial going on and then just share it everywhere.” [HRA FG2]

Although participants discussed representation in the police force as crucial in increasing police legitimacy, they also highlighted how this is particularly important for external facing services such as those dealing with hate crime. An example was provided about a Hate Crime Group within a force which was set up specifically to shape the policy and strategy around responding to hate crime. However it did not sufficiently engage the local community.

“I looked at the stats and the highest amount of stats in hate crime was racist and I didn't see a lead for Black and Asian. So again I always talk about the fact that who's informing that agenda? When I looked at who's leading it and I looked at the stakeholders, of course they're going to miss out on the intelligence that we run because they're not from that background, they do not understand. They don't live in the area that they police, a lot of them.” [SSA FG2]

4.4 External Review

There were differences within the evidence reviewed around the question of whether equality and diversity strategies reflecting individual workforces needed to ensure their reflected the composition of their service users and recipients. The importance of achieving this balance between the workforce and service user was demonstrated in all public sector organisations, although it was less commonly mentioned in the private organisations reviewed.

The review provides the following examples of practice:

- In their report on inclusion in the Fire and Rescue service, the Local Government Association (LGA) (2017) suggest learning from other sectors, or formal partnership with specialist organisations (voluntary and private sectors) can assist in developing and supporting equality and diversity activities. BP are also networked to external organisations to share practice examples.
- Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service make community rooms in their local fire station available for use by local LGBT groups.

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- Programming events and activities (with community partners) for certain cultural months or events (e.g. Pride, BP/Fire & Rescue) and Black History and LGBT month (Open University, Touchstone).

5 Conclusion

The research presented in this report is the culmination of three distinct, yet inter-related phases. The research has been synthesised in response to each phase, while intersecting elements of learning can be extracted from the recommendations below.

The extent of diversity within policing is currently 'patchy'. There are appropriate protocols and representatives in place to advocate for groups across protected characteristics, official strategies are in place, and there are clear groups and individuals responsible for the implementation of these. However, for a number of reasons, notably resource issues and the perceived low priority accorded to the diversity agenda within the police workforce, these strategies often lack meaningful impact and the ability to push change. The inconsistent implementation and success of the BME Progression 2018 programme illustrates this well.

A theme across the research strands was that although work to improve diversity in policing was being undertaken among forces nation-wide, it was patchy and sporadic and the diversity agenda could be more successful. This was often attributed to a lack of formalised frameworks and processes to address diversity and a lack of senior leadership buy-in. One explanation put forward to account for this was that police management culture was too conservative and did not embrace difference.

“People who think differently bring enormous strengths in terms of creative thinking, problem solving, but the police service just sees it as a problem. The average middle manager, I'm talking about chief inspector, superintendent rank, LPA district commander, that sort of level, would see it as a problem, as a nuisance, because they want everyone to be deployable anywhere, to all think the same, to tow the corporate line...” [SSA FG1].

This point influences all thematic areas explored. This is not to say that no work is being done, or progress being made in this area. It is, however, fundamental in trying to understand the suitability of particular initiatives and their (lack of) reach

Addressing diversity was seemingly not perceived as an operational imperative, and it is suggested that equality and diversity work has been heavily impacted by austerity measures. Another cross-cutting issue was a lack of existing data and systematic data collection. The importance of robust data was stressed in both focus group discussions and in the limitations and gaps across literature sources, with the acknowledgement of how crucial this data can be for improving understanding and awareness of diversity related issues such as representation and entry routes into policing. Examples of areas needing systematic data collection were:

- Number of PCSOs wanting to join the police workforce;
- Representation across different staff grades;
- Percentage of BME officers and staff relative to their numbers in the working population who are subject to disciplinary misconduct hearings; and
- Why individuals drop out of the recruitment process.

Building on the importance of systematic and improved data collection identified, there were also clear gaps in the evidence base:

- 1. Protected characteristics:** A lack of research existed to explore the distinctions within the BME category (e.g. the differences between Blacks people of African or Caribbean origin). This made it difficult to ascertain differences in police encounters that might exist between these groups (Yesufu, 2013). Moreover, the complexity of intersectional identities (i.e. being part of multiple minority groups) and the challenges arising from this had yet to be explored in full detail. One area of research that might explore the specific ways in which discrimination against officers representing different underrepresented groups (e.g. gay men with disabilities) differs from those who belong to only one underrepresented group (e.g. men with a disability) (Jones and Williams, 2015).
- 2. Organisational differences:** More research is needed to explore how to enhance diversity within police staff roles, since different priorities might exist for police staff compared to police officers. Additionally, research into the PCSO pathways is needed, with a specific focus on how many staff belonging to minority groups go on to become police constables and further diversify the upper ranks of the organization (O’Neil, 2014). A third area that merited more attention was to better understand why some forces have a disproportionality ratio of 2:1 for Black men stopped and searched, compared with 9:1 in other parts of the country (Bennetto, 2009).
- 3. Evaluation studies:** The majority of programmes discussed require further evaluation as many lack any formal evidence base supporting their impact. For example, research should examine the extent to which direct entry schemes have increased the number of underrepresented groups within the police, specifically women (Silvestri et al., 2013). There was evidence across some forces (e.g. the Metropolitan Police) that direct entry schemes had led to an increase of women and BME individuals within the force but more research is needed to explore the effect this policy has had on increasing representation across a range of individuals with protected characteristics.

The implications of issues identified above, and recommendations moving forward to assist in enhancing diversity within policing are discussed in the following sections.

5.1 Implications

The research discussed in this report has implications for diversity across recruitment, retention and progression, and community engagement. These are not ‘easy-fix’ solutions but rather ideas that necessitate the right levels of reflection and application: not just from a few individuals but from the police force more broadly.

As a starting point, equality and diversity training could be integrated into the core activities of police forces. The research suggested that this may not be undertaken as diversity is not seen as high importance in policing, and other issues related to organisational culture may present significant barriers in promoting diversity. Embedding it into the early career training of officers reinforces its importance and

merits to the entire workforce. Highlighting key areas of contention in any training, such as vetting, supervision and flexible working, all of which have emerged as exclusionary to some, may in the first instance illustrate the more ambiguous (if not already known) consequences of not ensuring diversity. Meeting the varied needs of ones' workforce such as flexible arrangements can also project organisational values and cultures into the community that the police are meant to serve and protect. It also assists with keeping the workforce engaged. These can be reciprocal benefits and potentially lead to other positive outcomes around retention, community engagement and productivity.

