

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION - OFFICIAL

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS - Management

DISCLOSABLE (FOI / PUBLICATION SCHEME) - Yes



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# Report

**Report to:** BTPA Full Authority Committee  
**Date:** 27/09/2022  
**Subject:** Accelerated Entry Scheme  
**For:** Noting

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## Executive Summary

This report concerns the introduction of the Detective Constable (DC) Accelerated Entry Scheme (AES) within British Transport Police (BTP). The scheme launched in June 2022 and has reached the end of the first round of recruitment. The first DC AES recruits begin training on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022. This interim report has been compiled to share learning from this first recruitment phase and respond to questions raised by members at the preceding Full Authority Committee – and is structured in direct answer to questions posed both in Committee and informally.

The first recruitment campaign for BTP's DC AES met its aim of attracting 20 new recruits into the Crime command. The scheme is achieving positive results in attracting those from more diverse backgrounds, providing a new avenue through which those with the skills and abilities to become Detectives, but who would otherwise decide against policing due to the frontline, uniform aspects, can pursue policing as a career.

Valuable data has been gathered during the course of this first intake, which will be used to improve future schemes and recruitment across the force.

## Main Report

This interim report has been created to record learning from the implementation of the Detective Constable Accelerated Entry Scheme within British Transport Police.

An accelerated entry scheme for detectives was requested by the Senior Leadership team in 2021 and work began on researching similar programmes in June 2021. The findings of the research phase then informed the design considerations of the BTP model.

## **Scheme Aims & Candidate Selection**

### ***Any briefing to the project team in terms of what would 'good' look like, and what did it contain?***

The Scheme was requested to provide a new recruitment route for detectives. This was necessitated both to address the high turnover of investigators within the force and also to provide opportunities to diversify the CID Command by reaching communities outside of the traditional recruitment pools.

The design lead was given full autonomy as to how this would be achieved with the restriction that the scheme could only be funded from existing departmental budgets. However, the emphasis from that start was to identify and recruit individuals capable of embracing and achieving not only the initial selection process but to go on to be successful within the wider CID portfolio.

### ***What were the core competencies of the ideal applicant?***

The core competencies required for the detective role are set out in the College of Policing's (COP) Detective 'Key Responsibilities'. The responsibilities (below) were then translated into a question set and marking criteria in order to interview candidates on their suitability to meet the competencies.

Prior to arriving at the DC interview, the candidates had already taken part in answering the Police Constable application form questions and the PC interview. Both of these are based on the Competencies Values framework. Having successfully passed assessment against the CVF the DC interview was then seen as an opportunity to assess the candidates against the Detective specialism.

### ***What skills-based methodology was used for selection. Was diversity a part of that?***

The selection process is divided into several sections. This allows for parity against the standards all recruits are expected to pass to ensure both quality assurance and provide DC AES recruits legitimacy in the eyes of the rank and file of police officers within the force.

The application form, online competency testing and PC interview remained the same as for all other recruit processes. The PC interview in the DC AES interview served as a first stage interview which recruits were required to pass in order to progress onto the second stage and final Detective Constable interview.

The application form and PC interview, as mentioned above, is based solely on the CVF.

The DC interview, whilst still adhering to the CVF, utilises marking criteria which is reflective of the role and responsibilities of a Detective.

All panels were aware of the equalities act and force policy on positive action. The methodology of the scheme was to be successful in reaching a higher than average number of Female and Minority Ethnic candidates. This meant that by the DC interview stage of the process a diverse range of candidates had been successful.

## **Diversity & engagement**

### ***How was 'diversity' made a theme of the recruitment exercise?***

The scheme was given the remit of contributing to the diversification of the Crime Command from the outset. This informed decision making at each stage of the scheme and recruitment campaign design.

During the research and planning stage the early scheme framework was taken to the 'Diversity Round Table' board chaired by Chief Superintendent Denis Murray. Consultation was also conducted with both the forces Positive Action Recruitment Team (PACT) and the Female Police Officer's association.

