

Public Accounts Committee

Oral evidence: Police Uplift Programme, HC 1215

Monday 25 April 2022

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Members present: Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown; Shaun Bailey; Dan Carden; Mr Louie French; Kate Green; Antony Higginbotham; Craig Mackinlay; James Wild.

In the absence of the Chair, Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown took the Chair

Home Affairs Committee Member present: Dame Diana Johnson (Chair).

Gareth Davies, Comptroller & Auditor General, and Marius Gallaher, Alternate Treasury Officer of Accounts, were in attendance.

Questions 1 - 101

Witnesses

I: Matthew Rycroft, Permanent Secretary, Home Office; Janette McCormick, Director, Police Uplift Programme, National Police Chiefs' Council; Rachel Watson, Policing Director and SRO for the Police Uplift Programme, Home Office.



Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General
The Police Uplift Programme (HC 1147)

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Matthew Rycroft, Janette McCormick and Rachel Watson

Chair: Welcome to the Public Accounts Committee today, Monday 25 April 2022. Today, we will be looking at the Police Uplift Programme, which is the Government's plan to recruit 20,000 additional police officers for England and Wales by March 2023. The National Audit Office has found that the Government are currently on track to reach this target, and we will see whether they are. However, while having extra police officers is welcome, it does bring some new challenges, as we will examine.

Today we will be questioning officials from the Home Office and the National Police Chiefs' Council about how they are going to make sure that these officers are supported and that the rest of the criminal justice system can cope. We are grateful to our witnesses for coming this afternoon. We have Matthew Rycroft, the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office. Welcome, Mr Rycroft. We have Janet McCormick, director of the police uplift programme and also of the National Police Chiefs' Council. Welcome to you, Ms McCormick. Finally but by no means least, we have Rachel Watson, policing director and SRO for the police uplift programme at the Home Office.

I would also like to pay a particular welcome to the Chair of the Home Affairs Committee, Diana Johnson, for being a guest member and no doubt bringing a lot of expertise from her Committee this afternoon. Welcome, Diana. Thank you for coming. With that, I am going to turn straight to you to raise the issue of the ministerial direction on Rwanda.

Q1 **Dame Diana Johnson:** Good afternoon, Mr Rycroft. I want to come to the exchange of letters around the ministerial direction in a moment, but I understand this is only the second time in 30 years that a ministerial direction has been issued in the Home Office. Is that correct?

Matthew Rycroft: That is my understanding as well, yes.

Q2 **Dame Diana Johnson:** The date of the letters is interesting, because they are both dated 13 April this year. I understand that the policy has been in preparation for some time. The announcement was around 13 April. I just wondered why it was that the exchange happened on that day. Why did it happen so late in the preparation? My understanding is that there would normally be an exchange well in advance of any announcement.

Matthew Rycroft: I do not think that is the case. The preparation of the letters, in particular the accounting officer assessment on which my letter to the Home Secretary was based, was a very long time in the making, certainly weeks or even months, tracking the progress of the negotiations



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of the Home Office team with our colleagues in Rwanda over several months. From my perspective, what mattered was, first of all, that the request for the direction came before any announcement, which it did, and also that we waited to ensure we had as much information as possible.

These are moving targets. In one sense, the assessment I made on 13 April is a snapshot in time. I will keep the assessment under constant review, as you would expect for a policy as important as that one. If circumstances change, I will make another assessment.

Q3 Dame Diana Johnson: Were you expecting the announcement to be made around that date in April?

Matthew Rycroft: Absolutely, yes.

Q4 Dame Diana Johnson: That was always the plan.

Matthew Rycroft: That was certainly the plan for some weeks, yes.

Q5 Dame Diana Johnson: Can I just ask you particularly about one of the sentences in your letter? You say, "The negotiated agreement will enable the processing of asylum claims which are inadmissible under our current asylum system in Rwanda". Could you just explain to me what that means?

Matthew Rycroft: Yes. To add to my previous answer, one of the things I was waiting for before finalising my letter, and indeed the assessment on which it was based, was the conclusion of the negotiations with our partners in Rwanda. That was only a small number of days before 13 April.

In terms of the content of the agreement, as that sentence makes clear, the Government have a policy that distinguishes between admissible and inadmissible asylum seekers. Admissible asylum seekers apply for asylum in the UK and, if granted asylum, they receive it in the UK. If not, it is the UK's responsibility to return them to their home country or another country through which they have travelled. In the case of the agreement with Rwanda, that responsibility for those who are deemed inadmissible into the UK asylum system will have their claims processed in Rwanda by the Rwandan authorities under Rwandan law. If they are granted asylum, that will be asylum in Rwanda. If they are not, that will be a matter for the Rwandan authorities to work with each individual to return.

Q6 Dame Diana Johnson: In the current or the last year, how many claims have been deemed inadmissible? I am trying to get to how many asylum seekers you think we would be sending to Rwanda.

Matthew Rycroft: We will have to see. Of course, that is one of the elements of uncertainty.

Q7 Dame Diana Johnson: You must have figures for the past year on how many inadmissible asylum claims have been made.

Matthew Rycroft: Yes, we do have them. I have seen them recently. I just do not have them in front of me at the moment or at the forefront of my mind. I am very happy to write to you with those.



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Q8 Dame Diana Johnson: I have some figures from Enver Solomon, who is the head of the Refugee Council. He says there are about 9,000 claims that could be deemed to be inadmissible, but the Home Office only served papers on 172 of those to say that they were inadmissible claims. That is 172 who could possibly go to Rwanda. Are those figures you would recognise?

Matthew Rycroft: The agreement with Rwanda has only just been concluded. We have not started operationalising it.

Q9 Dame Diana Johnson: Looking at the history, looking at evidence from the figures we already have for the past year, do you recognise those figures?

Matthew Rycroft: I am happy to write to you with my understanding of the figures. Of course, the purpose of the policy, from the Government's perspective, is to ensure that people are deterred from making a dangerous—

Q10 Dame Diana Johnson: Of course, there is no evidence of that. That is why you wanted a ministerial direction, is it not? There is no evidence.

Matthew Rycroft: There is not sufficient evidence to say that it is value for money. That is why I sought the direction, as you know.

Q11 Dame Diana Johnson: I just want to ask one final question. £120 million is going to be paid to the Rwanda Government up front. If there are only around 172 individuals, looking at the evidence the Refugee Council has come up with, that would be about £69,000 per individual. Is that a figure you recognise in terms of processing these people?

Matthew Rycroft: £120 million is a contribution to Rwanda's development, as the Prime Minister and Home Secretary have set out. The cost per person will be broadly comparable with the cost in the UK.

Q12 Chair: To be clear on your direction, Mr Rycroft, it was not to do with feasibility; it was not to do with whether the scheme would work. It was purely on whether there was value for money on one particular aspect, which was whether it would work as a deterrent. Am I correct?

Matthew Rycroft: As this Committee knows better than anyone in the country, there are four accounting officer tests. I assessed that one of them was not met, which was the value for money test. That was to do with the totality of the value for money judgment. How much will it cost? How much will it save? How does that net out?

As my letter made clear, there is a huge amount of uncertainty about that. It is inevitable that there is uncertainty. It is an untried policy; it is an innovative approach, which has not been tried in these circumstances anywhere around the world. It is a perfectly reasonable thing to do, but it did not seem to me that I could say that there was the evidence to be sure that there would be value for money.



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On the other three tests, there are risks in relation to all of those tests—that includes feasibility, the one you mentioned, but also regularity and propriety—but we have plans in place to mitigate those risks, so I was prepared to judge that the policy meets those three tests.

Q13 Chair: When will we really know whether this policy is really working, both in terms of value for money and in terms of the risk around feasibility and everything else?

Matthew Rycroft: That is a very good question. As I mentioned to Dame Diana, this is clearly a policy that I and we will keep under very close review, working with our partners in Rwanda. I will be returning to that question very regularly. I certainly would not expect there to be sufficient evidence one way or the other for many months.

Chair: I am sure you will keep this Committee updated.

Matthew Rycroft: Yes, absolutely.

Q14 Kate Green: I just wanted to follow up on Dame Diana's point about the £120 million, which, Mr Rycroft, you said was funding for Rwanda's development. Will that money be earmarked, then, against the Home Office's allocation of ODA funding, or is it new and separate funding from the Treasury?

Matthew Rycroft: It is new and separate funding and it does not count as overseas development assistance.

Q15 Kate Green: Therefore, will the future revenue expenditure in relation to people who may be sent to Rwanda for decisions on their claims be new funding from the Treasury too?

Matthew Rycroft: Yes. The Treasury has allocated sufficient funds to the Home Office for it.

Q16 Antony Higginbotham: Mr Rycroft, I want to talk about Rwanda but from a slightly different perspective. You will have seen, as I and my constituents did, the media reports last week about Home Office civil servants commenting anonymously, on online platforms within the Department, about their opposition to this policy. Is there a culture in the Home Office of officials briefing against the Home Secretary or working against Government policy?

