

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 13 JULY 2021

POLICE & CRIME PLAN ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (JANUARY – JUNE 2021)

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 (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.
3. Although the pandemic continues to impact on the delivery of the PCC function, the Commissioner and his staff have sought to minimise this impact as much as possible, ensuring the PCC is able to carry out his key functions and for the PCC and his staff to establish a business as usual approach where possible. The PCC's office is open with a reduced capacity to ensure social distancing is maintained. The PCC and his staff continue to utilise online meeting platforms to engage with the public, stakeholders and partners, although wherever possible engagements are held in person.

Delivery Plan and Assurance

4. A Delivery Plan is used to support monitoring and assurance of progress against individual elements within the Plan is updated on a quarterly basis. The Delivery Plan is subject to monthly scrutiny at the PCC's governance meeting where activity supporting the Plan is subject to closer scrutiny. An extract of the Delivery Plan is included at Appendix 1. This covers the latest quarter, March to June 2021.
5. The delivery plan update is in line with the activity set out in the current Safer West Mercia Plan. A new delivery plan will be introduced in tandem with the new Police and Crime Plan.
6. Examples of recent activity in support of the Safer West Mercia Plan's four key objectives, are set out in the following sections. This includes an update on the Alliance withdrawal in the 'Reform' section.

Putting victims and survivors first

Domestic abuse

7. The West Mercia wide Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) contract is coming to an end on the 31st March 2022. The PCC's commissioning team is in the

processes of jointly commissioning the IDVA contract for 3 years + 1, +1 after review with Worcestershire County Council. As part of the same tender exercise the PCC will be looking to commission the Drive project for Worcestershire and Herefordshire for the same timescales.

8. The evidence of the DRIVE interventions success in Worcestershire has been significant and signs of a positive impact in Herefordshire are emerging. Recognising that neither Telford nor Shropshire have the DRIVE programme yet, the commissioning team will be working with partners within each local authority to explore the provision of perpetrator programmes as well as DRIVE within Shropshire and Telford.

9. The PCC has been successful in securing additional funding from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) for two years (2021-23) for an additional 7 IDVA's and an additional 15 Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVA's). These roles include Young Person's IDVA/ISVA's (YPIDVA, new to West Mercia), Ethnic Minorities ISVA/IDVA, Lesbian, Gay Transgender Union (LGBTQ) ISVA/IDVA.

10. The PCC is also funding West Mercia Women's' Aid (WMWA) to deliver a children and young person's service for 5-12 year olds who are affected by domestic abuse. With the new YPIDVA roles this allows for more targeted support for children aged 5 – 18. These roles are currently being recruited to and will hopefully be in post by the summer.

Perpetrator fund

11. The Home Office have announced a Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Fund for 2021/22 and the PCC will be submitting a bid for the following:

- Male and Masculinities Perpetrator Programme for low/medium risk across Worcestershire and Herefordshire for 18 months.
- Richmond Fellowship Group Work Perpetrator Programme for Shropshire for 18 months
- Extension to Richmond Fellowship Group Work Perpetrator Programme in Telford for a further 12 months in line with the current contract with Telford Council
- Independent Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Needs Assessment including looking at the provision for children and young people perpetrator violence towards their parents/carers and within peer relationships

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

12. The PCC has commissioned West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (WMRSASC) to deliver the new CSE service contract across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. Telford was consulted about inclusion in the contract however due to the provision of the Child Abuse Trafficking and Exploitation Team (CATE) Team they felt they had sufficient provision covering Telford. The contract started on 1st April 2021 and is for an initial period of 3 years. The service works with those aged 8-18 (up to aged 24 for those with additional needs) and provides an early intervention and prevention programme across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. This includes tailored and needs-led responses and support to children and young people who have been a victim of, or who are at risk of, CSE.

Sexual violence and abuse

13. The PCC has taken part in the re-commissioning of the joint regional provision of Sexual Assault Referral Centre for CYP across West Mercia. The commissioning exercise

was hosted by NHS England/Improvement, with match funding being provided from the 4 regional PCC areas. The announcement of the preferred provider for the service will be sometime in July 2021, with the contract starting in February 2022.

14. The PCC is in the process of securing £50,000 of funding from NHS England/Improvement to create a Sexual Violence Officer, a strategic role which will focus on a number of areas within the sexual violence field, with overall aim of improving outcomes for victims of sexual assault and abuse.

