

West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**Monday 2 February 2026 at 14:00 hours****Birmingham City Council, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B1 1BB**This meeting will be livestreamed at <https://birmingham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>More information about the Panel, including meeting papers and reports, can be found on the Panel website www.westmidlandspcp.org.ukContact Officer: Sam Yarnall, Scrutiny Officer email: wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk Tel: 0121 303 2288**AGENDA**

Supporting Document	Item	Topic	Approximate time
	1	NOTICE OF RECORDING This meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast and members of the press/public may record the meeting. The whole of the meeting will be filmed except where there are confidential or exempt items.	14:00
	2	APOLOGIES	
	3	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY) Members are reminded they must declare all relevant pecuniary and other registerable interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation. If other registerable interests are declared a Member may speak on the matter only if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', Members do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that they have an interest. Information on declaring interests at meetings is available on the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct .	
Attached Pages: 5 - 6	4	POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ACTION TRACKER To consider the progress of actions arising from previous Panel meetings.	14:07

Supporting Document	Item	Topic	Approximate time
	5	<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>To receive questions from members of the public notified to the Panel in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Any member of the public who lives, works, or studies in the West Midlands (other than police officers and police staff) can ask a question at the meeting about the Panel’s role and responsibilities. Questions must be submitted in writing 4 days before the meeting to wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk</p>	14:15
Attached Pages: 7 - 8	6	<p>STATEMENT BY THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER</p> <p>To receive a statement from the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster, on the following question asked by the Panel:</p> <p><i>“In view of the Home Secretary’s recent statement that she no longer had confidence in the former Chief Constable of West Midlands Police, what assurance can the Police and Crime Commissioner provide to the Panel that he has confidence in the Acting Chief Constable and the senior leadership of West Midlands Police.”</i></p>	14:45
Attached Pages: 9 - 50	7	<p>2026/27 REVENUE BUDGET, PRECEPT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (“MTFP”) 2026/27 to 2030/31</p> <p>The Panel will formally review the proposed policing precept 2026 and make a recommendation to the Police and Crime Commissioner.</p>	15:05
Attached Pages: 51 - 116	8	<p>REVIEW OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER’S ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025</p> <p>The Panel must invite the PCC to attend a public meeting to scrutinise the Annual Report setting out progress on meeting the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan during the financial year and consider how the Annual Report can be developed.</p>	16:05
Attached Pages: 117 - 228	9	<p>COMMISSIONING</p> <p>To receive a report on the Police and Crime Commissioner’s overview of commissioning processes, services delivered, monitoring and evaluation and outcomes delivered through the commissioning activity.</p>	16:45
Attached Pages: 229 - 238	10	<p>PANEL WORK PROGRAMME</p> <p>The Panel to identify issues for consideration for a work programme for 2025/26 and arrangements to take forward.</p>	17:15

Supporting Document	Item	Topic	Approximate time
	11	NEXT MEETING DATE	17:25
		16 February 2026 at 2pm – Birmingham City Council, Committee Rooms 3&4 – <i>Provisional, if precept is vetoed.</i>	
		16 March 2026 at 1pm – Committee Room 3, Coventry City Council	
	12	URGENT BUSINESS	17:30
		To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that in the opinion of the Chair are matters of urgency.	

**West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Action Tracker –Outstanding
Actions**

Minute/ Action No.	Meeting Date	Action	Update/ Notes
	05/01/26	The Panel to write to the Commissioner requesting a breakdown of positive outcomes for drug offences on charge, warning, supply and possession as well as to confirm if offences relating to Nitrous Oxide were included.	
	05/01/26	Panel recommends that the Commissioner and Panel explore the lived experience examples of rehabilitation.	

TITLE: West Midlands PCC statement: Chief Constable Craig Guildford retires

PUBLISHED: 16 January 2026

AVAILABLE AT: [West Midlands PCC statement: Chief Constable Craig Guildford retires - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#)

Good Afternoon Everyone.

Thank you for joining me at the West Midlands Police Headquarters in Birmingham.

The Chief Constable, Craig Guildford, has today retired from West Midlands Police with immediate effect. In doing so, he has acted with honour and in the best interests of West Midlands Police and our region. I welcome his decision.

I am pleased this outcome has been reached having regard to due process and the law. That has prevented what might otherwise have been a complex procedure, that would have caused significant distraction, impact and cost to West Midlands Police and the wider West Midlands. It was important this matter was resolved in a balanced, calm, fair, measured and respectful manner.

The Chief Constable's retirement follows the decision of the Birmingham City Council Safety Advisory Group, based on the recommendation of West Midlands Police, to ban away fans from attending the Europa League football match between Aston Villa and Maccabi Tel Aviv on 6 November 2025.

West Midlands Police have been subjected to, understandable intense and significant oversight and scrutiny as a consequence of events that led to the recommendation it made to the Safety Advisory Group.

That has included the letter from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary that was published as recently as Wednesday 14 January, that set out significant preliminary concerns and shortcomings in relation to preparation and planning by West Midlands Police.

It is important that I acknowledge the many positive achievements and contributions that Craig Guildford has made to policing within the West Midlands during the course of his 3 years tenure as Chief Constable. As Police and Crime Commissioner and on behalf of the people of the West Midlands, I thank him for his service.

I have today appointed Deputy Chief Constable Scott Green, as the Acting Chief Constable. We have already met, to discuss the actions that the force must take to re-build trust and confidence amongst all the people and communities of the West Midlands, including addressing the significant matters identified in the letter from HMIC.

The Acting Chief Constable and I are committed to working together, to prevent and tackle crime, bring offenders to justice, promote the rights and welfare of victims and ensure the safety and security of the people and communities of the West Midlands.

Thank you.

TITLE: PCC refers retired Chief Constable to police watchdog

PUBLISHED: 19 January 2026

AVAILABLE AT: [PCC refers retired Chief Constable to police watchdog - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#)

The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner has today referred former Chief Constable, Craig Guildford, to the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Foster said: "This morning I met with Acting Chief Constable Green and Acting Deputy Chief Constable Mattinson.

"I received assurances that there will be an effective and efficient operational transition following the retirement of the former Chief Constable. The Force's priority will continue to be preventing and tackling crime and keeping the people of the West Midlands safe and secure.

"I welcome today's statement from West Midlands Police. I want to ensure the Force takes comprehensive and immediate action to rebuild the trust and confidence of all our communities across the West Midlands.

"These matters have had a significant impact on public confidence, and the confidence of particular communities in the West Midlands. This is unacceptable. The force know that I expect them to comply with the very highest standards of conduct at all times.

"I will therefore today make a voluntary referral to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) regarding any conduct matters by the former Chief Constable in relation to these events.

"Continuing to hold the Force to account for its actions, arising from the ban on away supporters from attending the football match on 6 November remains a top priority. At my Accountability and Governance Board next Tuesday 27 January, I will be considering in public, a report I have requested from West Midlands Police, and putting questions to the Force. I also await the publication of the Home Affairs Committee report into these matters.

"I acknowledge the continuing and understandable public interest. I will continue to hold West Midlands Police to account. That is absolute, unconditional and non-negotiable."



Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

Police and Crime Commissioner 2026/27 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31

Date: 2 February 2026

Report of: Tom Senior Associate Director, Law & Governance, Dudley MBC -
Lead Officer of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

Report author: Sarah Fradgley, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, Birmingham City
Council

Email: wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk

Phone: 0121 303 1727

1 Purpose

- 1.1 Under [Schedule 5 of The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#) the Panel must review the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed policing precept. This report sets out the legal basis and process for reviewing the precept, including the requirements and steps if the Panel exercises its power of veto.
- 1.2 The Police and Crime Commissioner's report setting out his proposed precept for 2026/2027, revenue budget, capital programme and Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 is attached at Appendix A.

2 Recommendations

The Panel is asked to consider the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed precept and do one of the following:

- a) **Endorse the proposed 2026/27 precept for a Band D property without qualification or comment;**
- b) **Endorse the proposed 2026/27 precept and make recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner; or**
- c) **Veto the proposed 2026/27 precept (by the required majority of at least two-thirds of Panel members (10 members)).**

3 Timetable for reviewing the precept

- 3.1 The Panel's meeting schedule reflects the statutory timetable for the Police and Crime Commissioner's formal notification of the proposed precept and the review by the Police and Crime Panel.
- 3.2 Following this Panel meeting, the Panel must report back to the Commissioner by 8 February 2026.
- 3.3 A provisional meeting date is also held for 16 February 2026, should the Panel use its power of veto requiring the Commissioner to present a revised precept to the Panel.

4 Responsibilities of the Panel

- 4.1 Having considered the Commissioner's precept proposals, the Panel must either:
 - Support the precept without qualification or comment
 - Support the precept and make recommendations
 - Veto the proposed precept (This requires a majority of at least two thirds of the membership of the panel at that time)
- 4.2 The Panel must then submit a formal report to the Commissioner.
- 4.3 The Panel will publish a copy of the report on its website.
www.westmidlandspcp.co.uk
- 4.4 The Commissioner must have regard to the Panel's report (including any recommendations) and provide a formal response to the Panel and publish this response. The Panel will also publish the Commissioner's response on its website.

5 Exercising a Veto

- 5.1 The Panel has the power of veto of the proposed precept. A minimum of two-thirds of the total panel membership is required to veto the proposed precept. In the West Midlands this is 10 members.
- 5.2 If the veto is used, the Panel report made to the Commissioner must provide details of the reason for the veto.
- 5.3 The Commissioner is required to consider the Panel's report and issue a response, including a revised precept. Where the Panel has vetoed the proposal because the precept was too high, the revised precept shall be lower than the original proposal. Where the Panel has vetoed because the precept was too low, the revised precept shall be higher than the original proposed.
- 5.4 The Panel would then meet again on 16 February 2026 to consider the Commissioner's revised precept and make a second report indicating whether the Panel accepts or rejects the revised precept, together with any recommendations made.

5.5 Rejection of the revised precept proposal does not prevent the Commissioner from issuing this as the precept for the financial year. The Commissioner shall have regard to the Panel's second report and any recommendations and provide and publish a response.

6 Finance Implications

6.1 A Police Precept is issued annually by the Police and Crime Commissioner under [Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992](#). The Precept forms part of the Council Tax bills issued by the constituent authorities within the Police Force area. [Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#) specifies that the Commissioner may not issue a precept until the scrutiny process by the Police and Crime Panel has concluded.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The process and timescales associated with the duty of the Panel to review the policing precept are set out in [Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#) and the [Police and Crime Panels \(Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments\) Regulations 2012](#).

8 Equalities Implications

8.1 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex, and sexual orientation.

8.3 The Panel will ensure it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within the West Midlands; and whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

- 8.4 The Panel should ensure that any recommendations which contribute towards reducing inequality, are based on evidence.

9 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix A – Police and Crime Commissioner 2026/27 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan (“MTFP”) 2026/27 to 2030/31.

10 Background Papers

- 10.1 [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)
- 10.2 [Police and Crime Panels \(Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments\) Regulations 2012](#)
- 10.3 [Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992](#)



Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – 2026/27 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan (“MTFP”) 2026/27 to 2030/31

Date: 2 February 2026

Report of: PCC Chief Finance Officer

Report author: Jane Heppel. West Midlands PCC Chief Finance Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner’s proposed 2026/27 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme. It also contains the Capital Strategy, Reserves Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2026/27 to 2030/31.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Band D precept for 2026/27 be set at the maximum allowed under excessiveness principles, currently expected to be **£244.50** per annum, which is an increase of **£15.00** per annum, when compared with 2025/26.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Government is expected to announce the police funding settlement for 2026/27 by 31st January 2026, and this paper is built on the assumption that this will match the draft settlement published on 17th December 2025.
- 3.2. The paper differs from that presented to Panel in the pre-briefing in early January, as a letter was received on 16th January in relation to year 2 of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
- 3.3. If the final settlement is materially different to the draft settlement, the Panel will be provided with a replacement series of appendices and tables for this report, to be tabled at the meeting.
- 3.4. This paper is based on using the maximum precept flexibility allowed to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) under the excessiveness principles for 2026/27. These set out the maximum increase available before a referendum is needed.
- 3.5. There is a statutory requirement for the PCC to set the precept by 1 March, however, the Commissioner seeks to set the annual budget and precept by mid-February to assist Billing Authorities with early dispatch of Council Tax Bills.
- 3.6. Regulations require the PCC to notify the Police and Crime Panel (Panel) of the proposed precept by 1 February, to enable the Panel to review the precept by 8

February 2026.

3.7. The panel does have the power to veto the proposed level and if the veto is exercised the Commissioner would need to consider the Panel's views and respond by 10 February for review by the Panel by 17 February. The Panel must respond by 17 February, but rejection cannot prevent the Commissioner from issuing the precept.

3.8. The Panel's schedule of meetings in February accommodates this timetable should it be needed.

4. 2026/27 Draft Government Grant Settlement

4.1. The main points to note from the draft settlement are as follows:

- A 4.0% increase in Core Grant for all areas, £382.3m in total, £23.4m for West Midlands
- The opportunity for PCCs to raise their precept by up to £15 per year per Band D property in 2026/27
- The provisional core grant settlement for the West Midlands in 2026/27 is £658.5m, which is an increase of £20.6m on the 2025/26 Settlement. This was not consistent with the Commissioner's medium-term financial planning assumptions, derived from the Comprehensive Spending Review.

4.2. The draft settlement contained a single table which showed core grant and precept.

4.3. The lack of detail in the provisional settlement has meant that we do not fully understand the difference in the core grant allocation compared to the total we were expecting, but it is believed to be due to:

- £12.2m reduction due to a top slice of £198m, of which £50m has since been returned for year 2 Neighbourhood Policing grant
- £2.8m reduction due to the reallocation of specific Top Up grant funding

4.4. The additional funding of £20.6m is less than even the increase in Police officer pay and increments of £33.6m, before any other increases are taken into account.

4.5. It is assumed that the £12.2m given for the first year of Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is included in this core grant settlement.

4.6. Additional specific Home Office grant funding allocations which are currently received of £33.6m will not be announced in time for this paper and the budget

has been prepared assuming that they will be received, which is a best-case scenario.

5. Formula Funding review and Precept

- 5.1. The formula used to derive the allocations between Police Force areas has once again been used, containing data from 2013, and frozen in terms of the rollout and release of damping, in 2016.
- 5.2. The allocation received therefore continues to ignore the distribution of new crime types, such as e-scooters and XL Bullies, and areas such as the West Midlands with higher-than-average population growth.
- 5.3. Many commentators have spoken about the need for a funding formula review over the past decade:
- Home Affairs Select Committee 2015
 - Public Accounts Committee November 2018
 - NPCC Report: Strategic Assessment of Workforce: August 2023
 - Chief Inspector of HMICFRS in his Annual Assessment of Policing 2023
- 5.4. The HMICFRS PEEL assessment of the Force in December 2023 noted that, in relation to the West Midlands, the impact of the lack of a formula funding review is that “West Midlands Police’s funding reduced by 13 percent per capita between the year ending 31 March 2014 and year ending 31 March 2020. This means that it has been affected disproportionately compared to some other forces and has little opportunity to obtain additional funds from increasing the police precept. West Midlands Police need to have enough resources to prevent crime and protect the public effectively.”
- 5.5. It remains the case that the single issue which has capacity to increase the resources available to policing and crime reduction in the West Midlands is to reform the funding formula, ensuring that it reflects the current distribution of crime and population in England and Wales.

6. Balances and Reserves

- 6.1. The prudent use of reserves to support spending, continues to be a key factor in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The following table details the anticipated level of reserves as of 31 March 2026 and the estimated level of reserves by 31 March 2027, as per the plans outlined within this budget report. **Appendix 6** contains the proposed Reserves Strategy.

