

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

27 JULY 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 West Mercia 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.

Putting victims and survivors first

Domestic Abuse

5. The PCC commissions West Mercia Women's Aid to provide an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service, to support victims experiencing domestic abuse. For the 22/23 year, the service has seen a continuous increase in referrals, up to 2,238. 72% of those referred engaged with the service, and 98% of those leaving the service reported cessation or reduction in domestic abuse.
6. West Mercia Women's Aid are also commissioned to provide a service to support children and young people affected by domestic abuse. The service received 386 referrals during 22/23, with 98 during January to March. The service has supported 162 children and young people through their group programmes and 1:1 support. It has been noted that there is a growing number of children aged 4-7 years old requiring support.

Sexual Violence

7. The Independent Sexual Violence Adviser service provided by West Mercia Rape Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC) and Axis Counselling received 1622 referrals during 2022/23, with referrals growing each quarter. The service is also seeing an increase in existing clients currently being supported, which is a reflection on the long delays within the criminal justice process.
8. Both WMRSASC and AXIS reported declines in client confidence with the criminal justice process, which has fallen to below 50%. This also reflects the delays within the criminal justice process with some victims waiting over three years for cases to come to trial. The PCC has repeatedly highlighted these and other related issues within the criminal justice system and continues to work with partners, with a view to seeking improvements for victims and the wider community.
9. In 2022/23, the Branch Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) service worked with 305 children and young people, providing direct 1:1 support for those at risk of, or experiencing child sexual exploitation.

Victim Services

10. In March, the PCC negotiated a 1 year contract extension with **Victim Support** to run to 31 March 2024. **Victim Support** provide services to support any victim of crime, and for 2022/23 received a total of 1,710 referrals. 89% of victims leaving the service report feeling more able to cope following support, but victims continue to demonstrate dissatisfaction for the criminal justice system.
11. Victim Support are also commissioned to provide a restorative justice service. For 22/23, 63 people were supported for **Restorative Justice** processes. Restorative Justice outcomes shows a more holistic picture for victims, with most not just achieving a 'better informed' picture but also a more balanced rounded improvement across all outcome areas, such as their experience of '*reintegrating*' after a crime, or their overall '*experience of the CJS.*'
12. **The Victim Advice Line (VAL)** handled a total of 15,564 referrals during the year where needs were identified. Of those referred in Q4, 826 victims had their initial needs met by the VAL service, with 1,627 victims having their needs met by VAL triage and other support services. At year end, 5,894 victims felt they had achieved 1 or more positive outcome(s) with the main improvement being around feeling better informed and empowered to act.
13. The PCC commissioned Victim and Offender Needs Assessment is anticipated for completion by June and will inform the recommissioning activity for Victims Services (multi-crime support) which will begin in Autumn.
14. **The Victim Support "I am ME!" Hate Crime Project** hosted 6 awareness and training sessions with 76 participants, and 8 outreach events, reaching 436 people. The project held 3 meetings with partners, one of which brought the West Mercia Police hate crime officers together to improve and promote more joined up working, data sharing and responses to hate crime.

Prevention

15. DIVERT, the PCC commissioned pre-arrest drug referral service received a total of 741 referrals in Q4, an increase of 14.2% on Q3, of which 237 engaged in the group

programme. This rise in both referrals and engagement uptake, is likely because of learning and refresher work conducted at the beginning of the year with officers, by the provider.

16. The PCC commissioned CLIMB service received 355 referrals for 10-17 year olds at risk of criminal exploitation. They sustained support for over 631 CYP's during 2022/23 and 158 left with positive primary outcomes.
17. The PCC has approved a £200,000 annual budget to pilot expansion of CLIMB which allows any person up to the age of 17 access to support, including a parent/carer/family worker in a whole family approach initiative.

