West Midlands Police Race Action Plan 2024-5: Background Report

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Challenges

Representation & Retention

Retention and recruitment of Black and Black Heritage officers and staff is a long-standing challenge. There are many reasons why people join and why they leave, though at present there are 25% fewer people leaving than joining. A better understanding of this through exit interviews and Say to Stay will assist to target our activities in the most effective areas and retain more officers and staff.

WMP has a number of entry routes for officers and staff, including apprenticeship in several key areas of business, such as forensics and Force Contact. There are more partnerships and initiatives to explore to improve Black and Black Heritage representation among staff and alternative officer entry routes, improving the career development and job satisfaction of the existing employees.

Further work in People Services is ongoing to understand the reasons for Black and Black Heritage officers and staff leaving. There is a wide variation in potential reasons, some of which can be addressed and some that cannot, for example, ill health retirement compared to lack of promotion opportunities. The key initiatives that supports retention is Say and Stay (a dedicated Intranet site whereby individuals who are considering leaving WMP can have a discussion with HR to discuss their options before submitting their resignation), Black and Black Heritage officers and staff will be given a pathway to discuss concerns with ACC O'Hara via the WMP RAP Coordinator. This will speed up the capture and dissemination of information about why these officers and staff are considering leaving and provide an opportunity for WMP to address issues and retain them.

Black joiner and leaver figures for 2024 are:

Joiners (12 mths)	Black Total	Black Female
Police Officer	14	3
Police Staff	18	11
Leavers (12 mths)	Black Total	Black Female
Police Officer	13	4
Police Staff	11	7

Representation across ranks is not even; with so few Black and Black Heritage officers over sergeant rank numbers remain low and the most senior Black officer is a superintendent. Overall ethnic minority representation since 2019 has grown from 12.4% to 16.3% (a 32% proportional increase), with ethnic minority officers having increased by 32% proportionally, from 10.8% to

14.3%. However, this is because representation in Asian and 'mixed ethnic' groups have increased, while Black representation has remained stationary; we now have 5 times less Black employees than Asian employees.

People Services are exploring adding an additional categorisation (in self reporting for ethnicity) of 'Black and other' which may enable more people with a mixed heritage to identify themselves as Black to the organisation.

Discussions are ongoing to provide support for underrepresented groups in promotions and using our staff networks to provide formal and informal support before and after the boards. Consideration will be given to lateral moves and general career development. The offer is in the early stages of consideration and will be intersectional, taking into account not only ethnicity and utilising offers already in place (such as coaching and mentoring) for an accessible and effective support offer. There are other considerations for potential barriers to development that may not be attributed to ethnicity; ongoing work on Reasonable

Adjustments and support for Neurodivergence, health conditions and maternity may all support our Black and Black Heritage officers and staff.

The Reputation of the Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) Nationally

Reputational issues have been significant in 2024-5, with significant criticism nationally from the Nation Black Police Association (NBPA) who withdrew their support to the PRAP programme for a few months and made scathing criticisms regarding lack of action and failure to tackle the core issues at their conference in October 2024¹. That said, they have since re-engaged with the national team.

WMP has not had the same issues locally and enjoys a positive working relationship with Staff Associations and BAPA, which is a key stakeholder. Members of the BAPA executive team are present in WMP RAP boards and liaise directly with the WMP RAP Coordinator and D&I manager, acting not only as consultants but as people who influence and support the workstream leads as well as leading on smaller projects and events. While WMP lacks Black and Black Heritage representation at senior and executive levels, engagement with experts (such as Dr Angela Herbert) and experienced community representatives (such as Angela Spence and the Afro-Caribbean Reference Group) has informed decision making and provided critical friends.

WMP is re-branding its PRAP work into the WMP Race Action Plan (WMP RAP) to put a distinction between the local and national work and avoid negative associations.

Data

Obtaining accurate and timely data is key to our understanding of the current position and supports the measure of the impact of projects and programmes. WMP RAP faces data challenges across a number of areas:

- Internally, capturing data about employees can be challenging as not all protected characteristics are accurately reported (some are not reported at all).
- Some internal data sets are small and do not yield any useful insights, for example, within promotion pools at higher rank that are fewer than 20 candidates.
- Data relating to interactions with the pubic relies on officers accurately recording characteristics, which is not always possible and is subject to error.
- Not every interaction with the public has a mandatory ethnicity recording prompt so many are missed.