Matthew Rycroft: No, there is not. There is, though, a culture of healthy debate. As you know, these are pretty controversial policies. The whole issue of migration is a divisive one in our society. It would be extraordinary if any Government could come up with any new policy that had the total support of any group of 38,000 in the country, including the 38,000 who work with the Home Office.

It is really important to me that we have channels for debate. It is particularly important, from my perspective, that the very small number of people who were involved in the policy before the announcement gave it



the maximum challenge. I am extremely glad that we did, and I would be happy to talk about that, if that would be helpful. Of course, after a Government Minister makes a decision, it is then the Civil Service's job to implement that policy. That was one of the main messages that I was passing on to my colleagues in the Home Office on the staff call that you mentioned.

Q17 **Antony Higginbotham:** That is really important, and that was my follow-up point. Debate and challenge is right and appropriate, but some of the comments, certainly those that were reported in the press, indicated a desire on the part of some officials to work against the policy or to refuse to work on it. Could you just reassure the Committee, and certainly my constituents, that Home Office officials are working to implement the policy appropriately?

Matthew Rycroft: Absolutely, yes. We have maximum challenge before a decision and maximum support after a decision.

Chair: That was neatly summed up. Thank you very much indeed. Let us move on now to the main session.

Q18 **Antony Higginbotham:** I want to first talk about training and the programme overall. I will come to you first, Mr Rycroft, but Ms Watson might want to come in as well. This programme has clearly been a big success. I looked at our figures for Lancashire Constabulary. We are on track to be approximately 500 officers up on the baseline number. We are about 300 up at the minute. Why has this programme been so successful? Why has it stayed on track? What lessons can we carry forward to other programmes?

Matthew Rycroft: As we embark on this main topic, I just want to say, by way of introduction, a huge thank you to the National Audit Office for its assessment of this programme. It was really heartening to read that the Department has managed the programme well from the NAO's perspective, and I pay tribute to the colleagues in the Department, to the NPCC and all the police chiefs around the country, and to the College of Policing for that success.

There are a number of things that we need to capture from this programme and pass on to others. Not every Home Office programme is as green, on track and on budget as this one. In some respects, this is an easier programme to achieve than some of the others. Especially over the last year or two, it has been quite a benign environment to recruit people. Policing is clearly a fabulous career. Lots and lots of people want to apply for it.

The way those three partners—the Home Office, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the College of Policing—have worked together is probably the first lesson we need to learn and make sure every other programme is applying. The second lesson is stability of team, and the third lesson is clarity of mission. The programme has quite a narrow scope. In fact, you



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might challenge us that maybe it should have had a broader scope. It does have a narrow scope, which means it is more achievable than some other programmes.

For this programme, we are focusing on recruiting a net 20,000 additional police officers over three years. As you say, we are on track. We have recruited 11,000 by the end of December, and there are new quarterly figures coming out later this week.

Q19 Antony Higginbotham: I appreciate that you cannot comment on what the new figures might show, but you would expect the successes of the programme to continue.

Matthew Rycroft: I would expect the successes of the programme to continue. I should warn the Committee that this third year that we have just started will be tougher than the first two, for a number of reasons. First of all, we are seeking to recruit 8,000 this year rather than 6,000, as in the last two years. Secondly, the labour market has changed. There are certainly fewer vacancies than there were. Thirdly, we should be honest that the whole debate about public trust and confidence in policing has probably put us in a more difficult position than before.

This is, as we keep on saying, a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the whole of policing across the country to refresh its workforce, to bring in people who are more diverse but as committed and as enthusiastic.

Q20 Chair: To interrupt Mr Higginbotham for a second, the figures for this year are due out on Wednesday. Can you give us any indication of whether they are going to show that you have succeeded or not?

Matthew Rycroft: I cannot, other than to say that—

Q21 Chair: I am not asking for the exact figures. I just want to know whether you are on track or not.

Matthew Rycroft: This programme continues to be on track.

Q22 Antony Higginbotham: One of the things the NAO report pulls out quite well is that the benefits of the police uplift will not be seen immediately. In there, it says it is year three that you really start to see the benefits. Have you explored whether there is a way—Ms McCormick, you might want to come in here—to bring forward some of those benefits?

Matthew Rycroft: Yes, I will happily hand over to Janette and indeed to Rachel in a moment, but our modelling is based on the assumption that a new recruit is, on average, about 50% effective in their first year, 90% in their second year and 100% only in their third year. It does take a good three years to get any individual up and individual. Of course, there are some benefits that accrue through that first 50% and so on in the first year.

Janette McCormick: The investment was not just in police officers. Clearly, they are already starting to become operational. We are looking at



individual units within individual forces being established. Part of the investment was also an investment in police staff. Those staff are there not just to provide the infrastructure to grow the officers; we have seen investment in things like call handling and civilian investigators. Some of those tangible benefits are starting to emerge from the staff side as well as the officer side, as those officers are trained and become more effective.

Q23 **Antony Higginbotham:** Did the recruitment of those staff start broadly at the same time? Is that following a similar path?

Janette McCormick: Yes, absolutely. The funding model looks at investment in staff and infrastructure as well as officers. Broadly, we were expecting around one member of staff for every three officers. That is where we are. Since October, we have seen a growth of 5,500 in the number of staff across forces. We particularly track roles such as call handlers and civilian investigators, but we have also seen growth in things like vetting departments and infrastructure roles like HR and L&D, which we know will be needed as we go forward with the increase in officers.

Q24 **Antony Higginbotham:** That is really helpful. I want to touch again on the degree part of needing to be a police officer. That strikes me as one of the things you could change to speed this up or get the benefits in an accelerated way. Do you still think a degree is required to be a police officer? I ask because, clearly, the country has been on a journey over recent years as well. We are looking more at expanding further education and recognising the values of that versus just saying that everyone needs to go down the degree route.

Rachel Watson: If I might take this, Mr Higginbotham, an individual does not have to have a degree to join the police. The entry requirements for the PCDA, the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship scheme, and what we call IPLDP, which is the old form of recruitment, are in fact the same. The difference with the current training is that it gives the officer the chance to accredit what they learn to degree standard, and therefore it recognises the abilities and skills that a fully formed and functioning police officer has in the modern world.

We are certainly not seeing that putting recruits off. We are seeing some really healthy applicant pipelines through all the different routes available. Many forces are using just the new routes. We are in a transitional phase, so some are using both. We are seeing some really good-quality levels of applicants coming through all of them at the moment.

Q25 **Antony Higginbotham:** I should have been clearer. I accept that you do not need a degree to start, but you end up with a degree. I spoke to the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner before this session to get his take on things. He was quite keen to do an Armed Forces fast-track entry into Lancashire police, recognising the skills there. Speaking to some of the Armed Forces careers advisers, the feedback from people in the Armed Forces was sometimes they do not want a degree. They are not academic; they are not looking for that. They might prefer to be offered something



slightly different, like an advanced diploma. Is recognising that different people want different things something you are willing to look at in the longer term?

Rachel Watson: It is the College of Policing that sets the requirements, rather than the Home Office. We defer to the college, as the professional body for policing, to recommend what the requirements are. At the moment, many forces are offering all the entry routes.

It is important for us to be really clear, and for the programme to be clear, in our messaging. It is not about spending a lot of time in the classroom. That is certainly part of the degree apprenticeship, but a lot of it is on-the-job training and all of the classroom sessions are very relevant. In the same way, the existing IPLDP route also had classroom elements. This is very much about on-the-job relevant learning. It is not writing theoretical essays. It is a challenge for the programme, as you rightly say, to make sure we are communicating that as well as we can, so that we are not inadvertently putting people off. I do not know, Janette, whether you would like to come in.

Janette McCormick: I can talk specifically around the military pathways, but it also relates to other professions. We are very keen to bring a broad range of skills in. One of the things the college does is recognise prior learning. It looks at the qualifications people have and how they can be offset against the training to reduce their training time as well.

We have a specific piece of work within the programme that is looking at working with the transition partnerships, which is part of that military pathway out. That work looks at how we can accredit the skills people have within the military and how we can reduce their training period within the broad framework of the police education framework. That could reduce it down from the three years.

I would stress that this is a practice-based degree. It is very much on-the-job training. They are operational, but they get the qualifications that mean, if they leave the police, they have something to offer more broadly as well.

Q26 **Antony Higginbotham:** I am glad you brought that up. Figure 13 in the NAO report sets out reasonably well the time you are operational versus the time you are in college learning. It looks very in-out, in-out. It looks like you are taking officers away and then putting them back in. That has an operational impact. Does that still feel like the right approach? Is there a risk in doing that? If I take Burnley police as an example, they will get an influx of officers and start to set some policing priorities, but then those officers will disappear for a couple of weeks. Do you see what I mean?