Building a more secure West Mercia

Improving Responses To Domestic Abuse

18. In February, the PCC was successful in a bid to the Home Office for £1.2 million up to 2025 for the provision of a low-medium risk domestic abuse perpetrator programme. Alongside the budget investment made by the PCC for 23/24 for DRIVE, the Home Office funding means that West Mercia will have all risk DA perpetrator programmes across West Mercia in 2023. The new service will be mobilised in the summer.
19. **Worcestershire and Herefordshire's DRIVE** programme has seen a total of 49 high risk perpetrators allocated in Q4, with 49 associated victims/survivors and 112 associated children and young people. Of note, those with closed cases report an 86% reduction in high-risk physical abuse, and 100% reduction in high-risk sexual abuse, harassment and stalking and jealous, controlling and coercive behaviours.
20. The **Men and Masculinities** domestic abuse perpetrator programme ran 4 groups in Q4 across Herefordshire and Worcestershire which included an online group. The online group was set up to meet the needs of those living in rural areas and are unable to drive or obtain public transport. Over the quarter, 35 referrals were received, taking the annual total to 182. Highlights from Q4, include 7 men completing the programme, with 2 men being allowed back into the family home. Another man was also allowed more contact time with his children because of the work completed around his behaviour, and another allowed unsupervised contact with his child following supervised contact being in place for a year.

Female Offenders – reducing reoffending

21. The PCC partnered with Willowdene; a provider of therapeutic, trauma informed holistic support in a successful bid to the Ministry of Justice Female Offenders Fund. £247,115 of funding over three years will facilitate an out of court disposal pilot targeting women specifically. The West Mercia bid was one of only four schemes funded out of twenty-seven who applied.

Road Safety

22. 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. Its anticipated completion date is Autumn 2023.
23. The PCC's budget for 2022/23 demonstrated an ongoing commitment to directly tackle speeding in communities. The investment from last year has seen recruitment of 8.5

full-time equivalent new members of the Road Safety team. A further three additional posts will be filled shortly.

Regional Collaboration

24. The Regional Policy team held a counter terrorism 'deep dive' session in collaboration with West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit (WMCTU). The session looked at the regional threat and risk picture, the management of terrorist offenders as well as the impact of the recently published Independent Review of Prevent and Manchester Arena Inquiry. The 'deep dive' helped give assurance that the CTU systems work effectively for the communities of West Mercia.
25. Quarterly regional roads policing and roads safety meetings continue to provide an opportunity to develop a strategic understanding of the regional roads landscape. These meetings, chaired by West Mercia Superintendent Steph Brighton, also allow the regional policy team to identify possible areas of future regional collaboration.
26. The PCC attended a Regional Governance Group meeting where he was able to seek further reassurance as to the efficiency and effectiveness of the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit. He also received a further quarterly briefing on the work of police and partners to tackle serious and organised crime across West Mercia and the region.
27. In partnership with the regional PCCs, a commissioning exercise has been conducted to commission a regional Pre-Arrest Diversionary Service from 1 July 2023. The regional service proposal has arisen from the publication of the government's drug strategy 'from Harm to Hope'. It is anticipated that 670 service users will be referred into the service from West Mercia.

Criminal justice

28. Following part 2 of the Home Office's PCC Review, national guidance has been published strengthening the role of the PCC as the Chair of Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB). The guidance also sets out expected membership and their roles within the board. The guidance will be implemented in West Mercia.
29. The review of the West Mercia LCJB has also determined new priorities for the Board, with a supporting delivery plan and the development of performance metrics for the next 12 months. Some of the new priorities include improving timeliness & quality, increasing victim engagement and the experience of vulnerable victims.
30. Court backlogs continue to be an issue impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent Bar strikes. The backlog continues to create unacceptable delays for victims, witnesses and defendants in West Mercia and ensuring timely access to justice will continue to be a key focus for the LCJB. The ongoing delays also have a knock-on effect for support services. West Mercia's Witness Care Unit is supporting over 21,000 victims and witnesses every month, placing additional demands against police resources, which the PCC has committed additional resource to fund. The PCC set up a task and finish group following the LCJB on 25 May, convening partners to develop an action plan centred around court backlogs.
31. Overall performance in the 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%.
- West Mercia's Domestic Violence conviction rate stands at 78% compared to the National average of 76%.
- Witness Attendance rates remain the highest in the region at 87%. The PCC allocated additional funds into the Witness Care Unit for 2 additional witness care officers which has immediately resulted in an uplift in witness attendance.

