



# THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF NORTH YORKSHIRE

Equality and Diversity

Internal audit report 4.23/24

FINAL

17 January 2024

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Why we completed this audit and background

As part of the 2023/24 audit plan we have completed a review of the Force's policies, procedures and processes in relation to equality and diversity including compliance with the procedures and reporting through the governance structures.

Our review has considered the Positive Action Strategy 2022-2025 which outlines the Force's commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion. The strategy is supported by the positive action tracker which details the Force's positive action priorities for 2023 and supports the management of day-to-day activities to ensure progress against the strategic priorities. It also documents clear outcomes and measures success by setting targets. The strategy was approved by the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Gold Board in March 2023.

The aim of the strategy is to work with partners, communities, support networks and staff, and accept nothing less than becoming a fully inclusive organisation. The Force intends to achieve its aim by using a strategy which focuses upon two elements: communities and people. The four priorities are defined as follows:

- Priority 1: Training and education
- Priority 2: Building a representative workforce.
- Priority 3: Understanding and including our communities
- Priority 4: Building an inclusive working environment

The Assistant Chief Constable is the Executive Lead for the Positive Action Team, which is comprised of three Positive Action Co-ordinators and the Chief Inspector who manages the operational day-to-day activities. The Force holds monthly diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) meetings to manage and monitor progress, lessons learnt and embedding improvements across the wider organisation.

## Conclusion

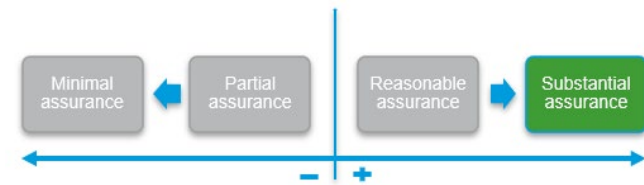
As a result of our review, we have agreed **two low priority** management actions.

We have determined the Force has a robust control environment surrounding equality, diversity and inclusion, with effective management and reporting throughout the governance structure on progress and issues that have been identified. The review confirmed the Force effectively engages with both internal and external stakeholders to support understanding, lessons learnt and improvements across the organisation. The reporting arrangements in place for DEI Silver and Gold Board have significant oversight of the equality, diversity and inclusion activities undertaken across the Force to contribute to the overarching strategy progress. The two low priority actions were agreed in relation to the ratification of strategies, which were in draft at the time of the audit, and the updating of the Recruitment, Selection and Appeals Procedure following the supporting strategy approval.

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### Internal audit opinion:

Taking account of the issues identified, the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire can take **substantial assurance** that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this area are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.



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## Key findings

**Our audit review identified that the following controls are suitably designed, consistently applied, and are operating effectively:**



We reviewed the Positive Action Strategy 2022-2025 which outlines the Force's commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion. We reviewed the Force's website and confirmed the strategy is available to the public. For internal officers and staff, the strategy can be accessed via the intranet. Through review of the DEI Gold Board action log, we confirmed the strategy was approved by DEI Gold Board within the meeting on 9 March 2023.



Through discussions with the Positive Action Chief Inspector, we understood that the responsibility for ensuring diversity, equality and inclusion is upheld falls on everyone individually in the Force and to ensure they are complying with the Equality Act 2010. The Leadership Team are at the forefront of the strategy and are responsible for ensuring this is embodied across the Force and within the culture that they promote. Responsibilities have clearly been outlined within the Positive Action Strategy 2022-2025, for example, Positive Action Champions are defined as a series of people across the entire organisation who have volunteered to be involved and support the Positive Action Team in their Force objectives for all diversity, equality and inclusion.



We obtained the Force DEI delivery plan which outlines the four priorities as set out in the strategy. The DEI delivery plan sets out the strategic aim within each priority and the proposed action they will take, which is monitored against agreed deadlines and milestones for the overarching strategy.



Through discussions with the Chief Inspector, we understood the Force offers an online training programme on the Equality and Diversity Act 2010 for all new starters. We reviewed the analytics dashboard which is circulated weekly by the Performance Team on training progress and to ensure individuals who have not completed the training are chased for completion. We confirmed the Equality and Diversity induction module is currently at 93.49% completion across the entire Force. We also confirmed the Positive Action Team are 100% compliant, as all members have completed the required training.



The Force has also introduced an interactive scenario based training on micro-aggressions, which was initially rolled out in December 2022. 1,685 employees have completed the training to date and there are 577 scheduled in to complete their training between now and December 2023. There are 1,361 employees still awaiting their training to be scheduled, 223 are from the Leadership Team, and 1,138 are the general workforce. The Chief Inspector confirmed this training was agreed to be run until March 2024, but the Positive Action Team is currently in the process of seeking an extension to ensure all staff have completed the training. Previously the training was rolled out to staff specific positions across the Force and in September 2023, this was rolled out to the wider organisation to complete the training. As the scheduling is currently being managed by the Force, we have not raised a management action and note that the Force is still in the process of implementing the training.



