



# HR Strategy Annual Report

## SPB REPORT

2021/2022



## **1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for monitoring.
- 1.2 There are no recommendations made requiring a decision.

## **2. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 This report provides information on the delivery of the People Services strategic objectives for 2021/2022.

## **3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **3.1 HR Operations**

A review of HR Operations and Workforce Planning was undertaken in August 2021. The result of the review was an improved structure that supports the leadership teams across the force and adds greater value to the overall human resources department.

The Monthly People Services Management Pack provide a summary of the HR data analytics. This includes establishment, sickness, retention and equality data. The HR Business Partners produce monthly performance packs to their Senior Management Team, to ensure key areas of concern or risk are identified and relevant action or support is put in place.

A review of our limited duties officers has been undertaken to ensure have a clear picture of the numbers, that restrictions are up to date, their skills are being fully utilised, they are in established roles and are allocated to key areas of the business. Improved processes to allocate officers who become restricted and ongoing review of placement of their skills and experience to best meet operational demand.

A review of the attendance standards has taken place and in conjunction with a positive internal audit, which now ensures that individual case management drives formal action. This has prevented unnecessary meetings, maintains the force's ability to manage sickness absence effectively and support the wellbeing of our staff, ensuring they feel they have been treated with compassion, fairly and proportionately.

The desire for accurate and reliable data from departments to inform their personnel decisions has never been greater due in part to Operation Uplift. Uplift has resulted in significant reporting requirements and information on our progress against recruitment targets. The



Workforce Planning Team has successfully created a range of documents that support the national reporting requirements and inform our own departments. Internal mechanisms have been put in place to understand progress to date, funding of roles and creation of new posts. This informs establishment forecasting for all ranks and Community Support Officers. This work will form part of the ongoing development of our QlikView data system to enable us to forecast police staff posts.

Data on analysis of the workforce has been regularly supplied to force Boards, including representation data, succession planning for both posts and skills and potential police officer retirements, in order to support improved succession planning through recruitment when required.

The following reports have been produced and submitted through Governance:

Annual Gender Pay Report and action plan

Annual Fairness at Work Report

The Fairness at Work (FAW) Procedure was reviewed and then re-published on 01/02/22. The review allows for independent reports of grievances, increased HRBP support and improved written guidance for investigating/appeal officers. Lesson learned are reviewed for each FAW submitted. Initial learning and ongoing trends are identified in quarterly reporting. Monthly and quarterly reporting are submitted to the Workforce Resource Meeting and People Strategy Board. Lessons learned discussed at the HR Operations Meeting, as a standing agenda item.

An amended exit interview (additional questions for student officers and to support the identification of cultural issues) and use of O365 has allowed better reporting and identification of trends. Analysis of the data has been conducted in respect of protected characteristics and entry routes into policing.

Personal exit interviews are conducted with staff and officers leaving the force to understand good practice, areas for improvement and any cultural issues within the force. Any immediate feedback is addressed with the relevant HRBP/department lead and where appropriate Professional Standards Department (PSD) are updated.

Monthly meetings with PSD take place to review new FAW's as well as any immediate contact that is made as part of the investigation, to ensure conduct is the appropriate route to deal with any identified issues.

Agile Working Guidance has been reviewed and was re-published 01/03/22.

Planned activity for the business year 2022/23 includes:

- Review of job family structure which will consider the job family structure, the application of the CVF and alignment of titles to responsibilities within the JD
- Implementation of an Employee Opinion Survey
- Development of Qlikview as a strategic workforce planning tool
- Introduction of a bespoke employee opinion survey
- Retention Procedure
- Review of the Flexible Working Process and Procedure
- Review of the Career Break Procedure
- Review of the Dignity at Work Procedure
- Review of Working Hours Procedure

### 3.2 Occupational Health

A Peer Review of the department took place in February 2022 by Liz Eades a consultant for the College of Policing and we await the findings.

Statistical analysis for occupational health data has been developed and is provided for reports each month which are included in the senior officer monthly meetings. The force has recently tendered for a new patient management system and Civica has been awarded the contract which is currently with procurement for signing off. This contract has been awarded in collaboration with South Wales and Dyfed Powys.

