

Finance, Change and People Oversight Board

30 June 2023

PCSO Update

Report by: The Director of Human Resources, Karen Graham

1. Purpose of this Paper

The purpose of this paper is to update on progress to recruit an additional 500 PCSOs, a key commitment made to create the strongest ever neighbourhood policing in ‘A new Met for London’ (formerly Turnaround Plan) and enabled through additional investment by the Mayor.

2. Recommendations – that the Oversight Board:

Note progress made towards the recruitment of 500 additional PCSOs

3. Summary Position

As of June 2023 there are currently 1,238 PCSOs against a target of 1,246 (8 vacancies). There are sufficient candidates in the pipeline to meet recruitment requirements up to November 2023. A new marketing campaign is live and showing positive applications results. To meet growth this year we need to increase applications from c400 to c1,000 in July - October. This remains a challenge. There is a detailed communications, marketing and engagement plan in place to collectively do all we can to promote this recruitment campaign.

4. Workforce Plan

The 23/24 recruitment target for PCSOs is 678, to cover attrition and deliver an uplift of 500. The plan is profiled as lower intakes in the first half of the year and higher intakes in the second half of the year. This is to allow time to launch a new attraction campaign to generate increased applications.

PCSO	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Totals
Workforce Plan Targets	16	32	32	32	32	64	64	64	64	96	96	86	678
Actuals	12	24	20										56
Variance	-4	-8	-12										-24

The forecast position is shown in the table below.

PCSOs	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
Plan	1,208	1,227	1,246	1,265	1,285	1,336	1,387	1,438	1,489	1,572	1,655	1,728
Strength (FTE)	1,208	1,219	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forecast			1,238	1,257	1,276	1,328	1,379	1,430	1,481	1,564	1,647	1,720

As at June 23, there are 1,238 PCSO's in force against a target of 1,246. Whilst Q1 was 24 short on recruitment delivery there were less leavers than the plan so are currently only holding 8 vacancies.

5. Recruitment Delivery

During Q1, 56 candidates were recruited against a target of 80, creating a shortfall of 24. At the end of Q1, the under delivery will be profiled into Q2 (August and September). Whilst there were sufficient candidates at pre-employment stage to fill Q1, there were a number of factors that delayed candidate readiness. These included timelines associated with vetting, an increase in the number of candidates requiring a fitness test and requests for extensions in start dates (due to leave, study and notice periods). We have confidence that SSCL have sufficient capacity and processes in place to meet this planned increase in demand but we, the Met, need to resolve vetting delays. Vetting are creating a dedicated PCSO vetting team to prioritise which will clear the majority of the delays in candidate readiness. If we are in a fortunate position to be able to bring more people in quicker we will flex the training courses with L&D to do so.

6. Pipeline

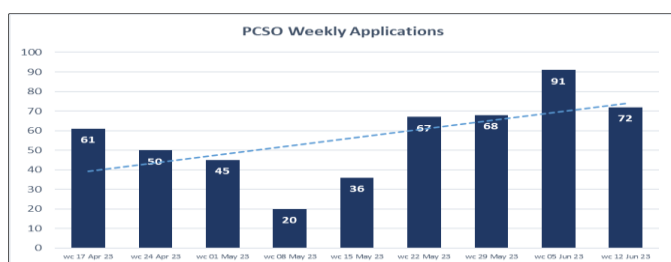
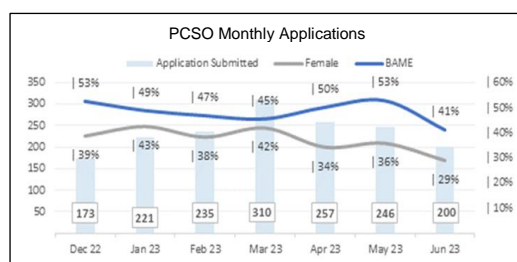
There are 648 candidates in the pipeline. With improved time to hire of 5 months, this should feed candidates up to November.

7. Applications

The new creative campaign went live on 15th May 2023. The last 4 weeks have seen applications increase. However, in order to complete the recruitment process this year (5 months) we will need to receive c1,000 applications in July, August, September and October.

Whilst we expect the extended roll out of the PCSO marketing campaign to increase applications further, given the employment market it is difficult to forecast the level, and speed, of increase.

If applications maintain at current levels, and don't increase further by October, we would forecast to deliver between 200-250 growth this financial year.



8. Attraction Plan

The new creative marketing campaign rolled out on the 15th May on social media. For physical advertising, our adverts will start to be live on digital screens in places like bus stops, supermarkets and shopping centres from w/c 26th June. We will be in print in the Evening Standard, Metro and local London press from w/c 3rd July. That week we are also launching on ITVX.

As a note of caution, we haven't been out to volume recruitment at this scale for some time, and is a very different offer to an officer role. Whilst we have had initial positive indicators in

response to the campaign this hasn't yet achieved the volumes we require. We must be cognisant of the current challenging employment market and potential implications of recent publicity about the Met.

In addition to the marketing campaign we have the following engagement activities in progress.

- **Mayoral Support to PCSO Campaign Launch**
 - **Meet & Engage Events:** Online teams events hosted by HR recruitment, with guest speakers from the Local Neighbourhoods teams to include PCSOs and Supervisors.
 - **Targeted Engagement:** To increase the conversion from those who register to completing an application, a personalised email, call and event invite sent.
 - **Outreach:** Outreach leads, alongside PCSO colleagues, are committed to supporting the recruitment drive for PCSOs and will be providing new materials at fairs and local community events.
 - **Utilising Talent Pools:** We are engaging candidates from all other relevant recruitment pipelines to encourage applications to PCSO, including those not successful in an officer process.
 - **PCSO Transferees:** We are opening up a transferee route for experienced PCSOs.
 - **Vetting Changes:** we are setting up a dedicated PCSO vetting team to enable the PCSO pipeline to be prioritised each week.
 - **Job Centres:** We are providing job centres with refreshed materials to join as a PSCO and will be running briefing sessions with job centre leads.
 - **Internal Campaign:** We are running internal comms campaigns to encourage internal Met staff to join as a PCSO.
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