

## **WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 17 NOVEMBER 2023**

### **POLICE & CRIME PLAN ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

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#### **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 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**

##### **Sexual Violence**

5. The contract for Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Service has entered its final year. The PCC commissioning team will be undertaking a review of the existing service and are in discussions with the incumbent provider prior to agreeing any extensions to the existing contract.
6. In the first quarter of this year referrals for the ISVA services and Branch services remained consistent. ISVA caseloads remain high due to court backlogs; with Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) cases being listed as far in advance as 2025.
7. Court backlogs have a significant impact on victims waiting for their cases to go to trial and in some cases, victims have withdrawn support from the case due to the effect on their mental health. Court backlogs are subject to oversight and scrutiny through the PCC's Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB).
8. Work is ongoing with His Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) and other partners, to try to reduce the current backlog. 13 new circuit judges for the West

Midlands and Herefordshire have been recruited, and plans are being shaped to restore Crown Court facilities in Hereford.

9. The Adult Sexual Assault & Referral Centre (SARC) service has been recommissioned for 5 years within West Mercia, with the new contract commencing from 31 March 2024. This service will offer a 365 day, 24hrs access service for adult victims who have been sexually assaulted, enabling them to access medical examination and care immediately. This service is available to all victims of sexual violence regardless of having reported it to the police or not.
10. In 2022/23, 379 adults accessed the service. Of these, 43% were referred by the police with the remainder being self-referrals for clients who chose not to make an initial police report.
11. The PCC was successful in a funding bid to NHS England & Improvement for £650,000 to deliver a Complex Care Pathfinder for victims of sexual violence. The PCC is working with the Integrated Care Boards (ICB) in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin to develop two Integrated Pathfinder Hubs, one in each ICB geography.
12. This is a first of its kind integrated service that emphasises innovative collaboration across agencies, maximising and improving access to services for victims of sexual violence. The support offer within the Hubs themselves will be broad and range from peer support / survivor networks to clinical assessment, formulation, and psychological intervention. Referrals are likely to commence from early 2024.

## **Victim Services**

13. The PCC Victim Needs Assessment was produced in September 2023, and highlighted some areas of development for the provision of services to support victims of crime in West Mercia, including the Victim Advice Line (VAL). Some of these areas were raised with West Mercia Police during an Assurance & Accountability (A&A) meeting in July.
14. Following the A&A meeting, the PCC set up a Victims Working Group, with representatives from the PCC's office and West Mercia Police. This working group has met three times and will continue to meet with a view of developing a proposal for the future direction of multi-crime victim services.
15. The current Victim Support contract is coming to an end on 31 March 2024. The PCC will be conducting a market engagement exercise to identify options for service provision in the interim whilst work continues on the options proposal.

## **Prevention**

16. The newly commissioned, PCC funded West Mercia Steer Clear Children and Young People (CYP) Diversionary service (£538,496) was launched on the 18 October. Anyone can refer a 10–18 year old believed to be at risk of involvement in knife related crime to the service provided by The Children's Society (TCS). An academic partner is to be commissioned to evaluate the pilot.
17. The PCC commissioned CLIMB 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 service has had a soft launch, with media and awareness raising planned between October – December, to allow for new roles to be embedded within the service.

## **Building a more secure West Mercia**

### **Chief Constable Recruitment**

18. The PCC has appointed Alex Murray as Temporary Chief Constable of West Mercia Police following the departure of Chief Constable Pippa Mills, who took up her new post as Assistant Commissioner of The Metropolitan Police in October 2023. A recruitment process is underway to identify a substantive Chief Constable. The Panel will be notified when a preferred candidate is identified as part of the confirmation process.

### **Safer Streets Five**

19. As part of the fifth round of the Government's Safer Streets initiative, the PCC bid successfully for a further £999,025 to fund a range of projects designed to tackle Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Neighbourhood Crime. The funding, in partnership with West Mercia Police, will deliver 14 initiatives focused on reducing three of the public's key priorities as outlined below:

- VAWG: 'Healthy Masculinity' programme, a school-based approach supporting wider prevention within an educational framework. There will also be bespoke training for police officers to identify predatory behaviour when on patrol, and additional street lighting in Leominster and Ross-on-Wye.
- ASB: Launch of targeted work with teenagers, installation of new CCTV cameras in Telford and Oswestry and intensive engagement work in Leominster, Oswestry, Shrewsbury and Evesham.
- Neighbourhood Crime: The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in Worcestershire will be extended to cover more locations with investment to join up schemes, as well as building on the successful rollout of SmartWater to deter burglary.

