



Confidence and Equality Strategy

Superintendent Robin Rickard

Preface

Thames Valley Police is determined to improve the Police Service's ability to reduce crime and build safer communities by increasing confidence and equality, through promoting diversity and inclusion.

This document sets out our vision of a policing service for the Thames Valley which values and respects the diversity of our staff and of the communities we serve.

As well as setting out our commitment to value, promote, support and respect diversity, this document also forms a strategic framework within which we will discharge our responsibilities under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2002, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, and other legislative requirements.

Thames Valley Police has a responsibility in law to produce a Race Equality Scheme, a Disability Equality Scheme and will soon have a responsibility to produce a Gender Equality Scheme leading to additional action on the part of Thames Valley Police to ensure that we comply both with the letter and the spirit of the law.

The detailed action plans to deliver Equality Schemes and compliance with the legislation sit as annexes to this strategy. By delivering the measures outlined in those action plans, we will move towards our desired position as a representative organisation, an employer of choice and a more effective Police Service. The opening section of the strategy describes that aspiration in detail and demonstrates the type of Thames Valley Police that we want to create.

Thank you for taking the time to read this strategy and for delivering the actions that will help us to make this journey.



Sara Thornton
Chief Constable

Introduction

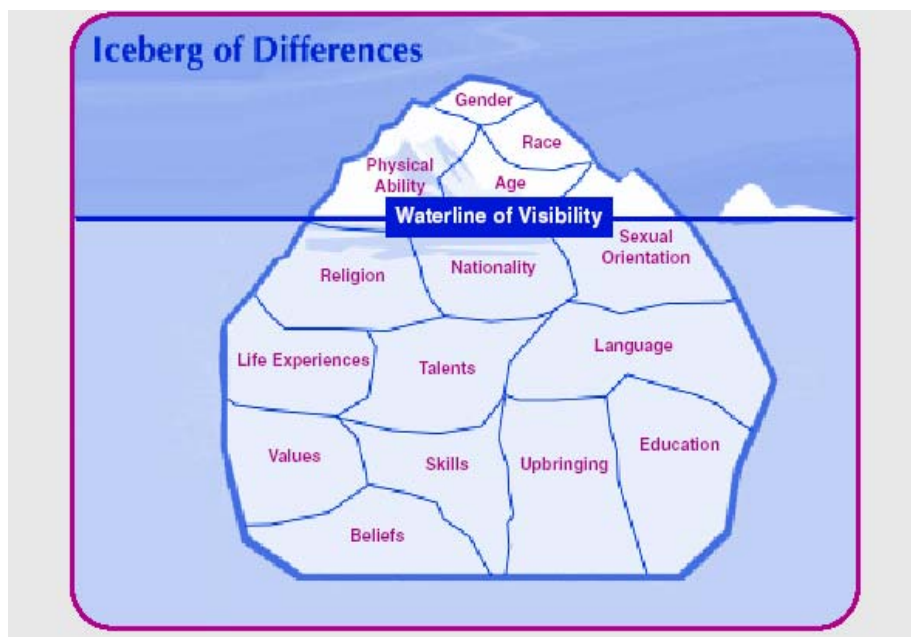
This document forms part of the strategic framework setting out our vision of a policing service for the Thames Valley, which values and respects the diversity of our staff and of the communities we serve. Delivery of this strategy will require the commitment, energy and efforts of staff and managers at all levels of our organisation.

What is Confidence and Equality?

Promoting and respecting equality and diversity is key to creating greater confidence and equality. Diversity relates to all aspects of difference that make individuals unique. This includes, but is not limited to; age, disability, gender, language, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation. Respecting diversity means recognising, understanding and valuing difference. This does not mean only considering a person's possible membership of a (minority) group.

We all need to understand that only a small part of a person's true identity is clearly visible: there are many aspects that can only be suspected, guessed or learned as understanding of the individual grows.

This may be evidenced by the "iceberg of differences"



Only around one eighth of an iceberg is visible above the waterline: likewise there are many things about an individual that we cannot actually see. Respecting diversity is about respecting the individual and their individuality, recognising that all individuals are unique. Crucially it also means, encouraging diversity of ideas and approaches to problems.

Diversity also means applying these same principles when working with communities, making sure that everyone can access policing services and making sure that police powers are used proportionately and fairly.

The purpose of this document

Successful organisations value difference and recognise that people from different backgrounds, with alternative skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perspectives. Diversity enriches organisations and gives them the potential to be more creative and dynamic. It is vital that Thames Valley Police encourages and harnesses differences to make the service more approachable and relevant to all the people we serve.

