

National Black Police Association 15th AGM & Annual Training Conference Report

“Reflecting Our Communities”



Report compiled by
Tony C Smikle MA

Content	Page number
Event outline	3
Master of Ceremonies for the event Tony C Smikle MA	4
Met BPA Chair Janet Hills & NBPA President Franstine Jones	5
Rt Hon Mike Penning MP	7
Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe QPM	8
Helen Bailey — Chief Operating Officer of Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	9
Karin Mulligan scholarship fund	10
Rev Nims Obunge MBE	11
Assistant Chief Constable Richard Bennett	12
US NBPA President Malik Aziz	13
Panel discussion	14
NBPA Unity march in Eltham, London	15
NBPA gala dinner awards	17
Workshop 1 National Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (NILE) – Mike Franklin	18
Workshop 2.NBPA Legacy Co-ordinated and Chaired by Charles Crichlow MA	19
Workshop 3.Mental Health : Institutionalised Stress Dr Aileen Alleyne	21
Workshop 4.Young People: Over Policed Under Protected Young Black Positive Advocates	23
Workshop 5.Reflecting Our Community Sonia Brown MBE	24
Workshop 6.Hitting the Glass Ceiling Denise Milani	25
Conference summary	28
Recommendations	29
Acknowledgements	30

Event outline

Event Name:

National Black Police Association 15th AGM & Annual Training Conference

Theme:

'Reflecting our Communities'

Date:

30 & 31 October 2014

Conference Organisers:

National Black Police Association & Metropolitan Black Police Association

Main sponsors:

- ◇ British Transport Police
- ◇ City of London Police
- ◇ Metropolitan Police Service
- ◇ ACPO Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service (AVCIS)
- ◇ Police Mutual Assurance Society Ltd (PMAS)

Venue:

The Warren, Hayes, Bromley,

Number of Delegates:

178 delegates attended the NBPA conference



Master of Ceremonies for the event Tony C Smikle MA

The NBPA 15th anniversary event was hosted in partnership with the MetBPA who were celebrating their 20th anniversary.

The theme for the conference was “Reflecting our communities” which gives both community confidence and police legitimacy.

Mr Smikle introduced the following information relating to BME ACPO officers:

There are currently 5 BME ACPO officers out of a total of 204 police officers at these ranks.

They are pictured, DAC Pat Gallan, Commanders’ Alison Newcomb, Neil Basu and Mak Chishty, plus ACC Max Sahota (centre) The first four officers are all based within the MPS whilst ACC Sahota is currently based at the College of Policing.



Current Home Office data shows that 5.2% of 127,909 officers are BME with clear under representation in all police ranks above the rank of Constable.

BME Officers 2014:

2.5% ACPO, 3.9% Chief Superintendent, 3.9% Superintendent, 3.9% Chief Inspector, 3.6% Inspector, 3.7% Sergeant, 5.7% Constable. Source: Home Office.

There were 64,097 police staff in the 43 police forces on 31 March 2014, Black and Minority Ethnic police staff comprised 7.0 per cent of all police staff.

Home Office data: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tables-for-police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2014>

Met BPA Chair Janet Hills & NBPA President Franstine Jones



MetBPA Chair Janet Hills (Left) and NBPA President Franstine Jones (Right) formally opened the conference thanking all speakers and delegates for participating in the 2 day event.

Janet Hills

Janet thanked the City of London and British Transport Police for co-hosting this year's conference with the MPS. On the 26th September, the MetBPA celebrated its 20th Anniversary having been formed in 1994 amongst a little bit of controversy and there were some who believed we wouldn't last 20 days, yet alone 20years.

We've had a number of events this year to mark the occasion, culminating in a reception hosted by the Rt Hon David Lammy MP, at the House of Commons last night.

The message that comes across having read through the Black History month booklet is the relevance of the MetBPA in the past, the present and more importantly the future.

And as long as there's work to be done, the BPA's across the United Kingdom & Internationally will always have a part to play in ensuring that race equality is kept firmly on the agenda.

In the Past the association has been part of some ground breaking events and have made submissions to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (McPherson 1999), the Case for Change (Morris 2004), the Damilola Taylor review – (Sentamu 2002) and the Race and Faith Inquiry report – Butts 2010.

Presently we are working with the Mayors Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC), The Commissioner and Senor leaders within the organisation to ensure that we have a service that looks and feels like the diverse communities of London.

My vision of the future is to have a police service that recognises, values & embraces difference, so that the BPA no longer needs to exist.

