



House of Commons
Home Affairs Committee

Police diversity

First Report of Session 2016–17



House of Commons
Home Affairs Committee

Police diversity

First Report of Session 2016–17

*Report, together with formal minutes
relating to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed
18 May 2016*

Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies.

Current membership

[Keith Vaz MP](#) (*Labour, Leicester East*) (Chair)

[Victoria Atkins MP](#) (*Conservative, Louth and Horncastle*)

[James Berry MP](#) (*Conservative, Kingston and Surbiton*)

[Mr David Burrowes MP](#) (*Conservative, Enfield, Southgate*)

[Nusrat Ghani MP](#) (*Conservative, Wealden*)

[Mr Ranil Jayawardena MP](#) (*Conservative, North East Hampshire*)

[Tim Loughton MP](#) (*Conservative, East Worthing and Shoreham*)

[Stuart C. McDonald MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East*)

[Naz Shah MP](#) (*Independent, Bradford West*)

[Mr Chuka Umunna MP](#) (*Labour, Streatham*)

[Mr David Winnick MP](#) (*Labour, Walsall North*)

The following were also members of the Committee during the Parliament.

[Keir Starmer MP](#) (*Labour, Holborn and St Pancras*)

[Anna Turley MP](#) (*Labour, Redcar*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Carol Oxborough (Clerk), Phil Jones (Second Clerk), Kunal Mundul (Committee Specialist), Peter Stam (Committee Specialist), Andy Boyd (Senior Committee Assistant), Mandy Sullivan (Committee Assistant) and Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Committee Media Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Home Affairs Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 2049; the Committee's email address is homeaffcom@parliament.uk.

Contents

Key facts	3
1 Introduction	4
Background to the inquiry	5
2 BME representation in police forces	6
Recruitment	6
Retention and career development	7
Specialist roles	8
Chief Officers	8
3 Change initiatives	11
The College of Policing and BME Progression 2018	11
Direct entry	11
Positive action	11
Positive discrimination	13
The Northern Ireland experience	13
Leadership and accountability	15
Conclusions and recommendations	17
Annex: BME percentages in police forces in England and Wales and in their local populations	21
Formal Minutes	23
Witnesses	25
Published written evidence	26
List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament	27

Key facts

- In 1999, 2% of police officers in England and Wales were from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background, compared to 6.5% of the population and 9.5% of the UK workforce.
- In 2015, 5.5% of police officers were from a BME background, compared to 14% of the population, and 11.4% of the UK workforce.
- No police force in England and Wales has a BME representation which matches its local demographic.
- In the Metropolitan Police Service BME police officer representation is 12.4%, compared to 40.2% of the population.
- Only two Police Chief Officers self-identify as BME.
- 4 police forces—Cheshire, North Yorkshire, Dyfed-Powys and Durham—employ no Black or Black British police officers.
- 11 forces have no BME officers above the rank of Inspector.

1 Introduction

1. In a speech at the National Black Police Association conference in October 2015, the Home Secretary set out the ambition of having police force profiles which reflected those of the local community which they served:

Every officer in this country from the newest recruit to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police knows that in this country, we believe in policing by consent. And if we are to protect that principle, we must not only improve public trust and confidence in the police, but we must ensure that police forces properly reflect the communities they serve.

[...] if police forces do not truly represent the people they serve, if they are not made up of men and women of all backgrounds, if they do not properly reflect the communities where local officers police, then we cannot truly say the police are the public, and the public are the police.¹

2. In trying to achieve this ambition in relation to ethnic diversity, the police service continues to face an enormous challenge. In 1999, only 2% of police officers in England and Wales were of a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background.² At that time, the Office of National Statistics estimated that 6.5% of the population of Great Britain was from an ethnic minority, and 9.5% of the UK workforce.³ In the same year, the Macpherson report on the Stephen Lawrence case was published, which concluded that the Metropolitan Police was institutionally racist. Since then, achieving better BME representation has been a key target for the police service, and by 2015, it had increased to 5.5%.⁴

3. Although this is clearly a notable improvement, the scale of the ongoing task in increasing BME representation in police forces remains immense, particularly as the BME proportion in the general population is increasing. The UK population is currently 61 million, of which 14% is made up of minority communities (who made up 11.4% of the UK workforce in 2015⁵); this proportion is expected to rise to 16% by 2024. This means that the police service would need to recruit 17,000 BME officers—or one in four of future recruits—to be representative of the population by then.⁶

4. In her October speech, the Home Secretary acknowledged the challenge which her ambition represented, given the current position. She noted that no police force in England and Wales currently has a BME representation which matches its local demographic; that four forces (Cheshire, North Yorkshire, Dyfed-Powys and Durham) do not employ any Black or Black British police officers at all; that only two Chief Officers self-identify as BME; and that 11 forces have no BME officers above the rank of Inspector.⁷

1 Home Secretary's speech to the National Black Police Association, [22 October 2015](#)

2 Home Office, [Policing Minister's Assessment](#) of Minority Ethnic Recruitment, Retention and Progression in the Police Service, A Paper for the Home Secretary, November 2008

3 ONS, The ethnic minority populations of Great Britain, Summer 1999 and DWP, [Labour market status by ethnic group: data to September 2013](#), January 2014

4 National Police Chiefs' Council, [Submission to the Senior Salaries Review Body](#), January 2016

5 DWP, [Labour market status by ethnic group: annual data to 2015](#), April 2016

6 College of Policing press release, [30 October 2014](#), "Police recruitment of black or minority ethnic officers"

7 Home Secretary's speech to the National Black Police Association, [22 October 2015](#)

Background to the inquiry

5. Predecessor Home Affairs Committees have examined issues relating to police diversity on a number of occasions. Most recently, a 2013 Report on Leadership and Standards in the Police made several recommendations on improving diversity.⁸ We decided to hold a one-off evidence session to examine progress on this highly significant issue since then.

