

Is Having an Ageing Workforce a Problem – or an Opportunity?

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1.0 Introduction

As part of the Aspire Business Partner Programme, run by North West Employers and CIPD, this group undertook some research into the topic of having an ageing workforce. It combined research from both Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and Sandwell MBC (SMBC).

Over a period of time it has come to be realised that in order to maintain an adequate level of deployable resources we will rely more heavily on the older end of the workforce market. This is supported by the national statistics available showing the population and workforce demographic changes over the last couple of decades and predictions for the future. Our question was to consider – is this a problem or an opportunity?

We have determined through research the support managers and non-managers require to make the most of all the available learning and good practice they can employ in order to maximise the most effective use of their human resources.

We utilised two different survey questionnaires to determine exactly what our organisation staff wanted in terms of support and how might we enable them to work in an effective way.

Additionally, we also hoped to: learn from those completing the survey; use the survey to generate awareness around our current policies; as well as helping us to improve and streamline our policies and processes.

The surveys were circulated and responded over a two-week period and involved around 500 managers and non-managers from both GMP and SMBC. The evaluation of this survey proved that we needed to supplement the data gained as there were either some gaps in information or further clarification was required. As a result, we made the decision to incorporate some qualitative interviews to gain further feedback from both groups. The outcomes of these interviews were then added to the original results.

Through this process we've learned that, whilst there's clearly an appetite for any advice or support to manage a diverse workforce, staff strongly expressed a wish to learn from each other. This reflects the current research in relation to learning which points to the rise in the value of peer to peer learning/shared learning and how highly valued social and collaborative platforms are.

Managers and staff also emphasised the importance of:

- Supporting an ageing workforce to make best use of all their skills and experience to maximise potential and productivity.
- Having the competitive advantage to attract and retain the right people to enable effective succession planning.
- Applying the correct learning strategies in particular, in relation to Information Technology.

- Ensuring that there is a varied generational mix in the workplace and that multi-generational teams can work together effectively.

The survey has acted as an excellent consultation exercise and we are far more aware of what our staff expect, want and need from HR in this area. However, it is not a case of 'one size fits all' and we are cognisant that solutions/tools must not only fit current needs but are flexible enough to be iterated in an agile and cost effective manner to move with the technology and content requirements of our future environment.

In summary, the feedback from our research was that the assumption that older workers were seen as problematic was a misnomer. The feedback led to the conclusion that an ageing workforce is an opportunity rather than a problem. Surprisingly it was younger workers who were perceived to be problematic by both managers and staff.

Our research highlighted three key issues that need to be addressed firstly, ensuring that the ageing workforce is fully supported particularly in the areas of working flexibly to ensure a work life balance and due to the number of carers in work, secondly, to consider how training is delivered especially in relation to technology and finally, the need to address intergenerational issues in particular views or perceptions held by 'older' workers towards 'younger' workers.

The next steps are to explore what can be done to take advantage of the opportunities and meet the key challenges that an ageing workforce presents.

2.0 Background and Objectives

Why did we select this particular project?

Recent changes in demographics mean that people are living and working for longer which has implications for employers' HR policies and practices. It is therefore necessary for all our employers to be aware of this issue and to develop targeted action orientated strategies pertinent to the situation. We felt it would be beneficial to research this area.

It is well documented that our population demographics are changing and organisations will have to rely on an older workforce in the future. There are a variety of reasons for this:

The Office of National Statistics' picture is as follows:

- The latest life expectancy figures stand at 79.3 years for males and 83 years for females with this rising to as high as 93.9 years for males and 96.5 years for females by the year 2039. (Roper, J 2016)

A white paper published by simplyhealth outlines the following:

- Demographically people are living longer. Between 2002 and 2032 the number of people over age 50 will almost double from 9 million to 17 million. Whereas the population under 50 years old increases by just over 10%.
- The UK Commission for Employment and Skills projects that in the next 10 years there will be 13.5 million job vacancies but only 7 million young people will leave school and college (UKCES 2010/GADa).
- The proportion of older workers aged 55 and above planning to work beyond the state pension age is increasing all the time. In 2010, 54% of employees expected to do this (CIPD 2010b). New CIPD research published in 2014 showed 38% of employees expect to retire between the ages of 66 and 70.
- In 2012 over fifties made up 29% of the working population compared to 25% in 2002. By 2020, 36% of the working population will be over 50.

(Ageing Population: Managing the health and wellbeing of an increasingly age diverse workforce to safeguard future talent, 2014 Simply Health.)

A document produced by Capita Consulting on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions outlines the following:

- The number of people in the 'prime age' of 25 to 49 is predicted to decline from 2012 onwards. In 2020, there are predicted to be 21 million in this group, the lowest number since 2005.
- Based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) population projections, the biggest decline will be among those in their forties while there will also be a significant decline in the numbers entering the workforce between the ages of 15 -24. This projected decline is likely to present a major problem for employers as they are the group who will be managers or senior managers in the future. Consequently,

employers need to begin considering how best to retain their older workers to cope with this likely shortfall.

- There has been a trend of people leaving the workforce later. The average age of leaving for men rose between 2004 and 2009 from 63.8 years to 64.5 years and for women 61.6 years to 62.4. This will be a key indicator as the State Pension Age (SPA) increases.

(Public Services Sector – Supporting Public Services sector bodies in tackling ageing workforce issues – knowledge pack – November 2011)

Recent research from CIPD and the Chartered Management Institute found that only 14% of managers across the UK workforce considered their organisations to be well -prepared to cope with an ageing workforce.

(<http://www.cipd.co.uk/pressoffice/articles/CMI+CIPD+age+report.htm>)

A report from CIPD 2016, reveals that just 25% of employees think their employer is doing enough to support older workers. The challenge for HR is to review and adapt people practices, as well as the design of jobs, to ensure they are fit for purpose.

In February 2017, the UK Government called for a million more older people to be in work by 2022, and reiterated the need for employers to do more to meet the needs of a maturing workforce - to create fulfilling working lives, not just longer ones. (Altman, R 2017)

Dianah Worman OBE , CIPD Public Policy Adviser, states that ‘Failing to act in a coherent and strategic way to the challenges and opportunities presented by the increased ageing of the workforce which will continue for decades, risks future economic success and threatens business performance.’

Furthermore ‘those organisations that do respond appropriately will gain significant competitive advantage in terms of recruiting and retaining talent and supporting the well-being and engagement of employees of all ages.’ (CIPD Managing a Healthy Ageing Workforce A National Business Imperative A guide for employers March 2012)

From the research undertaken, it is clear that the different generations have different approaches to communication, attitudes towards work, skill sets in relation to technology and different motivators. This will inform how we deliver the solutions in relation to managing an age diverse workforce.

The current workforce profiles, based on actual headcount, for GMP and SMBC can be found at Appendix 9 and Appendix 11 respectively.

On analysing the data the two organisations are different in relation to the generational mix as can be seen below.

Greater Manchester Police

Age range	Staffing numbers	Percentage of staffing levels	Generational category
Less than 40	4245	40%	Millenials
40 plus	3615	35%	Gen X
50 plus	2655	25%	Baby Boomers
Total	10515		

Sandwell MBC

Age range	Staffing numbers	Percentage of staffing levels	Generational category
Less than 40	1362	29%	Millenials
40 plus	1330	29%	Gen X
50 plus	1971	42%	Baby Boomers
Total	4663		

It is important to note that, as the Baby Boomers are born between 1946 to 1964, Gen X are born between 1965 to 1980 and the Millennials are born between 1981 and 2000, that the percentages shown above are an approximate representation as some of the age ranges lap over. E.g. Gen X eldest employee would be 52 and youngest would be 37.

