

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

Agenda

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

**Tuesday, 19 September 2023, 11.00 am
County Hall, Worcester**

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West Mercia Police and Crime Panel Tuesday, 19 September 2023, 11.00 am,

Membership:

Cllr Barry Durkin (Chairman)	Substantive Member - Herefordshire Council
Cllr Rob Adams (Vice Chair)	Substantive Member - Wychavon District Council
Cllr Martin Allen	Substantive Member - Malvern Hills District Council
Cllr Joanne Beecham	Substantive member - Redditch Borough Council
Cllr Roger Evans	Co-opted Member - Shropshire Council
Cllr Liz Harvey	Co-opted Member - Herefordshire Council
Cllr Helen Jones	Substantive Member - Bromsgrove District Council
Cllr Nigel Lumby	Substantive Member - Shropshire Council
Cllr Kelly Middleton	Substantive Member - Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Tracey Onslow	Substantive Member - Wyre Forest District Council
Cllr Richard Overton	Co-opted Member - Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Vivienne Parry	Co-opted Member - Shropshire Council
Cllr Tony Parsons	Co-opted Member - Shropshire Council
Cllr Tom Piotrowski	Substantive Member - Worcester City Council
Cllr James Stanley	Substantive Member - Worcestershire County Council
Mrs C Clive	Co-opted Independent Lay Member
Ms B McDowall	Co-opted Independent Lay Member

Agenda

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4	Public Participation Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in writing or by e-mail indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 18 September 2023). Further details are available on the Council's website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone number/e-mail address listed in this agenda and on the website.	

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Minutes of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

County Hall, Worcester

Thursday, 27 July 2023, 11.00 am

Present:

Cllr Barry Durkin (Chairman), Cllr Rob Adams (Vice Chairman),
 Cllr Martin Allen, Cllr Caroline Bagnall, Cllr Roger Evans, Cllr Paul Harrison,
 Cllr Liz Harvey, Cllr Nigel Lumby, Cllr Kelly Middleton, Cllr Richard Overton,
 Cllr Vivienne Parry, Cllr Tom Piotrowski, Cllr James Stanley, Mrs C Clive and
 Ms B McDowall

Also attended:

John Champion, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner
 Gareth Boulton, Chief Executive, Office of the West Mercia Police & Crime
 Commissioner
 Andrew Boote, Head of Service for Safer Communities (Public Health)
 Samantha Morris, Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager
 Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officer

Available Papers

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 February 2023 (previously circulated).

(A copy of document A will be attached to the signed Minutes).

472 Election of Chairman

The Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that there was a change to the order of business with agenda items 5 and 6 (Elections of Chairman and Vice-Chairman) being moved to the start of the meeting.

It was noted that Councillor Aled Luckman had stood down as Chairman of the Panel.

Nominations for Chairman were received for Councillors Barry Durkin and Liz Harvey. On being put to the vote, Councillor Barry Durkin was duly elected as

Chairman, for the remainder of the three-year term until July 2024, and took the Chair.

473 Election of Vice-Chairman

As Councillor Barry Durkin had been elected as Chairman of the Panel, there was now a vacancy for Vice-Chairman.

Nominations for Vice-Chairman were received for Councillors Roger Evans and Rob Adams. On being put to the vote, Councillor Rob Adams was duly elected as Vice Chairman for the remainder of the term until July 2024.

474 Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and placed on record his thanks to the retiring panel members, Councillors Aled Luckman, Graham Ballinger, Sebastian Bowen, Nyear Nazir, Tom Wells and David Wright for their contribution to the Panel. He particularly wished to highlight the long service of Councillor Sebastian Bowen who had been a member of the Panel since 2012 and had brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Panel. It was agreed that a letter of thanks would be sent to all retiring members on behalf of the Panel.

The new substantive members were: Councillors Barry Durkin (Herefordshire), Martin Allen (Malvern), Joanne Beecham (Redditch), Kelly Middleton (Telford and Wrekin), Tracey Onslow (Wyre Forest), Tom Piotrowski (Worcester City) and James Stanley (Worcestershire County).

The PCC advised the new members that if they had any particular areas of interest they wished to explore, this could be arranged via his office.

475 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Joanne Beecham, Helen Jones, Tracey Onslow and Tony Parsons.

There were no declarations of interest.

476 Named Substitutes

Councillor Caroline Bagnall for Tony Parsons (Shropshire Council) and Councillor Paul Harrison for Tracey Onslow (Wyre Forest District Council).

477 Public Participation

None.

478 Appointment of Co-opted Members

The following elected members were unanimously co-opted on to the Panel: Roger Evans, Vivienne Parry, Tony Parsons (Shropshire), Liz Harvey (Herefordshire) and Richard Overton (Telford and Wrekin).

479 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 3 February 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

480 Annual Report of the PCC

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) introduced his Draft Annual Report. Members of the Panel were required to review the Report and make recommendations to the PCC for consideration, following which, the PCC must then respond to any report or recommendations that the Panel has made prior to publishing the final version of the report.

In presenting his Annual Report, the PCC highlighted that in the last year there had been an increase in funding of £15m for policing and a significant rise in numbers of police officers for West Mercia. Whilst there had been an increased level of confidence in the West Mercia Police (the Force) in the last year, the PCC remained frustrated at the pace of the delivery of improvements. There were changing demands from communities and the PCC expected to see a greater pace of change in the year ahead.

The PCC drew attention to a few specific areas including:

- The lack of progress in respect of improving the visibility and access to police officers, an area that the Chief Constable was committed to seeing change.
- The reporting of poor behaviour of police officers nationally had impacted the reputation of the Police Force in general and public confidence. This behaviour was unacceptable, and the PCC was supportive of the work being done to drive improvement.
- The importance of continuing to fund services to support victims and securing additional funds for this purpose. This year more than £2m had been secured to tackle sexual and domestic violence and create safer spaces within communities. The PCC's mission was to continue to support those who needed it at a level that was expected and deserved by communities.

In the discussion that ensued, the following points were raised:

- With reference to the 500 new police officers highlighted in the report, a Member asked for details as to how many of them were front line officers. The PCC was not able to give an exact percentage but confirmed that it was not 100% as not all police officers were visible in the community and had other roles for example pursuing criminals on the dark web and therefore were out of sight of the public. The Panel would be provided with details following the meeting.

- Members were keen to see police officers being more visible within their communities, which would also benefit residents who had a fear of crime. The PCC explained that the number of police officers in an area varied according to activity levels, and that the Police response was relative and proportionate. The PCC acknowledged however, that public perception needed to improve and advised that some public perception work had recently been carried out in Pershore, and that he was keen to work with Councillors to improve public perception.
- A Member suggested that there was a lack of police officer presence at some Parish Council meetings, although it was highlighted that this was not the case at all Parish Council meetings. The Chief Executive explained that the Local Policing Charter including an agreement to provide timely updates to Parish Councils. If this was not happening, Councillors were asked to advise the PCC.
- A Member highlighted that the PCC's visit to a farm in Shropshire and interest in rural crime issues had been well received within the local farming community.
- Although there were some issues with policing in Telford, particularly with a lack of police attendance, a Member wished to highlight that the partnership working with the Police on the Safer and Stronger Communities programme was a very welcome initiative. The PCC agreed that the programme was proving successful, and that it was central to the aims of the Community Safety Partnership legislation.
- A Member advised that many of the issues highlighted in the report had been seen first-hand and referred to some positive diversionary and street work that was taking place and the mutual benefit of ward walks with the Police.
- In response to a Member question about the outcomes of the investment in technology, the PCC advised that by October the benefits would be realised, and a report would be brought to the February Panel detailing the outcomes of the investment.
- Referring to the year in numbers set out in the report, a Member requested that future reports included comparative figures from previous years with some context as to whether progress was 'on track' for these indicators. The PCC explained that he had adapted the reporting over time to suit the Panel's needs and was happy to try and meet new requests.
- The Chairman reminded the Panel that its role was one of critical friend and of holding the PCC to account. The PCC added that he saw the Panel's role as being one of support and challenge of his commissionership.
- A Member set out their observations on the figures used in the report, for instance the reliance on the use of estimates, despite the numbers of crimes reported having increased. It was suggested that public satisfaction with visibility was an outdated way of judging performance with the increasing importance of cybercrime. The low proportion of offences where action had been taken was also highlighted, and it was questioned what blockages were in the system and what was being done to influence this situation. The PCC agreed that the outcomes in the UK for lower-level crime were poor, although the Police did well with outcomes relating to serious crimes. Following some significant

investment in investigative work, the updated performance figures which would be presented to the September Panel were showing some improvement in the quality of outcomes. The PCC concurred that cybercrime and online fraud were important areas and that a weekly fraud update was provided via 'neighbourhood matters.'

- A Member highlighted that PCC's reflective summary of the previous year was appreciated, as was the use of case studies and the breakdown for each area. It was however disappointing to note the PCC's frustrations and the PCC was asked what actions were being taken to overcome these. The PCC set out his frustration that the organisation did not adapt quickly to emerging threats and he would prefer it to be 'live' to challenges that came along. The biggest frustration was with the lack of consistency and priority given to the commitments of the Chief Constable as set out in the Local Policing Charter, which meant that residents were not always getting what they should expect.
- Referring to the support for women who had suffered sexual and domestic violence, a Member asked for further details of the practicalities of victims accessing the support.
- In response to a question about the availability of 'Crucial Crew' in Shropshire, the PCC advised that he thought it was available in all areas of Shropshire and advised the Member to approach the local policing team, or his Office if her local team were not able to help.
- With reference to ensuring the accuracy of recording of outcome data, this was an area the PCC reported was being worked on. If ethical recording were an area of interest to the Panel, the PCC could provide a report at a later date.
- A Member expressed concern about the lower crime detection rate in Shropshire. The PCC advised that work was being carried out on this and the disparity was reducing.
- A Member requested detailed information on the average waiting time for 101 calls to be answered, as the figures quoted in the report did not reflect the local residents' experience. The PCC advised that further details could be found in the public call handling section of the performance monitoring report hyperlink in the report.

The Chairman confirmed that a formal letter would be sent to the PCC setting out the Panel's comments on his draft annual report.

481 2023/24 Annual Budget Metrics Report

The Panel received a report which provided an overview of the key performance indicators agreed by the PCC and the Chief Constable as part of the budget setting process for 2023/24. The PCC highlighted that these indicators had not been available when the Panel considered the precept.

A Member commented that for new Members, a longer-term view would be helpful so that trend analysis over time could be seen. Another point was raised that a comparison with indicators from other areas of the UK would be useful.

In response to a request from a Member, the PCC agreed to supply further details of the most similar group comparisons for robbery and burglary.

482 Combatting Drugs Partnership

The Panel received an update on the work of the two Combatting Drugs Partnerships in West Mercia, for which the PCC was the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO).