However as long as there's work to be done, the BPA's across the United Kingdom & Internationally will always have a part to play in ensuring that race equality is kept firmly on the agenda

Franstine Jones

This year's conference "Reflecting Our Communities" focused on the issues that the Service faces with regards to having a service that reflects the communities it serves.

The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them. The police Service must take the necessary radical steps in seeking to ensure that it reflects the community that it serves and thereby earning the trust and confidence of every community.

The British model of policing relies upon the police officers 'policing by consent'. The Nine Peelian principles identify how British policing should reflect their communities and police society as a whole. The diverse population, especially in London, demands a police service that demonstrates its commitment to black staff and officers as well as delivering a fair and equitable service to the wider community. The NBPA historically, continues to support the police service in this endeavor. The NBPA has made the following our priorities for 2014-2015:

Representation - To have a police service that looks like the communities we serve. A police service where we have BME officers in senior ranks and in specialist roles. This ties in with the seventh Peelian Principle which states;

"To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."

Without a wholly representative police service, we fail to live up to this principle.

Engagement - To have a police service that has meaningful engagement with local BPA's and BME communities. This links in with the fifth Peelian Principle, which states;

"To seek and preserve public favour, not by pandering to public opinion, but by constantly demonstrating absolutely impartial service to law, in complete independence of policy, and without regard to the justice or injustice of the substance of individual laws, by ready offering of individual service and friendship to all members of the public without regard to their wealth or social standing, by ready exercise of courtesy and friendly good humour, and by ready offering of individual sacrifice in protecting and preserving life."

True community engagement can only properly exist where we adhere to this principle. **Police powers** - To ensure fair use of all stop powers, eliminating disproportionality in professional standards and vetting. This ties in with the second of the Peelian Principles which states:

"To recognise always that the power of the police to fulfil their functions and duties is dependent on public approval of their existence, actions and behaviour, and on their ability to secure and maintain public respect."

Thus it is paramount that we ensure that the police use of stop and search reflects this principle. There must be a willingness to change police practices where they are causing division and mistrust. The NBPA strategic priorities links into the Peelian principles of the police being dependent on public approval of their existence, actions and behaviour, and on their ability to secure and maintain public respect. We all have a part to play in this endeavor.

The NBPA has come a long way over the past 15 years and has made great progress in supporting BME colleagues and communities, and ensuring that policing activities are fair, impartial and exercised for the good of all communities and society as a whole. There have been many trials and tribulations along the way which we have overcome together, as our motto states, "One voice, strength in unity".

Right Honourable Mike Penning Member of Parliament

The Rt Hon Mike Penning MP and the Minister of State for Justice was appointed Minister of State at the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice on 15 July 2014.

Mike began his presentation by apologising to the NBPA for the lack of attendance by previous policing ministers during the 15 years on the existence of the NBPA. He assured conference that he would attend future conferences if he was in post as policing minister.

The minister discussed his background in state education, military, career, work in the fire service, his route into politics and dealing with dyslexia.

“Police forces that reflect the communities they serve are crucial to cutting crime and this government is using the local policing landscape to drive change at local level. You are the people who experience what really goes on and know what needs to change for the better in policing and you should continue to use your voice”.

Recognition at ministerial level that the National Black Police Association is part of the answer to addressing under representation across the piste of policing



Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe QPM

Met Commissioner Sir Bernard (pictured) stated that he wanted to change employment law in order to enable the force to practice affirmative action.

Sir Bernard wants to recreate the initiative in Northern Ireland designed to achieve diversity in the ranks and create a *critical mass* of black and minority ethnic officers within the service which he believes would then help encourage even more to join.

The Met already undertakes 'positive action' recruitment advertising campaigns targeted at specific communities considered underrepresented in the force, and the commissioner has in the past stated his commitment to get his force *looking like London*.

The force would now like to recruit people from minorities in equal numbers to those from the white majority "for a set period of time".

The Commissioner also asked the delegates to encourage friends and family to join the police.

Sir Bernard started as the Met Commissioner in 2011 there was a single Black officer in his ACPO team, today there are four Black officers.

"After a five year freeze, we're into one of our largest ever recruitment campaigns with a target to recruit 5,000 new constables by 2015. This presents a fantastic opportunity to ensure that we look and feel more like London! I want 40% of those officers to be from BME backgrounds and to have more constables who understand local issues and can confidently engage with local communities. That is why, as of August 2014, we have taken a bold step to introduce a 'London Residency criteria' for those wishing to join the Met".

