

DCI Kerrin Smith, North Yorkshire Police

Entry Routes

Graduate entry should continue to be a national standard as we are aiming for the future ACPO officers in this regard and as such we need to ensure that there is a specific standard that a national programme will be able to manage, the officers will also benefit from the contact & support with the colleagues from other forces going through a similar programme and reduce the isolation factor.

We should think creatively about allowing officers to join the service at various ranks. A specifically designed national training programme to give the understanding of the police service for higher level entrants can overcome the issue of not joining at the grassroots level. This can address a number of issues such as the diversity at higher ranks – which currently will take years to get to a more balanced playing field – and also we end up closing our service to the best people to work within it by excluding people who have a great deal to offer from other organisations if they have been very successful managers / leaders in business but generally cannot afford financially / timescales to go through the current structure.

Specials

We could look at a retainer fee for Specials similar to that which the Fire Service operates. This gives a financial incentive with the full costs of a police officer.

If forces make being a Special part of the entry requirements of new constables & PCSO's then there is the potential for a major barrier to be put in place for future staff, many of whom will already work full time and have families and so this proposal will prevent them from joining.

Shifts

For police staff who attract shift allowances there should be a renegotiation that shift allowance will not be paid if you are not on duty under taking those particular tours of duty (currently sickness, maternity leave and recoup duties – some staff of which can do these 'alternative' duties for a year or more). Currently staff still attract the full entitlement ie weekend working night shifts is a 50% addition.

Police officers pay should reflect shift work and those officers on a 'day job' should attract less salary than 24/7 cover.

Performance related pay

It would be a dangerous and divisive stance to introduce performance related pay – as has been shown by Special Priority Pay. The inability to qualify the various roles and add value to these without introducing KPI's which are purely quantitative will cause disharmony. My fear is that it will also add to the bureaucracy and coupled with an attack on the integrity of supervision, staff will fight any form of supporting development plans etc... which is the case now when it comes to SPP so how far that will reverberate if performance related pay were also part of it is of concern.

Supts and Chief Officers should not receive performance related pay. They are paid the salaries they are to deliver an effective police service and lead people. If performance is deemed exceptional it is not purely down to them but also the team that they lead.

With police constables / staff, senior officers are being paid to do a job, we do not need enhanced payment for doing a good job, it should be an expectation that we meet regardless of the financial incentive.

Hard to fill posts

Ways of filling posts and recognising 'why' they are hard to fill is the key to this, not throwing money at it. Ensuring that the posts are not disproportionately burdensome on one team to another is one way but in reality some are and we should look at how else officers could be rewarded for their work ie 'on-call' payments.

Length of service

Some officers remain in the service, very disillusioned and ineffective but cannot leave due to the hold that the pension system has on them. This is very damaging for the service as a whole and for the wellbeing of that individual. We should look at ways of allowing officers to leave and managing their pension so that they are not disadvantaged by leaving early.

Fitness tests / health checks should be done regularly but caution should be given to what this entails and what the outcome of failing these will be. Often a number of roles require 'use of force' when in actual effect the officer has never needed to use these skills for years and works alongside other agencies in similar environments who do not have the same requirements. Ie Integrated Offender Managers working alongside probation officers.

Health related issues

Employment legislation, financial issues and misguided support can prevent officers / staff coming back to work. Issues such as stress in the workplace should be managed differently to engage staff, through their GP and the FME to resume some sort of activity in a more timely manner. The wider knock on effect of staff sickness on other federated ranks is often overlooked by both the business and the federation. Therefore single case issues which are fought for can do significant damage to the wider workforce.

Pensions

I don't think you can disallow retired officers who become the 'general public' from applying for jobs, however some things can be done to ensure the integrity of recruitment, ie a 'space' between retiring and applying for a job. Scrutiny over jobs which are civilianised the day an officer retires and then coming back into the same role as a police staff member.