6. We took oral evidence from former Chief Superintendent Dal Babu OBE; the National Black Police Association (NBPA); the National Association of Muslim Police; the Chief Constables of the West Midlands (Dave Thompson) and West Yorkshire (Dee Collins (temporary)) forces; and Robin Wilkinson, Director of People and Change of the Metropolitan Police. In a separate session, we also questioned the College of Policing and the Police Federation of England and Wales on police diversity, and gathered useful comparative information from the Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences and the Royal College of Nursing. We are grateful to all the witnesses for contributing to our work.

8 Third Report from the Home Affairs Committee, Session 2013-14, [Leadership and Standards in the Police](#), HC 67-I

2 BME representation in police forces

Recruitment

7. The most recent Government statistics on the police workforce were published in July 2015. Of the 127,000 police officers in England and Wales on 31 March 2015, 6,979 were from BME backgrounds, an increase of 265 compared with a year earlier. The overall proportion of BME police officers increased from 3.6% in 2006 to 5.5% in 2015. There is, however, considerable variation across the country, with some forces having difficulty in attracting applications from BME members of the community and having a very low proportion of new BME recruits.⁹ In addition, there is very poor BME representation at senior levels. Janet Hills, President of the National Black Police Association (NBPA), told us that BME women were particularly poorly represented throughout the police service.¹⁰

8. In West Yorkshire, 5.1% of police officers are from a BME background, compared to 18.2% of the local population, and its published equality monitoring data shows that little improvement has been made in recent years. Temporary Chief Constable Dee Collins told us that changing the workforce mix had been very difficult because of extremely limited recruitment opportunities in recent years.¹¹ However, she said that in the next 12 months, she would be recruiting 600 new police officers, and a number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and police staff, and that this presented a “huge opportunity” to encourage people from under-represented groups to join the service.¹²

9. The Metropolitan Police faces an even greater challenge than that faced by West Yorkshire Police. Although the proportion of BME police officers is higher in the London Metropolitan area than in West Yorkshire, there is an even bigger gap between the police force profile and that of the local community: 40.2% of the population is of a BME background; BME representation in its officer workforce was 12.4% in February 2016 (an increase from 3% in 1999). Between April 2015 and February 2016, 27.3% of new recruits were from BME backgrounds, compared to 16.2% in 2014/15.¹³

10. Some forces have made progress in terms of identifying the factors contributing to relatively low rates of applications and recruitment of people with a BME background, but have not necessarily been successful in addressing and removing the barriers. For example, Inspector Mustafa Mohammed, President of the Muslim Police Officers Association, told us that vetting of candidates was still a big challenge, particularly if not all of their close relatives lived in the UK, and pointed to the lack of visible role models for potential BME applicants.¹⁴ Temporary Chief Constable Dee Collins highlighted the need to find ways of reaching and communicating with young BME people to encourage them to consider careers in the police service.¹⁵

9 National Statistics, [Police workforce, England and Wales](#), 31 March 2015. See also data published by The Guardian, [1 January 2016](#), “Most UK police forces have disproportionate number of white officers” (data was obtained from an FOI request to police forces).

10 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q17

11 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q81

12 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q84

13 Metropolitan Police Service written evidence ([PDI0002](#))

14 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Qs18 and 35

15 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q124

11. Andy Fittes, General Secretary of the Police Federation of England and Wales, told us that he thought that none of the chairs of Police Federation branches were black or Asian or from ethnic minority communities, and that there were only two BME representatives out of about 30 on the Police Federation executive committee.¹⁶ He also explained that:

Everyone in policing has tried to achieve better representation in policing. Is it enough? No, it is not, because we have not achieved the levels we should have done, so everyone needs to try harder, and we need to look at different ways of achieving, because we have tried for decades, probably, now to do this and we have not succeeded. We need to start to look at different ways of trying to succeed.¹⁷

12. **In 2013, our predecessor Committee concluded that for too long lip-service had been paid to diversity in the police service, but this was unmatched by action. It also believed that progress since the 1999 Macpherson report on the Metropolitan Police and the Stephen Lawrence case was disappointing; and that it was shameful that not a single Chief Constable was Black or Asian. Three years have passed since the publication of that report, and progress has not been sufficient, but all of those conclusions are even more valid today and the need to address this problem has even greater urgency. Whilst there has been a steady increase in the overall proportion of officers and staff who are of a BME background, progress is painfully slow; there is wide variation between forces; and increased numbers of BME police officers remain overwhelmingly in the most junior ranks. Even allowing for appropriate career progression, the number of BME officers above the rank of Inspector is very disappointing. We find this unacceptable. We believe that it is time for concerted action, prioritised across all forces, policing bodies and Government.**

13. We have observed the progress on gender diversity within the police service and we are pleased to note that there is now a higher proportion of female representation in the most senior policing posts. We very much welcome the fact that two of the most influential posts in policing, the heads of the National Crime Agency and the National Police Chiefs' Council, are held by women, as well five of the Chief Constables in the 43 forces in England and Wales being women.