A Member questioned the PCC about the priority balance between tackling hard drugs which were fuelling serious crime versus the high usage of soft drugs amongst young people and the impact of those on their mental health and wellbeing. The PCC advised that the Government's 10-year plan 'From Harm to Hope' set out the approach to combatting illegal drug use at all levels. As the SRO, the PCC had a co-ordination role to ensure that there was a balanced approach but was not yet assured of the consistency of neighbourhood enforcement on drugs use. The PCC also referred to the recent launch of the Neighbourhood Crime fighting team which would boost resources to combat local drug issues. The Panel was informed that the PCC was unsure how the drugs partnerships were feeding back to Councils.

In response to a Member's question, the PCC stressed that the pathways had to be supported by partnerships, rather than a single organisation, and there was currently inconsistency as to how this was happening. The PCC referred to good consistency of delivery from the rehab work in prisons which was then being continued when the prisoners were released.

483 Most Appropriate Agency (MAA)

The Panel considered a report which set out details of a new policy and procedure referred to as, 'Most Appropriate Agency' which the Force had introduced on 3 April 2023. The Panel was informed that the policy was based on Humberside's Right Care Right Person (RCRP) policy and was intended to ensure that everyone, including the most vulnerable members of the community received the correct service, by the most appropriate agency, first time and every time. The PCC advised that there was a national launch event the previous day and whilst supportive of the principles behind the policy, he did have concerns regarding its implementation and how the system would work. The PCC had taken time to understand the way in which Humberside had implemented their policy and was clear that a partnership approach with all the local authorities in their area, was key to a successful approach. The PCC was keen to know if the Panel had any suggestions about the implementation of a partnership approach and 'bringing the partnership to life', perhaps involving local authority scrutiny bodies in the process.

Members raised a few issues and questions, to which the PCC responded as follows:

- The speed with which the policy was being implemented was raised as a cause for concern. A Member also highlighted the views of the Local

Government Association, which whilst welcoming the plans, had expressed concerns as to who would be left to foot the bill.

- Members were very concerned about the impact of this policy on vulnerable people in the community, especially those with mental health issues. It was felt that the conditions set out for a duty of care to arise for the Police to intervene, did not come across as a partnership approach.
- A Member asked whether the Equalities Impact Assessment referred to under the Equality Implications had been completed yet. The PCC advised that this had been completed by the Force and he would check whether it had been published.
- Whilst acknowledging that mental health was not a Police role, a Member suggested that the Police had powers to hold a person which were useful in certain situations, and examples were provided of a recent incident where Police intervention had been required. It was suggested that Telford & Wrekin Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme could have a role in a partnership and that drop off points with the IAPT team might be part of a solution. Also, greater involvement of place-based community groups as a source of engagement and for feedback purposes could be useful.
- A concern was raised about how the process for determining the best provider of a service would be managed and also the need to be able to respond to emergency situations, especially given that all partners could not necessarily act as an emergency service.
- A Member questioned, given the limited response to the consultation carried out by the Force, how partners had been engaged and challenged to roll out this policy. The PCC commented that the low engagement rate with the survey suggested to him that it did not reach the right people for completion.
- A Member suggested that the conditions required to be met before the Police had a duty to act was a major concern (paragraph 40 of report) and was unreasonable. The PCC advised that whilst he felt the Chief Constable was right to implement the policy, he had consistently expressed concerns in his holding to account work. He also agreed that there were some contradictions in the Force's policy, and he would ensure the concerns were taken on board.
- The PCC confirmed that the RCRP Toolkit (College of Policing) had been launched the previous day and that all the major partners had signed the agreement. It was intended that this policy would be cascaded through organisations, but the alignment of funding and services was not yet being seen.
- Another Member shared concerns that the process of implementing the policy was being rushed and whilst partnership working was the key, some sectors had little awareness of what was expected. It was suggested that local authority scrutiny committees could play a key role in helping this to move forward. The PCC welcomed this suggestion and advised that his Office could provide information or support to help partners to engage. It was agreed that the Chairman would write on behalf of the Panel to all Councils to encourage their engagement in this process.

- Further concerns were expressed about vulnerabilities in the community, for instance for the ambulance crews having to deal with difficult situations.
- A Member referred to a press release which the Force had issued about reducing police involvement in mental health care and commented that the Chief Constable was not present at this meeting to hear the Panel's concerns. The PCC advised that he would liaise with the Chief Constable to ensure that the Panels concerns were shared.
- A Member referred to the 'Mend the Gap' programme with different authorities and suggested that it may be of interest in this context too.

484 Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report

The Panel received an update on the activity undertaken by the PCC in support of his Safer West Mercia Plan and an update on Police performance.

In response to a Member's question about the approach to having 'holding to account' public meetings, the PCC advised that he had concluded that hybrid meetings were the way forward to ensure that the public could have the opportunity to participate. Consideration was also being given to holding a Force wide face to face 'holding to account' meeting.

Members raised a number of questions as follows, which were responded to by the PCC:

- In respect to a Member's question about the impact of the culture and values of the organisation, the PCC reported that the Chief Constable was currently in the process of carrying out a cultural audit throughout the Force, the results of which would be reported to the Panel.
- A Member raised the worrying statistics regarding children and young people affected by domestic abuse. The PCC highlighted that there was significant underreporting in this area making it hard to judge whether the increase was due to a true increase in crime numbers or a better understanding of the reality.
- In terms of the holding to account meetings, a Member highlighted that it would be helpful to receive some reassurance or communication regarding the contributions made by the public at these meetings.
- The diversity of the Police Force was questioned. The PCC advised that the Force was not yet representative of the communities that it served, but recent figures were showing some improvements. He commented that any insight from Members into engaging underrepresented communities would be welcomed. The PCC highlighted that figures on diversity were included in the performance report. A Member requested that a progress update be provided on police force diversity over the past 5 years and that the Equality implications section at the end of the report marked as 'none' could be usefully expanded.
- In response to a Member's question, the PCC agreed to ensure the financial management section of the report was expanded and the Chief

Executive confirmed that the most up to date quarterly financial information was always included.

- The importance of combatting rural crime was highlighted and a Member spoke positively about the use of smart water to prevent farm thefts. The PCC agreed that smart water was really helpful, and his mission was to ensure that it could be used much more extensively both within the farming community and innovatively for a wide range of community and parish uses, for which he was providing some funding.
- A Member was pleased to read about the work of the West Mercia Rape Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC) in supporting victims of sexual violence and asked whether enough was being done considering the growing number of referrals. The PCC reported that there was currently far more demand than capacity, however, in the last few days, the Ministry of Justice had announced additional funding which would help. The Panel was informed that there was work ongoing with perpetrators to break the cycle of crime in this area and the PCC explained that his role included co-ordinating activities to help prevent these crimes.
- In response to a comment about low prosecution rates inhibiting people from coming forward to report crimes, the PCC advised that sexual violence crimes were very hard to prosecute, and that getting the right support for victims was important, especially as the delays in the criminal justice process could be very lengthy. The social stigma attached to reporting sexual violence was raised, and it was also recognised that there were many unreported male victims too.
- A Member highlighted that there were different perceptions of what domestic abuse looked like and suggested that it would be helpful for consideration to be given as to how the 'lived experience' of domestic abuse could be conveyed to the public, to increase their understanding of the issue. The PCC agreed to take this away for consideration and report back to the Panel.

485 Work Programme

The Panel received details of its current work programme and the following main points were made:

- In response to a question about whether the Panel could carry out Task Groups, the Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager advised that the Panel was able to commission deep dives into particular issues. Initial suggestions made were:
 - smart water/rural crime
 - partnership working around sexual violence
 - Estates
 - Key Performance Indicators or PFI's
- A report on Police Force diversity was added to the work programme for the September meeting.
- A Member queried whether there were any shared services between West Mercia and Warwickshire following the separation of the Alliance.
- The Panel discussed the process for scrutinising the proposed precept and a Member suggested that it would be helpful if the final notification

of the proposed precept was advised at an earlier stage in the budget setting process. The Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager explained that the PCC had agreed earlier in the meeting to liaise with Officers about the process for scrutiny of the draft precept and details would be provided in due course.

- The Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager suggested that Members may wish to consider 'Champion' roles for Panel Members in order to develop their depth of knowledge in certain key areas.

The meeting ended at 1.50 pm

Chairman



WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

POLICE & CRIME PLAN ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

Recommendation

1. Members of the Panel are invited to consider the report.

Background

2. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) with an overview of activity undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in support of his Safer West Mercia Plan and provide an update on police performance.

Delivery plan and assurance

3. A delivery plan is used to support monitoring and assurance of progress against individual elements within the plan and is scrutinised at the PCC's monthly governance meetings.
4. Examples of recent activity in support of the Safer West Mercia Plan's four key objectives, are set out in the following sections.

West Mercia Police Chief Constable

5. Chief Constable Pippa Mills has announced she will be leaving West Mercia Police to become Assistant Commissioner of The Metropolitan Police in London, as of October 2023.
6. The PCC is currently advertising the vacancy with a view to appointing a new substantive Chief Constable for West Mercia in the near future. The PCP will be required to confirm the appointment of the new Chief Constable in due course.
7. In the interim, the PCC has confirmed that Deputy Chief Constable Alex Murray will become Temporary Chief Constable of West Mercia Police following the departure of CC Mills and will lead the police force until such time that the new Chief Constable is able to take up the role.

Putting victims and survivors first

Domestic Abuse

8. The PCC commissions West Mercia Women's Aid to provide 'Inclusion Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)' whose role has been to raise awareness of domestic abuse to under / overrepresented groups and those with protected

characteristics. These IDVAs are now regularly integrating with military families, Eastern European organisations, Foodbanks, Age UK, Action for Deafness, Sight loss organisations (1 in 12 of those with sight loss experience DA according to their research) and specialist neurodivergent services. This is a positive step towards tackling barriers experienced by our diverse communities, improved awareness and understanding of abuse and enhancing service accessibility. Additionally, they help accessibility in rural communities by attending drop-in clinics in the more remote areas in West Mercia in conjunction with partners and services.

9. West Mercia Women's Aid also provide Hospital IDVAs whose service delivery was impacted significantly by the pandemic and the subsequent restrictions to hospital access. Q1 2023-2024 referral figures show an increase in overall referrals (76 referrals), likely the result of the increased visibility and accessibility of the Hospital IDVAs who are now being back on site 2 days per week across all participating hospitals.

Sexual Violence

10. Referrals to the Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) services remain consistent, and the number of service users needing additional support outside the criminal justice process remains high. Clients leaving the service remain low due to the ongoing backlog of court cases, resulting in higher case numbers for ISVAs to manage. A snapshot of the average waiting time for an ISVA is 11 days at maximum. During the waiting period, each client receives information and contact details for the service. If there is an immediate need for an ISVA to support a client with an ABE interview or Court attendance, team leaders will fast-track the requests.
11. Branch Plus (Adult Sexual Exploitation) supports adults who have been sexually exploited. Numbers accessing the services are low but are beginning to increase. The role of the Branch Plus worker is crucial in supporting clients to safety plan and manage risks, helping them attend sexual health clinics, and providing advocacy, information and support in relation to court proceedings, including the family court.
12. In 2023/2024, West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC) and Axis were awarded £427,063 for counselling provision across West Mercia; however, demand exceeds capacity. Unfortunately, WMRSASC were not allocated the full funding they were anticipating through the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Rape Support Fund process. This could result in a reduction of service across communities. The PCC is working with partners in the Integrated Care System (ICS) and Public Health to develop a commissioning strategy that ensures the provision of appropriate and timely mental health support to victims of sexual violence.