Janette McCormick: There is a broad framework, but individual forces such as Lancashire can look at how they adapt that with their provider, which is UCLan in Lancashire's case. It is important that they go into the classroom and learn the theory, but it is also important that they go and



practice. It is very much a practice-based degree, a little bit like nursing. That in-out, in-out helps them reinforce that learning and get the tutoring from an operationally competent officer so they get that street-based experience and that streetcraft. It is really important to do that. A lot of the first year is classroom-based, but it is more operational as they go over those two or three years. The tutor becomes less hands-on, and that is when they get to independent patrol status.

Q27 Antony Higginbotham: You do not think the operational problems are greater than the benefits from doing that in-out.

Janette McCormick: No. If you look, we do an onboarding survey. We have surveyed the officers who have joined during the uplift cohort, which is since October 2019. We got results from about 3,500 of those new officers. Both in terms of the curriculum and the way they are being trained, they are far more satisfied. They are saying that they are far more likely to stay in policing and feel more prepared for policing under the new qualification than the old training regime.

It is about listening to what the person who is joining is saying. They feel more prepared for the issues of modern policing through the new qualifications and the way they are done.

Q28 Antony Higginbotham: Do you do the same kind of survey with your experienced officers or the people who are working with the new recruits when they are out there? That is another perspective that is presumably very important to understanding whether the model works.

Janette McCormick: We do two things. First, we look at the experience of tutors. Those are the people who are hands-on and receiving people who have done that classroom-based experience. We also do a national well-being survey, which allows us to compare the levels of satisfaction with being in policing. It is very different for those who have been in policing for some time.

One of the things that we are particularly investing in is around that front-line supervision, so that we can tailor the training and the supervisors are able to assist as best they can.

Q29 Antony Higginbotham: Finally, I want to talk about the PEQF and IPLDP. The plan was to scale down IPLDP and move over to PEQF. When do you expect that transition to happen now?

Rachel Watson: We will finally be switched off IPLDP—I am sorry about the acronym—in April of next year. Most forces have already transitioned. We have a few that are offering both routes and one still offering only the old route. They all have plans in place. There will be only the new entry route from April of next year. Ministers need to sign regulations to that effect, but that is the plan. That is what we have made clear to the police.

Q30 Antony Higginbotham: Is the feedback from chief constables that that is still the right thing to do? IPLDP was extended because of Covid, but people



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still want to crack on with—

Rachel Watson: The NPCC has absolutely signed up to this. This is on the recommendation of the chief executive of the College of Policing, which, again, as I have said, is responsible for setting the standards. This does have buy-in from police chiefs. We are not getting pushback on that.

Q31 **Chair:** Can I just clarify that answer? Was April next year chosen because it will be after the end of the police uplift programme? You will be getting back into a normal pattern of police recruitment, so all new officers will go into the training programme.

Rachel Watson: Originally IPLDP had been going to be switched off earlier. It was extended because a couple of forces were slightly slower in transitioning that they had originally planned to be, and it was agreed that April next year was the right moment at which to finally switch it off. It was not deliberately designed in advance with that in mind. I accept that the timing does work neatly with the programme, but certainly we did not set out for that to be the case at the outset.

Q32 **Dame Diana Johnson:** It is nice to read a report that is positive about the Home Office, so congratulations on that. One of the issues that I was struck by was the standardisation of the application process. That has allowed the Home Office to collect data and to know much more about what is going on within police forces. I wondered particularly about the online recruitment, which you set up because of Covid. I was concerned that police officers may just have been using online recruitment to assess the suitability of candidates coming forward. I wonder whether you could say something about any problems that have arisen out of the online process. I know some police forces have carried on using that online process and are not doing face-to-face interviews. Can you say something about that?

Rachel Watson: I will start, and then I will hand over to Janette afterwards for more of the detail. You are absolutely right that the online process was introduced in response to Covid. It has standardised recruitment in a way we did not have before. We have been able to ensure the professionalisation of assessors, consistency of assessors and consistency in the process, which simply was not in place before Covid. In that respect, we see it is a big improvement. There has always remained an in-person element. Fitness tests and medicals, for example, have to be done in person. They cannot be done otherwise. In addition, most forces have an in-person interview as well.

Dame Diana Johnson: That is most forces.

Rachel Watson: Yes, I do not believe it is all forces, although we were down to the last couple that did not. We do not believe that undermines the integrity of the process overall. At the moment, the standard of assessment is superior to the previous one. We are also seeing lower disparities when it comes to outcomes around ethnicity, which again we take as a positive.



Q33 Dame Diana Johnson: Just before you move on from that, the inspectorate has raised concerns over a number of years about inappropriate people joining the police force. The problems we have seen recently with Charing Cross is an example. I am trying to get at the fact that those face-to-face interviews are really quite important to try to tease out whether people do not quite have the right motives for joining the police. You are saying to me that most police forces will have that face-to-face interview and try to find out the motivation for why people are joining the police.

Rachel Watson: If I could just comment, the individuals involved in these incidents were recruited prior to uplift.

Dame Diana Johnson: I understand that.

Rachel Watson: All those individuals were recruited through face-to-face interviews. The online assessment itself includes assessing people against values and against their motivations. It is rigorous in that, and it is consistent in a way that we may not perhaps have been previously. Janette, I do not know whether you would like to add anything.

Janette McCormick: The selection process has many parts. The online assessment process is just one of those. Prior to us coming into uplift, lots of forces had lots of things that they put in place. You could say that some of those were not valid or fair tests. You are absolutely right: the online process has given us an opportunity to standardise the application form, a pre-sift process, the online assessment centre, which we are specifically talking about now, and the post-assessment process, which is a separate interview as well. Then we go into things like the vetting and probably some of the things that you want to tease out there.

In terms of the actual online assessment process, there has always been an interview for that. It is done through a virtual interviewer. A lot of processes are done that way. We specifically had to do that through Covid. All of that online assessment is done by trained assessors. We do a high amount of quality assurance to make sure we get standard processes and fair processes, and we look at whether any particular group is disproportionately impacted.

The vetting process around the pre-employment checks is controlled by authorised professional practice set by the college, and we have refreshed that to tighten it up. We are confident that both the standard of the assessment centre and the standard of the vetting has been maintained even though we have gone online.

Q34 Dame Diana Johnson: We may come to some issues around different groups and how they have fared during this process of application. Mr Rycroft, you started off by saying that, whilst things have gone well to date, it is going to be much more difficult as we go forward into the final year. I just wondered whether you could elaborate a little bit more on some of the challenges, particularly in light of what the acting Commissioner of



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the Metropolitan Police said to the Home Affairs Select Committee last week. He referred to the fact that they were concerned about the job market. You have referred to that already. They were starting to recruit outside of London. If you are recruiting nationally, that has implications around being representative of London. Could you say something about some of the problems and the challenges?

Matthew Rycroft: Absolutely, yes. To recap what I said earlier and then add to it, I mentioned three things. First, there is the fact we are seeking to recruit 8,000 rather than 6,000 this year. Secondly, the job market has shifted in terms of the number of vacancies in various different sectors. Thirdly, there is this whole issue about trust and confidence in policing.

As Sir Stephen House said to your Committee, Dame Diana, there are particular issues in relation to the Met, and the Home Office supports the Met in seeking to resolve those issues and get back on track with the numbers of their part of the police uplift programme, including through increased flexibility on where people are resident. Overall, the numbers of applications are holding up extremely well. It is a sign that people really want to join policing. That is a good thing, because being a police officer should be an honour and a privilege. We need to be attracting into the profession the best and the brightest from across the country. We also need to be improving the diversity and inclusion of policing through this programme, and we only have one more year to do that.

Q35 **Dame Diana Johnson:** The acting Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police said that applications to the Metropolitan Police had halved. That is what we were told.

Janette McCormick: In terms of the different entry routes, at the moment the PC entry route to the Metropolitan Police in particular is half of what they would like, based on their recruitment profile. We are doing an awful lot of work with them to look at how we can target the attraction campaign specifically around PCs and not detectives. They have a very healthy pipeline in terms of detective applications, but clearly they want to get the balance for the organisation.

Q36 **Dame Diana Johnson:** Are there any other challenges that they face? You talked a little bit about the culture. Over recent months, policing has had many problems exposed, particularly in the Metropolitan Police, as we have already alluded to. Culturally, this is a real opportunity to change the culture of the police. In terms of diversity—BAME candidates and women—they are not really moving the dial that much, are they?

Matthew Rycroft: The numbers are definitely going in the right direction, but you are absolutely right that it would have been better if they had been higher still. Of the new recruits, 42% are female and 11.8% are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic community. Of the total number of people employed in policing, 34% are female and 8% are black, Asian or minority ethnic. It is moving in the right direction, but it is not going as far or as fast as we would like.



Q37 Dame Diana Johnson: One of the other issues that was raised with the Home Affairs Select Committee last week was rates of pay in the public sector. Reference was made to other public sector jobs paying better than joining the police. Do you have any comment on that? The starting salary was about £21,000 for a police officer. How does that compare with other jobs in the public sector?

Rachel Watson: That is a really helpful comment. Overall, the starting rate of pay goes up to about £23,000. It depends. Forces can choose to start police officers within a particular range. Janette can correct me.