Serious Violence

32. The Serious Violence Duty commenced on 31 January 2023. Whilst the PCC is not subject to the Duty, he is playing a key role in supporting delivery of the Duty through convening, monitoring and grant making functions. The PCC was successful in February for a bid of £789,003 up to 2025 to the Home Office to support partners in exercising their requirements under the Duty.
33. Each local authority area has confirmed the local partnership under which the Duty will be delivered. In all areas, the duty will be delivered through existing Community Safety Partnership governance arrangements. The PCC has written to all responsible authorities in May to outline his governance and oversight arrangements which will be through the Crime Reduction Board.
34. The PCC has continued to engage with specified authorities through Community Safety Partnerships to ensure preparedness for implementation of the duty. This includes taking a convening and leadership role to facilitate engagement between the specified authorities and Crest who have been commissioned by the Home Office to provide the national support offer. Over the last quarter, the PCC's Office has supported Crest to assess readiness of the local partnerships in West Mercia.
35. The PCC has ringfenced £370,000 of funding to commission a West Mercia wide pilot serious violence diversionary service to divert those at risk of, or involved in, knife carrying / knife related activity. Final procurement stages are underway with the service anticipated to mobilise in Summer 2023.
36. The PCC commissioned serious violence needs assessment is currently underway, with consultation and engagement activity intensifying over Q4 particularly with children and young people. The new duty stipulates we must adopt creative approaches to engage the younger hard to reach cohorts, so the team have been utilising a variety of engagement methods and incentives.

Reforming West Mercia

37. The budget for 2022/23 was set at £260.5m. Following additional funding and use of reserves the total budget for the year is £261.557m. The outturn position is £253.926m. Therefore there is a reported underspend of £7.632m which represents 2.9% of the total budget. The main area of underspend has been on employees. The challenging labour market has made recruitment challenging alongside the focus on ensuring that West Mercia met the uplift target for officers.
38. The target for uplift of officers for West Mercia in 2022/23 was 125. Not only was this target achieved, but West Mercia were also able to deliver an additional 19 officers taking the total to 2,475. This means that today, West Mercia has the highest number of officers on record supporting all four core strands of the PCC's strategic objectives within the Safer West Mercia Plan. This uplift needs to be maintained in 2023/24 and

the PCC will continue to monitor and support the force's delivery of the National Uplift Programme through regular governance mechanisms.

39. The PCC has made a commitment for a further 40 additional officers in 2023/24 specifically focused on community priorities. 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.
40. The next largest area of budget investment has been in the digital transformation agenda. During 2022/23 the Digital Transformation Programme has delivered a significant upgrade in the support infrastructure for running IT applications, including a significant improvement in resilience through investment in using a Crown Digital Database Hub. This work has enabled the rollout of M365 to start. In due course this will enable the Force to make use of the wider tools and apps available to deliver more effective and efficient services. 2023/24 is the final year of this current programme and will see even more focus on benefit realisation.
41. Part of the reform agenda has been working with partners to have a more effective, and long term, approach to crime. The Safer Communities project, in partnership with Telford and Wrekin Council, is an example of this, in which the PCC has invested £500,000 and delivered a wide range of community outcomes. The PCC has made a commitment in 2023/24 for more funding to be made available to roll out this style of collaborative partnership working across West Mercia. Local authorities across West Mercia are engaged with the PCC now, with a view to developing local programmes in the coming weeks to benefit local communities.

