

From: Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Progress on recruiting additional police officers
Date: 14 November 2018



Introduction:

1. As Members will be aware, in addition to cutting the cost of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and requiring Kent Police to find £9m in cost savings, the PCC also took the decision to increase the 2018/19 policing precept by the maximum allowable amount of £12 (7.6%) for an average Band D property. Whilst a decision not taken lightly, this was to enable the Chief Constable to increase the total police officer establishment from 3252.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) at the end of March 2018 to 3,452.5 FTE by the end of March 2019 – it's highest level since 2012 and requiring the recruitment of up to 200 additional officers. It was also to enable the creation of over 80 new police staff roles, including boosting the number of call handlers answering 999 and 101 calls.
2. Of course, during the course of any given year, a number of officers leave Kent Police for personal or other reasons, such as retirement, change of career or ill-health – termed 'natural attrition'. As a result, there was a requirement for Kent Police's recruitment plan to factor in enough officers to replace all those projected to leave through natural attrition, as well as to achieve the increased establishment of 3452.5 FTE by March 2019 – representing the highest number of officers ever recruited in a single year.
3. This report provides an update on the number of officers recruited to date, and also on progress towards the March 2019 establishment figure of 3,452.5 FTE.

#morethanthebadge:

4. The media campaign [#morethanthebadge](#) commenced in March 2018 and campaign posts have successfully reached over 160,000 people and resulted in a 135% increase in visits to the recruitment website page. Other activity has included:
 - a programme of informative visits by senior officers to schools and attendance at career fairs;
 - pre-application workshops to support candidates through the recruitment process;
 - liaison and enhanced recruitment activity with community based groups;
 - joint emergency services recruitment events (including a Bluelight Jobs Fayre on 26 October hosted by the PCC);
 - formalised partnership with CTP (Military Career Transition Partnership);
 - attendance at large scale events including the County Show and Kent Police Open Days, as well as other local events, such as the Tunbridge Wells Mela, Maidstone Mela and Canterbury Pride;
 - outreach activity at sporting events, such as the British Superbikes at Brands Hatch and Kent County Cricket matches at Beckenham and Canterbury; and
 - campaign imagery displayed at county sporting venues such as Maidstone United, as well as some local clubs including Punjab United in Gravesend.
5. A second phase commenced in May 2018 and involved enhanced activity in two key areas:
 - greater focus on wider visibility of the campaign such as posters, banners and digital marketing displays across the county;
 - augmenting of online activity through the use of techniques such as search engine optimisation, pay per click advertising and use of premium job listings on key sites.
6. A third phase commenced in October 2018 with an 'out of home' campaign designed to enrich the brand:
 - refreshed imagery and messaging;
 - radio campaign with both core radio and digital audio advertising;
 - transport hub advertising, including train platforms and bus adverts across key Kent routes;
 - social media – real life stories of officers who joined on first 2018/19 intakes in May; and
 - video blogs showing the journey of new recruits since May, culminating in press coverage of their passing out parade at the end of September.

New officers:

7. So far this financial year there have been five new police officer intakes – in May, June, August, September and most recently, the 15 October when 100 officers started their training.
8. In total, as at 15 October 2018, 280 new officers have joined Kent Police, broken down as follows:

Entry route	Number of officers
Regular	217
Graduate	13
Investigate First	44
Transferee (from other force)	6
Total	280

9. In relation to the Protected Characteristics of these new officers, it should be noted that there may be under-reporting in relation to some groups as the information is self-declared and can be updated at any time. Taking this into account, please find below a summary:
- Gender: 108 female officers (38.6%)
 - Ethnicity: 17 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic officers (6.1%)
 - Disability: 1 officer (0.4%)
 - Sexuality: 20 gay, lesbian or bisexual officers (7.1%)
 - Religion: 79 officers declared a religion (28.2%)
10. As illustrated in the table below, as at the end of October 2018 the police officer strength figure was 3396.47 FTE; this is 143.9 FTE higher than the establishment as at the end of March 2018.

	Actual/Projected Month End Str (FTE)	Establishment	Variance	Variance against Previous Est (3252.5)
Apr 18	3225.22	3452.50	-227.28	-27.28
May 18	3246.49	3452.50	-206.01	-6.01
Jun 18	3263.54	3452.50	-188.96	11.04
July 18	3249.98	3452.50	-202.52	-2.52
Aug 18	3291.97	3452.50	-160.53	39.47
Sep 18	3315.21	3452.50	-137.29	62.71
Oct 18	3396.47	3452.50	-56.03	143.97
Nov 18	3377.73	3452.50	-74.77	125.23
Dec 18	3398.99	3452.50	-53.51	146.49
Jan 19	3480.25	3452.50	27.75	227.75
Feb 19	3461.51	3452.50	9.01	209.01
Mar 19	3488.77	3452.50	36.27	236.27

11. The Force has projected that it needs to recruit a further 112 FTE police officers to achieve the establishment figure of 3452.5 by the end of March 2019; it expects this to be achieved by January 2019. Whilst calculated using projections for the number of officers leaving through natural attrition over the next five months, the figure may of course fluctuate according to the actual number of leavers.
12. There are further police officer intakes planned for 10 December (40 officers required), 28 January 2019 (100 officers required) and 25 March 2019 (47 officers currently required, although this is a flexible intake of up to 100 officers to ensure the establishment figure is reached).
13. As at 17 October there were 488 individuals at various stages within the recruitment process. Since the initiation of the recruitment drive there have been 1,853 applications to join the Force as a new police officer. This is a three-fold increase when compared with application numbers in the previous period – an increase from an average of 75 per month prior to February, to an average of 230 per month.
14. The current average weekly application volume is 52, which is regularly monitored in order to ensure the Force is able to respond where necessary to any change.

Holding to account:

15. One of the principle ways the PCC holds the Chief Constable to account is through the quarterly Performance and Delivery Board.
16. Open to Panel Members and the public, on a non-participating basis, the meeting is chaired by the PCC and papers are submitted by the Force in advance and published [here](#). The Chief Constable is required to attend the meeting in order to present and discuss the papers, and answer questions about delivery of the Safer in Kent Plan and policing generally in the county.
17. At the two most recent meetings – 31 May and 26 September - the Force has provided comprehensive updates on officer recruitment within the 'People' paper. This has included substantive updates on the number of officers recruited, breakdown by entry routes and overview of recruitment activity to date. The Force will continue to submit written updates to future meetings.
18. Chaired by the Director of Corporate Services, the Chief Finance Officer has an open invitation to attend the fortnightly Force Resourcing Board which is where key stakeholders maintain an overview of establishment management and consider requests for change in line with Force priorities, funding and threat, risk and harm. In addition it also provides oversight of key work streams aimed at increasing officer numbers and deals with any frustrations or barriers to achieving the overarching goal.
19. The PCC has, and will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account via their weekly briefings. Held in the OPCC, the briefings are now based on a rolling agenda that allows for a detailed discussion on HR and recruitment matters every eight weeks.