



# **EQUALITY REPORT 2023**

Police Federation of England & Wales

## Requirements for PFEW

The Police Federation Regulations place certain legal requirements upon the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW). In relation to equality matters these are set out in Regulation 15 PFR 2017:

The PFEW is required, in accordance with Federation rules, to:

- (a) Assess and then publish information relating to the protected characteristic of people in the following parts of the Federation:
  - Federation members;
  - members of the Federation branches;
  - members of all the Federation bodies;
  - the Federation Officers; and
  - delegates to the annual conference;
  
- (b) annually report on the steps it is taking to advance equality of opportunity in the Federation between those who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not share it; and
  
- (c) include in such report information on the steps the Federation is taking to encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in the Federation where participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

## Data Available After the National Electoral Arrangements (NEA) – Positive Action Rationale

Following the 2021/22 triennial elections, PFEW assessed the diversity of its representatives at all levels of the organisation. Information was gathered in relation to sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, disability, religion, and age. The data in this report has been compared from the data that was gathered prior to changes to our election processes in 2016 and at the previous triennial elections in 2018. Reliable data was not available for the characteristics of PFEW's membership, other than sex and ethnicity.

Data was gathered to examine the level, if any, of underrepresented groups within PFEW. This examination was completed at all levels of the organisation from local federation representatives to National Board members. The steps taken around positive action, which includes safeguarding of seats, from the data gathered in 2016 and 2018 as compared to 2021/22 regarding the representation for women and people from ethnic minority groups, is reflected as follows:

- The representation of women on the National Board in 2021/22 remained at 29%, as it had been in 2018, which compares to 20% in 2016 prior to our changes to election processes.
- The representation of women on the National Council decreased by 2 percentage points from 25% in 2018 to 23% in 2021/22. Data is not available for an equivalent body to the National Council prior to 2018.
- The overall number of women federation representatives rose from 23% in 2018 to 24% in 2021/22. Prior to our changes in 2016 this figure stood at only 11%.
  
- The representation of people from ethnic minority backgrounds on the National Board reduced from 13% in 2018 to 8% in 2021/22. Prior to the changes in 2016 this figure stood at 7%.
- The number of people from ethnic minority backgrounds on the National Council remained the same at 7%. Data is not available for an equivalent body to the National Council prior to 2018.
- The overall number of federation representatives from ethnic minority backgrounds rose from 8% in 2018 to 11% in 2021/22. Prior to our changes in 2016 this figure stood at only 4%.

The information gathered did not alter the position from most recent elections that found that women were underrepresented at all levels of the organisation; and that, more generally, further work continues to be required to ensure adequate participation of all those with protected characteristics. However, the evidence provided leads to the conclusion that steps around positive action have assisted in making the federation significantly more representative for women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds since 2016 (see analysis later in this report).

The main findings of the 2021/22 assessment in relation to sex were:

**PFEW Membership Data – Sex**

**30%** of Members are women.

**PFEW Representative Data – Sex**

**29%** of the National Board are women.

**23%** of the National Council are women.

**24%** of all Federation representatives are women.

At a Branch level, in all 43 Branches the proportion of women representatives was less than the proportion of women members in the Branch.

The main findings of the 2021/22 assessment in relation to ethnicity were:

**PFEW Membership Data – people from ethnic minority backgrounds**

**7%** of members were people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

**PFEW Representative Data – people from ethnic minority backgrounds**

**8%** of the National Board were people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

**7%** of the National Council were people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

**11%** of all Federation representatives are people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

At a Branch level, 38 of PFEW's 43 branches have representation by people from ethnic minority backgrounds at Branch Council/workplace representative level.

## **Steps the Federation has, and is, undertaking to advance equality of opportunity in the Federation between those who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.**

PFEW agreed as an organisation that post the first triennial elections under the new 2018 Rules and Regulations the organisation would pause to reflect and seek feedback and analysis regarding how the elections went.