Other practical changes may also assist with addressing some of the gaps in the police workforce diversity agenda. Ensuring robust and useful data capture through survey administration that links to higher-level organisational outcomes (i.e. employee satisfaction) requires more critical consideration. This is not to dismiss the processes already underway to ensuring more robust data collection. However, these tools need to be seen as more than just another measure for senior management transparency and reporting; they are a necessary requirement (but not a guarantee) for delivering change. Robust and rigorous research on process and impact would also be useful in order to demonstrate 'what works' and what changes need to be made. The REA provided some promising findings, but at times the evidence lacked in quality and relevance to conclusively determine what could and should not be pursued to enhance diversity in policing. However, the sources included do provide important information about what has been done, and in doing so set the foundation for future research. Commissioning independent research can also provide a level of legitimacy, for individuals who would like to see their needs being addressed across their professional careers. This means that using external; non-workforce related organisations may provide those individuals with confidence from external scrutiny.

A key theme emerging from all phases was the importance of binding recommendations and accountability. Within the police hierarchy, as with many of the external organisations we considered, this could provide much needed support for those individuals with protected characteristics. This links into the previous discussion around meaningfulness and legitimacy, and the importance of research. Talking about enhancing diversity is one matter; demonstrating active participation by senior staff and overt displays that diverse needs of the workforce are considered may provide added benefits to those staff.

5.2 Recommendations

Our recommendations can be summarised as follows:

Embedding equality and diversity

1. **Training as core:** Diversity and equality training was often seen as a peripheral element of policing and done 'for the sake of doing it'. Placing it centrally to all training undertaken by new entrants into policing will, with time, lead to a deeper and richer embedding within the police workforce, and the service delivery of staff.

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2. **Representative mentors:** Invite and utilise individuals who have or share a protected characteristics (e.g. transgender individuals) to deliver training and/or lectures across all forces for all members of staff and officers. This may help inform as well as dispel myths around given protected characteristic. This is likely to make equality training more meaningful and increase empathy among participants. It also provides a degree of legitimacy to the content provided.
 3. **Dismissal of hierarchies of protected characteristics:** Focusing on protected characteristics that are seen to have more visibility or to have been 'failed' in the past does not assist with enhancing diversity and equality within the organisation. This can and will still be perceived as contributory to unequal status. Although government may prioritise, this needs careful reconsideration within the police force as it could lead to further exclusion, isolation and issues within recruitment and retention.
 4. **Workforce statistics:** Consider how to collect more statistics on 'hidden' protected characteristics in order (i) have a clearer picture of workforce diversity and (ii) lessen the perception of BME and gender being at the top of the equality hierarchy (see previous recommendation). It is also recommended to collect more workforce statistics on back-office staff and PCSOs. The collection of statistics should be informed by a clear idea of how the data will be used to avoid the collection of statistics becoming a tick-box exercise. This could assist with providing police forces locally and nationally with a better understanding of internal force issues and the experience of different groups of officers and staff. Data should also be collected meaningfully, meaning that its collection, analysis and dissemination should be associated with an overall place and clear aims and objectives.
 5. **Establishment of networks:** Build on already existing informal networks among HR and equality leads and establish formal and coordinated networks for information sharing across forces. This was considered an area of good practice, and could be formalised through any strategies falling under the remit of either the Office of the CC or PCC. These networks could feed into training programmes for new staff, and assist or support with recruitment drives targeting different groups of individuals. They could also provide illustrations or 'snap-shots' of practice examples locally, leading dissemination of locally-owned initiatives and helping optimise knowledge transfer.

Practical measures to enhance diversity within the workforce

6. **Vetting:** Review the recent changes made to the vetting process to examine whether it has had the desired impact in mitigating the disproportionate levels of BME individuals who currently do not pass the vetting stage.
7. **Entry requirements:** Reconsider the proposed introduction of requiring applicants to have a university degree, as this is likely to disproportionately affect underrepresented groups. As a minimum, research into impact of this scheme and its successes is merited.

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8. **Flexible working:** To maximise retention and attract applicants, increase part time and flexible working opportunities as well as parental leave.
 9. **Resources:** Include more resources (money, time and capacity) to ensure that existing schemes (e.g. Police Now) have the desired impact. Equally, make sufficient resources available to SSAs in order to mainstream equality and diversity within and across organisations.
 10. **Supervisory discretion:** Reduce supervisory discretion around deployment and promotion to avoid the possibility of unconscious bias in decision-making. The direct line manager's involvement in the promotion process should be minimised to allow a more neutral and 'fair' assessment. This could also include the development of supervisors to ensure that they are providing support for the career development of all their officers and staff from diverse backgrounds. This in turn could be associated with a re-consideration of how diversity and equality is embedded within the professional development of all staff and officers.

Leadership

11. **Accountability:** The PCCs should hold CCs to account by adding in workforce representation into their Police and Crime Plans. The 'Workforce Plan' should provide the framework for which mayors and PCCs hold their CCs to account. Moreover, to increase accountability among senior leadership, it should be considered to incorporate an action point around "what have you done to help advance diversity" as part of senior leaders' Personal Development Plans.
12. **Binding recommendations:** Consider making recommendations from the CoP mandatory in order to ensure a level of consistency across forces. To achieve collective buy-in, recommendations need to be preceded by meaningful consultations with SSAs and other relevant stakeholders across the 43 forces as opposed to forged in isolation. Resource availability for any shift in policy or practice also needs to be considered prior to mass implementation and as such, a robust consultation process is highly advised.
13. **Research and design:** Research into many of the gaps identified in this document (e.g. invisible characteristics, programme impacts, longitudinal analysis) would improve the evidence base and is needed. This includes a range of methods from feasibility, process and impact evaluations; to better data capture. An improved evidence base can assist with identifying what works and what does not in relation to equality and diversity, and allow for the knowledge transfer of successes to other forces, and the continued development of any programmes/initiatives well regarded.
14. **Institutional exclusion:** Further consideration needs to be given to the larger effects of strategies and policies across the PSED. Although non-intentional, certain provisions could inadvertently lead to unequal opportunities across characteristics.