A total of 3733 occupational health and counselling appointments have been undertaken from 01/04/21 to 31/03/22. This included 882 management referrals, 800 counselling sessions, 487 recruitment medicals, plus medicals on a variety of other specialist roles and vaccinations clinics. There were 1433 other appointments, including role-related medicals, health surveillance medicals, vaccinations, injury on duty, annual adjustment reviews and ill health retirements.

We continue to liaise with other Welsh forces and have reviewed best practice within other occupational health units, actively participating in benchmarking requests wherever required. We have forged good links with Oscar Kilo the National Wellbeing Framework.

4 Gwent delegates attended the Oscar Kilo conference in March 2022.

We have standard operating procedures and policies in line with Clinical Governance for clinical processes in addition to process guides for all administration functions.

The force keeps a review on restricted and recuperative officers to ensure we are able to use resources in the most effective way.



Occupational Health admin staff update the force personnel system on a daily basis with information provided from fitness to work reports which then generates a monthly analysis report to advise senior management as to the number of officers and staff on restricted duties.

As at 31/03/22 160 officers and 37 police staff were on adjusted or recuperative duties. Of this, 62 officers were unable to undertake their role 100% (these are permanent adjustments), 51 were in a permanent role and 11 were in temporary posts. There were 98 on temporary adjustments, including pregnancy. In respect of police staff, 5 were on permanent adjustments and 37 were on temporary adjustments including pregnancy. The force continues to support officers and staff and they are reviewed in line with clinician's recommendations.

Of those officers and staff who have permanent restrictions they are reviewed annually and are posted into roles commensurate with their restrictions, skills, abilities and force requirements. This information is reviewed monthly at senior management meetings.

The Occupational Health Unit is presently operating on reduced staffing. We currently have one Clinical Lead, a registered Mental Health Nurse, one Co-ordinator and two administrative officers. An Occupational Health Advisor (OHA) has recently been appointed. Proposals have been submitted to amend the Occupational Health and Wellbeing structure and we are awaiting approval.

We utilise a Force Medical Advisor Provision via a contract and we utilise another provider for ad hoc OHA cover and one Occupational Health Technician to carryout medicals which are then signed off by the registered OHA.

We are actively working with our wellbeing, human resources and health and safety colleagues to provide a holistic, evidence-based quality service. This will ensure that occupational health resources are being utilised in the most beneficial way and in line with the People Services Strategic Plan.

During the COVID-19 pandemic the Occupational Health team continued to attend weekly meetings providing support to the force operational response to the pandemic, Op Talla, keeping up to date with the latest information provided through briefings and government guidance.

Our Senior Occupational Health advisor also reviews Public Health Wales guidance for advice and information signposting officers and staff where necessary to avenues of support. The force has had very minimal instances of potential long COVID sufferers and these are being monitored by regular reviews.



### 3.3 Recruitment and Promotion

Operation Uplift has meant an increase in our police officer numbers this financial year. From April 2021 to March 2022, we have recruited 178 officers to achieve our uplift target and backfill for retirements and leavers. This increase in police officer numbers meant that Gwent Police, successfully achieved year two of Operation Uplift. We have focused on improving our workforce representation so that our workforce more accurately reflects the communities we serve and have had some significant successes.

From April 2021 to March 2022 our police officer percentage of ethnic minorities has grown from 2.5% to 3.6%, from 33 officers to 48. This is a huge achievement having only been at 2.2% in 2018; we have greatly improved our representation and are more reflective of our community. As of June 2022, we are now at 3.6%. Representation of ethnic minorities amongst police officers has increased by 59%. We have also improved on our 'Other White' category gaining more diversity and language skills. This is mirrored in the community support officers and police staff with growth in this area too of a 59% increase in representation. Our joining rate of ethnic minorities for police officers is 5.1% which is above the representation of the communities of Gwent (3.9%). This success has been driven by our positive action strategic plan and our positive action support journey.

Our female representation across officers remains above the national average across the UK but has decreased slightly across the last 12 months. We have been developing our positive action strategy across females to introduce female only recruitment career sessions and positive action sessions for females. This has included mock interviews, mock fitness tests and awareness sessions.