Victim Services

13. In line with contract timelines, the Victim Support provision will be reviewed Autumn 2023 and informed by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Victim and Offender Needs Assessment, which was completed in August 2023. During Q1 2023-24 the service has seen an 18% increase in the number of people self-referring, with the majority of these referrals relating to sexual offences.
14. Victim Support have supported 36 people through Restorative Justice processes in Q1, and those who participate in the service have reported an improved experience of the criminal justice system.

15. Victim Support are also funded to provide an Independent Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Advocate (IMSA) whose role has been reprofiled to better the need, building on the learning and feedback from partners. The focus will now be on awareness raising, community development and training, which will complement the direct service provision, in turn increasing referrals, creating a more seamless service and knowledge of support available to victims.
16. The Victims Advice Line (VAL) received 3,861 new referrals where needs were identified during Q1 2023-24, which accounts for 20.8% of new crime cases. 11,870 letters or emails were sent to raise awareness of the services available. 1,428 people had their support needs met in Q1, with the VAL directly responsible for meeting 641 of those, with onwards referrals for longer term or specialist support to other agencies for the remaining 787. VAL performance was subject to scrutiny through the Assurance and Accountability (A&A) process in June 2023, with a focus on governance arrangements, service provision to victims and future public communication and engagement activity.

Prevention

17. The PCC commissioned pre-arrest drug referral service DIVERT has been commissioned on a regional basis until March 2025 alongside Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Midlands Police. West Mercia will contribute £22,320.52 in year 1 and £25,742.25 in the following year bringing the total investment to £48,062.77.
18. Within the West Mercia area, the service received a total of 175 referrals in Quarter 1, 20 of which were under the age of 18. Residents of Worcestershire accounted for the highest number of referrals (33%), followed by Telford and Wrekin (18%), Herefordshire (16%), and Shropshire (12%). 17% of referrals made were for those residing outside of West Mercia. Cannabis use accounted for over three quarters of assessed individuals year to date, followed by Cocaine at 14.71%. Assessments were completed with 115 people and 96 of those engaged in a groupwork programme.
19. The PCC commissioned CLIMB Child and Young People (CYP) Diversionary Service has received additional funding of £198,000 to expand service provision for a pilot year to under 10s and parent/carer support, bringing the total investment to £869,762. The pilot will test the whole family approach to delivery following gap identification, and service mobilisation is currently underway. The additional funding will enable a total of 8 new roles, with each area receiving a 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) U.10 worker and a 0.5 FTE parental worker.
20. The CLIMB service is experiencing issues around length of service delivery being longer than the original model (designed pre-covid). The service reports finding it difficult to reach adequate outcomes for a CYP in the original 12-week model, often struggling to signpost to mental health support or support education stabilisation in that timeframe whilst also reducing the risk and other mentorship required. A focused piece of work will be undertaken in this extension year to assess further.

Building a more secure West Mercia

Improving Responses to Domestic Abuse

21. Following the successful Home Office Bid of £1.2 million for a low-medium risk perpetrator programme and the PCC budget investment towards DRIVE, the procurement stage is now complete with Cranstoun awarded to deliver as a prime

agency throughout West Mercia. Mobilisation is underway, and a recent virtual launch event delivered.

22. Worcestershire and Herefordshire's DRIVE programme has seen a total of 45 high risk perpetrators allocated in Q1, with 47 associated victims/survivors and 81 associated children and young people. Of note, those with closed cases report an 89% reduction in high-risk physical abuse and jealous, controlling and coercive behaviours and 100% reduction in high-risk sexual abuse, harassment and stalking.
23. The Men and Masculinities domestic abuse perpetrator programme started this quarter with 1 group in Worcester, 2 groups in Hereford and an online programme. Due to the ongoing procurement of the force wide multi-risk perpetrator programme, Cranstoun were unable to enrol new men onto the programme, so the Hereford groups were condensed into a single group. A waiting list was created which held 29 cases. Positive outcomes are already being reported following successful completion of the programme, with significant implications for the men and their families.

Female Offenders – reducing reoffending, Out of Court Disposals (OCD)

24. During April, Willowdene staff and Police have met regularly to develop pathways and promote the service. Willowdene's diversionary lead developed and delivered presentations across the region to front line police, in local stations. Working closely with the Police pathways team, reporting processes from referral to completion have been developed with all key points of contacts established and systems tested. The process is working well, and initial referrals received have been processed and recorded.
25. Although referrals are currently low, the OCD is making a significant difference by addressing the drivers of criminality and by alleviating the impact that having a criminal conviction would have for the female offenders.

Road safety

26. The PCC has been collaborating with partners on a specification for a road safety needs assessment. This will provide an updated data and gap analysis and includes a consultation which will inform future commissioning. The anticipated completion date is Autumn 2023.
27. The PCC's budget demonstrated ongoing commitment to tackle speeding in communities. The investment of an additional 11.5 full-time staff into the Road Safety Team and mobile camera vans are all now in place and operational. A further update on the impact of this investment is anticipated ahead of the next PCP update.

Regional collaboration

28. The Commissioner attended a Regional Governance Group (RGG) meeting in April alongside the other three West Midlands Regional Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables. A number of areas of collaboration were discussed with the Commissioner particularly keen to hear about the work the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) was delivering that benefitted the people of West Mercia. Updates were also received on the work of the Regional Counter Terrorism Unit, National Police Air Service and Emergency Services Network.

29. At the meeting, the Commissioner entered a new collaboration with Police and Crime Commissioners from Staffordshire and Warwickshire Police and Staffordshire University for the provision of degree level police training.
30. The PCC has agreed to take on a regional portfolio for tackling serious and organised crime on behalf of West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioners. He will represent the PCCs at quarterly meetings within the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.
31. The Pre-Arrest Diversion Scheme commissioning exercise was successful in appointing a provider, with Cranstoun winning the process. Officers from all four OPCCs contributed to evaluating the awarding the contract. The new regional contract went live on 1st July 2023

Criminal justice

32. Work continues to develop a delivery plan and supporting performance metrics to measure the impact of the Local Criminal Justice Board chaired by the PCC. This work will be presented to partners at the next meeting on 7 September 2023, to help identify appropriate priorities and activity.
33. A court backlog task and finish group has been established with partners, with the first meeting planned once the summer holiday period has concluded. This group will convene partners to develop an action plan centred around tackling the significant court backlogs and improving processes and outcomes for victims and witnesses. A Terms of Reference for the group has been developed and shared with attendees to ensure activity is focused and progressed.
34. Overall performance in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) in West Mercia remains stable since the last panel report:
 - The conviction rate for the Magistrates Court sits at 86% in West Mercia compared to the National average of 84%.
 - The conviction rate at the Crown Court sits at 74%, this is below the 78% seen nationally. The PCC intends to raise this disparity at the next Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB).
 - Witness Attendance rates remain amongst the highest in the region at 89%. The PCC allocated additional funds into the Witness Care Unit for 2 additional witness care officers which has led to a consistent uplift in witness attendance.

Serious Violence

35. The PCC has continued to engage with Crest Advisory (contracted by the Home Office (HO) to provide the national implementation support offer) and specified authorities through Community Safety Partnerships to ensure effective implementation of the Serious Violence duty. In July and August, the PCC convened two Serious Violence partnership events, designed to bring partners together to support in the development of the Serious Violence strategy and needs assessment.
36. In discussion with partners, the PCC has allocated funding from the HO towards a Serious Violence Partnership Manager, Analyst and Administration Officer up to 31 March 2025, alongside a Serious Violence Partnership Analyst. The PCC has also agreed with partners to allocate £126,699 of 2023/24 costs to each Community Safety

Partnership, to commission local interventions which are designed to prevent and reduce Serious Violence.

37. Following a successful procurement exercise, the PCC is pleased to award The Children's Society (TCS) a grant of £538,496.32 for delivery of a Serious Violence West Mercia wide CYP Diversionary Service for a pilot until March 2025. The service expands upon piloted activity and learning from former police led 'Steer Clear' workshops and a 1:1 worker in Telford. Each Local Authority area will benefit from whole family group programmes along with 1:1 tailored support. The primary positive outcomes for those engaging, will include reduction of risk and criminal activity, education, being better informed and empowered to act, increased resilience, improved relationships, and encouragement towards positive diversionary activity. Mobilisation is currently underway with partners to refine the panel framework and referral mechanisms whilst TCS recruit to roles. A launch event will be scheduled once schools have settled into the academic year.
38. The PCC has received the first draft of the commissioned Serious Violence Needs Assessment (SVNA) which included a large consultation and engagement exercise. A review of the draft is being undertaken, some initial observations being that not all local authorities submitted requested datasets. Consideration will be made to revisiting the data analysis following a Serious Violence Data Sharing Workshop, being led by the newly appointed Serious Violence Partnership Manager in August. This event will seek to increase engagement and buy in of specified authorities around data sharing improvements.
39. The draft SVNA was used to inform discussion at the June Assurance and Accountability meeting which included a focus on Victim Advice Line (VAL). As a result of this meeting, the PCC's office has established a joint working group with the force. The group will review the findings of the final needs assessment to identify areas for improvement, and to inform future victim service provision across West Mercia, as well as to inform activity in relation to the Serious Violence duty.

Reforming West Mercia

40. The PCC has set a Net Budget Requirement of £273.038m. Following additional funding and use of reserves the total budget for the year is £277.068m. A central element of the budget investment was a commitment of an additional 40 officers to support front line policing. The Force have a robust process in place for ensuring that we can maintain the target number of police officers, which has enabled the full establishment of 2 of the 5 Neighbourhood Crime Fighting Teams, with the other 3 teams being on target to be at full strength by end of September. These along with the commitment for 10 Community Safety Engagement officers has put greater focus on addressing key community concerns, such as anti-social behaviour and the harm caused by illegal drugs.
41. As part of the commitment to maintain officer numbers at this historical higher number efforts have also been made to improve diversity and representation within West Mercia. Progress has been made in respect of increased recruitment of female officers and those from ethnic minorities, however it is recognised further progress is still required.
42. The next largest area of budget investment has been in the digital transformation agenda. The force is in the middle of an ambitious 5-month programme to rollout new equipment, centred on the use of Microsoft 365 to all employees of West Mercia. To date over 50% of the workforce has received new laptops and trained on how to utilise

the software. In August the Force is on track to rollout to over 1000 employees, at a rate of at least 300 a week. This has been a significant logistical challenge whilst ensuring effective operational policing continues. This achievement means that the force can look to implement the wealth of technological solutions that are available to drive efficiency in how policing for the public is delivered and realise both operational and financial benefits.