Retention and career development

14. Although some progress is being made on recruitment, retention and progression of BME officers remains a considerable challenge. Janet Hills suggested that there was institutional racism within the police service and that some of the policies and practices had hidden biases which made it difficult for people to challenge decisions when they felt that they had been subject to unfair discrimination.¹⁸

15. The NBPA also said there was statistical evidence that proportionately more BME staff faced disciplinary and complaints proceedings; that formal measures tended to be used more often for BME than white staff; and that despite the existence of this evidence, little action had been taken to tackle the root causes of the disparity. It also suggested that these issues were connected to the under-representation of BME officers in the Professional

¹⁶ Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q29

¹⁷ Oral evidence taken in the inquiry into the College of Policing on [19 April 2016](#), Q27

¹⁸ Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q10

Standards Unit. The NBPA also said that racism was still an issue for a number of police officers and staff, and that research published by the Stevens Independent Commission into the future of Policing in England and Wales had highlighted cases of bullying and harassment of BME police officers.¹⁹

16. Inspector Muhammed pointed to the lack of Black and Asian leaders in the police service to act as role models; the lack of support, opportunities and encouragement for BME people to seek promotion and to recover from setbacks; and the existence of unconscious bias amongst selection panel members. He explained that “there has historically been the perception amongst BME staff that if you do not fit in, you are not part of the network or you do not share the values, you are not going to get promoted”.²⁰ Dal Babu proposed a number of steps to tackle these issues, including: developing a coaching and mentoring programme for BME officers; and providing training for units in forces which deal with complaints from officers to enable them to support officers who have concerns about diversity issues.²¹

Specialist roles

17. Another area of concern is the poor BME representation in specialist police roles. The 2009 Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Report on Police and Racism suggested that specialist units were often considered a ‘closed shop’. It noted that “this problem needs to be addressed urgently if the police are not to be stained with the accusation that some parts of the service are still only available to those whose face fits”.²²

18. Witnesses agreed that the ‘closed shop’ perception still prevailed today, and suggested a number of possible reasons for this. However it should be noted that, for example, the head of armed policing in the Metropolitan Police from 2013-14, and therefore the most senior firearms officer in the country, was from a BME background. Dal Babu said that there was a real challenge for BME officers seeking career development into specialist roles in being able to access the training courses required to acquire the necessary skills.²³ He suggested a range of initiatives to address these problems, for example: conducting a full review of the reasons for and ways to overcome low BME representation in specialist roles; introducing compulsory training for staff who participate in selection panels to tackle unconscious bias; expanding the use on selection panels of external assessors from a BME background; and setting targets for BME representation on courses relevant to promotion and progression to specialist roles.²⁴

Chief Officers

19. BME representation is even lower in the senior ranks than among more junior police officers. Rt Hon David Lammy MP, who is leading the Prime Minister’s review into racism in the justice system, has criticised the lack of a black police chief as “bringing the system into disrepute” and has said that the absence of a black police chief among the 43 forces in England and Wales is “hugely problematic”.²⁵

19 NBPA written evidence ([PDI0001](#))

20 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Qs18, 19, 53

21 Written evidence submitted by Dal Babu ([PDI0003](#))

22 EHRC, [Police and Racism: What has been achieved 10 years after the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report?](#), 2009

23 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q5

24 Written evidence submitted by Dal Babu ([PDI0003](#))

25 The Times, [18 April 2016](#), Race review MP criticises the absence of black police chiefs

20. HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary's annual State of Policing report, published in February 2016, noted that only 1% of all Chief Officers (2 out of 201, where ethnicity is known) are black, Asian or minority ethnic people and that more work is needed to ensure that those who work at all levels in policing better reflect the communities they serve.²⁶ Dal Babu told us that there was "not a single, non-white face among all the chief constables and all the police and crime commissioners" and that there was only one BME person out of the 59 members of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC, which replaced the Association of Police Chief Officers (ACPO) in 2015).²⁷

21. Chief Constable Alex Marshall, Chief Executive of the College of Policing, agreed that the overall culture of policing had to be healthy and welcoming to people from all backgrounds, and believed that providing different routes of entry into policing would help to create a more diverse leadership. He said that he was interested to hear from the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) that diversity in nursing had increased when they introduced degree entry level.²⁸ However, Janet Davies, FRCN, Chief Executive and General Secretary of the RCN, acknowledged that nursing faced similar challenges to the police in terms of diversity in senior positions.²⁹ In subsequent written evidence, the RCN indicated that its BME membership was around 15% (with about 72% white and 13.8% not known).³⁰

22. The number of BME officers in police forces is increasing to some extent but this is largely limited to junior roles. BME representation at junior levels is only one indicator of progress and is not a full reflection of the diversity of an organisation. The lack of senior BME representation in the police service affects its leadership and culture and could be interpreted as suggesting that the police service has an unconscious bias. People of a BME background wishing to develop their careers within the police service lack role models; encounter barriers when trying to access the training necessary for their career development; and face selection panels which are almost always lacking in diversity (although no evidence was presented to us to suggest that the panels are a barrier in themselves). We acknowledge that this is an issue affecting many other organisations and public services in the UK, and that promotion to the highest ranks starting from what was a low proportion of BME officers takes long-term commitment. However, that is not an excuse for the lack of progress in the police service.

23. The College of Policing, led by its Chief Executive, Chief Constable Alex Marshall, and many individual police forces, have considerable expertise in designing and implementing interventions to support the career development of BME officers, but it is clear from the evidence we received that these interventions are not yet having sufficient impact. The effective implementation of schemes to support the career development of BME officers appears to be subject to the discretion and commitment of individual forces and Chief Officers and is therefore too inconsistent and poorly monitored to be effective. The College of Policing should provide further, stronger leadership on this.

24. A number of practical steps could be taken now to improve retention and progression of BME police officers, including to the most senior ranks. These include: compulsory training on diversity issues for selection and promotion panel members,

26 HMIC, [State of Policing](#): the Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2015, February 2016

27 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q4

28 Oral evidence taken in the inquiry into the College of Policing on [19 April 2016](#), Qs181-182

29 Oral evidence taken in the inquiry into the College of Policing on [19 April 2016](#), Q81

30 RCN written evidence submitted for the inquiry into the College of Policing ([CPO0002](#))

including those for specialist posts; increased use of external assessors from a BME background on selection panels; instituting coaching and mentoring for BME officers; and ensuring that units which deal with complaints from officers on personnel matters receive dedicated training on diversity issues. These four steps towards greater diversity should then be added as benchmarks for the performance measures against which every police force is assessed. A BME senior leaders' forum, similar to the Association of Senior Women in Policing, should also be established, to provide support and guidance to BME officers seeking promotion.