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After the scheme's recruitment campaign had been launched, Supt. Tim Tubbs, from COP was invited to critique the process. This critical friend role was vital in ensuring a robust examination of the scheme's diversity engagement and overall recruitment process. Supt. Tubbs was positive about the DC AES standalone processes but had recommendations as to how existing BTP recruitment could be improved.

Approaching the recruitment campaign with diversity at the forefront of the campaign shaped and directed the process. Informing the choice of advertisement platforms, images and wording and supporting events. This is explored in more detail in the Recruitment Campaign section below.

### ***How did they undertake outreach?***

Outreach was performed a number of different ways. The traditional route of recruitment events were attended by the force PART team and they were fully briefed on what the DC AES was and how individuals could apply.

Another approach was pursued due to the unique aims of the DC AES in which social media on a variety of platforms was utilised. The choice of platforms was spread in order to ensure a wide coverage of selected locations – London, Birmingham and Manchester. These locations would be the 'Hub' locations in which recruits would be placed in order to ensure adequate support for trainees.

By utilising social media platforms, and aiming the advertisements at female and ethnic minority candidates, the scheme aimed to spark their interest, keep them engaged and translate that to applications.

In order to support this, the scheme aimed to replicate the traditional outreach method online to ensure potential recruits could access information, ask questions and see if the work of Detectives and Policing in general was for them. The online sessions were therefore set up using personnel from the AES design and training team as well as personnel from different ranks across CID and the Crime Command to provide the best illustration as to what a career as a Detective could be and mean.

The format took the form of candidates submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) in attending an information event by clicking on the social media campaign adverts. Events were then set up for morning and evening sessions over four (4) days, inclusive of one weekend day.

Upon attending an online information event, candidates were then given a brief talk on the work of BTP and the Crime Command. Crime personnel then took them through their role and the host asked questions related to the best and worst parts of the job. The Crime personnel were briefed before hand to be open and honest in their replies and not avoid the more negative aspects of the job. This enabled a very frank insight into the work and gave candidates the chance to make an informed decision.

Out of 700+ candidates who expressed an interest in attending the online events 115 applications were received.

### **Was there a 'diversity champion' to the project?**

There was not a Diversity Champion assigned specifically to the project, as the remit of the scheme was so firmly rooted in the aim of increasing diversity that each department and team member was charged with delivering diversity as part of their role. The design lead oversaw the implementation of these aims and provided overall project management the scheme's planning and launch and it was felt that the mission statement on this was clearly understood.

Diversity champions and other key personnel from around the organisation were engaged with during the research and planning stages of the scheme. Most notably; Chief Superintendent Denis Murray, Superintendent Alison Evans (BTP FPA), Superintendent Tim Tubbs and Detective Chief Inspector David Udomiahye. The personnel consulted offered both feedback and guidance in relation to the scheme.

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Further to those above, Crime personnel from a diverse range of backgrounds across the departments who took part in the information sessions also fed back their views on the scheme and how the proposed engagement would work.

## **Recruitment campaign**

### ***How did they arrive at the words in the advertisement?***

A budget of £5,000 was secured from the recruitment budget in order to conduct a bespoke and standalone advertising campaign for the DC AES.

The chosen medium of social media platforms dictated the campaign approach. Due to the way in which social media is consumed the advert used would have to grab the attention quickly and communicate in simple terms what was on offer. This worked on the assumption that the target audience of people interested in working as a detective would be attracted by police iconography and wording that invited them to consider the being a Detective.

During the consultation phase of the recruitment campaign research was looked at in regard to the differences in gender perceptions of job advertisement and the type of wording that would appeal to the genders as well as strike a neutral balance.

Roughly speaking the findings were that male candidates would often apply for roles despite only having a small number of the requirements. Whilst female candidates often only applied for a role if they had all requirements.

These findings were applied to job description which would later feature in the candidate information packs but also to the advertising campaign itself. Setting a brief that the iconography used should be a female weighted and utilise individuals from visibly minority ethnic backgrounds.

The brief also stipulated that the main advert for the campaign should not show a particular face.