Inevitably there will be different challenges for each organisation but the research in relation to organisations relying on 'older' workers is pertinent to both.

The main differences are:

- SMBC have a larger percentage of the workforce who are over 50 whereas GMP have a larger percentage that are under 40.
- GMP officers can access their pension at 50 and are less likely to remain in an officer role beyond 50 or upon reaching 30/35 years' service due to pension regulations. However, some officers secure new positions as police staff which means that their skills, knowledge and experience is retained in the organisation. Police staff can access their pension at 55 but due to reductions which apply at this age they are unlikely to do so.
- SMBC staff are able to access their pension at 55 but clearly are less likely to do so with a larger number of older workers remaining in the workforce in the same roles. Those that do leave tend not to return which means their skills, knowledge and experience leaves with them.

A summary of leavers for the period 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 (Appendix 12) identifies two key issues for SMBC to address: There were 73 leavers who retired due to age which amounts to 21% of the total leavers (352). As a result, potentially a lot of skill and experience has left the organisation. Also, there were 76 employees who left for Personal

Advancement/Better Prospects/Promotion which could suggest a potential loss of talent due to a lack of career development opportunities.

For both organisations, it is key that as older workers plan to exit the organisation a strategy is put in place to share all their knowledge and experience and that younger workers are developed in a timely and effective way to ensure that effective succession planning takes place which in turn, will help with retention.

3.0 Methodology

For the purposes of this research the focus was given only to GMP and Sandwell MBC rather than a general view. However, as part of the literature review a national picture was considered. Both quantitative and qualitative research strategies were undertaken in order to gain insight into the potential issues within our own workplaces. Primary data collection involved a blend of questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews.

The survey targeted both Managers and Employees of GMP and SMBC. A sample of 300 questionnaires was randomly sent out to GMP employees and 200 questionnaires were sent to targeted managers and employees of Sandwell MBC. The employees approached ages ranged from age 29 to 70 and included an equal percentage of female and male employees. A response of 268 surveys were returned, a percentage of 53.6%.

Different approaches were used by GMP and Sandwell MBC. Sandwell MBC had employer restrictions which resulted in a targeted selection rather than a random sample which was used by GMP. This was GMP's preferred methodology due to the large number of staff concerned. In addition, GMP has a policy with regard to the issue of questionnaires which also influenced the decision for random selection. The approach adopted by Sandwell MBC resulted in a higher return.

In total 19 in depth face to face interviews were conducted. The ages ranged from 36 to 70 and again an equal percentage of female and male employees were included.

4.0 Literature Review

A literature review was undertaken as a secondary data source to review academic and business literature, with a view to obtaining a wider and more thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and also to build rigour into the research data collection strategy.

Prior to commencing this research the group perceived that an ageing workforce was considered to be a problem rather than an opportunity within the workplace. Accordingly, we presumed this to be the case and used it as the basis for our questionnaires in the survey. As you will see from our findings the reality was different from the perception.

5.0 Findings

The survey results highlighted a high percentage of managers within the two organisations are long serving employees with permanent contracts. An equal number of male and female managers responded. Although the ages of manager/employees approached ranged from 29 to 70 the majority of respondents were in their 40s and 50s. This may have impacted on the outcome but there is no way of determining if this occurred.

GMP used survey monkey to randomly select employees to participate in the survey. Sandwell employees were targeted and a higher percentage of employees responded to the direct request. This has indicated that a personal email/contact was more effective than a random selection.

5.1 Findings from Manager's Survey

The majority of managers agreed that they felt they were able to offer training and development opportunities to all ages. However, of those that disagreed, it was felt that there was a tendency for funding to be provided in preference for training for younger workers. Managers also indicated that older staff were not interested in furthering their skills. Conversely, employees were being utilised by managers in some areas in a mentoring capacity due to their experience and life skills.

The results indicated that managers felt that they treated both younger and older workers equally and highlighted that managers carry out performance reviews regardless of a person's age. Managers felt equality was also important between younger and older workers in redundancy situations. Managers took into account all the views of staff regardless of age when looking at new work practices or procedures. Generally, the survey showed that they didn't feel that there is a specific retirement age as it's about still being competent to do the job.

Absenteeism was not rated as problematic when managing older workers, however, the survey highlighted that managers believe older worker health issues should be a consideration for them. Other considerations when managing people over 50 were capability of carrying out their full role and technology skills.

Of concern was the fact that a high percentage of managers felt that employees aged under 39 were unreliable (70.37%), lack commitment (65.38%) and incompetent (81.25%). This was explored further during the face to face interviews.

Overall there were positive comments about managing an ageing workforce. It was felt it was good to have a blend of new young enthusiasm and older experience. Utilising the age of the team and recognising that older workers may need more time to learn new things were seen as important.

5.2 Findings from Staff Survey

The survey highlighted that over 80% of respondents felt that people in the workplace are not treated differently as a result of their age. However, over 19% believe that age discrimination exists in the workplace and that this discrimination is at both ends of the age spectrum. Staff are confident with the approach taken in the workplace to address unwelcome behaviour around age.

It was felt that older workers were not open to new ideas and were technologically challenged. Younger workers (under 30 years of age) were perceived as unreliable, incompetent, lacks commitment and with higher absence levels than average. Both were explored further during the face to face interviews.

Over 76% did not agree that they had not been offered training and development opportunities as a result of their age. Over 85% do not consider that age is a factor when considering additional opportunities in the organisation i.e. promotion, relocation.

It was highlighted that both organisations took advantage of the skills of an age diverse workforce by offering opportunities such as mentoring. Over 70% consider that the workplace actively encourages career progression according to ability and regardless of age. The survey indicated that performance reviews are regularly carried out irrespective of age.

More than half of staff disagreed that older workers should be considered for redundancy before younger workers. Similarly, staff did not feel under pressure as a result of age to accept voluntary redundancy/redeployment. The organisations had not asked staff when they intend to retire or future intentions to stay.

5.3 Summary of qualitative interviews

On evaluation of the surveys further clarity was required as follows:

- A more detailed understanding of the negative views of younger workers.
- Understanding of employees' views in relation to the impact on younger and older workers when undergoing significant change and restructures.
- Why managers were reluctant to ask staff about their retirement plans.
- The anomaly between absenteeism not being a main concern but health issues are.
- Are older workers offered additional support when learning new things.
- As 33% of staff had indicated that their workplace didn't take into account their views we wanted to explore this further.
- To understand more fully what employees would consider important to encourage them/enable them to work beyond retirement age.

There were 6 interviews conducted within GMP and 13 interviews conducted within SMBC with the aim of filling in some of the gaps identified and obtaining further clarity as outlined

above. Without exception, there were some common themes identified in all of them as follows:

General:

- Everyone interviewed preferred to work with /manage a mixed age team.
- Employees should be utilised for their skills and strengths regardless of their age.
- Managers need to understand how to motivate younger and older workers.
- Need to adjust the management approach not for age but for experience.
- Buddying and mentoring have proven to be invaluable but are not used enough across the organisations. Use of the right mentor is important to ensure bad habits are not transferred. Older workers feel valued as it is good use of their experience.
- Career progression is limited due to austerity measures and lack of succession planning.
- The organisation should maximise older and younger workers working and learning together.
- Some people, regardless of age are in the wrong jobs and this affects their attitude and motivation.
- One person felt that they had experienced age discrimination within the workplace.
- Succession planning is essential but not always undertaken effectively.
- Carer issues/responsibilities potentially have an impact on absence. There is need to have an open dialect with employees to enable flexibility.