3 Change initiatives

The College of Policing and BME Progression 2018

25. The College of Policing has been commissioned to develop and deliver a national programme to improve the recruitment, development, progression and retention of BME officers and staff. Known as BME Progression 2018. The programme also includes the development of an evidence base of successful approaches used by forces. The programme is scheduled to continue until December 2018, and will include various research activities, sharing of best practice and continuous evaluation tasks.

26. Janet Hills and Inspector Muhammed told us that neither the NBPA nor the National Association of Muslim Police had been consulted about the design of the programme by the College of Policing.³¹ However, the College of Policing witnesses emphasised to us that they valued highly the contribution of the NBPA. They explained that the College had recruited the Vice Chair of the NBPA, Detective Inspector Irene Afful, to work on the BME Progression 2018 programme; that in all its programmes of work relating to BME representation and progression, the College had worked with the NBPA, which had been very supportive of the College's work; and that they would endeavour to improve their future communications with the NBPA about this work.³²

Direct entry

27. When our predecessors examined police diversity in 2013, there was a single point of entry to the police at Constable level with progression one rank at a time, although the Winsor review had recently proposed direct entry at Superintendent rank.³³ Since then, direct entry at Superintendent and Inspector level has been introduced, with an 18-month training programme. The initial direct entry recruitment round ran until 20 April 2016.³⁴

28. Alex Marshall told us that he was pleased with the early results from the direct entry scheme, which had included three people of a BME background out of the 14 participants. In addition, the NBPA had supported the advertising of the fast-track scheme, which had led to a 20% success rate for BME applicants, compared to a previous best of 5%.³⁵

Positive action

29. The College of Policing has published guidance offering advice to police forces on the use of lawful positive action to support the recruitment, retention and progression of officers from under-represented groups. The EHRC definition of positive action is that it:

Refers to a range of lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantages (e.g. in employment opportunities) that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs.³⁶

31 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q33

32 Oral evidence taken in the inquiry into the College of Policing on [19 April 2016](#), Qs115-121

33 Third Report from the Home Affairs Committee, Session 2013-14, [Leadership and standards in the police](#), HC 67-I, para 122

34 College of Policing website, [Direct Entry Programme](#) [accessed 4 May 2016]

35 Oral evidence taken in the inquiry into the College of Policing on [19 April 2016](#), Q176

36 Equality and Human Rights Commission website, [Glossary of Terms](#)

The College of Policing guidance includes: an explanation of the relevant legislation; advice and factors to consider for recruitment and development of staff; police force case studies; and case studies from other organisations.

30. The Metropolitan Police told us that it fully exploited positive action throughout its police constable recruitment process, including ‘Meet the Met’ events at the start of the process, online and face-to-face tutorials to prepare candidates for assessment centres, and targeted coaching and training for areas such as functional skills. It says that it has also used positive action for internal promotion processes at all ranks, ranging from “webinars” to face-to-face training sessions and one-to-one coaching.

31. The Met also provided the following information about a number of other key initiatives which it believes are helping to increase diversity:

- The introduction of a new London residency criteria for police constable applicants, which has helped increase BME recruitment to 27%.
- A second-language recruitment campaign was launched in July 2015 which required applicants to speak proficiently one of the 14 most spoken languages in London, and which was seen as likely to result in 180 new recruits, about 50% of them of a BME background. A further second-language campaign was launched in January 2016 with the number of languages increased to 25, and from which the Met anticipates recruiting around 110 officers, with similar BME representation to the first campaign.
- Police NOW is a campaign to attract high calibre graduates from diverse backgrounds, with the first two years of service in some of the most challenging roles. The second campaign closed in December 2015, and resulted in 110 new recruits, of whom 27% were from a BME background.
- Ten candidates have been selected from the direct entry Superintendent scheme over the last two years, of whom 30% are BME.³⁷

32. Witnesses commended the Met’s second-language and residency initiatives. Janet Hills said that she supported the residency criteria initiative and that the language scheme had helped achieve more diversity.³⁸ Dal Babu agreed that language was a really important factor and believed that it would help improve both community policing and counter-terrorism efforts.³⁹

33. Cleveland Police has also taken specific steps on ethnic diversity, in the context of what its Temporary Chief Constable, Iain Spittal, describes as the “very difficult history” which the force has experienced in recent years. The positive action taken by Cleveland Police includes:

- A recruiting open event at the University of Teeside specifically aimed at BME applicants through demographic targeting and social media profiling from the Middlesbrough BME community.

37 Metropolitan Police Service written evidence ([PDI0002](#))

38 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q46

39 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q44

- Local radio recruitment and social media campaigns led by the Temporary Chief Constable, targeted at outlets with high BME audiences, and electronic circulation of recruitment leaflets targeted at BME contacts and communities.
- Circulation of Direct Entry Inspector Scheme documentation to under-represented communities, and advertised via the Equality North East portal.⁴⁰

Positive discrimination

34. In oral evidence in February 2016 Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, told us that he supported a statutory change to allow for positive discrimination, which would enable him to introduce 50:50 recruitment.⁴¹ Positive discrimination is currently illegal. The EHRC describes positive discrimination as:

Treating someone with a protected characteristic more favourably to counteract the effects of past discrimination. It is generally not lawful although the duty to make reasonable adjustments is an exception where treating a disabled person more favourably may be required by law.⁴²

35. The Home Secretary does not favour positive discrimination. In her speech to the NBPA she stated that, although the current pace of change was slow, the case for allowing positive discrimination was “deeply flawed”, and that it would not in any event offer quick solutions, because it would require the UK to seek a derogation from the EU, with no guarantee of success, before it could pass a law for positive discrimination.⁴³

The Northern Ireland experience

36. 50:50 recruitment was temporarily introduced in Northern Ireland to increase the Catholic composition of the new Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), and create a service which was broadly representative of the community. As a result of recommendations in the 1999 Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (the Patten Report), temporary provisions, effected by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, were introduced in November 2001, and remained in place for 10 years. In order to introduce these provisions, the Government had to obtain from the Council of the European Union an exemption from the Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000, which established a “general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation”.