We have also increased our recruitment from those declaring a disability and those with neurodiverse conditions. In April 2021 we had 2.35% of our police officers that declared a disability. By March 2022, 6.87% of our officers declared a disability, this is 98 people. We have communicated a 'safe to say' campaign and asked officers and staff to declare their protective characteristics. This has greatly improved the number of unknowns we had recorded and help us better understand our workforce. We now have a clearer picture on our workforce in particular sexual orientation where the number of unknowns has decreased for officers from 42% to just over 5% (82 officers).

In relation to police staff the number declaring a disability has increased in the year 2021/22 from 3.93% to 8.53%, which is 70 individuals in total. We are recruiting more new joiners with a disability but also demonstrating that staff/officers are more comfortable in declaring. The



positive action teamwork with those joiners with disabilities and provide appropriate reasonable adjustments. We offer screening for all new starters for dyslexia and ensure in induction that any workplace adjustments are discussed. Gwent Police have been recognised and have been awarded a **disability confident level 3 leaders award**. We are one of the very few forces in the UK to be awarded this level.

We have rolled our mentoring for ethnic minority officers and staff with over ten staff and officers being matched with mentors. Reverse mentoring has been running for around 8 months successfully within force with many senior officers getting involved and learning from others in force.

We have worked with specialist teams where there is lack of representation to encourage a wider candidate pool to apply and support with positive action. We have worked closely with Firearms, Area Support Unit and the Dog section to improve representation. The makeup of Firearms is now 9% from ethnic minorities and 4.68 % are female. This is a significant increase.

The positive action team work closely with the support networks around promotion time and offer support and mentoring to under-represented groups. Those who are unsuccessful are supported through the networks in mentoring them for the next process.

We have also had an increase in our community support officers (CSOs) by 20 FTE and additional 10 planned for 2022/23. We recruited 56 CSO's as at 31.03.22 to increase the establishment and backfills to replace those joining as regulars' officers and resignations.

Our recruitment of police staff has been considerably high with over 100 new police staff recruited this year in a range of roles.

Work has commenced on growing the special constabulary complement and there is an ongoing plan to bring in three intakes a year. In 2021/22, 24 new special constables have been recruited. This has helped to maintain levels due to the numbers of specials being successful for the regulars.

During the year 21/22, Gwent Police launched our first ever police staff apprenticeship scheme. This has been particularly successful with 16 apprentices recruited over a range of departments within Gwent Police on a 22-month programme. This has been highly successful and it is planned to roll out a second campaign in January 2023.

An equality impact assessment has been undertaken in order to ensure that recruitment processes are fair and do not result in an adverse impact for any particular group. This is undertaken for all our large campaigns and also promotions processes, analysing the data and trends to ensure no adverse impact.



Interview panel members are appropriately trained and panels are representative. Colleagues from the staff support networks have been trained as panel members to ensure that panel members are diverse and representative. Independent Advisory Group members act as critical friends in recruitment processes and they are invited to observe at interviews.

Our Welsh Language capability remains an ongoing focus for us in order to deliver the outcomes required with the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards. Our aspirational target is for 10% of our Workforce to be Welsh Speakers (level 2 – 5).

### 3.4 Wellbeing

Between April 2021 – February 2022 the Wellbeing Team has developed a comprehensive strategy and supporting business plans to ensure that Wellbeing is correctly embedded as business as usual throughout the force. A researched, scientific approach has been adopted to create a department that has legitimacy and commitment to training and initiatives. The force has invested in the Wellbeing Team, resulting in the creation of 2 Wellbeing specialist roles and a Wellbeing Lead. The Wellbeing Team is working with organisations such as the NHS, Oscar Kilo and other organisations with specialist knowledge to ensure we provide a gold standard service to the workforce.

To ensure best practice, and continued improvement, data analysis and feedback is being used to tailor the approach to Wellbeing. A bespoke Employee Opinion Survey which is due to be launched in January 2023 will give us an understanding on how our new initiatives have landed, how accessible members of the Wellbeing Team are and what can be done to improve force-wide wellbeing.

January 2022 saw the launch of station visits from the Wellbeing Specialists, for all stations, every 6 months. Drop-in sessions and recorded Lunch and Learn sessions have also been developed. The Wellbeing Team is now supporting officers going through the PSD investigation process to offer support, coping strategies and further signposting to try to increase feelings of fairness. During Summer 2022, the Wellbeing Team will also be working in partnership with Biostress Lab who will do research into stress points in new recruits and the force control room. This research will enable us to develop more specific stress management packages in 2023-2024.