Estates Update

42. West Mercia Police need to be in fit-for-purpose buildings that support the 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. The new service is already proving to be both a better value for money and enhanced property management service model.
43. 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 ongoing, with the programme to deliver the new facility on track for completion October 2024.
 - A new Firearms Range & Training School at Hindlip HQ. To date, architects have been appointed and activities are underway to appoint and commission a principal designer, planning consultants and various site-specific surveys. The current work programme indicates the Firearms Range is due for completion in June 2025 with the new training school due for completion in April 2026.
44. In the financial year 2022/23 the Estates Team commissioned a full condition survey of the Estate to determine the current condition and compliance of the sites and buildings. This data has been utilised to determine the 2023/24 programme and will be further developed to prepare a 5-year, long term planned programme. Ongoing delivery of the annual planned programme of minor works and refurbishments continues to provide significant improvements to the Estate.

45. The annual planned programmes for 2023/24 are made up of 3 defined budgets, to the total value of £2m, to enable improvement and significant repair or remedial works across the OPCC Estate. These budgets are broken as follows:

- Investment In Estates Infrastructure (Capital) - **£800,000**
 - This will deliver significant capital improvement works to protect or increase the value of the assets. Works have been scheduled based on the condition of the property or statutory compliance requirements.
- Investment In Estates Infrastructure (Revenue) - **£550,000** -
 - This will deliver repair or remedial works outside of routine or planned maintenance to maintain the value of the estate and prevent further deterioration.
- Local Policing Estates Transformation (Capital) - **£700,000**
 - This will deliver significant refurbishment or improvement works to existing facilities to maintain standards, improve working environments, or changes to meet operational requirements.

46. Some examples of completed works and those planned, include but are not limited to the following:

- Provision of a new Learning & Training Hub at Bridgnorth police station;
- Provision of a new learning hub at Hindlip HQ;
- Significant improvements and refurbishment to Hindlip HQ to improve offices, working environments and specialist areas e.g. dog section and forensics;
- Major refurbishment of the Hereford multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) facility;
- Various reglazing and new roofing works across the estate;
- Various refurbishments works to offices, staff welfare areas across the estate;
- Various replacement of heating and cooling infrastructure across the estate;
- Remedial and improvement works to custody areas.

47. Significant work is underway across the West Mercia Estate as part of measures to drive energy efficiency. This work is intended to both reduce West Mercia's carbon footprint and offset increased pressures that the Force faces around energy costs. Research shows that 75% of electricity usage in offices is controlled by individuals. A '*Turn it Off*' energy saving campaign has begun, whereby staff are encouraged to take that extra second to turn a light off, unplug a phone charger or shut down laptops at the end of the day. Activities such as this will make a big difference in helping West Mercia Police to reduce its energy consumption.

48. Current projects include:

- Installation of LED lighting at Kidderminster Police Station, planned for completion in July 2023. This will be followed by the other 4 x DHQ sites and Hindlip Main Hall, which will significantly reduce electricity consumption and costs at these sites over the next 1-4 years.
- Installation of additional EV charging Infrastructure at Worcester Police Station, to support West Police electric vehicle fleet.

49. The PCC is actively engaged in the current public consultation around the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) Review, specifically around the status of police headquarters at Hindlip. The review proposes to remove major developed site status for Hindlip Park. If confirmed, this would threaten the long-term viability of the

site as an operational headquarters for both the police force and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

50. The Estates Team continue to develop and refine their service, with improvements to and the streamlining of the supply chain, thereby achieving best value on various term contracts to include but not limited to grounds maintenance, waste, fire safety systems, etc.