Planned Movements in Reserves relied upon in the 2026/27 budget are as follows:

Reserves £m	Balance @ 31st March 2026	Planned Movement in Reserves 2026/27	Balance @ 31st March 2027
Funding for Planned Expenditure on Projects & Programmes - Revenue			
Regional / National Reserve	8.4	0.0	8.4
PPA / Misuse of Drugs Act	2.0	(0.1)	1.9

POCA (Proceeds of Crime Act) Reserve	1.1	(0.3)	0.8
Change Programme / Estates Strategy Reserve	17.7	(7.2)	10.5
Carry Forward Reserve inc. Grant No Condition	7.4	(3.3)	4.1
Office of PCC	3.4	(0.3)	3.1
Reserves held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management			
Uniform and Equipment Reserve	11.0	0.5	11.5
Budget Reserve	34.4	(5.7)	28.7
National Contingency Reserve	2.7	(0.3)	2.4
Total Earmarked Reserves	88.1	(16.7)	71.4
General Fund Reserve	16.7	0.0	16.7
Total Reserves	104.8	(16.7)	88.1

6.2. Details of the planned movement in Reserves are as follows:

- 6.2.1. **Regional / National / Collaboration reserve** – This reserve will be unused in 2026/27 as there are no plans which require drawdowns and the regional ROCU reserve is expected to be kept at a £0.25m with any underspend in 2025/26 being returned to Forces.
- 6.2.2. **Change Programme / Estates Strategy Reserve** – This reserve has been combined to more effectively use the reserve to meet the needs of change. In 2026/27 most of the planned usage is on large refurbishment programmes in the estate, as well as investing in digital media hubs to improve the investigation of digital crimes and the service to victims.
- 6.2.3. **Carry forward Reserve** - where approved one-off investments and changes cannot be made within a financial year it is customary to allow those to carry forward into the following year to enable work to complete. The use of this fund in 2026/27 is to enable key CBRN equipment to be purchased for regional use.
- 6.2.4. **Drug Squad / PPA Reserve** – The Police Property Act allows the Police to retain in full the money and other assets seized from criminals where that is not recovered under PACE. This contribution is used to partially fund the Commissioner’s My Community Fund, which supports projects across the West Midlands.
- 6.2.5. **POCA Reserve** – The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, allows some of the value of seized criminal assets to be returned to Forces over time as criminal prosecutions come to court. The money is also distributed to other parties involved in these prosecutions. Any amount over that relied upon in-year, to support economic crime and other teams targeting seizures, is returned to this reserve to smooth the time delay between workload, seizure of goods and the return of money through the ARIS mechanism. In 2025/26 and 2026/27 this reserve is also being used to fund Operation Fearless, an operation to enhance problem-oriented policing in key high crime neighbourhoods in the West Midlands.

- 6.2.6. **Budget Reserve** - The budget reserve is held to reduce the impact of financial pressures on service delivery. Due to the scale of the savings required to balance the medium-term plan, the Force has continued to drive savings in 2025/26 from increased income opportunities and reviewing staff vacancies. This will be transferred to the budget reserve and drawn down to help balance the medium-term plan allowing time to generate further long-term sustainable solutions.
- 6.2.7. **Uniform and Equipment Reserve** – This reserve is being utilised to support the initial higher costs of purchasing non-ICE vehicles, along with smoothing out the replacement strategy for IT&D equipment such as mobility devices, airwaves and laptops.
- 6.2.8. **National Contingency Reserve** – This reserve is being utilised to support the purchase of new Tasers which is a nationally mandated upgrade.
- 6.3. The Commissioner needs to maintain an adequate General Reserve balance because:
- As a substantial organisation with a turnover of almost £0.9 billion, there are no other such reserves to call on.
 - There are no budgeted contingencies for very major incidents, which may require significant resource levels for a long period.
- 6.4. The considerations in determining how much of the earmarked reserves should be used in 2026/27, are:
- Retaining the maximum level possible, to support spending in 2026/27 and later years, when resource levels may be constrained, within the context of a tough CSR settlement,
 - Striking a fair balance between how much should be used to support spending over the planning period and by how much the precept should increase,
 - Risks and uncertainties in key budget assumptions, any additional spending in 2026/27, which cannot be met from in year redirections would have to be met from reserves.

7. Proposed Revenue Budget 2026/27

- 7.1. The Commissioner is proposing a Revenue Budget for 2026/27, based on the following:
- The priorities in the Police and Crime Plan
 - The implications of the funding settlement
 - Existing budget commitments and inflationary pressures
 - The continued recruitment of Police Officers to ensure than planned numbers are maintained as detailed in Section 13
 - Providing recurring funding for Operation Fearless, an operation to enhance problem-oriented policing in key high crime neighbourhoods in the West Midlands

- Investing in cyber security, artificial intelligence and robotic process automation to create a resilient police force which uses the most efficient and effective means possible for each task in hand
- Developing digital media hubs in each LPA to enhance the forensic capture from mobile devices and increase the speed and quality of investigations
- Providing improved equipment and technology to frontline officers to support capability, safety and welfare
- Continued work on efficiencies and productivity, to redirect resources to frontline policing as a priority
- Continued support for the Estates Strategy, and implementation of Continuous Improvement methodology to deliver savings and efficiencies in the short to medium term. These will help the Force to continually challenge the way services are provided, maximise innovation and drive efficiency and productivity.

7.2. Recognising that in the medium term, there are significant cost pressures to the Force including inflation and other cost pressures. There is a need to strike a careful balance between spending levels, the use of reserves and a precept increase across medium term.

7.3. The table on the following page analyses the changes between the proposed 2026/27 Revenue Budget, compared to the 2025/26 budget. The subjective analysis of the proposed 2026/27 budget is shown in **Appendix 1**, along with the base budget from 2025/26.

Revenue Budget Movement	Revenue Budget £m	Reserve £m	Net Budget £m
2025/26 Budget	849.2	(13.9)	835.3
Inflation			
Cost of living pay awards 2025 (4.2%) and estimated 2025 (3.0%), incremental pay banding increases	34.2	0.0	34.2
Non-Pay Inflation / Contract Changes	7.7	0.6	8.3
Policing an additional 3 bank holidays	1.7	0.0	1.7
Funding from Reserves			
Remove reliance on reserves (PCC & ROCU)	0.0	0.1	0.1
Movement in Budget Reserve	0.0	(0.1)	(0.1)
Use of Reserves to Fund Ill Health Retirement	0.0	(1.0)	(1.0)
PCC Agreed funding from Reserves	0.3	(0.3)	0.0
Operation Fearless reduced funding from Reserves	(0.3)	0.3	0.0
ICT Mobility Devices (defer budget to 2027/28 when required)	(1.4)	1.4	0.0
CBRN equipment purchased in 2024/25 to cover 2025/26 to 2027/28	3.3	(3.3)	0.0
Other Budget Movements			
Additional Income Generation	(0.8)	(2.4)	(3.2)
Movement in Change Programme Profile	(2.0)	1.9	(0.1)
Change in Capital Spend Profile	0.6	1.0	1.6
New Costs			
Change in Demand	7.8	(1.0)	6.8
Approved investments	2.6	0.0	2.6
Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee			
Increase in NPG Grant (£3.0m additional, £7.1m transferred from PUP Grant (included in Government Grants below the line)	(10.1)	0.0	(10.1)
Full Year impact of 150 year 1 officers	4.9	0.0	4.9
Additional Expenditure to fund 107 year 2 officers	5.2	0.0	5.2
Savings			
Savings	(13.2)	0.0	(13.2)
Reduction in Police Staff Pension rate from 19.8% to 14.3%	(8.6)	0.0	(8.6)
Repayment of Dudley Debt, a PWLB loan and updated MRP profile plus additional interest receivable based on 2025/26 forecasts	(3.8)	0.0	(3.8)
2026/27 Provisional Budget	877.3	(16.7)	860.6

8. Savings

- 8.1. The revenue budget proposal contains plans to deliver £13.2m of savings derived from a Priority Based Budgeting review. This incorporates reductions from contract management in the cost of IT, utilities and staff restructures in corporate communications and Forensics as well as the continued implementation of reducing the size of the estates footprint.
- 8.2. The draft triennial valuation for the LGPS should produce a rebate in the employers' pension contribution for staff, delivering savings of around £8.6m p.a. This is largely a return of monies from the Fund to the employer, recognising that the Fund itself is now more than fully funded. In future years we will not be able to use all of this saving as we focus on rebuilding a pot to call upon if contributions need to rise again. This is likely but not definite as the contribution rate is calculated based on 70% of scenarios delivering a 110% funded position.
- 8.3. There are £3.8m of savings in treasury costs as loans are repaid, the Dudley debt relating to the old West Midlands County Council unwinds and some capital receipts are used to support Fleet expenditure. It also recognises an updated Minimum Revenue Provision profile and a predicted increase in interest receivable based on the 2025/26 forecast, but with an allowance for reducing interest rates.

9. Investments

- 9.1. The Force is growing in certain areas of high demand or growing need such as cyber security, artificial intelligence, robotics and process automation, intelligence and major crime. Some of this growth is as a result of a planned partnership with the National Crime Agency to focus on organised crime in the region.

10. Increased Demand

- 10.1. The increased numbers of positive outcomes over the past year have led to a need to spend more on custody services such as interpreters and doctors' statements, as well as Digital and Telecom forensics and detention escort officers.
- 10.2. There will be a £1.4m increase in vehicle costs and maintenance costs, which is the result of a larger fleet, supporting the highest number of officers that the Force has had since 2010.
- 10.3. There is an increase of £2.6m in the provision for the cost of ill health retirements, although the Force continues to work with external partners to promote measures to prevent ill health and deal with it quickly and effectively when it arises to successfully return people to work. In view of the fact that this may represent a backlog, this is supported by the use of £1 million in reserves.

11. Police and Crime Commissioner Office

- 11.1. The Office supports the functions of the PCC, including commissioned services, statutory external audit, supporting victims, engaging with the public, joint internal audit, running grants schemes, custody visiting, managing complaints

appeals and responsibility for overseeing, scrutinising, and leading the police force.

- 11.2. The Office is responsible for victim services in the region, including supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. For many of these grant funded schemes, the Office absorbs the overhead ensuring the maximum amount of money is allocated to the recipients of these services. The Office continues to support projects such as the Regional Criminal Justice Forum, on behalf of the four-regional force / OPCC areas.
- 11.3. The budget has been refocussed on improved governance and a commitment to invest in regular public engagement and surveys. This will improve the ability to hold the Force to account and measure public perceptions.
- 11.4. The proposed budget for the Police and Crime Commissioner's office for 2026/27, compared to the budget for 2025/26, is shown in the table below. The 2026/27 budget includes provisions for the impact of the pay awards and staff increments.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Breakdown	Budget 2025/26	Proposed Budget 2026/27
	£,000	£,000
Governance	426	416
Staff and Office Support costs	2,756	2,877
Consultation, ICT and Supplies and Services	101	214
Police Misconduct Hearings including Legally Qualified Chairs	40	48
Subscriptions	95	99
Bank Charges and External Audit Fees	186	191
Custody Visiting	15	26
Professional Services	118	123
Gross Budget	3,737	3,994
Use of Reserves		(17)
Total Budget	3,737	3,977

- 11.5. The total budget of the Police and Crime Commissioner's office, including net spending on the Violence Reduction Unit, and Victims grants, as well as community safety funding, amounts to 1.4% of the overall net revenue budget of the Force and OPCC combined.

12. Operational Policing Budget

12.1. In accordance with the Scheme of Consent, it is necessary for the Commissioner to approve an operational policing budget, which can be delegated as detailed within the Scheme of Consent. It is consistent with policies and priorities included in the Police and Crime Plan. The proposed operational policing budget is set out in **Appendix 2**. This represents, in more detail, a cost centre-based view of Operational and non-Operational policing in the West Midlands.

13. Staffing Budgets 2026/27

13.1. The Home Office have set one conditional workforce grant for 2026/27, the Neighbourhood Policing ringfence grant, worth £22.3m. We are awaiting full details around the final force-level targets linked to this grant; our current working assumptions are detailed in the table below.

Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee	Officer FTE	PCSO FTE
31 st March 2025 Baseline	387	245
Year 1 Uplift	289	20
Year 2 Uplift	107	0
31st March 2027 Target	783	265

13.2. To support the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, whilst maintaining affordability, the police officer establishment is built upon:

13.3. Maintaining the Target National Uplift headcount of 8,086, less 32 FTE, which will be redistributed to Neighbourhood Policing due to the reduction in Top Up grant funding following reallocation into the main Police Grant.

- Maintaining the additional 30 FTE agreed by the Commissioner in the 2024/25 budget for Local Policing and Public Protection.
- Maintaining the 150 FTE increase agreed as part of year 1 of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
- Increase by a further 107 FTE as part of year 2 of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
- **A net increase of 75 FTE Officers.**

Officer Headcount Breakdown	Headcount	FTE
PUP Target from 2025/26	8,086	7,946
Redistribution to Neighbourhood Policing	(32)	(32)
Precept Uplift	30	30
Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee	150	150
Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee	107	107
Total 2026/27 Target	8,341	8,201

13.4. Further consideration will need to be given to the overall Headcount and FTE once the continuation of the CTU, County Lines and GRIP funding have been confirmed, where we currently employ approximately 500 officers.

The PCSO establishment is therefore built on maintaining the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee FTE, plus a further 35 FTE key posts.

PCSO FTE Breakdown	FTE
Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee	265
Other PCSO roles	35
2026/27 PCSO Total	300

13.5. The police staff budget for 2026/27 is based on an establishment of 4,440 FTE, however, there is a 7.5% vacancy factor built (which equates to 333 FTE vacant posts) to set a balanced budget. The consequence of this is that if our strength goes above 4,107 FTE, we are at risk of overspending against this budget line. This will be monitored closely throughout the year.

14. Medium Term Financial Plan

14.1. The Medium-Term Financial Plan has been refreshed and updated, based on a number of key assumptions covering likely funding, inflationary increases, expenditure items and the maintenance of the uplift headcount. The table below outlines these assumptions.

Planning Assumptions by Expenditure Type	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	1% Movement £m (+/-)
Salaries	2.5%	2.5%	2.0%	2.0%	8.3
Supplies & Services	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	0.9
Premises including utilities	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.4
Income	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	0.4
Fuel	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.1
Other Transport	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	0.1
Third Party Payments	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	0.4
Police Grant	3.3%	1.7%	2.0%	2.0%	6.2
Tax Base	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	2.0
Precept (£)	£14	£14	£14	£14	0.8

14.2. The Medium-Term Financial Plan, reflecting the assumptions outlined above, is shown in the table below. Assuming a £14 precept increase from 2027/28 to 2030/31, the forecast funding gap is currently £14.7m in 2027/28 growing to £53.8m over the medium term.

