



John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia



Annual Report

2017-2018

Contents

Foreword.....3

The year in numbers5

Putting victims and survivors first6

Building a more secure West Mercia.....9

Reforming West Mercia.....13

Reassuring West Mercia's communities17

Community Engagement.....22

Performance and accountability.....25

Our resources27

Foreword

At the midpoint in my term, my work over the last year has built on the foundations set out in my first year in office. My guiding principles have remained consistent: Putting victims first, and delivering a secure, reformed, reassured and ultimately safer West Mercia.

Ensuring victims get the help they need to cope and recover is central to all of my work. This year an extra 3,000 victims have been supported by Victim Support and there have also been increases in people accessing specialist support for sexual violence. I have worked to ensure my Victim's Charter is being delivered as it should be.



Deputy PCC Tracey Onslow joins the Youth Intervention Team, funded by the PCC to help vulnerable young people.

Levels of recorded crime have continued to increase in the last year. This has been in line with the national picture and follows a continued decrease in actual crime, according to the Crime Survey for England & Wales. It is pleasing to see a higher proportion of crimes being reported to our police and work has continued to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities.



The Princess Royal was the guest of honour at an event showcasing the work of the PCC's Remember Veterans project, which was aimed at diverting military veterans away from the criminal justice system.

The increased demand that comes with more recording of crime only adds to the need to reform the police force to ensure it is working as effectively and efficiently as possible. This year has seen the successful full roll-out of both body worn video and mobile technology with more technological changes well underway. The organisation's structures are also undergoing continuing reform. This year that has resulted in a new shift pattern to better meet demand and a greater proportion of police resources being directed towards frontline services.

Work to ensure our communities are reassured continues. I have established a major new project to effectively measure public confidence in our police and have continued to proactively engage with our communities as much as possible in the last year. I have been pleased with continued work to enable our communities to play an active role in local crime and safety issues, resulting in some significant successes, for example, around Neighbourhood Watch programmes and almost 100,000 hours being clocked up by West Mercia Police's volunteers.

I am pleased to be able to share details of all this progress in my second annual report. I am proud that this progress is being made whilst, for a second consecutive year, delivering the lowest precept change in England & Wales, and ensuring our reserves are reduced to an appropriate level. I will continue to work to deliver on my election promises and deliver a safer West Mercia.



A cohort from a course funded by the PCC, training local taxi drivers, licensees and hoteliers to spot signs of child sexual exploitation.



John Campion
West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

The year in numbers

Putting victims and survivors first

 9.6% increase in referrals to Women's Aid

RJ 61 restorative justice cases completed with positive outcomes for the victims


 53,000 victims of crime supported by Victim Support


 82.6% of victims satisfied with the overall service provided by West Mercia Police

+ 95% of service users left West Mercia Women's Aid with a positive outcome

Reforming West Mercia

£ £211M budget

 90% of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds

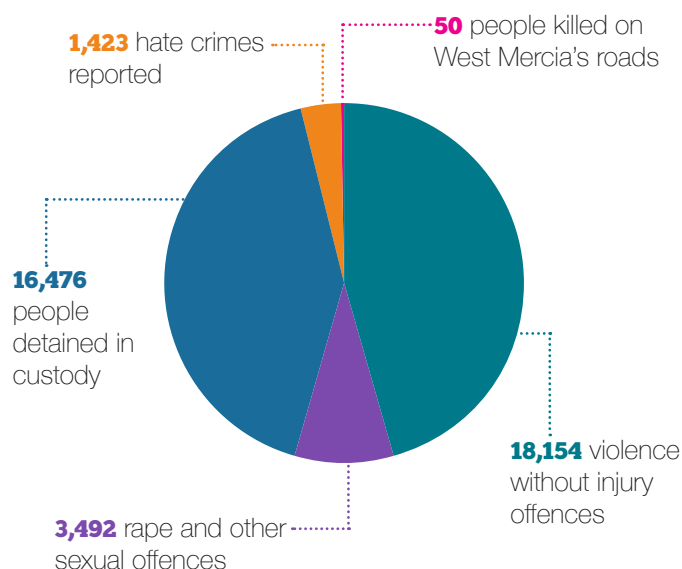
 74% of 101 calls answered within 30 seconds

 474 voluntary health checks


 3 fast track inspectors recruited

Building a more secure West Mercia

84,576 offences were recorded, which included:



Reassuring West Mercia's communities


 76.8% of people are confident in police in their local area

 360 special constables

+ 35.4% stop and searches resulted in a positive outcome

 594 community engagements

 232 independent custody visits

 8 Summer festivals and events attended by the PCC and his Deputy

Putting victims and survivors first

Supporting victims of crime to cope and recover from their experiences remains a top priority for me.

My focus in commissioning services has centred on victim driven outcomes. To further understanding of the service provision for victims, and determine whether victims feel their needs are being met by current provisions in West Mercia, I commissioned an independent needs assessment. Once delivered, the findings from this review will help shape future service provision.