Older workers:

- The older age group was believed to take longer to cope with new information technology and can struggle with new processes.
- Absence in the older age group was believed to be for fewer periods but longer term.
- For employees to consider working beyond normal retirement age work life balance was key. Employees want the ability to work more flexibly e.g. compressed hours, part-time hours, agile working/working from home and to be able to access pension.
- Planned Leavers scheme (SMBC) is leading to a loss of experience and knowledge across the Council.
- One person felt that SMBC want to get rid of employees who are 55 plus to bring in 'fresh' blood.
- Manual workers 50 plus struggle with work due to physical capability.
- Older workers to mentor and train younger workers in work ethics and share their experience and knowledge to maximise the new workers potential.

Younger workers:

- Younger people take more short term absence.
- Younger workers have more issues with attention and are easily distracted by social media this in turn, affects their productivity and the service provided.

- Younger workers have to be productive very quickly – years ago they would have been supernumerary.
- Council does not attract younger people as seen as a ‘dying trade’.
- Younger person’s work ethic can be an issue – it’s not that they are incompetent just they ‘can’t be bothered’ and do not take ownership or responsibility.
- Younger workers bring enthusiasm to the team and are eager to learn.

Mixed Team

The rationales provided for this were that the age mix allowed for a more harmonious team with fewer disputes/squabbles amongst the staff. The older staff had a stronger work ethic and would not report sick, in the main, unless it was essential. It was felt that a mixed age group represents the community we serve and provides the best mix for an effective team. One manager spoke from experience and said that members of the public sometimes prefer to deal with an older person that is, particularly in cases of domestic abuse as they feel the older person will have a better ability to deal with them. They feel the younger person hasn’t had sufficient life experience to fully understand the particulars of their circumstances so how can they help them.

Other managers felt that it helped them to carry out their job more effectively for instance; when dealing with benefit claims they would know how much is normally spent in relation to the household budgets.

Young people can bring enthusiasm and energy to the team and revitalise those who have been working there for a long period of time. When new they need to be inducted into the team and are likely to ask more questions to understand what is expected and how things work. This can cause those who have been there longer to undertake a review of what they are doing and why, that is, question if they are working in the most effective way possible. Mentoring relationships can be two way, not just older to younger.

When questioned on the negative views held for the age groups under 30 those interviewed agreed that short term absence was more of a problem for younger workers. They said that social media was a distraction and this affected their attention span and productivity. They felt that it was the fact that they wouldn’t take responsibility/ownership for their work and the fact that they didn’t appear bothered about their work that makes the younger worker appear less committed and in turn, sometimes appear incompetent.

There were strong reactions to say that age is just a number, it is a person’s mind set which is more important as it determines how they work. The manager is more effective when they know a person’s strengths and weaknesses, their working styles and preferences. This was also apparent when considering absence.

Age Discrimination

One person had experienced comments that they felt could be construed as age discrimination within the workplace. This was experienced by colleagues making comments or jokes about their age and speculation as to when they would be leaving/retiring.

Succession Planning

It was a concern for most managers that if they asked their staff when they were intending to retire that they would be seen as being ageist. They normally approached the issue during their appraisal when discussing future work plans. All of the managers interviewed felt that succession planning was vital to the organisation and to achieving their work goals. The comment was made that the manager always knew when a police officer was going to retire due to the Police Pension Regulations. However, the removal of the mandatory retirement age and changes to the pensions mean that these days the date of retirement can be more fluid. Those who didn't ask directly when someone planned to retire worked on the basis of assumptions that in the main people would retire at the standard age. Or in one case felt that they knew the staff well enough to know what their plans were without having to ask outright.

SMBC Planned Leavers Scheme involves employees indicating that they wish to leave the Council up to 2 years in advance with no actuarial reduction in their Pension. However, concerns were raised that a lot of experience and knowledge was being lost from across the Council with no effective succession planning taking place in which the knowledge/experience was shared. It was felt that they were often replaced by someone who had spent the longest time with the Council rather than the right person for the job. Career progression had become limited firstly, due to austerity and secondly, failure to plan and train employees to release their potential. Not only is SMBC losing a wealth of knowledge and experience, younger workers are also leaving making it difficult to succession plan.

Information Technology

All of those interviewed felt that the introduction of new technology can be problematic. From our personal opinion prior to starting this research and our own experience, we had assumed that this would be portrayed as older people not being able to cope with the new technology, but this was not the case. What was identified is that the way in which the organisation goes about introducing new technology is what causes the biggest issues.

It was felt that it takes an older person longer to get to grips with understanding and using the technology, but this doesn't mean they can't use it or don't want to. Younger people have grown up using laptops/mobiles, surfing the internet etc. as a part of normal life and

it's accepted as the 'norm' and taken for granted. This is not the same for older workers and it just takes them a bit longer to learn to use it.

It was quoted that the organisation just expects people to pick up the new kit and run with it without any formal training or instruction. This works fine for those who are accustomed to using this equipment in their domestic circumstances, but not for those where more structured training/support is required. The Force have considered this, for the first time, in the current roll out of mobile data technology and the change to android equipment. There were super users trained and floor walking in the first few weeks of usage and this did produce better results than previously seen. However, it is not across the board, as the recent change to Windows 7 for back office staff was not managed in the same way and staff were provided with new kit with no explanation or training and expected to use it.

This was seen as one of the benefits of having a mixed team so the younger staff who are more familiar with using the technology could help out those who are unfamiliar, whatever their age.

Absence

The work ethic from the younger workers was seen to be not as strong and they would take days off at the 'drop of a hat' so became more unreliable. There was some peer pressure in these instances which managers believed prevented longer term absence as those going sick for one or two days were seen to be letting the team down. It was felt that when older people went sick it was for a longer absence that is, an operation or serious injury. The managers felt that they could better manage this type of absence as they could plan for it. The short repeated absences were unpredictable and this caused problems.

When considering age, health issues and absence in a lot of cases the age is immaterial. An older person can be just as fit and healthy as a younger one if a person looks after themselves. It was however, acknowledged that it becomes more physically difficult for a majority of people as they get older to undertake specific strenuous tasks. Added to this there are some age-related illnesses which can cause absence to occur and can take longer to recover from.

Managers felt that focusing on wellbeing can have a positive impact on people in relation to both health issues and absence because firstly they are proactively managing their wellbeing and secondly, if it's a priority for the organisation they feel valued, have a sense of belonging and they are more likely to make an effort.

A snapshot of absence has been provided over an 8 month period between April – Nov 2016 at Appendix 8 (GMP) and for the period April 2016 to March 2017 at Appendix 10 (SMBC)

and the statistics do bear out what is being said. You can clearly see that there are more cases of absence in the 30 – 49 age bracket for GMP and more occurrences in the 20-39 age bracket for SMBC. However, for GMP the age bracket is the highest percentage of the workforce but the age bracket for SMBC is the lowest percentage of the workforce.

In GMP, the 50 – 55 bracket has about half of the cases but about two thirds of the absence, so this could align with the comment that older workers have fewer instances of absence but when they are off it is for a longer period of time. This was reflected the same way for police staff, even more so than officers.

In SMBC over 50's contribute to 47% of days lost but only 1825 occurrences, in comparison to 20-39 age bracket who contribute to 25.5% days lost with 1708 occurrences.

6.0 Conclusions

In considering the question we began with – “Is Having an Ageing Workforce a Problem or an Opportunity?” we came to the following conclusions.

Yes, there are issues with having an ageing workforce which have the potential to create problems, but these, in the main, are not insurmountable and we will go in to more detail below. We have to consider all of the issues highlighted within the context of the fast pace of change which exists in our everyday life and look at all of the things which impact on performance and competence at work.