Police Force Net Expenditure £m	Proposed Budget 2026/27	MTFP 2027/28	MTFP 2028/29	MTFP 2029/30	MTFP 2030/31
Salaries including Overtime	828.9	862.0	899.1	932.4	961.2
Non-Pay Expenditure	189.0	201.5	208.0	208.4	216.7
Income	(139.4)	(141.2)	(143.9)	(146.5)	(149.0)
Change Programme including Estates	8.8	8.2	4.0	3.8	2.6
Total Police Force Expenditure	887.2	930.5	967.1	998.1	1,031.5
Police & Crime Commissioner	12.4	12.9	13.2	13.7	14.2
Total Expenditure	899.6	943.4	980.4	1,011.8	1,045.7
Police Grant	(672.8)	(693.1)	(704.2)	(717.2)	(730.6)
Specific Grants	(22.3)	(22.3)	(22.3)	(22.3)	(22.3)
Precept	(187.8)	(201.5)	(214.5)	(228.0)	(241.8)
Planned Contribution to / (from) Reserves	(16.7)	(11.7)	(7.5)	3.0	2.8
Potential Savings Required	0.0	14.7	31.8	47.2	53.8

14.3. There are a number of outstanding risks yet to be added into the medium-term plan. These include:

- The impact if pay awards are higher than the 3% assumption for 2026/27, 2.5% for 2027/28 and 2028/29, and 2.0% for 2029/30 and 2030/31.
- Higher than anticipated non-pay inflation.
- Revenue consequences of nationally led ICT schemes, the NLED Programme, which will replace legacy data systems, such as Police National Computer and Police National Database, with the Law Enforcement Data Service (LEDS).
- Savings from adopting proposals in the Police Productivity Review.
- The cost of adequately refurbishing buildings and fleet to meet environmental targets for decarbonisation which have been reported to the Home Office as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review but not yet incorporated into this medium term financial plan.

15. Capital Programme

15.1. The capital programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31, is detailed in **Appendix 4**. The Capital Programme will be financed by a combination of revenue contributions, capital receipts, and short-term internal borrowing, as required.

16. Prudential Guidelines

16.1. In relation to capital financing, the Commissioner is required to set a number of prudential indicators, and these are covered in detail in **Appendix 7**.

17. Risks and Uncertainties

17.1. Details of the risks and uncertainties inherent in these Budget proposals are summarised in **Appendix 8**.

18. Precept Implications

18.1. The statutory calculations, required by Local Government Finance Act 1992, are shown in **Appendix 5**.

19. Chief Finance Officer's Statement

19.1. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, requires the CFO to report to the Commissioner on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the statutory budget calculations and the adequacy of financial reserves and the Commissioner must have regard to that report when making decisions about the statutory budget calculations.

19.2. This is made challenging due to the partial and incomplete nature of the draft settlement information. However, in relation to the precept decision, there is no doubt that any estimates show that the full precept flexibility is required.

19.3. **Appendix 8** analyses the risks and implications if key budget assumptions vary during the year. Any overspendings which cannot be contained within approved budget levels will have to be financed from the Budget Reserve.

19.4. Details of the Commissioners general balances and reserves are set out in **Section 4** of the report.

19.5. I am recommending that the level of General Balances remains at £16.7m.

19.6. The 2026/27 Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan requires a use of reserves.

19.7. I have advised the Commissioner that I believe this represents an entirely reasonable, balanced and prudent approach, given current levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan and the levels of Government resources likely to be available in the medium term.

19.8. The Insurance fund will continue to be maintained at a level consistent with the insurance cost borne by the Commissioner's reserve and the level of outstanding self-funding insurance claims at any time. Financing for the Capital Programme includes the use of borrowing, capital receipts, capital grant and

revenue contributions. Other earmarked reserves will be applied as expenditure levels and service requirements dictate.

19.9. It will be necessary to retain as much flexibility as possible over the levels of reserves.

19.10. The total level of revenue reserves is estimated to be around £88.1m by 31st March 2027, depending on the use of earmarked reserves and the other factors influencing the use of reserves in 2026/27.

19.11. I am therefore able to confirm that, in my professional opinion:

- The estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the commissioner's budget requirement for 2026/27, under Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 contained in the report are robust.
- The Financial reserves that will remain available to the Commissioner, as a result of agreeing the proposals contained in this report are adequate.

20. Finance Implications

20.1. This report solely deals with financial issues.

21. Legal Implications

21.1. Section 40, Local Government Finance Act 1992, requires the Commissioner to set a budget and precept by 1 March each year.

21.2. The Commissioner must ensure that the precept is sufficient to provide for the expenditure estimates it will incur in the year in performing functions, defraying outstanding expenditure incurred earlier, an expenditure before precepts become sufficiently available and any payments into reserves.

21.3. The Localism Act 2011 abolished the council tax capping regime and replaced it with the requirement for precepting authorities to hold a taxpayer's referendum if excessive increase is proposed. In 2026/27, an excessive increase would be £15.01 or greater.

21.4. Information contained in this decision is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation. This decision will be made available on the Commissioner's website.

22. Equalities Implications

22.1. The budget provides for the continuation and development of policing services for all people in the West Midlands, irrespective of their protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, regional or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Both the Commissioner and the Force are committed to delivering the principles, strategies and priorities of their respective Equality Schemes.

Schedule of Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Summary of Revenue Budgets for 2025/26 and 2026/27

Appendix 2 – Operational Budget 2026/27

Appendix 3 – Capital Strategy 2026/27 – 2030/31

Appendix 4 – Capital Programme 2026/27 – 2030/31

Appendix 5 – Statutory Council Tax calculations 2026/27

Appendix 6 – Reserves Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31

Appendix 7 – Statement of Prudential Indicators

Appendix 8 – Risk Assessment

Appendix 1 – Summary of Revenue Budgets for 2025/26 and 2026/27

Income and Expenditure Breakdown	2025/26 Budget £,000	2026/27 Budget £,000
Police Pay	557,361	593,390
Police Community Support Officers	12,485	12,490
Police Staff Pay	221,881	222,977
Other Employee Expenses	17,653	20,111
Sub Total	809,380	848,968
Premises	33,034	32,321
Transport	12,745	13,754
Supplies and Services	81,294	86,683
Third Party Payments	25,959	26,254
Capital Financing	16,089	9,851
External Income	(134,657)	(139,439)
Neighbourhood Policing Grant	(12,211)	(22,330)
Change Programme including Estates Strategy	6,281	8,823
Police Force	837,914	864,885
Office of Police and Crime Commissioner	3,737	3,993
Community Safety Funding	3,520	3,625
Helping Communities Fund	400	412
External Commissioning	2,679	3,011
Victim Services Expenditure	6,697	7,070
Victim Services Income	(6,049)	(6,170)
Violence Reduction Unit Expenditure	5,911	5,593
Violence Reduction Unit Income	(5,587)	(5,118)
Total Office of the PCC	11,308	12,416
Total Revenue Budget	849,222	877,301
Net Use of Reserves	(13,902)	(16,709)
Net Budget Requirements	835,320	860,592
Government Grants	(659,302)	(672,830)
Council Tax including Surplus on Collection Fund *	(176,018)	(187,762)

Appendix 2 – Operational Budgets 2026/27

The tables below detail the operational budgets for the Force for 2026/27.

Operational Budget £,000	2026/27 Proposed Budget
Pay, Allowances & Overtime	828,857
Non-Pay Costs	179,123
Capital Financing	9,851
External Income	(139,439)
Total Operational Budget	878,392
Change Programme including Estates Strategy	8,823
Neighbourhood Policing Grant	(22,330)
Total Police Force Budget	864,885

Operational Budget Breakdown £,000	Pay, Allowances & Overtime	Non-Pay Costs	Capital Financing	Income	Total Operational Budget
Local Policing	297,311	1,291	0	(4,331)	294,271
Major Crime	213,812	21,020	0	(14,521)	220,311
Commercial & People Services inc. Student Officer Salaries	72,959	115,486	9,801	(14,587)	183,659
Force Contact & Change	76,779	467	0	(299)	76,947
Operations	77,231	11,655	49	(27,234)	61,701
Security	71,619	26,271	1	(78,154)	19,737
DCC	19,146	2,933	0	(313)	21,766
Total Operational Budget	828,857	179,123	9,851	(139,439)	878,392

Appendix 3 – Capital Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30

23. Background and Introduction

- 1.1. The CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes, require all local authorities (which includes Policing Bodies), to prepare a capital strategy report and there is a need for the Capital Strategy to be approved before the start of each financial year.
- 1.2. The Capital Strategy for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the West Midlands and West Midlands Police, is a key overarching document and sets out the policy framework for developing, managing, and monitoring capital investment.

24. Purpose

- 24.1. This Capital Strategy provides a framework for the development of the Capital Programme which sets out the investment in assets and identifies the resources required for that investment. It also represents the intentions for capital investment reflective of strategic priorities, objectives, and outcomes. Guiding the importance of a link from capital investment to strategic outcomes.
- 24.2. To sustain this service and meet the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan, the Capital Strategy also gives an overview of how the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will apply the principles set out in the CIPFA Prudential Code to test the affordability of the Capital Strategy. It is therefore also closely linked to the Reserves Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy which includes the Investment Strategy, Borrowing Strategy and Prudential Indicators.
- 24.3. Additionally, this strategy aligns to the Police and Crime Plan and demonstrates how investment decisions properly take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, risk, sustainability, and affordability.
- 24.4. The capital strategy sits below the Police and Crime plan and the Force Vision. The detailed strategies for Estates, Fleet, Environmental Sustainability and IT and digital are used to plan, prioritise and co-ordinate resources for the long-term capital plan.

25. Background and Introduction

- 25.1. The CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes, require all local authorities (which includes Policing Bodies), to prepare a capital strategy report and there is a need for the Capital Strategy to be approved before the start of each financial year.
- 25.2. The Capital Strategy for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the West Midlands and West Midlands Police, is a key overarching document and sets out the policy framework for developing, managing, and monitoring capital investment.

26. Purpose

- 26.1. This Capital Strategy provides a framework for the development of the Capital Programme which sets out the investment in assets and identifies the resources required for that investment. It also represents the intentions for capital

investment reflective of strategic priorities, objectives, and outcomes. Guiding the importance of a link from capital investment to strategic outcomes.

- 26.2. To sustain this service and meet the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan, the Capital Strategy also gives an overview of how the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will apply the principles set out in the CIPFA Prudential Code to test the affordability of the Capital Strategy. It is therefore also closely linked to the Reserves Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy which includes the Investment Strategy, Borrowing Strategy and Prudential Indicators.
- 26.3. Additionally, this strategy aligns to the Police and Crime Plan and demonstrates how investment decisions properly take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, risk, sustainability, and affordability.
- 26.4. The capital strategy sits below the Police and Crime plan and the Force Vision. The detailed strategies for Estates, Fleet, Environmental Sustainability and IT and digital are used to plan, prioritise and co-ordinate resources for the long-term capital plan.
- 26.5. The operation of all these strategies and plans is underpinned by the Code of Corporate Governance which includes Contract Procedure Rules and the Force's Financial Regulations.
- 26.6. The strategy also considers how any associated risks are managed and the implications of future financial sustainability.

27. Scope

- 27.1. In managing capital investment for the Police and Crime Commissioner and West Midlands Police, this strategy considers the following areas:
 - Governance Framework
 - Capital Expenditure Priorities
 - Capital Investment Priorities
 - Prioritisation Approach
 - Capital Funding
 - Monitoring Capital Projects
 - Benefits Realisation
 - Risk Management

28. Governance Framework

- 28.1. A Financial Governance Board has been established which meets monthly and has an overview of the progress in terms of financial position, and benefits realisation. It will ensure that capital priorities are aligned to organisational priorities and see reports on revenue impact as well.
- 28.2. It sets the prioritisation framework, setting out the terms and approvals for business cases and business as usual capital plans against an agreed prioritisation framework.
- 28.3. This works in line with the 2-gateway process that is currently in place. An outline business case is prepared first and may inform the strategy and MTFP with

provisional figures. However, then a full business case is prepared which may require modification.

- 28.4. The board decisions are made based upon the presentation of a business case / recommendation. These are considered and challenged at the meeting; attendees include the Director of Commercial Services, Chief Finance Officer for the PCC, Assistant Director of Finance & Procurement, and other key stakeholders as required.
- 28.5. The business case process includes a rigorous process of options appraisal including identifying the needs and benefits (both financial and non-financial) of the proposal, the associated risks and the costs profiled over the life of the project (revenue and capital).
- 28.6. All the investment decisions made follow Force Standing Orders and the usual approvals process, via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 28.7. Plans will only be revised and updated following the approval given at the Investment Board. These will then be built into the longer-term capital plan which forms part of the revenue and capital budget setting process of the Force. The budget plans are presented to the Accountability and Governance Board and the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel to ensure that there is a wide opportunity for challenge and scrutiny. Following on from this process the PCC formally approves the decision to accept the budget proposal.
- 28.8. The delivery of the capital plan is monitored monthly by the S151 Officers for the Force and the PCC and quarterly, via reports that are presented to the Accountability and Governance Board.
- 28.9. To underpin the capital investment, each year a Treasury Management Strategy is produced, which incorporates the Commissioner's investment strategy and approach to borrowing (The capital investment programme is the key driver of treasury management activity). This report is written by the CFOs of the PCC and the Chief Constable and is presented to the Joint Audit Committee in March each year for consideration before being approved by the Commissioner. Copies of the strategy can be found on <https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/finance/annual-investment-strategies/> for each relevant year. The Joint Audit Committee also receive update reports throughout the year on the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy.

29. Capital Expenditure

- 29.1. As part of the Medium-Term Financial Planning (MTFP), West Midlands Police takes a forward view of the Forces' asset needs to meet its future objectives. The MTFP links very closely with the Police and Crime Plan 2025-29 in assessing where capital investment priorities may lie.
- 29.2. In addition to the change programme the capital programme also provides for business-as-usual expenditure (BAU) such as the replacement of fleet vehicles, replacement or upgrade of core IT systems and equipment not related to change programmes but meeting the definition of capital expenditure.
- 29.3. To meet the definition of capital, the expenditure incurred must result in the acquisition, construction, or enhancement of a fixed asset (either tangible or

intangible). In the case of enhancement this must be to prolong the life of or increase the market value of the asset.

29.4. The overarching capital strategy considers and links in the various strategies including estates, fleet, environmental and IT.

30. Capital Investment Priorities

30.1. The PCC's Police and Crime Plan 2025-29 states the priorities and ambitions over the medium term. These are summarised as:

- Rebuilding Community Policing,
- Preventing and Tackling Violence,
- Improving Road and Travel Safety,
- Preventing and Reducing Neighbourhood Crime,
- Protecting Victims and Witnesses,
- Building Trust and Confidence,
- An equal and fair West Midlands,
- Bringing offenders to Justice,
- Prevention and Rehabilitation

30.2. In delivering those priorities, the Plan also sets goals for how Partnerships, People and Resources and Accountability and Governance will support and embed those goals.

30.3. The Plan contains the following statements from the PCC:

- The police estate is a significant asset for the benefit of the people and communities of the West Midlands and WMP. It is imperative that we drive the greatest possible value out of it by ensuring well designed spaces to maximise productivity, efficiency, accessibility to the public and personal wellbeing. This will include collaborating and sharing space with other public bodies including West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service and local authorities.
- I expect WMP to proactively scan for emerging trends and prioritise the effective and efficient use of new and existing technology, ensuring that police officers and staff have the right hardware and software to undertake their roles to the best of their abilities. Use of new technology will be lawful, ethical and proportionate at national, regional and local levels. I expect equality impact assessments to be undertaken for the deployment of new technology to ensure lawfulness, fairness and inclusivity.
- The resources of WMP and how they are used leave a carbon footprint. I expect WMP to play its part in delivering decarbonisation and Net Zero including: complying with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008 and working with partners to achieve this across the public sector; increasing the number of officers deployed on bicycles or foot; using technology to reduce its carbon footprint and enhance operational efficiency; reducing the carbon footprint of the police estate; increasing the proportion of its vehicle

fleet that are electric or low carbon; and implementing the WMP Environmental and Sustainability Strategy 2022-2027.