20. Procurement for delivery providers is ongoing following a bidding process which closed October 2023.

### **Improving Responses to Domestic Abuse**

21. The Men and Masculinities domestic abuse perpetrator programme is now fully mobilised across the force area. Cranstoun and West Mercia Women's Aid facilitated a live launch event held in Telford and Wrekin on the 5th of October, which was attended by partners from Telford and Shropshire. Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire have secured sufficient referrals to run the first group, which commences in November.

22. The DRIVE high risk domestic abuse perpetrator programme (DAPP) mobilised into Telford and Shropshire with the first DAPPs taking place for both areas on 18<sup>th</sup> October. During Quarter 2 Herefordshire and Worcestershire have worked with 43 perpetrators, 43 victims and 133 children. 12 direct contact cases were closed this quarter with reductions in physical abuse (81%), sexual abuse (100%), harassment and stalking (76%) and jealous, controlling and coercive behaviour (79%).

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

23. The PCC was previously successful for a funding bid to create a diversionary pathway for female offenders, to be used as part of an Out of Court Disposal (O OCD). The service went live in June 2023 but referrals from West Mercia Police have been lower

than anticipated. The PCC has sought assurance from the Chief Constable to address concerns about low numbers and plans to increase referrals.

24. Although referrals are low, there is evidence that OOC is making a difference by avoiding criminalisation of females referred and more importantly, addressing the root causes of why the crime was committed in the first instance.

## **Road safety**

25. All consultations and analysis have now taken place for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Road Safety Needs Assessment by the commissioned in-house resource with West Mercia Police Strategy, Planning and Insight Department (WMP SPI). With the draft now quality assured, anticipated receipt date is mid-November 2023.
26. The PCC has launched a £150,000 Road Safety West Mercia grant round, with the application deadline in November 2023. Applications are invited for safety initiatives or interventions that will reduce harm caused on our roads.
27. This grant round excludes Tru-cam, ANPR or VAS applications as provision for these is either already being reviewed by West Mercia Police and the PCC, or has a separate funding route already established (e.g. via the Commissioner's Community Fund). The grant round has been well publicised and generated a good response. It is hoped awards can be made before the end of November 2023.
28. The previous uplift and investment in force budgets to transform road safety within West Mercia Police has already seen some benefits including:
  - An increase in the number of visits to enforcement sites.
  - Development of a more targeted approach to speed enforcement with a focus on high-risk areas.
  - Enhanced partnership working in relation to resolution and prevention strategies with partners in Local Authorities, HWFRS, SFRS and National Highways.
  - Increased efficiency in processing applications for driver offender retraining scheme course, enabling changed driver behaviour and increased diversion away from the court system.
  - Increased visibility and more facilitated deployments relating to the mobile enforcement capability. A 10% increase in deployments in Q1 23/24 when compared to same period in previous year.

## **Regional collaboration**

29. The PCC had his quarterly Counterterrorism (CT) and serious and organised crime (SOC) briefings in October which provided an opportunity to understand West Mercia threat and risk. The SOC briefing included an input from both the force SOC lead and the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU).
30. The PCC was reassured on a number of matters including understanding what barriers may exist to encouraging Prevent referrals from West Mercia's communities, and the local and regional response to tackling organised crime. The PCC now holds the regional SOC portfolio on behalf of the PCCs in the West Midlands.

31. A review of regional criminal justice governance arrangements is progressing at pace. The review will look to ensure that there is a greater sense of connectivity and interaction between the four LCJBs across the region.

## **Criminal justice**

32. This quarter, the LCJB and Victims' Boards has focussed on work to improve outcomes and services for victims through the development of SMART partnership delivery plans and a new performance management framework (PMF).
33. This activity has been supported by a series of PCC-led partnership task and finish group meetings and will be finalised following a workshop in November. The aim of the workshop is to engender greater partnership buy in and agree clear activity and measures of success for each board.
34. Tackling court backlogs remains a priority for the LCJB. A court backlog task and finish group was established in September and centred on the development of a standalone action plan to tackle the significant backlogs and improve processes and outcomes for victims and witnesses. Following the workshop in November, the court backlog task and finish group will meet monthly.
35. 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 85% in West Mercia, comparable to the Regional and National average of 84%.
  - The conviction rate at the Crown Court sits at 78%, this is in line with the 78% seen nationally.
  - Witness Attendance rates remain amongst the highest in the region at 88%. The PCC allocated additional funds into the Witness Care Unit for two additional witness care officers which has led to a consistent uplift in witness attendance.