43. Another aspect of the investment in technology to deliver transformational change which the PCC committed to as part of the budget, was the Chief Constable's proposal in relation to a Contact Resolution Centre (CRC). The proposal aims are to improve the access to key services the public require. To support the launch of the new CRC, the force implemented a number of new and revised policies in April 2023, including a review of how incidents are graded and the Most Appropriate Agency (MAA) policy. These policies are integral to successful delivery of the new CRC as they ensure that demand is consistently and appropriately graded and responded to.
44. As a result of these policies, the officers within the CRC are able to achieve legitimate, timely and appropriate resolution without deployment (where assessed as appropriate). The policy change in respect of incident grading has had a significant impact on how the force manages calls for service (predicted to be more impactful on overall service than the MAA policy which relates to only 5% of telephony demand).
45. Following go-live in April 2023, the force reported a significant shift in graded response volumes, including a 14% reduction in Grade 1 deployment and a 67% reduction in Grade 2 deployment. In turn, Grade 3 CRC managed demand rose by 54%. Anticipated benefits for victims include quicker resolution for calls for service where deployment is not required, improved quality of evidence capture at the point of call and ensuring appropriate focus on high harm and priority crime types such as domestic abuse and burglary.
46. Performance is being closely monitored by the force and the PCC's office and the impact of these policy changes were most recently discussed at the Assurance and Accountability meeting in June 2023 which included a focus on MAA. The Chief Constable identified notable improvements that had resulted from the policy changes including a reduction in unresourced incidents across the 5 local policing areas, increased capacity to attend relevant incidents more expeditiously and an improvement in response times. Performance will continue to be monitored.
47. Increased best use of technology has further supported the policy changes to provide a better level of accessibility to matters that would have previously awaited a police deployment. Rapid Video Response (RVR) is the use of video conferencing and now enables OCC staff to engage with victims remotely in a 'face to face' way, in a more instantaneous manner than physical deployment often allows.
48. The PCC is also focused on reforming West Mercia to reduce the environmental impact of policing. The PCC has invested in new electric charging infrastructure at Worcester Police station which will provide valuable information on how the Force can effectively use electric vehicles, reducing the carbon footprint of the vehicle fleet. This will support the work that has been commissioned to establish how to roll out both the infrastructure and vehicles across the whole of the Force.

Estates

49. West Mercia Police need to be in fit-for-purpose buildings that support new technology which is being introduced. It is also important that, whilst doing this, savings, and ways

of working better and more closely with partners are identified. The work of the PCC around estates has focused on delivering against those needs. The insourced estates model enables West Mercia Police and Herefordshire & Worcestershire Fire & Rescue Service to realise their mid and long-term visions as well as deliver their estates and financial strategies.

50. Work on major capital projects continues at a good pace, in respect of;

- A new Police & Fire combined hub at the Middlehouse Lane site in Redditch. Site remediation works are complete, with construction started and steelworks currently being erected. The new facility remains on track for completion October 2024.
- A new Firearms Range & Training School at Hindlip HQ. Architects have been appointed, together with the appointment of a principal designer, and planning consultants. Numerous site-specific surveys have also been commissioned.

51. In the coming weeks, the estates team will commission a full condition survey of the Heating, Ventilation and Aircon (HVAC) systems. Again, this data will be utilised along the same lines as the previous building fabric condition surveys, going forward to better inform long term planning and decision making.

52. Ongoing delivery of the annual planned programme of minor works & refurbishments continues.

Financial management

53. The process to prepare the 2024/25 budget has commenced. The PCC has set out his priorities for the following financial year in a letter to the Chief Constable. The force has held sessions with budget holders at an organisation wide event and also on an individual level, to set out expectations of the approach to developing spending plans. Continuing the process that was put in place for the 2023/24 budget, the PCC is meeting monthly with the Chief Constable to make sure there is clear understanding of how the force are building their budget to reflect the priorities set out by the PCC and to meet the Police and Crime Plan.

54. The review of the financial position at the end of quarter 1 highlighted a small underspend against the budget year to date, but which projected an overspend by the end of the financial year of £2.379m. It is recognised that this is still at an early stage in the financial year and recognises that there is a significant amount of risk relating to the projections. Therefore, there is no remedial action recommended at this time, with further monitoring through quarter 2 in place to understand cost drivers and to provide more certainty over the estimated costs for the financial year.

55. The Government announced that they would abide by the recommendations of the independent pay review panel for the Public Sector, and announced a 7% pay award for Police Officers, with effect from 1st September 2023. The Treasury also announced additional funding to PCCs to mitigate the pay award being above estimates used when setting the budget. The pay announcement, which has been assumed will be applied to Police Staff as well, has not had an additional adverse impact on the PCC budget position.

Reassuring West Mercia

56. The PCC, Deputy PCC and Assistant PCC continue to carry out engagements with communities, such as attending parish council meetings, visiting local community

groups, and those that receive funding from the PCC. A total of 55 engagements have taken place between May and July.

57. The PCC continues to monitor his engagement and reach with communities, across social media. Between May and July, 583 posts were uploaded, more than 5,600 people engaged with posts, and 160 new followers were gained. There are now 15,107 people signed up for PCC news updates via the Neighbourhood Matters system and 1,903 receiving the PCC's monthly newsletter. The PCC continues to send monthly newsletters to MPs to ensure they are sighted on activity in their constituencies.
58. During the period May to July, 26 press releases and statements have been issued. This resulted in 145 items of media coverage, helping to ensure that the PCC maintains a visible presence across West Mercia's communities, playing his part in community leadership and providing reassurance where necessary.
59. During the period May to July, the PCC's office dealt with 522 new pieces of casework. The most common themes were around road safety and anti-social behaviour (ASB) with other key trends around Police contact and local policing. As a result of this, the PCC, Deputy PCC or Assistant PCC have visited areas of concern to understand the issues and identify solutions, if necessary.
60. Between May and July, circa 5,900 people visited the PCC's website. Work continues to ensure that information, such as meeting minutes and decisions made, are uploaded onto the website. Work also continues regarding ensuring required levels of accessibility are met and maintained.
61. The PCC has been running his summer events programme, with four events attended. These events have run alongside Community Conversation engagements, the latest of which involved the PCC holding an event focused on the delays around obtaining a new or renewed firearms licence. More of these events, along with other themes, will be held in the coming months.

Performance and accountability

Assurance and accountability meetings

62. The PCC is committed to continuously improving processes, and in January 2023 the PCC commissioned a wholesale review of his holding to account function. As a result of the review, over 15 recommendations were identified to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the holding to account process, with a focus on tangible outcomes and service improvement for communities. Going forward, the holding to account meetings will be called "Assurance and Accountability" meetings.
63. The recommendations from the review also focused on facilitating more robust scrutiny of key performance issues on a quarterly basis, including performance in relation to local and national policing priorities (inc. the budget metrics) and HMICFRS recommendations.
64. Key performance indicators are set out via the quarterly performance report, but some significant improvements have been seen recently, including total recorded crime and burglary detection levels.
65. An action plan was developed to monitor delivery of the review recommendations. With the support of the Chief Officer team, all the recommendations in the action plan were

delivered across the first 2 quarters of the year, including a comprehensive review of how the PCC holds public A&A meetings.

66. The A&A timetable for 2023/24 is published on the PCC's website. Areas of focus are informed by performance monitoring, horizon scanning of emerging issues or legislative changes and local / national policing priorities. 3 formal meetings have taken place this financial year to date:

- 5 June 2023: Performance meeting - Quarter 4 2022/23
- 29 June 2023: Thematic meeting - Most appropriate agency (MAA) and Victim Advice Line (VAL)
- 28 July 2023: Public meeting - Police visibility and contact

67. The minutes from the performance and thematic meetings are published on the PCC's website ([Assurance and Accountability Meetings - West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)). A number of key outcomes from the meetings this quarter are summarised below:

- In collaboration with the force, the PCC has published a statement on the contribution of the force to achieving improvements against the national policing priorities in Q4. This ensures compliance with the Specified Information Order and increases transparency regarding key areas of performance.
- A joint working group has been established with the force to review the victims needs assessment commissioned by the PCC and to review implications for victim service provision across West Mercia.
- Service provision in the Victim Advice Line is being reviewed by the PCC's office and the force to ensure appropriate governance, oversight and performance monitoring is in place to deliver the best outcomes to help victims cope and recover.
- Further assurance provided in respect of MAA governance and safeguarding responsibilities. This will inform ongoing oversight and scrutiny activity including PCC representation at the force's MAA scrutiny panel in August and engagement with partners through local Health and Wellbeing Boards in September.

68. The new public meeting process was launched in July 2023 and elicited an extremely positive response, with over 140 questions from the public received by the PCC. The session, which is now available to watch on the PCC's YouTube channel ([Public Assurance and Accountability: Police Visibility and Contact - YouTube](#)) covered a range of themes including foot patrols, presence at police stations, investigating crime, interaction with police officers, and 101 call handling times.

69. The next formal meeting took place on 31 August 2023, and was a quarterly performance meeting focused on:

- Police and crime priorities, notably public confidence, 101 call handling, victims' code compliance and road safety.
- National priorities for policing, notably homicide, serious violence, drugs, neighbourhood crime, satisfaction and cybercrime.
- The national HMICFRS inspection on vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the police.

70. The PCC's A&A programme also includes an ad-hoc, virtual element that enables the PCC to raise issues that do not fall within the remit of a thematic meeting or require a more immediate response. Ad-hoc A&A requests are sent to the Chief Constable via

email, who provides a response in writing. Since the last PCP report, the PCC has submitted the following ad-hoc requests to the Chief Constable:

- Crime and public confidence in Pershore.
- Herefordshire Council Families Commission Report, 'Listening to the Families'.
- MAA policy and the impact on safeguarding.
- Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) abstractions.

71. The responses to the ad-hoc A&A requests are used to inform ongoing scrutiny and assurance activity. For example, the adhoc A&A in Pershore has resulted in a large amount of activity taking place to address the concerns raised by the community. The PCC commissioned a bespoke survey to gather the views of Pershore residents, a second public meeting has been arranged for November.

West Mercia perception survey

72. Headline findings from the latest results of the West Mercia commissioned perception survey, Quarter 1 2023/24, are set out below:

- The majority of residents (82%) agreed that they had confidence in West Mercia Police, with a similar proportion confident that they would receive a good service from the force (80%). This is comparable to findings in the previous period.
- Nearly three-quarters (74%) of residents agreed that West Mercia Police understood the issues that affect their community, this is comparable to the previous quarter (72%).
- 88% said they were confident they could access the police in an emergency, and 70% in a non-emergency – the same as seen in the previous quarter.
- 18% said they see an officer or PCSO at least once per week, this is comparable to findings in the previous period. Over half of residents are satisfied with the levels of policing in their area; this is stable.