"Restoring trust is about actions not just words. That is why when I became Commissioner in 2012 I sought to reform our use of stop and search. As a result we have reduced our volume of searches by over a half, at the same time as increasing the number of arrests arising from those searches (from 8% in 2011 to 20.5% in August 2014)

We are now the example others are encouraged to follow. I also believe our use of body worn videos will help to improve accountability and provide reassurance that our interactions are as professional as they can be".



Helen Bailey — Chief Operating Officer of Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)

MOPAC is directly accountable for police performance in the capital, setting out strategic direction and allocating resources across London in its Police and Crime Plan.

This was the first occasion that MOPAC had attended the NBPA conference.

Helen stated that BME officers face the difficult task of challenging their force and highlighting where things are going wrong, at the same time as encouraging others to join.

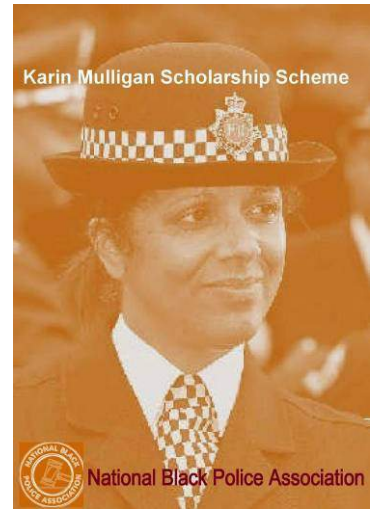
Ms Bailey stated that “A representative police force will never happen unless BME officers are more upbeat about the force and the job prospects it offers,” she continued, “Think about what you are doing to show young black men and women that working in the police is something they should aspire to and want to do.”

She added that Sir Bernard’s policy of recruiting people who live in the area was one positive way of ensuring the force becomes more representative, and encouraged other areas to do the same.



Karin Mulligan scholarship fund

Chief Inspector Karin Mulligan was one of Britain's most senior black police officers. Based in Manchester, Karin was an exemplary police officer who challenged injustice and discrimination wherever she found it. Karin earned and deserved the respect and admiration of many within policing, especially the NBPA.



Sadly she died in March 2009 after losing her battle with cancer. In tribute to her dedication, the NBPA established this scholarship fund. The scholarship scheme operates through the NBPA charity and contributes to the development of members of the community, police officers and police staff completing academic study or personal development linked to policing.

This year there were 3 successful applications for funding from the fund.

The scholarship co-ordinator announced the following awards:

- Steve Kappel (Cleveland BPA) Work Based Studies (Leadership and Management) BA (Hons) at Teesside University
- Remi Prierra (Avon & Somerset BPA) Law with psychology at the University of the West of England
- Kelly Johnson-Ward (Independent) Master of Science in Health and Social Care MSc Psychological Therapies for Psychosis at the University of Nottingham

All applicants have been granted monetary awards to assist in their personal development.

Ms Johnson-Ward was the first applicant to apply from outside policing.

Rev Nims Obunge MBE



Rev Nims Obunge MBE

Pastor of Freedom's Ark; CEO of The Peace Alliance, Coordinator London Week of Peace & London Leadership and Peace Awards; Deputy Lieutenant for Greater London.

Pastor Nims highlighted the fact that even though he does not fit the villainous profile he identified that he too had been stopped by the police under more humorous circumstances.

Pastor Nims detailed the background to the riots in 2011 and explained how he sought, but failed to get the police to engage with the community groups as tensions rose.

He reminded the delegates that the way to ensure sustainable change was to be active within communities and active within policing as the necessary change does not occur by being passive.

Pastor Nims thanked the national and local BPAs for the unseen work that was undertaken during and post the 2011 riots that had added to the calming message that eventually lead to peace on our streets

Assistant Chief Constable

Richard Bennett

Seconded from Thames Valley Police to the College of Policing Richard leads on the BME 2018 project to improve the recruitment, development, progression and retention of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) officers and staff.

The Police will need to make one-in-four recruitments a Black or minority ethnic officer to be representative of the population by 2024.



Of the 127,000 police officers in England and Wales, just five per cent (6,700) are Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) officers.

Currently, the UK population is 61 million, of which 14 per cent is made up of minority communities. This is expected to rise to 16 per cent by 2024, meaning the service would need to recruit 17,000 BME officers - or one-in-four of future recruitment - to be representative of the population by then.

Richard outlined that practical advice on positive action and best-practice products and services will be collated by bringing together the evidence of what works in policing and in other sectors.

ACC Bennett said: "If police are to be effective in tackling crime and bringing offenders to justice they must enjoy the trust and confidence of all the diverse communities they serve.