## **Serious Violence**

36. The PCC has continued to engage with Crest Advisory (contracted by the HO to provide the national implementation support offer) and specified authorities through Community Safety Partnerships to ensure effective implementation of the Serious Violence duty.
37. In October 2023, a further £25,000 was awarded to each of the 5 Community Safety Partnerships from the Home Office Serious Violence Duty Funding 2023/24 to be used for non-labour costs (i.e., interventions). A working group led by the Serious Violence Partnership Manager meets regularly to offer support around the duty and to share information around what works.
38. In September, the PCC supported two Serious Violence partnership analyst data sharing events. These sessions built on the strategic events held July – August. The data sharing events were designed to bring together analysts across agencies to review best practice in delivering the Serious Violence strategic needs assessments. West Mercia Police took away a number of actions to overcome barriers and ensure delivery of comprehensive strategic needs assessments in the autumn.
39. The first draft of the PCC Serious Violence Needs Assessment has been received and reviewed and, following some initial gaps in data, will now be revisited following the

data sharing events. This will ensure the needs assessment contains all relevant partner information as required under the duty to inform the landscape review and future direction for Serious Violence.

## **Combatting drugs partnerships**

40. The last set of Combatting Drug Partnership (CDP) meetings took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023, chaired by the PCC.
41. These meetings centred around a reinforcement of the role of the CDP, alongside strategic aims and development of key priority areas to inform a West Mercia delivery plan. Partners agreed that the focus areas would centre around four key pillars; Prevention, Treatment, Recovery and Partnerships.
42. West Mercia Police is reviewing the issuing of Naloxone to frontline police officers, to report back to the next meeting.
43. Drug related deaths was an area for discussion, with partners from the ICB and Local Authority taking actions to explore the role of local Health and Wellbeing boards. This will be a focus of the next meeting, as well as a longer term objective.
44. Partners were held to account for production of their local delivery plans, and challenged on their inclusion of prevention activity, as well as neighbourhood crime (featured in national outcomes framework).
45. The PCC has developed a performance dashboard, aligned to the national outcomes framework and used the meetings to hold partners to account for production of data to inform this framework. The PCC is also currently challenging the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) for direct access to the national performance dashboard.
46. To reinforce his commitment, the PCC is now setting up a joint working group in November, to develop a West Mercia CDP delivery plan by December 2023.

## **Reforming West Mercia**

47. The PCC has set a Net Budget Requirement of £273m. Following additional funding and use of reserves the total budget for the year is £277m. A central element of the budget investment was a commitment of an additional 40 officers to support front line policing.
48. The Force have a robust process in place for ensuring that West Mercia maintains the target number of police officers. The uplift target was achieved in September, which ensured release of the first element of the full funding.
49. The successful uplift in officers has enabled the full establishment of the five Neighbourhood Crime Fighting Teams committed as part of the budget. These resources, along with the commitment for 10 Community Safety Engagement officers have put greater focus on addressing key community concerns, such as anti-social behaviour and the harm caused by illegal drugs.
50. As part of the support to the force the PCC has recently allocated an additional £1m to invest in the vehicle fleet. The PCC has provided £0.6m for replacement of vehicles to remove some of the oldest/high mileage vehicles from the fleet, which carry a risk of

breakdowns and therefore non availability to the force to utilise in delivering front line policing.

