



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicestershire

Prevention | Partnership | Protection

Our ref: OPCC/11324/18

Date: 05 September 2018

Ron Hogg

Email: Andrew.Tremayne@apccs.police.uk

Dear Ron,

Thank you for your letter regarding the PEQF that is due to be introduced in 2020.

I share your concerns about its implementation. Upskilling and professionalising officers is undoubtedly a positive step. But it would be a great shame if that came at the expense of the experience that recruits currently gain from being a part of the workforce, not to mention the impact this would have consequently on the resources available to the Force. Abstraction is something we should really look to minimise where possible.

I too would hope for some flexibility from the partner universities to minimise the disruption to current recruitment practices. You're right in that this would depend on negotiations between the respective universities and forces, as each would have its own way of doing things. This may be a complex process, therefore more time to iron out any problems would clearly be beneficial.

Although I appreciate universities are taking steps generally to try to become more inclusive and appeal to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, there is inevitably still a danger that the requirement for a degree may lead to excellent potential recruits being deterred from joining their local Force. This would be extremely disappointing and would undo a lot of the good work done so far in attempting to increase the diversity of police forces. I believe that having the opportunity to fully consider how this could be overcome would be time well spent.

As with everything in the current economic climate, cost is a major factor that we have to consider. In addition to the issues above, the impact of the potential costs of the scheme and the impact this may have on starting salaries and budgets is a strong argument in support of Chief Constable Skelly's proposal that the implementation of PEQF be postponed.

In conclusion, I am in agreement that more time should be allowed for the impact and cost of PEQF to be properly assessed. I support Chief Constable Skelly's team in their work on the proposal, and look forward to hearing the outcome of this in October.

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Thank you again for getting in touch.

Yours truly,

Lord Willy Bach
Police & Crime Commissioner

Willys



TO: Police and Crime Commissioners and
Chairs/Heads of Other Policing Bodies

10 August 2018

Dear Colleague

As you will be aware the College of Policing is introducing the PEQF in 2020 as part of wider workforce transformation. The purpose of my letter is to outline some of my concerns regarding its practical implementation and to seek your views on its introduction in your own force. Whilst I do not intend to be critical of the College, in that I agree with the need to upskill and professionalise officers, I set out below my concerns.

Abstraction

In Durham, for example, new recruits are subject to an initial 13 week classroom based learning environment where they learn the law, practical skills, interview techniques, role play etc. This is followed by a 10 week tutor constable phase where they start to learn their street craft. This is followed by a series of specialist attachments for the remainder of their two year probation, which includes the completion of the constables policing diploma as per current College guidelines. I would imagine that such a process is familiar to your police force. My understanding is the PEQF will lead to greater abstraction from the workplace during the three years of the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship which I am concerned will undermine service delivery (as the new recruits will not be taskable compared to current practice) and/or increase overtime costs. It is clear that the majority of future probationers will now be so for three years, and not two as at present, which will impact existing workloads and resource capabilities.

Timing

Whilst I am sure that Universities will want to be flexible, they are still a business and I am concerned that we may end up with a potentially restricted timetable from a University. For instance, we normally recruit in March, June and September each year to replace officers who leave. This works well as it smooths recruitment processes, cost, training and service delivery not just of the new officers but also other new recruits in the Force ie PCSOs's and police staff. I am unsure as to whether a University will offer a flexible product which results in them supporting the Force over the summer months and which does not involve significant e-learning. I am conscious that this will be dependent on the outcome of each Force's procurement exercise but it may well result in Force's having to change their wider recruitment and training practices.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is considerable uncertainty, despite a quality impact assessment, as to whether the new regime will be equality proofed in that we struggle to achieve a balanced workforce despite our best efforts. I am concerned that the requirement to obtain a degree or diploma will deter others from disadvantaged backgrounds from applying to join the police service. I would

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be interested to hear your views on this issue. Any requirement to study for and obtain level 2 Maths and English whilst studying for a degree/diploma and simultaneously hold down a challenging job will be a lot to ask of an individual. It is similarly unclear what the implications will be for recruitment to the Special Constabulary.

Cost

My understanding is that once a Force's levy has been depleted any overspend will attract a 90% Govt grant. In Durham we estimate that the PEQF alone will cost the Force approx. an additional £75,000 per year once it is fully embedded. This cost is over and above what we pay into the levy (approx. £380K pa) and assumes a 90% Govt grant. Clearly this will have to be found from somewhere. This additional cost does not include anything for other apprenticeship schemes eg senior officers, PCSO's or police staff. We are yet to cost these and this will no doubt, even after a 90% Govt grant, put further pressure on our budget. It seems that the cost of the PEQF is crowding out other opportunities for staff / officer development which seems wrong as development opportunities may inevitably become more rationed. One response may be to raise the starting salary for new officers to £18,000 pa (£8.65 per hour , compared to a minimum wage of £7.83 for an over 25 or £5.90 for an 18-20 year old , and £8.75 for the real living Wage as per the Living Wage Foundation). This low starting salary will undermine our attempts to recruit a diverse workforce from either internally or externally, notwithstanding the fact that they get a free degree. Indeed, it is not a proposal I can morally support.

Also, in respect of costs for those who join with a relevant policing degree, my understanding is that we cannot fund this from the levy which will therefore fall entirely on Forces. Also, I understand that it will be for the University which a Force partners with who decides what is and is not a relevant degree. In practice this may well mean that new recruits with a non-relevant degree with complete a second degree which will increase abstraction rates.

Again, in respect of costs, there may be additional travel costs for Force's to pick up, for example, quality assurance, travel and technology. The issue of costs is clearly important given the other spending pressures that we are all trying to manage.

Opportunity Cost

Significant officer and staff time is being currently expended to understand this new regime and to prepare the Force. I am grateful to those Forces' who have trail-blazed thus far and look forward to seeing the results of their work. It is clear that there will be an ongoing administrative burden from the PEQF introduction which we will all have to bear. Clearly this opportunity cost is on top of everything else which is expected of us. It is important that we get to a common understanding on the key issues and a way forward so as to try and ensure consistency.

The bottom line for me is that we will deliver what is expected, but that there needs to be common understanding of the practical issues which lie ahead for us all.



Finally, the NPCC Workforce Lead, CC Bill Skelly has written to all Chief Constables expressing real concern regarding the implementation of PEQF. He is seeking to postpone its implementation beyond 2019 and retain the current IPLDP option for a further 2 years in order to allow fuller and further evaluation of the cost and impact of PEQF to be properly assessed. He assures me that there are many Chief Constables who support this position and I would be keen to hear your views. CC Skelly has dedicated staff for this work with a view to the submission of a substantive impact to Chief Constables Council in October.

Please let me have your views through Andrew.Tremaybe@apccs.police.uk by 7 September 2018, and I will distil them into a further letter to yourselves in due course.

Kind regards,

Ron Hogg
Workforce Portfolio Lead