Critical support fund

15. The MoJ recently announced a further £2.8m funding round for services which support victims of sexual violence and abuse. The PCC has been working with local service providers to submit a final bid to the fund on 25th June. If successful this could secure up to a further £1.4m.

Building a more secure West Mercia

Substance misuse

16. Funding has been received regionally for substance misuse diversionary services via £3.3 million seized through the Proceeds of Crime Act. Work is now underway to implement the project across the whole of West Mercia. Offenders of any age above 13 found in simple possession of any controlled drug will be eligible for a Community Resolution provided they agree to attend a substance misuse intervention (DIVERT). This replaces the use of the following outcomes used by the police:

- Cannabis Warnings,
- Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs)
- Community Resolutions with Cannabis leaflet,
- Caution / Conditional Caution
- Charge.

Safer Communities project

17. The PCC has committed £500,000 across the next 2 years as match funding for the Safer Communities Project. The Safer Communities Project is a partnership initiative between Telford & Wrekin Borough Council and the PCC. It will seek to address the root causes of crime and/ or issues that inadvertently enable crime within targeted areas, improving life for communities within Telford & Wrekin. The project will see a total of £1.5m invested in communities within the Borough across a two year period starting from 1 April 2021. However, it is envisaged that engagement and monitoring will extend beyond the delivery programme with social regeneration and community improvements lasting well into future years.

Safer Streets funding

18. The PCC was successful in securing an additional £863,185 of funding from the second round of the Home Office Safer Streets fund, designed to reduce crime and improve community safety in areas of Telford & Wrekin and North Worcestershire. The areas of Woodrow in Redditch, and Sutton & Madeley in Telford & Wrekin will benefit from the funding of £431,185 and £432,000 respectively.

19. The Home Office have recently launched a third round of Safer Streets funding for PCC's, specifically designed to improve the safety of public places for all, with a particular

focus on reducing violent crimes against women. The PCC is currently working with West Mercia Police to submit up to 3 bids, each of which can be a maximum of £550,000. Closing date for these bids is 15th July.

Mental health

20. The PCC is currently in discussions with partners including NHS England/Improvement, West Mercia Police and Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) to look at the potential development of a 'Mental Health Treatment Requirement' pilot site across Telford & Wrekin as part of a wider Community Sentence Treatment Requirement offer. The PCC and partners are exploring the national Community Sentence Treatment Requirement Framework and how this could support the development of a local offer for Mental Health Treatment Requirements.

Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Funding

21. All 5 CSPs have been notified of their funding for 2021-22. They will all be top-sliced £20K to fund the Partnership Analysts and £5K to go towards Integrated Offender Management (IOM). So far 3 applications have been submitted for North Worcestershire, 4 for South Worcestershire, 1 for Shropshire and 1 for Telford.

22. The PCC has agreed to continue with funding for CCTV to all 5 CSPs until the end of October 2021 pending the outcome of an internal review of CCTV provision within West Mercia. A decision about funding beyond this date will be made later in the year.

Policing demand

23. Following the easing of national restrictions there has been a steady increase in crime recording. However, for the majority of crime types performance remains below volumes recorded during the same period in 2019 (comparison to a pre-COVID operating environment, Apr-May 2019). This is particularly true of traditional acquisitive crimes such as personal robbery, burglary, vehicle offences and shoplifting which have seen a significant reduction in recording since March 2020 which has been sustained. In contrast, the impact of COVID and subsequent easing of restrictions has led to increases across a number of key offences categories (including sexual violence, public order offences, cyber crime offences).

24. Operation (Op) Navigator sets out the force's approach to policing in the context of easing lockdown regulations and anticipated increases in demand. Each Local Police Area (LPA) and the Operation Patrol Unit (OPU) were tasked with providing a bespoke easing of lock down plan taking into account the demographics and footprint of their LPA and to address key dates in respect of the roadmap and the impending Euro 2021 football tournament. Each area was also required to consider a number of key priorities including the re-opening of the night-time economy, violence against women and girls and high visibility patrols in public spaces. The implementation of Op Navigator and the increase in demand across key crime types (including sexual offences and public order offences) were subject to further scrutiny at the PCC's holding to account meeting on performance in June.

Court backlog

25. While the Coronavirus pandemic continues to pose significant challenges for the wider criminal justice system caseloads in the Crown Court have stabilised, and over the past month there has been a slight reduction in the backlog. While this news is to be welcomed, there is still considerable concern over the fact that the backlog of cases is 54%

higher than it was pre-pandemic, which has an impact on victims, witnesses, defendants and users of the CJS. The PCC continues to the work with the Courts and partners to complete the remedial repairs to the ceiling and roof at Hereford which has closed the Hereford Crown Court and added extra pressure on the system. Plans are being drawn up to see how we can further reduce trial backlogs once social distancing measures are removed.