“I actually need very little support, just a safe, trained, trusted person to gradually disclose my trauma in a safe environment”

(Survey respondent, victims’ needs assessment)

My commissioning team have worked hard to seize national funding opportunities when they have been available. We have secured over £250,000 of funding from the Police Transformation Fund to deliver the Drive project in Worcestershire. Drive is a new response to tackling the behaviour of high risk domestic abuse perpetrators, using a one-to-one case management approach. This project helps plug a significant gap in domestic abuse services. Other mechanisms undoubtedly provide excellent support to victims, but this targets the source of abuse with a view to reducing incidences of abuse in the future.



PCC John Campion joined by Herefordshire Ambassador Dan Guerche on a visit to West Mercia Women’s Aid.

Victim Support are the main service providers for victims of crime within West Mercia. In the last year they have managed 53,000 referrals from victims seeking emotional and practical help. This is a 6% increase from the previous year. However, I have worked with them to ensure service standards have remained high. 100% of service users were satisfied with the support they received, 80% of which said they were ‘very satisfied’.

“I had never felt unsafe in my life before this happened. Thank you for being there for me and helping me to feel safe again”

(72 year old male victim in receipt of Victim Support services)

The increase in service users provides me with reassurance that victims of crime are becoming more confident to come forward and get support, whether or not they have reported a crime to the police.

I have commissioned Victim Support to provide a restorative justice service for West Mercia. Restorative justice gives victims the chance to have their say, to get answers to their questions, and to move on with their lives. In its first year of operation the service has received 117 referrals, worked with 362 individual and completed 61 cases with a positive victim outcome, supporting my commitment to achieving the right outcome for victims.

Specialist support

Over the last year there has been a further increase in the volume of referrals to the specialist services I commission to support victims of domestic abuse and sexual abuse. We work hard to prevent these awful crimes from happening in the first place but, where it does occur, it's important we have the right structures and resources to help people cope and recover and provide them with the best possible service. I have committed to ring fence the funding I provide for these services for my time in office to provide a stable and gender equal service.

The Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors and helpline support I have commissioned from Women's Aid received 5476 referrals in to its services in 2017/18 compared to 4951 in 2016/17. This is an increase of 9.6%.

I have also granted funded an additional project to enable Women's Aid to employ a Children and Young People's Worker to engage with those between the ages of 5–19 who are identified as at risk of suffering significant negative outcomes as a result of domestic abuse within their family or home environment. In its first year the project has exceeded its projected target and from 158 referrals have been able to engage with 101 children and young people.



Community Ambassador Phil Grove visiting the Dawn project, supporting victims of domestic violence.

A grant of £25,000 to the DAWN project provided support and mentoring to victims and survivors of domestic abuse. The project has received 114 referrals, engaged with 103 women and empowered 98 women to safely leave their abusive relationship.

The two service providers for West Mercia's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) have reported to me that they have seen significant increases in demand. Axis who provide a service across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have seen a 14.5% increase in new referrals compared to the previous year and West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WRASAC), serving Herefordshire and Worcestershire has seen a 22% increase in referrals compared to the previous year. In particular their CHISVA service has seen a 48% increase in referrals

I am reassured that these increases in referrals have been influenced by improved awareness raising and closer partnership working with external agencies such the Police and Social Care as well as continued coverage of high profile cases of sexual violence in the media, prompting victims to come forward.

"I just want to say an incredible thank you for everything you have done for me. You really have restored my faith in professionals and in people. I wouldn't be here today in the position I'm in if it wasn't for you. You've made one of the most difficult things in my life more manageable and more bearable. I will try by continuing to live my life. You do amazing work I'm so glad you were there with me every step"

(15 year old male receiving support from WRASAC CHISVA)

Outcomes



100% customer satisfaction with victim support services



Additional 3,000 victims supported following crimes this year



£250,000 national funding won for project aimed at domestic violence perpetrators



117 referrals to new restorative justice programme



More victims receiving specialist support for sexual or domestic violence

Building a more secure West Mercia

Responding to demand

I am committed to building communities where people are safe and feel safe. To achieve that, it is important that the police provide the right response at the time when it is needed most, so the matching of resources to demand is crucial.

Following extensive research into crime statistics and how officers respond to incidents a new local policing model was introduced at the beginning of April 2018. These changes will not only maintain, but should in fact increase the visibility of police officers within our communities, particularly at times of peak demand.



Visiting companies in Worcester to discuss business crime.

This year, West Mercia has withdrawn from the Central Motorway Patrol Group (CMPG) in the interest of delivering an improved service to our local communities. 25 officers have now become part of the new West Mercia roads policing service. They are working to improve roads policing, prevent offending and keep the public safe across our roads networks.

I am confident that these reforms within the force, coupled with new technologies and the significant improvements we have already made, will help ensure a more effective and efficient police service that delivers on community needs.

Recorded crime has risen by 5% when compared to the previous year. I will continue to ensure that the force is working efficiently and effectively to tackle existing and emerging demand.

Tackling child sexual exploitation (CSE) remains a top priority for me, and the force. I am committed to ensuring the full weight of the law is brought down on the offenders who perpetrate this horrific crime. I continue to hold the Chief Constable to account on this issue, and have invested in additional resources to take a proactive approach to prevention and detection and provided grant funding towards initiatives set up to address CSE.

Our commissioned service with Young Solutions to deliver CSE awareness training to taxi drivers and hoteliers across West Mercia has seen almost 400 taxi drivers trained along with hoteliers, who may (in their professional roles) be more likely to come into contact with potential cases of CSE. In the coming year the intention is to work with local area licensing teams to make the training mandatory for all taxi drivers.

