



**POLICE RACE ACTION PLAN:
GLOUCESTERSHIRE CONSTABULARY
PROGRESS UPDATE (MAY 2024)**



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Executive Summary

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) launched the first iteration of the 'Police Race Action Plan: Improving policing for Black people' in May 2022 with the main aim of giving:

'...officers the tools they need to build trust and confidence with Black communities, so that they are better equipped to challenge racism and to identify and address any ingrained cultural biases that may be fuelling racial disparities across policing.'

This plan was implemented against a context of historical and recent incidents of racism, ongoing disproportionality within the criminal justice system, low levels of trust and confidence in policing from the black community towards the police and a national debate by Chief Constables about institutional racism. Whilst some have disputed the equity and proportionality of endorsing a plan that solely focuses on one group of society, the evidence for which can be illustrated by variety of sources from statistics to lived experiences, there is an underlying gap within policing that needs to be addressed in order to reduce the disproportionately negative impact that the service has on the black community.

That is not to say that other under-represented groups do not experience discrimination. Baroness Casey's Review into the 'standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service' (MPS) clearly exemplifies that the force's institutional problems cut across various protected characteristics. These issues are not only applicable to the Met, but rather are indicative of a wider culture within policing. This sentiment has been acknowledged by Chief Constable Rod Hansen (Chief) on numerous occasions. Most recently, at two extraordinary meetings held on Friday 21 April 2023 and Monday 24 April 2023 with the Support Association Networks (SANs) and Community Legitimacy Panel (CLP) respectively. The Chief and DCC recognised that instances of racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination on the grounds of ability and neurodiversity have, and do occur in the Constabulary and reaffirmed our organisational commitment to being anti-discriminatory.

Fundamentally, the Race Action Plan is supposed to act as a catalyst and building block, which, if successfully embedded, can be used as the framework for addressing other forms of inappropriate and discriminatory behaviour.

Gloucestershire Constabulary has committed to supporting and delivering the Police Race Action Plan (PRAP), which aligns to the Constabulary's commitment to being an anti-discriminatory organisation.

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In addition to delivering the National plan, the Constabulary has also committed to delivering 8 key priorities which have been drafted by Gloucestershire's Community Legitimacy Panel. It is arguable that the force could be considered an 'ice breaker' police force in this respect as we are 'focusing on priority actions to develop more effective and legitimacy policing activities' in response to concerns that have been raised directly from members of our ethnically diverse community.

The Constabulary's journey to becoming a more inclusive, representative and anti-discriminatory organisation began prior to the Race Action Plan when the third organisational Base Camp, Better Together, was established. Better Together is the Constabulary's approach to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DE&I). The phrase 'Better Together' was chosen as it recognises that effective, legitimate policing is enhanced through working closely with all of our communities, staff and volunteers seeking to understand, value and support difference. Our approach is underpinned by national advice and guidance such as the NPCC Vision 2025, relevant legislation such as the Public Sector Equality Duty (relating to the Equality Act 2010) and our understanding of local communities. Our DE&I approach encompasses three elements, these are:

1. Better Together – With our communities
2. Better Together – With our workforce
3. Better together – Within our organisation (acceleration of positive action)

Furthermore, Chief Constable Rod Hansen affirmed the Constabulary's commitment to becoming an anti-discriminatory organisation and our commitment to delivering the Race Action Plan in a statement published in May 2022.

The objectives of the Race Action Plan were initially incorporated into the existing Better Together Delivery plan in 2022, which had both benefits and limitations. A benefit of this delivery method is that it avoids duplication as some of the actions stemming from PRAP have already been initiated by the Better Together Team, such as the promotion of the force's local Black Police Association to black officers and staff, and the creation of a community advisory group. On the other hand, Better Together covers all protected characteristics and under-represented groups so if the Constabulary relies too heavily on the initial delivery plan then the organisation could potentially miss the mark in terms of achieving the targeted ask of improving policing for black people. However, as of May 2023, objectives specifically relating to PRAP have now been clearly delineated from Better Together objectives. Recommendations from the Race Action Plan are being progressed through the PRAP Silver meetings.

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Governance

The Governance of the Race Action Plan can be viewed through a national and local lens. Nationally, the progress of police forces on the Race Action Plan will be reviewed by the NPCC for which Chief Constable Gavin Stephen Stephens is the Senior Responsible Officer. The Independent Scrutiny Oversight Board, Chaired by Abimbola Johnson, also provides external advice and scrutiny on the Plan.

Locally, the Senior Responsible Officer for PRAP at Gloucestershire Constabulary is Assistant Chief Constable Donna Lawton. The tactical lead is Chief Superintendent Jane Probert.

PRAP Silver meetings take place bi-monthly and report directly into the Legitimacy Board. As part of the process of holding the Constabulary to account, updates on the Constabulary's progress are provided to the Community Legitimacy Panel.

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Gloucestershire Constabulary's position on Institutional Racism

In May 2022, Chief Constable Hansen wrote a paper seeking to address two questions. One of them was 'is Gloucestershire Constabulary currently institutionally racist (IR)?'

The original definition of 'institutional racism' was written by Sir William MacPherson in 1999. The MacPherson report was written after the racially motivated murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993.

Institutional racism is defined as:

"The collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."

The Chief's report concluded that:

"We recruit from society and within society there is racism. Despite our best efforts to prevent it from penetrating our organisation, on occasion we fail in this regard.

My primary emerging conclusion therefore is that: Denial of the definition is a denial of community experiences and indeed of many colleagues within our organisation. We should be courageous and understand what such actions may mean to the community.