The procedures outline that officers and staff are encouraged to raise matters which concern them and the Force will aim to resolve the grievances promptly and fairly and identify any lessons learnt and implement improvements. The procedure is available to officers and staff via the intranet.

We discussed the procedure with the Chief Inspector and confirmed when grievances are made a designated grievance officer is assigned from the People Services Team to ensure the entire process is fair. Additionally all grievance officers are required to follow the procedure to ensure all cases are dealt with in a consistent manner. All complaints are raised and investigated in line with the associated procedure to ensure there is a consistent and fair approach to all concerns raised.



The Recruitment, Selections and Appeals Procedure is in place to ensure a fair and consistent approach is adopted for all vacancies advertised internally and externally. All vacancies must be considered to contribute towards the strategy priorities or the Force minimum staffing requirements. We confirmed all Force vacancies are now advertised with recruitment insight days, these are not mandatory but are accessible for all applicants. A designated day is planned for each recruitment campaign to provide applicants with an insight into working at the Force and understanding what the role they have applied for consists of.

Through discussions with the Chief Inspector, we understood the Force uses promotional campaigns to support recruitment drives, during these campaigns they issue targeted posts on social media, provide business card vacancy opportunities out to the public, and provide leaflets at recruitment events. Additionally, the Positive Action Team supports the recruitment campaigns by attending local schools, college and universities to promote current vacancies.



For a sample of 10 new recruits, we confirmed the following:

- The vacancy was advertised in all cases on the Force website for external applicants and on the intranet for internal applications, with clear closing dates recorded;
- Legislative requirements for compliance with the Equality Act 2010 had been clearly documented in all 10 application forms;
- In all 10 cases, the applicants had recorded protected characteristics within their application, and there is an option to select 'prefer not to say';
- One new starter had requested reasonable adjustments be made due to a declared disability; however, after verbally contacting the applicant (notes documented on file), the applicant advised that they did not need adjustments for the interview. In a second case, the

candidate selected 'prefer not to say' despite requesting reasonable adjustments, the recruiter followed up with a call (notes documented on file) to confirm if there were any reasonable adjustments required and they declined. No further examples of reasonable adjustment requests were noted within the remaining samples; and

- In all 10 cases, the applicants recorded how they had heard of the vacancies and a number of methods were referenced, such as, via the website, via social media, and through school and university campaigns.



From discussions with the Chief Inspector we understood the reporting process as; DEI Bronze, to DEI Silver to DEI Gold Board. The DEI Bronze Group is based on the Positive Action Team activities, which are reported to the DEI Silver Group which considers how they have contributed towards the strategy. The DEI Silver Group also have their own activities to complete as part of the standing agenda which are reported to the DEI Gold Board where progress against the strategy priorities are outlined and updated within the delivery plan and the action and decision log.



We reviewed the action log and identified the DEI Gold Board regularly review a progress against actions documented. The DEI Gold Board has defined what it considers 'good' to look like in relation to equality and diversity, and states this as 'the Force promotes equality, diversity and inclusion. It makes new recruits feel welcome and included, and helps supervisors to foster an ethical and inclusive working environment'.



The HMICFRS raised a number of recommendations as a result of the PEEL (Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) review. Three areas for improvement were raised under the 'building, supporting and protecting the workforce' category, which was marked as requires improvement overall. The areas for improvement were not specifically raised in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, although we have been able to evidence that these are being monitored by the Force. In relation to equality and diversity, the HMICFRS outlined that the Force has restarted its work to make its workforce more representative of the communities it serves.

At the time of the review, the HMICFRS noted that the Force had previously had a dedicated team working to increase the diversity of its workforce, but due to changes within the People Team, this work had been paused for over 18 months. The report noted that the Chief Constable had recognised the gap and has overseen a strategic approach, developed an effective operational plan and provided resources to lead this work.

We have noted during this review that the Force has dedicated resources to progress with its equality and diversity strategic objectives.

## 2. DETAILED FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

This report has been prepared by exception. Therefore, we have included in this section, only those areas of weakness in control or examples of lapses in control identified from our testing and not the outcome of all internal audit testing undertaken.

