

Alan Wright

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25th September 2019

Re: Open Letter to West Mercia PCC (Case Ref: WE1844)

Dear John,

Thank you very much for your response to my open letter.

However, two points immediately spring to mind.

Firstly, you do not appear to have addressed the main point of my letter, namely the 80% reduction in experienced officers in the 5-10 years' service band. In my opinion that will have significant and detrimental effects in coming years. Unless concerted efforts are made to attract Transfers in from other Forces that 'Experience Gap' will just migrate through the Force, i.e. in 5 years' time there will be an equivalent shortage of officers in the 10-15 years' service band. As a resident and Council Tax payer of West Mercia this concerns me. As a former Police Officer I am aware of the importance of experienced officers above new recruits. Experience can't be taught, it is gained by years of hard graft at the 'coal face'. No Police & Crime Commissioner can replace experienced officers with raw recruits and/or officers with 2-3 years' service.

Secondly, in your response to me you tell me that during your time in office (since 2016) you have invested to increase Policing numbers by 215. I simply don't understand that statement, it does not align with official Home Office figures. I fully accept that as the PCC you will have access to more up-to-date figures than I have, I have to rely on the annual release of March of each year, and the figure I possess only go up to March 2109. However, the figures that I DO have do not appear to support your statement.

In fact, in 2018, according to Home Office figures West Mercia Police lost a larger percentage of it's strength overall than any other Force in England and Wales. Since you were elected in 2016 overall recruitment is surely negative according to Home Office figures? Are those figures wrong? Have I misinterpreted them in some way? Since March 2016

West Mercia Police has recruited **290** officers (**including transfers in**) but has lost **424** officers in total (all reasons for leaving **including transfers out**)

I look forward to your explanation of this anomaly.

Kind Regards

Alan Wright