"To enable policing by consent the service must recruit, develop and retain from the widest pool of talent, including BME communities.

"We want policing to be a career of choice for the most talented people from every community. The scale of this is challenging when in the last five years the average yearly intake of BME officers was 305. (8.3 per cent).

"The programme will work with forces to help them encourage more people from diverse backgrounds to join the police and to remove the obstacles which may be preventing them from making the most of their talents within policing."

Future recommendations and interventions will be based on an evidence base of what works.

US NBPA President Malik Aziz

Malik congratulated the UK NBPA on the 15 year and detailed how the original BPA members in the USA were sacked in 1972 for starting the group but later reinstated.

Malik has been on the international media following the shooting of an unarmed Black man named Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri by a white police officer.

The streets erupted in violence due to the lack of confidence in the police to get to the truth of how it came to pass.

Malik explained that the long-term solution is for Ferguson and places like Ferguson to actually diversify their police departments.

The city is 65 percent to 70 percent black, and yet they fail to meet demographics and reflect or mirror the community in which they serve. What it appears to be are people who are culturally disconnected which — the communities in which they serve, so, therefore, the result is the response that was given when you have a policy that you're not open or you're not transparent. Therefore, you're not accountable.

If Ferguson, Missouri, actually wants to resolve some of the issues and have a viable solution, then they should look at the policies that govern or surround the admission policies that are seemingly so subjective and not objective.

Malik Aziz is a Deputy Chief with Dallas Police Department.



BTP Commissioner Adrian Leppard, NAMP Chair Asif Sadiq, NBPA Vice President Nick Glynn, ACC Richard Bennett & Rev Nims Obunge MBE



The panel discussion was chaired by Nick Glynn:

Questions from the floor included a possible change to legislation to use 50:50 affirmative action to force a more inclusive police service.

Commissioner of the City of London Police, Adrian Leppard and Chair of the National Association of Muslim Police, Asif Sadiq did not support this approach.

Maybe the positive action envelope has not been pushed enough, however, the practices up to date have not delivered a representative police service.

NBPA Unity march in Eltham, London



NBPA President Franstine Jones MetBPA Chair Janet Hills lead the NBPA unity march in Eltham to the location of the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

Wreaths were laid at the scene by the NBPA President and the MetBPA Chair.

Words of remembrance and prayer were said by Pastor Nims Obunge in recognition of the immense legacy that Stephen has left and the strength and bravery of Stephen's parents Neville and Doreen Lawrence.

This was sad but poignant moment for delegation who recognised that the fight to identify and prosecute the outstanding murderers of Stephen is a destination that may never be reached.

The first NBPA march of solidarity took place in 2006 at the US/UK International conference in Manchester. The march is an overt demonstration of community spirit. Walking with the public, walking their streets and showing that there are Black role models within the police service. This event *the march of solidarity* has consistently been the high point of recent NBPA conferences.

Additional photographs of the march available via the NBPA website www.nationalbpa.com

Images from the march in Eltham



NBPA gala dinner awards



Stafford Brooks receives his NBPA award for his outstanding contribution to Staffordshire MCA and the NBPA from Tony Smikle & President Franstine Jones



Richie Paines receives his NBPA award for his outstanding contribution to South Wales BPA from President Franstine Jones

NBPA Workshops 31 October 2014

Workshop 1 National Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (NILE)
Mike Franklin

Addressing Complaints from our Communities

Aims

This workshop aims to provide participants with an opportunity to –

1. Explore key issues arising from the IPCC reports into the handling of allegations of discrimination by the MPS and the Greater Manchester, West Midlands and West Yorkshire police forces, and
2. Contribute towards the development of effective strategies to address those issues

Target Group

A cross section of NBPA members, including local and national representatives

Objectives

- a. To increase awareness and understanding of the problems that members of our communities face in relation to the handling of their complaints of discrimination
- b. To elicit participants' views as to (a) the causes of the problems and deficiencies in the current handling of such complaints, and (b) practical and effective measures to address those problems and deficiencies

Outcomes

- i. Greater understanding of key issues and problems highlighted in the IPCC reports
- ii. Evidence and practical ideas from a cross section of members to inform NBPA/BPA proposals for improvements in the handling of allegations of discrimination by members of our communities

<http://www.nbpa.co.uk/conference-feedback/>



Workshop 2. NBPA Legacy Co-ordinated and Chaired by
Charles Crichlow MA



Panel members (listed left to right)