Financial management

51. The achievement of delivering services within budget for 2022/23 is welcomed, particularly with the savings target of £6.040m that had to be achieved, combined with the increasing challenge of inflation increasing the cost base.
52. The underspend of £7.632m represents 2.9% of the budget. The PCC has set a clear intention for resources to be used on delivering service improvement. Whilst recognising that this is an improvement on the 2021/22 outturn, the PCC will continue to challenge the organisation to deliver by using all resources that are made available. £400,000 of the underspend from 2022/23 will be used to deliver additional policing capacity in 2023/24, clearly aligned to the Safer West Mercia Plan, to address priority needs in local communities.
53. The budget for 2023/24 was signed off on the 27 March, which set a Net Revenue budget of £273.038m. Following the Police and Crime Panel meeting in February, the PCC met regularly with the Force to agree a detailed plan to be able to set a balanced budget. The PCC has set out clear expectations for the Chief Constable to deliver service improvement and return on investment for the public. The Force continue to seek efficiencies and savings to ensure that costs are controlled within the resource envelope available.
54. The Force presented a variety of options as to how to achieve the balanced budget. The PCC made the decision to increase the use of reserves to fund the 2023/24 budget, to bridge the unavoidable gap and avoid having to make quick resourcing decisions. The additional use of available reserves enables the force to plan reduction in costs in a more planned and controlled way, to ensure that the impact on service delivery is understood. The Force has a Budget Implementation Team in place, which will provide a strong link between management, budget holders and finance to ensure that good financial management is at the core of service delivery.
55. Recognising the financial challenges in place, the planning for 2024/25 budget has already started. A detailed programme is being drawn up to provide the framework to deliver future balanced budgets, which is based on the funding available whilst delivering the service improvements committed to in the Safer West Mercia Plan.

Reassuring West Mercia

56. The PCC, Deputy PCC and Assistant PCCs 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 47 engagements have taken place between February and April.
57. The PCC continues to monitor his engagement and reach with communities, across social media. Between February and April 778 posts were uploaded, more than 5,607 people engaged with posts, and 153 new followers were gained. There are now 12,450 people signed up for PCC news updates via the Neighbourhood Matters system and

1,891 receiving the PCC's monthly newsletter. The PCC sends monthly newsletters to MPs to ensure they are sighted on activity in their constituencies.

58. During the period February and April, 31 press releases and statements have been issued. This resulted in 92 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 February and April, the PCC's office dealt with 490 new pieces of casework. The most common themes were around road safety and antisocial 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 February and April, circa 4,958 people visited the PCC's website. Work has been completed to improve the accessibility of the website, allowing people with a range of additional needs to have better access to information. Work will continue to ensure that the required levels are met and maintained.
61. The PCC has just started a new engagement programme, Community Conversation, which aims to ensure community voices are heard and reflected in the decisions the PCC makes on behalf of them. The locations have largely been chosen based on concerns raised by the public via correspondence. The Community Conversation will continue through the summer, alongside other events.

Performance and accountability

Holding to account

62. Since the last Panel report, three holding to account meetings with the Chief Constable have taken place. A public meeting focused on confidence in policing was held in January 2023. The thematic meetings in February and March 2023 focused on Criminal Justice and the Independent Inquiry into Telford Child Sexual Exploitation (IITCSE) respectively. Notes from the meetings are published on the PCC's website and recordings of public meetings are available online.
63. Key findings/outcomes from the thematic meeting on Criminal Justice include:
 - West Mercia Police is subject to national challenges in respect of Criminal Justice including the impact of COVID on court backlogs, and legislative changes that place demands on policing including disclosure requirements.
 - Conviction rates in West Mercia are consistently strong. The force area has a high magistrate's court conviction rate which is over 4% above the regional average at 87.2% and national average of 82.4%. Guilty pleas at first hearing are above the regional average at 76.7% and national average of 74.2%.
 - Similarly, the Crown Court conviction rates are above national average of 79.2% with performance in 2022 consistently above 80%. The guilty plea rate of 76.7% is well above the 72.4% achieved nationally. West Mercia has also consistently outperformed national averages for domestic abuse conviction rates.