Force performance reports

73. The PCC scrutinises a weekly dashboard of performance along with monthly and quarterly summary reports. A copy of the Q1 2023/24 performance report can be found on the PCC's website: [Police Quarterly Performance Reports - West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/police-quarterly-performance-reports-west-mercia-police-crime-commissioner).

74. Below are some key performance areas of note:

- Recording around outcomes: West Mercia has seen some improvements in action taken against offenders. There has also been a downward trend in cases where the victim does not support the prosecution. As a result, West Mercia Police has an improved performance position compared to most similar forces (MSG), albeit still above average.
- Response times: performance has remained stable for Grade 1 incidents although is largely below the force's target. Following a review of how the force grades incidents, the force has seen a notable improvement in grade 2 response times.
- Victim satisfaction: the methodology for reporting on victim satisfaction has been amended. Of note, the force's reporting of 'satisfied' now includes those that were

completely, very and fairly satisfied (previous methodology only included those that were completely or very satisfied). This was discussed at the performance A&A in June. As a result of these changes, the force are now meeting their satisfaction targets for burglary, violent and hate crime. Domestic abuse satisfaction currently sits just below the target.

- Call handling: Both 999 and 101 have seen a notable reduction in performance during Q1. This is due to a number of factors impacting the call centre including a substantial increase in 999 demand in June 2023, a 38% in demand was seen when compared with June 2022.

75. These performance trends are used to inform the agenda setting for the quarterly performance A&A meetings, as well as ad-hoc A&A requests if there is a pressing performance issue.

HMICFRS inspection reports

76. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has published 3 national inspection reports since the last Panel meeting. West Mercia Police was not inspected as part of any of the national reports. Reports published this quarter:

- July 2023: An inspection of how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms.
- July 2023: Police Performance: Getting a Grip, PEEL spotlight report.
- August 2023: An inspection of the police contribution to the prevention of homicide.

77. Each of the above reports has been reviewed and the force has provided the PCC with updates in relation to all new recommendations made by the inspectorate as a result of this national work. These updates will be used by the PCC to produce a formal response to the 3 national reports. These responses will be published on the PCC's website in Quarter 3 and sent to the Home Secretary as required by law.

78. Following the review of the holding to account process in January, oversight and governance of force activity against HMICFRS report recommendations has been integrated into the A&A programme for 2023/24. From June, the quarterly performance A&A meetings will include a Chief Constable update on progress against key HMICFRS reports.

79. The performance meeting in June 2023 focused on the force's progress against the outstanding PEEL inspection cause of concern, recommendations and areas for improvement (AFIs). The force has continuously audited and reviewed progress against the PEEL findings over the last 12 months. Based on this activity, the Chief Constable was confident that there has been demonstrable progress around key areas including investigative quality and supervisory updates, leading to an overall improved service for victims. A significant number of recommendations have been submitted to the inspectorate to be signed off as completed, including AFIs linked to the use and enforcement of domestic violence protection notices and orders.

80. As set out in the previous section, the performance meeting in August will include an update report from the Chief Constable on progress against national and local AFIs related to misconduct, misogyny and vetting.

81. The formal A&A meetings are supplemented by regular meetings between the PCC's Policy team, the force's HMICFRS liaison officer, and the regional lead within HMICFRS to ensure the PCC remains sighted on upcoming inspection activity and reporting.

Risk Management Implications

None.

Financial Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None

Equality Implications

None.

Supporting Information

None.

Contact Points for the Report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website](#)

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WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

2023/24 ANNUAL BUDGET METRICS REPORT

Recommendation

1. Members of the Panel are invited to consider this report.

Background

2. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Police and Crime Panel with an overview of the key performance indicators (KPIs) agreed by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Chief Constable as part of the budget setting process for 2023/24.

2023/24 Key Performance Indicators

3. The KPIs for the annual 2023/24 budget are set out in Table 1 and were included in the Budget Report published on the PCC's website. The PCC and Chief Constable have made a clear commitment to pursue continuous improvements against these KPIs.
4. The metrics focus on crimes that have the greatest impact on communities, including traditional police and crime measures, neighbourhood crime, serious violence, domestic abuse and criminal justice outcomes for victims; as well as metrics that enable robust financial management.
5. The metrics are also aligned to local Safer West Mercia Plan priorities and national Beating Crime Plan priorities against which the force must deliver improvements.
6. The full performance information, including additional context is available in the Quarterly Performance Report. A copy of the Q1 2023/24 performance report can be found on the PCC's website: [Police Quarterly Performance Reports - West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/pcc-quarterly-performance-reports).
7. The Force's Quarterly Performance Report currently reports on police detections by way of an 'action taken' outcome rate. The 'action taken' rate is an aggregation of several positive outcome codes as set out below:
 1. Charge and or Summons
 2. Caution - youths
 3. Caution - adults
 4. Taken into consideration (TIC)
 5. Penalty Notice for Disorder
 6. Cannabis warning

7. Community Resolution

8. The Quarterly Performance Report does not currently breakdown performance across individual outcomes codes as specified in the agreed budget KPIs (i.e., does not report on the OC1/1A charge/ summons rate individually). This deviation from the agreed metric was raised with the force last quarter. The PCC's office continues to engage with the force to ensure that future reports include specific data for Outcome 1/1A as agreed as part of the budget metric setting process. In the interim, the outcome data included in the table below is for total 'action taken' outcomes.

**2023/24 Budget KPIs
Table 1.**

Safer West Mercia Plan	Improvement Areas	Key Performance Indicators	Data Source	Q1 23/24 Update
Putting Victims and survivors first	Victim satisfaction	% of victims satisfied with service	Quarterly Performance report	At the end of Q1, burglary, hate and violent crime victim satisfaction targets were met whilst domestic abuse satisfaction fell just below the target. The force has recently changed the way they report on this data which has had a sig. impact on performance reporting. More details are available in the PCC's performance and activity report, and the force's quarterly performance report.
Building a more secure West Mercia	Total Recorded Crime (TRC)	Volume of Total Recorded Crime	Quarterly Performance report	There has been a 9% reduction overall in Q1 23/23 in the volume of TRC when compared to the same period in the previous year. The majority

			of crime types have seen reductions.
	TRC - % outcome 1 & 1A	Quarterly Performance report	The force has taken action against 10% of all total recorded crime in Q1 23/24.
Violent Crime	Volume of violence with injury	Quarterly Performance report	Violence with injury offences have seen a 3% reduction in Q1 when compared to the same period last year
	Violence with injury - % outcome 1& 1A	Quarterly Performance report	The force has taken action against 12% of all violence with injury offences in Q1 23/24.
Rape	Volume of rape offences	Quarterly Performance report	Rape offences have seen a 10% reduction across West Mercia in Q1 when compared to the same period last year.
	Rape - % outcome 1& 1A	Quarterly Performance report	The force has taken action against 11% of all rape offences in Q1 23/24.
Robbery	Volume of robbery offences	Quarterly Performance report	Robbery offences have seen a 10% reduction overall in Q1 when compared to the same period last year, despite seeing an increase at the end of 22/23.
	Robbery - % outcome 1 & 1A	Quarterly Performance report	The Q1 report shows that 8% of robbery offences have

			had action taken this quarter.
Residential burglary	Residential burglary	Quarterly Performance report	Residential burglaries have remained comparable, with a small 1% increase in Q1 when compared to last year.
	Residential burglary - % outcome 1 & 1A	Quarterly Performance report	The Q1 report shows that 6% of residential burglary offences have had action taken this quarter.
Vehicle Crime	Volume of vehicle crime	Quarterly Performance report	Vehicle offences have seen a 7% reduction across West Mercia in Q1 when compared to Q1 22/23
	Vehicle crime - % outcome 1 & 1A	Quarterly Performance report	The Q1 report shows that 3% of vehicle offences have had action taken this quarter.
Domestic Abuse	Volume of domestic abuse	Quarterly Performance report	Domestic abuse crimes saw a 7% reduction in Q1 23/24 when compared to the previous year.
	Domestic Abuse - % outcome 1 & 1A	Quarterly Performance report	The Q1 report shows that 9% of domestic abuse offences have had action taken this quarter.
Reassuring West Mercia's Communities	Call Handling	% of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds	Quarterly Performance report
			In June 23, 76% of 999 calls were answered within the 10 second target, this is significantly below performance in June last year (90%). A 38% increase

				was seen in call demand when compared to June last year.
		% of 101 calls answered within 30 seconds	Quarterly Performance report	In June 23, 38% of 101 calls were answered within 30 seconds, this a decline on performance in June last year (59%). 101 demand saw an 8% increase in June this year when compared to last.
	Public Confidence	Overall Confidence - % of respondents that agree or strongly agree they have confidence in local policing	Quarterly Performance report	For the 12 months ending June 23, 82% of respondents to the survey agree or strongly agree that they have confidence in West Mercia Police. This has remained comparable to the previous quarter's findings.
		Visibility - % of respondents that report seeing a police officer or Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) at least weekly	Public Confidence and Perceptions Survey	For the 12 months ending June 23, 18% of residents report seeing a police officer or PCSO at least once a week. This has seen a slight decline from the 20% seen in the previous quarter.
Reforming West Mercia	Emergency Response times	Median Grade 1 response time	Quarterly Performance report	In June 23, the median Grade 1 response time was 13 minutes. This is comparable to June 22.

	Median Grade 2 response time	Quarterly Performance report	In June 23, the median Grade 2 response time was 35 minutes. This is a significant improvement on the median response time in June 22 (over 1 hour).
Finance	Financial Outturn is within the agreed Budget.	Q1 Money Matters	<p>The approved budget for 2023/24 as presented in the budget report January 2023 is £277.068m, a change in the Collection Fund surplus notified in March and further funding from reserves has resulted in a revised budget of £277.016m.</p> <p>Net operational expenditure to the end of June 2023 was £78.954m against the profiled budget of £80.328m, giving a £1.373m underspend year to date.</p> <p>Including an expected pay settlement across the board of 7% along with allocation of the additional funding announced from the treasury the projected</p>

			<p>overspend for the financial year is £2.379m.</p> <p>The report highlights the high level of estimation associated with this projection given the current level of underspend. There was no recommendation to take further action at this stage to reduce spend, with further monitoring through Quarter 2 of the financial year to establish spend expectations with more certainty.</p>
	Savings plan is delivered (as part of achieving financial outturn)	Q1 Money Matters	<p>The savings target of £12.092m is profiled to have achieved £6.682m at the end of Q1. Actual savings to date are £5.528m with the £1.154m shortfall predominantly in Digital Services and Change due to the Digital Services Transformation programme.</p> <p>Despite the expected profile not being achieved, 33% of savings are in place in the first quarter and a further 47% are on track for delivery</p>

			<p>in the year. Of the 7% identified as unachievable 4% have been replaced by other savings and additional savings are also being sought to replace the remaining balance of unachievable ones.</p> <p>The loan interest saving has been overachieved by a forecast £0.222m, which contributes toward a number of those expected to be unachievable.</p>
		Unqualified annual VFM conclusion is received from the External Auditors	This is delivered with the audit of statement of accounts which is expected to be delivered in January 24.
Environment	Reducing the carbon footprint associated with policing.		To be included in Quarterly Report when a meaningful indicator has been developed by the Force.