The reason for the above decisions was that male candidates were likely to apply whatever the iconography was used. However, by using female centred imagery, combined with minority ethnic appearance, the intention was to encourage those from a wide range of backgrounds to apply.

The wording asking the question "Could you be a Detective?" was intentionally plain and simple. Designed to grab the attention of someone scrolling through their social media feed who had an interest in the specific job role. This brief was communicated and work then began in relation to engaging a central advertising company to map out the social media campaign. However, due to a policy change it was not possible to target advertisement based on gender or ethnicity on any platform owned by the META group who own Facebook, Instagram and other popular sites. It was also deemed, by the external government contracted advertising company, to be too work intensive to advertise using interests and other algorithms to hit target audiences. A decision was then made to run the advert as it was and rely on the advert visuals to engage with candidates.

The advert was released on Facebook, Instagram, Linked in and Twitter. In the case of Instagram, the advert was only shown on the stories section and the use of Twitter was restricted to promotion from the Chief Constable's Twitter account and force Twitter feed.

This approach proved successful and over seven hundred candidates responded to the advertisement, booking themselves into expression of interest sessions to find out more about the role of Detective.

### ***How did they 'look after' applicants through the stages?***

A recruitment advisor was dedicated to the DC AES scheme and others within the recruitment department also supported the application and selection process when the demand was high. The

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engagement provided by the advisor underpinned the candidate journey and supported the training and design leads in their engagement with individuals throughout.

Online PART preparation sessions took place before the PC interviews for female and Minority Ethnic candidates. This was followed by an online session for all successful candidates to aid in preparing them for the DC interview stage.

Feedback from candidates attending these sessions was positive.

The DC AES training lead is also responsible for ongoing engagement with all candidates as they move toward their start dates. This role also acts a mentor to the recruits throughout their training.

### Was there any use made of one 2 ones with candidates, and at what stage of selection?

One-to-ones were considered and planned for the information session stage of the recruitment process with the aim being to recreate an outreach scenario in which a person approaches a BTP stand at a recruitment event and decides which of the two or three officers standing behind it they feel most comfortable speaking to. One-to-ones were intended to take place after the main information events with a diary system in order to give candidates a choice of personnel they could approach based on who they believed would be best placed to answer their questions. However, due to the level of demand for the online events it was not feasible to implement one-to-ones with the limited number of staff available. Instead, extended Q & A sessions took place at the end of each talk.

### Results and learning

The DC AES is presently meeting its objectives and provides a unique insight into strategies and recruitment adaptations that could be utilised across force recruitment.

At each stage of the process data was capture as to the success and attrition rates which enabled the scheme to examine where attrition was highest:

	Total	Female	Ethnic Minority
Applications Received	115	59	36
Applications Received		51%	31%
Eligibility Sift Passes	106	55	32
Eligibility Sift Fails	4	2	2
Eligibility Sift Pass Rate	96%	96%	94%
Shortlist Passes	89	48	25
Shortlist Fails	17	7	7
Shortlist Pass Rate	84%	87%	78%
Testing Passes	56	28	12
Testing Fails	26	16	5
Testing Pass Rate	68%	64%	71%
Interview Passes	24	13	6
Interview Fails	14	7	3

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Interview Pass Rate	<b>63%</b>	65%	67%
Stage 2 Passes	<b>22</b>	12	4
Stage 2 Fails	<b>5</b>	2	0
Stage 2 Pass Rate	<b>81%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>100%</b>

54.5%	18.2%
Female	EM

That 51% female and 31% Minority Ethnic candidates submitted applications is seen as an encouraging response to the DC AES recruitment campaign. 22 candidates were then offered roles after successfully completing the recruitment process and DC stage interview. Of the 22 successful candidates 55% were Female and 18% were from an Minority Ethnic background.

Those who passed the PC stage interview but failed to pass the DC stage interview were offered PC roles within the force in order to retain some of the candidates who were not successful.

There is learning to be gained from both the positives of this scheme and the attrition rates, particularly those seen amongst Minority Ethnic candidates.

This work is ongoing and will be applied to the next DC AES intake, commencing on 03<sup>rd</sup> October 2022.

**REPORT ENDS**

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