For 2018/19 I have launched a specific CSE grant round for the provision of specialised support to those at risk of, or identified as being a victim of, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire.

I am aware that acquisitive crime, including burglary, robbery and theft harms our communities. Last year saw a 6% increase in residential burglaries in West Mercia. A person's home and possessions often carry an emotional attachment and when crime interferes with this it can have a long lasting impact on its victims, which is why I have asked my commissioning team to develop a new grant scheme to provide funding for a 'We Don't Buy Crime' SmartWater initiative. Details of this new initiative will be made available soon.

Tackling hate crime continues to be a priority, both in terms of encouraging a greater reporting of incidents and preventing incidents in the first place. I was pleased to support the force with the launch of its new Hate Crime Strategy last June, which sets out the role police officers and staff will play in responding to and investigating hate crimes and the service victims can expect. I gave each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) £10,000 specifically to address hate crime in their area. In Telford this funding has been directed towards a schools project which will provide pupils with an hour of structured learning for two terms.

Reducing reoffending

I believe a holistic approach can break the cycle of crime and reoffending. By working together and providing the right intervention at the right time we can make a difference to improve reoffending rates. My Crime Reduction Board brings together representatives from key organisations to ensure this approach is working in West Mercia. My funding of related initiatives has included:

£20,000 to the Inspiring futures through the Arts programme to provide a co-ordinated programme of arts activity for Worcestershire offenders and those at risk of offending. 107 art workshops have been provided, which have been attended by 51 service users, 41 of whom were judged by Probation to have achieved a positive outcome.



Visiting HMP Hewell to discuss the 'Behind the Badge' campaign, to reduce attacks against police officers.

I am of the opinion that taking part in the creative writing intervention has helped improve A's mood and mental well-being and reduce his stress levels. It has also helped his communication skills and improved his critical thinking to deal with problem areas in his life'

(Offender manager Community Rehabilitation Company on offender on the Inspiring Futures Programme)

£24,780 to an employment support programme, providing practical and emotional support to people in or at risk of being in the criminal justice system with mental health issues. This project received 99 referrals of which 57 engaged with elements of the programme. Of the 57 individuals referred, 5 gained sustained employment and 4 voluntary work

'All the staff have helped in making me aware of different options in rebuilding my life, they have been supportive and given me a different perspective on my current position'

(Service user on the ESP programme)

Collaboration and partnership working

Building a safer West Mercia is not and cannot be the sole responsibility of any one person or organisation. I remain committed to developing strong collaboration and partnership arrangements to deliver shared outcomes, improve services for our communities and achieve efficiencies. The new Operations Communication Centre which will be shared with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is one example of where sharing resources provides a more efficient way of providing emergency services to our communities.

By ensuring our police and fire services are collaborating and integrated as much as possible we can deliver better emergency responses, improve prevention measures, and increase information sharing between the services. This is why last year I undertook a process to consider whether single governance of police and two fire and rescue authorities within West Mercia would benefit local communities. Following an extensive three month consultation I submitted my business case for consideration to the Home Office and learned earlier this year that my proposal had been accepted.

If Fire and Police services in Herefordshire and Worcestershire are to continue to keep our community safe to the best of their capabilities they have to work towards more seamless collaboration. The Police and Fire services have worked together on a number of initiatives, but I believe there is considerable as yet untapped potential which we must explore.

Our partnership working with CSPs has continued to evolve and I have undertaken two key reviews impacting directly on CSPs. My office has worked with the CSPs to produce, for the first time, an evidence based review of CCTV provision across West Mercia. As a result of the review, we have developed a CCTV funding policy for CSPs which secures my commitment to provide a million pounds to be used on new and improved equipment during my term of office.

Secondly we have been working very closely with our CSPs and force intelligence team to improve the partnership working and availability of data between the six different analyst teams. As result of the review, three CSP analyst posts will shortly be based within the police force. This change will not only improve the sharing of data but improve awareness across partners.

In 2017/18 I have provided CSPs with £468,000 in funding. Each CSP is held accountable to ensure the funding they receive is addressing local priorities and securing better outcomes for West Mercia's communities.

I have continued to work collaboratively with regional colleagues to ensure the Strategic Policing Requirement is met. Our two Regional Policy Officers have ensured that I have oversight of the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU), National Police Air Service (NPAS), Roads Policing, Counter Terrorism (CT) and national programmes such as the Specialist Capabilities Programme.

The ROCU has continued to develop over the past 12 months. I have overseen the “lift and shift” of resources from local force level to the ROCU, alongside the development of regional resources. This has enabled more efficient use of more specialist skills and tactics across the region, allowing West Mercia Police to access a highly skilled unit as and when required. This has been particularly beneficial in business areas such as ‘County Lines’, where our more rural towns have been utilised as a market for drug dealers from bigger cities, they have been met with a robust, regional response.

Last year a ‘county lines’ investigation led by West Mercia's Serious and Organised Crime Unit, supported by the ROCU saw six members of a drugs gang arrested in Malvern and Birmingham. They were sentenced to over 18 years in prison for drugs and fire arms related offences.