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Appendix A. Search terms and strings

Research area	Core	Tangent	New tangents
I Prejudice and discrimination	(“inclusive” OR “included” OR “equal” OR “integrated” OR “addressed” OR “met” OR “assisted”) AND (“race” OR “BME” OR “BAME” OR “religion” OR “faith” OR “gendered” OR “pregnancy” OR “pregnant” OR “maternity” OR “sexuality” OR “transgender” OR “LGBTQ” OR “disabled” OR “disability” OR “ageism” OR “protected characteristic” OR “minority” OR “prejudiced”) AND (“value” OR “valued”) AND (“police” OR “policing” OR “police work” OR “police force”)	AND (“policy” OR “programmes” OR “strategies” OR “implement” OR “influence”)	policing AND diversity AND equality AND minority groups AND work* AND (England and Wales) AND policy
		AND (“good practice” OR “What works” OR “examples” OR “implementation”)	N/A
		AND (“poor” OR “bad” OR “negative” OR “gap” OR “lack” OR “lacking”)	N/A
		AND (“ingroup” OR “outgroup” OR “others” OR “different”)	N/A
		AND (“prejudice”)	N/A
II Equal opportunities	(“inclusive” OR “included” OR “equal” OR “integrated” OR “addressed” OR “met” OR “assisted”) AND (“race” OR “BME” OR “BAME” OR “religion” OR “faith” OR “gendered” OR “pregnancy” OR “pregnant” OR “maternity” OR “sexuality” OR “transgender”	AND (“hired” OR “recruited” OR “employed” OR “identified”)	policing AND diversity AND equality AND minority groups AND work* AND (England and Wales) AND recruit*
		AND (“promotion” OR “progression” OR “raise” OR “rank” OR “advance” OR “climb”)	policing AND diversity AND equality AND minority groups AND work* AND (England and Wales) AND promot*

	<p>“LGBTQ” OR “disabled” OR “disability” OR “ageism” OR “protected characteristic” OR “minority” OR “prejudiced”) AND (“value” OR “valued”) AND (“police” OR “policing” OR “police work” OR “police force”)</p>	<p>AND (“development” OR “develop” OR “train” OR “qualification” OR “improve” OR “certificate” OR “certification” OR “learn” OR “learning”)</p>	<p>policing AND diversity AND equality AND minority groups AND work* AND (England and Wales) AND develop*</p>
III Influence	<p>(“inclusive” OR “included” OR “equal” OR “integrated” OR “addressed” OR “met” OR “assisted”) AND (“race” OR “BME” OR “BAME” OR “religion” OR “faith” OR “gendered” OR “pregnancy” OR “pregnant” OR “maternity” OR “sexuality” OR “transgender” OR “LGBTQ” OR “disabled” OR “disability” OR “ageism” OR “protected characteristic” OR “minority” OR “prejudiced”) AND (“value” OR “valued”) AND (“police” OR “policing” OR “police work” OR “police force”)</p>	<p>AND (“community” OR “relations” OR “procedural” OR “procedural justice”)</p>	<p>policing AND diversity AND equality AND minority groups AND work* AND (England and Wales) AND legitimate</p>
		<p>AND (“representative”)</p>	<p>policing AND diversity AND equality AND minority groups AND work* AND (England and Wales) AND representative</p>
		<p>AND (“effective”)</p>	<p>policing AND diversity AND equality AND minority groups AND work* AND (England and Wales) AND effective</p>

Appendix B. Targeted databases and grey literature for REA

Academic or peer-reviewed databases	Alternative
PsycArticles and PsycInfo	For grey literature, two options were pursued: a) by asking the PCC/PTF team for any reports/documentation in the last year they would be willing to sign-post linked to the research aims and objectives and b) by putting a mini 'Call for evidence' request through to participants in focus group 1 and 2.
Criminal Justice Abstracts	
Political Science Complete	
E-Journals	
EBSCOHOST	
HeinOnline	

Appendix C. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	All others unless translated into English
Country of Origin	Research with relevance to UK police forces, with an additional focus on England and Wales	Other countries (NB: external review included evidence from other countries)
Evidence Type	Evidence should either be a report or peer-reviewed journal article	Books and opinion pieces should be excluded.
Methodology	All and varied	Newspaper articles and/or blogs
Year	Originally 2011—reduced to 2009	Prior to 2009
Access	Only documents that the research team can access in full will be included	Where full versions are not accessible
Topic	Evidence should relate to either internal policing practices/experiences or those specific to public-police interactions	

Appendix D. Targeted databases for external review

Organisation/Sector	Rational
UK University sector (staff focused)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectors employing large portions of population • Large and very complex workforces (with regards to service delivery) • Operate at local and national level (and international) • Breadth of engagement with communities
NHS	
Fire Services	
Armed services (UK)	
Civil service (UK)	
Inclusive Top 50 NB: This may prove difficult if information is not readily available in summaries—we may need to discuss with PTF team about what to prioritise. UPDATE: Start with top 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • League table of UK top employers in terms of diversity and inclusion
G4S, Securicor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant to policing workforce due to increasing positions in communities and in lieu of police
European Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees recruited from 28 diverse national backgrounds
Bank of England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous negative attention due to lack of diversity
Deloitte's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large multinationals (including UK specific operations) • View of corporate diversity, inclusion and respect • Publish annual statistics on workforce
PWC	
EY	
BP	
GKS	
Enterprise rent a car (USA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award recipient for diversity in workforce and suggested for inclusion by stakeholders

National equality duties for employment

NB: This will not be exhaustive but instead, focus a search on existing national frameworks in the suggested countries. We are happy to discuss this further with the PTF team

It is also worth noting that these countries have been selected on the basis of similar social structures and institutions to the UK.

