

LONDON FIRST PROGRAMME: NEXT STEPS

Introduction:

London First is a business membership organisation, whose mission is to make London the best city in the world in which to do business. For the past six years, the MPS has worked in partnership with London First on a Leadership Exchange Programme, which aims to bring senior police leaders together with senior business figures in London to promote partnership working, and share expertise and ideas.

Until recently, ownership for this area lay with the Leadership Academy. Now, the Career Management Unit has taken over as the MPS point of contact, in order to ensure the development available through London First is closely allied with future talent management processes.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief update on activities that London First are currently pursuing with the MPS, highlight some issues, and suggest a way forward.

Leadership Exchange Programme:

The Leadership Exchange Programme is a joint mentoring initiative between the police service and business leaders in London. The programme is aimed at superintending rank upwards and equivalent police staff. Partners typically meet for one hour per month over the course of about 12 months, and discuss a range of issues, such as strategic planning, change management, leadership, with each learning from the practices and experience of the other's organisation. Participation in the programme enables individuals to gain a unique insight into another organisation; gain fresh perspectives; strengthen partnership working, and gives a valuable 'sounding board' for the exchange of ideas.

The MPS pays an annual subscription fee of £31,000 (excl. VAT) towards delivery of the programme. There are currently 80 partnerships, and London First has scope to accommodate approximately 100 per year (equating to a cost of £310 per partnership). The programme was re-advertised to all superintendents, chief superintendents and high potential chief inspectors in January 2008 to ensure that the full 100 partnerships are reached. To date, the response to this advert has been large, with demand exceeding capacity.

Of the existing partnerships, there are currently 11 BMEs on the programme (14%) and 17 females (21%). The last evaluation of the programme (in August 2006) showed that 71% of participants rated their partnership match as excellent; 97% felt they benefited from the programme, and 95% scored their experience as good or excellent. Another evaluation is now overdue and it is suggested that the MPS should be more actively involved in this evaluation and ensure it is structured to measure our programme objectives.

Police Secondments Pilot:

At the end of 2006, London First sought approval from HR Director, Martin Tiplady, to pilot a secondments programme, which would place Chief Inspectors and police staff equivalents into 3-6 month full time business placements. The placements aimed to attract talented police officers and provide them with exposure to the business world, in order to share good practice on management issues and develop transferable skills to assist them in becoming more effective and efficient leaders. Each placement would be a 'real' role within a company, such as HSBC, Serco, BT, amongst others. Roles would include operational, policy and strategy setting, as well as bespoke projects.

It was agreed by Martin that five business secondments would be scheduled by the close of 2007. The pilot is being offered free of charge to the MPS, although there will be a cost implication to any subsequent full-scale rollout. To date, only one secondment has been filled and completed (DCI Vas Gopinathan, who was placed within HSBC for 6 months). This is not through a lack of effort by London First, but has largely resulted from the fact that they did not have a dedicated point of contact to facilitate and broker the placements within the MPS. This led to issues in targeting the right calibre of MPS applicants and in securing the requisite engagement from B/OCUs to release individuals and continue to fund their salaries through the duration of the placement.

Feedback on Vas Gopinathan's placement has been extremely positive and he would recommend this process to other officers. A number of other individuals at inspecting rank and police staff equivalent have expressed interest in undertaking a similar placement, however these have tended to fall down at the final hurdle as individuals struggle to gain the support of their B/OCU. The fundamental issue is, inevitably, a funding one and this will need to be addressed if the other pilot secondments are to be organised effectively.

Recommendations:

Based on this, approval is sought for the following:

- A full evaluation of the Leadership Exchange Programme is undertaken to review the benefits of the programme and the return on the investment
- As part of this evaluation, each of the current 80 partnerships are reviewed to ensure that they are active and benefit continues to be derived by both parties
- For future launches of the Leadership Exchange Programme **priority** should be given to those officers and staff enrolled on the MPS talent pool and High Potential Development Scheme, to ensure the most talented candidates benefit from this opportunity

- Positive action should be undertaken to boost the number of BMEs and females taking part in the Leadership Exchange Programme
- The police secondments pilot should be **solely** targeted at high potential officers and staff to ensure the best candidates are placed with external organisations. Existing standard operating procedures for the high potential schemes will then govern the release of individuals for such placements.
- Once the police secondments pilot has been completed, a full evaluation should be undertaken, which will offset future cost implications against perceived benefits, prior to any investment in this area.