Work is ongoing within the NPCC to address data recording (within interactions with the public) to make a standardised approach across forces and systems to work towards usable datasets (see workstream 4).

¹ See press release from June 2024 <u>NBPA-statement-on-suspension-of-support-for-NPCC-and-CoP-Race-Action-Plan.pdf (nationalbpa.com)</u>

Equality Implications

The WMP Race Action Plan seeks to address existing disparities that exist in force for its Black and Black Heritage officers and staff, and disproportionality in relation to Back communities. In addressing these, some aspects of the workstreams could attract criticism, and can be justified as follows:

Op Synergy is a pilot mentoring scheme offered to new Black and Black Heritage officers and staff. This project is in part a response to the 2nd wave of Our Black Workforce survey published in November 2023 (an anonymised survey sent to Black and Black Heritage officers and staff nationally). WMP has proactively responded to the liost of recommendations (see page 55 PowerPoint Presentation (npcc.police.uk)); one being that Senior leaders should consider mentoring Black officers/staff. This is not the only recommendation that WMP have considered and it has guided other areas of work on WMP RAP (such as community engagement and how training is delivered).

Given our lower retention and representation of Black and Black Heritage officers and staff alongside the recommendations from the survey, this is a proportionate means to achieve a legitimate result. It does not exclude officers and staff who are not Black or Black Heritage from mentoring and coaching opportunities; any officer or staff member can request a coach, mentoring from senior leaders is arranged between individuals seeking promotion informally and formally through schemes such as Fast Track.

Achievements:

Workstream 1: Represented

Lead: Chief Superintendent Phil Dolby

Learning From Our Black History (LFOBH)

Programme lead: Chief Superintendent Phil Dolby

This learning package was developed by L&D and volunteer officers, staff and members of the public to create a video and discussion presentation that covers Black Communities' history in the West Midlands and highlights key events. It begins with Windrush and features the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the Birmingham Riots, which many of our new joiners (particularly the younger ones) are not aware of.

The first version was delivered to student officers at Tally Ho to address gaps in their knowledge as part of basic training. Version 2 includes videos of lived experiences provided by our volunteer officers, staff and community advisors, drawn from the Afro-Caribbean Reference Group (ACRG) and through WMP RAP engagement events. OD&L (now Training) quality assured the product, oversaw the roll out to initial officer training and will oversee the feedback and monitoring. The roll out to force is via a distributed model of departmental facilitators and consideration is being given to a community version. Communications to force about LFOBH has been via Newsbeat during Black History Month and via the WMP RAP Board.

Facilitators

Over the summer of 2024 over 100 facilitators were trained to deliver V2 of the package in a 1-day training event. They are volunteers who identify as Black or Black Heritage or as allies from across WMP and work in pairs to facilitate the presentation, due to the emotive nature of the content. For example, some officers were involved or connected to in deaths in police custody of Black people and have been subject to prolonged investigation, others may have been subjected to microaggressions and Hate Crime.

It was presented to the ACRG in July 2024 by C.Supt Dolby and with a small amendment received their endorsement.

Facilitators are supported via a monthly meeting, chaired by C.Supt Dolby and supported by the WMP RAP PM and Coordinator to capture feedback, solve problems and drive the delivery locally. Feedback about this meeting has been positive and there is consistent attendance.

Debriefs

Facilitators post-session debrief forms are regularly submitted to keep track of progress and capture learning points, which are considered and taken forward by the WMP RAP Coordinator.

Consideration for those who have been affected by the issues discussed is ongoing. During the last quarter C.Supt Dolby met with an officer affected by a death after police contact that is referred to in the package, the officer gave positive feedback around how the subject was delivered.

Next Steps

Though this project has been running for less than one year it has already offered valuable discussion and raised points for the organisation to consider. Feedback will continue to flow through the WMP RAP team and D&I to consider. Though already in planning before the Our Black Workforce Survey 2nd Wave (results published in November 2023), the delivery style through WMP local facilitators aligns with the recommendations (external facilitators being less preferable than internal ones).

Deliverables

Though difficult to measure, LFOBH is designed to build cultural awareness and prompt discussions to improve intercultural competency when interacting with colleagues and the public. This may help to address issues of discrimination and microaggressions both internally and externally, though as cultural change takes a long time and not all officers have attended a session it is not appropriate to draw conclusions yet.