1. Ireland
2. Canada
3. USA
4. Australia
5. Germany
6. Sweden
7. Norway
8. Denmark
9. Scotland (time permitting)

Appendix E. Weighting of sources included

Authors	Year	WoE score overall
Atherton, S. and Crisp, A.	2011	Medium
Awan, I.	2013	Medium
Bennetto, J.	2009	Medium
Bradford, B.	2011	Medium
Brown, J. and Woolfenden, S.	2011	Medium
Brown, J., Gouseti, I. and Fife-Schaw, C.	2017	Medium
Bullock, K. and Johnson, P.	2016	High
Bullock, K., Fielding, J., Fielding, N. and Lloyd, A.	2014	Medium
Choudhury, T. and Fenwick, H.	2017	Medium
College of Policing	2015	Medium
EHRC	2016	Medium
Hargreaves, J., Husband, H. and Linehan, C.	2017	Medium
House of Commons	2016	Medium
Jones, M.	2015	High
Jones, M. and Williams, M.L.	2015	Medium
Lammy, D.	2017	Medium
Medina Ariza, J.J.	2014	Medium
Metropolitan Police	2017	Medium
Morant, N. and Edwards, E.	2011	High
O'Neill, M.	2015	Medium
Rowe, M. and Ross, J.I.	2015	Medium
Ruda, S., Linos, E. and Reinhard, J.	2015	Medium
Silvestri, M., Tong, S. and Brown, J.	2013	Medium
Silvestri, M.	2015	Medium
Smith, G., Hagger Johnson, H. and Roberts, C.	2015	Medium
Stanko, B., Jackson, J., Bradford, B. and Hohl, K.	2015	Medium
Stop Hate UK	2018	Low
Ward, A. and Prenzler, T.	2016	High
Wunsch, D., Hughes, C., Hobson, Z. and Yesberg, J.	2016	Medium
Yesufu, S.	2013	Medium

Appendix F. Topic Guide 1

Research aims:

The key aim of the study is to explore and deepen an understanding of work currently undertaken by police forces across the country to enhance diversity within policing. This included any insights into barriers and facilitators of diversity work being implemented.

Overview of topics to be covered in focus groups:

Explore participants' understanding of diversity and a diverse workforce

Understand what parts of the current national and local diversity agenda work well/not well and why

Explore what differences (if any) policies or programmes have made on protected groups within the policing workforce

Explore participants' recommendations for improving the current national and local diversity agenda

Whether participants have any suggested recommendations or changes to current national and local diversity programmes

How to use this topic guide:

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered in focus groups

Fully formed questions are avoided to allow researchers to be responsive and flexible in their questioning

Probes such as 'why', 'how' etc. are not included in the guide. These are asked by researchers as and when appropriate

- Introduction to research team. Thank you for agreeing to take part
- Introduction to NatCen – independent research organisation, we have been commissioned by the Office of the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner to evaluate the current work undertaken by police forces across the country to achieve a diverse workforce
- Brief explanation of the nature and purpose of the study
- Participation is voluntary – you can choose not to discuss any issue
- It is important to respect the views of others – no right or wrong answers and okay to have different opinions. We are interested in hearing all views and opinions
- We also ask that you do not discuss other participants' responses outside of this setting to ensure that everyone is comfortable sharing their views and that the views remain confidential and anonymous. The research team will take steps to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, and you and your views will not be identifiable in the final report, which will not include any names, personal details or personal identifiers

-
- Disclosure – Explain disclosure policy i.e. everything you say will be treated confidentially, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Your answers will only be used for research purposes. The only potential breach to your confidentiality may be if you talk about a significant risk of harm to yourself or somebody who can be identified and is not able to speak for themselves, and/or you talk about an identifiable offence/illegal act that is unknown to the authorities.
 - We will be recording the focus group discussion so we have an accurate record of what is said
 - Recorder is encrypted and files stored securely in line with Data Protection Act 1998
 - Only the research team will have access to the recordings
 - The focus group will last up to 120 minutes
 - Questions?
 - Ask for permission to start recording

1. Introduction and context setting

Section aim: *to ‘warm up’ participant and gather contextual information about his/her current role and responsibilities.*

- **Participant background**
 - Job role and responsibilities
 - Length of time in role
- **Responsibilities across the three professional groups represented within the focus group in relation to diversity**
 - Their specific role (e.g. in HR, as a union etc.)
 - How do they function internally (within the group, e.g. HR, different police associations)
 - How do they function locally (within the force)
 - How do they function nationally (across police forces)

2. Overview of diversity in policing

Section aim: *to gather participants’ own understanding of diversity and a diverse workforce, including what protected characteristics they believe are covered by diversity.*

- **Importance of diversity**
 - For the individual police employee

-
- For your collective professional group (e.g. HR)
 - For police workforce
 - For the community the police serve
 - **Probing participants understanding of diversity**
 - Protected characteristics covered/not covered by diversity
 - Range of locally recognised groups (e.g. Goth subcultures, refugees)
 - **Describe what a diverse police force resembles**
 - Internally (i.e. within the ranks of policing; composition of force members)
 - Externally (i.e. to the community; perceptions of police by community members)

3. Overview of current diversity agenda

Section aim: *to map the range of activities and actions currently undertaken to enhance the diversity of the police force.*

Throughout this section, explore national and local differences

- **BME Progression Plan 2018**
 - Their understanding of main aim/goals of progression plan
 - Brief overview of actions already implemented
 - Current focus/priorities of progression plan
 - Specific examples of actions currently being undertaken
 - Planned actions
- **Police Now (recruitment and community)**
 - Their understanding of main aim/goals of Police Now
 - Brief overview of actions already implemented
 - Current focus/priorities of Police Now programme
 - Specific examples of actions currently being undertaken
 - Planned actions
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**
 - Extent to which PSED is used to work towards equality and diversity within the police workforce (*as opposed to police interaction with the community*)
 - Brief overview of previous equality objectives (*relating to workforce diversity*)
 - Current focus/priorities of equality objectives (*relating to workforce diversity*)
 - Specific examples of actions currently being undertaken to meet equality objectives (*relating to workforce diversity*)
 - Usefulness of the Equality Improvement Model (EIM) in supporting the meeting of PSED duties

- Usefulness of the EIM in comparing police forces nationally
- **Local schemes: positive action activities (e.g. Metropolitan police), community engagement**
 - E.g. Merseyside Police with the Phoenix Leadership Programme, Greater Manchester Police with Operation Peel etc.
 - What local schemes provide that national schemes do not
 - Any other approaches/interventions related to workforce diversity not yet discussed?