51. The other £0.4m the PCC has allocated for investment in additionality to the fleet reflects the uplift in the number of officers, particularly the Neighbourhood Crime Fighting Teams. The PCC commitment is to provide resources to enable the force to respond more effectively to the needs of the communities of West Mercia.
52. The next largest area of budget investment has been in the digital transformation agenda. The force is in on target to deliver the ambitious five month programme to rollout new equipment, centred on the use of Microsoft 365 to the vast majority of employees within West Mercia. Providing this to 3500 officers and staff across West Mercia 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, whilst resolving remaining implementation challenges.
53. Since the last report to the Panel, the PCC has also approved additional capital investment in the Digital Forensic Unit to ensure that they have the required technical capabilities to analyse digital devices quickly and efficiently, supporting investigation into potential criminal activity.
54. There has also been the approval of specific allocation of vehicles to support the Firearms Licencing Unit (FLU). Following the additional investment in officers / staff made earlier in the year, the PCC has now responded to a request for additional vehicles to ensure that the force have the resources they need to focus on improving performance.
55. There is regular oversight and scrutiny of FLU performance to ensure that the PCC's investment leads to an improved service for the public. The investment has enabled progress in several areas including recruitment of new staff, embedding of new guidance and approved professional practice, and a reduction in firearms and shotgun grant backlogs.
56. However, the waiting times for new certificates has not improved as anticipated. Latest data from the force shows members of the public are waiting as long as 300 days for a new shotgun certificate, and 660 days for a new firearms certificate. This is in excess of the target set by the PCC at the time of initial investment in April (150 days).
57. The force remains committed to significantly expanding capacity of the FLU and have provided reassurance that this will lead to improved wait times and enhanced service delivery over the next 2 quarters.
58. The PCC has requested that FLU performance is subject of scrutiny each month via the West Mercia Governance Board. Further, every 6 months, the PCC is undertaking a review of FLU performance to be reported to the Policing Minister (next review due January 2024).
59. In addition to the scrutiny activity outlined above, the PCC and DPCC are holding a virtual Community Conversation on firearms licensing in November to give members of the public an opportunity to have their questions answered and be updated on the work of the department.

## Estates

60. 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.
61. 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.
62. 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. The erection of the steel frame is complete and external cladding is underway. The new facility remains on track for completion October 2024.
  - The closure of the existing Redditch Police Station was completed on time in October, to allow demolition works to commence in November 2023.
  - In the meantime, the force has relocated from the current Redditch Police Station to a new temporary location based in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, Redditch. The force has moved in fully and this location is fully operational.
  - A comprehensive communications plan and targeted information campaign has ensured residents and communities are aware of the new location. In addition, a new digital kiosk to support public access to services has been installed at the external entrance to this temporary location.
  - As part of the PCC's commitment to ensuring public accessibility to Police services, a new digital Kiosk has also been installed at Kidderminster Police Station.
  - A new Firearms Range & Training School at Hindlip HQ. Architects have been appointed, together with the appointment of a principal designer, and planning consultants. Various site survey and investigations have commenced, and design is currently on target to reach RIBA Stage 3 by December 2023.
63. As part of the ongoing process to identify key estates infrastructure, in the coming weeks the estates team will commission a full condition survey of the Heating, Ventilation and Aircon (HVAC) systems. 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.
64. Surveys have been commissioned for DHQs at Shrewsbury, Telford, Kidderminster & Worcester. These will report at the end of 2023, with smaller sites to follow. Hereford Police Station has not been commissioned at this stage as it will be reviewed as part of the proposed feasibility into a refurbishment of the site as a whole.
65. Ongoing delivery of the annual planned programme of minor works & refurbishments continues with the improvements to numerous areas of the Estate.
66. Estates have adopted specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). By doing so the performance of the OPCC West Mercia Estate can be measured more accurately, which will enable verification of whether operational and strategic needs are being met fully. It is intended that the KPIs will be monitored on an on-going basis, enabling the team to act promptly if required and ensuring that the condition, efficiency and effectiveness of the estate is maintained successfully under the oversight of the PCC.



67. The Estates Team continue to identify potential savings from the estate's revenue budget, as well as potential capital receipt, through reasonable disposal of assets. Assets identified and in the process of disposal by 31/03/24 include:

- Disposal of the Freehold of the Land off Holmer Road, Hereford, HR4 9SW. The PCC purchased a 2.8-acre plot of land off Holmer Road, Hereford HR4 9SW, in December 2018 with the intention of developing a joint police and fire station for West Mercia Police and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. However, in 2023, the partners officially decided not to proceed with this project. Thus, the land was deemed surplus to requirement and earmarked for disposal. The PCC has since approved this disposal, to the interested party (Wye Valley NHS Trust) for the sum of £1,200,000 as per the conditions stated in the Decision Notice Ref: PCC/D/2023/30 dated 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023.
- Disposal of the residential properties that are The Firs & The Orchards (located at Hindlip HQ site Worcester).
- Disposal of the residential property located at 42A Albert Road Malvern.
- Disposal of the redundant and vacant Evesham Community Contact Centre located at Evesham Police Station site.

## **Financial management**

68. The process to prepare the 2024/25 budget is continuing at pace, with an initial draft budget being prepared for presentation to the PCC. There is currently a significant budget gap based on the assumptions on resources that are available.