Outcomes



New policing model to better meet demand



£1m for CCTV in West Mercia



Increased resources to tackle CSE



Funding to create new SmartWater towns and villages in West Mercia

Reforming West Mercia

Embracing technology

One of the key promises I set out in my Safer West Mercia plan was to deliver new fit for purpose technology for West Mercia Police and during the year this promise has been turned into a reality.

My £1M investment in body worn video has seen a full roll out of this technology to all frontline officers and staff. I am delighted that this project was delivered ahead of time and on budget.

We are already seeing the benefits of body worn video, as it provides additional clarity and evidence when incidents occur, increasing the chance of conviction and therefore the quality of service for victims.

In Wellington PCSOs came across a male who had stolen a bottle of wine from a nearby shop. They followed and challenged the male. He became very aggressive and threatening towards the two PCSOs, with his behaviour captured on BWV. Following his arrest he was charged with theft and threatening behaviour. He pleaded guilty at the first opportunity and received a 14 week prison sentence.

(Recent encounter)



The PCC meeting Home Secretary and Bromsgrove MP Sajid Javid.

The £4.2M investment I approved to equip officers with mobile technology has seen Officers issued with smartphones and laptops, enabling them to work on the move and spend more time in the community. As officers no longer have to frequently return to police stations to do admin work, on average, an extra hour per officer, per shift, is being spent out and about in the community, where our officers are needed most.

A new telematics system has been installed across all vehicles in the force's fleet. This gives the ability to track vehicles, making it easier and quicker to deploy officers to an incident as supervisors can see where any vehicle is located across the force area in 'real time'. Not only does this mean resources are deployed more effectively and efficiently, it improves officer safety, especially when working alone, as in the future supervisors will be able to see at a glance where all vehicles are at any time, and ensure assistance is despatched to an accurate location if required.

At the beginning of October, Athena, a 'one-stop-shop' ICT business process solution went live. It manages over 70% of intelligence, investigation, operational processes, case preparation and custody management. Early feedback from officers raised some concerns around the system. In response I focused my November holding to account meeting with the Chief Constable on the impact Athena was having on effectiveness and efficiency in the force, seeking assurance that Athena was fit for purpose. As the use of Athena has progressed many of the early service issues have been addressed, however I will retain a close oversight on its impact until I am confident that it is delivering what was intended and what it is capable of.

Financial reform

In the last year I have delivered significant financial reforms within the police force.

Efficiency savings of over £2m have been made in the back-office function that supports policing. £60,000 has also been saved on hire vehicle costs by changing contract supplier. These efficiencies both enable more money to be spent on the frontline services our communities value most.

A significant investment has also been approved in transforming West Mercia Police. A total of £8.2m has been approved this year to enable new technology to be embedded within the force.

Ensuring a fit for purpose police estate

My work around estates has focused on ensuring that police buildings are fit for purpose and located where they are needed most – in the heart of our communities. I have worked to deliver on these principles while also reducing the costs associated with buildings in order to free up money to go into policing.

A major milestone in the estates programme was achieved in November when contractors completed the construction phase of Southwell House, the new Operations Communications Centre (OCC), at West Mercia Police HQ.



Deputy PCC Tracey Onslow joined local school children in planting trees outside the newly built joint police and fire Operations Communications Centre.

A number of police teams, together with Worcestershire County Council's Emergency Planning team, the Safer Roads Partnership's Casualty Reduction team and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service staff were the first teams to move into the building early in the New Year.

Once fully occupied, with the latest technology, the co-location of police and fire incident control teams, operational support teams and partner emergency planning teams, will equip officers and staff with the information and flexibility they need to enable them to work more efficiently and respond more quickly to members of the public.



Roll-out of body worn video in Telford. The roll-out of the technology is now complete across the force area to all frontline officers.

As Police and Crime Commissioner I act on behalf of our communities as the owner and provider of the estates, from which the police operate. That estates needs to be fit for purpose to enable a modern, lithe, agile police force to deliver good quality services to the people they serve. To support this ambition I have jointly appointed a Strategic Estates Manager to work across the alliance police areas of West Mercia and Warwickshire to ensure effective planning and management of the estate used for the delivery of policing services across our four counties. The role also provides the strategic estates support to the two Chief Constables.

A published estates management strategy has now been developed that sets out my objectives, encompassing transformational aspirations for the police force as well as sustainability, efficiency and carbon management ambitions.

Investing in our people

Providing people with the right equipment and resources to do their job is only part of developing West Mercia from a good professional force into a modern and innovative one. Investing in people by identifying and developing their potential and supporting their health and wellbeing is important to building a happy, healthy workforce who feel valued and maximise both effectiveness and efficiency.

I am encouraged that the force has continued to seek opportunities to develop its workforce. For example:

- Taking part in 'Police Now', a national talent programme for graduates
- Taking part in Fast Track, a three year talent management programme from Police Constable to Inspector
- Joined the Direct Entry programme set up to attract external leaders from a strategic background who are recruited directly into the rank of Inspector. There are currently three officers from this programme within the alliance.
- Developed a leadership development strategy and continued the roll out of the talent management programme.