37. For recruitment competitions where there were six or more vacancies of a similar nature to be filled, all candidates who reached a specified standard of merit in the selection procedure were placed in a pool from which an equal number of Protestants and Catholics were then drawn for appointment.

38. The Patten Report envisaged that such a model would quadruple the proportion of Catholic officers within 10 years and would take Catholic composition of PSNI officers to

40 Letter to the Chair from Iain Spittal, Temporary Chief Constable, Cleveland Police, [13 May 2016](#)

41 Oral evidence taken on [23 February 2016](#), Q159

42 Equality and Human Rights Commission, [Glossary of Terms](#)

43 Home Secretary’s speech to the National Black Police Association, [22 October 2015](#)

between 29% and 33%. In 2001, Catholic composition in the Royal Ulster Constabulary was 8.3%, and by November 2010, Catholic composition in the PSNI was 29.38%. Over this same period, the Catholic application rate increased from 23.33% to around 37%.⁴⁴

39. Witnesses acknowledged that introducing a similar scheme to achieve better BME representation in the police service in England and Wales would probably be a lengthy process, but suggested that it had the potential to achieve significant change. Dal Babu said that similar provisions to those used in Northern Ireland would be “very helpful”, and Janet Hills stated that she was “absolutely 100% behind affirmative action for recruitment” provided that it was introduced as part of a carefully considered recruitment and retention strategy.⁴⁵ Inspector Muhammed believed that achieving long-term change would require “some sort of radical approach around the positive action initiatives or positive discrimination”.⁴⁶

40. **Three years ago, our predecessor Committee recommended that each force assess the potential benefits of introducing skill-based selection criteria, such as the Metropolitan Police’s second-language recruitment scheme; and that mentoring schemes to support the career development of BME officers should be rolled out across the country. Some forces, particularly the Metropolitan Police, have invested considerable effort in understanding and tackling these issues. However, we have seen no evidence that our predecessors’ recommendations have been systematically evaluated or introduced more widely, or that less diverse police forces have made any effort to learn from the experience of more innovative ones.**

41. **We warmly welcome the commitment to increasing diversity shown by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, and his desire to achieve a more representative and diverse police force. Positive action measures taken by individual police forces, including the Metropolitan Police, have led to some successes, and we are particularly encouraged to hear that the Met uses positive action to support internal promotion processes at all ranks. We reiterate our predecessors’ recommendation that the importance of cultural intelligence, and abilities such as language skills relevant to the local policing area, should be assessed by each force and recognised in recruitment planning.**

42. **We fully support the Home Secretary’s ambition of a police service which is representative of the communities it serves. We believe that the police service should “look like the people it serves”. Radical action will be required if this is to be achieved. The scale of the challenge for the police service in England and Wales is similar to that faced in 1999 by the police service in Northern Ireland. Even with positive discrimination in the form of the introduction of 50:50 recruitment there, it took 10 years to achieve a police service which was more representative of the community.**

43. **The Home Secretary has argued that it would be too difficult and too lengthy a process to seek a derogation from the EU to allow positive discrimination in BME recruitment to the police service, and that other options should therefore be exhausted first. However, 17 years on from the publication of the Macpherson report, BME representation remains poor and in senior police roles it is at a pitiful level; and many**

44 Northern Ireland Office, [Consultation Paper](#), Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000—Review of Temporary Recruitment Provisions, November 2010

45 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Qs21 and 49

46 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q59

police forces seem to have no better grasp of how to increase diversity than they did decades ago. Most of the other options to increase recruitment and progression of BME police officers have already been tried, with only limited success. It may therefore be necessary for the police service to take further positive action, if the other measures which we propose in this report do not bear fruit sufficiently quickly.

Leadership and accountability

44. Witnesses told us that the key problem was lack of leadership and accountability. Dal Babu said that:

I do not know who the go-to person is in the police service around equality issues. Who is the chief constable who is the lead? Everybody knows Mark Rowley is the lead for counterterrorism. I do not know who the lead is for making things happen in terms of equality, diversity and changing that workforce.⁴⁷

Dal Babu suggested a number of initiatives to improve leadership on diversity including: appointing a diversity workforce lead in each police force and nationally; incorporating questions on achievements in promoting diversity in interviews for all senior officer posts; and adding benchmarks for promoting diversity to the performance measures against which senior police officers are assessed.⁴⁸

45. Janet Hills said that there was no-one holding chief constables to account, and no long term action plan to support progress.⁴⁹ She explained that: “we keep saying that we expect the chief constables to be held accountable but no one does hold them to account. There is no action plan in place for the next five, 10 years that allows for this progression to happen.”⁵⁰

46. The National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) brings together the Chief Constables from all 43 forces. Its structure includes 12 coordination committees, each led by a Chief Constable.⁵¹ The Workforce Coordination Committee is led by Giles York, Chief Constable of Sussex Police. He told us that the Co-ordination Committee’s “current structure does not have a specific lead for ‘Diversity’”, although there is a separate committee on Equality, Diversity and Human Rights which “did have such a role until recently”. He assured us that diversity “is a consistent theme that penetrates and underpins the major work-streams” of the committee and stated that “I believe that we have contributed strongly to the agenda”. However, this NPCC Committee’s Delivery Plan, which Chief Constable York sent to us, only mentions BME representation once, in the context of the College of Policing’s 2018 Progression Programme. Mr York also pointed out that the “NPCC is a forum for employers (Chief Constables) and the College of Policing is the Professional Body in which Alex Marshall [the College’s Chief Executive] is solely accountable to his Board for standards in policing”.⁵²