- Ruwan Udwerage-Perera MSc - Retired former NBPA General Secretary
- David McFarlane – Retired former Met BPA Executive and NBPA National Coordinator.
- Wendell Henry – Former NBPA Treasurer
- Franstine Jones – NBPA President
- Janet Hills – Met BPA Chair and NBPA Cabinet member
- Dr Leroy Logan MBE – Retired founding member of Met BPA and founding NBPA Chair
- Charles Crichlow MA – Former NBPA President
- Bevan Powell MBE – Retired former Met BPA Chair and NBPA Cabinet member

Issues covered

Independence From Home Office / Police Leadership

It was noted that in the early days of the NBPA, support from the Home Office was welcome, however we became far too dependent and this dependency inhibited our freedom to speak out on important issues. The current level of financial independence has to be maintained and extended and the relationship with the Home Office and College of Policing needs to be properly calibrated. New leadership must remember that historically the NBPA lobbied across political lines.

Small Constabularies

It is very important the NBPA leadership pay more attention to smaller constabularies. This is where many serious issues are going unnoticed and where the isolation of Black staff is perhaps the greatest.

Nurturing Unity

There was a general observation among panel members that unity amongst black staff needs to be nurtured. The NBPA needs to find ways of promoting that unity, particularly through social programmes.

Development of Local Associations

Strong local associations are essential to development of a strong National body, this way of thinking must be programmed into the work of the Cabinet, NBPA leadership must always be visible at local level to send the message that we are a strong and relevant organisation.

Retired Members

Retired BPA members are an amazing untapped resource for the serving NBPA leadership. They have done their time, they know the terrain and generally have less to lose and can speak freely. Retired members can be a compass for the NBPA in terms of its core founding principles and values. Many retired members are volunteering to help but BPA's are not configured appropriately to utilise their assistance. This needs to be remedied. A better understanding of the foundation principles of NBPA will help new members to understand and be able to articulate the relevance of the organisation.

Income Generation

The NBPA needs to be far more businesslike in terms of raising income. Strategies should take account of the fact that retired members have time and resources available to them and in many cases are looking for ways of maintain social contact with the service. US NBPA has many exemplary income generation programmes.

Anyone aspiring to lead the NBPA should have a manifesto that includes a clear agenda for raising income.

Protecting The Legacy

There is a concern that the history of the NBPA is not being properly documented and there is a real danger that others could exploit this weakness by presenting an inaccurate narrative of the NBPA legacy. A number of retired members have volunteered to work documenting the history of the NBPA.

All in all, the forum was very well received. A number of younger BPA members attending the workshop, expressed amazement at hearing the history and development of the NBPA. There was unanimous agreement that the legacy of the NBPA need to be preserved and that aspiring leaders will benefit greatly from a proper understanding of its history.

<http://www.nbpa.co.uk/conference-feedback/>

Workshop 3. **Mental Health : Institutionalised Stress**
Dr Aileen Alleyne

Aims:

To gain awareness and insight into the impact of workplace stress caused by discrimination and racism

Objectives:

- Examine perceptions of stress as experienced by Black workers
- Highlight the nature of occupational stress
- Provide attendees with helpful ways to identify this form of stress and take appropriate action



What is stress?

- it is a type of alarm reaction involving heightened mental and bodily states
- it is both psychological (mind) and physiological (body)



SPIRAL OF EVENTS
 (Alleyne, 2004)

Alleyne's spiral of events 2004 explained

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Presence of micro/macro-aggressions | • Spot it, Name it, Confront it |
| • Workers response | • Seek support from objective allies. Act not React . Identify and own what is yours. Challenge assertively what belongs to the other |
| • Mistakes/slip-ups | • Share your distress. A burden shared is a burden halved. Rally effective support |
| • Management's response | • Educate management to the unique phenomenon of race, workplace stress and its hidden injuries |
| • Crisis and Impasse | • If the above are successfully employed, crisis and impasse could be de-escalated. |

Trauma and intra-psychic issues

- Workplace institutionalised stress is damaging and can be experienced as clinical trauma

The intra-psychic issues manifest as:

- Damaged self worth, loss of confidence and desire
- Hypervigilance and paranoia
- Mistrust and dis-ease (somatisation and disease)
- Physical illness e.g., high blood pressure, weight gain/loss, hair loss, loss of libido
- Vengefulness, bitterness , depression

Advice

Familiarise yourself with the full workings of your organisation -

- Code of conduct
- Equal opportunities in employment policy
- Grievance (Employee complaints) procedure and
- Seek counselling to deal with stigmatic stress, feelings of being overwhelmed, losing personal control and restoring damaged

<http://www.nbpa.co.uk/conference-feedback/>

Workshop 4. Young People: Over Policed Under Protected
(Young Black Positive Advocates)



This workshop about young people was uniquely managed by young people from the YBPA.