30.4. The capital strategy and capital programme underpin both the local and national priorities in the investments it makes, particularly in relation to making the best use of resources and creating a modern police service. The investments made through the IT & Digital's new approach and the Estates strategy enhance and improve the service for both staff and citizens by providing up to date technology and systems and creating better working environments, optimising available space.

30.5. Given the significant scope of ambition of the strategy a prioritisation matrix is to be used in approval of capital investments as set out below against which business cases and BAU capital activity requests can be more objectively prioritised.

31. Prioritisation Approach

31.1. The Capital Strategy is led by the priorities outlined in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan. It translates these priorities into a programme of projects in the PCC's Capital Programme that will achieve the intended outcome whilst also factoring in other key criteria that make different business cases attractive when pursuing those aims.

31.2. West Midlands Police will set out which of the priorities are key based on the latest plans, to provide some initial rationale to the prioritisation decisions and so people know where to focus their attention. Consideration will be given to the following key areas:

- Strength of the link to PCC priorities
- Affordability / financial savings
- Minimisation of Risk
- Improvement of organisational functions.

31.3. This would allow a rational debate about the relative merits of projects and in the event of a restriction on resources a way of ordering schemes.

- Assets are vital to the delivery of efficient services, and so the optimum use of resources whilst securing best value in relation to both cost and quality are key considerations.
- An asset management plan/strategy for each asset classification is held and contains specific details of each asset including the longevity and optimum replacement cycles.
- The capital investment priorities, because of the above will include:
 - Police Buildings to ensure they are fit for purpose and cost effective
 - ICT and systems to exploit the operational and organisational benefits of new technology
 - Operational equipment such as Tasers and Body Worn Cameras
 - Police Vehicles
 - Environmental Considerations

32. Capital Funding Strategy

- 32.1. Under the provision of the Prudential Code, the PCC can invest in a capital programme so long as its capital spending plans are “affordable, prudent and sustainable”.
- 32.2. The Capital Programme is reflected in the PCC’s Treasury Management Strategy, which is reviewed by the Joint Audit Committee. It sets out the Prudential Indicators, which determine the limits set against the requirements of affordability, prudence, and sustainability.
- 32.3. The PCC, in consultation with the Chief Constable, will identify available sources of funding for the Medium-Term Capital Programme including the identification of potential capital receipts from the disposal of property.
- 32.4. The sources of funding available to the PCC to finance capital expenditure are detailed below:
- 32.5. **Revenue Contributions** - In some circumstances the Force does allow revenue contributions to be made to fund capital expenditure. This is usually where a piece of equipment is locally purchased but meets the definition of a capital asset. Where affordable within achieving a balanced budget and cashflow – this method of finance avoids the need to pay interest. It is currently WMP preferred method of funding BAU – but this must be planned carefully and budgeted into the revenue budgets at a sustainable level, with due care that revenue to capital contributions do not affect front line service adversely.
- 32.6. **Government Grants** - The Force also receives a small number and low value of in year other specific grants, which could be spent as capital or revenue to fund specific projects. Where possible additional grant income and plans to deliver should be sought.
- 32.7. In addition to the funding given to the Force some specific grants are also received by the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) and these fund expenditures specific to the CTU.
- 32.8. **Capital Receipts** - The financing of the estate’s development programme is dependent on the release of property assets for sale. Achieving the full investment programme will be dependent on progressing schemes listed on the development schedule or identifying alternative assets for disposal.
- 32.9. **Prudential Borrowing** - The introduction of the 2004 Prudential Code enabled PCCs, like local Authorities, to determine their own level of capital investment controlled by self-regulation. It gives PCCs the ability to borrow provided that the borrowing is prudent, sustainable, and affordable.
- 32.10. **Internal Borrowing** – allows the PCC / Force to use its own cash resources to finance capital expenditure rather than new external borrowing. This is a prudent approach when investment returns are low.
- 32.11. In addition to revenue and funding considerations full cashflow considerations and appropriate treasury management advice should be considered in relation to levels of capital expenditure and financing decisions.

33. Monitoring Capital Projects

- 33.1. Capital projects are subject to high levels of scrutiny. The precise scrutiny will vary dependant on the type of project and may be influenced by size or by the

makeup of regional involvement. Each project will have a Project Manager and potentially a team to implement the project.

33.2. Typically, projects will have a dedicated Project Board which, if part of a larger programme, may sit under a Programme Board. Programme and Project Boards will have a Senior Responsible Officer.

33.3. Heads of Department have overall responsibility for ensuring that the objectives are met for all projects, but particular focus will be placed on ensuring that high-profile projects are delivered on time, achieving the intended outcome and good progress is being made in delivering the programme within planned capital and revenue funding set out in the current year's budget, the Capital Programme and the MTFP.

33.4. Progress against the capital programme, including considerations of capital financing, is reported quarterly to our Finance Governance Board and a summary position to Performance Panel / Force Executive and the Accountability and Governance Board.

33.5. The following measures have been put in place to mitigate the risk of slippage in the Capital Programme:

- Comprehensive assessment of project risks during the development of the business case for each scheme
- Continual monitoring of the project's progress will help to identify reasons for delays in delivery so that appropriate action can be taken.

34. Benefits Realisation Review

34.1. Upon completion of a capital project, consideration will be given to the use of a Post Implementation Review (PIR). This review will provide a check against the performance compared to the original proposal. It will focus on the outcomes achieved both financial and non-financial, the extent to which the benefits claimed are being realised, and the actual costs both revenue and capital. Using these types of review, we would look to capture learning that can inform our future projects and programmes for the better. The Investment Board would receive updates on PIR's to ensure that it can act on lessons learned.

35. Risk Management

35.1. Risk in relation to capital investment projects should be escalated to the Investment Board. However, the normal risk register process is used to report on all risks. The effectiveness of the controls is tested as part of the Audit Plan and subject to the scrutiny of the Joint Audit Committee. Performance Panel will consider risk as part of the individual business cases and monitoring of activity. It can also identify risks and ensure their inclusion in the risk register. New risks can be added to the risk register at any time.

Appendix 4 – Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31

The table below details the Capital Programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31.

Capital Programme £m	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
Fleet	7.7	7.9	8.0	8.2	8.4	40.2
Body Worn Video	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	6.4
Laptops / Desktops	2.2	3.5	9.4	1.5	3.4	20.0
IT Infrastructure including CCTV	1.9	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	5.3
Airwave	0.0	0.0	11.2	5.6	0.0	16.8
CTU Capital Programme (estimate)	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.4	3.3	16.1
Estates Strategy	21.3	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.3
Total	37.1	27.0	33.8	20.9	17.3	136.1
Financed by:						
Revenue Contributions	12.4	14.6	19.5	11.9	14.0	72.4
Capital Grants	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.4	3.3	16.1
Capital Receipts	21.7	9.1	11.2	5.6	0.0	30.8
Total Funding	37.1	27.0	33.8	20.9	17.3	136.1

Appendix 5 – Statutory Council Tax calculations 2026/27

The table below details the statutory Council Tax calculations for 2026/27.

The table below shows a summary of the precept calculation, including the notified Collection Fund net surplus and compares the precept level with last year's figures.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Summary Precept Calculation		
Total Revenue Budget	849.2	877.3
Contribution to / from Reserves	(13.9)	(16.7)
Net Budget Requirement	835.3	860.6
Police Grant inc. DCLG	(579.1)	(623.3)
National Insurance Grant	(11.6)	(11.6)
Pension Grant	(18.9)	(18.9)
Additional Recruitment Top Up	(9.3)	0.0
Council Tax Support Grant	(19.0)	(19.0)
Ringfenced PUP Grant	(21.4)	0.0
Surplus / Deficit on Collection Fund*	(0.6)	0.9
Precept Requirement	175.4	188.7
Total Tax Base*	764,370.5	771,776.6
Band D Precept+	229.5	244.5
* Provisional		
+ An increase of £15.00 per annum		

This produces a charge for each property for 2026/27 as follows.

Band	Statutory Proportion	2025/26 Precept £: p	2026/27 Precept £: p	Change Annual £: p	Change Weekly £: p
Band A	6/9	153.00	163.00	10.00	0.19
Band B	7/9	178.50	190.17	11.67	0.22
Band C	8/9	204.00	217.33	13.33	0.26
Band D	9/9	229.50	244.50	15.00	0.29
Band E	11/9	280.50	298.83	18.33	0.35
Band F	13/9	331.50	353.17	21.67	0.42
Band G	15/9	382.50	407.50	25.00	0.48
Band H	18/9	459.00	489.00	30.00	0.58

Appendix 6 – Reserves Strategy

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This document sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands Reserves strategy up until March 2031. This includes details of reserves currently held, the purpose of the reserves and the predicted balances by 31 March 2031.

3. Reasons for holding reserves

- 3.1. The PCC must consider the required level of general policing fund balances that should be retained before deciding the level of council tax precept. General balances are maintained as a matter of prudence and to meet financial risks. They enable the PCC to provide for known and unknown risks and offer financial resilience.
- 3.2. Earmarked reserves are retained for specific risks and planned investments.
- 3.3. Provisions are retained for specific purposes or for known future financial obligations.
- 3.4. The reserves strategy has been drawn up within the parameters of the Financial Regulations adopted by the Police and Crime Commissioner. The use and maintenance of reserves is based on the following principles:
- Maintaining a working balance or general reserve to cover the effects of uneven cash flows and to avoid temporary borrowing.
 - Reserves in place to provide flexibility in managing future year's budget pressures.
 - Funding investment in the Change Programme including the Estates Strategy.
 - Earmarking specific funds to meet known or predicted requirements in the future.
 - Creating contingencies to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies.
- 3.5. The reserves are split into two categories:
- i. Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes
 - ii. As a general contingency or resource to meet other expenditure needs held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management.

4. Reserves Strategy

- 4.1. The Commissioner's overall reserves strategy is to use reserves over the medium term up to 2031 to support the medium-term financial strategy including the Change Programme and Estates Strategy. Over the next 5 years we will look to use a net £30.1m of reserves as detailed in the table below:

Contribution to / (From) Reserves £m	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Estates Strategy / Change Programme	(7.1)	(4.6)	(1.4)	(1.1)	(1.0)
Carry Forward Reserve	(3.3)	(3.3)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uniform and Equipment Reserves	0.4	(3.5)	(6.0)	4.2	3.9
Budget Reserve	(5.7)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Police Property Act / Drug Squad	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)
Office of PCC	(0.3)	(0.2)	0.0	0.0	0.0
POCA	(0.2)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
National contingency	(0.4)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	(16.7)	(11.7)	(7.5)	3.0	2.8

4.2. Details of the planned movement in Reserves are as follows:

- The uniform and equipment reserve is being utilised to support the conversion of our fleet to non-ICE vehicles, along with smoothing out the costs of our IT&D replacement programme for mobility devices, laptops and airwaves.
- The Estates Strategy / Change Programme is being used to support the refurbishment costs of the estate's strategy (where expenditure cannot be capitalised), along with the one-off investment costs of our change projects.
- Balancing the 2026/27 budget utilising the budget reserve, including £1m to support the increased provision for the cost of ill health retirements whilst the Force continues to work with external partners to promote measures to prevent ill health and deal with it quickly and effectively when it arises to successfully return people to work.
- The carry forward is the draw down of the years 2 and 3 of the income received during 2024/25 to fund the CBRN PPE to mitigate the risks around future supply.
- The office of the PCC is drawing down prior year underspends to support ongoing activity along with £0.5m use of reserve to enhance the visibility of the Victims Code of Practice, driving an increase in public trust and confidence.
- The POCA reserve is being utilised to support Operation Fearless, an operation to enhance problem-oriented policing in key high crime neighbourhoods in the West Midlands.
- The national contingency reserve is being support the legal costs associated with the ongoing Hillsborough legal compensation claims.

4.3. The budget reserve is currently being held at current levels from 2027/28 onwards, however we will look to draw down on this to support setting a balanced budget over the medium term.

- 4.4. The table below details the current level of reserves held from the outturn for March 2026 through to the forecasted level by March 2031 based on use of / contribution to reserves detailed above.

Reserves £m	31st March 2026 Forecast	31st March 2027 Forecast	31st March 2028 Forecast	31st March 2029 Forecast	31st March 2030 Forecast	31st March 2031 Forecast
Funding for Planned Expenditure on Projects & Programmes - Revenue						
Regional / National Reserve	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4
PPA / Misuse of Drugs Act	2.0	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.3
POCA (Proceeds of Crime Act) Reserve	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Change Programme / Estates Strategy Reserve	17.7	10.5	5.9	4.6	3.5	2.5
Carry Forward Reserve inc. Grant No Condition	7.4	4.1	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Office of PCC	3.4	3.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Funding for Planned Expenditure on Projects & Programmes – Capital						
Useable Capital Receipts Reserve	14.8	17.7	19.2	8.0	2.4	2.4
Capital Grants Unapplied	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Reserves held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management						
Uniform and Equipment Reserve	11.0	11.5	8.0	2.0	6.2	10.2
Budget Reserve	34.4	28.7	28.7	28.7	28.7	28.7
National Contingency Reserve	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
Total Earmarked Reserves	103.7	89.9	77.8	59.2	56.5	59.3
General Fund Reserve	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7
Total Useable Reserves	120.4	106.6	94.5	75.9	73.2	76.0
Provisions	24.2	20.7	18.0	16.1	16.1	16.1
Total Useable Reserves & Provisions	144.6	127.3	112.5	92.0	89.4	92.2

- 4.5. The total reserves of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner forecast as of 31 March 2026 is 17.3% of the net revenue budget (NRB), if funding is used as planned by March 2027 this will reduce to around 15.3% of the forecast NRB, dropping to 9.8% by the end of March 2031.

5. Individual Reserves

- 5.1. The following paragraphs provide an explanation of each reserve split by Home Office Category.

5.2. **Category (i) Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes**

Regional / National / Collaboration Reserve

This reserve includes balances held for regional and national projects and Operations including the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU), National Ballistics Intelligence Service (NaBIS), Mounted Unit, Lock-Up Museum,

Collaborations such as Forensics and Public Order Training, Road Safety Enforcement and County Lines. This reserve is therefore held by West Midlands on behalf of ourselves and other forces and partners. This reserve has been generated from in year under spends and will be agreed and drawn down annually over the course of the medium term in line with decisions made at the respective boards to support operational activity.

Change Programme / Estates Strategy Reserve

This reserve has been combined to more effectively use the reserve to meet the needs of change. In 2026/27 most of the planned usage is on large refurbishment programmes in the estate, as well as investing in digital media hubs to improve the investigation of digital crimes and the service to victims.

Carry Forward Reserve

This reserve is used to carry forward specific / agreed under spends from the revenue budget and will usually be utilised the following year. where approved one-off investments and changes cannot be made within a financial year it is customary to allow those to carry forward into the following year to enable work to complete Any unutilised carry forwards will be transferred to the budget reserve. This includes:

- Grant No Conditions across BAU Departments,
- PCC Carry forwards
- BAU requests to carry forward due to committed spend moving into future years.

Drug Squad / PPA Reserve

The Police Property Act allows the Police to retain in full the money and other assets seized from criminals where that is not recovered under PACE. This contribution is used to partially fund the Commissioner's My Community Fund, which supports projects across the West Midlands.

POCA Reserve

The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, allows some of the value of seized criminal assets to be returned to Forces over time as criminal prosecutions come to court. The money is also distributed to other parties involved in these prosecutions. Any amount over that relied upon in-year, to support economic crime and other teams targeting seizures, is returned to this reserve to smooth the time delay between workload, seizure of goods and the return of money through the ARIS

mechanism. In 2025/26 and 2026/27 this reserve is also being used to fund Operation Fearless, an operation to enhance problem-oriented policing in key high crime neighbourhoods in the West Midlands.