47 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q15

48 Written evidence submitted by Dal Babu ([PDI0003](#))

49 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q16

50 Oral evidence taken on [12 April 2016](#), Q60

51 See NPCC website, [About the NPCC](#) [accessed 9 May 2016]

52 Letter to the Chair from Chief Constable Giles York, NPCC National Lead on Workforce, [25 April 2016](#) and NPCC National Workforce Coordination Committee delivery plan

47. We accept that there is a division of responsibility between the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), which coordinates national operational policing, and the College of Policing which is the professional body for policing and which leads on developing national approaches to a wide range of issues including human resources. However, the NPCC acknowledges that it is also "a forum for employers". It is therefore very disappointing that Chief Constables, as employers represented collectively in the NPCC, appear to be doing too little to promote BME representation, and diversity more broadly, in their police forces. Each police force should therefore appoint a workforce diversity lead. This person should usually be at Deputy Chief Constable or equivalent rank.

48. We have assessed the College of Policing's role in this report and will be publishing a separate, broader report on the work of the College very shortly. We heard oral evidence from the National Black Police Association that it had not been consulted on the College's BME Progression 2018 programme. It was wrong of the College not to ensure that the NBPA was fully consulted on such an important policy document.

49. There is considerable variation in the achievements and the ambitions of police forces in England and Wales in increasing BME representation, and there is no mechanism for holding the worst performers to account. It is apparent to us that the current structures provide no clear leadership for increasing diversity, and allow this lack of accountability to persist. Increased BME representation in police forces will not be achieved unless these issues are addressed.

50. Police and Crime Commissioners are the statutory mechanism for holding police chiefs to account on diversity and should take a much more active role on BME representation in their forces during their second terms in office. The first PCC from a BME background was elected in May 2016. This lack of diversity amongst PCCs has undermined the message that diversity is a basic requirement in the police service.

51. Urgent and radical action is needed if the Home Secretary's ambition, which we share, of all police forces reflecting the ethnic profile of their communities, is to be realised. There is no visible, "go-to" person who has clear responsibility for equality and diversity within the police service as a whole and across the 43 police forces. We were surprised that, in an oral evidence session on border security, the Director General of Border Force informed us that he was the Home Office's Diversity Champion.⁵³ This choice is an interesting one, given his other onerous duties. We are unclear about what this role entails and the obscurity of its remit does not inspire confidence. Therefore, in addition to our recommendation that each police force appoint a workforce diversity lead, we also recommend that the Home Office appoint a specific diversity lead for the police service (a "Police Diversity Champion"), with the authority to hold all police forces to account for achieving proper community representation throughout the ranks, including at the most senior levels, and in specialist roles, by collecting and publishing data, promulgating best practice, and providing practical advice. This appointment should be made by the end of the 2016-17 parliamentary session in May 2017.

53 Oral evidence taken on [1 December 2015](#), on countering extremism, HC 428, Q566

Conclusions and recommendations

BME representation in police forces

1. In 2013, our predecessor Committee concluded that for too long lip-service had been paid to diversity in the police service, but this was unmatched by action. It also believed that progress since the 1999 Macpherson report on the Metropolitan Police and the Stephen Lawrence case was disappointing; and that it was shameful that not a single Chief Constable was Black or Asian. Three years have passed since the publication of that report, and progress has not been sufficient, but all of those conclusions are even more valid today and the need to address this problem has even greater urgency. Whilst there has been a steady increase in the overall proportion of officers and staff who are of a BME background, progress is painfully slow; there is wide variation between forces; and increased numbers of BME police officers remain overwhelmingly in the most junior ranks. Even allowing for appropriate career progression, the number of BME officers above the rank of Inspector is very disappointing. We find this unacceptable. We believe that it is time for concerted action, prioritised across all forces, policing bodies and Government. (Paragraph 12)
2. We have observed the progress on gender diversity within the police service and we are pleased to note that there is now a higher proportion of female representation in the most senior policing posts. We very much welcome the fact that two of the most influential posts in policing, the heads of the National Crime Agency and the National Police Chiefs' Council, are held by women, as well five of the Chief Constables in the 43 forces in England and Wales being women. (Paragraph 13)
3. The number of BME officers in police forces is increasing to some extent but this is largely limited to junior roles. BME representation at junior levels is only one indicator of progress and is not a full reflection of the diversity of an organisation. The lack of senior BME representation in the police service affects its leadership and culture and could be interpreted as suggesting that the police service has an unconscious bias. People of a BME background wishing to develop their careers within the police service lack role models; encounter barriers when trying to access the training necessary for their career development; and face selection panels which are almost always lacking in diversity (although no evidence was presented to us to suggest that the panels are a barrier in themselves). We acknowledge that this is an issue affecting many other organisations and public services in the UK, and that promotion to the highest ranks starting from what was a low proportion of BME officers takes long-term commitment. However, that is not an excuse for the lack of progress in the police service. (Paragraph 22)
4. The College of Policing, led by its Chief Executive, Chief Constable Alex Marshall, and many individual police forces, have considerable expertise in designing and implementing interventions to support the career development of BME officers, but it is clear from the evidence we received that these interventions are not yet having sufficient impact. The effective implementation of schemes to support the career development of BME officers appears to be subject to the discretion and commitment

of individual forces and Chief Officers and is therefore too inconsistent and poorly monitored to be effective. The College of Policing should provide further, stronger leadership on this. (Paragraph 23)

