

Introduction

The Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) has a key role in advancing diversity, equality and inclusion (DE&I) across West Mercia. Alongside a number of statutory obligations, the PCC's unique position in respect of the public and his convening powers, lend themselves to champion and drive cultural change across the system.

The PCC has set out his commitment to promoting DE&I in his Safer West Mercia Plan 2021-2025. This includes a specific commitment to publish equality objectives in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

Equality Act Requirements

The PCC has a number of statutory duties in respect of DE&I. One such duty is the requirement to prepare and publish equality objectives that should be achieved to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity includes:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

This documents sets out the PCC's equality objectives for 2021-2025. The objectives take into account national and local DE&I strategies, as well as feedback from those working within the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

Mechanisms are in place to measure progress against the equality objectives, and this will be monitored by the PCC on a regular basis. This document will be reviewed and refreshed at least every 4 years in line with legislation.

Equality Objectives

Our Communities

We will:

- Ensure that every victim has access to services they need to help them cope and recover, regardless of geography, personal characteristics, or circumstance.
- Ensure representation of all demographics and communities across West Mercia in plans for victim services, acknowledging their needs and challenges.
- Support the PCC to be visible and accessible to all communities in West Mercia.
- Ensure all individuals and communities who contact us are dealt with fairly, equally and respectfully.
- Develop new platforms and outlets to engage with under-represented voices from our communities and ensure their needs and concerns are understood and acted upon.
- Develop and implement a new engagement strategy to foster good relationships across diverse communities, and ensure the PCC represents everyone in West Mercia.
- Deliver an Estates Strategy to meet the needs of our communities; ensuring the police Estate is accessible to everyone.

Our Organisation

We will:

- Attract and retain staff and volunteers that reflect our diverse communities.
- Ensure equality of opportunity for all staff and volunteers throughout every stage of employment; from recruitment, retention and promotion, to exit from service.
- Recognise the needs of diverse groups within our workforce and ensure appropriate support is available for all staff and volunteers.
- Provide training to increase the knowledge and confidence of all staff on issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Cultivate an inclusive culture where all individuals are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.
- Recognise, challenge and effectively address any inappropriate behaviour, language or dignity at work issues that may arise.
- Maximise the transparency of our organisation to ensure our activities and decisions can be scrutinised and feedback used to improve the service provided to the public.

Our Partners

We will:

- Work with local, regional and national partners to champion diversity, equality and inclusion in policing and community safety.
- Engage with partners and stakeholders to understand, and where possible, address disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System and improve the service to the public.
- Support the PCC to hold the Chief Constable of West Mercia Police to account for the exercise of all duties relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Require all service providers, organisations or individuals who enter into a contract, or receive funding from the PCC to comply with the Equality Act and any further terms and conditions related to equality and diversity as set by the PCC.