Useable Capital Receipts Reserve

The capital receipts reserve holds the balance of receipts received through the sale of police assets and will be used to capital part of the Estates Strategy or BAU capital programme over the current medium-term financial planning cycle. It should be noted capital receipts can only be used for capital purposes.

Capital Grants Unapplied

This reserve holds previous year's capital grants that have not yet been applied. The unapplied grants are ring-fenced to be used over the medium-term planning cycle.

5.3. Category (ii) Reserves held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management

Budget Reserve

The budget reserve is held to reduce the impact of financial pressures on service delivery. Due to the scale of the savings required to balance the medium-term plan, the Force has continued to drive savings in 2025/26 from increased income opportunities and reviewing staff vacancies. This will be transferred to the budget reserve and drawn down to help balance the medium-term plan allowing time to generate further long-term sustainable solutions.

Uniform and Equipment Reserves

The Uniform & Equipment Reserve was created to mitigate the effects of legislative changes in uniform and equipment and to provide some flexibility if policies in relation to uniform and equipment issues change. The reserve has recently been expanded to cover the periodic replacement of major equipment such Tasers, laptops / desktop replacement and IT infrastructure and mobility devices (to support in smoothing the replacement cycle), along with supporting the switch to a greener fleet.

National Contingency Reserve

This reserve is to fund projects and national policing initiatives the West Midlands may be required to contribute funding towards.

General Fund

The Police Service, as one of the major emergency services, is required to respond to incidents of an unexpected nature over which it has little or no control. A major incident, or a series of events, could put extraordinary pressure on the budget in a particular year.

As a result, financial prudence dictates that a level of General Balances should be retained to provide resilience against the effect of such a situation.

The balance of the general fund has been assessed considering the financial risks included within the PCC and Force Risk Registers. A breakdown of these alongside the financial risk assessment against each category is shown in **Appendix 8**.

This provides the PCC with more accurate, timely and risk-based information on the type of issues that may have significant potential implications for the level of general fund reserves held, both now and in the future.

The biggest risk is the additional costs of one-off operational incidents or in-year emergencies that cannot be contained within budget or be fully grant funded by Government.

Nationally, Police and Crime Commissioners have provided financial guarantees to organisations in case they fail. This is in respect of the Police ICT Company, also known as Police Digital Services and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Association. In the unlikely event these guarantees are called in these will be funded from the general reserve.

Appendix 7 – Statement of Prudential Indicators

- 1 The Prudential Code for Capital Financing in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) is applicable to the Police and Crime Commissioner and has been developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to provide a code of practice to underpin the system of capital finance embodied in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003. PCCs, like Local Authorities, are free to determine their own level of capital investment controlled by self-regulation.
- 2 The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 3 The Prudential Code supports a system of self-regulation that is achieved by the setting and monitoring of a suite of Prudential Indicators that directly relate to each other. The indicators establish parameters within which the PCC should operate to ensure the objectives of the Prudential Code are met.
- 4 In setting the prudential indicators, the PCC must give due regard to the following matters:
 - Service objectives, e.g. strategic planning for the authority
 - Stewardship of assets,
 - Value for money, e.g. option appraisal
 - Prudence and sustainability
 - Affordability
 - Practicality, e.g. achievability
- 5 The Prudential Indicators below will also be reported in the PCC's 2026/27 Treasury management strategy statement which will be reported to Joint Audit Committee in March 2026. The PCC has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA): Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. The Prudential Indicators for which the PCC is required to set limits are as follows.
- 6 The first prudential indicator is Capital Expenditure – this prudential indicator is a summary of the PCC's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously, and those forming part of this budget cycle. It also forms the background to all other indicators, given that the overall rationale of the prudential system is to provide flexibility for borrowing to fund capital investment.

- 7 The actual amount of capital expenditure that was incurred during 2024/25, and the estimates of capital expenditure to be incurred for the current and future years that are proposed in the 2026/27 Budget are as follows.

	2024/25 Actual £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m	2028/29 Estimate £m	2029/30 Estimate £m
Capital Expenditure	14.9	30.0	37.1	27.0	33.8	20.9

- 8 The second prudential indicator is the PCC’s Capital Financing requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of indebtedness and so is the underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above which has not been paid for through a revenue or capital resource, will increase the CFR. That does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the indebtedness in line with each asset’s life and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.
- 9 This Prudential Indicator also provides an overarching requirement that all the indicators operate within and is described in the Prudential Code as follows - “In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the PCC should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years”.
- 10 In considering the proposed capital programme for 2026/27, the anticipated future borrowing requirements are considered in the context of overall capital resources and the impact on the revenue budget.

	31 st March 2025 £m	31 st March 2026 £m	31 st March 2027 £m	31 st March 2028 £m	31 st March 2029 £m
<i>Capital financing requirement (CFR)</i>	86.5	85.4	80.3	75.4	72.7
<i>Net External borrowing</i>	(82.3)	(80.3)	(80.3)	(73.3)	(73.3)
<i>Variance</i>	4.2	5.1	0	2.1	(0.6)

- 11 The third indicator, Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream is intended to demonstrate the affordability of capital investment decisions in terms of the ratio of capital financing costs to overall resources, expressed as a percentage.
- 12 Financing Costs include the amount of interest payable in respect of borrowing or other long-term liabilities and the amount the PCC is required to set aside to repay debt, less interest and investments income.
- 13 The Net Revenue Stream is the amount to be met from government grants and local taxation. The prediction of the Net Revenue Stream for future years assumes increases in the PCC's funding from government and the local taxpayer consistent with expectations in the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- 14 The estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream, which are at very low levels, are as follows.

	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m	2028/29 Estimate £m
<i>Financing Costs</i>	7.2	5.9	5.8	4.7
<i>Net Revenue Stream</i>	813.9	860.6	894.6	918.7
<i>Ratio</i>	0.89%	0.68%	0.65%	0.51%

- 15 The next set of indicators are Authorised Limit, Operational Boundary and Actual External Debt, these indicators are intended to ensure that levels of external borrowing are affordable, prudent and sustainable. The Authorised Limit for external debt is a statutory limit that should not be breached under any circumstances. The proposed limits set out below have been calculated to take account of the current PCC's Capital Expenditure and Financing Plans and allowing for the possibility of unusual cash movements. If this limit is likely to be breached, it would be necessary for the PCC to determine if it is prudent to raise the limit or to instigate procedures to ensure that such a breach does not occur.
- 16 The Operational Boundary is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. It is a management tool for day-to-day monitoring and has been calculated with regard to the PCC's Capital Expenditure and Financing Plans allowing for the most likely, prudent, but not worst-case scenario for cash flow. Temporary breaches of the Operational Boundary, due to variations in cash flow, will not be regarded as significant.

17 The following limits are recommended.

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
<i>Authorised Limit for external debt: Borrowing</i>	120	120	120
<i>Operational Boundary: Borrowing</i>	115	115	115

18 The PCC's actual external debt as at 31st March 2026 is anticipated to be £80.3m, excluding transferred debt managed by Dudley MBC.

19 It is recommended that:

(a) That the PCC sets an upper limit on **fixed interest rate exposure** as follows:

Fixed Interest Exposure	2025/26 %	2026/27 %
<i>Upper Limit</i>	100	100

• That the PCC sets an upper limit on **variable interest rate exposures** as follows:

Variable Interest Rate Exposure	2025/26 %	2026/27 %
<i>Upper Limit</i>	20	20

20 This is the maximum external borrowing judged prudent that the PCC should expose to variable rates.

21 These gross limits are set to reduce the PCCs exposure to large, fixed sums falling due for refinancing and are required for upper and lower limits. It is recommended that the upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings are as follows:

Period of Maturity	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %
<i>Under 12 months</i>	25	0
<i>12 months and within 24 months</i>	25	0
<i>24 months and within 5 years</i>	50	0
<i>5 years and within 10 years</i>	75	0
<i>10 years and above</i>	100	25

Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed.

22 It is recommended that the upper limits of total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days are £30m for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.

Appendix 8 – Risk Assessment

The table below details the risks and implications if key budget assumptions vary during the year.

Financial Risk Assessment	Likelihood	Impact	Comment
The Capital Programme requirement changes as work streams develop, for example, development of the Estates Strategy.	High	High	The programme has been written with some flexibility built in, but should strategic choices vary significantly the programme would be reviewed and re-shaped in line with the new requirement.
Planned savings the estates strategy included within the Medium-Term Financial Plan are not achievable.	High	High	Budget Managers have considered the planned savings and confirmed they believe them to be achievable, however if circumstances change and the planned level of savings is not achievable alternatives will be sought in year.
Further Cost Transfer from National Programmes / Projects	High	High	Further cost transfers from the centre (e.g., Emergency Services Network and IT company costs.)
Headcount is not kept at the target, to secure Neighbourhood Grant funding	Medium	High	The numbers must be maintained, to keep grant funding. Terms and Conditions of grant funding are not confirmed for 2026/27, neither is the penalty regime to be applied.
Medium-Term funding remains unclear.	Medium	High	A one-year settlement was received for 2026/27. Due to the nature of the funding settlement the future years funding remains unclear and could vary significantly to that planned. A £1 change in precept results in £0.8m movement and a 1% change in grant results in £7.5m movement in grant
Pay awards in the future differ from the assumptions in our financial planning	Medium	Medium	Current assumptions are in line with pay award offers to Police Officers and Staff. If pay awards are higher than this, the budget reserve will be used in year to meet any difference, net of increasing turnover and holding posts vacant to meet costs.
General inflation is different to the assumptions included in the budget.	Medium	Medium	A 1% increase would cost around £1.5m. Significant increases in building costs in the medium-term capital programme period could have an impact on some estimates.
Increase in volume and/or cost of policing public order incidents linked to the general economic conditions or other factors	Medium	Medium	Depending on the volume and complexity of any incidents, this could place a significant strain on current contingency budgets. In the first instance savings would look to be found across budgets areas. If this

			were not sufficient then reserves would need to be used.
Interest rates increase	Medium	Medium	The budget reflects the current rates of interest being received on investments. No further borrowing is planned currently.
Short Term Grants not extended by 2025/26	Medium	Medium	There are several short-term grants that are due to end in 2025/26. Not all funding is yet confirmed for 2026/27. The mitigation is to stop the expenditure however this has a cost in terms of efficiency and positive outcomes. These include County Lines £7m, VRP £4.3m and GRIP (guardian) £3.7m
Income levels not achieved	Medium	Low	A 1% loss of income (excluding grants & interest) would cost around £1.4m.

Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report 2024-2025

Date: 2 February 2026

Report of: Tom Senior Associate Director Law & Governance, Dudley MBC
Lead Officer of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

Report author: Sarah Fradgley, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, Birmingham City Council

Email: wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk

Phone: 0121 303 1727

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Panel has a statutory duty to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner's annual report at a meeting held in public and agree a collective response to submit to the Commissioner.
- 1.2 A copy of the Police and Crime Commissioner's draft Annual Report covering the 12-month period from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 is attached at Appendix A.

2 Recommendation

- i) **The Panel reviews the Police and Crime Commissioner's Draft Annual Report 2024-2025.**
- ii) **The Panel makes a report setting out any recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner on his draft annual report.**
- iii) **The Panel report and response from the Police and Crime Commissioner be published on the Panel's website.**

3 Statutory Responsibilities

- 3.1 **The responsibilities of the Police and Crime Panel** regarding the review of annual report are set out in Section 28 (4) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. In summary the Panel must:
 - Arrange for a public meeting to be held as soon as practicable after receiving an annual report;
 - Ask the Commissioner at that meeting such questions about the annual report as the members of the Panel think appropriate;
 - Review the annual report; and
 - Make a report or recommendations on the annual report to the Commissioner.

3.2 **The responsibilities of the Commissioner** regarding the annual report are set out in Section 12 of Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. In summary, the Police and Crime Commissioner must:

- Produce an annual report on the exercise of functions, and the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the police and crime plan.
- Send the report to the relevant police and crime panel.
- Attend before the panel to present the report to the panel and answer the panel's questions on the report.
- Respond to any panel report or recommendations on the annual report.

4 Preparation and Publication of Reports

4.1 At the Panel meeting members will agree a collective response to submit to the Commissioner as a written report.

4.2 In line with the Panel's Rules of Procedure (Section 9), the Panel's report and the Commissioner's response will be published on the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel's website: www.westmidlandspcp.co.uk.

5 Any Finance Implications

5.1 The Home Office provides an annual grant to support the administration of Police and Crime Panels. The grant is administered by Birmingham City Council.

6 Any Legal Implications

6.1 In presenting this draft annual report to the Panel for consideration, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel are fulfilling their respective statutory obligations as set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Failure to do so would mean a breach of statutory duty.

7 Any Equalities Implications

7.1 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex, and sexual orientation.

7.3 The Panel should ensure that it has due regard to its duties under the Equality Act while reviewing the draft Annual Report and making its recommendation to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

8 Appendices

8.1 A - West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Draft Annual Report 2024-2025

9 Background Papers

9.1 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Annual Report 2024/25

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner is required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to produce an annual report. A draft copy of the Annual Report 2024/25 (annex 1) has been circulated to Board members and is being brought to the Police and Crime Panel for comment. The annual report from the PCC covers the 12-month period from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.

BACKGROUND

2. Publication of an annual report is a statutory requirement. Part 1, Chapter 3, Paragraph 12 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 states:

‘Each elected local policing body must produce a report (an ‘annual report’) on — (a) the exercise of the body’s functions in each financial year, and (b) the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the body’s police and crime plan’.

3. Once agreed, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 also requires that the report is shared with the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel:

2) As soon as practicable after producing an annual report, the elected local policing body must send the report to the relevant police and crime panel.

3) The elected local policing body must attend before the panel at the public meeting arranged by the panel...to— (a) present the report to the panel, and (b) answer the panel’s questions on the report.

4) The elected local policing body must— (a) give the panel a response to any report or recommendations on the annual report...and (b) publish any such response’.

4. Finally, it is a statutory requirement to publish the annual report, and it is for the Commissioner to ‘determine the manner’ of publication. The annual report will be published on the Commissioner’s website, and promoted via social media, media releases, and the West

Midlands Police intranet. There will be direct electronic dissemination to West Midlands MPs and councillors.

5. Copies of the annual report in large print, other languages and alternative formats will be provided on request. Any typographical and formatting corrections required will be made by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands prior to final publication and dissemination.

PROCESS

6. The draft Annual Report at Annex 1, has been shared with the Police and Crime Panel to give members the opportunity to consult with the PCC and make comments and/or recommendations in advance of publication.

7. All comments will be received and considered. Amendments may be incorporated, and the PCC will then forward the final approved version to the Panel for the meeting being held on the 16 March 2026.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8. The Annual Report will be designed and produced by the Police and Crime Commissioners Office. Therefore no external costs will have been incurred in its preparation. Electronic dissemination incurs no additional costs.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9. The production of an annual report ensures compliance with the requirements of Part 1, Chapter 3, Paragraph 12 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. The draft report is being shared with the Police and Crime Panel in advance of publication, to allow the Panel the opportunity to consider any comments or recommendations on the content. The published annual report will come back to the Panel for information on the 16 March 2026.

Annual Report 2024/2025

Foreword from PCC

After a long, hard fought and successful campaign, to retain the role of a democratically elected and directly accountable Police and Crime Commissioner, I was pleased to be re-elected in May 2024, whilst at the same time doubling my majority.

In view of the breadth and scope of the role, the gravity of the issues involved and the significant level of public concern and interest in policing, crime, community safety and criminal justice, I believe that the people should have the right to vote and decide for themselves, who represents them, as their Police and Crime Commissioner.