69. Inflation continues to cause a cost pressure, and with it expected to remain above the government target through 2024/25, it has meant a review and increase in the assumptions on the pay award. The cost of digital services and the requirement to purchase licences for all users, on all systems, is another area where West Mercia is seeing costs increase for maintaining service levels.

70. There are, at this stage in the process, elements of the budget which are subject to confirmation, both in terms of resources available and costs of various services. The autumn statement from the Chancellor, due at the end of November, will be important in clarifying what government funding will be. In the meantime, the PCC is engaging with the Force to understand the options to ensure that a balanced budget is delivered and to make sure that the priorities in the Safer West Mercia Plan are clearly reflected in the budget.

71. The review of the financial position at the end of quarter 2 highlighted a small underspend against the budget year to date, with a projected underspend by the end of the financial year of £1.337m. This is an improvement of £3.716m from the Q1 forecast. No action is considered necessary at this stage in the financial year, and monitoring will continue through Q3 to provide more certainty over the estimated costs for the financial year.

## **Reassuring West Mercia**

72. During the period May to October, 185 press releases and statements have been issued. This resulted in 336 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.

73. 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 96 engagements have taken place between May and October.
74. The PCC continues to monitor his engagement and reach with communities across social media. Between May to October, 1,527 posts were uploaded, more than 8,800 people engaged with posts<sup>1</sup>, and 555 new followers were gained. There are now 17,407 people signed up for PCC news updates via the Neighbourhood Matters system and 1,890 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.
75. Between May and October, circa 9,500 people visited the PCC's website. Work continues to ensure that information, such as meeting minutes and decisions made, is uploaded onto the website. Work also continues regarding ensuring required levels of accessibility are met and maintained.
76. The PCC attended six events as part of his summer events programme. These events have run alongside Community Conversation engagements. The PCC held an event that was focused on the delays around obtaining a new or renewed firearms licence. The next event planned will be held in Bromsgrove, with this area being chosen due to the number of concerns raised regarding road safety. Further Community Conversation events, that feature different locations and themes, will be held in the coming months (e.g., a virtual Community Conversation on FLU).
77. During the period May to October, the PCC's office dealt with 1,166 new pieces of casework. The most common themes were around crime, ASB and road safety with other key trends around police contact, local policing, and firearms. 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.

## Performance and accountability

### Assurance and accountability meetings

78. 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. Three formal meetings took place in Q2:
- 28 July 2023: Public meeting - Police visibility and contact
  - 31 August 2023: Performance meeting – Quarter 1 2023/24
  - 25 October 2023: Thematic meeting – Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI)
79. The minutes from the performance and thematic meetings are published on the PCC's website ([Assurance and Accountability Meetings - West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/assurance-and-accountability-meetings)). Key outcomes from the meetings this quarter are summarised below:
- More than 140 questions were received by the PCC to inform the A&A Public meeting with the Chief Constable on Police visibility and contact. The Chief Constable acknowledged that there was still more work required to improve

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<sup>1</sup> Due to changes to Twitter/X it is now more challenging to fully understand changes in engagement via the analytics section of the platform.

visibility. Over 20 questions were followed up by the PCC directly with the force following the meeting on behalf of residents.

- The force to share initial feedback from the HMICFRS Serious Organised Crime Inspection (publication date to be confirmed by Inspectorate) and the local delivery plan which has been developed to ensure areas of improvement are acted on as soon as possible. This will inform future scrutiny activity through the PCC's quarterly SOC briefings.
- PCC to receive demonstration and data related to new app embedded within Neighbourhood Matters that supports engagement with communities.
- Force to review body worn video compliance target with a view to improving compliance in line with the T/CC's aspirations.

80. The next formal meeting is due to take place on the 30 November and will focus on Performance.

81. In particular, this meeting will have a key focus on the recent HMICFRS Victim Services Assessment, further details of which can be found later in this report.

82. The PCC's A&A meeting programme is supplemented by an ad-hoc, virtual element that enables the PCC to raise issues that do not fall within the remit of a performance or 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. During the previous quarter, the PCC submitted a number of ad-hoc requests outlined below that continue to support oversight, assurance and governance activity this quarter:

- Crime and public confidence in Pershore.
- MAA policy and the impact on safeguarding.
- Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) abstractions.

83. The ad hoc A&A in Pershore has resulted in a large amount of activity to address the concerns raised by the community. The PCC commissioned a bespoke survey to gather the initial views of Pershore residents and a second follow up survey to capture residents' views launched in October 2023. A further Community Conversation public meeting has also been arranged for November 2023.