26. The PCC and his office continue to work actively with National, Regional and Local partners to address the challenges facing the CJS. At a National level the PCC is engaged in meetings chaired by the Secretary of State and at a regional level he is part of a strategic CJ forum. Locally, the Deputy PCC now Chairs the West Mercia Criminal Justice Board, the Victims' Board and Crime Reduction Board.

Reforming West Mercia

Alliance Update

27. Discussions are ongoing regarding the scope of any residual IT services that Warwickshire requires from West Mercia beyond the end of the current collaboration on 30th September 2021. Those IT services which are required beyond that date will be on a hosted, not shared basis, as per the recommendation of the independent report at the close of the Alliance. Warwickshire are on target to cease using the Forensics and Transactional Services hosted by West Mercia by end of September 2021 as planned. This will enable those functions to focus entirely on serving the public of West Mercia.

National Police Uplift Programme

28. The PCC's commitment to increase officer numbers along with the national uplift programme resulted in an additional 93 officers across West Mercia in 2020/21. This means that the force has successfully achieved the national target for year one and based on projections, the force remains on track to either meet or exceed year two targets. Latest data also shows that the widening of routes into policing is continuing to have a positive impact on the diversity of the force. Recruitment in the last rolling 12 months (to May 2021) shows a female joiner rate 43.3% vs 33.8% 3 yr average and a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) joiner rate 7.3% vs. 2.1% 3 yr average.

Estates Services

29. The establishment of an in-sourced Property Management Service to the PCC was successfully completed on 1st April 2021. This is a streamlined function that provides an efficient, commercially viable, fit for purpose and flexible police estate in line with the Safer West Mercia Plan. Core functions of the service include the delivery of Estate Management, Facilities Management and Project Management services, utilising service providers, contractors as well as providers from relevant outsourced property related frameworks.

30. The Estates Team aim to provide the right accommodation and facilities in the right places and locations that responds to the increase and changing demands of modern policing, whilst providing accessible services which continue to connect police to our communities.

Financial management

31. The PCC approved the 2021/22 budget on the 15th February 2021. The Treasurer and her staff are working with the Force CFO on ensuring that regular monitoring of the budget is taking place, and to implement a process for scrutiny of budgets at Governance Board. The Force has implemented a process to review all budgets and prioritising spend for the

2022/23 budget. The PCC is also running a budget review process to ensure that expenditure is aligned to the new Police and Crime Plan and the priorities of the PCC.

32. The Estates Service was brought in house from the 1st April 2021. Work has been focused on embedding the processes required to ensure that the service is fully supported from the finance team and that the service can control expenditure. A review of the capital programme and rationalisation of the West Mercia Estate will be ongoing through the year to ensure that the estate held is fit for purpose.

33. The draft 2020/21 Statement of Accounts have been completed and signed by the treasurer. They have been sent to the external auditors with accompanying working papers so that the audit work can be started. The expectation is that the auditors will not be able to complete the work by the deadline for issuing the opinion by the 30th September 2021. Further information will be published on the website in relation to the timescale for the audit if it fails to be completed by this deadline.

Reassuring West Mercia's communities

West Mercia Local Policing Community Charter

34. The force has launched its Local Policing Community Charter covering six key areas for improved service delivery: visibility & accessibility, responding to communities, prevention, vulnerability, relationships and partnerships. The Charter outlines how the force will ensure it provides a visible policing presence and how, using local engagement, social media and new digital channels, it will create further opportunities for dialogue so the public can raise concerns, provide feedback, be involved and help shape policing in their area. The charter also sets out how the force will work with its partners and the public, to listen, understand and respond to community issues. It will focus on persistent problems and concerns to find long-term and sustainable solutions; prioritising the most vulnerable victims, problem locations and repeat offenders with the aim of preventing crime.

Neighbourhood Matters

35. The replacement for the force Community Messaging System (CMS), Neighbourhood Matters, has gone live. This uses the Neighbourhood Alerts platform and enables residents, businesses and community groups to keep in touch with local policing teams and to receive tailored updates on crimes, latest information on on-going incidents policing activity.