5. A number of practical steps could be taken now to improve retention and progression of BME police officers, including to the most senior ranks. These include: compulsory training on diversity issues for selection and promotion panel members, including those for specialist posts; increased use of external assessors from a BME background on selection panels; instituting coaching and mentoring for BME officers; and ensuring that units which deal with complaints from officers on personnel matters receive dedicated training on diversity issues. These four steps towards greater diversity should then be added as benchmarks for the performance measures against which every police force is assessed. A BME senior leaders' forum, similar to the Association of Senior Women in Policing, should also be established, to provide support and guidance to BME officers seeking promotion. (Paragraph 24)

Change initiatives

6. Three years ago, our predecessor Committee recommended that each force assess the potential benefits of introducing skill-based selection criteria, such as the Metropolitan Police's second-language recruitment scheme; and that mentoring schemes to support the career development of BME officers should be rolled out across the country. Some forces, particularly the Metropolitan Police, have invested considerable effort in understanding and tackling these issues. However, we have seen no evidence that our predecessors' recommendations have been systematically evaluated or introduced more widely, or that less diverse police forces have made any effort to learn from the experience of more innovative ones. (Paragraph 40)
7. We warmly welcome the commitment to increasing diversity shown by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, and his desire to achieve a more representative and diverse police force. Positive action measures taken by individual police forces, including the Metropolitan Police, have led to some successes, and we are particularly encouraged to hear that the Met uses positive action to support internal promotion processes at all ranks. We reiterate our predecessors' recommendation that the importance of cultural intelligence, and abilities such as language skills relevant to the local policing area, should be assessed by each force and recognised in recruitment planning. (Paragraph 41)
8. We fully support the Home Secretary's ambition of a police service which is representative of the communities it serves. We believe that the police service should "look like the people it serves". Radical action will be required if this is to be achieved. The scale of the challenge for the police service in England and Wales is similar to that faced in 1999 by the police service in Northern Ireland. Even with positive discrimination in the form of the introduction of 50:50 recruitment there, it took 10 years to achieve a police service which was more representative of the community. (Paragraph 42)
9. The Home Secretary has argued that it would be too difficult and too lengthy a process to seek a derogation from the EU to allow positive discrimination in BME recruitment to the police service, and that other options should therefore be

exhausted first. However, 17 years on from the publication of the Macpherson report, BME representation remains poor and in senior police roles it is at a pitiful level; and many police forces seem to have no better grasp of how to increase diversity than they did decades ago. Most of the other options to increase recruitment and progression of BME police officers have already been tried, with only limited success. It may therefore be necessary for the police service to take further positive action, if the other measures which we propose in this report do not bear fruit sufficiently quickly. (Paragraph 43)

10. We accept that there is a division of responsibility between the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), which coordinates national operational policing, and the College of Policing which is the professional body for policing and which leads on developing national approaches to a wide range of issues including human resources. However, the NPCC acknowledges that it is also "a forum for employers". It is therefore very disappointing that Chief Constables, as employers represented collectively in the NPCC, appear to be doing too little to promote BME representation, and diversity more broadly, in their police forces. Each police force should therefore appoint a workforce diversity lead. This person should usually be at Deputy Chief Constable or equivalent rank. (Paragraph 47)
11. We have assessed the College of Policing's role in this report and will be publishing a separate, broader report on the work of the College very shortly. We heard oral evidence from the National Black Police Association that it had not been consulted on the College's BME Progression 2018 programme. It was wrong of the College not to ensure that the NBPA was fully consulted on such an important policy document. (Paragraph 48)
12. There is considerable variation in the achievements and the ambitions of police forces in England and Wales in increasing BME representation, and there is no mechanism for holding the worst performers to account. It is apparent to us that the current structures provide no clear leadership for increasing diversity, and allow this lack of accountability to persist. Increased BME representation in police forces will not be achieved unless these issues are addressed. (Paragraph 49)
13. Police and Crime Commissioners are the statutory mechanism for holding police chiefs to account on diversity and should take a much more active role on BME representation in their forces during their second terms in office. The first PCC from a BME background was elected in May 2016. This lack of diversity amongst PCCs has undermined the message that diversity is a basic requirement in the police service. (Paragraph 50)
14. Urgent and radical action is needed if the Home Secretary's ambition, which we share, of all police forces reflecting the ethnic profile of their communities, is to be realised. There is no visible, "go-to" person who has clear responsibility for equality and diversity within the police service as a whole and across the 43 police forces. We were surprised that, in an oral evidence session on border security, the Director General of Border Force informed us that he was the Home Office's Diversity Champion. This choice is an interesting one, given his other onerous duties. We are unclear about what this role entails and the obscurity of its remit does not inspire confidence. Therefore, in addition to our recommendation that each police force

appoint a workforce diversity lead, we also recommend that the Home Office appoint a specific diversity lead for the police service (a “Police Diversity Champion”), with the authority to hold all police forces to account for achieving proper community representation throughout the ranks, including at the most senior levels, and in specialist roles, by collecting and publishing data, promulgating best practice, and providing practical advice. This appointment should be made by the end of the 2016-17 parliamentary session in May 2017. (Paragraph 51)

Annex: BME percentages in police forces in England and Wales and in their local populations

