

'Blues and Views' podcast – sharing the lived experiences of officers and staff from underrepresented groups

A podcast series highlighting the experiences of officers and staff from underrepresented communities, with a focus on creating an inclusive culture.

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Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Organisational
Topic	Leadership, workforce and organisation Diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) Training and professional development
Organisation	Humberside Police
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Region	North East
Partners	Police
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	June 2025

Key details

Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Adults Workforce

Aim

The aims of the 'Blues and Views' podcast are to:

- provide a voice for officers and staff from underrepresented groups
- encourage understanding across the workforce of colleagues' and communities' lived experiences
- showcase inclusive leadership through real-life experiences and practical examples
- signpost support services available to officers and staff
- deliver impactful learning on culture and inclusion that complements the force's existing training offer

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of the 'Blues and Views' podcast are to:

- increase awareness across the workforce of the experiences and contributions of underrepresented groups
- improve the workforce's understanding of the benefits and impact of inclusive leadership
- improve retention of officers and staff from underrepresented groups

Description

As part of Humberside Police's culture and inclusion education strategy, the force aims to help the workforce better understand the experiences of officers and staff from underrepresented groups. The purpose of the podcast is to explore individuals' career journeys, their personal stories and their perspectives on what inclusive leadership looks like to them.

Planning process

The corporate communications team consulted with staff networks, who expressed they wanted training to feel more authentic and to include lived experiences from individuals within underrepresented groups. In addition, the team reviewed existing resources, such as the College of Policing's video content, to identify gaps and opportunities.

Initially, a series of videos were planned in which individuals would share their career journeys. However, it became clear that conducting interviews with the positive action team would be a more suitable and effective approach.

A dedicated content creator from the corporate communications team was assigned to record, edit and publish each podcast episode. To support accessibility, all episodes are produced in an audio-only format. The content creator engaged with staff networks and compiled a list of volunteers who were willing to share their stories.

'Blue and Views' podcast

Each podcast episode is recorded by the content creator in a soundproof room. The interviews are conducted by a positive action officer, following a semi-structured interview approach. During the recording, individuals are asked the following questions:

- who they are
- their journey into policing
- their current role
- their experience of working for Humberside Police

Each interview is scheduled for one hour. The content is then edited down to between 30 and 40 minutes. Once recorded, the audio file is sent to the public affairs officer for annotation and is returned to the content creator for final editing.

A short article providing an overview of the episode is written by the corporate communications team. Both the article and the podcast episode are sent to the head of corporate communications for approval before being published on the force's intranet homepage. The article is pinned to the front page for two weeks to optimise reach. All previous episodes are archived on the culture and inclusion intranet page. The podcast episodes are stored on the force's private YouTube channel, and a full transcript is provided for accessibility purposes.

Episodes are released on a monthly basis and follow the diversity and inclusion calendar. To date, episodes have covered the following topic areas:

- disability
- sexuality
- menopause
- Endometriosis
- Black culture
- Islamic culture
- Chinese culture

Further planned episodes have been recorded and include:

- Sikh culture
- mixed heritage culture
- sexism and misogyny
- carers responsibilities
- neurodiversity
- members of a local black youth project where they speak about their interactions with police

Access to the podcast is limited to within the force, to ensure participants feel comfortable speaking openly about their experiences. Humberside's independent advisory groups have been granted controlled viewing of the episodes. In the future, the force plans to produce a series of anonymised, shorter "bullet" episodes that can be shared publicly.

There has been no external costs associated with the planning, recording, or distribution of the 'Blues and Views' podcast.

Overall impact

The podcast has been positively received by officers and staff from all levels and ranks. They have expressed that, although the episodes can be challenging to listen to, it has helped them have a better understanding of individuals' experiences.

The podcast has been promoted through the equality, diversion and inclusion educational offering to first-line and mid-level leadership. These recording have been adapted into a live setting format,

which has been well received by cohorts.

Humberside Police has used the podcast series to deepen understanding, challenge preconceptions, develop leaders and support the creation of a more inclusive workforce.

Learning

- The corporate communications team recognises that further work is needed to increase engagement and reach across the workforce.
- Audio-only accessibility has been prioritised. Producing episodes without video reduces editing time and ensures content can be easily accessed on force-issued mobile phones, allowing staff to listen remotely.
- Labour-intensive production has been challenging. Although there are no financial costs, planning, recording and distributing each episode required significant staff time. In response, the corporate communications team has developed a structured plan to streamline the recording of future episodes.
- Soundproof recording is essential to prevent external noise from affecting audio quality. Using a dedicated soundproof room ensures a consistent and professional listening experience.

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