From our research we have selected three areas that we believe are key for our organisations and where improvements can be made to add value. The three areas are detailed below:

6.1 Supporting an ageing workforce

According to the Office of National Statistics, over 1 million employees in the UK are aged 65 or over, which is the highest figure on record. The latest Government proposal to increase the state pension age to 68 by mid 2030s means that an ageing workforce is only going to increase.

Employers are faced with the challenge of creating a balance between managing employee health and having a high performing workforce.

With an ageing population more people start caring for elderly relatives, the peak age for caring is 45-64 which is also the point at which people are most likely to have developed the skills employers need.

“As the population ages, the number of carers rises and the effects of losing carers from the workforce will get worse. Over the next 30 years the number of carers will increase by 60% so employers need to begin to prepare now for what lies ahead. Openness is the key, if you actively support carers.” www.carers.org

Supporting older workers to remain in work can bring considerable benefits and opportunities to both the employer and the employee. Employers will have invested significant time and money in employees and therefore, by providing this support the employer retains the skills of carers and for the employee it is a benefit as work may be the only place that they get relief from caring.

It is vital for employers to develop a workplace strategy to assist the older worker which can include flexible working i.e. flexible starting and finishing times, compressed working hours, annualised working hours, job sharing or part time employment, working from home,

flexible holidays to fit with alternative care arrangements and allowing older workers to purchase leave to boost leave entitlement.

Jennifer Liston-Smith, head of coaching and consultancy at My Family Care, suggests making policies around flexible hours or remote working 'age agnostic' rather than allowing managers to assume they're just for those with families: "You need to show managers that flexible working is a way to deliver, not a favour that certain individuals have. Show examples of people making it work- but not just parents.....It's wrong to assume certain generations need certain things." (People Management, 'Young People are just smarter', Jo Faragher, December 2016/January 2017).

Older workers can stereotypically be perceived as a burden, but this needs to be challenged with more focus given to their work capability rather than their date of birth. Supporting older people in employment is absolutely critical. Organisations cannot afford to lose the opportunities of using their valuable skills and experience or their motivation.

Well-being interventions could mean employees will stay in employment longer and remain engaged and motivated. Organisations need to establish open dialogue with older workers in order to establish their expectations and needs, and then work with them to identify and achieve a plan going forward such as flexible working options to allow older workers to enjoy a life out of work whilst still continuing to be productive in jobs.

Flexible retirement is a system that allows members to access their pension benefits and continue working and thereby, having a gradual move into retirement. This is a good option for organisations retaining experienced older workers and supporting work life balance considerations including caring responsibilities and flexible working. Benefits to the organisation include retaining experienced staff and therefore, less cost in recruiting and training new workers.

Absenteeism was not seen by managers as a particular issue in the workplace for older workers. There was evidence to support that longer periods of absence were more likely in the older age categories but for fewer occasions. Organisations supported this and could plan around the absences. Consideration should be given to preventative and supportive measures for the older age group.

6.2 Technology and Training

The staff survey highlighted that it was generally felt that older workers were not open to new ideas and were technologically challenged. However, from the interviews conducted, the general assumption that older workers are frightened of new technology and do not want to use it was felt to be a misnomer. It was identified that older workers are happy to learn new systems and use new technology as long as they receive appropriate training and support. Therefore when considering introducing new technology within the organisation there needs to be a clear plan how to deliver and implement the training.

6.3 Intergenerational Issues

The surveys highlighted some concerns in relation to the view of older worker towards the younger workers. As the majority of respondents fell into the 40's and 50's age bracket then these views appear to be held in relation to the Millennials (Born between 1981 – 2000 and currently aged between 17 to 36).

Unfortunately, the surveys were mainly circulated to the above age groups so we do not have a view from the Millennials in relation to what they think of the Baby Boomers or Gen Xers.

Millennials form 40% of the GMP workforce and 29% of SMBC workforce so it is key to address these views/perceptions.

Research indicates that certain generations have particular traits and misunderstandings between the different groups can affect productivity and morale. 'The challenge for companies and individuals is to take advantage of the varied strengths of different generations while diminishing points of friction. And in an ideal world, this would happen when members of each generation learn from each other.'

According to Jason Dorsey, chief strategy officer at the Center for Generational Kinetics, acknowledging that someone is part of a particular generation is not meant to put them into a box, it is a way to glean clues on how to better understand and connect with them. (Bridging the Gap at Work: Improving Intergenerational Communication (by Nora Zelevansky Dec 1 2014)

The surveys indicated that employees felt that the Local Authority was failing to attract new talent/retain younger people as it was seen as a 'dying trade' and no longer promised the longevity of a career that it used to. It was felt that career progression in Local Authority is limited due to austerity measures and lack of succession planning. Consideration needs to be given as to how we are going to address these issues.

Leadership is a key issue. 'Managers need to develop strong interpersonal skills to foster relationships. A key leader's responsibility is to ensure that everyone in the organization understands that "working together" is not negotiable. Create a respectful, open and inclusive environment where workers of all ages and cultural backgrounds can share who they are without fear of being judged, "fixed," or changed. Leaders must remain open to new ideas and avoid projecting their own expectations about work and remain open to different perspectives based on generational attitudes. Our organisations can achieve real strategic advantage by embracing diversity among generations to create a flexible work environment that values people and keeps them productive, regardless of age'. (AMA-American Management Association-Leading the Four Generations at Work)

It has been identified that there could be a potential loss of talent due to lack of career development. This reflects differently in both organisations. Within GMP the police officer structure is rank orientated and follows a national promotion process. Recently opportunities have been fewer due to austerity measures and there has been a need to

consider alternative options to create development opportunities i.e. temporary acting, job rotation etc.

For GMP police staff, the issues align more to those found in Sandwell MBC. It is suggested a more detailed piece of work is undertaken to identify the size of the problem or indeed if it is a problem. The data will be shared with both organisations Learning & Development Units to take forward.

It was identified that older staff may not be interested in furthering their skills by participating in further training. Managers need to be mindful of this and ensure that all staff are engaged and motivated to move forward with the organisation.

In answer to the original question, yes there are problems which can arise as a result of having an ageing work force, but as we have shown they can be mitigated with some careful and considered planning and good HR policies. Our research has shown that there are seen to be more opportunities available to an organisation if they have the right environment and attitude by having an ageing workforce than there are problems. Our recommendations will show how we propose that organisations can future proof their policies and procedures to ensure they are in the best position possible.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Supporting an Ageing Workforce

Employers need to review their strategic direction as there are more benefits and opportunities rather than problems that come from an ageing workforce, not least their knowledge and experience. Older workers like all workers need a good work life balance and employers need to promote a supportive environment.

Recognising the different needs of older workers is another important way that organisations can optimise work for older workers and extend their working lives. Individual older workers may have quite specific interests, needs or expectations that influence their decisions around working – for example, around work life balance, personal interests, changing health needs, caring responsibilities or their financial situation. Supportive employers should work with their older workers individually to try to accommodate their needs and expectations, to the benefit of both the individual and the organisation. A one size fits all approach does not address the actual needs of individual workers. It's about asking and understanding the needs of each specific older person and working to meeting those needs without causing compromise to the organisation's requirements, standards or performance expectations.

Offering flexible work arrangements is a popular means of addressing the needs and preferences of older workers, other options include sabbaticals, unpaid or extended leave, time off at short notice, temporary assignments, project based work or casual workers. This may also help the older workers transition to retirement. It will improve morale, attract and retain older workers and could reduce costs. It also has the positive effect of engagement and empowerment enabling staff to have the flexibility and lifestyle they want which in turn encourages operational efficiency and effectiveness and improved productivity and performance.