The Young Black Positive Advocates (YBPA) are a London based youth organisation consisting of young people who are from ethnic minorities and live in different areas of London. The aim is to empower and motivate the younger generations, whilst also aiming to empower and motivate younger generations, whilst celebrating the youths who break the stereotypical perceptions which society holds about young people within Britain.

The youth organisation is 'run by the youth, for the youth'; because of this they act as the voice of the unheard young people within Britain. YBPA are a community-serving organisation that provides an outlet for youth to display their talents, passions and hobbies, whilst also educating them on budding issues, which directly or indirectly affect their everyday lives.

The YBPA consists of positive and inquisitive Black and Asian youths, who not only identify key issues affecting young people, but create and implement effective solutions which tackle these social issues. YBPA encourage and compel young people not to conform to the norms of society and also act as young role models who set exemplary standards. The YBPA advocate determination, passion and knowledge, whilst also striving to be the catalysts that will change the national and global community for the better.

<http://www.nbpa.co.uk/conference-feedback/>



Chief executive Paul Anderson MBE

Workshop 5. Reflecting Our Community — facilitated by **Sonia Brown MBE**

Inspired by a simple speech given by one of her mentors, Sonia Brown MBE created her ideal job by founding the National Black Women's Network in 1999, now running alongside its online social network, SistaTalk.

Key Actions

- 1 Challenging Organisations Processes
 - A) Race Test Assessors (independent) Recruitment and Promotion Panels to ensure impartiality and fairness in the result.
 - B) Ensure panels are made up of a diverse mix of people
- 2 Undertake a cultural audit of panels

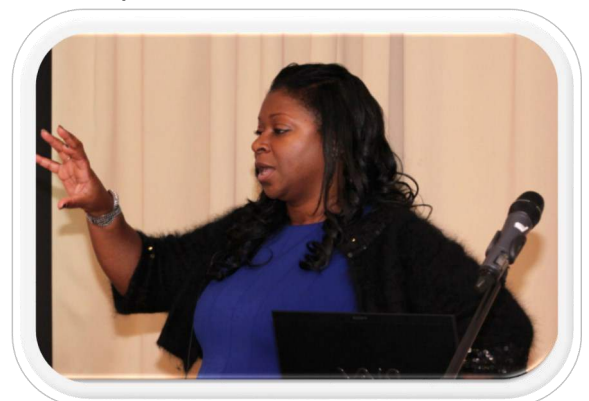
This will:-

- A) Challenge unconscious bias and sameness agenda
- B) Shatter the old boys network

Staff Associations:-

- 3 To drive the organisation to ensure diversity is back on the agenda; challenge decisions and stop being passive – push more!
 - A) Understand your individual responsibility for development because the organizational culture has changed regarding promotional opportunities
 - B) Develop leadership potential through schemes like “Releasing Potential” when traditional training options are not available
- 4 PCSOs need to be linked into the networks to assess mentoring, support and advice around recruitment issues
 - A) PCSOs could be trained to be FLOs to offer an alternative development pathways and support to BME communities.
 - B) Look at career development for Police Staff through mentoring, sponsoring and net working through senior staff members
 - C) Apply external learning to access management skills via lateral moves e.g. public appointment, school governors
- 5 Staff associations to conduct exit interviews to improve best practice and
 - A) Develop strategic networking opportunities to expand

<http://www.nbpa.co.uk/conference-feedback/>



Workshop 6. Hitting the glass ceiling — Progression facilitated by **Denise Milani**

Aims

10 years ago issues for many women were reflected in the concept of a “glass ceiling” whilst women from minority backgrounds spoke of “sticky floors”.

The aim of this short workshop is to start a contemporary conversation on the position of women in Policing in 2014 and beyond; and then to garner the energy, commitment and support of attendees to sign up to a brand new approach.



Target Audience

Any delegate excited by the aim as outlined above.

Objectives

Gain an understanding of the landscape and key challenges facing women in policing today.

To explore and identify ways in which attendees can get to grips with key challenges.

Harness the collective energy of attendees to provide creative and inspirational responses ultimately through the use of social media.

Outcomes

To move themes of the “glass ceiling” and “sticky floors” into a more contemporary context in line with the ambitions of the equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda.

Training Style

Participative, informative, upbeat!

