

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

23 NOVEMBER 2022

SATISFACTION AND OUTCOMES

Summary

1. The Panel is asked to consider the update provided on satisfaction and outcomes.

Background

2. Part of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) role is to be the voice of the public in policing and hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of an efficient and effective police force, as well as reducing crime.
3. People also need to be able to engage with the PCC and their police service to be confident that they are visible, accessible, understanding of local priorities and able to tackle them effectively.
4. The communities of West Mercia expect and deserve the very best from their Police Service. They want officers that are visible and accessible, protecting them and preventing harm and they want to be confident.
5. The PCC is clear that communities not only are safe, but feel safe too, and this is echoed in the priorities within the Safer West Mercia Plan. These include:
 - Make West Mercia a safer place by reducing crime and reoffending.
 - Improving responses and outcomes around domestic abuse and sexual violence.
 - Ensure all communities have a voice that is heard within policing, crime, criminal justice and community safety matters.
 - Ensuring all communities can access their police service quickly and conveniently when they need to.
6. The PCC continuously scrutinises force performance in these areas via a range of metrics, a summary of which can be seen below.

Performance

Victim Satisfaction

7. At Force level, none of the aspirational satisfaction levels have been achieved at the end of Q2 22/23. Violent crime satisfaction has seen a statistically significant reduction since April 2021 with levels currently at 59%. Satisfaction with the

Force among victims of Road Traffic Collisions sees the highest levels at 79% and has remained stable for several months.

8. The Force has recently established new governance forums which are intended to oversee and grip levels of victim satisfaction. The PCC is disappointed with the current position and will continue to monitor progress and hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of improvements.

Outcomes

9. Despite the aspiration to increase the volume and proportion of charge/summons outcome offences, levels have been declining. When compared to April 2019, current levels show a 7.9% reduction in positive outcomes taken. Current levels are below both the national average and that seen for the Most Similar Group (MSG)¹.
10. Since April 21, there has been a 24% increase in the use of Outcome 16 (Victim does not support police action; prevents further action). The proportion of cases with evidential difficulties due to a lack of victim support is significantly higher in West Mercia than across England and Wales.

Scrutiny Activity

11. The PCC has a programme of regular scrutiny meetings with the Chief Constable as part of his role in holding her to account. Victim Satisfaction and police outcomes have featured at these meetings throughout the PCC's term.
12. To supplement the formal meetings, the PCC also runs a virtual holding to account process, whereby performance and service issues that do not require a focused thematic meeting but are areas for which he wishes to retain closer oversight, are scrutinised on an ad hoc basis. The virtual process is run via email with the Chief Constable providing a written response to the issues raised.
13. Most recently, in August 2022, the PCC carried out a virtual holding to account around some key performance concerns including satisfaction and outcomes. He sought from reassurance the Chief Constable that;
 - a. New governance arrangements will provide sufficient oversight and grip of satisfaction performance issues.
 - b. Asked the Force to set out short, medium and long term deliverables that need to be implemented to improve levels of satisfaction.
 - c. The drivers behind declining outcome performance are fully understood.
14. The minutes from this meeting can be found here - [Police Performance & Holding to Account - West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/pcc-performance-and-accountability/scrutiny-activity)

¹ Most Similar Group are police force areas found to be the most similar to each other based on factors relating to crime. For West Mercia this is North Yorkshire, Wiltshire, Suffolk, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Cambridgeshire and Devon and Cornwall Police.

15. The PCC wanted to ensure that drivers behind declining outcome performance were fully understood to improve outcomes for victims regardless of where they live across the force area. The PCC also sought reassurance that new governance arrangements will provide sufficient oversight of the issues impacting victims. The Force set out that initial activity for victim satisfaction will look at improving data and processes within the Force to better understand victim feedback, governance and improve officer training. The Chief Constable responded to questions asked and activity set out will be monitored and followed up through the formal meeting process.
16. A formal meeting scheduled for the 29 November focussed on the quarterly performance report will look at a number of issues including satisfaction and outcomes as performance has not improved as expected.

Budget Investment

17. In November, the PCC held a formal holding to account meeting with the Chief Constable, to scrutinise the impact of the 2022/23 budget investment in several key areas.
18. The 2022/23 budget includes the provision to increase West Mercia's establishment by an additional 125 officers, which will take the establishment up to 2,456 police officers. This represents the highest number of officers the force has seen since 2009 and is very close to the highest level seen on record in West Mercia, ensuring greater visibility, accessibility and confidence to the public.
19. Initial internal adverts for uplift posts resulted in 64% of the uplift posts now either being filled or having an officer identified for the post. Of these, 31 (44%) already have the officer in post. The PCC sought reassurance that all uplift posts will be recruited to by the end of the financial year. The Chief set an aspiration that these posts will be filled by December.
20. The largest single additional investment within 2022/23's budget is an additional 55 officers into Investigations, an area highlighted for improvement by HMICFRS as well as public feedback. The investment in specific resource for the investigation of crime will mean more people who fall victim to crimes like domestic or sexual violence receive a high quality of service, with greater emphasis on putting victims and survivors first, and a robust response to bringing offenders to justice.
21. The investment of an additional 11.5 staff within the Road Safety Team remains ongoing and is expected to be fully in place before the end of the financial year. The primary objective of this investment will enable greater reassurance to West Mercia's communities through increased visibility and accessibility in local communities, with additional mobile enforcement capability reducing speed and changing driver behaviour.

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) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

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