4. Effects and benefits of current diversity agenda

Section aim: *to have a clearer understanding of the impact that the different programmes/strategies have had on protected groups – including the range of factors that enabled or hindered impact, within policing*

Some of this may already have been covered in the previous section

- **Identifying impacts**
 - Perceptions of the impact particular policies/strategies may have had
 - For whom have they had an impact (e.g. protected characteristics)
 - Specific element of workforce/service delivery impacted (e.g. recruitment, retention, promotion etc.?)
 - Perceived effect to entire group (e.g. BAME, LGBTQ)
 - Expected impact versus actual impact
 - Differences in impacts of the diversity agenda across different areas of the country (*anecdotal evidence or actual figures to back it up?*)
- **Evaluating impacts**
 - Approaches taken to measure/assess impacts (*what outcomes are measured?*)
 - Extent of engagement with underrepresented groups in the workforce in determining impacts
- **Facilitators to achieving impacts**
 - Enablers: what helped them in achieving impact (e.g. *PSED, buy-in from senior leadership, equality champions etc.*)
- **Barriers to achieving impacts**
 - Any expected impacts that are not achieved
 - Reasons for this/challenges experienced
 - internal vs. external to organisation (e.g. *austerity*)
- **Lacking and unexpected impacts**
 - Any protected groups who have not benefitted from the diversity agenda

-
- Reasons for this (*link with section 2 ‘understanding of diversity’*)
 - How big of a problem this is perceived to be by participants
 - Any unintended (i.e. negative impacts; unexpected) of the diversity agenda

5. Recommendations and close

Section aim: *to explore the participants’ recommendations as what can be done to improve the current diversity agenda (focus on BME Progression Plan, Police Now, PSED (and EIM to facilitate), any local approaches discussed above).*

- **What works well/what are the best parts of:**
 - BME Progression Plan
 - Police Now
 - PSED (and EIM)
 - Local approaches
- **What does not work well/changes they would make**
- **Check if anything else to add, thank and close**
 - Any questions
 - Reinforce that everything discussed will be reported on anonymously. We will not include any information in outputs produced that will personally identify any participants in the group.
 - Reassure participants that they are able to contact you after the focus group if there is anything they have said that is particularly troubling and they do not want mentioned in the final outputs.
 - Inform participants about date of next focus group and what next focus group will involve.

Appendix G. Topic Guide 2

Research aims:

The key aim of the focus group is to explore participants' views on the evidence presented to them in relation to what works around enhancing diversity in policing, with a particular focus on (a) retention; (b) recruitment; (c) progression; and (d) community engagement

Overview of topics to be covered in focus groups:

Explore views on good practice and why for (a) retention; (b) recruitment; (c) progression and (d) community engagement

Explore views on challenges for (a) retention; (b) recruitment; (c) progression and (d) community engagement

Explore views on recommendations around (a) retention; (b) recruitment; (c) progression and (d) community engagement

How to use this topic guide:

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered in focus groups

The researchers begin each session by providing context to the area and sharing their findings with the participants (2-5 minutes per section)

Fully formed questions are avoided to allow researchers to be responsive and flexible in their questioning

Probes such as 'why', 'how' etc. are not included in the guide. These are asked by researchers as and when appropriate

- Introduction to research team. Thank you for agreeing to take part
- Introduction to NatCen – independent research organisation, we have been commissioned by the Office of the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner to evaluate the current work undertaken by police forces across the country to achieve a diverse workforce
- Brief explanation of the nature and purpose of the study
- Participation is voluntary – you can choose not to discuss any issue
- It is important to respect the views of others – no right or wrong answers and okay to have different opinions. We are interested in hearing all views and opinions
- We also ask that you do not discuss other participants' responses outside of this setting to ensure that everyone is comfortable sharing their views and that the views remain confidential and anonymous. The research team will take steps to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, and you and your views will not be identifiable in the final report, which will not include any names, personal details or personal identifiers

- Disclosure – Explain disclosure policy i.e. everything you say will be treated confidentially, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Your answers will only be used for research purposes. The only potential breach to your confidentiality may be if you talk about a significant risk of harm to yourself or somebody who can be identified and is not able to speak for themselves, and/or you talk about an identifiable offence/illegal act that is unknown to the authorities.
- We will be recording the focus group discussion so we have an accurate record of what is said
 - Recorder is encrypted; files stored securely compliant with Data Protection Act 1998
 - Only the research team will have access to the recordings
- The focus group will last up to 120 minutes
- Questions?
- Ask for permission to start recording

Introduction and context setting [5 min]

Section aim: to ‘warm up’ participant and gather contextual information about their current role and responsibilities

[Facilitator: emphasise that this is necessary as there will be a few new people in the group]

- Participant background
 - Job role
 - Responsibilities regarding diversity
 - Length of time in role

Recruitment [25 min]

Section aim: to explore participants’ views on good practice as well as their views on challenges and recommendations made

[Facilitator to present findings, then probe and prompt as appropriate. Begin with good practice and then move on to recommendations and challenges]

What findings they find surprising and why (both positive and negative)

What is not there that they would have expected to see and why

Critical reflection on the presented evidence—this can include comments about methodology, sample, purpose **[we do not need to have the answers for them]**

Whether they have direct knowledge of similar examples to the findings

- Were they effective? Why? Why not?
- What was it about the barrier/facilitator that enabled/hindered progress

Other examples of good practice/challenges/recommendations

Retention [25 min]

Section aim: *to explore participants' views on good practice as well as their views on challenges and recommendations made*

[Facilitator to present findings, then probe and prompt as appropriate. Begin with good practice and then move on to recommendations and challenges]

What findings they find surprising and why (both positive and negative)

What is not there that they would have expected to see and why

Critical reflection on the presented evidence—this can include comments about methodology, sample, purpose **[we do not need to have the answers for them]**

Whether they have direct knowledge of similar examples to the findings

- Were they effective? Why? Why not?
- What was it about the barrier/facilitator that enabled/hindered progress

Other examples of good practice/challenges/recommendations

Progression [25 min]

Section aim: *to explore participants' views on good practice as well as their views on challenges and recommendations made*

[Facilitator to present findings, then probe and prompt as appropriate. Begin with good practice and then move on to recommendations and challenges]

What findings they find surprising and why (both positive and negative)

What is not there that they would have expected to see and why

Critical reflection on the presented evidence—this can include comments about methodology, sample, purpose **[we do not need to have the answers for them]**

Whether they have direct knowledge of similar examples to the findings

- Were they effective? Why? Why not?
- What was it about the barrier/facilitator that enabled/hindered progress

Other examples of good practice/challenges/recommendations

Community engagement [25 min]

Section aim: *to explore participants' views on good practice as well as their views on challenges and recommendations made*

[Facilitator to present findings, then probe and prompt as appropriate. Begin with good practice and then move on to recommendations and challenges]

What findings they find surprising and why (both positive and negative)

What is not there that they would have expected to see and why

Critical reflection on the presented evidence—this can include comments about methodology, sample, purpose **[we do not need to have the answers for them]**

Whether they have direct knowledge of similar examples to the findings

- Were they effective? Why? Why not?
- What was it about the barrier/facilitator that enabled/hindered progress

Other examples of good practice/challenges/recommendations

-
- **Check if anything else to add, thank and close**
 - Any questions
 - Reinforce that everything discussed will be reported on anonymously. We will not include any information in outputs produced that will personally identify any participants in the group.
 - Reassure participants that they are able to contact you after the focus group if there is anything they have said that is particularly troubling and they do not want mentioned in the final outputs.