Workshop Length

1 hour

Number of Participants

15/20 approximately

Denise identified two distinctive types of individuals which she labelled “radiators” or “drains”. The former emitting light, positivity and warmth, ideas and solutions, the latter drawing energy out of any given situation to the point that one’s energy level eventually dwindled and disappeared.

Workshop colleagues were encouraged to look at the recently launched “Gender Agenda” 3 and also “What About Us?” the report by the NBPA on the situation of BME women in policing by Marcia Gittens.

The main points made in each workshop revolved around empowerment, networking, engaging and being engaged through social media and ultimately the notion of individual choice.

Ms Milani explained that she wished to start a networking site **#HITTHEGLASSCEILING** which would be based on and include the groups individual advice as arising from the written task in the shape of a poem or letter to be opened in 2024, by a young woman as she is about to embark on her career. Here are snapshots of the advice received in the form of poems/letters:-

- “Stay focused, don’t be swayed by peers, keep studying and learn to deal with setbacks”
- “Be happy”
- “Move on, if your enthusiasm has gone then take control”
- “Take time to enjoy what/who you have become”
- “Be the change you want to see”
- “You can /will achieve what you set your mind on. There are no glass ceilings because I smashed it years ago!”
- “Embrace everyone’s differences and don’t believe that everyone is the same. Judge a person by their content.
- Have a career plan and set objectives
- Treat your family like a glass ball - if you drop it - it will break; treat your job like a rubber ball; if you drop this, you can always bounce back!

Denise then addressed the delegates’ individual concerns and with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, went on to further explain the meaning of “The glass ceiling.” “An invisible but real barrier to advancement in a profession, especially affecting women and members of minorities”. She also spoke about the concept of “Sticky floors” i.e. the situation faced by many junior women, often from BME communities, in not being able to even get beyond the most basic grade in terms of promotion; and also explained the idea of “Intersectionality” - the situation and experiences of members of minority groups with any number of the challenges associated with more than one of the range of protected characteristics, e.g. a disabled, BME, female.

Discussion followed on the language minority groups often used to disempower themselves and how individuals sometimes use language to “think” barriers into existence. . Whilst on the point of language, lively debate ensued on feeling included /excluded through the use of language. Denise light heartedly challenged many of the attendees on their own form of excluding those who are not members of the Police service through Service members use of Three Letter Acronyms (TLA’s); examples of which were many throughout the workshops e.g. CID “Criminal Investigation Department” or the street talk definition, “Coppers In Disguise!”

Workshop notes

Denise opened her sessions by asking each delegate to introduce themselves by name and force and to state their reasons for attending her workshop. Here are a few of the reasons given.

Session 1

- "I want to know how to progress and support others"
- "support colleagues to progress and believe in themselves"
- "There are other barriers to progression, i.e. age, gender and race"
- "I've given up on promotion"
- "Leadership and progression"
- "Given up on promotion"
- "What barriers are there in the force, have been trying unsuccessfully to get promoted for the past 8 years"

Session 2

- "Inspired by other achievers and how they overcame obstacles"
- "In my current job for the past 14yrs and have been trying for the last 5yrs to break through the glass ceiling"
- "Want to advise police on where they are going wrong/can improve"
- "How to get the drill hammer to go through the concrete walls"
- "Observation"
- "I'm responsible for HR and I want to know what abilities I have to remove the glass ceiling"
- "To make sure that Mr McIntosh keeps his words"
- Share ideas and solutions"
- Want to get promoted"
- "Better understanding to improve job in Home Office policing Dept"
- "How to identify how to get the first black commissioner"

Session 3

- "I want to help inspire, support and encourage people to hit the glass ceiling"
- "What is the glass ceiling?"
- "Grabbing title"
- "What is HR's perspective of the glass ceiling?"
- "Experienced hitting the glass ceiling"
- "Poor relationship with the Black Police Association"
- "Championed for this workshop, lots of reports on recruitment and retention, but what can we do to improve this and manage BME staff rather than waiting for opportunities"
- "Ideas to crack on with my career"
- "Need a more diverse police force and reflective of the community, how can we help those coming up behind me"

Conference summary

The 15th anniversary of the NBPA coincided with 20th anniversary of the MetBPA.

Interestingly the 'Black Police Association' was named after the US counterparts who formalised themselves in 1972.

The conference theme of "Reflecting communities" is well timed as in recent months we have seen two high profile employment tribunal cases finalised in the courts, concerning officers Harmit Bahra (Bedfordshire) and Carol Howard (Metropolitan). As a community barometer it is impossible to know the impact of such cases, however, we are aware that such negative publicity does little to restore confidence within BAME communities. It also reinforces to police personnel the existence of institutional racism that establishment consistently refuses to accept.