Assurance and Accountability

8. The quarterly performance Assurance and Accountability (A&A) meeting took place on 31 August 2023. The agenda included a focus on performance in relation to:
- Public Confidence (budget metric, Safer West Mercia Plan metric)
 - Non- emergency contact (budget metric, Safer West Mercia Plan metric)
 - Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (VCOP) Compliance (Safer West Mercia Plan metric)
 - Road safety- Killed and Seriously Injured (Safer West Mercia Plan metric)
 - Any other performance areas as determined by the Chief Constable.
9. The Chief Constable will also provide an update on the national policing priorities as set out in the Government's Beating Crime Plan, and progress against key HMICFRS areas for improvement (AFIs) and recommendations.
10. More detail in relation to the A&A process can be found in the PCC's Performance Report.

Risk Management Implications

None.

Financial Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None

Equality Implications

None.

Supporting Information

None

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

Worcestershire County Council 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Specific Contact Points for this report

Gareth Boulton, Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Executive



WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

ESTATES STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT

Recommendation

1. Members of the Panel are invited to consider the report.

Background

2. The Police and Crime Commissioner's Estates Strategy was developed in 2022 in consultation with West Mercia Police, the public and other partners. The document sets out aspirations for the police estate across the medium term and principles as to how these will be achieved.
3. The Estates Strategy is designed to support delivery of the Commissioner's Safer West Mercia Plan in every context. This includes:
 - Community reassurance and confidence in respect of police visibility and accessibility
 - Ensuring police buildings are fit for purpose in respect of their required functions. For example, they are safe and welcoming for victims and witnesses, whilst (where appropriate) being safe and secure in respect of people detained in police custody.
 - Support and enable reform within policing and drive greater effectiveness and efficiency for the public
 - Support health and wellbeing for police officers, staff and volunteers
4. West Mercia's police estate consists of approximately 100 buildings and sites. The estate has suffered from a lack of strategic management and sufficient investment for many years. As a result, there has been (and continues to be) a significant amount of work to do in making the estate operate effectively and efficiently in support of the police service while delivering best value for the public purse. Significant additional investment has been made in recent years to look to address these issues, as well as much more active management of the estate. This has led to notable recent improvements in estates performance, whilst acknowledging more work is required.

Governance

5. West Mercia's Estates service is now fully embedded as part of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). It serves West Mercia Police as well as Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS).
6. The service is under the day-to-day control of the OPCC Chief Executive and is formally governed by a new Estates Governance Board to ensure appropriate

rigour, transparency and co-ordination. This meeting is chaired by the Deputy PCC, and typically attended by West Mercia Police Chief Officers, OPCC statutory officers and HWFRS senior leaders.

7. Within West Mercia Police the Estates Forum meeting is the primary vehicle for escalation and discussion of Force specific estates matters, feeding into the OPCC and the main Estates Governance Board as appropriate. This ensures the operational requirements of the police force can be established and agreed and that work on the estate is fit for purpose.

Major Capital Projects

8. Major capital projects remain ongoing within West Mercia's estate in 2023/24, representing significant investment in the estate and key public services. These are work towards a new firearms training facility and the new police and fire station in Redditch.
9. The PCC has supported a £16.74m investment in a new, fit-for-purpose firearms training unit (FTU) for West Mercia Police to ensure local communities can continue to receive the right response to incidents when highly specialised police firearms units are required. Current facilities are no longer compliant with national standards and all options were considered prior to PCC sign-off.
10. The project is continuing at pace in 2023/24. More than £1m has been invested in progressing the project thus far, with contractors appointed for the latest stage in the process. It is currently planned that the FTU can be submitted for planning approval before the end of the calendar year.
11. Work on the new police and fire station at Redditch continues at pace.
12. Having overcome a number of challenges with the new site the build is now well underway and on track to be completed on time and on budget.
13. The completed project will represent a total investment of circa £20m and will ensure a fit-for-purpose operational base for emergency services at the heart of the local community for many decades, whilst also offering improved sustainability through environmental and economic efficiency.
14. West Mercia Police remains on track to vacate the existing Redditch police station on time. It will be necessary to temporarily relocate local officers and staff until such time that the new police station is ready to occupy. A temporary location in the town centre has been identified that is fit for purpose. It is currently being redeveloped to accommodate the Force in the coming weeks.

Planned Projects 2023/24

15. Almost 100 projects are budgeted and scheduled within the planned programme across the police estate in 2023/24. This is a significant uplift on activity in previous years, reflecting the additional investment being made to ensure the estate is fit for purpose and supports key services.

16. These projects range from minor window replacements to major internal refurbishments and have a relatively even and proportionate spread across the whole force area. All projects support elements of the Estates Strategy, including:
- Ensuring compliance with laws and regulations
 - Ensuring security
 - Maintaining an estate that is fit for purpose
 - Delivering best value for money
 - Improving sustainability
 - Ensuring the estate is more flexible and connected
 - Maximising the potential of the police estate
17. There is a significant element of work within the planned programme at the Hindlip police headquarters. Much of this work is necessary modernisation to support the Force in having more flexible workspaces, embracing new ways of working and enabling functions to work in close proximity where it is beneficial.
18. The content of the draft South Worcestershire Development Plan represents a significant risk in respect of the Hindlip Masterplan, delivery of the Estates Strategy, and long-term viability of Hindlip as a police headquarters. The draft plan contains a proposal to remove Hindlip Park’s status as a “major developed site”, within the greenbelt. If approved, this measure would call into question not just the viability of the site, but also the nationally significant emergency services which operate from it. The PCC remains actively engaged in the process and attempts to retain this status are ongoing.
19. In the financial year 2022/23 the estates team commissioned a full building fabric condition survey of the estate to determine the current condition and compliance of the sites and buildings. This data means that a more informed approach can be taken to planning and decision making. It has helped determine the specific work categories and priorities for the 2023/24 planned infrastructure and improvement programmes. This will be further developed to prepare a 5-year, long term planned programme. Further similar surveys will be commissioned shortly in respect of heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.

Finance

20. The PCC has continued to prioritise significant resource towards the estate and the estates service, particularly since the Estates service returned to the OPCC, recognising the need for investment and improvement in this area. This investment is set out in the table below:

	22/23 (£)	23/24 (£)
Total Estates Budget	9,800,880	12,958,859
Planned Programme Budget - Revenue	829,585	1,062,921
Capital Budget		
- Masterplan	7,496,000	8,940,000

- Planned Programme Capital	800,000	1,596,000
- Local Policing Estates Transformation	418,000	1,491,000

21. Wider economic factors continue to have a significant impact on the Estates function, including inflation in the construction sector, utility costs and interest rates. These environmental factors create a challenging position whereby the need for effective and efficient use of public resource in line with the Estates Strategy is even greater. This scenario continues to drive both the OPCC and West Mercia Police to come up with alternative solutions, maximise efficiency and deliver even better outcomes.

Efficiency and Commercial Advantage

22. Commercial advantage is a central premise of the Estates Strategy, focused on delivering the best possible value for money and enabling as much investment as possible into key services and infrastructure. Work in this regard over the last year has focused on maximising additional income and minimising costs wherever possible.

23. Numerous “invest to save”, initiatives have been supported in the last year, with the aim of realising significant longer term revenue savings via short term investments. These include the rollout of low energy LED lights at divisional headquarters. It is anticipated the cost of the investment will be repaid in full within two years (particularly given high energy costs) and will then support ongoing savings on an annual basis and support a reduction in West Mercia’s energy footprint.

24. In conjunction with the electrification of West Mercia’s vehicle fleet, investments have also been made in charging infrastructure. Again, with the intention of recouping costs through reduced reliance on conventional petrol / diesel vehicles and reducing carbon emissions. A pilot is now underway in Worcester with a further review of the full charging infrastructure taking place.

25. A review and closer management of contracts is supporting significant efficiencies within the service. For example, more than £100,000 has been removed from West Mercia’s waste management contract through an improved contract and procurement process this year. In total, efficiencies totalling more than £330,000 are projected for delivery through improved management of estate contracts per year.

26. West Mercia’s Estates team is engaged at high levels of central government and the House of Lords on behalf of emergency service partners seeking changes to legislation around section 106 contributions from housing developers. The Estates service is working with partners to seek to improve access to income streams for policing and other blue light partners, with government receptive to the approach thus far.

27. A programme of rationalisation has also been developed and is being implemented to drive efficiency through revenue generation and reduced annual costs. This rationalisation is focused primarily on non-operational buildings and pieces of land which sit within West Mercia's estate portfolio, but which either carry inherent significant costs and risk, or have little to no strategic value. It is believed these disused or unnecessary parts of the police estate can achieve significant capital receipts in the coming years.
28. This rationalisation programme is supported by (and operates in conjunction with) work to modernise the police estate, recognising the shift to new ways of working and creating more flexible workspaces with the police estate.

Co-Location

29. Co-location with local partners is intended to meet key elements of the Estates Strategy. These include ensuring that the police service remains visible and accessible to communities and enabling the best possible service, whilst also seeking to be efficient and deliver best value to the public.
30. The PCC has been clear that any proposal to sell operational police stations must have fit-for-purpose alternatives within the same communities and that principle remains. For example, the recent sale of Tenbury Wells has seen West Mercia Police co-locate with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) nearby.
31. Collaboration with HWFRS is extensive, with shared facilities also in Bromsgrove, Redditch, Leominster, Peterchurch, Wyre Forest Hub and a shared headquarters at Hindlip Park, all in the interests of improved public services and efficiency.
32. Collaboration around co-location with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is less developed. Discussions between the OPCC and SFRS have commenced in recent months with teams now engaged positively to look at possibilities and opportunities.
33. The PCC is also engaged with other partners around co-location. For example, at Pontesbury, where the local Safer Neighbourhood Team now operates out of the Pavilion community hub. Other similar arrangements with community partners exist in a number of places such as Bridgnorth, Wem, and Whitchurch. The PCC is also at an early stage of exploring the viability of co-location in Newport.

Compliance and Regulations

34. A full review of West Mercia's health and safety policies related to the police estate has recently been undertaken and finalised.
35. New pro-active inspection and testing regimes have been designed and implemented to ensure health and safety standards as well as compliance with statutory requirements.
36. Compliance is reported at every Estates Governance Board, alongside other performance metrics. Currently the Estates Service achieves a "first time fix", in

85% of reactive work.

37. This again represents real progress for an estate where compliance and testing regimes had been inconsistent in years gone by.