- West Mercia's file quality is currently below the national average. The force has recently piloted a triage team to review files prior to submission to the CPS which has improved performance.
- The PCC shared oversight and learning from the out of court disposal (OOCs) Scrutiny Panel and how learning from this panel could be better shared, particularly in the context to impending changes around OOCs.
- The Force committed to providing the PCC with regular CJS updates, to include exception reports. Exception reports will be linked to the bi-monthly.

64. The IITCSE report included a recommendation for the PCC to have a specific holding to account meeting on the IITCSE. The details of the IITCSE recommendation were used to inform the Terms of Reference for the meeting, ensuring the PCC satisfied all requirements of the recommendation. Key findings/outcomes from the IITCSE meeting are set out below:

- The progress report provided an update against the 13 recommendations related to West Mercia Police (either solely or in partnership with the Local Authority). Assurance was provided that a range of activity is either under way or scheduled to satisfy the recommendations of the Inquiry. This includes practice reviews, training, enforcement, audit, and scrutiny.
- The force have worked with Telford Council to set up a joint CSE review group which will meet once every 6 months and has a central role in producing the annual partnership report.
- Quarterly meetings have also been established between the Chief Officer lead for IITCSE, and the PCC's Head of Policy and Commissioning to ensure the PCC can support the force to tackle CSE through the use of grants and funding.
- The force provided a high level 'Road Map' for 2023, identifying key strands of activity including:
 - Q1: launch of the Telford & Wrekin threshold guidance; analysis of the partnership CSE data to inform the expected annual report.
 - Q2: publication of the first annual CSE report; piloting procedural justice (PJ) training.
 - Q3: forecast roll out of procedural justice training; completion of wider CSE training/CPD review; external campaign to heighten CSE awareness; scheduled review activity against recommendation progresses a year after IITCSE publication.
 - Q4: finalisation of training programme with the Children's Society; Force Crime Registrar (FCR) CSE marker audit; review of any National Referral Mechanism (NRM) changes; final assessment with partners of progress made.

65. The PCC is committed to continuously improving internal processes, and in January 2023 the PCC commissioned a wholesale review of his holding to account function. As a result of the review, a number of 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. The recommendations would also facilitate 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.

66. The PCC's Policy Team has been working with the Chief Officer team to implement the recommendations from the review in the new financial year. Going forward, the meetings will be called "Assurance and Accountability" meetings. The first meeting under the new process was 5 June and focused on Performance.
67. The second meeting was 29 June and was a thematic deep dive on putting victims and their voice at the heart of the Criminal Justice System. This session focused on implementation of the new Most Appropriate Agency (MAA) policy (inc. the impact on the public and stakeholder engagement), and Victim Advice Line (VAL).
68. To supplement the formal meetings, the PCC also runs a process whereby he can request 'ad hoc assurance briefings' from the Chief Constable, enabling the PCC to respond dynamically to emerging, or single item issues. This process is run via email and requires the Chief Constable to provide a written response to the concerns the PCC has raised.
69. In January 2023, the PCC requested an ad hoc briefing on police vetting and corruption. The Chief Constable was asked to provide an update on activity undertaken to implement the recommendations in the national HMICFRS inspection on vetting, misconduct and misogyny published in November 2022; and requirements from the Home Office to recheck vetting of all officers and staff.
70. Key findings/outcomes from the Chief Constable's response to the ad hoc briefing request are set out below:
 - a. Following publication of the 2 HMICFRS vetting and counter corruption reports, the force has developed an action tracker to record and monitor activity to address the reports' findings. For over a third of national recommendations, West Mercia Police had either successfully delivered or had made significant progress in delivering the required activity.
 - b. The Chief Constable is confident that every single officer and member of staff working for the force holds vetting, with processes in place to review vetting at appropriate intervals dependant on the level of vetting held.
 - c. A standard operation procedure (SOP) is in place to ensure a review of vetting takes place following any final written warning, written warning, or reduction in rank.
 - d. The force is complying with the Home Office directive to check all officer and staff details against the Police National Database. Any criminal conviction / adverse trace identified from this process will be reviewed and where appropriate, a full review of current vetting will be undertaken by the Vetting Unit and Force Vetting Manager.
 - e. The force has developed and implemented a new Internal Domestic Abuse (DA) and Vulnerability Policy and Procedure which clearly details support provided to officers and staff who are subject to DA or other vulnerability crime. Additional support is available through the Victim Advice Line (commissioned by the PCC) for internal and external victims of crime and police misconduct.