Janette McCormick: It can go up to £24,000 with the new allowances.

Rachel Watson: The other thing to remember is that it goes up quickly after that. Once a constable is fully competent, after six years, it is close to £40,000. If you add in overtime and London allowance, the salaries are very competitive with other bits of the public sector. Certainly, the Police Remuneration Review Body, which assesses police pay, has always given us the message that the actual rates, once officers are in post, remain competitive.

Janette McCormick: We have done some work recently around that starting salary. Particularly, to your question before, you earn as you learn. That is still very attractive to people. It is worth saying that we are still getting 100,000 hits on our website every month in terms of people wanting to join the police. That is the monthly average that we are getting. It depends on the entry route as well, specifically around whether it is the detective entry route or the police constable entry route. One of the things we have recently done is removed one of the pay points. Once you are trained and qualified, once you are out of your student period, you go up to that next pay point. That is attractive to people.

Q38 Dame Diana Johnson: The evidence that we heard last week at the Home Affairs Select Committee was that it was not a terribly competitive salary, bearing in mind that being a police officer is a very difficult and stressful job and that there are requirements around having to study on top, if you are not a graduate already. That was what was being put to you. You think that is not correct, even though the acting Commissioner was telling us that the applications had halved.

Rachel Watson: The applications certainly have compared to what they would like to be getting in, for some of the reasons Janette said, but that is not what our onboarding and our surveys are telling us at the moment. There are many different issues that will influence them to choose to become a police officer or not. Of course pay is one of them, but we are not seeing pay being a blocker at all.

Janette McCormick: I talked before about the onboarding survey that we do with 3,500 officers. We also do a lot of insight work with members of the public. If you find what drives people to join, it is about making a difference, it is about leaving a legacy in their community and it is about



the attraction of the job of doing something different. When you look at pay, it is very low down on the list of drivers of why people join policing, which is probably not unexpected to those around the room here today, but that is still the case for people who are joining.

Q39 Dame Diana Johnson: Can I just ask about retention? What are the retention rates? I did not see any figures around the retention of these new recruits.

Rachel Watson: Overall retention rate for officers, if you exclude retirements, is very high. We have a voluntary resignation rate of around 2%, which is very low. It tends to be higher in the first year or two of someone joining the police, which is what we would expect. There are NPCC figures, which are not audited in the way our national statistics are audited, that showed on average around 9.1% leaving in the first couple of years, which is completely in line with what we would expect, because not everyone joining any new career is going to be suited to it or will enjoy it when they get there. Overall, we are very pleased with the rates at which people are staying and our survey that we conducted, which Janette refers to, showed that around 80% of new recruits wanted to stay in policing until they had retired.

Dame Diana Johnson: Just so I am clear, you are saying 9.2%—

Rachel Watson: It is 9.1%. The NPCC figures have been reported, but they are not audited and assured in the way that our recruitment figures are. I do not know if Janette would like to add to that.

Janette McCormick: In terms of total voluntary resignation at any point—

Dame Diana Johnson: I am interested in the uplift programme.

Janette McCormick: At endpoint, as Rachel said, it is just under 3%. For the uplift cohort, it is 9.1%. When we into the programme we did a planning assumption, based on data we had, of 10%. It is broadly running in line with that. If you look at our survey results, again, that confirms those figures that we probably would expect one in 10 to leave us in their training, and that is exactly where we are currently.

Q40 Dame Diana Johnson: That was based on previous experience. It was that one in 10 of new recruits would go.

Janette McCormick: Yes. We never used to have any of this workforce data, and the data that we have and the richness of it have been one of the real benefits of the programme. We did a dip sample of a dozen forces and that is broadly where it was. When we were looking at how many we would have to recruit, we built in a planning assumption of 10%, and that is where we are. Interestingly, if you look at the IPLD programme compared to the new entry routes, we are seeing lower levels of leavers in the new entry route compared to the IPLDP entry route. Again, that probably says that people coming into a career in policing through that training are more satisfied with it.



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Matthew Rycroft: Sorry to jump in on this, but just so that everyone is clear, the 20,000 commitment is a net increase. If there any issues in relation to retention, that just gives the programme a bigger job to do to get the 20,000 net. We are going from a baseline of 128,434 police across the country plus 20,000, so up to 148,000.

Q41 **Mr French:** On those statistics you just highlighted on the overall retention rates of the police force, has there been any change? The report talks about the extra pressures on more experienced officers through the uplift programme, which is obviously a positive, but have you noticed any difference in people leaving the force based on the impact of the uplift programme?

Janette McCormick: It is very difficult to compare one year to another. On average, we lose about 7,000 officers a year. We are the lowest in all of the public sector in terms of voluntary resignations. We lose about 7,000 a year. During Covid that dropped really quite significantly. It dropped across retirees and voluntary resignations as well. When we look at this year's levels, they have gone up, but against a backdrop of having been very low last year. What we are seeing at the moment is probably what we would call our latent attrition coming through, but generally we are not seeing any increase at all. As I said, if you look at the new entry routes, we are seeing higher levels of retention in those student officers.

Q42 **Kate Green:** This is quite hopeful. The new recruitment process is securing more diverse intakes than the former process and higher retention rates, which would seem to suggest we should be, in both ways, working towards a more diverse force over the medium term. Would that be a fair interpretation of how things have moved?

Janette McCormick: Yes.

Q43 **Kate Green:** Is it not therefore a concern that, as I understand it, in December 2021 40% of recruits had come through the old IPLDP system, especially if you are going to run it through to April next year? Is there any way to accelerate the transition across to the new process?

Rachel Watson: As you have just said—thank you—forces are working towards moving to the new process, but they have to do this at a rate that they can manage. We have already discussed the burden on tutor constables and the burden on a force of introducing any new training programme. They need to, for example, negotiate with the higher education institute. They need to make sure that that training is in place. At this stage we could not accelerate any further than we have, but it is important to remember that, although the new routes have shown to have some clear benefits, the original route was accredited by the college as entirely appropriate and does give adequate training.

In addition, the college has produced what they call IPLDP+, just to add to the acronym, which gives the officers some of the training, particularly around vulnerability and some other issues, that the PEQF would have, so



that they do not suffer as a result. We are confident that we could not go faster and that forces are doing everything they can to transition.

Q44 Kate Green: As I understand it, quite a lot of the recruitment that has taken place in the early part of the programme has been conversion of PCSOs or civilian staff, where there was already a more diverse workforce make-up. What do you think the profile will look like over the remainder of the programme? Is there more scope to recruit from that diverse pool, or is that going to change?

Rachel Watson: You are absolutely right that those pools are more diverse and, therefore, recruiting from them will help us bring diversity in. We are hoping that we will build on these foundations and keep on increasing our levels of diversity, both in terms of gender and in terms of BAME communities as well.

We have increased police staff as well. There is always a tension between recruiting from one pool into another and robbing Peter to pay Paul. That has not happened so far. As Janette said, we have recruited over 5,000 additional police staff.

We are really challenging ourselves on diversity to ensure that we are not leaving any stone unturned when it comes to recruitment from diverse communities. That is partly supporting forces to make sure they are doing everything they can on outreach. There have been some really innovative outreach programmes; for example, West Yorkshire and West Midlands come to mind.

We are making sure that we are targeting the areas and barriers we know can put people, particularly black people, off joining policing. That can be the attitudes of friends and family, and fear of those. We have a campaign really focused on that, and an innovative partnership with Channel 4 as well. We are just making sure that we are really supporting those forces that are finding it more difficult and sharing the best practice of those forces that are doing well. Janette may want to come in, but we are really focusing everything we can on that.

Janette McCormick: It is fair to say a lot of people did come with an association with policing. The benefit of that is you get the experience of that policing into the force as well, so these are not brand-new recruits in many ways. 75% of those did not have any association with policing at all and in terms of the work that we have done around trying to understand what the barriers and blockers are, we do very bespoke and targeted recruitment and attraction campaigns to address those and put a lot of work around our positive action practitioners, so training around those in terms of how you nurture people into the force, as well as an awful lot of work around our selection process. We talked about the online assessment centre. We have had independent evaluation. We have done a huge amount of work with assessors to narrow the gap.

Q45 Kate Green: Did you think about encouraging forces to have targets for



ethnic recruitment, and what did you do about it if you did think about it?

Rachel Watson: Ministers decided not to have targets, but rather to focus on long-term improvements to diversity and equality. That does not mean that we have not challenged forces. Forces will have very different demographic make-ups within their area and very different populations to choose from.

Q46 **Kate Green:** They would have different targets, of course.

Rachel Watson: The policing Minister has written twice to forces now, and we have ranked forces on how they are doing against the diversity within their population, so that those forces that are doing less well compared to forces with a similar demographic understand that they are and also understand what the forces that are doing better are doing.