Town and Parish Council survey

36. The PCC's fourth annual Town and Parish Council Survey was launched in May, seeking local views around police visibility and accessibility, and crime and disorder. This year's survey will focus particularly on West Mercia Police's Local Policing Community Charter ensuring the force are achieving their commitment to keeping people safe and making them feel safe.

PCC's media and communications

37. As lockdown restrictions continue the PCC's communications and engagement function has maintained as much community engagement as possible. With restrictions allowing for socially distanced engagements, the PCC and DPCC have been able to visit local policing teams and community groups with the hope this will continue and increase further into the year.

38. A start of a new PCC term has allowed the team to re-focus on the type of campaigns and engagement the PCC is involved in. A revised Communications and Engagement Strategy will support this.

39. The new Safer West Mercia Plan will be supported by a consultation period that will include an online survey as well as face-to-face engagement where possible.

40. The PCC addressed the public following West Mercia Police Constable Monk being found guilty of the manslaughter of Dalian Atkinson. The PCC has since carried out other media interviews highlighting the lessons that need to be learnt, as well as the important role of strengthening relationships with communities and regaining the trust and confidence the public should have in their police force.

41. Further to the election commitment the PCC made around increasing accessibility and visibility of police officers, the PCC has supported the force launch the Local Policing Community Charter and the new community messaging service, Neighbourhood Matters. This will encourage greater communication between the force and communities.

42. Following the pre-election period, where the website was simplified, it has now reverted back to the full version and continues to be updated regularly to ensure it is compliant with the accessibility legislation.

43. The PCC continues to speak up for victims by commenting publicly on reports or findings, as well as allocating considerable amounts of funding towards prevention and support.

Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) Scheme

44. The ICV scheme resumed physical visits on the 1 June in line with government guidelines, prior to this visits were conducted virtually. There has been a number of new recruits this quarter with some now trained and conducting visits and some sat in the recruitment process awaiting vetting and interviews. This should bring the number of ICVs in the scheme back up to 50 which represents 10 per scheme.

Performance and accountability

Holding to account

45. The Commissioner holds a regular scrutiny meeting with the Chief Constable (CC) as part of his role in holding the force to account. The following areas have been addressed since the last report. Notes from thematic meetings are available to view on the PCC's website. Since the last Panel report the following formal meetings have taken place. The Meeting in April on the Dorstone illegal gathering was an additional meeting called by the PCC to better understand the policing response to this event.

Month	Type	Subject area
February	Thematic	Domestic Abuse
March	Thematic	Serious and Organised Crime (SOC)
April	Thematic	Review of the Year
April	Extraordinary	Dorstone illegal gathering
June	Performance	Performance

46. In addition to the formal meetings, the PCC has submitted a number of *virtual* holding to account challenges to the force on ABE provision, response to calls for service and most recently on stalking.

47. Key findings / outcomes from the thematic meetings include:

- **Domestic abuse (DA):**
 - DA is complex and difficult to deal with but is the source of the biggest threat to harm in the organisation.
 - West Mercia takes DA seriously, training is better, understanding is better and the investigative approach is improving.
 - To respond to societal changes the force will need to evolve its training and response, for example to better understand DA in same sex relationships or what makes a DA perpetrator
- **SOC:**
 - SOC is now business as usual with outcomes in place, things raised by HMICFRS 2 years ago are now no longer relevant.
 - SOCJAGS are now in a better place, at their origin partners needed to be persuaded to engage. They are seeking independent chairs but the force need to ensure they support them.
- **Review of the Year:**
 - The challenges faced by policing over the last 12 months (e.g. flooding, response to COVID) have provided the force with opportunities to affect public confidence outside of its confidence strategy work.
 - It was agreed that greater clarity was required regarding the products and timescales for finalising the work to develop the new performance management framework
 - Efforts had been made to encourage underrepresented groups to apply for specialist roles such as Authorised Firearms Officers. Such opportunities needed to be recognised and acted on consistently, and evaluation was required to understand whether interventions resulted in positive outcomes for the workforce.
 - The PCC highlighted the discrepancy in victim satisfaction seen across the LPAs. The DCC is sighted on the variation in satisfaction levels and it will be subject to scrutiny via Force Delivery Group.
- **Dorstone unlicensed music event (UME)**
 - The CC believes that due to a lack of experience, local officers on the ground did not spot the signs or understand the nature of the event until the site had been established; putting the force on the back foot.
 - The CC was clear that the learning from Dorstone needed to be understood to ensure the force was prepared for the future. The force will be undertaking a 2-part debrief of the incident. The first part will be a survey, and the second part will be a more focused zoom debrief to understand what happened, what went well and what could have been done better.
- **Performance**
 - The CC felt that the force's aspiration for 80% of burglary victims to be satisfied was achievable. It is clear that in the majority of cases the force is providing a good service, but now incremental gains needed to be made. Part of the challenge is around consistency of service provision, particularly in the context of new student officers. This would be addressed in part by the CPD training days.