Police Force	% BME in local population	% BME of police officers (2015)
Avon and Somerset	6.7	2.6
Bedfordshire	22.5	6.1
Cambridgeshire	9.7	2.1
Cheshire	3.1	0.6
City of London	21.4	6.2
Cleveland	5.5	1.7
Cumbria	1.5	1.1
Derbyshire	6.7	3.4
Devon and Cornwall	2.5	1.2
Dorset	4.0	1.3
Durham	2.2	1.7
Essex	6.8	2.2
Gloucestershire	4.6	2.1
Greater Manchester	16.2	5.0
Hampshire	6.7	2.5
Hertfordshire	12.4	4.1
Humberside	3.5	1.1
Kent	6.9	3.0
Lancashire	9.6	3.7
Leicestershire	21.6	7.3
Lincolnshire	2.4	1.6
Merseyside	5.5	3.4
Metropolitan Police	40.2	11.7
Norfolk	3.5	1.8
Northamptonshire	8.5	3.7
Northumbria	5.4	1.7
North Yorkshire	3.4	1.1
Nottinghamshire	11.2	4.4
South Yorkshire	9.4	3.3
Staffordshire	5.9	1.9
Suffolk	4.8	2.4
Surrey	9.6	3.7
Sussex	6.3	2.0
Thames Valley	15.4	5.0
Warwickshire	7.3	4.8
West Mercia	3.8	1.9
West Midlands	29.9	8.6
West Yorkshire	18.2	5.1

Police Force	% BME in local population	% BME of police officers (2015)
Wiltshire	5.5	1.6
Wales		
Dyfed-Powys	2.0	0.7
Gwent	3.9	1.7
North Wales	2.5	0.9
South Wales	6.6	2.0

Source: Home Office, [Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2015](#), Statistical Bulletin 02/15, 16 July 2015 and associated Tables; and data published by The Guardian, [1 January 2016](#), "The racial gap in recruitment for every police force in the UK" (using ONS data).

Formal Minutes

Wednesday 18 May 2016

Members present:

Keith Vaz, in the Chair

Victoria Atkins	Mr Ranil Jayawardena
James Berry	Stuart C McDonald
Mr David Burrowes	Mr David Winnick
Nusrat Ghani	

Draft Report (*Police diversity*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 42 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 43 read as follows:

The Home Secretary has argued that it would be too difficult and too lengthy a process to seek a derogation from the EU to allow positive discrimination in BME recruitment to the police service, and that other options should therefore be exhausted first. We are not convinced that this is necessarily the case. Seventeen years on from the publication of the Macpherson report, BME representation remains poor and in senior police roles it is at a pitiful level; and many police forces seem to have no better grasp of how to increase diversity than they did decades ago. Most of the other options to increase recruitment and progression of BME police officers have already been tried, with only limited success. It may therefore be necessary for the police service to take further positive action, if the other measures which we propose in this report do not bear fruit sufficiently quickly.

Amendment proposed in line 4 to leave out from “first” to “Seventeen” and to insert “However;”.—(*Mr Ranil Jayawardena.*)

Question proposed, That the Amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 5	Noes, 2
Victoria Atkins	Stuart C. McDonald
James Berry	Mr David Winnick
Mr David Burrowes	
Nusrat Ghani	
Mr Ranil Jayawardena	

Amendment agreed to.

Further amendment proposed, in line 4 to leave out from “that” to “Seventeen” and to insert:

“it would be as difficult or lengthy a process as the Home Secretary says it would be to obtain a derogation from the EU to allow positive discrimination in BME recruitment to the police service. We believe it may be necessary to introduce positive discrimination, if progress towards increasing BME representation in the police service is not achieved more rapidly than is currently the case. If so, this will require the process for seeking the EU derogation to be put in train.”—(*Mr David Winnick.*)

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 2

Stuart C. McDonald

Mr David Winnick

Noes, 5

Victoria Atkins

James Berry

Mr David Burrowes

Nusrat Ghani

Mr Ranil Jayawardena

Amendment disagreed to.

Paragraph 43, as amended, agreed to.

Paragraphs 44 to 51 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 24 May at 2.00 pm.]

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 12 April 2016

Question number

Dal Babu OBE, former Chief Superintendent, **Janet Hills**, President, National Black Police Association, and **Inspector Mustafa Mohammed**, President, National Association of Muslim Police

[Q1–72](#)

Chief Constable Dee Collins (temporary), West Yorkshire Police, **Chief Constable Dave Thompson**, West Midlands Police, and **Robin Wilkinson**, Director of People and Change, Metropolitan Police Service

[Q73–156](#)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

PDI numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Chief Constable Giles York QPM, Sussex Police ([PDI0005](#))
- 2 Chief Constable Iain Spittal, Cleveland Police ([PDI0007](#))
- 3 Dame Anne Owers, Chair, Independent Police Complaints Commission ([PDI0006](#))
- 4 Former Chief Superintendent Dal Babu OBE ([PDI0003](#))
- 5 Metropolitan Police ([PDI0002](#))
- 6 National Black Police Association ([PDI0001](#))
- 7 National Black Police Association supplementary ([PDI0004](#))

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2015–16

First Report	Psychoactive substances	HC 361 (HC 755)
Second Report	The work of the Immigration Directorates (Q2 2015)	HC 512 (HC 693)
Third Report	Police investigations and the role of the Crown Prosecution Service	HC 534
Fourth Report	Reform of the Police Funding Formula	HC 476
Fifth Report	Immigration: skill shortages	HC 429 (HC 857)
Sixth Report	The work of the Immigration Directorates (Q3 2015)	HC 772
Seventh Report	Police and Crime Commissioners: here to stay	HC 844
First Special Report	The work of the Immigration Directorates: Calais: Government Response to the Committee's Eighteenth Report of Session 2014–15	HC 380
Second Special Report	Out-of-court Disposals: Government Response to the Committee's Fourteenth Report of Session 2014–15	HC 379
Third Special Report	The work of the Immigration Directorates (Q2 2015): Government Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2015–16	HC 693
Fourth Special Report	Psychoactive substances: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2015–16	HC 755
Fifth Special Report	Immigration: skill shortages: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2015–16	HC 857