Fit for Purpose

38. A central tenet of the Estates Strategy is that West Mercia's estate will be fit for purpose.
39. As previously documented, it is apparent that the estate suffered from a lack of investment and strategic management for a significant number of years. The extent of this issue continues to develop and be understood as the estate continues to be managed in a much more pro-active manner.
40. Significant additional investment has been made in the estates function and infrastructure in recent years. For example, a large amount of work and investment has been channelled into making West Mercia's infrastructure more resilient following power outages in recent years. This has involved investment in more cooling infrastructure, better alert mechanisms, better testing, and more developed co-operation between relevant functions. It does not however wholly mitigate against the fact that West Mercia has elements of its estates infrastructure which have not been fit for purpose for some time now, which will continue to present challenges and levels of risk, albeit much reduced.
41. Some significant progress has been made and that should be noted. It remains the case however that there is currently more work to do with the estate than there is resource allocated. It is clear that the modernisation of West Mercia's estate and making it fully fit for purpose will be a long-term endeavour, as was known at the time the Estates Strategy was developed.
42. For example, it is apparent that a multi-million-pound investment would be required in the divisional headquarters at Shrewsbury to make the building fit for purpose. Major investment would also be required at Telford's Malinsgate divisional headquarters in the medium term. Options around the northern estate are currently being appraised between the OPCC and West Mercia Police, taking into consideration operational requirements, balanced with affordability and best value for the public.
43. These and other similar considerations will need to be reviewed in the continued delivery of the Estates Strategy, to ensure the strategy and its objectives can be delivered in a timely, effective and efficient manner whilst balancing the delivery of other priorities within the Safer West Mercia Plan.

Risk Management Implications

None.

Financial Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None.

Equality Implications

None.

Supporting Information

None

Contact Points for the Report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website](#)

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WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION REPORT (DEI)

Introduction

1. Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) is a central focus of the PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan, with a number of commitments included under the following priorities: 'Putting victims and survivors first' and 'Reassuring West Mercia's Communities'.
2. The Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) has a key role in advancing Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DE&I) across West Mercia. Alongside a number of statutory obligations, the PCC's unique position in respect of the public and his convening powers, lend themselves to champion and drive cultural change across the organisation.
3. The PCC has set out his commitment to promoting DEI in his Safer West Mercia Plan 2021-2025. This includes a specific commitment to publish equality objectives in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

Equality Act Requirements

4. The PCC has a number of statutory duties in respect of DEI. One such duty is the requirement to prepare and publish equality objectives that should be achieved to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
5. Figure 1 sets out the PCC's equality objectives for 2021-2025. The objectives consider national and local DEI strategies, as well as feedback from those working within the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC).
6. Mechanisms are in place to measure progress against the equality objectives, and this is monitored by the PCC on a regular basis. This document will be reviewed and refreshed at least every 4 years in line with legislation.

7. The PCC continuously scrutinises force performance aligned to his equality objectives, as well as the force's own equality objectives as set out in their local DEI strategy.

Figure 1 - OPCC Equality Objectives

Our Communities

We will:

- Ensure that every victim has access to services they need to help them cope and recover, regardless of geography, personal characteristics or circumstance
- Ensure representation of all demographics and communities across West Mercia in plans for victim services, acknowledging their needs and challenges
- Support the PCC to be visible and accessible to all communities in West Mercia
- Ensure all individuals and communities who contact us are dealt with fairly, equally and respectfully
- Develop new platforms and outlets to engage with under-represented voices from our communities and ensure their needs and concerns are understood and acted upon
- Develop and implement a new engagement strategy to foster good relationships across diverse communities, and ensure the PCC represents everyone in West Mercia.

Our Organisation

We Will:

- Attract and retain staff and volunteers that reflect our diverse communities
- Ensure equality of opportunity for all staff and volunteers throughout every stage of employment; from recruitment, retention and promotion, to exit from the service
- Recognise the needs of diverse groups within our workforce and ensure appropriate support is available for all staff and volunteers
- Provide training to increase the knowledge and confidence of all staff on issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Cultivate an inclusive culture where all individuals are treated with fairness, dignity and respect
- Recognise, challenge and effectively address any inappropriate behaviour, language or dignity at work issues that may arise.
- Maximise the transparency of our organisation to ensure our activities and decisions can be scrutinised and feedback used to improve the service provided to the public.

Our Partners

We Will:

- Work with local, regional and national partners to champion diversity, equality and inclusion in policing and community safety.
- Engage with partners and stakeholders to understand, and where possible, address disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System and improve the service to the public.
- Support the PCC to hold the Chief Constable of West Mercia Police to account for the exercise of all duties relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Require all service providers, organisations or individuals who enter into a contract, or receive funding from the PCC to comply with the Equality Act and any further terms and conditions related to equality and diversity as set by the PCC.

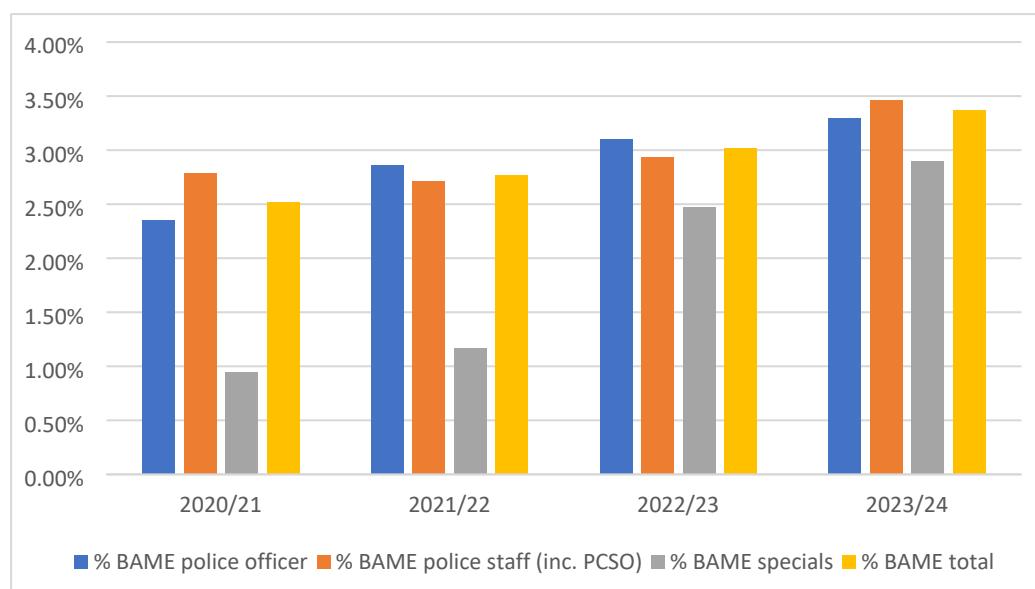
Force Governance

8. The PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan sets out policing priorities and provides strategic direction to inform West Mercia Police's local Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2021 - 2025. The four-year strategy outlines three key elements for the force (communities, organisation and partner), aligned to the national strategy. This provides the force with a broad framework for DEI which is driven through governance arrangements set out below.
9. The PCC has a responsibility to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the DEI commitments within the Safer West Mercia Plan, as well as delivery of local and national DEI strategies.
10. The Chief Constable shares the PCC's commitment to advancing DEI in West Mercia. Following the Chief's appointment in September 2021, the Chief Constable established 'Inclusive' as the fifth organisational value reflecting early observations of the organisation and her personal commitment to this core value.
11. Following this revision to the organisational values, the Chief Constable commissioned a review of the force's DEI governance arrangements to ensure there was clear direction and scrutiny. This review resulted in the establishment of a six-monthly Inclusion Strategy Board (ISB), chaired by the Chief Constable and attended by Chief Officers and senior managers. The ISB sets the strategic priorities in relation to internal/organisational DEI issues and external/ operational DEI issues. The PCC is represented at the ISB by the DEI lead within his policy team.
12. Two Inclusion Delivery Boards sit below the ISB and are tasked with developing and overseeing the tactical plans necessary to deliver against the identified DEI priorities. The external, operationally focused group is chaired by the ACC for Local Policing and the internal, organisational group is chaired by the Director of Business Services. These quarterly tactical delivery boards capture progress and report to the ISB.

Black and minority ethnic (BAME) representation data

13. A key commitment in the Safer West Mercia Plan is to ensure that the force continues to drive progress in workforce representation; ensuring that officers, staff and volunteers reflect the demographics of the communities they serve, and that measurable progress are being made to deliver the force’s Equality Objectives 2021-2025.
14. An update on workforce data for West Mercia Police (illustrated below) was requested by the Panel, with a focus on black and minority ethnic (BAME) representation within the force.
15. The force aims to have a workforce that represents the communities served, as set out in the Census. The Census data for 2011 recorded the local population in West Mercia from a minority ethnic background was 3.8%. The Census data was refreshed in 2021 (published 28 June 2022). The latest Census data shows the proportion of the general population from a minority ethnic background in the West Mercia Policing area is now 5.8%. West Mercia Police are reviewing their aspirations / targets in relation to representation in light of this newly released data as previously the force was working towards a target of at least 3.8% BAME officers / staff.
16. West Mercia Police’s workforce from 2020 – 2023 is as follows, which shows a distinct increase year on year in the number of officers and staff from BAME backgrounds.

Percentage of officers and staff from a BAME background



The table below shows what is visually represented in the chart above.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
% BAME police officer	2.35%	2.86%	3.10%	3.30%
% BAME police staff (inc. PCSO)	2.79%	2.71%	2.94%	3.46%
% BAME specials	0.95%	1.17%	2.47%	2.90%
% BAME total	2.52%	2.77%	3.02%	3.37%

N.B Data as of April each financial year. Please see Appendix 1 for raw data volumes.

17. Whilst this progress is encouraging, the proportion of officers from a black or ethnic minority background is below the force's aspirations to reflect the communities in West Mercia as set out in the Census data (2011 and 2021). The 2021 Census data confirms an even more diverse West Mercia community, highlighting that there is still work to be done to establish a more representative police force.
18. Organisationally, significant work is taking place within the force's Positive Action team to improve attraction and recruitment across all strands of diversity. The 'Step' programme aims to provide support to potential new recruits and existing officers and staff who identify with a protected characteristic, e.g., female, BAME, dyslexic, LGBTQ+ etc. The programme has 3 phases: Step In, Step Up, and Step Across. Each of these phases are underpinned by the principles of positive action, and examples of activity under each element of the programme is set out below.

Step In

19. Significant work has been undertaken to identify diverse communities across the force area, to inform targeted attraction and recruitment activity. Candidates in the recruitment pipeline who identify as having a protected characteristic have access to a closed Facebook group which includes a vast amount of information regarding the assessment centre process, online and in person recruitment events/ discovery sessions.
20. The positive action team maintains contact with candidates in the pipeline, by way of frequent phone calls to ensure candidates remained engaged in what can be a lengthy recruitment process.
21. The positive action team also run discovery sessions to provide in depth information on various aspects of the application process. A number of these discovery sessions have been supported by leads from various staff networks, which has proved incredibly successful.