Elevate

Project Lead: Cat Stock

Elevate is a mentoring pilot where Black and Black Heritage officers and staff are mentored by others from a similar background, sometimes across police force areas so that areas with fewer Black officers were not at a disadvantage. The project is expected to run for 10 months. By the summer of 2024 the initial training for mentors and briefings for mentees had been completed, mentors and mentees had been matched and the introductory sessions were held. There are 6 mentors and 11 mentees from WMP.

Evaluation will take place at the beginning, middle and end of the project to capture effectiveness.

Next steps

Check ins with the mentees and mentors will be completed to understand their progress and identify any challenges or barriers. Evaluations will be completed and submitted to CoP/NPCC.

We will consider within WMP RAP and D&I how this cross-force pilot fits into the wider URG coaching and mentoring work we are delivering internally (such as Op Synergy below and general coaching and mentoring programmes).

Belgrave Theatre Project

Project Lead: Cat Stock

Based on the research conducted by Warwick University and the Coventry City of Culture we found that arts and culture is a very effective way to both understand and connect with people from different groups, particularly different communities when we are trying to bring about behavioural change. Fictional characters have been found to be an effective method to build empathy and convey a message without making the experience overly personal or direct; what we say about a character can be combative without creating conflict. Issues such as inclusion, bias, stereotypes, disproportionality and safety were included in their research findings and this collaborative project was borne out from one already undertaken with Belgrade Theatre (the play "After Preston").

Pilot workshops with Op Guardian and Priority Teams were held in July and August 2024, utilising "After Preston" as source material to explore the issues and stimulate thought and discussion to encourage attitudinal and behavioural change through understanding and empathy.

Additional funding was secured for wider roll out of the workshops with Neighbourhood and Response Teams, a total of 4 workshops with 3 groups with a focus on building empathy and understanding of the experiences of Black and Black Heritage communities and colleagues to inform our policing practice and behaviour.

Next Steps

The project will be evaluated based on participant feedback and other KPIs will be considered in the medium term. We are considering the applications of the project in Workstream 4 and how the project can be extended.

Internal Mentoring – Op Synergy

The Chief Constable's project matches WMP mentors of Chief Superintendent rank and police staff equivalent, with Black and Black Heritage officers and staff who are new to the force – being within their first 3 years of service. Both mentors and mentees have been briefed about how to get the most out of mentoring (and reverse mentoring) by Dr Angela Hebert, who will also assess the project's effectiveness by collecting feedback from the participants over the 12-month period.

The project aligns with the Our Black Workforce Survey recommendations from the 2nd Wave (PowerPoint Presentation (npcc.police.uk) page 55).

The project was launched at the September 2024 Senior Leaders training day and the final briefing sessions took place in January 2025. Dr Herbert's end-of-project report will be reviewed to consider how it compliments WMP wider coaching and mentoring work.

Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment

Recruitment efforts that focus on Black and Black Heritage joiners have continued using digital and in-person formats.

Digital

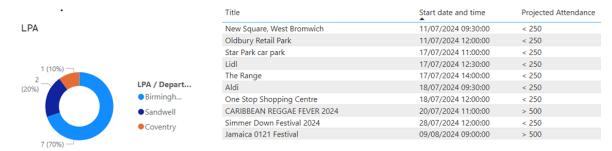
Targeted WMP recruitment ads have been released based on location with a focus on 10 postcodes which show a high population of Black communities via Mobile+.

Corporate Comms has developed a partnership with external provider, TapIn (tap in) to create specific attraction 4 week campaign on Social Media (across Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn) with Black communities. They have utilized influencers and created posts and videos, including several ride-alongs with Black officers.

In-person

Some events were not cost effective in 2024, for example at the Legacy Centre over 100 attendees were confirmed to the WMP event, however only 30 attended and 5 applications (3 PC, 2 FC) were received as a result. Recruitment and WMP RAP are reviewing learning and planning other sessions in the evenings or weekends.

The following targeted events below took place in the summer of 2024.



Retention

'Say to Stay' is a dedicated Intranet site whereby individuals who are considering leaving WMP can have a discussion with HR to discuss their options before submitting their resignation launched in 2023-4. It was paused in the summer of 2024 due to the POD review and is open again for 2025.