The Home Secretary held all forces to account about this at the National Policing Board during the course of the last year. There is a good discussion, and it has really highlighted the issue to forces and has definitely driven a great deal of progress. We keep on monitoring that and the programme continues to come in to help those forces that are finding it more challenging, while encouraging them to keep up with the best. Some forces have chosen to introduce their own target. Leicestershire, for example, has chosen a 25% target. West Midlands is aiming for 1,000 BAME recruits, so individually forces can set their own.

Q47 **Kate Green:** Indeed, the Home Affairs Select Committee, in its report last year, recommended that there should be targets, so it is disappointing that that has not been taken up across all forces. Can I ask you about the application and the vetting process? Overall, there is, as I understand, a 94.4% success rate among applicants, but that conceals quite a wide difference between a 96% success rate among white applicants, 84% for those of Asian heritage and 87% for those of black heritage. Why do you think that has happened? What was done to understand and address the drivers of that difference?

Rachel Watson: We have looked at every aspect of the application process to try to understand where the disparities are and where we start to lose people at different points in it. We have already talked about the online assessment centre and trying to drive down disparities there. We are looking at every part of the process to understand where those disparities are.

There are a lot of different issues that can play into vetting and why vetting outcomes are as they are. It is important the College of Policing sets the standards for vetting and reviews those on an annual basis to make sure that they are fit for purpose and that they are being rigorous, while at the same time, as much as possible, not disadvantaging any individuals in particular. I do not know whether, Janette, you would like to come in more on what the programme has done.



Janette McCormick: Again, prior to the programme very little work had been done to deep-dive into vetting failures, particularly around different sub-groups and particularly different ethnic sub-groups. We had already reviewed the authorised professional practice to set some standards. What we see are disproportionate failures in relation to Asian females under 26. That is usually associated with third-party associations because of the extended family, and we also see it in black African men, particularly those who are older as well. We see that they are more likely to appeal and be successful on the appeals.

Apart from airing, collecting and benchmarking the data across forces, we now have data standards in place, so we can compare forces. We have brought in training for appeals managers, because one of the things that we find is there is sometimes not a cut-and-dry decision. Sometimes it is a risk-based decision about what wraparounds you can put in place to manage risk. We have put training in place for vetting managers, appeal managers and the data framework, so we can start to understand how we can better manage some of the risks to reduce that disproportionality, but we are starting to understand it.

Q48 **Kate Green:** Do you expect that we will see, therefore, less disparity both in the initial decisions and then in appeal rates over the remainder of the programme?

Janette McCormick: Yes. It is not just over the lifetime of the programme, because this is clearly legacy for beyond. Debbie Tedds, who is West Mercia's chief constable and is the lead for vetting, has this within her portfolio, so that, going forward, this will continue to be monitored and evaluated. It can be looked at not only within NPCC, but in broader inspection regimes as well.

Q49 **Kate Green:** Just finally on this question, for those groups where recruitment has proven particularly challenging, what work is ongoing to support forces to think about more imaginative outreach and to think about that in the context of the wider policing practice and the ethics and integrity context that we were talking about a few moments ago? You and I, Ms McCormick, have a long history with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, for example.

Janette McCormick: Some of this starts with the data. For starters, around workforce data, we never used to do it to the 18+1. For example, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller was never collected, so we did not know how many people applied, how many people did not get through the process and how people were appointed. We have done a lot of work around that, so it is very visible. It is not only visible to chiefs, but to PCCs. All our data is reported to Police and Crime Commissioners, so again they can challenge police chief constables on that data as well.

There is a lot around attraction, what attracts and what does not and how we can target those. We have done very bespoke campaigns, in particular things; for example, *Travellers Times* is one of the organisations that we



have worked with. We have used different media to target that, as well as a lot around social media, where we might get a better traction. We have done a lot around the attraction, but also around positive action in terms of what support can be put in place. We work with a lot of forces about building their capabilities to do that, because we do not recruit; the forces recruit, so you are absolutely right. We build their capabilities to do it and to do it better and to learn from the best. That will continue to go on, and the data will then be able to be used to show that continuous improvement.

Q50 Chair: Listening to your answer on the appeals managers, do the National Police Chiefs' Council or the College of Policing monitor those decisions across police forces to make sure that they are entirely consistent and that there are not any rogue appeals managers with a particular prejudice or anything like that?

Janette McCormick: No, they do not. There is no benchmarking and has not been, but because we brought the data framework in and are collecting that data centrally, going forward there will be an ability to do that. Again, on the uplift board, HMIC sits on that. It is currently doing an inspection around race and disproportionality, so it is able to look, inspect and see what is going on. Bearing in mind some of those appeals panels have independent people on them, again, it is important to upskill those people so that they feel equipped to challenge decisions that are made.

Q51 Chair: Do I, as an individual who has appealed and whose appeal has failed, have any further route of appeal?

Janette McCormick: There is an appeal through the individual force, but that is one single appeal process, yes.

Q52 Antony Higginbotham: Just on the diversity point, the thing that jumped out, certainly when I looked at Lancashire Constabulary in particular, is that we are doing really well. We have above 50% for female applicants and ethnic minority applicants is at around 10%. I just wondered whether you had any observations or thoughts about whether not having a top-down target might have liberated some of the forces to think outside the box at what they are doing and then, if they are, how you are making sure that those learnings and programmes are being translated into other forces.

Janette McCormick: Yes, Lancashire is doing incredibly well. We have been up to have a look at why it is doing well, because we want to learn from the best and share that good practice as well. Places like Lancashire are not just looking at ethnicity and sex. For the first time, we also collect data now, and are publishing it, on sexual orientation, disability and religion. We look across the broad protected characteristics, but also Lancashire, for example, is particularly interested in making sure we start to collect sociodemographic data, so we can check that we have a good spread in terms of that.

You also have to be careful. We have about a quarter of the forces that are achieving proportionate to their population around ethnic minority joiners,



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but for some of those it might be three or four people. For those three or four people in a force, it does not feel desperately inclusive. You can set a target and lose the point of inclusivity if you are not careful.

That said, there will not be a single chief in the country that would not say that they are aiming for at least their population. They are looking at the 2011 census and now they are looking at the 2021 census, so they are not being complacent. Personally, I do not think a target would have added more. It might have taken away from some of the less diverse forces. They might have become complacent, but they are looking at broader difference.

Q53 Dame Diana Johnson: I just wondered if you could say a little bit more about Lancashire. What did they do to ensure that they were getting over 50% of their new recruits as women? What were they doing?

Janette McCormick: They have a really good outreach. Some of this around individuals. Rozila, who is there, is fantastic in terms of the work that she is doing around outreach. We have gone up and taken some of the good practice there. They also do quite short, targeted bursts of recruitment and they have a very strong positive action team that look at how they can provide things like mock interviews to build the confidence of those individuals. They have learned off other people as well.

Q54 Dame Diana Johnson: In terms of outreach, where are they going to? Where is this outreach to?

Janette McCormick: Some of it is around recruitment. It is really active. I will go and put up a stand. I will go into a community centre. We do geofencing around populations to have a look at where we can have the most diverse populations and look at setting up stalls. We did some work early doors and we saw that for 40% of people, the tipping point that made somebody interested in applying was contact with the force. People want to speak to an officer. They want to know what it is like, so a lot of our work is around case studies and getting real officers to speak to them. Some of it is that.

It is also broader engagement and community work that is being done, and some of it is through social media as well. Rather than just putting an advert out, it is reaching out into the community, getting the interest and then supporting them through the application process, because our black, minority ethnic and female candidates are most likely to withdraw from the process, and some of that is confidence, so you need to keep that buddying and one-to-one contact through the recruitment process.

Q55 Dame Diana Johnson: What you just said there is interesting. They are most likely to withdraw through the process.

Janette McCormick: Yes. That is why positive action work and that buddying are so important, and that is some of the learning. We now give forces a toolkit with some of the tactics that they can use to improve the application rate. The other bit that we have done is to try to improve our



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processes, so that they are not disproportionately impacting on those groups.

Q56 **Dame Diana Johnson:** I just wondered what you thought about the quote from the strategic review of policing, where it said that the programme was having a negligible impact on workforce diversity. You must be very disappointed that that comment was made.

Matthew Rycroft: It is not true any more.

Q57 **Dame Diana Johnson:** You do not think it is true, but that was March 2022. That was just last month.

Matthew Rycroft: As I said earlier, I wish the impact was greater, and the actions that Janette has been describing will, we hope, see an improvement on the diversity figures, but I would not say that the impact so far has been negligible. It has been positive; there have been good steps in the right direction, with more to come.

This whole debate, including about Lancashire, demonstrates why sometimes the real impact on individuals, including police chiefs and PCCs, is through the power of the data rather than requiring or compelling someone to do something in a particular way. If you shine a spotlight, give people the data and let them realise that their own force is not as high up a league table as they would like it to be, I hope that competitive spirit will kick in and people will move up the table by learning from Lancashire and others.

Janette McCormick: If I may with that, if you look at the average recruitment for females three years before the uplift programme, the joiners figure was 36%. It is now nearly 43%. We have varied between one and seven forces that have been over 50% during the lifetime of the programme, so they are all pushing up there. If we look at ethnic minority recruitment, it was 10.3%; it is now just short of 13%.