Appendix H. External Review Contrasts and Connections

Diversity in Policing: External Review Contrasts & Connections		
	External Good Practice	Contrast and Connection
Recruitment	<p>A. Generating external accountability. This includes external charter marks and awards: Higher Education sector: Athena SWAN, Race Equality Charter Mark Top 50 Inclusive Employers and private sector: Stonewall Champions, Disability two ticks scheme</p> <p>B. Extending networks and working with partners to support diverse recruitment. For example, BP work with REMPLOY to advertise their job opportunities. The LGA reporting on the Fire & Rescue Service also suggest formal partnerships with specialist organisations to develop activities and share good practice.</p> <p>C. Positive Action from external review relate to activities tied to action plans, raising awareness and effective implementation of stated goals. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue service’s use of positive action in recruitment included changes to their communication strategy, outreach activities and using 	<p>The two main equalities focused programmes (BME Progression 2018 programme & Police Now) highlighted in the landscape review are designed and delivered within policing. Good practice emerging from the external review suggests external accountabilities drive the commitment of resources, senior leadership buy-in the designation of measurable action plans.</p> <p>These serve to inform the business case for diversity and give visibility to staff and partners about what is being done, and plans for development.</p> <p>A barrier noted in the landscape review is how to diversify recruitment models. Focus group analysis also suggests a lack of awareness of national diversity agendas and schemes and a perception that the police force is not sufficiently prepared to support applicants with, for example, a disability, which can put people off applying.</p> <p>This final report identifies a range of ways positive action is used in policing, including pre-application support and positive priming (REA); training panel members and adapting recruitment processes (focus group); and better monitoring of the candidate pool and outcomes of process (focus groups).</p>

	<p>social media to increase their reach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The UK Civil Service use 'name blind' and 'school blind' recruitment processes and have an apprenticeship programme to support entry. 	
Retention	<p>A. Staff networks and 'inclusion champions' were frequently listed as providing supportive environments for underrepresented groups. These networks are staff-led and the protected groups represented vary between organisations.</p> <p>B. Flexible Working. Deloitte provide coaching for new parents and their line managers to address family responsibilities and how to manage this in work.</p> <p>C. Surveying the workforce: Up to date knowledge of the workforce through effective data monitoring is seen as good practice. This is particularly well specified through the Athena SWAN charter mark in the HE sector.</p> <p>D. Equality & Diversity policy and objectives, and making use of equalities legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are included in staff reviews at Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service. They also 	<p>Findings from the focus group indicated the perception that there was a lack of infrastructure to support newly recruited staff through equality schemes. Notable efforts include, for example, assigned LGBT representatives who wear visible 'allies' badges, but this initiative does rely on disclosure. Staff networks, for example, can be a more inclusive way for staff to get support and recognition.</p> <p>The REA provides evidence that a lack of flexible working options can lead to attrition of women in the force.</p> <p>Disclosure is also cited as a challenge to increasing representativeness in the workforce, with reluctance for people with non-visible characteristics to disclose them (focus groups). Staff networks, inclusion champions and increasing visibility of acceptance, demonstrating zero-tolerance and the commitment of senior people (evidenced through the external review) contribute to a culture where disclosure could be encouraged.</p> <p>Two findings that aid retention from the REA were that 1) police code of conduct is helpful for those seeking redress for discrimination; and 2) external legislation (e.g. 2010 Equality Act</p>

	<p>have available anti-discrimination, respect and dignity policies to set out expectations with staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Bank of England requires senior staff to work towards equality indicators in regular reporting. - The Irish Employment Equality Act (1998) recommends as good practice that employers put equality concerns central to decision making by using equality impact assessments [on workforce issues]. 	<p>2010 has increased confidence within workforce to challenge discrimination and harassment is helpful</p>
<p>Progression</p>	<p>A. Action plans & data collection: Good practice here is best evidenced through the use of external charter marks in Higher Education available through the Equality Challenge Unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These charters require Higher Education Institutions to make action plans which include collating data and setting KPIs on progression. This has given rise to specific activities such as unconscious bias training for recruitment/promotion panel members (Kingston University). - Target setting, e.g. The Royal Bank of Scotland target 30% senior women in their top 3 leadership layers by 2020, should be contained within an action plan. - The UK Civil Service make their action plan public (also the case with HE) making more transparent their pathways to for progression. <p>B. Training. Identifying relevant training to progression (and retention) includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity leadership training 	<p>The landscape review discusses 'Fast Track' training programmes to senior roles.</p> <p>Some forces have overhauled their promotions process to create a fairer system, removing the application form component and moving to assessment centres for validity and legitimacy, often with trained assessors from underrepresented groups.</p> <p>The examples cited from the external review suggest these and analogous efforts are best retained within an overall action plan and data collection framework. This requires structural as well as cultural changes.</p> <p>The REA identifies reverse mentoring and making use of legislation to challenge discrimination.</p>

	<p>(BP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making adjustments for disabled staff and supporting colleagues in gender transition (Royal Bank of Scotland) 	
Community engagement	<p>This was an area that - beyond the public sector - was not driven by a representative need; rather community engagement might be seen as a useful way to meet different aspects of corporate social responsibility agendas.</p> <p>Notable points of good practice include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue making community rooms in their local fire station available for use by local LGBT groups. - Programming events and activities (with community partners) for certain cultural months or events (e.g. BP advertise their involvement in Pride and Black History and LGBT month (cited by the Open University and Touchstone). 	<p>This is an area policing has already developed areas of good practice, driven by compliance with the PSED. This includes making use of community confidence surveys (landscape review), Independent advisory groups and programmes of outreach at community events (REA).</p> <p>Challenges cited by the REA on this theme include, lack of resources, changing demographic of communities and a need to increase cultural competence.</p>