- The CC was satisfied that the reasons for the increase in Child at Risk offences were understood and that the range of child markers were being applied correctly to identify vulnerability and safeguard children and young people (C&YP).. The chief officers were clear that despite confidence in the data, there was no room for complacency, as far too many children in communities remain at risk.
- Op Navigator set out how local policing will be implemented during the easing of lockdown regulations and how demand will be managed and mitigated wherever possible while providing community reassurance to the public. The CC believes the message and ethos of Navigator had been received and understood across the LPAs; particularly in terms of the importance of visibility.
- The CC stated it was critical to clearly set out expectations of professional behaviour and standards to new student officers by way of the Code of Ethics and the force's vision and values.

48. A Facebook Live event is being planned for the end of July which will be centred on the policing priorities in the draft Police and Crime Plan. The PCC is also close to finalising his holding to account programme for the remainder of 2021/22 which will better reflect his commitment to bring more of a focus on tackling crime and disorder and performance in the new Police and Crime Plan.

HMICFRS Inspection Reports

49. HMICFRS have continued their insight work as part of their continuous assessment process for the new PEEL inspection regime. This work focuses on specialist areas of business and to date serious & organised crime (SOC), armed policing, Management of Sexual or Violent Offenders(MOSOVO) and the Online Child Exploitation Team (OSCET) team have been subject to closer scrutiny.

50. A core element of the PEEL inspection is the Victim Service Assessment (VSA), and the inspectorate have recently completed their inspection work for this. The VSA examined 70 case files across 7 crime types (rape, other sexual offences, serious injury assaults, non-serious injury assault, burglary, DA, stalking and harassment) plus 70 random incidents to assess opening codes and a review of 60 out of court disposals. A debrief on the findings from this work has been shared with the force and the PCC.

51. HMICFRS has published a number of inspection reports since the last report to Panel. These have addressed Regional Organised Crime Units, Disproportionality in Stop and Search and Use of Force, and Public Protests. Work is ongoing to review the recommendations within these reports.

52. The force has completed and submitted a Force Management Statement (FMS) to HMICFRS for 2021. The FMS is a self-assessment document which follows a prescribed format and provides an overview of the demand the force expects to face in the foreseeable future and the assets and resources available to meet demand. The FMS is used by HMICFRS to inform their PEEL assessment programme and for ongoing performance monitoring purposes. The FMS is not a public document.

West Mercia Perception Survey

53. As part of the Commissioner's commitment to ensure both he and the force are acting on community concerns locally, and that the service provided by the force leads to increased confidence in local policing, the PCC commissioned a confidence survey which

has been running for over two years. Headline findings from the latest results, quarter four 2020/21, are set out below:

- 85% of consultees tended to agree or strongly agreed they have confidence with West Mercia Police – up 1% on last quarter
- 79% tended to agree or strongly agreed that West Mercia Police understands issues in their community – up 8% on last quarter
- 95% said they were confident they could access the police in an emergency – up 4% on last quarter
- 28% said they see an officer or PCSO at least once per week – up 2% on last quarter
- 60% say they are satisfied with the level of policing in their local area – up 6% on last quarter

Force performance reports

54. A number of internal performance products are produced by the force to enable senior officers and the PCC to maintain strategic oversight of force performance. In particular the PCC scrutinises a weekly dashboard of performance along with monthly summary reports.

55. The fourth quarter performance report for the period January to March 2021, is attached at appendix 2. The report sets out a force wide picture of performance particularly in relation to force priorities and key practises. The report focusses on gold level key performance indicators (KPI), however there are some measures at a silver level included to create a comprehensive picture across the force. The new performance framework uses a reporting hierarchy to monitor performance across the whole organisation at gold (strategic), silver (service) and (bronze) operational levels.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Extract taken from the Safer West Mercia Plan Delivery Plan

Appendix 2 – West Mercia Police Performance Report October to December 2020

Contact Points for the Report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case Worcestershire County Council's Assistant Director of 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 [here](#)