When we started the programme, there were a lot of people already in the system. We have had to, if you like, mend the jet engine and fly the jet at the same time. We have been improving those processes and, if you look at the performance, it has seen that upward curve during the lifetime of the programme, so hopefully that will continue.

Q58 **Dame Diana Johnson:** Just finally, in the report that Kate Green referred to that the Home Affairs Select Committee produced on Macpherson 22 years on, one of the recommendations was about having some targets. We said that we thought there should be a target of having 14% BAME communities represented in police forces by 2040. Could you just say what you said about 13%?

Janette McCormick: Our joiner rate at the moment is just short of 13% nationally.

Q59 **Dame Diana Johnson:** It is interesting to hear what you have to say,



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because we have not had a response from the Home Office to that Macpherson report, so we do not know what the Home Office's view of this is, but, Ms Watson, you said that Ministers have decided that targets were not the way to go and it did not sound like they had changed their mind on that.

Rachel Watson: They certainly did in relation to that, but we do owe you that response, so we will respond formally on all the points in the report.

Q60 **Dame Diana Johnson:** We are over six months now.

Rachel Watson: It will be with you soon. I am very sorry that there has been a delay in that. As Janette has said, we are really confident that we are pushing in the right direction on diversity, but, absolutely, we do have much further to go.

Q61 **Antony Higginbotham:** We have spoken a lot about the inputs. It is a very input-heavy policy. It is about getting 20,000 extra police officers recruited. I just wanted to touch on outputs and how we judge success. Is success in the eyes of the programme just having the 20,000 or are there any other metrics you are looking at as well?

Matthew Rycroft: You are absolutely right that the 20,000 commitment is itself an input commitment and the programme per se does have, as I said at the beginning, a relatively narrow scope, which is to recruit the 20,000, albeit by improving diversity, improving standardisation, improving data and other benefits in the meantime. When it comes to outputs and outcomes, i.e. safer public, crime being prevented, crimes leading to charges and so on, all of that is not for this programme, but it is absolutely for the Home Office and our partners across the criminal justice system. There is a lot that we could say about that.

Q62 **Antony Higginbotham:** If I think about it from my constituents' perspective, when can they expect to see the end benefit? Will there be a dataset that says, "Here are the number of extra officers you have in your local area and here is what has happened to the crime rate locally"?

Matthew Rycroft: I wish there was a machine that could demonstrate the link as clearly as that, but life itself is more complicated than that and the number of officers is only one of many factors that affects the crime rate in any particular area. There are so many other factors, and that makes modelling difficult, as well as making communication about a programme difficult.

We are seeking to improve the evidence base. We are working with our colleagues in the Ministry of Justice and elsewhere across the criminal justice system, in order to have better modelling over the course of the next year, in terms of the what the impact will be downstream, as we say, of these extra 20,000 officers. Even the beginnings of that evidence will not be available, let us say, for another year or so, but even then, this is an inexact science. There are too many different variables and what really matters is the beating crime plan, which is the outcomes in terms of



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reducing crime, particularly for this Government in terms of homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime.

Q63 Antony Higginbotham: There is not at the minute any kind of dataset being built around the beating crime plan that we can then match up with the graph showing officer numbers and where they are going.

Matthew Rycroft: We will be able to have lots of graphs, including correlations between officer numbers and crime outcomes. What would be very hard to do is something about causation, so what causes what.

Q64 Antony Higginbotham: No, I understand that. It is that correlation. Are there going to be ways to overlay data, so that taxpayers in Burnley can look and go, "We can see we are paying more for our crime and policing through taxation and the precept, and, look, we can now evidence it based on the beating crime plan and what we said the outputs were going to be"?

Matthew Rycroft: Yes, there will be in terms of correlation.

Q65 Chair: Mr Rycroft, you have done a calculation. The Home Office has estimated that the number of crimes the new officers will help prevent from the year 2024-25 is 505,000. That must be based on some sort of modelling.

Matthew Rycroft: It was, and that modelling is constantly updated. In fact, there is a slight change to that. What I was seeking to demonstrate to the Committee is that there is a lot of uncertainty around, and we do not want to promise very specific links between this programme and outcomes.

Q66 Chair: That estimate does seem to imply that you do, in the Department, have some form of a link; otherwise that figure is fairly meaningless, is it not?

Matthew Rycroft: We have some sort of modelling, but I would not want to take it too literally. We are seeking to improve it and we are working, as I say, with our colleagues on a particular programme funded by the Treasury over this financial year.

Q67 Antony Higginbotham: To the point I made earlier on about the in-out, in-out, but also the resource it takes for the mentors, the trainers and the police officers who are bringing these new recruits up to speed, is there any way of getting a number on what I am going to call the lost resource? It is an investment in future resource. Is there any way of understanding what we are paying for now to get the benefits of later?

Janette McCormick: We are doing a specific piece of work to look at that. It is different across different forces, because they have different tutoring models. We are looking at what is best practice around that and how we can reduce that time that has been invested and quantify that, but it is very much an investment for the future as well.

Q68 Antony Higginbotham: Yes, but there is a piece of work looking at best



practice.

Janette McCormick: Yes.

Q69 **Antony Higginbotham:** As we said at the start, this is a really good programme. It is going really well, but we also want to make sure that the benefits are carried forward and lessons are learned and embedded elsewhere.

Janette McCormick: There is a specific piece of work with the finance committee in NPCC that will look at having some findings later on in the summer, and that will link to what is good practice and where we can make some efficiencies.

Q70 **Antony Higginbotham:** That is this summer, so that should, in theory, be in enough time so that those lessons are starting to be embedded now for the people that are being recruited now. Trainers who are training over Q3 and Q4 of this year will have those learnings to fall back on.

Rachel Watson: If I may come in there just briefly, the College of Policing also developed role profiles for tutor constables and has put in place products to support forces, so there is already a degree of consistency. As Janette says, we are looking at how forces can improve and where the best practice is, so it can be shared, but there is already, through the college, a set of what that tutor role involves and some help for forces to get there.

Matthew Rycroft: While we are on this question about sustainability after ending the programme, can I just make a wider point? Even though the programme will end at the end of this financial year, because that is the three years, we will have what we call a post-programme team that will precisely focus on your question and others like it, about how to get the sustained benefit of the improvements that the programme will have delivered.

It is not going to be a cliff edge and suddenly everything will stop. We will hope to have changed forever the way that we recruit police, the way that we use the evidence and so on, and for some of these policy-type points, either about diversity or about deployment, we will have ways of the post-programme following those on.

The other thing to say is that other programmes in the Home Office can learn from this programme's successes. I have sent around the National Audit Office report, which is before the Committee today, to all of the SROs of the Home Office's major programmes, just to ask them to look very carefully, from their own programme's perspective, about what the police uplift programme is doing that they can pinch with pride.

Q71 **Antony Higginbotham:** I just have one final question linked to the impact on communities. When you are looking at the programme and presumably looking at the skillset you need in your officers that are coming through the pipeline, are you looking at the way crime is changing across the country? Not to keep going on about it, but take Burnley and Padiham as



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an example. ASB is becoming an increasing challenge. That will require a different kind of police officer to when you are looking at recruiting to tackle cybercrime.

Matthew Rycroft: Exactly, yes.

Rachel Watson: The College of Policing has very much looked at how crime is changing in order to design the policing education qualifications framework, but, as you say, issues arise that need quite a quick response. That is where the crime, policing and performance board, chaired by the policing Minister, comes in. This meets four times a year, and the policing leaders and the leaders of the relevant organisations get together to assess where there are issues and where there are particular crime types that perhaps forces do need to help with responding to. This allows the college to do quick-time work on best practice to ensure that that is shared really quickly, so that we are much more agile as a system than we used to be when it comes to potential new crimes spiking that were not such an issue a year or 18 months ago.

Q72 **Antony Higginbotham:** With the education and training for police officers being three years, can you respond quickly enough if issues are flaring up?

Rachel Watson: That is what the college is for, really. The example of the crime, policing and performance board does allow the system to decide in real time that it needs training on X. That does not have to be a training course. Training can come in the form of an app; it can come in all sorts of different ways. The college has looked at how crime trends are changing over the long term, and the PEQF is responding to those, but in addition, as different things come up that may not have been predicted, we are able to respond to those in a much more agile way, in real time.

Q73 **Antony Higginbotham:** In terms of seeing the benefit on the ground in your neighbourhood, to summarise, it will take a couple of years because police officers take time to train, but there is a programme of training and constant professional development to make sure officers can focus on the issues that are flaring up at that time, rather than just at the point they were going through training.

Rachel Watson: Yes, exactly.

Q74 **Dame Diana Johnson:** The Home Office has had the end-to-end rape review and is looking at going back to 2016 rates of convictions and prosecutions for perpetrators of rape. In terms of the uplift that we are seeing now in police numbers, can you explain to me how that fits with the priority that you are giving to ending violence against women and girls? Where is the link? How does it all fit together?