84. The assurance provided in respect of MAA policy and safeguarding responsibilities will inform ongoing oversight and scrutiny activity including PCC representation at the force's MAA Governance Board, and engagement with partners through local authority Health and Wellbeing Boards across Q3.

## **Force performance reports**

85. Headline findings from the latest force performance report (Q1) were presented in the last PCP report. A copy of the Q2 2023/24 performance report was published at the end of October and 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/reports)

86. Performance trends identified in the quarterly report are used to set the agenda for the quarterly performance A&A meetings. The August Performance A&A meeting scrutinised Q1 performance with a focus on the following areas:

- Public confidence
- Non-emergency contact
- Victim Code of Practice (VCOP) compliance

- Road Safety- Killed and Seriously Injured
- Total recorded crime
- Action taken outcomes.

## West Mercia perception survey

87. Headline findings from the latest West Mercia perception survey (Quarter 1 2023/24) were presented in the last PCP report. Q2 findings will be released mid-November.
88. Public confidence remains a local and national priority and the PCC continues to engage with the Home Secretary and the APCC around improving police visibility and accessibility for members of the public.

## HMICFRS inspection reports

89. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published 2 national inspection reports since the last PCP meeting. West Mercia Police was not inspected as part of any of the national reports. The reports published were part of the inspectorate's new race and policing programme:
- August 2023: Leadership and governance for race-related matters,
  - August 2023: Race disparity in police criminal justice decision making.
90. 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.
91. In October, HMICFRS published the findings from the Victim Service Assessment conducted in July 2022. This was part of the continuous assessment process under the police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL), originally conducted in 2021.
92. The original 2021 report cited a cause for concern around how the force investigated crimes, supervises investigations and updates victims. Whilst the re-assessment concluded that the force has made progress in some areas such as updating victims on investigation progress and outcomes, there were some clear areas for improvement including;
- **The force need to improve how it responds to the public, particularly in how effectively it answers 999 and 101 calls and attends incidents** – the report remarked that the force wasn't answering 999 calls quickly enough, too many callers to 101 abandoned their call and the force wasn't attending incidents quickly enough.
  - **How effectively crimes are supervised** – the report remarked that no meaningful improvement was made to supervision throughout an investigation.
93. The findings of this assessment will be subject to scrutiny within the Assurance & Accountability meeting in November, with the PCC response to the Home Secretary scheduled for December.
94. Since the last Panel meeting, the PCC has published two formal responses to national HMICFRS inspection reports. This covers the race and policing publications set out above, and a national inspection report focused on the police contribution to the prevention of homicide.

95. The PCC's responses set out how the Chief Constable in West Mercia will address recommendations and the wider support provided by the PCC. The PCC's responses are published on his website and sent to the Home Secretary as required by law: <https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/performance-information/performance-information-hmicfrs/>
96. Reducing and preventing serious violence including homicide is a key priority in the Safer West Mercia plan. A comprehensive summary of key activity to address national recommendations in relation to homicide prevention are set out below to demonstrate the scale of activity underway:
- The force has created a proposal for a rapid review process for homicides and high level near miss incidents. The intention is to capture learning as soon as reasonably possible after the event.
  - The PCC, force and partners have established a new partnership approach to reduce homicide in West Mercia (Op Freya) by using data to identify those most at risk of offending or victimisation. Governance of Op Freya will sit under the PCC's Crime Reduction Board with support of 4 local operational groups.
  - As set out in the report, the PCC has increased investment in commissioned services aimed at young people to prevent knife related crime, serious violence and criminal exploitation.
  - National policing priorities including homicide and serious violence have been included within the PCC's quarterly performance A&A meetings with the Chief Constable. This ensures oversight of performance and activity being undertaken by the force to prevent and reduce homicide and serious violence.
97. Each quarterly performance A&A meeting also includes a focus on HMICFRS inspection activity. The meeting in August 2023 focused on the local and national HMICFRS inspections into vetting, misconduct and misogyny.
98. At the time of the meeting, 17% of recommendations had been signed off by HMICFRS, 75% of recommendations were partially or fully compliant (awaiting results of audit), and 2 recommendations were still outstanding.
99. The 2 recommendations related to a review of historic allegations and implementation of ICT monitoring software and were subject of scrutiny at the meeting.
100. The formal A&A meetings are supplemented by regular meetings between the PCC's Policy team, the force's HMICFRS leads and the force liaison officer 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**

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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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