Appendix I. Glossary of terms

Abbreviation	Term
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CC	Chief Constable
CoP	College of Policing
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
EIM	Equality Improvement Model
HRA	Human Resources and Associates
IAGs	Independent Advisory Groups
IHREC	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
LGA	Local Government Association
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
PC	Police Constable
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCSOs	Police Community Support Officers
PEQF	Police Education Qualifications Framework
PSD	Professional Standards Department
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
PTF	Police Transformation Fund
REA	Rapid Evidence Assessment
SCC	Strategic Command Course
SL	Strategic Leads
SPNAC	Senior Police National Assessment Centre
SSA	Staff Support Associations
WoE	Weight of evidence

Appendix J. Detailed methodology

The project methodology was constructed for an overview of information linked to diversity and equality in the workforce, both within and outside policing, nationally and internationally. It was envisaged that the outputs of this research would assist with identifying elements of good practice in including those with protected characteristics into the police force, and providing members of underrepresented groups with an equal and fair experience to any other member of staff. Therefore a landscape review of current key documents; a REA of academic research; and an 'external' non-policing review, complimented by series of focus groups were carried out. Each phase is outlined below.

Phase 1 Landscape Review

The purpose of the landscape review was to gain an overview of recent work being undertaken in the delivery and implementation of the diversity agenda within policing in England and Wales, focusing specifically on the areas of recruitment, retention, progression and community engagement.

The landscape review involved examining a range of publically available documents relevant to the diversity agenda within policing. A total of 11 documents were included in the landscape review – 10 were shared with the NatCen research team by strategic leads from the Police Transformation Fund (PTF) team in Suffolk, and one document was identified by the research team themselves. Content from these documents was summarised in an accessible way and relevant information was entered into an extraction sheet which organised data into various categories including: context, objectives, representative policing, protected characteristics, gaps and recommendations.

Phase 2 Rapid Evidence Assessment

A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) is an approach for collating, integrating and synthesising available and accessible research evidence on any given policy concept or issue comprehensively and within particular and limited time frames. According to Davies (2003), the aims and objectives of rapid evidence assessments are to:

- consider as widely and comprehensively (within policy and/or practice timetables) the electronic and print based literature
- integrate descriptive outlines of the evidence available on a particular topic
- critically evaluate the evidence identified
- identify, record and exclude evidence that is considered of poor quality
- summarise the information in its entirety and as it is linked to project-specific research questions

The REA was conducted in four stages:

1. **Pilot search and identification** – the purpose of the pilot was to test the strength and capabilities of the search strings, i.e. a combination of key words entered into search databases (Appendix B); the inclusion/exclusion criteria; and the volume of returns.

2. **Evidence identification** – this process included setting parameters and specifications determining inclusion and exclusion criteria for evidence, such as documents in the English language; published within a certain timespan (e.g. the last five years); and accessibility (e.g. open access). The setting of these criteria was followed by developing search terms linked to the research questions related to enhancing diversity in policing.
3. **Evidence screening and weighting** – the first level of screening involved simple title considerations, to check for relevance of the returned research to the overarching research questions. Abstracts and executive summaries were then considered. Lastly, any document still included was sourced for its complete version to be read in full and checked for relevance. Once documents were screened for final inclusion in the analysis, their key information was entered into an extraction sheet, which organised the data in various categories: author(s), year released country of origin and language, methodological approach, brief summary of content, information relevant to the research question, and a weight of evidence (WoE) score (Appendix E).
4. **Narrative development and information integration** – in producing the final report, information collected to address each of the research questions was synthesised into thematic narratives. The information was then organised in response to the research questions that each source addressed. Following integration of information, the narratives were embedded within chapters and revisited to check the synthesis for quality, sensitivity, coherence and relevance.

The WoE analysis used the approach first developed by the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Coordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre), which has been applied when analysing both quantitative- and qualitative-based research. Each study was assessed by three criteria:

- quality assessment
- appropriateness of design and analysis for current research
- relevance of particular focus of study for current research

Using these criteria each piece of literature was scored as having low, medium or high relevance. The research team was briefed on the scoring process by the lead researcher and a training session was undertaken as part of the pilot process. The team discussed why particular elements and sources were scored in a particular way. The *quality assessment* score for each source was based on the clarity of its research questions, and the findings and coherence of the results in responding to its stated aims. The *appropriateness of design and analysis for current research* score dealt with an assessment of whether the source identified fit with the current rapid evidence assessment's aims, objectives and research questions. There was a focus on the rigour of the methodology and analysis and the interpretation of each particular study or source's finding, and how they fit with the ongoing rapid evidence assessment. The *relevance of particular focus of study for current research* assessment was based on the researcher's interpretation of the source's context and purpose, sampling, sample and neutrality of the data within the source, and the paper's association with the current rapid evidence assessment. The overall score provided was based on a consideration

of the aforementioned three areas of assessment. Before final integration of retained information, two researchers independently considered a 10 per cent sample selection of returns to check the inclusion and exclusion criteria had been applied appropriately. This ensured a level of inter-rater reliability across the selection process

Phase 3 External review

An external review provided an opportunity to look outside the immediate project domain and draw comparisons, collate evidence and highlight elements of good practice from an agreed set of targets (Appendix D). In this case we have:

- Concentrated our search for workforce diversity in four domains:
 - Public sector organisations
 - Organisations with external recognition of equality and diversity
 - Private sector organisations
 - International country level legislation
- Integrated descriptive outlines of the evidence available from these particular targets
- Critically evaluated the evidence identified for its relevance to the topic
- Summarised the information as it is linked to project-specific interests

The external review was completed in two stages:

1. **Criteria and focus** – This process included agreeing targets and their relevance to the inquiry; determining inclusion and exclusion criteria for evidence, such as documents in the English language (or with available translation); published within a certain timespan (e.g. since 2007); and accessibility (e.g. open access).
2. **Evidence screening and collation** – Screening involved searches for target organisations and checking for relevance of the sources found for the focus of the external review. The variable treatment and availability of information relating to workforce diversity across targets also meant screening evidence from different sources – i.e. documents/webpages/blogs which offered different levels of detail and specificity. Once sources were screened, their key information was entered into an extraction sheet, which organised the data in various categories: to summarise key objectives, strategy or policy and highlight applications of practice in the workforce.