The fact that there has only ever been a single Black Chief Constable since 1829 and that in 2014 there are only 5 Black ACPO officers out of 204 should make those in power pay attention.

The introduction of the 2018 project with the College of policing is a welcome step, however, initiatives like the Positive Action Leadership Programme (PALP), senior PALP, Releasing Potential were development courses aimed at BAME staff that showed real promise and produced the necessary future leaders, only to have other hurdles put in their way. The full value of these schemes were never embraced by the organisation as an effective way to ensure a consistent stream of BAME talent coming through the system, to this end there has been a small amount of progress over the last 20 years. The police service needs to understand that there cannot be a long term solution to under-representation without the intimate participation of the NBPA, who are in a unique position to give insight and understanding from a lived experience.

Affirmative action would require a change in legislation to assist with greater representation. A change of legislation would need to address issues that have now arisen within the PSNI of which many of the minorities within the ranks being stuck at Constable and Sergeant. Affirmative Action is NOT Positive Discrimination. Many of us remember going regional training centres as new recruits to find that we were the only Black officer in the class, sometimes the only Black officer in the whole intake yet the staff associations were silent as they could see no problem. The first suggestion that 50:50 may come in sees the media frenzy to cry foul and suggest that standards will be lowered and criminals employed to hit diversity targets. This conflicts with the facts as we know, the Police service needs to evolve into the 21st Century.

The NBPA is uniquely positioned to recruit Black officers and staff, however, the environment needs to be a safe place for us to invite family and friends to be a part of.

Issues such as Stop and Search, disproportionality in discipline, misbehaviour by professional standards departments, progression based on skills and ability, fairness in recruitment and vetting need to be tackled head on with the NBPA ensuring that there is a sustainable plan that will not fall off the end of the table (again).

The future belongs to our young advocates and their generation, we need to include programmes to develop their skills and guide them into careers within the Criminal Justice System. It is an absolute imperative that BME people are represented in the CJS as officers and staff, without appropriate representation it questions the legitimacy of community policing.

Conference recommendations

1. The NBPA Cabinet and NEC must familiarise themselves with seminal documents that have informed the debate around the police service 'reflecting the communities' we serve in order to support BPAs and the CJS
2. The NBPA needs to learn from its' history and utilise the skills and knowledge of former and retired members, including a process to formally document the history of the NBPA
3. The NBPA needs to develop a structure that develops members for Cabinet roles and understand the role of charity trustees
4. The NBPA must develop the support infrastructure in order to support members with issues such as stress and other work related issues
5. In partnership with stakeholders develop engagement programmes that include young BME people that will lead to a career or greater participation in policing
6. The NBPA to add to the 'Gender Agenda 3' utilising the current data and the report 'What about us' to ensure that BME women are included in the retention and progression plans in order to support the importance of diversity within forces
7. Police forces to have appropriate policies and structures to ensure the retention of Black staff and to tackle existing barriers to progression, including the culture of the police service.
8. The NBPA to be an active member of the College of Policing BME 2018 project and have a key role in recruitment, retention and progression initiatives and Work with providers of support programmes for Black leaders.
9. The NBPA to be routinely considered as a primary consultee by all stakeholders involved in decision making relating to policing and be provided with an opportunity to inform the decision making process
10. The NBPA to review national, regional and force training which focuses specifically upon leadership/managerial skills in order to ensure explicit commitment to diversity and equality issues

Acknowledgements

- ◇ Special thanks to Khalid Lone (Kent MEPA) for supplying the main photographs in this report
- ◇ Thank you to Ms Dominique Anglin of MB Photography - photographer of the conference workshops

NBPA 2014 Conference Planning Team were:

- ◇ Deborah Thomas
- ◇ Tracy Gittens
- ◇ John Awosoga
- ◇ Keith Smith
- ◇ Kwame Opoku
- ◇ Nadia Mark
- ◇ Janet Hills
- ◇ Franstine Jones
- ◇ Zaf Qazi
- ◇ Jay Dave
- ◇ Sharon Thomas (conference volunteer)
- ◇ Yvonne Rhoden (conference volunteer)
- ◇ Fanny Takyi-Micah (conference volunteer)
- ◇ Lisa Cherry (conference volunteer)
- ◇ Henry Akhigbe (march co-ordinator)

Additional information and photographs can be found on the NBPA website:

www.nationalbpa.com

Twitter: @NBPAUK

Facebook: NBPAUK