


Officers vote against affirmative action but for a service which reflects diversity

 The police service should not prioritise recruits from ethnic minorities but should be more representative of the communities it serves, according to a debate on diversity.

Officers voted overwhelmingly against introducing affirmative action to reach Home Office targets on increasing the numbers of ethnic minority officers in the service.

Anesta Weekes QC, a member of the Morris Inquiry Team Panel, said that if black officers and more women were to come forward into the service that they would have to come with 'merit and respect'.

She paid tribute to the work of the National Black Police Association but said that if there is anything that takes away from that, potentially affirmative action, then the 'whole thing falls apart'.

Everett Henry, assistant HM Inspector, said he welcomed the debate on affirmative action and



Diversity panel get involved in debate with delegates

added that it should be on the agenda as forces will not be able to hit targets for recruiting ethnic minority officers without thinking of ways to achieve such objectives.

He added: 'I would like to see people recruited on merit but we will not hit these targets.'

One officer from Somerset said that such a move would be moving the goal posts and

would amount to discrimination in itself.

He said the answer to being a more representative service was more 'communication and understanding'.

Ian Rennie, secretary of the Federation's equality sub-committee, said: 'I think the message for the day is to look forward.'

He suggested the police service had to start learning les-


sons from its mistakes very quickly.

Jan Berry, chairman of the Federation, said: 'We need to work together and look forward and not back.'

Mrs Berry added that the Federation need to sit down with all the support groups and work out exactly how they can do that.



Calls for federation to push for a reserve seat for ethnic minority officers to promote diversity

 A Greater Manchester officer called on the Federation to create a reserve seat for officers from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Mohammed Sultan, from Greater Manchester Federation, said that women officers being given a reserve seat at the Federation had 'helped tremendously' and something similar should be done for officers from ethnic minorities.

He said that the police service had 'come a long way' since he joined more than 20 years ago but that more needed to be done to change the mind set of some chief officers, police officers and police staff.

Another officer from the Met Police called for the Federation to be 'visionary' and push to make the agenda and have a reserve seat for officers from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Jan Berry, chairman of the Federation, has said that the Federation are trying to encourage more officers from diverse backgrounds through the 'Make a Difference' campaign.

Currently it is against the law to create such a reserve seat but Mrs Berry said it is something the Federation would like to change in order to have a more representative organisation.



Service should be representative: Jan Berry

Have your say on the issues:

Post or E-mail your letters to:

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The Police Federation wants:

- Conference fully endorsed the statement that if the police service more accurately reflected the community it serves it would be more effective.
- Conference overwhelmingly rejected affirmative action.