Step Up

22. The positive action team have delivered an internal promotion conference 'You can't be what you can't see'. The event was aimed at positive action candidates (officers and staff) who are most underrepresented in the force rank structure. The conference has led to a considerable increase in applicants for the upcoming Sergeants' process. The conference is supplemented by more frequent information sessions to provide information to prospective candidates regarding the promotion process.

Step Across

23. A series of blogs using real officer / staff experiences are being developed to encourage applicants from underrepresented groups to apply for specialist roles.
24. This work is supported local and nationally by the Police Race Action Plan, which includes a range of actions that focus on developing officers' and staff members' understanding of black history and they produced a bespoke black history product which provides a mandatory role/rank specific programme for all staff to challenge assumptions and bias. There is also the opportunity for every Black officer and member of staff to be offered access to the BME network and for black officers, to complete a survey to capture their experiences within policing to assist in developing internal culture and inclusivity.
25. The #HeForShe initiative has also seen multiple learning events focused on addressing misogyny and health inequalities. More than 100 allies are now in place within the Force, a staff toolkit is being released and an impactful video has been delivered, which has been highlighted and shared as an example of good practice.

PCC Scrutiny

26. The PCC has regular Assurance and Accountability meetings (A&A) with the Chief Constable. DEI has featured at these meetings throughout the PCC's 2 terms, including multiple formal and public sessions in 2020 and 2022. The PCC is in the process of preparation for a further A&A meeting focused on DEI in October 2023 which will be a valuable opportunity to review progress made.
27. To supplement the formal meetings set out above, the PCC's A&A programme includes an ad-hoc, virtual element. The virtual process is run via email with the Chief Constable providing a written response to the issues raised. This channel has also been utilised to raise issues in regard to DEI, with a particular focus on utilising local and national uplifts to improve representation between 2020 - 2022.
28. The last formal DEI A&A session was in October 2022. The meeting focused on key DEI related performance areas including representation. The PCC sought reassurance from the Chief Constable on the following areas;
 - Transparency and scrutiny of the force's resources and governance arrangement to deliver against local and national DEI strategy, including use of independent scrutiny.
 - Development of the workforce, to ensure that there was improved representation across all protected characteristics.
 - Utilisation of local and national officer uplifts to support DEI and consultation with underrepresented groups.
29. This work concluded that progress and plans had been implemented, understanding had improved and that a governance framework had been established with plans for further activity scheduled.

30. The next Thematic A&A will focus on public-facing, operational DEI activity with a focus on a number of areas including police use of powers such as Stop & Search, use of force including arrest rates to understand any disproportionality or inequalities.

31. The A&A will also explore the force's approach to engaging with seldom heard communities, with a particular focus on black heritage communities. The PCC has requested further information on the force's activity with communities and groups who may be vulnerable to particular types of targeted crime or that have a negative view of policing.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Black and minority ethnic representation data

Risk Management Implications

None.

Financial Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None

Equality Implications

The above report supports the PCC in complying with the objectives of the Equality Act.

Contact Points for the Report

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For the Police and Crime Commissioner: Gareth Boulton, Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Executive

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Background Papers

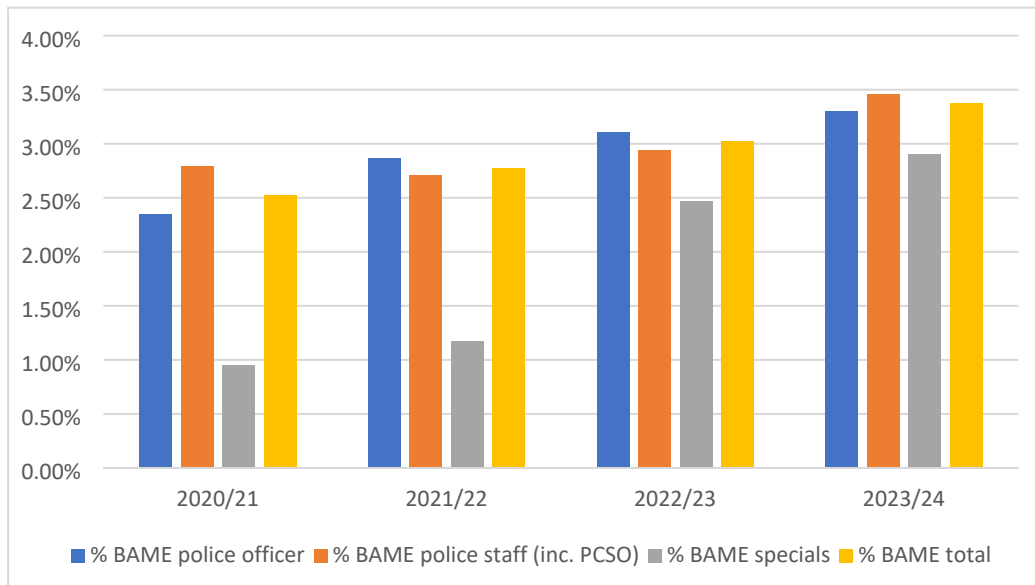
In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

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Appendix - Black and Ethnic Minority representation data

Black and ethnic minority data



	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
% BAME police officer	2.35%	2.86%	3.10%	3.30%
% BAME police staff (inc. PCSO)	2.79%	2.71%	2.94%	3.46%
% BAME specials	0.95%	1.17%	2.47%	2.90%
% BAME total	2.52%	2.77%	3.02%	3.37%

N.B Data as at April each financial year

April 2023

	Police Officer	Police Officer Total	Police Staff		Police Staff Total	Special	Special Total	Grand Total
Ethnic Group	Police Officer		PCSO	Police Staff		Special		
BAME	82	82	6	66	72	2	2	156
Not Stated	30	30	3	79	82	1	1	113
White	2372	2372	185	1742	1927	66	66	4365
Grand Total	2484	2484	194	1887	2081	69	69	4634

April 2022

	Police Officer	Police Officer Total	Police Staff		Police Staff Total	Special	Special Total	Grand Total
Ethnic Group	Police Officer		PCSO	Police Staff		Special		
BAME	73	73	4	58	62	2	2	137
Not Stated	24	24	4	90	94	2	2	120
White	2257	2257	201	1751	1952	77	77	4286
Grand Total	2354	2354	209	1899	2108	81	81	4543

April 2021

	Police Officer	Police Officer Total	Police Staff		Police Staff Total	Special	Special Total	Grand Total
Ethnic Group	Police Officer		PCSO	Police Staff		Special		
BAME	66	66	6	49	55	2	2	123
Not Stated	21	21	3	89	92	5	5	118
White	2200	2200	202	1681	1883	110	110	4193
Grand Total	2287	2287	211	1819	2030	117	117	4434

April 2020

	Police Officer	Police Officer Total	Police Staff		Police Staff Total	Special	Special Total	Grand Total
Ethnic Group	Police Officer		PCSO	Police Staff		Special		
BAME	52	52	6	51	57	1	1	110
Not Stated	15	15	3	85	88	5	5	108
White	2147	2147	219	1679	1898	99	99	4144
Grand Total	2214	2214	228	1815	2043	105	105	4362

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

WORK PROGRAMME

Summary

1. From time to time the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (PCP) will review its work programme and consider which issues should be investigated as a priority.

Background

2. Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Panel is responsible for scrutinising the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) exercise of their statutory functions. This includes:
 - (a) The power of veto, by a two-thirds majority of the total panel membership, over the level of the PCC's proposed precept;
 - (b) The power to review the Police and Crime Plan and make recommendations to the PCC who must have regard to them;
 - (c) The power to review the PCC's annual report and make recommendations at a public meeting, which the PCC must attend;
 - (d) The power to require the PCC to attend the Panel to answer questions.
3. Some of these functions are carried out at a specific time of year – for example the precept must be considered and a view given to the PCC by 8 February each year.
4. As a Scrutiny body the Panel reviews decisions made by the PCC, performance and issues of concern or interest. It is not possible to carry out all these functions in detail and it the Panel needs to plan its workload and agree its priorities.
5. The enclosed work programme takes into account 'routine' items, items which are required to be considered by the Panel at particular points in the year and topics for which the Panel has asked the PCC to provide a report.

Dates of Future Meetings

6. Dates and details of future meetings are available on the County Council website. The next planned Panel meeting is on 17 November 2023.

[Browse meetings - West Mercia Police and Crime Panel - Worcestershire County Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/Meetings/Agenda/2023/09/19/West-Mercia-Police-and-Crime-Panel)

Purpose of the Meeting

7. The Panel is asked to consider the 2023/24 Work Programme and agree whether it would wish to make any amendments. The Panel will wish to retain the flexibility to take into account any urgent issues which may arise.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: West Mercia Police and Crime Panel Work Programme

Specific Contact Points for this Report

Samantha Morris, Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website](#)

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel - Work Programme 2023/24

Meeting Date	Area of Scrutiny	Date of Last Report	Notes/Follow-up Action
19 September 2023	Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report	27 July 2023	
	Quarterly budget monitoring (and key performance indicators)	27 July 2023	
	Update on the Implementation of the Estates Strategy	7 September 2022	
	Police Force diversity		Requested at 27 July 2023 meeting
	Work Programme	27 July 2023	
17 November 2023	Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report	19 September 2023	
	Quarterly budget monitoring (and key performance indicators)	19 September 2023	
	Update on the Crime Disorder Partnerships		Discussed at 23 November 2022
	Specification for the refresh of the road safety needs assessment		Discussed at 23 November 2022
	Annual Report on Complaints	7 September 2022 15 September 2021	
	Work Programme	19 September 2023	
February 2024	PCC's Proposed Precept (and Medium Term Financial Plan) including budget briefing/Task Group arrangements	2 November 2023	

	Update on Information Technology - outcome of investment		Agreed at 27 July 2023 meeting
	Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report	2 November 2023	
	Work Programme		
June/July 2024	Draft Annual Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia		
	Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report		
	Quarterly budget monitoring (and key performance indicators)		Quarterly
	Work Programme		
Potential items			
TBC	Update on the progress of Combating Drug Partnerships (CDPs)	23 November 2022	Update twice yearly
TBC	ICT Improvement Programme		
TBC	Update on the Criminal Justice System		
TBC	Update on the Prevention Strategy	7 September 2022	
TBC	Update on the progress Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of West Mercia Police	15 June 2022	
TBC	Update on the progress of Joint HMICFRS & Her	15 June 2022	

	Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) Inspection Report: An unannounced inspection visit to police custody suites in West Mercia Police.		
TBC	Update on the progress made against His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) - A report into the effectiveness of vetting and counter-corruption arrangements in West Mercia Police (published 17 November)		

Statutory items			
	PCC's Proposed Precept (and Medium Term Financial Plan) including budget briefing/Task Group arrangements	February/July/December	
	Draft Police and Crime Plan (or variation to it)		
	Annual Report of the PCC	Annually	
	Review the PCC's proposed appointment of a Chief Constable, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and/or the Deputy PCC	As needed	
Regular items	Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report	Every meeting	
	Quarterly budget monitoring (including key performance indicators)	Every meeting	
	Work Programme	Every meeting	
	Annual Report on Complaints	Annually	

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