

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](#)