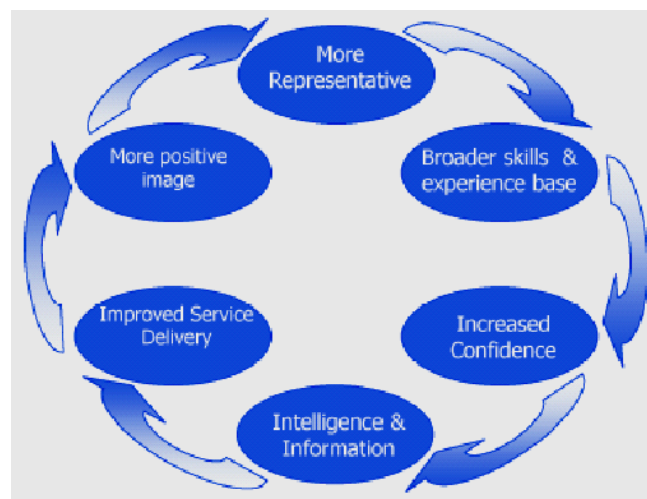
The Operational Benefits

The powers of the police, within a framework of policing by consent requires the trust and confidence of our communities.

The day to day work of Thames Valley Police involves the responding to tensions within communities and identifying and responding to critical, and potentially, critical incidents.

Understanding and valuing diversity enables us to increase trust and confidence, to become more engaged with communities, gather intelligence and ultimately reduce crime and build safer communities. We recognise the need to create a culture which respects diversity and builds confidence and equality. By doing this we will deliver a service that benefits the public; a service that both understands, respects and responds to the diverse needs of our communities.

The business benefits can be illustrated in terms of a “virtuous” circle, demonstrated by the following diagram:



More representative:

The police service exists to safeguard and improve the quality of life of all the citizens it serves. We recognise the benefits of having a workforce that resembles the communities we serve - we aspire to achieve a representative workforce. We will strive to recruit more staff from diverse backgrounds and promote Thames Valley Police as an employer of choice

Broader skills and experience base:

As we become more representative we will be drawing from a broader pool of skills and experience. By creating a positive working environment in which all our staff feel respected and valued, they will become more involved in their work. This will lead to increased innovation and performance, higher job satisfaction and lower staff turnover.

Increased confidence:

An organisation that is built upon the widest range of skills and talents available to it, and that does all it can to make the best use of those talents, will inspire more confidence in policing in the community. Proper external communication and engagement with the communities we serve at every level of policing will assist in this.

Intelligence and information:

A more confident and trusting public will communicate better with the police and will supply us with the information and intelligence that is so important to our delivery of effective intelligence led policing service. Ultimately this will allow for the reduction and detection of more crime. Neighbourhood Policing and the Neighbourhood Teams are the primary resource involved in this.

Improved service delivery:

By building a clear and comprehensive intelligence picture, making the best use of all the information that the community provide to us and using the National Intelligence Model, including working with our partner agencies, our effectiveness will be improved and ultimately will allow for the greater reduction and detection of crime.

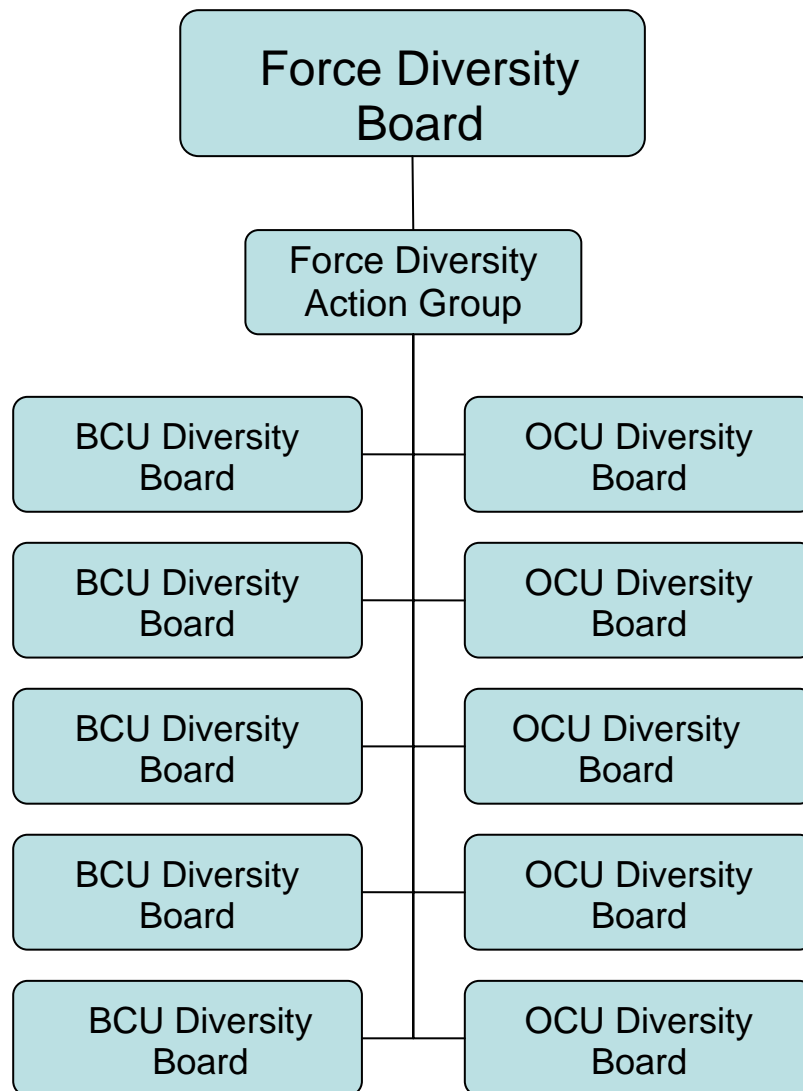
More positive image:

Improved performance will lead us to improving our image and respect amongst all sections of the community.

The police service has come a long way over the last few years in its understanding, recognition and development of diversity. This strategy sets out how we will continue to improve confidence and equality for our staff and for the public.

Delivery

This Confidence and Equality Strategy is overarching and is underpinned by the Diversity Programme of work which includes the Single Equality Scheme and the strand specific equality schemes action plans. To deliver this strategy and the underpinning programme of work Thames Valley Police has the following structure.

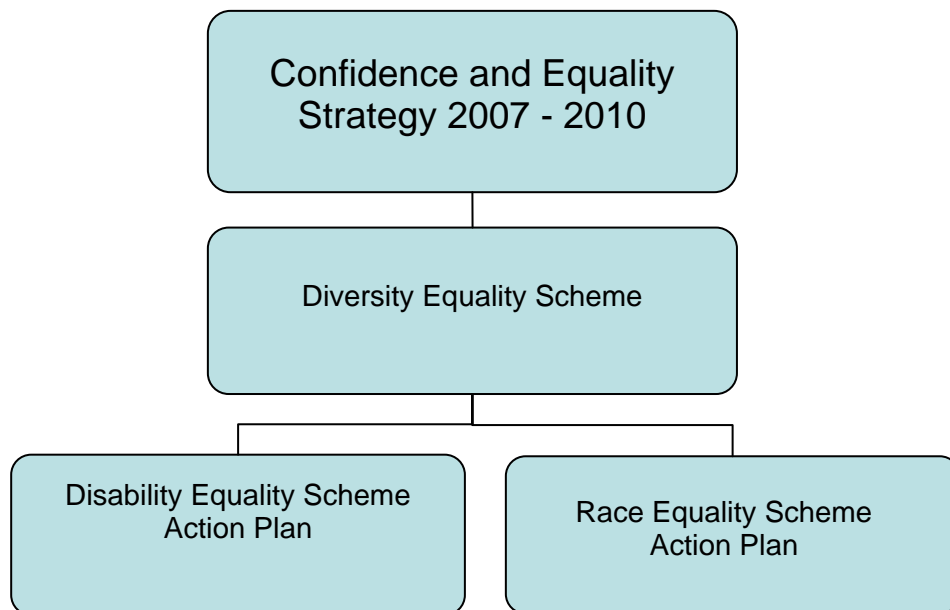


The Force Diversity Board is the strategic body, chaired by the Chief Constable, which bears responsibility for meeting the requirements of the equality legislation. The Board “owns” the Confidence and Equality Strategy and sets the strategic direction. It has external membership to provide a community and partnership perspective and is ultimately responsible for the development and delivery of this strategy.

The Force Diversity Action Group, (DAG) chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable (Local Policing), is responsible to the Force Diversity Board for delivery of the actions supporting the Confidence and Equality Strategy. The DAG “owns” the overall Diversity Programme of work which includes the Single Equality scheme and its underpinning strand specific action plans.

The BCU and OCU Diversity Boards, chaired by the BCU/OCU Commander, are responsible to the Force Diversity Board via the DAG for delivery of, and compliance with, the equality scheme action plans.

The following diagram outlines how the various documents and action plans are structured. This diagram will expand as legislation covering other areas of diversity is introduced:



Conclusion.

This Equality and Confidence Strategy sets out our vision of a policing service for the Thames Valley which values and respects the diversity of our staff and of the communities we serve. It sets out how and why we should capture the strengths and talents of all our staff so that they achieve their full potential and, in turn, play their full part in reducing crime and building safer communities through increased confidence and equality.

Related and relevant policies.

Positive Action Statement

Race and Diversity Learning and Development Strategy

<http://onlineview/humanresources/strategyteam/Final%20Issued%20-%20People%20Strategy%202005%20-%202008%20-%20Appendix%204.doc>

People Strategy 2005-2008

<http://onlineview/humanresources/strategyteam/index.htm>