Representing the people of the West Midlands is an honour and a privilege. I take the trust and responsibility placed in me very seriously. It drives me on, to take the constant and unremitting action that is required, to ensure West Midlands Police is the best it can possibly be, in order to prevent and tackle crime and keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure.

My duties and responsibilities as Police and Crime Commissioner are extensive and wide ranging. As you read the report, you will gain an understanding of the breadth and scope of the role, which includes, amongst many other matters:

- Ensuring an effective and efficient police force;
- Holding the Chief Constable and police service to account;
- Responsibility for police main grant and other grants from central and local government;
- Setting the police budget and local policing precept;
- Funding the community safety partnerships;
- Ensuring an effective and efficient criminal justice system;
- Hosting my Violence Reduction Partnership
- Commissioning victim support services; and
- Preparing and issuing a Police and Crime Plan.

I launched my new Police and Crime Plan ('the Plan') on 26th March 2025. The Plan sets out my key objectives for policing, crime, community safety and criminal justice for 2025 to 2029. My Plan is important, because I have a statutory duty to prepare and issue the Plan, it sets out the strategic direction for policing, the Chief Constable has to have regard to the Plan and I use the Plan to hold West Midlands Police to account, on behalf of the people of the West Midlands.

Building on my first Plan, issued during my initial term in office in November 2021, it is a comprehensive agenda for change, development and progress in policing, rebuilding community policing, putting prevention and the tackling of crime at the heart of what we do

and ultimately delivering justice, safety and security, for all of our people and communities of the West Midlands.

The harsh reality is that the past 15 years has been a challenging time for policing, our essential preventative public services and our criminal justice system. That has been as a consequence of ill-advised, misconceived and poor decision making on the part of central government. That decision making was a big mistake, it was counter-productive and a false economy. Our under-funded and overworked police service has all too often been left to pick up the pieces.

The people of the West Midlands have been paying the price, because this has had, still does have and will continue to have, a serious adverse impact on West Midlands Police presence and visibility, response times, the conduct of investigations and the ability to prevent, tackle and reduce crime, all to the serious detriment of the people of the West Midlands.

The Report outlines the action taken and what has been achieved over the course of 2024-25. This has been as a consequence of, working with the police and through strong partnerships, across the West Midlands. That action taken and progress made, is detailed within the Report. However, it includes amongst many other matters:

- Campaigned for the return of our 700 fewer officers and 500 fewer Police Community Support Officers and for fair funding for the West Midlands.
- Continued work on the Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls agenda through the Alliance, driving the essential partnership work required;
- Commissioned over 56 support services for over 62,224 victims with my core victims grant, to ensure victims have access to the right support, at the right time and in the right place;
- Continued to fund specialist victim support services and IDVAs and ISVAs across the region;
- Continued to drive improvements in emergency call performance on both 999 and 101 calls and faster emergency and priority response times;
- Secured Investment in our VRP to commission around £3 million worth of activity across the region, reaching just under 41,000 children and young people, to prevent and tackle youth violence and knife crime;
- Action to tackle violence continued with tailored education in schools, youth workers in A and E Departments, custody centres, outreach and rescue workers and on school routes;
- Continued to support a network of weapon surrender bins, to remove dangerous weapons from the streets of the West Midlands;
- A reduction in knife crime classified under ADR160 of 17.3%
- Ran an awareness campaign around Op Snap enabling more people to submit dashcam evidence of dangerous driving resulting in 70% more reports and 6,000 motorists being fined.
- Invested in the 7 Community Safety Partnerships across the West Midlands to prevent crime and disorder;

- Continued action to eliminate any and all racism and unlawful discrimination from within policing and the wider criminal justice system, including via the Fairness and Belonging Strategy;
- Backed young people, working with my cohort of Youth Commissioners, and Police Cadets Schemes;
- Invested in prevention and intervention to prevent and tackle crime, promote community safety and rehabilitation;
- Supported local communities, through my Helping Communities Fund

I always said that I would be a People and Communities Police and Crime Commissioner, who engages with, listens to and works with the people of the West Midlands. It has been a pleasure continuing to meet with so many of you, listening to your views, understanding your concerns and hearing what further action is needed, to ensure that we all work together collaboratively to prevent, tackle and reduce crime and deliver justice, safety and security for all of our people and communities of the West Midlands.

I am firmly of the belief, that a democratically elected and directly accountable Police and Crime Commissioner, is the best way to ensure an effective and efficient police service. The laser-like focus it provides is crucial, to holding the police to account and driving the change needed. The one and only top priority of a Police and Crime Commissioner is preventing, tackling and reducing crime and keeping the people and communities of the West Midlands safe and secure.

Thank you to my Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Wasim Ali, my Victims Advocate, Natalie Queiroz, appointed in April 2025, members of my boards, committees, panels, partners, volunteers and the entire team within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Violence Reduction Partnership, for all of the invaluable experience, knowledge, skills and hard work that they contribute, to all of the action taken that is set out in this Report.

Thank you to all of the officers and staff of West Midlands Police, for their commitment, dedication and hard work, to keep the people and communities of the West Midlands safe and secure. It truly is a collective and collaborative team effort. I am also grateful to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel, for the support, oversight and scrutiny it has provided throughout 2024 to 2025.

Simon Foster
Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands
January 2026

Section 1. West Midlands Police

Force Performance

The primary expectations I place on West Midlands Police, is the prevention, tackling and reduction of crime. The police play a pivotal role, working in collaboration with various stakeholders, to proactively address local issues, share critical information and work towards reducing repeat offences. The Performance Scorecard for the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025, provides an overview of progress, in achieving the specific measures outlined in my plan.

The assessment of progress towards the key performance indicators outlined in my Police and Crime Plan varies, depending on the specific measure and the availability of data. A number of key performance indicators have predefined targets, which have been established through a comprehensive analysis of historical and current performance and consultation with stakeholders, while others represent ambitious stretch targets.

It also tracks trend data, providing insights into recent patterns and periods of change. Whilst some key performance indicators may not currently align with expectations, the trend data in certain areas reveals a positive trajectory of improvement, providing optimism for continued progress.

Rebuilding Community Policing

People value seeing police officers and PCSOs walking the beat in their communities. The Chief Constable and I agree, that it is important to provide a local, accessible, reassuring and visible presence. However, West Midlands Police still has around 700 fewer police officers and 500 fewer PCSOs when compared to 2010, in addition to reduced numbers of police staff.

I continue to take every available opportunity, to campaign for and to call on government, to return our 700 police officers and 500 PCSOs and to ensure that our region receives a fair share of all funds allocated to policing. Unfortunately, despite extensive and wide-ranging efforts, our region continues to be structurally under-funded and under-resourced

Recruitment

As of 31st March 2025, WMP reported a total workforce headcount of 12,316, according to Office for National Statistics data. This comprised 7,991 Police Officers, 3,842 Police Staff, 298 PCSOs, and 185 Special Constables. These figures reflect the organisation's continued commitment to maintaining a strong workforce across operational and support roles to deliver effective policing to the community.

Table 1 – WMP Workforce headcount, March 2025

Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSO	Specials	Total
7,991	3,842	298	185	12,316

Fairness and Belonging

Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded throughout my Police and Crime Plan. We are focused on delivering this work within my own office. I continue to scrutinise West Midlands Police on their progress.

This includes monitoring the action taken to implement their new Police Race Action Plan, which is based on the national Plan, but tailored to local challenges. The Plan commits to better recruitment practices, improved community engagement, and challenging disproportionality in key police practices. My office attends the force's newly established Board, that oversees and scrutinises delivery.

All officers and staff continue to receive training to equip them with a better understanding of racism as part of this work. The training explores Black history and the local landscape between the Black community in the West Midlands and the police, the lived experience and impact of systemic racism in modern UK society and identifies blockers to anti-racist practice.

This year, I signed a pledge to make Birmingham and the wider West Midlands anti-racist, to show my commitment to anti-racism and to working with West Midlands Police, the National Police Chiefs Council and other partners to ensure an anti-racist police force.

In addition, I have also worked with local criminal justice partners to promote race equality in the criminal justice system, including tackling racial disparities in the youth justice system, and in charging and prosecution decisions. My office is also a partner in the Mayor's Race Equalities Taskforce, which publicly launched in September 2023, and we continue to lead on the criminal justice strand.

My Deputy Chief Executive continues to attend WMP's quarterly Diversity and Inclusion Governance Board, to ensure oversight of progress being made in relation to this strand of work. In addition, I am represented on the Stop and Search and Use of Force Scrutiny Panels and Stop and Search and Use of Force Commission.

I continue to regularly meet with and support the force's staff networks. I have spoken at several of their events and highlighted the value of these networks, in striving to make West Midlands Police an inclusive employer.

In my own office, I continue to ensure the delivery of anti-racist practice training. This includes an organisation-wide anti-racist training programme, that addresses how to deal with issues relating to racism and how to develop and promote anti-racist practice. In addition, all staff within the OPCC have continued to undergo training around trauma informed practice and becoming a trauma informed organisation and mandatory safeguarding training.

The OPCC hold the Karl George Race Code accreditation. We continue to implement the transformational work needed to maintain this, in order to achieve truly diverse governance structures and organisational senior leadership team.

A breakdown of my own team shows that in March 2025, the OPCC had 80 employees, of whom 78 disclosed their ethnicity. 55 were White/White British (70%) and 23 (30%) were from an Ethnic minority group.

Reviews Function and Oversight of Police Complaints

This year, our oversight work has continued to grow. The Complaints Team remains at the heart of this effort, providing the insight I rely on to understand what the public are telling us and how the Force is responding. Their oversight has allowed us not only to track volumes

and timeliness, but to recognise where improvements are required and the learning behind the statistics.

One of the most encouraging developments has been the publication of our first Learning Report - a real milestone. It reflects a shift from simply resolving complaints to making sure that what we learn from them shapes future practice. Learning is, after all, the golden thread running through complaints legislation, and it's imperative that we continue to hold the Force to account for acting on it.

We also broadened our oversight this year by looking more closely at the Vetting Team. Our first dip-sampling session showed that WMP is making positive progress, and we came away reassured by the improvements we saw. Alongside this, our quarterly meetings with the IOPC continue to be constructive and candid, allowing us to compare notes, challenge where needed, and support meaningful change. We have already seen encouraging shifts in several areas as a result.

The complaints dashboard has been updated to make information clearer and more accessible, and further work is underway to refine it. Complaint volumes into WMP have remained steady - 4,032 in 2024 and 4,153 in 2025. This small rise suggests that the public continue to feel able to raise concerns, which is essential in any healthy policing system. It also reminds us, that we must stay focused on capacity and responsiveness as demand remains stable.

Reflecting this, the number of reviews coming into my office has also increased, from 80 in 2024 to 114 in 2025. This growth is not unexpected. National changes have made the process clearer and more accessible, and the public are making use of it. Not only are numbers up, but the pattern of outcomes has changed, with approximately 23% of cases upheld in 2025 compared with 15% in 2024. This increase highlights areas where first-stage complaint handling can be strengthened and reinforces the value of the review process, in identifying learning and ensuring fairness. It remains an essential safeguard, supporting the Force continue to improve.

This year the Government introduced new Police Misconduct Regulations, which saw chief constables take over responsibility for chairing police misconduct hearings, and a greater emphasis on accelerated hearings. Independent legally qualified chairs are no longer chairing dismissal hearings. We have seen an increase in the number of hearings from 35 in 2023/4, to 41 in 2024/5. I have supplied Independent Legally Qualified Advisers and Independent Panel members to sit on 10 hearings for West Midlands Police between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.

We have also seen an increase in the number of appeals against dismissal. Six Notices of Appeal were received by the OPCC between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025. This is an increase from three Notices of Appeal received between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

Contact with the public

Figure 1. Force Contact 999 and 101 Performance Metrics



Force Contact



Performance

Fiscal Year 2024-2025



In 2024/25, the total number of 999 calls received by WMP fell by 10 percent, decreasing from 810,868 to 732,440 calls in comparison to 2023/24. Call handling performance has remained consistently strong. The proportion of 999 calls answered remained static at 99.9 percent, demonstrating sustained reliability in emergency call response.

Performance against the national 10-second call service level agreement has improved. Compliance increased from 93 percent in the previous year to 96 percent in 2024/25, representing a 3-percentage point improvement. This indicates a continued focus on meeting service level expectations and ensuring the public receives a timely emergency response.

The average answer time for 999 calls has improved, reducing from 5 seconds to 3 seconds in 2024/25. This represents a 40 percent improvement and demonstrates faster connection times, which are particularly critical in emergency situations where every second counts.

There has also been a notable reduction in the number of calls abandoned after waiting more than 10 seconds. This figure dropped from 651 to 179, a decrease of 73 percent. The improvement reflects increased efficiency in call handling and fewer instances of callers disconnecting due to delays or other reasons.

Turning to 101, there has been a 15 percent increase in demand, with 755,332 calls received in 2024/25 compared to 655,832 the year before. Despite this rise in call volume, the service has responded well. The proportion of calls answered, rose from 87 percent to 95 percent, an increase of 8 percentage points.

There has also been considerable progress in meeting the 3-minute answer time target. Compliance rose from 76 percent to 93 percent, a 17-percentage point improvement. This reflects ongoing efforts to improve access to police services and deliver a more responsive experience for the public.

The average answer time for 101 calls has seen a substantial improvement, falling from 2 minutes and 13 seconds to just 36 seconds in 2024/25. This 72 percent reduction

demonstrates a significant increase in responsiveness, ensuring that callers are connected to the support they need far more quickly.

The number of calls abandoned after waiting more than 3 minutes has also dropped sharply. A total of 8,665 calls were abandoned in 2024/25, compared to 36,091 the previous year. This 76 percent reduction highlights improvements in both speed and overall service quality, as fewer callers are disengaging.

Stop and Search and Use of Force

Figure 2. Police Powers Performance Metrics



We continue to see high rates of Body-Worn Video compliance, during both Stop and Search and Use of Force. For stop and search, compliance has increased slightly to 98 percent in 2024/25, having previously increased from 42 percent in 2018/19 to 95 percent in 2021/22. Compliance for Use of Force has continued to increase and is now at 92 percent, up from 87 percent in the previous year.

In December 2024, WMP changed its policy to save all Stop and Search and Use of Force BWVs for 12 months as standard, up from 12 weeks as standard previously, with the intention of improving transparency and governance. Positive outcome rates, which is the rate at which an illegal item is found during a stop and search, has remained static at 30 percent during 2024/25, having previously been 29 percent in the previous year.

Disproportionality ratios show how many times more likely it is, that a member of an ethnic group is to be stopped and searched, compared to the white population. Stop and search data shows that Asian individuals are 1.8 times more likely, and Black individuals 3.0 times more likely, to be searched than White individuals. For use of force incidents, the pattern of disproportionality differs. Asian individuals are 0.8 times less likely to be subjected to force compared to White individuals, whereas Black individuals are 1.9 times more likely.

There is a continued focus to offer a feedback mechanism on stop and search interactions, with officers using a unique QR code on their phone, that people who have been stopped and searched can scan to give feedback on matters such as, how fairly they felt they were treated by the officer and whether they understood why they were stopped. We continue to see around 2% of all those stopped and searched give feedback this way. This is now WMP policy for the QR Code to be offered where applicable. We will continue to raise awareness of the QR code, to encourage members of the public to tell us about their experiences.

Throughout 2024-25, WMP continued as a pilot force for the Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVRO). SVROs are a civil order, whereby someone who has a SVRO can be stopped in public spaces by the police and searched, without the need for there to be reasonable grounds. My office continued to hold WMP accountable on its use of the SVRO power, throughout the pilot through a community led working group. This working group has provided feedback to Home Office as part of the evaluation for the future of SVRO'S, with the pilot ending April 2025.