Health and well-being initiatives such as health checks, fitness routines, encouraging healthy eating and educational talks could encourage older workers to take care of themselves and prevent long term absences.

7.2 Technology & Training

Older workers need a different approach to using new technology in comparison to their younger counterparts. Consideration needs to be given to different options to assist older workers in how to use new technology.

- **Super Users**

One of the options that has already been used effectively by Greater Manchester Police is to train predominately younger members of staff as “super users” of new technology who can then assist their colleagues with any problems they encounter when using new systems. Communications are released advising of the days and locations that super users will be available in the early days of the new systems being used and longer term they are available on an ad hoc basis.

- **Instructions**

Clear and simple written instructions need to be readily available for older workers to use when using new systems or devices. ‘Step by Step’ guides used to be the norm for older workers and are an option going forward to help them understand and use new technology systems.

- **Buddy Scheme**

Younger workers could be “buddied up” with older workers so that they can assist them in using new technology. This would no doubt be a two-way flow of information and probably not limited to the use of technology. Pairings of staff from different age brackets could have the benefits for both parties with the sharing of experiences as well as support in using new technology.

- **Training Delivery**

It is suggested that the way training is delivered is fundamental to the way that older workers learn. Using IT based training systems is not the optimum way of delivery and “on the job” and workshop based training is preferable along with the use of manuals or step by step guides.

- **Mentoring**

Mentoring has been seen to be a productive way of achieving integration and development within multi-generational teams. Both organisations have existing mentoring schemes but it is recommended that both organisations review their current arrangements to improve consistency of application. A variety of models can be used for example, one to ones, group programs, senior leadership panels. Consideration should be given to the adoption of a “speed mentoring” program where employees sit across from company experts to ask questions. Making mentoring a part of the employment life cycle will ensure that as more established and experienced workers head towards retirement that their knowledge is transferred. Also by determining younger workers’ development needs and then pairing them with older more experienced workers this will create cross-organisational dialogue between generations.

7.3 Intergenerational Issues

- **Attraction/Retention Strategies**

Our research has indicated that there will be fewer younger workers available. It will therefore become a competitive market to attract and retain younger workers. Equally, as we will be relying on older workers to fill positions, it is imperative that we understand how to attract and retain people from each age group. We need to become an employer of choice.

We need to review our recruiting strategies, social media communications, job descriptions and employer branding to reflect a combination of the different multigenerational attributes. This will allow the organization to demonstrate a commitment to diverse hiring, as well as showcase an ability to provide a variety of opportunities for top talent that support life goals. GMP are tied to a national recruiting programme for police officers but have the ability to influence this and should do so.

Both organisations have apprenticeship schemes that apply only to young workers. Another option may be to use alternative apprenticeship schemes to attract older workers who may want a change in career direction or a return to work after time away.

- **Communication**

Consider the importance of clear communication and fostering intergenerational communication by reviewing our existing communication strategies. Our survey results indicated that older workers, both managers and staff, held negative views towards younger workers. The first step to bridging these gaps is helping people to understand each other. The key is getting each person to recognize that everyone has different communication skills that can be harnessed to best support the organisation. Managers need to develop strong interpersonal relationships to foster relationships and to create a respectful, open and inclusive environment so employees of all ages do not feel judged because of their age.

- **Staff Development**

There is a need to review performance management systems. Organisations need to determine employees' preferred approach to their development. For instance; do they prefer regular informal check-ins or a more structured approach. There is a need to refrain from 'one approach suits all'. Focusing on employees' skills, attitudes and working styles rather than just a task focused or goal orientated approach is also beneficial.

Staff development is crucial to ensure effective talent management and succession planning.

- **Leadership**

Leadership is a key element and we recommend a review of current programmes to ensure they are focused and reflect current issues as outlined in the conclusions.

Business Planning and future proofing of policies

We have to ensure that all areas of our business are aware of the current situation and consider these issues when planning to take both organisations forward in the future.

8.0 Bibliography

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9.0 Appendices

1. Manager survey
2. Manager survey results
3. Summary of Findings of the manager survey
4. Staff survey
5. Staff survey results
6. Summary Findings of the staff survey
7. Copy of Buddy Scheme
8. Copy of GMP Sickness Statistics
9. Copy of GMP Workforce Profile
10. Copy of SMBC Sickness Statistics
11. Copy of SMBC Workforce Profile
12. Profile of SMBC Leavers.

Ageing Workforce Survey

Introduction:

We are a team of four public sector HR professionals participating in a HR Business Partner Programme in conjunction with North West Employers. We are undertaking some research into the UKs current ageing population and would appreciate your assistance in completing this short questionnaire.

This survey is **confidential** and is for managers of ALL ages. It will help us to identify any particular issues so that your employers can ensure your workplace meets the needs of an age diverse workforce.

Please complete the following information:

1. Your age:

2. Gender: Male
Female

3. Ethnicity: Asian
Black
Chinese
Mixed
Other
White
Prefer not to say

4. Length of time with current employer:

0 – 5 years
6 – 10 years
11 – 20 years
More than 20 years

5. Type of contract:

Permanent Full-time
Temporary Part-time

6. Employer:

GMP Sandwell MBC

GENERAL

7. Age profile of the people you manage:

Under 39 years
40 – 49 years
50 – 59 years
60 – 65 years
Over 65 years

8. People in my workplace are treated differently as a result of their age:

Strongly Agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't Know

9. My workplace welcomes all individuals, regardless of their age:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't Know

PERCEPTIONS, ATTITUDE AND EXPERIENCE

10. Which of the following attributes would you associate with the people you manage (Tick all that apply)

	Aged under 39	40-49	50-59	60-65	65 plus
Experienced	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Inflexible	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Unenthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Not open to new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Unreliable	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Incompetent	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lacks committed	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Technologically challenged	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Higher absence than average	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Less productive	<input type="checkbox"/>				

11. I would prefer to manage:

- A team of similar age to myself (within 10 years)
- A team made up of individuals of diverse ages
- The age of my colleagues is not relevant to me

12. I would prefer to be managed by:

- A person older than me
- A person of the same sort of age as myself (within 5 years)
- A person who is younger than me
- The age of my Manager is not relevant to me

13. I am confident with the approach taken in my workplace to address unwelcome behaviour around age:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

No experience

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

14. **As a manager, I am able to offer training and development opportunities to all ages:**

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

If 'disagree', was this due to:

Being too young

Being too old

What led you to believe this?

.....
.....
.....

15. **My workplace takes advantage of the skills of an age-diverse workforce by offering opportunities, such as mentoring:**

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Informally

Don't know

PROMOTION AND CAREER PROGRESSION

16. **My workplace actively encourages career progression according to ability and regardless of age:**

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

17. **As a manager, I carry out regular performance reviews regardless of a person's age:**

Yes

No

18. In a redundancy situation, I believe that older workers (over 50) should in general be considered for redundancy before younger workers

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

19. I would feel under pressure to offer voluntary redundancy, or redeployment to older workers:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

20. Have you asked your staff when they intend to retire:

- Yes
- No

21. Have you asked your staff about their future intentions regarding staying with the organisation:

- Yes
- No

22. At what age do you think staff should retire? _____

23. What do you consider when managing people over 50 years of age:
(Tick all that apply)

- Capable of carrying out their full role
- Technology
- Pace of change in the organisation
- Work life balance
- Absenteeism
- Opportunities for additional skills training
- Opportunities for flexible or part time work

Health Issues

Other (please specify)

.....

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

24. As a manager, I take into account all the views of my staff regardless of age when looking at new work practices or procedures:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

25. Please use the space below to provide any additional, relevant information:

Manager Survey Results

These are available as an adobe document if anyone wishes too view. The file was too large to include here.

