

PABEW Recommendations on Winsor Part Two

In March 2012 the Home Secretary wrote to the Independent Chair of the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales (PABEW) directing the Board to consider a number of recommendations from the Final Report of the Winsor Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions. Some had a deadline of July 2012 while some have a deadline of July 2013. Discussion on these recommendations at PABEW took place in parallel to the consideration of a number of other recommendations from the Winsor Final Report by the Police Negotiating Board. At the PABEW meeting on 24 July 2012 the Board reached unanimous agreement on the recommendations set out below.

Recommendation 3 asked the PABEW to consider requiring candidates for appointment to a police force to have either a Level 3 qualification, or a police qualification or service as a special constable or service as a PCSO. The Board agreed that Level 3 achievement is appropriate to the demands of modern policing. The Board recommended that chief officers should have discretion to accept candidates who do not hold a formal Level 3 certificate if there is evidence to show that the training and experience of the candidate is equivalent to Level 3.

Recommendation 5 was that the pass mark for the 2013 SEARCH assessment process should be raised to at least 70 percent. The Board recommended that this recommendation be rejected. SEARCH is a psychometric assessment and is not designed to monitor academic thresholds. Furthermore, insufficient consideration was given by Winsor to the consequences of the proposal, in particular the effect it would have on the pass rate, which would result in only 2.8 percent of candidates passing, together with significant increases in the costs.

Recommendations 10, 11, 12 and 21 concerned the accelerated promotion scheme. The Board was not asked by the Home Secretary to consider the design of the proposed accelerated promotion scheme, which was deemed to be a matter for the College of Policing. The Board was unable to reach a decision on these recommendations without details of the scheme design being available to it. It was agreed that these recommendations should be considered by PABEW once details of the scheme had been provided.

Recommendation 16 was that a provision be introduced to enable police officers to be seconded to organisations outside policing for a period not exceeding five years. The Board unanimously agreed this recommendation.

Recommendation 17 was that officers within five years of leaving the service should be allowed to return at the rank they last held, while Recommendation 18 was that returning officers should be subject to a probationary period of six months. The Board unanimously agreed both of these recommendations.

Recommendation 23 was that the eligible experience for a Chief Constable set out in Police Regulations be amended to include overseas service in a common law jurisdiction which practises policing by consent. The Board noted that the issue of principle involved was one for Parliament, but noted neither "common-law jurisdiction" nor "policing by consent" were precise terms. The Board recommended that, in the event that Parliament approved the principle of overseas experience

rendering a candidate eligible for appointment, the countries in which such experience could be gained should be specifically named in the Determination made under Regulation 11.

However, **Recommendation 26 of the Winsor Final Report suggested removing the requirement in respect of the minimum length or place of service required to become a Chief Constable for overseas candidates. The view of the Board was that it is difficult to see why the length of senior experience should be less for an overseas candidate than a UK candidate. The Board recommended that the two years' experience requirement remains for all candidates, and that this be at ACC/Commander level or above, or an equivalent level in an eligible overseas force, should Parliament approve the principle of overseas experience rendering a candidate eligible for appointment.** The Board also noted that British citizenship is a minimum requirement for employment in most national security and secret intelligence roles. Consequently it further recommended that, should Parliament approve the principle of overseas experience rendering a candidate eligible for appointment as a Chief Constable, it would be appropriate for Parliament to determine whether a successful overseas candidate should be required to obtain British citizenship prior to taking up post, and to relinquish any non-British citizenship.

Recommendation 33 was that a fitness test should be introduced in September 2013 for all police officers and staff required to undertake personal safety training, with those who fail the test three times being subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedures. The Board accepted the recommendation for an annual fitness test at level 5:4 on the shuttle run. However, it recommended that failure should not lead to disciplinary action. In the first instance supportive action should be offered to remedy the matter and then, if it remains unresolved, Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures should be initiated. The Board does not support the use of disciplinary measures for those who fail.

Recommendations 34, 35 and 36 related to the introduction of an annual physical fitness test should be introduced for all police officers in England and Wales, equivalent to the test used for recruits in the Police Service of Northern Ireland. These recommendations were referred to the PABEW with a deadline of July 2013, but have been referred back to the Home Secretary with a recommendation that this is not pursued until the introduction of the fitness test under recommendation 33 has been evaluated.

Winsor also suggested, in Recommendation 37, new national fitness tests for specialist police officer roles. Given that the PABEW had recently recommended fitness standards for specialist posts in the police service which were endorsed and published by ACPO, the Board took the view that the current standards for specialist posts do adequately replicate the demands of the job. Consequently the Board did not accept recommendation 37 but proposed the impact of the existing standards should be reviewed after two years.