I have recently agreed to support a policy intern position within my office. It will provide either an undergraduate with a 12 month placement opportunity or a post graduate work experience placement. This is a new approach for my office and provides a real development opportunity for the successful candidate and shows my commitment to investing in people.

Health and wellbeing

Health and wellbeing remains a high priority for the force and is recognised as a key part of investing and valuing people and I fully support this agenda. Initiatives taking place under this agenda include:

- Offering free health checks for the workforce in Sept / Oct 2017
- New gym equipment purchased for 7 gyms across the alliance
- Health and wellbeing leads have been holding regular webchats with the workforce to answer questions and concerns raised.

Outcomes



Successful full roll-out of body worn video and mobile technology



£8m investment in further police transformation



£2m back-office efficiency savings



New strategy to deliver fit-for-purpose and sustainable police estate



New telematics system across police fleet of vehicles

Reassuring West Mercia's communities

My work over the last year has continued to focus on ensuring that not only are our communities safe, but they feel safe as well.

I have monitored the progress and delivery of my Communications and Engagement Strategy at regular intervals, to ensure I continue to be accessible, visible and responsive to community needs as Commissioner.

Improvements I introduced around transparency have been sustained and built upon over the last year. I have monitored performance to ensure that all necessary information from my office continues to be published and updated as appropriate. This includes details of official decisions, financial information, freedom of information logs, expense claims and registers of interests among many other details. Changes I made to introduce the publication of minutes from formal 'holding to account' meetings with the Chief Constable will be built on this year. Plans are in development to stage a public 'holding to account' meeting, which our communities will be able to contribute to and observe.

I have also welcomed the publication of West Mercia's 'use of force' data. This is part of a new national publication scheme, releasing data on a quarterly basis. In West Mercia, the data have shown the vast majority of times where our officers use other skills and resources at their disposal to manage to deal with incidents without resorting to use of force. This data has featured as part of my ongoing 'Behind the Badge' campaign, in support of our police officers and the challenges they face in the line of duty.

In Stourport a PCSO was assaulted by a lady with drug and alcohol issues. The incident was captured on BWV. She pleaded guilty at the earliest opportunity, was made subject of a criminal behaviour order to help her substance addiction and ordered to pay £75 compensation to the PCSO.

(Recent encounter)

The force has retained its status on the national Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, which in itself helps deliver confidence and reassurance to communities. Over the last year officers have undertaken over 4000 stop and searches, 35% of which resulted in a positive outcome.



The PCC has funded SmartWater packs in a number of communities. Here the project was launched with officers, councillors and residents in Wythall.

I fully recognise the importance of neighbourhood policing to our communities and have taken steps to protect the police's Safer Neighbourhood Teams. The force is now building on this by taking a more active approach to publishing personal contact details for frontline PCs and PCSOs which I believe is a positive step forward. This helps ensure communities know how they can access neighbourhood police officers and staff directly at any time. Public confidence in West Mercia Police has remained stable in the last year at 76.8%. In January the force launched a confidence strategy for its officers and staff seeking to improve how confident the public are in the force as a service and also how confident the staff, are in the organisation. I welcome this drive to improve public confidence and want to see it built upon in the years ahead.

A major new engagement project has been developed over the last year as additional means of measuring public confidence in West Mercia Police. Working with a third party provider, I have developed a new confidence survey which is now live across each local policing area. The project will capture public perceptions of police performance including local police visibility, accessibility and integrity. It will involve engaging with thousands of residents across West Mercia's geographic areas and demographic breakdowns. This project is now live and will report its first findings shortly. The results will enable confidence breakdowns within each constituent area of West Mercia, a capability that has been lacking for some time now. It will also allow me to hold the Chief Constable to account more effectively on behalf of our communities, whilst enabling the police to address issues identified and learn from their own best practice.

In the last year I have issued over 200 separate articles, media releases or public comments on a wide range of issues to ensure local communities are informed about my work and local matters. This represents an increase on the previous year. Levels of engagement have also increased significantly across all of my digital platforms, with more people getting in touch via social media, reading my monthly newsletter, or using my website.

I promised to empower our communities to take an active role in helping to resolve local issues. I have continued work to keep that promise over the last year. The number of Special Constables working alongside regular officers in West Mercia Police remains broadly the same as this time last year at just under 400. Between them, these volunteer officers clocked up more than 80,000 hours of service in the last year. Their work is supplemented by a further 11,000 hours of work by other volunteers within our police force. I remain incredibly grateful for their contributions.



Special Constables on patrol in Shropshire - volunteers have given almost 100,000 hours of time supporting West Mercia Police this year.

I have also continued to enable active citizenship outside of the police, via expanded Community Speedwatch programmes and grants to numerous voluntary organisations including Street Pastors and a grant of £51,000 to West Mercia Search and Rescue.

I have also worked with partners towards a significant online growth of local Neighbourhood Watch platforms. The number of official Facebook pages has grown considerably in the last year, with a combined reach of over 6.2 million people over the last year. These social media sites are now helping ensure a new and convenient way for people to stay informed of local crime and safety issues. I have worked to highlight these and other examples throughout the year, producing a series of videos and other promotional messages during Volunteer Week in particular.