By summer 2024 5 say and stay requests were received from employees of Black and Black Heritage, making 4.13% of the total requests, proportionately higher than force representation of 2%. Of the 5 contacts, 4 were police officers, 1 of which was in their probationary period and 1 was police staff. All 5 remain with in WMP (as at July 2024). We do not have the data for the reason these 5 people were thinking of leaving, this will be captured going forward.

As part of the relaunch of 'Say to Stay' Black and Black Heritage officers and staff will be given a pathway to discuss concerns with ACC O'Hara via the WMP RAP Coordinator. This will speed

up the capture and dissemination of information about why these officers and staff are considering leaving and provide an opportunity for WMP to address issues and retain them, if possible.

Coaching for Black Female officers and staff

Women in Shade have been commissioned to provide a series of group coaching sessions for a cohort of 20 female officers and staff who identify as Black and Black Heritage. The first and last session will be in person with four sessions online. The objective is to build a strong cohort who support each other, to build their confidence and self-development skills and to support the retention and development of Black and Back Heritage officers and staff.

This programme was coordinated by the BAPA lead for Women of Colour in Policing, a new strand of support to acknowledge the intersectional issues and build support and awareness.

Pay Gap

Pay Gap reporting in relation to ethnicity and gender is done annually as part of the People Services functions and does not form part of the Workstream 1 tasks.

Workstream 2: Not over policed

Lead: Chief Superintendent Andy Parsons

Use of Police Powers – Stop and Search

A comprehensive review of the Stop and Search policy was carried out in 2024, a working group formed and the proposed new policy is with workstream leads for review with an estimated completion date of April 2025. It includes: the Restorative Justice Pilot for Stop and Search, aligns with PSD processes and clarifies the grounds for searching based on the smell of cannabis. The updated guidance for Section 60 searches has already been published on Newsbeat and guidance can be found on the WMP RAP Intranet page.

To enable the roll out of the new policy and approaches Training are building a suite of products for the Section 60 policy and Stop and Search policy, including refresher training for all officers and staff, which will feature trauma awareness. Updated guidance will also feature on Op Excellence training for newly promoted sergeants.

A robust scrutiny panel framework is in place and Superintendent Allan Green leads the national working group to review their approach, though there is no deadline for this work.

Data Capture

The QR code for searches has been introduced and working is ongoing to make offering the QR code a mandatory field in 2025. This captures feedback from the person who has been subject to a search, including asking for their ethnicity, to increase recording of ethnicity data enabling better understanding of police powers use with regard ethnicity.

Storage of BWV has been extended to retention for 12 months instead of the previous 3 month period and there is ongoing work to increase the recording of compliant handcuffing as a use of force.

Deliverables

We anticipate that by the end of 2025-6 there will be more consistent ethnicity data available from Stop and Search and compliant handcuffing, with an updated Stop and Search policy and corresponding training products.

S163a App

Pilot recording has been conducted and FET briefed on the outcomes. The development team are continuing to work on improving recording by officers, which will include Stop and Search and other traffic apps within it to avoid duplication and reduce administration time. The user requirements and design have been scoped and explored, however, a number of amendments are still required to ensure the app is aligned to other recording systems rather than being standalone.

IT continue to work on capacity and prioritisation, however Operations will utilise Microsoft 365 to build an app and trial a version, though this is still to be completed and tested.

Workstream3: Involved

Lead: Kate Quilley

Communications objectives and strategy

The communications objective for WMP RAP is to: Raise awareness of the work WMP is carrying out to improve the relationship between our Black communities and the police, generating trust and confidence.

- Externally consistent targeted messaging sharing information of force activity as part of BAU, highlighting local initiatives, good practice and successes
- Internally consistent updates about work supporting WMP RAP including blogs and sharing of best practice, alongside national updates
- Regularly featuring Black officers in BAU comms both internally and externally
- Work with NPCC WMP RAP comms lead share all WMP proactive comms with national comms team to feature in their content and give a wider platform
- Work closely with NPCC comms team to ensure we're aware of good examples and best practise from other forces
- Attend WMP RAP board for updates we can use
- Stakeholder mapping for our Black communities understand who the key contacts are and what channels they have access to in order to carry our messages wider into the community

• Amplify the national paid for opportunities in The Voice and The Phoenix newspapers, as well as on the Ujima Radio and New Style Radio stations

The communications leads in WMP RAP work across all the workstreams to cascade massages, the work below will touch upon the other workstreams.