I am taken with the point made by Abimbola that failing to address this vital issue now is likely to put my colleagues who operate within our communities in unnecessary danger if they are operating in a society where we are not legitimate.

The MacPherson definition has been carefully considered and is indeed tailored for policing. Regardless of the actions of others in society and in other sectors, the moment we cross the threshold of becoming paid professionals in policing we should strive to set the highest standards of all given the uniqueness of our role in society and the coercive powers we have at our disposal.

Unless and until we can adequately explain and justify the inequality that occurs in certain policing activities such as stop and search and the use of force, coupled with the inequality experienced by our colleagues from visibility ethnic minority communities, we meet Lord MacPherson's definition of Institutional Racism.

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By accepting that we remain IR, by acknowledging the progress made to date and the enormous determination by so many amongst us to become authentically anti-racist, we will benefit from the support and engagement from minority ethnic communities who are desperate to help us succeed.

I remain committed to playing my part in creating not only an anti-racist organisation, but an anti-discriminatory one.”

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Workstream 1: Internal culture and inclusivity (Represented)

A police service that is representative of Black people and supports its Black officers, staff and volunteers.

- The Better Together Team provide application skills workshops and positive action support to external applications from under-represented groups applying for roles within the Constabulary. They also support internal candidates going for promotion.
- Introduction of targeted personal development programmes such as Innovate and Breaking Barriers.
- Our Professional Standards Department (PSD) seeks the views of Better Together, Gloucestershire's Ethnic Minority Association (GEMA) and the Community Complaints Assessment Group, where appropriate, on cases and vetting reviews.

Workstream 2: Not over-policed, use of powers

A police service that is fair, respectful and equitable in its actions towards Black people.

- Work is underway to develop a vehicle stop policy and a way of recording all vehicle stops. A pilot is currently being run within Specialist Operations.
- Refreshed section 60 and stop and search training, which incorporates inputs on unconscious bias and disproportionality, has been rolled out to all officers.
- Neighbourhood Policing Health Checks incorporate reviews of disproportionality relating to stop and search and use of force across the three Local Policing Areas
- Stop and Search form has been updated to incorporate the question “do you feel that you have been treated with dignity and respect?”
- Embedded enhanced scrutiny of Taser usage as part of reviews.
- Amended our Body Worn Video (BWV) Policy to reflect the position that the expectation is that officers and PCSOs should have their BWV switched on when attending incidents. In instances where BWV is not used, officers and PCSOs should be prepared to justify why it was not used.

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Workstream 3: Community engagement and relations (Involved)

A police service that routinely involves Black people in its governance.

- Every black officer and member of staff has access to GEMA.
- Continuous engagement and collaboration with the Community Legitimacy Panel to host events such as the Better Together Sports Day and Community Engagement Forum.
- We are supporting the CLP Lone Female Working Group, which was formed to respond to the concerns of ethnically diverse females within our community who have voiced their lived experiences of being stopped without reasonable grounds by police officers.
- Establishing networks with local community groups.
- Race Action Plan inputs have been delivered to all Neighbourhood Policing Teams to raise awareness of the plan.

Workstream 4: Not under-protected against victimisation

A police service that protects Black people from crime, and seeks justice for Black victims.

- Development of clear data sets to monitor hate crime incidents across the county.
- Updated 'Officer and Staff 7 Point Pledge' which created parity between physical assaults, and hate crimes (whether physical or not), recognising the psychological impact of racially aggravated abuse upon officers/staff.
- A review of the Constabulary's response to missing people has been undertaken and will incorporate recommendations from incidents involving members of the black community.

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Community Legitimacy Panel (CLP) Priorities

Objective 1: Treat Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people (members of ethnically diverse communities) with respect and dignity, as set out in relevant PACE Codes and the College of Policing's Code of Ethics.

Objective 2: Bring to an end the disproportionate use of force towards members of ethnically diverse communities.

Objective 3: Bring to an end the disproportionate use of stop and search towards members of ethnically diverse communities.

Objective 4: Demonstrate a zero tolerance to racism through all relevant policies, operational planning, delivery and review, disciplinary processes and internal promotion and progression.

Objective 5: Implement a comprehensive training programme covering the history of racism in Britain, racism in policing, the trauma experienced by Black communities and possible solutions, including a model of community policing with empathy. Such training must include the informed input of black people and enable trainees/participants to engage with current lived experiences of unsatisfactory policing and its consequences.

Objective 6:

(a) Ensure the effective, efficient and appropriate use by PSD of Police Regulations (applicable to police officers only), policies and procedures for police officers and staff. When appropriate PSD should provide feedback with a view to improving policy, procedures and Police Regulations.

(b) Ensure that Gloucestershire Constabulary's Vetting Department complies with national Authorised Professional Practice for Vetting and the Code of Practice, ensuring individuals with a history of unacceptable conduct do not join the Gloucestershire Constabulary.

Objective 7: Development of clear data sets which monitor the internal progression of officers and support staff from ethnically diverse communities and also the extent to which disciplinary processes are used against them relative to their counterparts from other backgrounds.

Objective 8: Better service to victims of crime from ethnically diverse communities including; empathetic and timely communication about the progress of investigations/cases, accessible language which does not, for example, contain much organisational jargon.

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Allyship

As part of the actions taken to promote and achieve equality, diversity and inclusion, Gloucestershire Constabulary adopted the Allyship model, created by Yvonne Coghill OBE, in 2020.



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Black History Month, Oct 2021



NBPA Conference, Oct 2022



NBPA Conference, Oct 2022



Community Sports Day, July 2022



Community Sports Day, July 2022

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