In July I successfully launched a Mobile Phone App which was designed by a group of school children from Bromsgrove. Following a competition with all schools in West Mercia to invite them to submit designs for the app and the winning one was “Choices”. The app is aimed at those aged 11-14 and features a series of videos where the user has to make choices. There are 5 key areas which are covered in the app; Healthy Relationships, Hate Crime, Theft, ASB and Bullying. The 5 themes were determined following a consultation exercise with young people where there were over 1800 responses.

(Mobile App scheme)



Deputy PCC Tracey Onslow meeting residents at the Oswestry Show.

At the beginning of September 5 new rural and business crime officer posts commenced in force, funded by me until 2020. Their work to enables communities to take an active part in crime prevention and safety. Since September they have hosted or been involved in a wide range of events, including safety demonstrations, crime prevention talks with local groups or providing advice in partnership with local businesses.



Deputy PCC Tracey Onslow with John Hodges from Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, at a joint police and fire training event.

Cyber crime is regarded as a national policing priority and in response to the increasing threat an alliance cyber crime unit has been formed across West Mercia and Warwickshire police forces. This team provides support and active guidance to specific threats and enables the force to look more closely at vulnerable or higher threat cases and is ideally placed for a strong link with the Regional Organised Crime Unit and National agencies. My Deputy Commissioner has taken an active role in instigating a wider partnership involvement in the fight against cyber crime. A tactical partnership group has been established with a wide range of representatives including police, banks, chamber of commerce, trading standards and academics. In the coming year the group will be seeking to develop and strengthen a partnership approach to raising awareness and preventing cyber crime in all its forms.

Police ethics

I continue to represent our communities to ensure ethical policing in West Mercia.

My office liaises closely with the force's Professional Standards Department (PSD) to ensure complaints are handled appropriately and people receive the service they need. Through engagement with complainants, monitoring of PSD performance data and regular meetings with the service lead I am able to hold the Chief Constable to account for PSD matters. PSD will remain a focal point in my holding to account process in the coming year.

Cases continue to be dip sampled by the Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee (TIE), whose work across other parts of police business has also continued in the last 12 months. One of the TIE members represents me on the force's new Internal Ethics Committee, which supports the TIE committee, and is seeking to strengthen ethics within the workforce.

The Independent Custody Visitor programme run within my office continues to operate, in order to provide reassurance about standards and practices within police custody suites and highlight any issues they find. Details of the visits carried out over the last year are highlighted in the box opposite. These volunteers carry out their visits at any time of the day or night, seven days a week. I continue to be grateful for their dedication in delivering an extremely valuable service to our communities.

16,476

detainees in Custody during 2017/18



47 Independent Custody Visitors



232 visits undertaken by Independent Custody Visitors



81% of detainees consented to meeting with the Independent Custody Visitors

Outcomes



6.2 million annual reach on new Neighbourhood Watch platforms



232 Independent Custody Visitor inspections



200 published articles and comments



Almost 100,000 hours of volunteer time within West Mercia Police



New Rural and Business Crime Officer posts established

Community engagement

I have continued to actively seek engagement in a wide range of ways across all sectors of our communities. Over the last year this has included the establishment of a number of significant projects specifically focused on community engagement. I have been responsive to community feedback and used that information to help shape my work and policies as Commissioner.

Face-to-face engagement has continued to be a priority for myself, my Deputy, my Community Ambassadors and my wider office. Around 600 face-to-face community engagements have taken place across the year. I have made it a priority to engage with local councils, including town and parish councils, as much as possible and have attended numerous meetings across the West Mercia area. Along with this many face-to-face engagements have also involved visiting local schools, speaking to community groups or meeting individual victims of crime.



The PCC and members of his team meet local residents in Herefordshire as part of the summer events programme.



Visit to a Worcestershire school to meet pupils involved in a PCC funded mentoring project.

These face-to-face engagements have been expanded upon in the last year with the development of a whole programme of summer events. I attended and had stalls at some of West Mercia's biggest events last summer – including the Three Counties Show, Shropshire County Show, Newport Show, the Pershore Plum Festival and Bromyard Gala. This gave us the chance to engage with thousands of people from right across the area, answering questions on a whole range of subjects and where necessary taking cases to follow up afterwards. The events programme was a big success which I will be repeating in 2018.



The PCC is joined by Ambassador Sherrel Fikeis at the Newport Show.

My Community Ambassadors have continued their work over the last year, building on the relationships they established during my first year in office and establishing new ones. They have been involved in hundreds more face-to-face engagements over the last year, with their feedback and outcomes factored into my work as Commissioner.

In the last year, key pieces of Ambassador work include:

- Working with a community group and the local council to introduce new road safety measures in Herefordshire
- Engaging with parish councils across South Worcestershire to find out about and feedback on local issues

- Being an integral part of Team Shrewsbury, which has achieved Purple Flag status for the town, including work with the new Pubwatch group.
- Working with both victims and Muslim communities in Telford in the wake of national media coverage on child sexual exploitation
- Helping a community in North Worcestershire alleviate local parking and road safety problems

I have held two formal consultations over the last year, relating to the precept and the possibility of joint governance of our police and fire services. In both cases I took account of the feedback received from our communities in deciding my eventual course of action, and published details of how I had done that.