Communications and Campaigns

Various content has been created and shared across WMP Social Media channels, up to the summer of 2024:

- Created a video with the Coventry Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel featuring member of the community
- Stephen Lawrence Day videos and updates from event held in WMP
- QR code communications (in relation to Stop and Search) for internal and external audiences to raise awareness and encourage participation (this was used as a national example of good working practise at the national WMP RAP board), it had 1,500 Intranet views by July 2024
- Ensuring WMP RAP page on new SOH site features regular updates so it can be a 'hub' for all proactive communications
- · Briefing for ACC O'Hara for BBC Radio WM interview

WMP Corporate Communications teams have been working closely with the national team on development of a national WMP RAP campaign that can be localised for specific forces. They have also been working with BAPA to get a Black work experience student into Corporate Comms to give feedback specifically on engagement and contact for Black communities, the candidate has been selected and this work experience will happen in 2025.

The team has identified key officers and staff who can assist getting their communications content and strategy right, including Aston PCSO Tamima Bukhari to build on the work she's doing with the Somali community and the facilitators and SPOCs for LFOBH training.

They continue to work with recruitment around future targeted campaigns (see update in workstream 1).

Internal engagement

BAPA continues to support engagement with key cultural calendar dates marked – such as Stephen Lawrence Day and Black History Month. They make opportunities to give updates to their membership on WMP RAP and its progress as well as engaging Black Officers and staff in their events.

External Engagement

In partnership with local SPOCs the WMP RAP coordinator oversees engagement events to meet with local communities and have meaningful dialogue, the most recent of which was in Sandwell in January 2025. Feedback is captured and local officers build new connections to continue the conversation and maintain trust. Over 2024-25 there were a number of events that involved the recruitment team and that built on local engagement effort through partnerships and neighbourhood teams.

More work will be done in 2025 to engage with scrutiny panels and IAGs to capture more perspectives from Black communities, at present the LFOBH product has been delivered to the Afro-Caribbean Reference Group (ACRG) and Stop and Search panels have been consulted about use of the QR code.

WMP Police Museum

The Black History Working Group was formed following feedback from Black and Black Heritage officers and staff during Black History Month. They engaged with the content and found it interesting, but wondered why we did not have any permanent exhibitions reflecting the diverse contributions to policing in our museum. The group was formed in January 2025 and has a number of Black and Black Heritage officers and staff contributing ideas and informing new initiatives for the museum. We are working to build meaningful engagement with Black and Black Heritage communities by touching on events and aspects of policing that have significance and relevance.

Deliverables

More events and exhibits that relate to the experiences of Black and Black Heritage people with WMP and the communities we serve.

Workstream 4: Not under protected

Lead: Chief Superintendent: Ed Foster

Undertake analysis to identify which crime types have the most disproportional impact on Black people and the service level that Black victims receive.

Lead: Andy Maybury

- What. 'Undertake analysis to identify those crime types most disproportionately impacting on Black people and the service level that Black victims receive. This analysis will form the basis of ensuring quality of service.'
- **How**. 'The NPCC will use the Office for National Statistics Crime Severity Score methodology to map crime and harm that has an impact on Black communities.'

WMP were one of two 'icebreaker forces' supporting this action (Hampshire & IOW being the other). WMP supported both NPCC steering and working groups to scope appropriate approach and metrics. The aspiration was for icebreaker forces to develop action plans based on NPCC analysis, with lessons identified being shared nationally.

NPCC requested data from icebreaker forces based on workstream steering group and working group agreements. Andy Maybury commissioned this work through the Data Analytics Lab (DAL) and WMP Data delivered to NPCC November 2023 through the DAL. Circa 1.4 million lines of data and highlighting data vulnerabilities to NPCC. This includes circa 65% of the self-declared ethnicity being null — as it's often not a mandatory field. Additionally, without context, there is a risk of reputational damage through misinterpretation/inference.

Data and Disparity Event Workstream 4 National WMP RAP was held on 23 April 2024, stated that '...it will not be possible to adequately map out crime harm racial disparities until the data quality for

victim ethnicity improves significantly'. Andy Maybury has asked them to clarify next steps from a national perspective.