Summary of findings - Manager Survey

Question 7 - restricted the age profile of the people they managed this wouldn't allow a manager to select a number of different age ranges, therefore the stats are not accurate, but we can legitimately assume that they manage a wide age range.

Question 8 - identified that typically people are not treated differently as a result of their age and both organisations welcome all individuals regardless of age.

Question 9 - provided statistics that required further exploration to identify attributes that managers associate with the people they manage, particularly in comparison of age. This question was asked as part of the interviews.

Questions 10 & 11 - confirmed that the age of the employees they managed was irrelevant and similarly the age of the manager was irrelevant however there were no responses to say they preferred a younger manager.

Question 12 - 70% confirmed that they were confident with the approach taken in the workplace to address unwelcome behaviour around age.

Question 13 - over 90% of managers felt that they were able to offer training and development opportunities to all ages.

Question 14 - one manager advised that they no longer had younger team members as they had been employed on temporary contracts, work placements or as apprentices. It was highlighted that some external training was funded for the under 24 years of age, however, although training opportunities were low for older employees managers felt that older staff were not interested in furthering their skills.

Questions 15 & 16 - show that the organisation allows the managers to take advantage of the skills of an age diverse workforce by offering opportunities such as mentoring. The culture of the organisation is allowing this.

Question 17 - highlighted that managers carry out performance reviews regardless of a person's age.

Question 18 - both organisations have undergone significant changes and continue to restructure, therefore managers have experience of redundancy situations and redeployment. However approx. 75% felt that in a redundancy situation they believed that older workers should not be considered for redundancy before younger works, or felt under pressure to offer voluntary redundancy or redeployment to older workers. This will be explored further in the interviews.

Question 19 - over 60% of managers have not asked their staff when they intend to retire and approx. 50% have asked staff about their future intentions regarding staying with the organisation. Generally, the survey showed that there is no specific retirement age as it's about still being competent to do the job.

Question 22 - highlighted what managers consider when managing people over 50 years of age, surprisingly absenteeism was rated low but managers do consider health issues and also scored high if an individual was capable of carrying out their full role and if they were able to use technology.

Question 23 - managers take into account all the views of staff regardless of age when looking at new work practices or procedures.

Question 24 - overall positive comments about an ageing workforce. Problems with succession planning. It's good to have a blend of new young enthusiasm and older experience. Utilising the age of the team and recognising that older workers may need more time to learn new things.

Ageing Workforce Survey

Introduction:

We are a team of four public sector HR professionals participating in a HR Business Partner Programme in conjunction with North West Employers. We are undertaking some research into the UKs current ageing population and would appreciate your assistance in completing this short questionnaire.

This survey is **confidential** and is for staff members of ALL ages. It will help us to identify any particular issues so that your employers can ensure your workplace meets the needs of an age diverse workforce.

Please complete the following information:

26. Your age:

27. Gender: Male
Female

28. Ethnicity: Asian
Black
Chinese
Mixed
Other
White
Prefer not to say

29. Length of time with current employer:

0 – 5 years
6 – 10 years
11 – 20 years
More than 20 years

30. Type of contract:

Permanent Full-time
Temporary Part-time

31. Employer:

GMP Sandwell MBC

GENERAL

32. People in my workplace are treated differently as a result of their age:

Strongly Agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't Know

33. My workplace welcomes all individuals, regardless of their age:

Strongly Agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't Know

PERCEPTIONS, ATTITUDE AND EXPERIENCE

9. Which of the following attributes would you associate with your colleagues (Tick all that apply)

	Aged under 30	Aged 30-50	Aged 50 plus
Experienced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inflexible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unenthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not open to new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unreliable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incompetent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lacks committed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technologically challenged	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Higher absence than average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less productive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. I would prefer to work with:

- A team of similar age to myself (within 10 years)
- A team made up of individuals of diverse ages

- The age of my colleagues is not relevant to me

11. I would prefer to be managed by:

- A person older than me
- A person of the same sort of age as myself (within 5 years)
- A person who is younger than me

- The age of my Manager is not relevant to me

12. I am confident with the approach taken in my workplace to address unwelcome behaviour around age:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- No experience

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

13. As a result of my age, I believe I have not been offered training and development opportunities

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

If 'agree', was this due to:

- Being too young
- Being too old

What led you to believe this?

.....
.....
.....
.....

14. As a result of my age, I believe I have been unsuccessful in securing additional opportunities (i.e.: promotion, relocation, etc) in my workplace or within my organisation/company:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

If 'agree', was this due to:

- Being too young
- Being too old

What led you to believe this?

.....
.....
.....
.....

15. My workplace takes advantage of the skills of an age-diverse workforce by offering opportunities, such as mentoring:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Informally
- Don't know

PROMOTION AND CAREER PROGRESSION

16. My workplace actively encourages career progression according to ability and regardless of age:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

17. I believe, as a result of my age, I have been inhibited in my career progression:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

18. I believe my age would be a disadvantage when seeking alternative employment outside of this organisation/company because I am:

- Too old
- Too young
- Not applicable

19. In my workplace I believe regular performance reviews are carried out regardless of a person's age:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

20. My last performance review took place:

- Less than 6 months ago
- Between 6 and 12 months ago
- More than 12 months ago
- Never had one

21. In a redundancy situation, I believe that older workers (over 50) should in general be considered for redundancy before younger workers

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree

Strongly disagree
Don't know

22. I would feel under pressure, as a result of my age, to accept voluntary redundancy, or redeployment if it was offered to me:

Strongly agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

23. My employer has asked me when I intend to retire:

Yes
No

24. My employer has asked me about my future intentions regarding staying with the organisation:

Yes
No

25. At what age would you like to retire? _____

26. At what age do you think you will retire? _____

27. What factors would impact (or have had an impact) on your decision to:
(Tick all that apply)

Extend your working life beyond 67

- Financial considerations
- Work being a significant part of my identity
- Whether I still feel valued by my organisation
- Work life balance
- Changes to pension rules
- Opportunities for additional skills training
- Opportunities for flexible or part time work
- Health Issues

Other (please specify)

.....
.....

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

28. My workplace takes account of my views when looking at new work practices or procedures:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

29. I am able to feed back my thoughts about my workplace through:

(Tick all that apply)

- Staff surveys
- Open forums
- Department or team/section meetings
- Staff consultations
- Newsletter/E-news
- Trade Union Reps
- Line Manager
- Senior Staff
- I do not feel able to feed back my thoughts

30. In your organisation: *(Tick all that apply)*

	There is a policy/ relevant documentation on:	I know where to find it	I have received training	I know who is responsible for this area
Equality and Diversity				
Flexible Working				
Bullying and Harassment				
Staff Induction				

Succession Planning				
Development of Future Leaders				
Staff Welfare/support				

31. My organisation uses marketing materials that represent the age diversity of its customer base:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

32. I believe age discrimination exists in my workplace:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

33. Please use the space below to provide any additional, relevant information:

Staff Survey Results

These are available as an adobe document if anyone wishes to view. The form was too big to include

Summary of Findings - Staff Survey

Question 1 – even split of responses from males and females, length of time with current employer higher end more than 20 years. Mainly permanent contracts. Response higher from Sandwell MBC due to targeted sample.

Question 7 – over 80% felt that people in the workplace are not treated differently as a result of their age.

Question 8 – older workers not open to new ideas and technologically challenged. Younger workers under 30 years of age, unreliable, incompetent, higher absence than average and lacks commitment over 75%

Question 9 – over 70% consider that age is irrelevant when considering who they prefer to work with and 82% irrelevant when considering the age of who they are being managed by

Question 11 – staff are confident with the approach taken in the workplace to address unwelcome behaviour around age.