Qualitative analysis of focus groups

Drawing primarily on the findings of the landscape review, three focus groups were held to provide a clearer and more practical understanding of the implementation of the diversity agenda within British policing. Each focus group was made up of 5-7 individuals and lasted up to 120 minutes. The recruitment of participants for inclusion in the focus groups was done by the Police Transformation Fund research team in Suffolk.

The focus groups were made up of the following sets of participants:

1. Staff Support Associations (SSA) – made up of individual representatives acting on behalf of police officers and staff with particular protected characteristics;
2. Human Resources and Associates (HRA) – made up of police staff tasked with overseeing equality and diversity-related policies in their respective police force;

3. Strategic Leads (SL) – comprised of decision-makers from different national organisations and/or individual forces, tasked with formulating and implementing strategies about equality and diversity and/or other areas relevant to policing.

Participants were subjected to an informed consent process and told that they could withdraw at any stage before or during the focus group discussion. Everything said in the focus groups has been treated in the strictest confidence. Permission was gained from all participants to audio record the discussions, recordings and full transcriptions of which are stored securely with the NatCen research team. Participants were told that NatCen would use the information provided to produce outputs (such as reports) and that while these reports would not attribute findings to individuals, some views could be identifiable in outputs due to the size of the focus groups and the representative function of the participants.

The same participants also took part in a second set of focus groups (with some variation, e.g. some participants could only attend one focus group and therefore sent representatives to the other focus group) aimed at critically engaging with the findings emerging from the REA. The REA examined academic literature that was police-specific regarding diversity, with a focus on '*what works*' in relation to recruitment, retention, progression, service delivery and community engagement of police work (see 2.2).

The transcribed focus group data was managed and analysed using the Framework approach (Ritchie et al., 2013), developed by NatCen. Key topics emerging from the data were identified through familiarisation with the transcripts. An analytical framework was drawn up and a series of matrices set-up, each relating to a different thematic issue. The columns in each matrix represented the key sub-themes or topics and the rows represented individual focus groups. Data was summarised in the appropriate cell, so the data was ordered systematically and grounded in each unique group's accounts. The Framework method is embedded in NVivo 10. This enabled the summarised data from the research to be linked to the verbatim transcript. The final analytic stage involved working through the charted data, drawing out the range of experiences and views, and identifying similarities and differences.

Considerations and quality of evidence

Across each strand of the research, we found particular trends or knowledge gaps that proved challenging to navigate and draw themes and findings together. As such, this sections aims to provide the reader with key points to consider in critically engaging with the evidence the presented findings are based on. These are meant to critique overall the quality of the research base but also serve as important overarching findings to the investigation carried out.

Phase 1 Landscape review

The majority of the documents included have been published by the College of Policing (CoP) and as such refer to national strategies, actions and approaches. The documents contain no information about how these might be implemented across all 43 police forces in England and Wales, and there is no standard data collection practice in place for collecting such information. Moreover, the documents provide many

recommendations and suggested actions, but it is not evident how many of these have been implemented following their publication.

Content extracted from these sources demonstrated a clear and disproportionate focus on making visible difference within the police workforce, focusing mostly on BME individuals and, to a lesser extent, women. This focus suggested that limited work is currently being undertaken to enhance diversity within the police workforce in relation to less visible protected characteristics such as transgender identity, disability and sexuality. This is hampered by the lack of available Home Office equality data for analysis, as data is currently only collected on ethnicity and gender.

The limited focus on less visible characteristics has been acknowledged by the CoP and they have developed a *Valuing Difference and Inclusion Strategy* (2017). The strategy not only provides a business case for diversity and inclusion within the police workforce, but also outlines the need for the police to move towards a philosophy which values difference and inclusion in a broader and more inclusive sense, evolving beyond the narrow perceived focus on ethnicity and gender.

In addition to focusing overwhelmingly on ethnicity and gender, and in terms of workforce area, the current diversity agenda focuses mostly on recruitment. There is less focus on progression and retention, and focus on community engagement is largely absent in the documents examined. We do note that community engagement evidence is richer and of a higher quality within academic areas of research.

Phase 2 REA

REA's pertain to (a) the method and (b) the evidence. To be 'rapid', an REA will need to sacrifice breadth, depth and comprehensiveness of the search. The assessment is aimed at producing quick results through strict inclusion and exclusion criteria, and focuses on extracting key information (e.g. year, study design, main findings) in order to synthesise the data.

Three further considerations are worth bearing in mind when examining the evidence on recruitment, retention, progression and community engagement:

- (a) The lack of research based on robust quantitative evaluations makes it difficult to definitively comment on 'what works'. The research illustrates examples of good practice and case studies, but it is difficult to make wider inferences about their effectiveness;
- (b) The evidence primarily addresses external recruitment and community engagement. Less evidence exists in relation to retention and (internal) progression, which indicates a notable gap in research;
- (c) The evidence base centres around police officers, with limited information about police staff.

Phase 3 External review

External reviews, as with REAs, need consideration of the method and the evidence prior to full dissemination. The external review was aimed at searching for evidence

through strict inclusion and exclusion criteria; being organisationally targeted; and focused on extracting key information.

Evidence obtained in the external review was reliant on the depth and detail of publically available information from each target organisation. This varied across targets and was generally self-reported, rather than based on robust evaluation, making it difficult to be definitive about the effectiveness or impact of intended actions or make wider inferences. In addition, no '*weight of evidence*' scoring was used in the external review. Rather, the evidence gathered is context specific to organisation or geography and has been used to indicate lines of good practice or innovation.

Focus groups and qualitative analysis

Participants in each of the focus groups had varying levels of knowledge about national and local diversity schemes and initiatives. Some participants had been in their role for a number of years, while others had recently joined the organisation. There was also variation in terms of the type of role each participant had within their force, so the focus of their work and awareness of diversity schemes differed. The nature of focus groups means that they were participant led, so not every theme listed in the topic guide was covered. As a result, the main focus of the discussion was around recruitment initiatives and perceived barriers to the impact of national and local diversity schemes.