



NPIA
National Policing
Improvement Agency

The Equality Standard for the Police Service

Field Test Case Study – Sussex Police

In running a trial, Sussex Police's focus was on the key areas of implementation, integration and verification to add value to the force and its customer proposition.

Their initial concentration was on introducing the Equality Standard across their performance framework ensuring that evidence of effective practices could be shared, with gaps assessed, prioritised and addressed as an integral part of decision-making processes.

Their position has been to introduce the Standard as part of their existing frameworks and processes, rather than inventing new ones. They wanted to enable it to be embedded rather than seen as 'bolted-on'.

One of their first decisions was to use how the Standard facilitates connections between Confidence, Citizen Focus, the 'Citizen Focus Hallmarks' and other business areas.

All have elements of evidence gathering and scrutiny and similar ambitions around service delivery, meeting needs and expectations, and of customer service. All are now positioned as integral to 'Serving Sussex', Sussex Police's new way of working that covers the whole organisation.

There is a new group, the 'Serving Sussex' Working Group (SSWG), which is governed by their Corporate Development Department and supported by their Citizen Focus and Diversity Teams. The group has champions from all departments and divisions (BCUs), staff associations and the police authority and its primary function is to assess and coordinate force activity in relation to the 'Serving Sussex' programme whilst maintaining a force action plan of activity undertaken in relation to the Standard, Policing Pledge and 'Citizen Focus Hallmarks'.

All departments and BCUs were involved in evidence gathering. They were deliberately not provided with a template for how this evidence gathering should take place and most units have formed their own working group to bring together senior management and people from across their business area to facilitate debate and discussion.

David Tonkin, Head of Diversity at Sussex Police, visited all units to explain what the Standard is intended to achieve and how it sits within the 'Serving Sussex' framework. He also explained the relevance to each particular business area and the aim of creating an environment where the Standard is understood and considered within the wider policing context. Importantly, at Sussex Police, the responsibility for capturing the evidence rests firmly with each business area, not the Diversity Team.

The SSWG is the vehicle through which they will assess evidence, identify areas of effective practice and gaps. They have recognised the importance of verifying the evidence offered by departments and BCUs to enable informed decision-making. That evidence will then be triangulated against what the public tell them, and what their workforce tells them.

Their Citizen Focus and Diversity Branch collate views and experiences of independent advisors, a range of external reference groups (that already look at force service provision from different equality/diversity perspectives), the results of their user satisfaction and the new local confidence surveys to help inform their assessment of the evidence provided.

They have already introduced elements from the Standard into their internal inspection process, which asks questions of managers, supervisors and focus groups across all business areas.

Sussex Police feel that the ultimate role of the SSWG is to support effective decision making. It does not make the decisions that affect the organisation but supports them by making recommendations to each relevant decision-making group.

There are three main, ACPO-chaired, decision-making groups in Sussex Police, aligned to the 3 pillars of 'Serving Sussex' (Keeping People Safe, Neighbourhood Policing and Best Use of Resources). This approach was considered essential to the force-wide integration of the Standard. Similarly, police authority scrutiny is achieved through their three scrutiny committees (also aligned to the 'Serving Sussex' pillars).

One aspect of the Equality Standard that Sussex police see as gaining greater significance will be in relation to value for money and productivity. In the coming months they will need to make difficult decisions where resources are currently committed to a 'Gold Standard' service provision.

One area where the Standard will assist will be an enhanced ability for forces to consider what effect going 'beyond the Baseline' has on confidence and what the impact would be were resources to be redirected.

Thanks to David Tonkin, Head of Diversity at Sussex Police, for this case study information

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