Matthew Rycroft: I will start and then hand over to my colleagues. First of all, this Government have a very clear focus on combating rape, which is such a heinous crime and affects so many women. The end-to-end review is in place and we are working very closely with our Ministry of Justice colleagues, who lead on this, to take it forward. The policing aspect



of this has largely been through Operation Soteria, which started off in two forces; it expanded to 14 and will eventually, over the course of the next year, go across the whole of the police, to really learn the best practice, spreading that across in order to really focus on what victims—

Q75 Dame Diana Johnson: I understand all of that. That is fine, but how is the uplift programme going to deal with the issue that we have around the appallingly low rates of investigations that go to the CPS and go to court? How is this helping?

Matthew Rycroft: I want to be honest with the Committee. It is not going to have a very direct impact very early on, because, as we have been discussing, the uplift programme is about getting entry level officers, by and large, into policing, and rape and other serious sexual offences require very significant expertise, a huge amount of sensitivity in relation to the victims and so on. We are working with policing, the National Police Chiefs' Council, the PCCs, the college and others in order to ensure that the overall policing response is commensurate with the challenge.

Rachel Watson: We are also recruiting direct-entry detectives. Many forces recruit these detectives themselves. Through Police Now, which is sponsored by the Home Office, we also recruit hundreds of detectives each year. These people are going to be operationally competent as detectives far more quickly than those who come in through the uniform route and have to do their time in uniform before moving into CID. That will help us to have a quicker impact than we would otherwise have had on investigations and speeding those up, but, as Matthew says, clearly there is still a time lag and it will take time before people are fully competent.

Janette McCormick: Right at the beginning we talked about the fact that some of the staff have already been invested in those areas, because the funding envelopes all those sorts of roles. Individual forces will need investment in different areas. They have to look at their local needs and then invest in that.

Q76 Dame Diana Johnson: Politicians always like to talk about bobbies on the beat and we are all very keen to have as many bobbies on the beat in our areas as possible. Is that really what the uplift programme is about then? It is that front-facing bobbies on the beat rather than tackling, as we know, the areas of crime that are growing, like fraud and sexual assaults. This is more about the front line. Is that really what this is?

Matthew Rycroft: It is a mix, is it not?

Janette McCormick: We have gone to forces to look at where, in the future, they see the investment would be. Certainly, there are some forces that will look at increasing response, but if you look at where they are investing, a lot of it is around cyber, public protection and investigation when those officers come through. If you look at force management statements through the inspectorate, that is exactly where they are saying that they are going to invest them. They are just not quite ready yet,



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although the point that Rachel makes is a really good one, which is the detective entry route now accelerates them into those positions far quicker than they would have done previously going through response.

Q77 Dame Diana Johnson: Would it have been better to have invested more in that side of things rather than just the 20,000 uplift programme?

Rachel Watson: That is part of the 20,000 uplift programme. Ultimately, it is for chief constables to decide how many detectives they take, how many PCs they take and how they deploy their workforces. We have invested in Police Now to give them that national option of recruiting detectives if they want to and it is up to them to decide how many, because the Home Office identified detectives as clearly an area that needed to grow, but we leave it to them to make the ultimate deployment decisions.

What we are doing for the first time is, as Janette said, doing a study into how officers are deployed. We have not done up until now. We expect to have the results by the summer, and that is really going to help us focus going forwards. It is not just 20,000 bobbies on the beat. It is 20,000 fully warranted and capable officers who are deploying in a number of situations.

Q78 Dame Diana Johnson: It is about downstream. You are saying that in the future we will see more officers, say, in RASSO units because there are additional officers coming through at the other end, if you see what I mean.

Rachel Watson: Yes.

Q79 Dame Diana Johnson: It is all in the future.

Rachel Watson: There are some now, as I said. If someone has come through as a direct-entry detective and they came through last year or the year before, it is very likely they could be in a RASSO unit at the moment contributing, but you are absolutely right: this will build up over time as more and more come onstream and become competent.

Janette McCormick: I have probably confused you, sorry. All of those form part of the 20,000, whether they are PCs or DCs. They are all part of that, and the staff are separate.

Q80 Dame Diana Johnson: It is down to particular forces to decide what the mix is.

Janette McCormick: Yes.

Rachel Watson: They make the operational decisions, yes.

Q81 Dame Diana Johnson: Could I just ask one other question? In terms of that mix, different forces will decide what they want to have, but in terms of the Home Office perspective, the Home Office will want to see a proper response to fraud across the country, for example. Is there any need for the Home Office to be a bit more directive about where the focus should be?



Rachel Watson: It is worth pointing out that the Home Office did allocate certain officers to particular areas. This year 300 officers of the uplift, out of the 20,000, are to join regional organised crime units; they look at the serious and high-end crime. Also, 30 have been allocated to the City of London specifically to focus on fraud. Next year it is 725 officers being allocated to ROCUs. Each force knows how many they are supposed to give to ROCU and they are, with the help of the programme, deciding when they allocate these officers. The Home Office has taken a degree of direction there, recognising that the serious crimes dealt with at the regional level also need a specific boost, but what we have not done is taken a view on where, within their local force, chiefs and PCCs should be deploying those officers.

Q82 **Dame Diana Johnson:** Everything is working well in terms of the relationship between police forces and the Home Office, but on that point, that could be a sticking point, could it not?

Rachel Watson: It could have been, but we have made really good progress because of the good partnership that we have built up with the NPCC, which we keep talking about, and the collective desire to hit the 20,000, because of the collective assessment that they are needed, and also the collective understanding that we do need to bolster ROCUs. Every single chief believes that the regional organised crime units are a good idea. There can be a degree of wrangling over who gives what up. We are very comfortable that we are on track, thanks to Janette and her team's work, to have the 300 allocated to the ROCUs this year, and again more in the coming year. It has been very constructive engagement, and so far, so good.

Q83 **Dame Diana Johnson:** Those numbers were reduced down, were they not? Originally, you wanted to have larger numbers going off to the regional.

Rachel Watson: That was the original thinking, but through engagement with the serious organised crime NPCC lead, we agreed that that would be too big an abstraction all at once from territorial policing, because the detectives who are in ROCU are the best trained and some of the most experienced, so there were concerns about moving all of those out of territorial in one year. The police chiefs agreed between themselves to extend that over two years. We were very comfortable and Ministers were happy that that would be effective.

Q84 **Mr French:** It has been very interesting listening to the point on outcome and impacts people expect to see in the community. I have a number of concerns, for example, in Bexley around impacts of tri-borough policing policy, which is a localised issue. What the report says throughout it is the need to backfill some of the vacant PCSO positions, for example, there are in different forces. That is something I have experienced when I have been out walking the beat with officers. One of the big success points that is highlighted in this report is the impact of standardisation and how that has helped recruit. Are there any lessons that can be learned post this uplift



programme on the impact of recruiting PCSOs across different forces?

Janette McCormick: There has been a small reduction of PCSOs over the lifetime of the programme, by about 150 nationally, but the levels are still high. We find that PCSO is sometimes a really good feeder pathway into recruitment as well. Just in the same way that we standardised the recruitment of officers, we have looked at all those feeder pathways and we have worked with the College of Policing to standardise those.

We have just done a piece of work, which literally concluded last week, around reviewing all the selection processes that the 43 forces do for PCSOs, so we can get standard practice, standard data and look at all the adverse impacts. From exactly the same learning from the programme we are looking at PCSOs and, again, what attracts them. Let us get some standard attraction messages and build those into local campaigns. We are trying to build those capabilities of forces. Yes, absolutely, the learning is being taken into those. We have done exactly the same with specials as well, which is a fantastic feeder pathway.

Q85 **Shaun Bailey:** I just wanted to touch on the funding allocation formula. I know the Department has acknowledged that is out of date and has attempted to do work on updating that formula. That work has been hit by a number of unfortunate instances along the way, shall we say, including a general election—I do not know if you would call that unfortunate.

I am keen to understand whether you are confident, given the funding allocation formula being used as part of the allocation for the recruitment, that that figure of 20,000 is what the public need. Or do you think that figure is out of date and needs to be reviewed, in light of the fact that you have a funding formula that seven years ago was seen as out of date? I am just keen to understand what work you have done to test that 20,000 figure as to whether it is appropriate.

Matthew Rycroft: First of all, yes, we are confident that 20,000 was the right number for this three-year programme. Secondly, we are confident that, absent other agreed formulae, the existing funding formula was the right one to use for allocations. We absolutely agree with the question: it does need to be updated, it needs to be modernised and our Ministers are committed to doing that before the next general election.

Q86 **Shaun Bailey:** I am just keen to understand how this 20,000 figure fits in with the formula, given that, as I say, it is out of date. Just so I am clear, in your estimation that 20,000 is accurate to the needs as of now. Bearing in mind that that is calculated on a funding allocation basis that even seven years ago was out of date, I am just trying to understand that.