Question 12 – over 76% did not agree that training and development was only available for younger workers.

Question 13 - wrong question asked

Question 14 – over 85% do not consider that age has a factor when considering additional opportunities in the organisation i.e. promotion, relocation.

Question 15 – both organisations agreed that the workplace takes advantage of the skills of an age diverse workforce by offering opportunities i.e. mentoring.

Question 16 – nearly 70% consider that the workplace actively encourages career progression according to ability and regardless of age.

Question 17 – less than 50% considered that being too old would be a disadvantage when seeking employment outside of the organisation.

Questions 18 & 19 – performance reviews are regularly carried irrespective of age.

Question 20 – over 60% disagree that in a redundancy situation older workers should be considered for redundancy before younger workers.

Question 21 - similarly, staff did not feel under pressure as a result of age to accept voluntary redundancy/redeployment.

Questions 22 & 23 - the organisation has not asked staff when they intend to retire or future intentions to stay. No specific age identified as a suitable age to retire (range 50 to

75+), with financial consideration being the major factor to stay over 67, followed by changes to pension rules (question 26).

Question 27 – this was not age related and will be considered at interview.

Question 28 – staff surveys, line manager and staff meetings were identified as means to feed back through the organisation.

Question 29 – knowledge/what is available in the organisation for older workers - high on knowing policies, existence and knowing where to find them but low on training and who is responsible, particularly low in succession planning and development of future leaders.

Question 30 – over 30% of staff agreed that the organisation uses marketing materials that represent the age diversity of its customer base.

Question 31- over 19% believe that age discrimination exists in the workplace. Comments indicate that discrimination is at both ends of the age spectrum.

Summary of the Survey – learning we needed qualitative data, we asked for volunteers on the survey and in GMP 26 replied and 19 replied in SMBC.



**GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE
POLICY DOCUMENT**

REF No:		OWNER	Human Resources Branch
COMMENCEMENT DATE:	July 2017	REVIEW DATE:	July 2018
SUBJECT:	Buddying Scheme		
SUBJECT AIM:	A process to assist officers and police staff to work in partnership to expand their knowledge, skills and understanding of each other's roles.		

POLICY :

Objectives:

1. To establish a buddying process to match police officers and/or police staff of similar rank/level.
2. To maintain and co-ordinate the process in line with existing GMP mentoring/coaching guidelines.
3. To share best practice and provide opportunities for solution focussed activity
4. To evaluate the process to ensure evolution of quality and effectiveness over time.

Criteria for the scheme:

5. For those applying for a buddy, the scheme is open to:
 - staff who volunteer with regard to their own personal development and who are supported by line management.
 - staff who have been identified as being suitable for undertaking the process as a result of promotion, transfer, the appraisal process or change of role.

In all cases the Human Resources Branch will review the application.
(See attached Buddy Application Form)

6. For those volunteering to be a buddy:

Each volunteer should fulfil the role outlined in the Buddy Volunteer Role Description & Person Specification (See attached Role Description and Person Specification)

Each volunteer should provide a pen picture of themselves outlining:

- Personal details
- Brief outline of current role
- Specialist skills and experience

(See attached Buddy Profile Form)

Matching Process

The application needs to be approved and countersigned by the line manager prior to submission to the Human Resources Branch.

Contracting

9. A contracting agreement must be signed off by both parties at commencement of the first session and returned by the volunteer buddy to the Human Resources Branch.
10. Pairs are to be contracted for a period of time to suit both individuals up to a maximum of six months, and as such relationships should be concluded six months after the start date.
11. All participants should honour diarised appointments where possible and notify their partner if they are unable to attend.

Evaluation

12. Both parties will be contacted mid-way through their buddying process to ensure that they are progressing towards achieving their personal aims and objectives within the agreed parameters.

Publicising the Scheme

13. This document will be placed on the Force Intranet site and an item placed on Chief Constable's Orders to publicise.
14. The Human Resources Branch will provide regular updates on the numbers of matched pairs to the Force Command Team.
15. An update newsletter will be sent to those participating in the buddying scheme.



GREATER MANCHESTER
POLICE

GMP BUDDY APPLICATION FORM

Work Address:

Tel No:

PIN No:

The information on this form will remain strictly private and confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this buddying scheme.

If you would like to discuss any issues before you send in your application, or if you feel uncomfortable with putting your reasons on paper, please call XXXXX, HR Senior Partner on telephone number XXX.

All the information that you supply will be helpful in the matching process

This area is for your Line Manager to complete in support of your application

Line Manager information: When supporting this request you must be aware of the commitment to the scheme that will be required of the applicant. The buddy relationship will be conducted for approximately an hour each month for a maximum period of 6 months and as such the applicant should be allowed 6 hours time to be released from duties. In supporting this request, you are agreeing to accommodate this allowance.

Line Manager: Please provide any information that you feel would support this application or detail your reasoning if you applicant is not suitable for a buddy relationship at this time.

Line Managers signature and date:

Human Resources Manager signature and date:

How do you think a buddy could help you ? It is essential that you have an idea as to what objectives you would like the buddy relationship to assist you with prior to starting a buddy relationship.



Please complete the following questions. This information is for monitoring purposes only and will be treated in strictest confidence

Age

Are you:

25 and under

26 – 40

41 – 55

Over 55

Greater Manchester Police

Buddy Role Description

Role Title: Buddy Vounteer

Department/Division: Forcewide

Branch/Section: Various

Grade: Voluntary

Main Duties & Responsibilities

1. To provide a confidential support and guidance service to staff on issues relating to personal development
2. To assist individuals with identifying personal objectives which will progress their personal development
3. To develop action plans with the individual to assist with their personal development
4. To identify where individuals may need other support services appropriate to their circumstances and guide appropriately
5. To complete and forward monitoring data to the Human Resources Branch.
6. To maintain relevant paperwork to assist with continuous personal development
7. To maintain an awareness of current equal opportunities issues, new legislation and changes in force policy
8. To regularly attend buddy meetings and take an active role in the sessions
9. To challenge inappropriate language and behaviour and positively promote an awareness of equality issues related information and support services

Greater Manchester Police

Person Specification

Role Title: Buddy Volunteer

Department/Division: Forcewide

Branch/Section: Various

Grade: Voluntary

Essential Criteria

Specialist Skills/Abilities

Ability to manage boundaries appropriately

Training/Experience

Experience of enthusiasm for developing others

Experience of providing support in an advisory capacity

Evidence of self -development and continuing professional development

Willingness to facilitate learning opportunities for others

Other Requirements

Able to commit to buddying for a specific period of time (maximum period of 6 months)

Motivated to seek feedback on own performance and learn from reflective practice



**GREATER MANCHESTER
POLICE**

BUDDY PROFILE FORM

Personal Details

- Name
- Rank/Grade

Pin No:

Ext:

Current Role

- Post/Job Title
- Location

What specialist skills and experience can you bring to buddying?

