

External Factors Currently Affecting South Wales Police

Organisations should be aware of factors which could affect them, often these factors need to be established and reviewed. There are analytical tools which can assist organisations with this. A PESTLE reviews six external factors (Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental) that influence an organisation. With overall aim of increasing opportunities and reducing threats. (Battista, 2023). Focusing on external factors can restrict the amount examination it can provide. In comparison a SWOT can look at an organisations (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) these factors are both internal and external. (Haan, 2023). These tools can be used in conduction with each other to give a more holistic review of factors which could affect an organisation. Vardopoulos et al. (2023) used this approach and outlining the tools were an effective way of analysis outcomes.



Political

SWP have a controlled budget which is set via the Police Crime and Commissioners (PCC), these are individuals are elected to oversee their respected police force, manage budget, council tax charges and how areas are policed. (UK Government, no date) PCC for SWP, Alun Michael details his aim as “to serve the people of South Wales by holding the police accountable and setting priorities for preventing and fighting crime.” (PCC, no date b). Budget for SWP 2023-2024 was £58.7 Million, the budget comes from Central government grants and local police precept, from council tax (PCC, no date, c).

The Association of PCC's (APCC), detail their role as ‘The role of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is to be the voice of the people and hold the police to account. They are responsible for the totality of policing.’ (APCC, no date).

SWP HR need to make sure that there is a collaborative approach to working and ensure good working relationships are in place to support the aim of preventing crime. As discussed above there is a SWP & Crime Plan 2023-2027, which was created by the Chief Constable and PCC.

This collaborate approach was further reviewed by the home secretary Priti Patel MP in 2020. The aim of the review was to give the public an increased say over policing, one of the key measures included looking at the relationship between PCCs and chief constables. (UK Government, 2020). Following part one of this review it was highlighted the government would work with the various police associations to build on accountability guidance which related to the performance management of Chief Constables, with the aim to promote and set a positive relationship between Chief Constables and PCCs. (Patel, 2021).

In contrast Derfoufi (2023) reviewed this relationship and identified PCCs did struggle when facing pushback from Chief Constables which reduced the view that they were too influential on the organisations.

SWP has many policies and plans in place which have been created and implemented by a collaborative approach between the PCC and SWP. This will need to continue, if there is a breakdown of communication this could have a negative impact on the organisations and the public. HR need to ensure that the organisation is utilising the budget it has been set, as well as being open and transparent with its stakeholders such as PCC and central government.



Economical

Currently, the cost-of-living crisis in the United Kingdom is continuing to put pressure on organisations and its employees. Cotton (2023) outlined employees views detailing they were struggling with the increased costs of bills and their pay was not enough to support them. The percentage of individuals within the public sector who felt their wages were acceptable was at the lowest. This was further evidenced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2023a) which confirmed that the average pay growth in the private sector was over 3% more than the public sector from October – December 2022. However, following pay awards during 2023, ONS (2023b) recorded that annual average pay growth during July to September 2023 for the public sector was 7.3% highest since 2001, but still lower than the private sector.

South Wales Police (SWP) HR, need to be mindful of difficulties both officers and staff are faced with currently and ensure support is maintained. SWP does have Financial Wellbeing packages in place to support such as toolkits, budgeting, and savings support. HR will be key in ensuring this message is delivered to all officers and staff. The effectiveness of these measures will need to be reviewed to show their effectiveness.

Budget is constantly assessed as a public sector organisation. Within the SWP & Crime Plan 2023-2027 it outlines six priorities SWP have in place to deliver a high level of service to the communities of SWP. One key priority outlined relates to budget implications and ensuring money from central government is utilised correctly. (Police & Crime Commissioner, no date a).

SWP will need to show its officers and staff their value, it will need to ensure the budget is utilised correctly for example on wellbeing support, retention, and promotion, this is discussed within the people strategy as a key metric. (SWP, 2021).



Environmental

Within recent years there has been a significant push for organisations to operate in a sustainable way. Maskell (2021) highlighted the impact of climate change on organisations and the risks such as reputational damage which has meant there is a requirement for organisations to ensure environmental sustainability.

Climate change has seen a shift in the weather and in turn more extreme weather conditions. ONS (2022) highlighted that within the public sector the main source of emissions related to gas for heating this increased from 2020-2021 due to colder weather conditions. Further to this, the central government have published Government Property Sustainability Strategy 2022-2030' which is a commitment to reduce emissions from public sector buildings by a minimum of 50% by 2032. (Government Property Function, 2022).

Deloitte Insights (2023) highlighted that employees are also reviewing sustainability practices and the role of their employers in the workplace, individuals highlighted switching to more sustainable organisations and organisations not doing enough to address sustainability.

HRM will play a key role in progressing SWP to become a sustainable employer. Maxwell (2021) highlighted that its future trends report it predicted that ‘sustainability will increasingly influence the future of work and the people profession.’ It also outlined the various ways in which HRM can support organisations. SWP HRM will play a vital role in delivering key messages regarding sustainability to staff and the public to show its contribution to sustainability. For example, completing the ‘smarter working’ policy which supported hybrid working this reduced the need for individuals to attend the office every day and reduce the carbon footprint.