In addition to the new confidence survey already outlined, I have also developed and published a new survey specifically for town and parish councils across West Mercia. I believe strongly in the value of these councils and the understanding they have of the communities they serve. As such I have been keen to engage with them and get their feedback on local policing and crime. The survey has been sent to the hundreds of smaller councils in our area for a three month period and I await the results this summer.

Within my office, levels of written correspondence continue to increase from the levels seen in my first year in office. In the last year almost 500 items of individual casework have been logged for further research and response. This is approximately double the level from the previous year. I am continuing to work hard to ensure a tailored, individual response in a timely fashion to each person who contacts my office and have introduced new systems for contact management in light of this increased demand. I have also seen significant growth in engagement via online platforms – particularly social media. Engagement in my office Facebook page has more than doubled since my election and I have focused on delivering quality content and seeking community views through those channels. In the near future I will also stage a first public ‘Holding to Account’ meeting with the Chief Constable, which will be broadcast live via Facebook. Circulation of my monthly newsletter has grown by more than 50% in the last year, primarily due to people signing up during our summer events and there have been more than 15,000 unique users of my website, which is also a significant increase on previous years.



Shropshire Ambassador Graham Oliver with the Shrewsbury BID team that helped the town achieve Purple Flag status.

Performance and accountability

My scrutiny

I continue to scrutinise force performance on behalf of our communities and push for improvements.

I use detailed monthly and quarterly force performance reports to inform my regular meetings with the Chief Constable. The quarterly reports are publicly available on my website and form part of my performance report submitted to the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel. On a more frequent basis an internal performance dashboard enables me to closely monitor weekly performance.



The PCC and Deputy meet with Rural and Business Crime Officers, whose posts are funded by the PCC.

One of the primary ways by which I hold the Chief Constable to account for ensuring the force's efficiency and effectiveness is through my monthly holding to account meetings. These meetings have mainly focussed on performance reports and strategic issues, plus additional meetings on more specific topics such as digital forensics. However, following a review I have adapted and changed to a more effective scrutiny programme, aligned to my Safer West Mercia Plan. The 2018 programme includes thematic meetings on topics such as domestic abuse and victims along with two live stream public meetings. I also continue to use the monthly meetings to discuss new or emerging performance issues as they arise most recently holding a meeting solely focussed on HMICFRS's PEEL Effectiveness inspection.

I am confident that the robust process I have implemented provides an effective way for me to scrutinise the force and to instigate change.

My continued scrutiny and oversight of 101 and 999 call handling has led to an improved and more stable performance.

My scrutiny of the use of hire cars by the force has resulted in a review of their use and brought about a cost saving of £60,000 in fleet management.

In August the focus of the holding to account meeting was on Telford, where crime rates per 1,000 population were consistently higher than the other policing areas across a range of crime types. This has led to an in depth analysis to better understand the profile of Telford's communities and ongoing plan of activity to address the root cause of issues.

As well as the holding to account meetings, I meet regularly with the Chief Constable and other police officers and staff to discuss all aspects of the force. I or my team also attend a range of internal organisational meetings to provide effective oversight of wider force activity.

The main governance meeting for the alliance between West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police is the Alliance Governance Group. In keeping with my commitment to be open and transparent I ensure that notes of this meeting and my holding to account meetings are published on my website.

Independent scrutiny

The Joint Audit Committee and the Trust Integrity and Ethics Committee continue to support me in my oversight role through their independent scrutiny of activities, processes and policies.

HMICFRS which is the lead body for the independent assessment of police forces and fire services has issued reports on the Efficiency, Legitimacy and Effectiveness of police forces as part of its PEEL inspection programme. While the force has retained a 'good' judgement for Efficiency, it has been assessed as 'requires improvement' for both Legitimacy and Effectiveness as it has failed to make sufficient progress in some areas.

I have been clear that the issues raised by the Effectiveness report in particular are unacceptable, and not what our communities expect. It is clear that more must be done, in order to understand the threats to our communities and provide a consistent, effective service to those that need it.

I am committed to working with the Chief Constable to deliver my pledge of building safer, more secure communities. I will support the force in making the necessary improvements through an effective and transparent holding to account process.

Our resources

Financial position and future financial prospects

The 2017/18 total revised net revenue budget for West Mercia was £213.417m, funded through a combination of central government grants, council tax and a small amount from the budget reserve to manage reductions. At the end of the year, this budget was underspent by £2.490m. This means that the actual amount required from our reserve was less than originally budgeted.

The main variances in 2017/18 are shown below:

Area of spend – under/(over) spending	£m
Policing	2.202
Office of the PCC	0.288
Total net underspend in 2017/18 (% of total policing budget)	2.490 (1.16%)

West Mercia's reserve balances, which stand at £36.4m at the end of the year, are healthy and are an important part of the strategy to deliver my objectives. They are helping to continue to minimise the effect of future budget reductions, by phasing their use over the life of the current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), in addition to part-financing the transformation programme and the significant levels of capital investment.

The budget and MTFP agreed with the Police and Crime Panel in February 2017, outlined the planned use of reserves, reducing balances to £13.1m by 21/22. The use of reserves and reserve balances are reviewed rigorously each year to ensure that they remain adequate against the risks we face.

Full details of this year's budget are published on my website to ensure transparency, along with draft versions of the 2017/18 statements of accounts.