The organisation also agreed that it would only make minimal changes and adjustments to assist with the organisation of the elections, in line with the agreement that no fundamental changes would be made to the make-up of the NEA until the second cycle of triennial elections was concluded.

PFEW has evaluated the success of the safeguarding steps taken and carefully considered, with the help of legal advice, whether it was lawful and necessary for such steps to continue for a further election period. Consultation was undertaken with stakeholders within the Federation, and despite the positive action steps causing some difficulties with the administration of the election process for larger forces, it was agreed that the positive action steps put in place for women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds should continue without change.

The statistics in the previous section highlight PFEW's success in ensuring that the total number of women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds participating in the Federation has steadily increased. There have been continuous increases at each election cycle.

In relation to the National Board and National Council there was either no change or a decrease in percentage of women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds between 2018 and 2021/22. It should be borne in mind however that the number of people in these data sets are considerably lower than the total number of representatives. As such a single retirement can significantly affect the total percentage, especially in relation to the National Board. Our broader aim is that we seek to ensure that representation on the National Board and National Council remain broadly in line with the representation amongst all Representatives. We are content that this remains the case.

This does not mean, however, that we are complacent or that there is not still work to do. The percentage of all women Federation representatives remains significantly lower than the percentage of women members. Whilst the increase between election cycles (from 11% to 23% to 24%) is welcome and a positive reflection of activity to date, our work must continue to encourage more women to stand for election. We want to see continued movement in the direction we have seen to date.

Equally, whilst the percentage of all Federation representatives from minority ethnic backgrounds has improved significantly (from 4% to 8% to 11%) and now exceeds the percentage of the membership at the last election (7%), we know from the data from the police uplift programme that our membership is becoming increasingly diverse. The large number of new recruits to the service is more diverse than ever, and as such we do not intend to stop our work now, but instead look to how we can sustain and build on what we have achieved to date in order to continue to remain representative.

We will, once again, seek to implement positive action initiatives at the next election, however, we continue to work towards our goals in between election cycles. Branch Boards are responsible for filling casual vacancies outside of the national election process and we have actively encouraged and supported Branches to use positive action in filling these vacancies. This work is a continuous endeavour.

**Steps the Federation is taking to encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in the Federation where participation by such persons is disproportionately low.**

Four equality groups to support underrepresented officers in the organisation have been established (women, race and religion, LGBT+ and disability). These groups exist to provide a safe space and networking opportunities for federation representatives who share a protected characteristic.

In addition to these internal self-organised groups, PFEW has continued its sponsorship of the Police Association of Strategic Leaders (PASL), a network for diversity staff support networks in the service. This work is vital to ensure that there is a working relationship between PFEW and non-statutory staff diversity networks within policing.

The Federation continues to support officers through advice locally, and ultimately, through Employment Tribunals where necessary. These are an important and visible way in which the Federation supports equality issues and shows its members that it is actively engaged in their welfare. PFEW will continue to legally challenge the bad decisions and discriminatory behaviour that our officers report to us. We continue to offer outstanding support to officers that approach us, and effectively train representatives to deliver a platinum service to the officers that the local Equality Leads deal with within forces.

We continue to ensure that our Equality Lead Officers, of which there is one in all 43 Branches, are best placed to provide these services, and receive the continuous professional development offer. We have a key responsibility to input into regulatory changes, and uniquely, as a staff association, the opportunity to do so.

We use our voice as a leading organisation in the policing landscape to raise issues that are more likely to concern our members from minority or under-represented sections of the service; we do this through the national and local forums we represent our members at, but also directly to members through our communications.

We believe the active demonstration of our commitment to equality in the police service encourages our diverse membership to access our services and get involved in their Federation. In the last year, for example, we have publicly raised issues relating to sexual harassment, provision of neurodiversity assessments, reasonable adjustments for disabled officers, time off for dependants and parental leave. We use our communication channels to celebrate the diversity of the police workforce and contribute to national initiatives such as the Police Race Action Plan, to help shape the change the service needs.