Brief Outline of Current Role:

[Empty box for writing the brief outline of current role]

Vounteer Buddy signature

Appendix 8

GMP Sickness Statistics

Sickness by age band

All Sickness (Officer/Staff/PCSO)

Age band	Apr - Nov 16		
	Cases	Days Lost	% of days lost
Under 20	37	64.21	0.1%
20-29	949	5,452.23	4.9%
30-39	3082	30,277.12	27.2%
40-49	3195	38,944.86	35.0%
50-55	1731	25,935.39	23.3%
56-59	483	6,471.02	5.8%
60+	309	4,091.88	3.7%
Grand Total	9786	111,236.71	

Officer sickness

Age band	Apr - Nov 16		
	Cases	Days Lost	% of days lost
Under 20	0	-	0.0%
20-29	183	1,231.90	1.8%
30-39	2086	20,861.94	30.5%
40-49	2178	28,202.88	41.3%
50-55	1001	16,948.05	24.8%
56-59	66	1,050.64	1.5%
60+	2	40.00	0.1%
Grand Total	5516	68,335.41	

Staff sickness

Age band	Apr - Nov 16		
	Cases	Days Lost	% of days lost
Under 20	37	64.21	0.2%
20-29	598	3,119.87	9.1%
30-39	691	6,379.10	18.5%
40-49	788	8,713.64	25.3%
50-55	591	7,753.82	22.5%
56-59	366	4,751.17	13.8%
60+	275	3,650.46	10.6%
Grand Total	3346	34,432.27	

PCSO sickness

Age band	Apr - Nov 16		
	Cases	Days Lost	% of days lost
Under 20	0	-	0.0%
20-29	168	1,100.46	13.0%
30-39	305	3,036.08	35.8%
40-49	229	2,028.34	24.0%
50-55	139	1,233.52	14.6%
56-59	51	669.21	7.9%
60+	32	401.42	4.7%
Grand Total	924	8,469.03	

GMP Workforce Profile

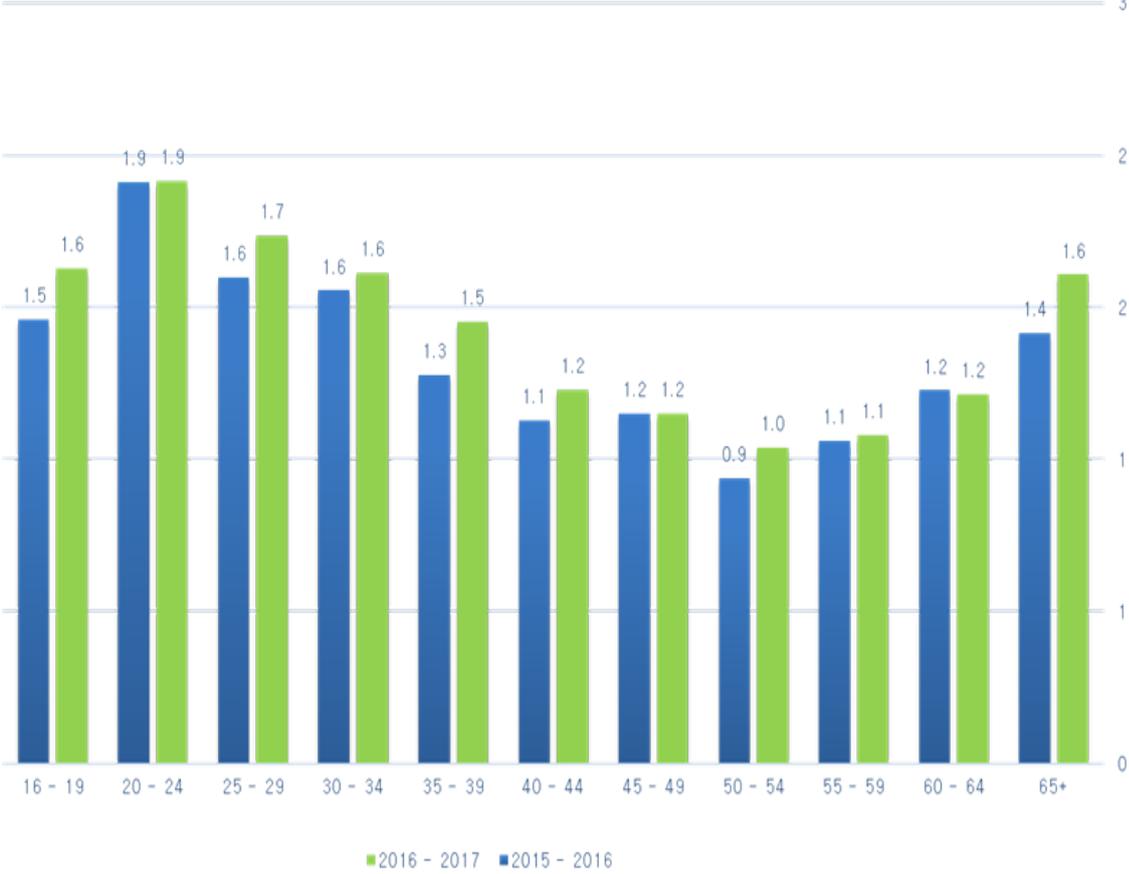
The current staffing levels within GMP as at 31/03/17 are :

Age Band	Officer	Staff	PCSO
Up to 20	3	79	0
20-29	430	511	87
30-39	2,185	760	190
40-49	2,614	846	155
50-59	1,008	1,151	149
60+	6	310	31
Grand Total	6,246	3,657	612

**Total
Headcount 10,515**

Sandwell MBC

Average occurrence of sickness per FTE employee



Sandwell MBC

Average days lost per FTE employee



Appendix 10c

Sandwell MBC All Sickness – 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017

	Apr 16 - Mar 17		
Age band	Cases	Days Lost	% of days lost
Under 20	15	23.32	0.06%
20-29	502	2180.07	5.60%
30-39	1206	7760.45	19.93%
40-49	1358	10535.31	27.05%
50-54	786	8055.12	20.68%
55-59	586	5957.86	15.30%
60+	453	4433.79	11.38%
Grand Total	4906	38945.93	

*Please note slight difference between age bands used by Sandwell MBC and GMP (50-55 and 56-59)

Sandwell MBC Workforce Profile as at April 2017

Gender Profile (April 2017)					
	Male	Female	Grand Total	% Male	% Female
Sandwell Council (excluding schools and PRUs)	1846	2817	4663	39.6%	60.4%
Economically Active in Sandwell (Source: 2011 Census)	79824	67261	147085	54.3%	45.7%

Age Profile (April 2017)				
Grade Band	Sandwell Council (excluding schools and PRUs)	%age	Economically Active in Sandwell (Source: 2011 Census)	%age
16 to 19	61	1.3%	6968	4.7%
20 to 24	163	3.5%	16264	11.1%
25 to 29	213	4.6%	18697	12.7%
30 to 34	411	8.8%	17223	11.7%
35 to 39	514	11.0%	17319	11.8%
40 to 44	517	11.1%	18548	12.6%
45 to 49	813	17.4%	17651	12.0%
50 to 54	862	18.5%	14239	9.7%
55 to 59	620	13.3%	10643	7.2%
60 to 64	386	8.3%	6513	4.4%
65 plus	103	2.2%	3020	2.1%
Grand Total	4663	100.0%	147085	100.0%

Employees Leaving Sandwell

(excluding Schools and PRU's)

April 2016 to March 2017

*Some information has been removed which is not relevant to this project

Reasons for Leaving	Total Leavers
Death in Service	2
Dismissal – xxxxxxx	7
Dismissal – xxxxxxx	1
Dismissal – xxxxxxx	8
End of Fixed Term Contract (No Redundancy)	29
End of Fixed Term Contract (With Redundancy)	1
Resigned - Due to Ill-Health	7
Resigned - Family Commitments	5
Resigned - Full-Time Studies	3
Resigned - Leaving the area	9
Resigned - No Reason Given	70
Resigned - Personal Advancement/ Better Prospects/ Promotion	76
Resigned - Personal Reasons (other)	29
Resigned - Physical Working Conditions	1
Resigned – XXXXXXX	14
Retirement – XXXXXXXX	1
Retirement - Age (No Redundancy)	51
Retirement - Efficiency of Service (No Redundancy)	22
Retirement - Ill-Health (No Redundancy)	16
Grand Total	352