During this year, there has been a focus on internal governance and oversight of Stop and Search and Use of Force, bringing better governance, improved performance, increased accountability and a continued focus on and investment in training. There have been changes to areas, such as Section 60 policy where local Superintendents are now the ratifying officers and Force Incident Managers (FIM's)/Local Policing Area (LPA) Chief Inspectors, are the applicants allowing for more localised oversight and governance. In May 2024, WMP changed its policy so that compliant handcuffing is now recorded as a use of force, meaning that all uses of handcuffing now require a use of force form to be submitted.

Section 2. Working in Partnership Locally

West Midlands Community Safety Partnership

Community Safety Partnerships have a statutory responsibility, to respond to crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their local authority areas. The West Midlands Community Safety Partnership (WMCSP) is the place where I, statutory bodies and representatives from the seven Local Authority areas come together, to agree a coordinated approach to crime reduction, local policing and community safety for the West Midlands. I am Chair of the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership Board.

As part of my ongoing commitment to work with community safety partners to jointly tackle crime and disorder, I provide a Crime and Disorder Reduction Grant to each of the seven local authorities, as well as to third sector organisations. This vital funding is used to reduce crime, the risk of reoffending and for initiatives tackling the issues which have the biggest impact upon our communities, including anti-social behaviour.

The funding is also used to help victims of crime cope and recover from their experience, such as domestic abuse and sexual violence and to support the diversion of children and young people away from crime, through positive initiatives and allows local CSP's to respond to emerging issues. In addition to the individual community safety grants, we commission services regionally across the force area, to ensure that services are available within the seven local authority areas and work with the CSPs, to respond to anti-social behaviour and violence reduction.

Our joint Community Safety priorities were agreed for 2021-2024 through consultation with partners and communities, informed by West Midlands Police's Strategic Assessment. They are: preventing crime and anti-social behaviour; serious and organised crime; supporting victims and witnesses; violence and intimidation against women and girls; cyber-crime and fraud; serious violence; offending and reoffending; and substance misuse.

Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)

I am chair of the West Midlands Local Criminal Justice Board. I am committed to working closely with key partners to provide a fair, efficient and effective criminal justice system, with a focus on reducing reoffending; delivering justice for women and girls; and supporting victims and witnesses.

The LCJB has responded to several key emerging issues during the year, including the Crown Court case backlog and the number of sitting days, and the prison population pressures and early release schemes. The Board has also focused on racial disproportionality in the criminal justice system, and improving support for victims, particularly victims of hidden and underreported crime.

I continue to closely monitor and scrutinise the time taken for victims to have their case heard at court, particularly for people who have been subject to serious crimes and offences that cause high levels of harm, such as violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Victims

Throughout 2024-25, I have continued to deliver on the pledge in my Police and Crime Plan, to provide quality assured support services to victims, survivors and witnesses, whether or not they reported the crimes to the police; to ensure victims and survivors were able to access justice; to enable them to cope and recover; and to ensure that perpetrators of crimes are held to account.

To achieve my priorities, I have worked closely and collaboratively with the specialist victims' sector and criminal justice agencies, whilst listening to and acting on the voices and experiences of victims and survivors.

I have continued to consult with victims, to better understand their needs and to ensure that services I commission, continue to meet the diverse needs of the victims living in my region. This has helped to shape the Protecting Victims and Witnesses chapter of my Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029.

I have continued to work with key partners, to review regional governance arrangements to ensure matters in relation to key thematic areas, including Domestic Abuse, Sexual Assault and Abuse, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and Exploitation and Missing, can be discussed and escalated. These governance structures are key to partnership working and an avenue to drive collaboration and improvements across the system.

One example of collaborative working led by my office, is to address the long waiting times for safe accommodation and an overreliance on temporary/emergency accommodation, I led discussions around the implementation of a reciprocal housing scheme, for all victims of exploitation and abuse. This would reduce homelessness, improve victim safety and create more housing options for victims of abuse.

Commissioned Services

During 2024-2025, I commissioned 56 services which in total supported 62,224 (new victims supported) 78,157 (new and existing) and included a total spend £6,190,807.46. Victim Support is my largest provider for victims of multi crime, which includes theft, robbery, burglary and standard risk domestic abuse.

Following publication of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) Victims Hub Landscape Review ([APCC findings report: Victim hub landscape review - The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners \(apccs.police.uk\)](#)), I carried out an extensive comparative analysis of the victims Hubs in areas most comparable to the West Midlands to inform best practice in our area, which will be taken into account through the recommissioning process currently being implemented by my office

Assessing need and continuous improvement, is an ongoing process across all my commissioned services. During 2024-2025 I carried out a needs' analysis, to ensure there was an equitable split of resource for IDVA services across the 7 local authorities. The analysis was based on several data sources including female population, MARAC referrals, and recorded demand from monitoring returns. The analysis showed a need for re-distribution, to ensure an equitable spread and need for a regional bespoke IDVA service for men, due to limited existing pathways.

I also launched a Hidden Harmful Practices Fund of £110k, to consider applications from organisations working to support victims of harms, such as faith based/witchcraft based/breast ironing/transnational marriage abandonment, which despite being hidden can have an immense and long-lasting impact on victims.

In readiness for the Duty to Collaborate, I have been leading the way nationally on the development of 2 new and innovative commissioning frameworks, which have received national attention with my office being invited to present to all PCCs via the APCC.

Violence Against Women and Girls

I have continued action to tackle violence against women and girls throughout 2024-2025. Together with my Violence Prevention Partnership, I wrote to the Safeguarding and Victim's Minister, Minister for Education and the Home Office and Ministry of Justice, around the need for preventative VAWG/misogyny education and the need to strengthen provision in RSHE, including through provision of sustainable and multi-year funding for this work.

I have also worked with partners, through my Ending Male Violence against Women and Girls partnership board, to raise awareness of hidden forms of VAWG such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and so called 'honour' based abuse (HBA) and published a series of practice frameworks which draw together the views of partners on the necessary steps to build regional capability, in ensuring a proactive response to these harms. All practice frameworks can be found [here](#).

The NPCC VAWG taskforce Stakeholder Practice Sharing event, which is attended by senior national leaders, such as the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, the National Victims Commissioner and Chief Executives of charities, such as Rape Crisis England and Wales and Karma Nirvana took place on the 7th November 2024. The meeting heard from NPCC VAWG innovation projects nationally and as winners of the 2023 NPCC VAWG Awards, my office was invited, in continued recognition of my innovative response in this space.

I have commissioned two needs assessments, into the experience of sexual assault and abuse victims. One is looking into the mental health needs and pathways for victims, while the other focuses on the needs of Black and Minoritised Victims. The findings from these needs' assessments, will be shared regionally and will drive improvements where required.

Operation Soteria

The Government's End to End Rape Review in 2021, saw a commitment to roll out Operation Soteria – a Home Office funded, academically led change programme, for adult Rape and other Sexual Offences (RAOSO). I supported WMP in their piloting of the academic pathfinder, by investing £200,000 in pilot programmes, following the findings of the academic deep dive in June 2022.

In the Criminal Justice Scorecards regarding adult rape, published quarterly, WMP are increasing the positive outcome rate, demonstrating closer working with CPS partners, particularly in the areas of Early Investigative Advice (EIA) and triage, which is allowing quicker and better outcomes for case progression.

This work, alongside my commissioned Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) and specialist sexual assault and abuse services, has seen an improved level of procedural justice and engagement with victims and witnesses. However, as mentioned in my recent letter to Ministers, the provision of specialist support for survivors is vastly underfunded and the services we commission are struggling to cope, to provide the needed level of support through the funding available.

I have continued work with local MPs, the Chief Constable and others, to clearly highlight to central Government that the existing funding formula and previous policing cuts, undermines the ability of WMP to embed a sustainable RAOSO specialism.

Domestic Abuse

During 2024-2025 the Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, announced that the initiative to place domestic abuse specialists in 999 control rooms, will form part of 'Raneem's Law'. With experts being embedded to advise on risk assessment, work with front line officers and ensure victims receive an effective response, as well as onward referrals to support services as fast as possible. WMP are part of the initial roll out and are already seeing positive results.

MARAC, which is the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference for domestic abuse, came out of the 'engage' status with HMIC, after significant action from WMP supported by my office. To manage demand and to future proof the system, a new operating protocol is being developed, which all MARAC partners will sign up to.

The domestic abuse desk, launched in April 2023 continues to deliver positive outcomes through 2024-2025. Officers complete a Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA), capturing the voice of the child where relevant, via video call. Following the call, the victim has the option to be transferred to an IDVA or receive a call back. Officers are also in plain clothes and the link to the video call leaves no trace on the caller's phone. The IDVAs attached to the DA desk are partially co-located with the team and share good practice, offer advice, and can take some of the calls.

This year has seen the expansion of the innovative, integrated, domestic abuse family court otherwise known as the Pathfinder Court. Pathfinder places IDVAs within family courts, to ensure safety is prioritised above all else, in private family court proceedings. The Pathfinder is already in the Birmingham Family Court and the project will be rolling out in the Wolverhampton and Telford Family Courts from November 2025.

My office continues to lead the way in its work around suicide following domestic abuse. This year the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) Domestic Homicide Project has published its year 4 findings, which shows again the number of suicides has exceeded homicides. I continue to work alongside Community Safety Teams and the University of Birmingham in response to this.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is an approach that focuses on repairing the harm caused by crime or conflict by actively involving victims, offenders, and sometimes the wider community in a structured process.

The process typically includes facilitated meetings or communication, where the person responsible acknowledges the impact of their actions, the person harmed can express how they have been affected, and both parties work together to agree on steps to make amends or repair the harm. Participation is voluntary, with the aims of fostering accountability, promoting healing, repairing relationships, and supporting reintegration into the community.

I have been reviewing my commissioned service having regard to new NPCC guidelines, and a new Restorative Justice (RJ) Service Specification will seek to modernise the 2018 West Midlands Service by aligning it with NPCC guidance, recent legislation, ASB priorities, and out-of-court resolution (OOCR) reforms.

ASB, although often categorised as low-level offending, can cause profound cumulative harm that undermines victims' wellbeing, sense of safety, and trust in local services. Research and statutory guidance emphasise that ASB affects individuals differently, depending on contextual and personal factors such as vulnerability, social isolation, or housing conditions. It is for this reason that I will be including ASB within the RJ specification.

Modern Slavery Human Trafficking

This year I wrote to Ministers, including the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls) Jess Phillips MP, Minister for Victims and Violence Against Women and Girls Alex Davies-Jones MP, the Minister of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Matthew Pennycook MP and Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum - Dame Angela Eagle DBE, to raise the urgent need to include victims of modern slavery as a category of priority need.

Evidence suggests that there are clear links between experiences of homelessness and modern slavery. Previous research also suggests that homeless people are vulnerable to becoming victims of modern slavery, particularly where they have multiple or complex needs. Equally, victims of modern slavery may also be particularly vulnerable to becoming homeless, where accommodation is linked to the work a victim is being forced to undertake.

This year there have been several national reforms and updated policy directions in relation to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The Home Office published its long-awaited Modern Slavery Action Plan, which brings forward new measures to tackle this heinous crime. It has also updated its Section 54 Transparency in Supply Chain guidance, which will see many organisations including my office, update their approach to identifying slavery within the supply chain.

West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership

I am Chairperson of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Strategic Board, which is one of 21 Violence Reduction Partnerships (VRPs) across the country. Established in 2019, they are funded by the Home Office, to build capacity in local places and systems to prevent, tackle and reduce violence, by addressing the root causes of violence. I also host our Violence Reduction Partnership, within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

In addition, on behalf of all PCC's, I am the joint Serious Violence lead, for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. I represent PCCs, when dealing with government ministers, the Home Office, the National Police Chief's Council and national partners, in relation to serious violence.

The WMVRP partnership and delivery model

The WMVRP consists of a range of specialists, who work locally and regionally, to facilitate and encourage the development of system wide responses to preventing and reducing violence, directly delivering and commissioning a wide range of services and interventions.

They adopt a public health approach to preventing violence. This means focusing on understanding the root causes of the problem and testing, evaluating and upscaling interventions. Developing stronger data, analysis and evaluation is key to working in this way.

West Midlands Police plays an integral role in the WMVRP, providing support and bringing policing knowledge and expertise into the different thematic areas. They ensure that the whole force play an active role in the WMVRP, working in partnership locally and regionally, to prevent and reduce violence.

The WMVRP delivery model aims to:

- Deliver primary prevention, entire population approaches to violence prevention and reduction, including training, capacity building and awareness raising.
- Fund targeted work, in areas we know are impacted more by violence.
- Respond effectively as a partnership to incidents when they occur, to limit the onward transmission of violence and address the trauma that serious incidents cause to individuals and communities.

Working in Local Places

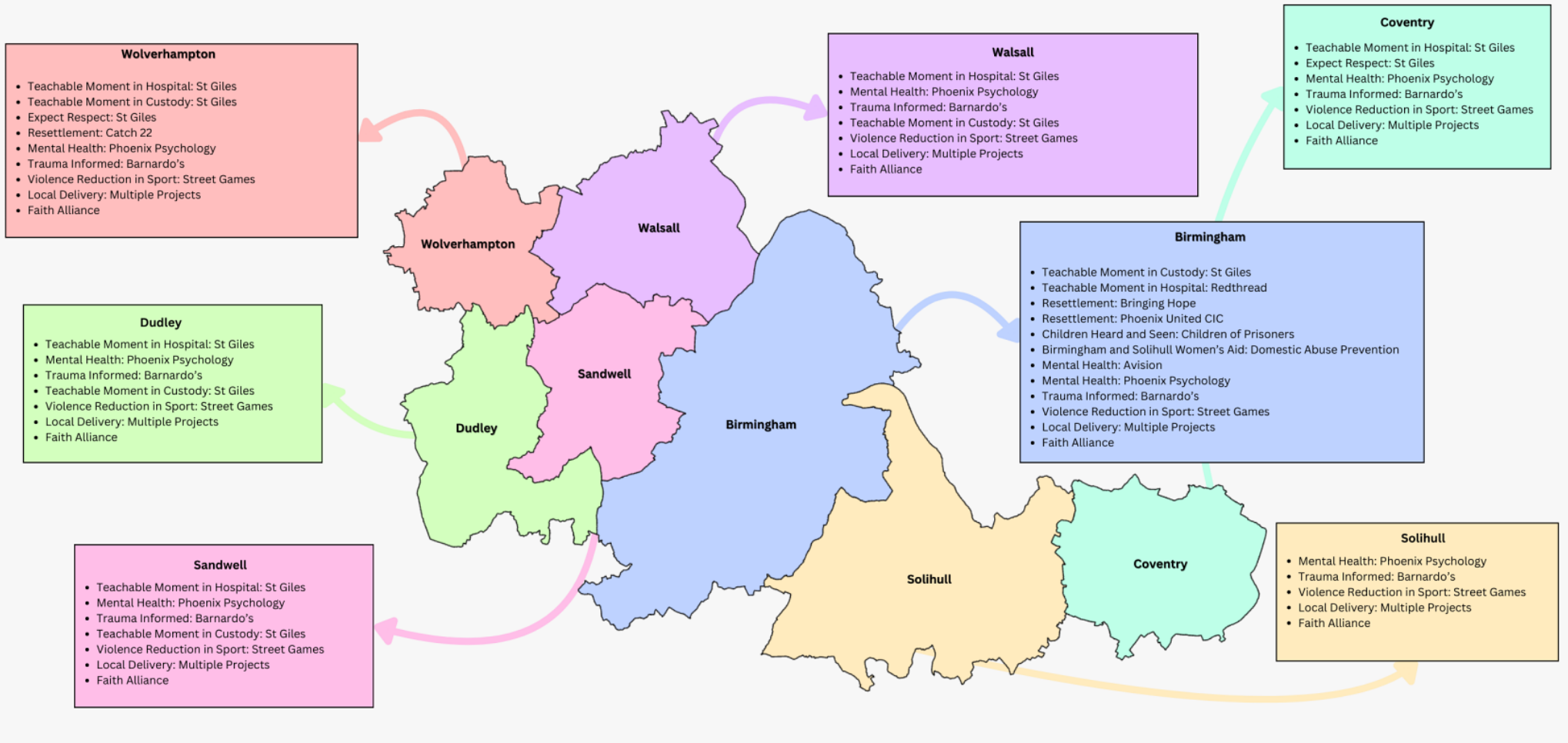
During 2024/25, the VRP funded around £3 million in commissioned activity across the West Midlands. These interventions reached just over 35,000 individuals. The training and awareness raising provision the WMVRP delivered, benefitted just over 7,000 professionals including teachers, social workers, youth workers and others. Trends in police-recorded crime continue to reinforce a positive trajectory across the West Midlands, particularly in relation to violence reduction. Notably, knife crime offences, classified under ADR160, have declined by 17.3% across the force area, falling from 3,762 incidents in 2023/24 to 3,108 in 2024/25.