The NPCC has being doing work around national standards for data collection across forces and IT platforms which is in progress outside of the WMP RAP space and yet to be signed off, this may account for the delay in confirmation.

Mental Health - RCRP

Lead: Chief Superintendent Kim Madill

Dip sampling of Right Care, Right Person logs has been implemented via the Vulnerability Desk in Force contact. Since go live monthly appropriate attendance rates have been between 92-95% meaning WMP are making excellent RCRP deployment decisions

Mental Health features as a concern in our equality analysis specifically relation to the Black Community and implementation of RCRP. Since go live there has been a change in Section 136 detentions seeing a reduction from approx. 214 detentions per month to 196 detentions over the first 4 months post go live. This is positive as over 70% of police detentions do not result in the detainee being sectioned. Whilst this data is not broken down currently into ethnicity this positive impact should be felt across all communities.

Tactical workshops were planned for July and September with partners to ensure coordinated delivery of phases 3 and 4. One of the workshops will focus on multi-agency KPI and data collection that should lead to better reporting frameworks. Ethnicity will be considered as part of this approach.

RCRP continues to be managed in a separate MH/RCRP governance board chaired by ACC Bell.

Black Workforce Survey

The second wave of the survey was carried out in April 2023 and the results published in November 2023. The full version of the results can be found here - <u>PowerPoint Presentation (npcc.police.uk)</u>

Key themes from the national report

- Black and Black Heritage officer and staff experience race related incidents at work and many incidents involved discriminatory behaviour that happened in the office. This includes peers, managers and senior managers.
- There is a general perception that they have to work harder to progress their career due to their ethnicity, with perceptions that the organisation is not supportive of them being more prevalent than that their line manager is not supportive.
- 60% had thought about leaving in the last 12 months. The reasons were broadly similar to why many officers leave (work life balance, workload etc.) and 27% reported that experience of discrimination or harassment was also a factor. The top reason was the impact on heath and wellbeing at 51%.
- Not having a supportive line manager has a strong correlation with wanting to leave.

- There is a lack of understanding of Positive Action across the organisation.

Key points from the WMP feedback

- There are concerns around the transparency of promotions processes and how WMP conversations are used to highlight aspirations for promotions.
- Line managers lack knowledge on cultural awareness and how to manage microaggressions, harassment and bullying, particularly to deal with those incidents themselves rather than refer to PSD.
- There is a need for mentoring and role modelling from senior leadership.
- There is a lack of understanding of Positive Action across WMP.
- Peers across the organisation should be trained to understand the lived experiences of Black and Black Heritage colleagues, racism and how to interact with people from different cultures when public facing.
- They would like to see consistent meaningful engagement with Black Communities and encourage them to join policing.

Action on feedback

There are a number of suggestions for action, which are in progress or in planning.

WMP	Improve training for line managers (including action to take) around microaggression, harassment and bullying	D&I are working with Training and Leadership Development Team to improve the content on Op Excellence and build more cultural competence-based knowledge builders and guides. LFOBH includes discussions on racism and microaggressions delivered in an empathetic and powerful way, though not targeted at line managers they are among the attendees
WMP	Increase cultural competence across the force	D&I & WMP RAP Coordinator are considering options for 2025-6 including maximising cultural calendar events and partnering with PSD Learning and Intervention Team, LFOBH also contributes to cultural awareness
WMP	Improve the transparency of promotions processes	Quality Assessors from BAPA and other staff networks attend promotions boards, work is ongoing to develop support for people interested in promotion via the staff networks

WMP & National	Consistent and meaningful engagement with Black Communities to encourage recruitment	WMP RAP workstream 3 has begun a number of digital and in person engagement events, the police museum is building a network of local community influencers and partnership contacts, efforts to have meaningful dialogue with them will continue
WMP & National	Increase knowledge on Positive Action and its benefits	To be developed in 2025
WMP & National	Provide senior leader mentorship	Op Synergy has been launched
National	Improve feedback processes and aim to build trust, inclusivity and promote healthy challenge	The grievance process has been changed in 2024 to a local resolution model and there is scope to involve local HR to enable dispute resolution supported by D&I/WMP RAP colleagues when appropriate, how to increase awareness of this is being explored (likely to sit in People Board and feed back to WMP RAP Board)
National	Have training delivered by internal trainers rather than external providers	LFOBH in workstream 1 has been based around this principle and received positive feedback