To ensure the force remains both effective and efficient, it is undergoing significant transformation, much of which is reliant on capital investment. During 2017/18 £26.5m of capital expenditure was incurred across the Alliance. This included £11.5m which was spent on our estates strategy, with the majority of spend relating to the new Operational Control and Command Centres (OCCs). 2017/18 saw the completion of the construction and refurbishment phase of the new unified OCCs at Stuart Ross House, Warwick and at Southwell House, Hindlip. Work to connect the required ICT systems to them is now underway and it is hoped that they will become fully operational later in 2018/19, along with an ongoing review of our wide estates.

Over £11.9m was invested in our ICT systems in 2017/18, to streamline and update systems to ensure they are capable of meeting the needs for 21st century policing. This includes the systems for improved incident management, more effective contact with the public, mobile working equipment, the upgrades of data networks, improved telephony systems and the full roll-out of body worn video equipment to front line officers. This also includes £1.6m of spend on the automatic number plate recognition system in 2017/18 to facilitate more effective policing. Significant levels of investment are planned to continue, with £26.3m anticipated over the period up to 2021/22 principally over estates and ICT.

During 2017/18 I continued to work closely with many partners across West Mercia, providing financial support and assistance to a number of local projects and initiatives to protect people from harm. In 2017/18, I committed to funding £1m for local CCTV projects up to 2020 and have invested over £3m in prevention schemes and local grants which have helped over 12,000 people. We have also invested heavily in the support services we provide for those who are the victims of crime.

I am continuing to drive value for money across all areas of the service, and believe that aside from the transformational changes being undertaken, this can also be achieved through greater collaboration across emergency services. During 2017/18, I submitted a business case to the Home Office which outlined how improved working, more effective services and greater efficiencies could be achieved across policing and fire, if there was closer collaborative working between Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire and Telford fire and rescue services and West Mercia Police. The Home Office have accepted the business case and as such in 2018/19 the governance of these fire and rescue services will be transferred.

However, there remains a number of financial challenges in the medium term, with West Mercia facing a savings target of £24.2m between the period 2018/19 to 2021/22. I am confident however, that the work the force is doing to reform, and our Alliance with Warwickshire will help to create a Safer West Mercia able to meet the challenges ahead.



Students finding out about economic crime as part of the PCC's #DoesItAddUp campaign at Hereford College of Art.

Commissioning and grants

I launched two new community grant schemes with a combined post of around £600k early in 2017 with an initial focus on services for children.

Improving road safety and reducing the number of serious incidents on our roads is a key issue for communities and a key priority for me as commissioner and so one of the grant schemes I have funded is a young driver safety awareness programme (Pathfinder). The £90,000 funding over 3 years will allow for the programme to be extended across West Mercia.

I was amazed by the progress M had made just on the first day alone but was stunned by just how much he had learned and progressed on all levels in his overall practical, competency and awareness skills by the end of the course on Friday close of day.

(Parent – Pathfinder programme)

Along with all the other grants awarded I gave approximately £1.7m in grant support during 2017/18.

Details of all the grants awarded are published on my website.



With retired police dog Murphy following the PCC's commitment to supporting Finn's Law, offering greater protection for service animals.

In July I asked my Commissioning team to audit of all grants under my Commissioners Grant Scheme and the Community Safety Partnership core funding. This detailed piece of work took 7 months and involved half day visits to 84 different grant recipients. The audit has provided me with valuable additional assurance on value for money and on the outcomes being achieved. The audit has helped develop my strategic planning for funding 2018/19 initiatives and to introduce a new grant extension process for those grants reaching targets and continuing to perform. The audit has been welcomed by grant recipients who have welcomed my outcomes focused approach.

“It was great to be able to update the PCC on how the project was going and to talk in more detail about measuring impact and how we might improve on the tools we use for this next year”

(Debbie Birch, Project Manager Inspiring futures Through the Arts)

“Support from the PCC is encouraging and challenging us to develop new ways of working in meeting the changing needs of young people, and helping to develop existing and new partnership arrangements and ways of working. This would not have been possible without the innovation and forward looking approach of the PCC and the Commissioning Team”

(Will Lindesay, Chief Executive, HVOSS Herefordshire)

To support the work of my Community Ambassadors I allocated £40,000 to enable local third party organisations to apply for one off grants of up to £1,000 through their local ambassador. Successful applicants had to demonstrate that their project would support local initiatives that secure or contribute to securing crime and disorder reduction within West Mercia or that contribute to delivery of the Safer West Mercia Plan. As a result my Community Ambassadors have been able to provide funding to a range of organisations including:

- £1,000 towards the Worcestershire Pride Event.
- £1,000 towards the Rocksprings Garden Project for young people in Ludlow.
- £500 to Wellington Pub Watch for their DISC programme.



To contact your Police and Crime Commissioner:

John Campion

Police and Crime Commissioner
OPCC, West Mercia Police
Hindlip Hall, Worcester
WR3 8SP

Tel: **01905 331656**
Email: **opcc@westmerciam.pnn.police.uk**
Twitter: **[@WestMerciaPCC](https://twitter.com/WestMerciaPCC)**
Facebook: **West Mercia PCC**
Instagram: **WestMerciaPCC**

This document is available in other formats,
please contact 01905 331656 for further assistance.