Counselling data from the reporting period shows that 18 individuals sought support for workplace trauma and 28 for personal trauma. However, a review of sickness absence data shows that only 9 individuals in 2021-22 were absent due to trauma during this period. This suggests that the work done to ensure Gwent Police is a more Trauma Informed organisation may be preventing individuals from needing to take periods of absence.

Data for sickness absence in relation to wellbeing and mental health shows that anxiety and depression are the highest causes of mental health sickness for both officers and staff. During the period 2022-2024, a new course for stress management and stress resilience will be created in order to give individuals the tools to cope in stressful situations and limit the impacts of stress. More voluntary Wellbeing Ambassadors will be recruited so that there are designated individuals in force who will have the tools to support individuals feeling stressed. Also as part of this workstream, hot spots and workplace stressors will be pinpointed to ascertain causes of workplace stress.

To ensure a more consistent level of support for Officers dealing with workplace trauma, we have Retrained our TRiM practitioners with the third-party organisation March On Stress (December 2021), who provided a more in-depth course than the previous providers. This new training delivery model requires all practitioners to work toward becoming Level 3 BETEC trained in TRiM.

As of January 2022, the average wait time for an assessment was 4 days which is consistent in the ethical guidance of not providing psychological intervention for the first 72 hours. In 2022-2023, we will recruit a further 12 TRiM practitioners to enable wellbeing to continue providing this timely service as major incidents can lead to longer waiting times due to the limited number of practitioners.

In order for members of the Wellbeing Team to become more visible and known across the whole force, Team members have attended stations regularly and have held a variety of support groups. In response to COVID-19 and isolation, a bereavement support group was set up by the Wellbeing Lead and was run for 6 consecutive weeks during March-April 2021.

Endometriosis and menopause groups have been established by wellbeing and are being run monthly as a way for others to gain peer support on the symptoms they are facing.



A new support group, Gwent Babies, will be established by Summer 2022. It is understood that becoming a new parent whilst working within the emergency services environment can be challenging, particularly for those in front line roles where they may feel uncertain about the risks involved with the job now that they have a family. This support groups will provide new parents to talk with other new and expecting parents, to share concerns, fears and tips on how to manage these feelings.

Wellbeing Drop-in sessions have started back up via teams every Tuesday 9:30-11am. This session is available to all in the force and can be utilised for peer support, guidance, and further signposting. Management can also attend to find out what is new in wellbeing and in information about supporting teams and themselves.

During the reporting period, 225 Officers attended ReTrain. Their feedback was generally positive, with certain elements of the course being favored more than others. The Wellbeing Lead has amended the course to make this a one-day course going forward (March 2022) with the opportunity for individuals to have refresher input at 12 months to continue the positive impact the course has on the workforce before helpful effects decline.

The Occupational Health and Wellbeing Teams are working with the College of Policing to utilise the psychological monitoring systems used by Dr Tehrani. This new monitoring system has many benefits, including limiting unconscious bias and being cost effective and time efficient. Psychological monitoring assessments started January 2022 and will run until April 2022.

### 3.5 **Welsh Language**

Please see Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report attached as Annexe 1.

## 4. **COLLABORATION**

4.1 Current collaborations are referenced above.

## 5. **NEXT STEPS**

5.1 None, this report is for information only.

## 6. **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**



6.1 None, this is a retrospective report in respect of the reporting period 2021/2022.

## 7. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 None

## 8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 None

## 9. EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Joint Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.

9.2 In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.

## 10. RISK

10.1 None, this is a retrospective report in respect of People Services business conducted during the reporting period 2021/2022.

## 11. PUBLIC INTEREST

11.1 In producing this report, has consideration been given to 'public confidence'? **Yes**

11.2 Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? **Yes**

11.3 If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons: **N/A**

11.4 Media, Stakeholder and Community Impacts:

11.4.1 This information is suitable for the public domain.

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR

12.1 Sandra Connolly

## 13. LEAD CHIEF OFFICER

13.1 Deputy Chief Constable

## 14. ANNEXES

14.1 Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report



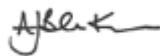
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## 15. CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL

15.1 I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting.

15.2 I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain for the reasons stated in 11.3.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B. K.', written over a light blue background.

Date: August 2022