Area: Equality and Diversity		
<b>Control</b>	<b>Partially missing control</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
	The Leadership Strategy is in draft to support the implementation of equality, diversity and inclusion within recruitment and training.	<b>Design</b> x
	The Recruitment and Retention Strategy is in draft, which will ensure equality and diversity is adopted within recruitment processes.	<b>Compliance</b> -
<b>Findings / Implications</b>	<p>The Force does not currently operate any specific policies in relation to recruitment and training based on equality and diversity. It has however developed a suite of strategies and procedural documents.</p> <p>The Force has developed a Leadership Strategy, which is currently in draft and includes strengthening an inclusive and valued workforce as a key objective. The following statement is included within the Leadership Strategy under this objective: 'We will seek to improve our approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion by developing the way our leaders think and establishing clear pathways for underrepresented groups. The commitment to diversity and inclusion should start from the top. Leaders should be vocal about their commitment and integrate diversity and inclusion goals into the organisation's strategy and culture.'</p> <p>The Leadership Strategy also focuses on activities that are directly aligned to the North Yorkshire Police DEI Strategic Plan, and states that leadership programme will enhance inclusive leadership behaviours within the organisation. As part of this, leaders will examine relevant legislation, policies, and procedures, such as: the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, and the Lammy Review: Final Report 2017, as examples. The Force outlines within the Leadership Strategy that it will prepare colleagues to take responsibility and lead the evolution of an inclusive workforce by advancing equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination, valuing difference, and embedding organisational and procedural justice in everything the Force does.</p> <p>In addition, the Force has also developed a Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2023 - 2025, which is also in draft format. It outlines that building a representative workforce is one of the key priorities of the DEI strategy and delivery plan, and the strategy states that taking positive action to recruit and retain the best possible candidates from a far wider range of backgrounds is a key element of achieving this priority. The current Force priorities for operational roles are to increase representation of women and those individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds. For staff roles, the priority is to increase representation of those individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds. The Positive Action Strategy and delivery plan is therefore closely aligned with this strategy. The strategy further outlines some challenges in respect of achieving its priorities, such as, recruitment timeframes, national shortages, diverse talent, the labour market, targeted attraction, and retention. It outlines a plan as to how to overcome such challenges, such as, by introducing diverse and flexible entry routes to North Yorkshire Police.</p> <p>In discussions with the Chief Inspector, we understood that all strategies are now supported by a delivery plan across the Force to manage and monitor progress against the priorities. We obtained the Leadership Strategy delivery plan which outlines the current activities they are undertaking, we noted they are currently undergoing equality impact assessments across the Force to requires</p>	

## Area: Equality and Diversity

breaches of diversity, equality, and inclusion. The Chief inspector noted, for the past 12 months the Force has been actively working to remove outdated policies and replace them with current strategies.

Both the Leadership Strategy and the Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2023 - 2025 are currently in draft and expected to be approved by November 2023.

Additionally, the Force operates a Recruitment, Selection and Appeals Procedure, which was due to be reviewed in December 2022. Force procedures do not require approval as they are for operational use only. From further discussions with the Chief Inspector, we noted this was delayed with the introduction of the new Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2023 - 2025 and the procedure is expected to be updated once the strategy has been agreed and published.

The Recruitment, Selection and Appeals Procedure outlines under section 1.6 that it is the responsibility of all members of North Yorkshire Police involved at any stage of the recruitment and selection process, to ensure that all actions in the process comply with Equality Act 2010, Data Protection, Human Rights and Freedom of Information Act legislation and takes into account the requirements of the North Yorkshire Police Equality and Diversity Policy. To note, the EDI policy has been superseded by the Positive Action - Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025.

We note that the strategies are currently in draft, awaiting approval; however, where these strategies are not approved and in place, there is a risk that the Force may not achieve its objectives if not clearly communicated. In addition, where procedural documentation is outdated, there is a risk that staff or officers may follow incorrect procedures.

<b>Management Action 1</b>	The Force will ensure the Leadership Strategy and the Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2023 - 2025 are appropriately authorised, published on the intranet and made available to officers and staff.	<b>Responsible Owner:</b> Talent and Development Manager	<b>Date:</b> 31 January 2024	<b>Priority:</b> Low
<b>Management Action 2</b>	Once the Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2023 - 2025 has been approved and published, the Force will review and update the Recruitment, Selection and Appeals Procedure in line with the new requirements set out in the strategy.	<b>Responsible Owner:</b> Talent and Development Manager	<b>Date:</b> 31 January 2024	<b>Priority:</b> Low

## APPENDIX A: CATEGORISATION OF FINDINGS

### Categorisation of internal audit findings

Priority	Definition
Low	There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency and quality.
Medium	Timely management attention is necessary. This is an internal control risk management issue that could lead to: Financial losses which could affect the effective function of a department, loss of controls or process being audited or possible reputational damage, negative publicity in local or regional media.
High	Immediate management attention is necessary. This is a serious internal control or risk management issue that may lead to: Substantial losses, violation of corporate strategies, policies or values, reputational damage, negative publicity in national or international media or adverse regulatory impact, such as loss of operating licences or material fines.

The following table highlights the number and categories of management actions made as a result of this audit.

Area	Control design not effective*	Non Compliance with controls*	Agreed actions		
			Low	Medium	High
Equality and Diversity	1 (11)	0 (11)	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

\* Shows the number of controls not adequately designed or not complied with. The number in brackets represents the total number of controls reviewed in this

\*\* More than one action raised against one control.



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