71. The PCC continues to use his accountability processes to focus on standards and ethics and in March 2023 commissioned an 'ad hoc briefing' from the Chief Constable in respect of the Casey Report. A response was submitted by the Chief Constable and discussed as part of the PCC- CC regular weekly meeting.

West Mercia Perception Survey

72. Headline findings from the latest results of the West Mercia commissioned perception survey, Q3 2022/23, are set out below:

- a. The majority of residents (83%) agreed that they had confidence in West Mercia Police with a similar proportion confident that they would receive a good service from the force (81%), this is comparable to findings in the previous period.
- b. Around 73% of residents agreed that West Mercia Police understood the issues that affect their community, this is an improvement on the previous quarter (70%).
- c. 89% said they were confident they could access the police in an emergency and 70% in a non-emergency – an improvement compared to the previous quarter.
- d. 20% 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 Q4 performance report can be found here - [Police Quarterly Performance Reports - West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://westmercia-pcc.gov.uk).

74. Below are some key performance areas of note:

- a. Recording around outcomes: West Mercia has seen slight improvements in action taken against offenders. There has also been a downward trend in cases where the victim does not support the prosecution, however in 2022/23 West Mercia still recorded the highest proportion of cases finalised this way amongst most similar forces.
- b. Response times: performance has remained stable for Grade 1 incidents although is below the force's target. The force is reviewing their targets following some changes to how they grade incidents.
- c. Victim satisfaction: this continues to be an area of concern, which is specifically linked to victims being kept informed. Although some areas have seen improvements, such as domestic abuse, across the policing area, overall satisfaction is still below aspirational targets. As a local and national policing priority, satisfaction will be subject to scrutiny at the June Performance Assurance and Accountability meeting.
- d. Call handling: Both 999 and 101 have seen a slight reduction in performance during Q4, however improvements are seen when compared to the summer period last year. 999 performance is continually above the target of 90% of calls

answered within 10 seconds. The measures used to assess call handling performance have been subject to review during 2022/23.

- e. Roads: Positively, the number of people being killed or seriously injured on West Mercia's roads (KSIs) has been declining since November 2022.

HMICFRS Inspection Reports

75. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) have published 2 inspection reports since the last Panel meeting in February:

- An inspection of how well the police tackle serious youth violence (national report published March);
- An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (national report published April).

76. As required by law, the PCC has written to the Home Secretary in response to the national report on serious youth violence. This response has been published on the PCC's website and sets out how the Chief Constable in West Mercia will address the 2 recommendations for all force's nationally. Reducing serious violence is a key commitment within the Safer West Mercia Plan, and the letter also sets out the work being undertaken by the PCC in response to the new Serious Violence Duty.

77. The response to the digital forensics report is due to be drafted at the end of May.

78. Following the review of the Holding to Account process in January, oversight and governance of force activity against HMICFRS report recommendations (local and national) has been integrated into the "Assurance and Accountability" programme for 2023/24. From June an update on progress against key HMICFRS reports will be provided by the Chief Constable at the PCC's Quarterly Performance Assurance and Accountability meetings (first meeting June).

79. The formal PCC-led meetings will be supplemented by regular meetings between the PCC's Policy team, the force's HMICFRS liaison officer, and the regional lead within HMICFRS.

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.

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