Matthew Rycroft: One of my colleagues should correct me if I am wrong, but my understanding is that the formula was determined to break down a top-level figure of 20,000 into an allocation to each force. We accept that even when that was happening the formula was not perfect. There is not any agreed more perfect formula, and everyone agreed that the equitable and fair thing to do was to use the existing formula, even though everyone



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accepts that it needs to be updated. That was the point, but the 20,000 number itself was a top-down number and the question was how to divvy that up rather than how to get to the right bigger number.

Q87 Shaun Bailey: The NAO report notes in paragraph 1.12 that, while the utilisation of the existing funding formula enabled things to be done expediently, it does not give the Department a grasp on the force-by-force pressures and basis. Again, I am just curious, because you have translated that top-level figure on to a force-by-force basis. Are you confident that has been done in a way that reflects the needs of those forces, given that the top-level formula you have used does not really permit you to do that?

Matthew Rycroft: The key thing is we have done it with the chiefs and PCCs of each of those forces. It is as fair and equitable as any formula could have been, and it was the one that was available at the time. We do not pretend that it was perfect and there are definitely things that will be changed in the new version.

Q88 Shaun Bailey: Mr Rycroft, have you had pushbacks from any chief constables in your deliberations on the basis of the allocation you have given under that formula?

Janette McCormick: No. The point is that there is no other fairer way that currently is agreed that could be used, and it was an expedient way to do it, but all chiefs would recognise that they welcome a review of the formula.

Q89 Shaun Bailey: That is really useful. Thinking ahead, given that recruitment is going to be an ongoing process, as we come to review that formula, does the Department think that perhaps this is going to show up additional needs in forces that had not been noticed under the previous formula allocation? If so, what is the plan to react to that? Are there going to be, for example, targeted recruitment efforts in particular forces or specific support packages put in to ensure that those that are noted as under their allocation get that? I am just curious to understand, as you review this formula, how you are going to deal with any unintended consequences.

Matthew Rycroft: It is a very good question. I defer to Rachel. The answer is that it is one step at a time. Let us finish the 20,000 programme over this year. Let us do the new formula. This is not the end of police recruitment after this year. Every year we have the churn that we have been talking about, so in round numbers there will be 10,000 police being recruited every year, and we will use the new formula to ensure that they are in the right places. If there are particular issues that come out as a result of the change from the existing formula to the future one, then, absolutely, I am sure we will find ways to work with those forces on those particular gaps.

Q90 Chair: Mr Rycroft, can I just ask you about some of the projected cost-benefits of this scheme? If you take figure 16, there are some fairly big, chunky figures in there for reduction in charge costs to the CPS. I wonder, therefore, whether the projected benefit on paragraph 1.16—£23 billion



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against a cost of £18.5 billion—is a little on the optimistic side. I know that they are not in directly comparable years but they are similar.

Matthew Rycroft: We have kept that under review, as you would expect, and there is a slight adjustment downwards that we need to make. The total benefits, from memory, have fallen from £4.7 billion to £4.3 billion over the lifetime of the programme, but we keep that under constant review. As we were talking about earlier, there are so many variables that, although we did a valiant effort for the business case, it would be wrong to suggest that the link between the input of extra police officers and output of reducing crime and so on is very specific. It is not very specific. There are so many different factors.

Q91 **Chair:** I accept that, but one of the things that was not uncertain is a fairly significant effect on the criminal justice system of the police uplift programme. If I could take you to paragraphs 3.14 and 3.15, the NAO report says that, by September 2021, there were 59,000 cases awaiting completion; but, worryingly, if the Department is correct in its assumptions, an additional 729,000 cases could enter the criminal justice system over the next 10 years, resulting in 300,000 more convictions. How closely are the two Departments working together on the effect on the criminal justice system of this police uplift programme?

Matthew Rycroft: We are working very closely together. We have a whole series of ways of doing so, led by the Home Secretary and the Lord Chancellor. The two Permanent Secretaries are working very closely together through the criminal justice action group that my colleague at the Ministry of Justice chairs. There are lots of other ways that the two Departments work very closely together on this set of issues. That is particularly true in the run-up to and during spending reviews. As a result of the last one, the criminal justice system secured an uplift in order to deal with the consequences of the extra 20,000 police officers, as well as the consequences of other increases in likely charging.

Q92 **Chair:** There are three issues I would like to go through very quickly that are not relating to the police uplift programme. First, in relation to the Competition and Markets Authority inquiry into Motorola and the effect on the Emergency Services Network, can we be assured that all the Home Office work that is going on into the replacement for the Emergency Services Network is continuing despite the Competition and Markets Authority inquiry?

Matthew Rycroft: Yes.

Q93 **Chair:** Do you have a latest date for when the Motorola system will be turned off?

Matthew Rycroft: The Competition and Markets Authority investigation could come up with findings that could have an impact on both the timeline and the budget for the Emergency Services Network programme. We are expecting the initial and final findings in June and September respectively.



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The current projection for Airwave to be turned off continues to be the end of 2026. Clearly, we want to make that as soon as possible, because one of the benefits of the programme is the saving, from £450 million a year down to £250 million a year, that the turning off of Airwave will make. We are working very closely with our suppliers and others in order to achieve that.

Q94 **Chair:** Out of interest, who referred this to the Competition and Markets Authority? Was it your Department or was it the Treasury?

Matthew Rycroft: It was not the Home Office. As you know, the CMA is independent.

Q95 **Chair:** Somebody must have made a referral.

Matthew Rycroft: It was public knowledge that Motorola was both the supplier of Airwave and delivery partner on ESN.

Q96 **Chair:** Can I move on quickly to NLEDS and ask you about the effect on the Police National Computer system, which is estimated to not be able to cope with the amount of information required after 2024 and yet the new system will not come into effect until 2026, if I am right? There is not sufficient funding to prolong the existing software on the Police National Computer system.

Matthew Rycroft: If I may say so, that is a rather negative summary of the existing system.

Chair: Give us the positive one then.

Matthew Rycroft: Although the Police National Computer is old, it is incredibly stable and is not going to fall over in 2024. The plan that the NLEDS programme has after it is reset is product-centric. Rather than having a big cliff edge where everything all comes in in one go, we are, over time, introducing new products that replace bits of the Police National Computer. The first one of those was done last year. The last two were done on time and on budget last month, so by the end of the last financial year, and the next ones are coming up over the coming 18 months. There is a different product, which, added together, will make turning off the Police National Computer a much easier thing to do.

Q97 **Chair:** Was my assumption that there is no funding allocated to those updates after 2024 correct or not?

Matthew Rycroft: This programme will have enough funding to do what it needs to do. That is what this Committee needs to know.

Q98 **Chair:** The bottom line of my query is that the Police National Computer system will be able to cope with the information on it, so the police will be able to rely on it until it goes out of service in 2026.

Matthew Rycroft: Yes, absolutely.

Chair: That is the important thing.



Matthew Rycroft: It will become less important to the police as time goes on, as different products get done by this new programme. Absolutely, we will retain the support needed for the Police National Computer, in order for the police to be able to use it.

Q99 **Chair:** Can I move us on to the I-LEAP system? As a result of us leaving the EU, we were not able to continue in the Schengen system, so it had to be replaced by the I-LEAP system, which relies, as I understand it, on a manual computer update from the Interpol system on to our I-LEAP system and then on to our Police National Computer system. There are two manual applications. It relies on the EU putting information from the Schengen system on to the Interpol system and then from the Interpol system on to the I-LEAP system. That is surely very cumbersome and could be subject to errors and differences of important criminal information being wrongly computed on to the police system.

Matthew Rycroft: It is true that, in order to have these communications as seamless as possible, we need to get data from one system to another. That is absolutely true, but it is not true that it is manual and it is not true that it is clunky or risky. It is real-time and the Information Law Enforcement Alerts Platform will provide that real-time connection to Interpol. The European Commission has announced that by the end of this year it will have a plan for its end to link in with that, so we are looking forward to hearing what that is. In the meantime, two forces have already piloted in March the use of this Interpol data, which is both names and images, so faces of people, through the I-LEAP programme.

Q100 **Chair:** It is critically reliant on the EU Schengen system transferring data in a timely manner on to the Interpol system, and one of the ways of ensuring that was to do individual country partnership negotiations on data transfer. It was stated that you needed to do at least one of those a year until you got to the 26 and every one of them was covered.

Matthew Rycroft: The Commission proposal will probably have something to say about that. We look forward to hearing what that is. In the meantime, we are ensuring that this really important law enforcement collaboration is as seamless as possible.

Q101 **Chair:** That is as far as we can take it today, but if I have not understood the situation properly or you have not fully elaborated on it, I would be grateful for a note on all of those three subjects. It would be really helpful, because they are really three very important Home Office projects.

Matthew Rycroft: I write quarterly to the Committee on one of them, and I am very happy to write regularly on the others as well.

Chair: That is very kind, Mr Rycroft. Thank you. Can I thank you and your two co-witnesses very much? It has been a very informative session. We have benefited greatly from your presence, so thank you very much for attending this afternoon.