Figure 3. VRP commissioned projects



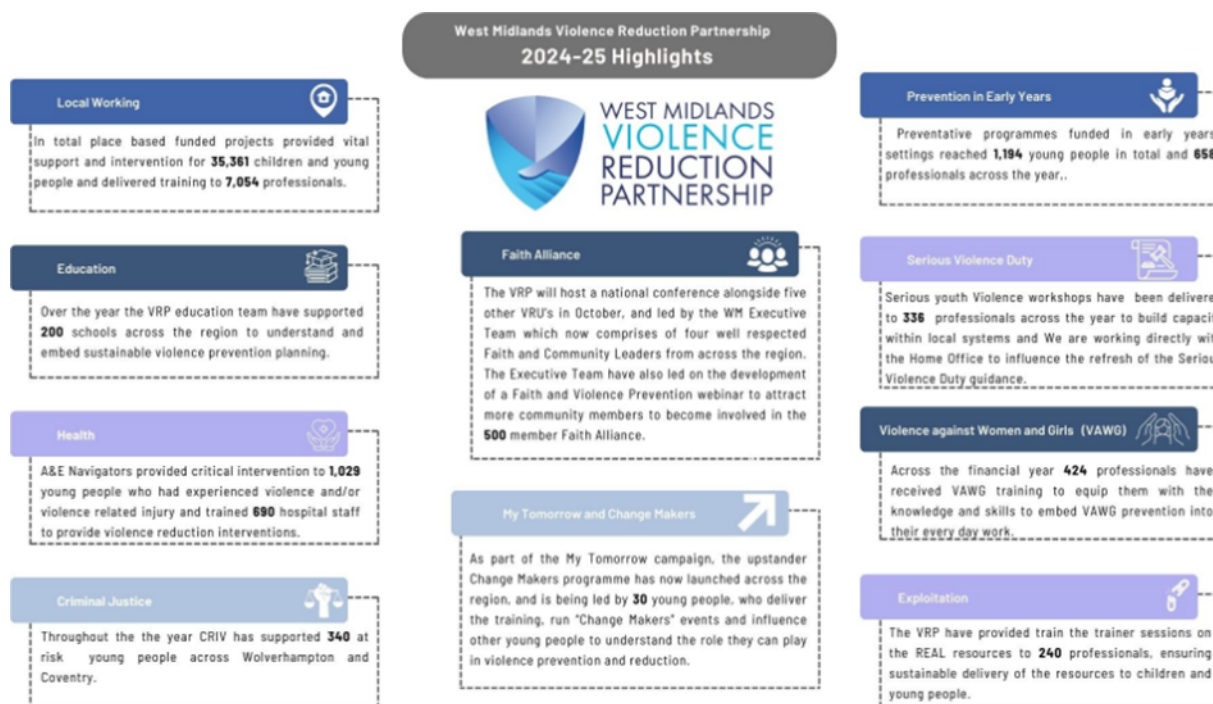
VRP 24/25 Commissioned Projects

Across the West Midlands in the financial year 24/25 the VRP funded various commissioned activity. Below is a map infographic breaking down the interventions in each local authority.



The [VRP Annual Report](#) 2024/2025 sets out the following highlights:

Figure 4. VRP highlights



Serious Violence Duty

During 2024/25, the VRP continued to embed regional implementation of the Serious Violence Duty (SVD), which requires a range of 'authorities' to work in partnership, to formulate an evidence-based analysis of serious violence in a local area, and to use this to develop a partnership delivery plan. The VRP also continued to work towards the 5 objectives in the West Midlands Violence Reduction Strategy (2023-26).

The VRP continues to support each of the seven local partnerships across the region to meet the requirements of the Duty, by raising awareness and providing regular briefings on the Duty, sharing best practice across the region, providing data to develop needs assessments, contributing to or delivering on key areas of their plan to tackle violence and providing key information and resources into local partnerships.

Children and Young People

In the West Midlands, 16 Youth Commissioners were elected by their peers to serve two-year-terms. As young leaders, my Youth Commissioners work to engage with young people, consult with me on policies and help build a better relationship between young people and policing.

In their second year as Youth Commissioners, they have further developed their knowledge around operational policing and supporting me in holding WMP to account. This year, Youth Commissioners visited WMP operational units, to observe how the police protect the public and support crime prevention within the West Midlands.

In 2024, the Youth Commissioners assisted the consultation on my Police and Crime Plan, advocating for the voices of young people. The cohort supported the summer of consultation, by attending events and speaking with members of the public, to engage and understand how young people should be better protected in the West Midlands.

In January 2025, the Youth Commissioners developed their own campaign on the impact of online harm for young people. They surveyed young people within the 7 local areas in the West Midlands, to understand experiences online and the impact it has on their wellbeing. They received over 1,000

responses and produced a report 'Youth Commissioner Research Report: The Experience and Impact of Online Harm for Young People', to present to WMP at the Accountability and Governance Board.

Throughout the year, the Youth Commissioners continued to support regional and local events, like the Annual Walsall Youth Summit and workshops at the West Midlands Young Combined Authority Youth Summit, to further support young people and ensure that their views are represented and advocated for across the West Midlands.

Drugs and Alcohol

The Arrest Referral Service

My Arrest Referral Service provided by Cranstoun, allows people in custody, who have had a positive drug test or who otherwise voluntarily engage, to have a drugs and alcohol assessment undertaken by a trained specialist. They are then able to both provide initial advice and to refer onto specialist treatment providers, commissioned by local authorities, or where possible, receive a court order requiring the individual's engagement with such services, by way of an Alcohol Treatment Requirement or Drug Rehabilitation Requirement.

In 2024-25, there were 14,376 contacts, assessments and interventions delivered by the Arrest Referral Service. Figure 5 shows what my Arrest Referral service has achieved over the course of the year.

Table 1. Arrest Referral Service outputs

Assessments completed	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Required Assessments following positive test	712	625	705	807	2,849
Voluntary Custody Assessments	132	147	107	140	526
Court Assessments	130	175	249	186	740
Total assessments	974	947	1,061	1,133	4,115

In 2024/25 there were a total of 235 Drug Rehabilitation Requirements granted, and 126 Alcohol Treatment Requirements granted as a result of my arrest referral service.

In 2024/25, there were a total of 2,224 referrals to specialist treatment from my arrest referral service.

Divert

Divert is a pre-arrest diversion scheme, which is currently provided by Cranstoun. It allows individuals found in possession of a controlled drug, for personal use not intent to supply, to receive a non-criminal sanction – a Community Resolution, rather than a more traditional outcome, such as an arrest and subsequent caution or prosecution.

From 1st April 2024 to the 31st March 2025, West Midlands Police made 4,126 referrals to the Divert Programme. 2,712 initial interventions were carried out, and 1,762 attended group sessions.

Cannabis was the most common drug individuals were found in possession of when referred onto the Divert Programme - 1,750 adults and 288 young people under 18.

The most common age group of those referred was 18 to 24 (1,067 referrals).

Offending to Recovery (O2R)

My O2R programme in Birmingham, seeks to reduce retail offending and associated criminality by diverting serial offenders, who are offending due to drug and/or alcohol addiction into treatment programmes or residential rehabilitation.

The main activities are:

- Working with people with long-standing drug dependency.
- Identifying clients through a combination of assessing crime statistics, intelligence from partner agencies and retailer referrals.
- Outreach work and engaging with potential clients (takes time to build this trust and for clients to agree to be on the programme)
- Assessment of a client's needs which helps to determine the best pathway options
- Prehab sessions before entering residential rehab (if it is decided that is the best option)
- Ongoing support throughout the client's treatment as well as aftercare, including dry houses and community support.

At the end of 2024/25 there were a total of 144 referrals to the programme in Birmingham. A total of 13 individuals had entered residential rehabilitation. At the end of March 2025, 39% had completed residential rehabilitation, 46% were discharged early, but were still engaged with O2R, and 15% were discharged, but no longer engaged.

Alternative treatment pathways to rehabilitation also included, 15 individuals on Buprenorphine, 16 on Espranor, 12 on Methadone, and 9 in recovery communities. This does not include the individuals who continued to be supported by the team, but had not formally engaged in treatment at this stage.

The Birmingham O2R overall re-offending rate for the 24/25 period averaged at 25%, suggesting a desistance rate across the cohort of 75% since April 2024.

Road Safety

The Regional Road Safety Partnership

I have continued to chair the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group, where all strategic partners convene to direct road safety across the region, including West Midlands Police, Transport for West Midlands and local authorities. Last year the Partnership launched the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030, which adopted the Vision Zero policy of eliminating deaths and serious injury on our roads.

I have been holding the Partnership to account for delivery of the Regional Road Safety Strategy published in November 2024, which outlines 23 actions for partners, with the aim of halving the number of people killed and seriously injured by 2030.

Actions include:

- Funding for extra staff to review speed camera and dashcam footage to increase the number of people prosecuted for speeding and dangerous driving.
- A quarterly review of all road deaths and serious collisions to learn lessons and advise on action
- Working with the food delivery industry to improve safety and compliance for their staff
- Further action to identify and remove uninsured vehicles and drivers from our roads
- Working with media to highlight successful prosecutions for dangerous driving – showing justice being done
- Providing additional support for victims through restorative justice and working with organisations like Road Peace
- Working with local councils to design safer roads

Safer Streets Five

In the Autumn of 2023, I secured investment of £1 million from Safer Streets 5. Part of that money was used to address the criminal and anti-social use of roads.

In February 2025, West Midlands Police received three new speed vans as a result of this funding, and I agreed to fund the purchase of a fourth van. This doubled the number of speed vans that West Midlands Police owned. It means the force can be stationed at even more hot spot locations across the West Midlands, to help put the brakes on speeding drivers.

Part of the funding also went towards investing in the Third-Party Reporting Team in West Midlands Police, to process dashcam and mobile phone footage of criminal and anti-social behaviour on roads, uploaded by the public. The team has seen an increase in reports being submitted by the public and continue to produce a high positive outcome rate.

Table 2. The total number of reports and outcomes during 2024/25 by month

Date of submission	Submissions	Positive Outcome Rate	No further action	Other (such as False Plates)
April 2024	1,239	81%	17%	2%
May 2024	1,304	80%	19%	1%
June 2024	1,493	86%	13%	1%
July 2024	1,409	89%	10%	1%
August 2024	1,257	84%	15%	1%
September 2024	1,632	83%	16%	1%
October 2024	1,658	82%	17%	1%
November 2024	1,518	85%	14%	1%
December 2024	1,220	84%	14%	2%
January 2025	1,662	86%	11%	2%
February 2025	2,098	86%	12%	2%
March 2025	2,441	85%	13%	2%

In November 2024, I launched my ‘Record Report Result’ campaign to raise awareness of Operation Snap; to tell members of the public how to submit their footage; and to encourage the public to help put a stop to dangerous driving. The campaign appeared on digital billboards, buses and fuel nozzles across the West Midlands, as well as on social media.

Retaining Fixed Penalty Fines

I have continued to lobby the government, writing to the Department for Transport, to request that the West Midlands be allowed to ringfence money made from fixed penalty fines in the West Midlands, to invest in local road safety schemes, rather than being sent to the Treasury.

In November 2024, the Mayor of the West Midlands and I wrote a joint letter requesting a pilot scheme in the West Midlands to test local retention of all road safety related fixed penalty fines revenue. I believe this would demonstrate how, when that revenue is reinvested directly into road safety, it can prevent and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads, reduce economic losses, and provide a scalable model for other regions.

Support for Victims of Fatal and Serious Collisions

I currently commission Victim Support, to offer a bespoke, trauma-informed support service for individuals and families, affected by fatal or life-changing road traffic collisions across the West Midlands force area. The service provides emotional, practical and advocacy support from point of referral through to recovery and provides continuity of care, beyond the remit of Family Liaison Officers.

Section 3. Police Collaboration

Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) was last updated in February 2023 and sets out the biggest threats, in the Home Secretary's view, to public safety. These are currently identified as Serious and Organised Crime (SOC); Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder; Civil Emergencies and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). PCCs must have due regard to the SPR when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans, and I have ensured it has been properly considered in developing my new Police and Crime Plan.

The SPR supports PCCs and Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local, regional and national responses and highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs, to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities. I ensure that West Midlands Police has the capacity and capability to respond to national policing threats and are working cooperatively and in collaboration with other police forces and agencies to achieve this.

In order to ensure that the regional and national collaborations are effective, I continue to host a small Regional Policy team, that works across the four PCC areas in the region. They scrutinise activity under the main areas of regional and national collaboration and ensure that the collaborations remain effective and lawful.

As part of this, all four PCCs in the region have local briefings with the Counter-Terrorism and ROCU leads, to ensure effectiveness and to be informed of activity within each area. The structure of these briefings has been developed collaboratively with the other three PCCs, to ensure proportionate local scrutiny arrangements. This is crucial because it informs the joint scrutiny by PCCs at a regional level. Additionally, the Regional Policy Officers attend quarterly Regional Operations meetings, to ensure PCC representation and engagement across specialist areas of policing.

I have also ensured engagement and appropriate oversight of national projects. The role that that National Police Air Service (NPAS) brings to police is changing, as advancing drone technology gives police forces different options. However, it remains imperative and continues to be mandated by the Home Secretary, that forces should collaborate on the provision of a national police air capability.

I also remain informed of the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme, a national programme tasked to introduce a replacement for the Airwave system. The delays in this national programme and the uncertain local implementation costs, are a significant future risk to West Midlands Police and other Forces. However, I am aware that progress is starting to be made to advance this project, which is welcome.

West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit (WMCTU)

The threat of terrorism to the UK remains and continues to change at pace. We have unfortunately witnessed this through the tragedy in Southport, which raised significant questions around the definition of terrorism, young people's susceptibility to mixed extremist and violent narratives through the online space, and whether our current safeguarding systems and referral mechanisms, including Prevent, are fit for the current threat and risk. These issues continue to be discussed, and in my role as National Counter-Terrorism lead for PCCs on behalf of the APCC, and as Chair of the National Counter-Terrorism Collaboration Agreement Strategic Board, I have ensured PCCs nationally, are informed on key developments relating to the issues arising from this tragedy and the implications of this for the local management of threat and risk.

Alongside my PCC colleagues in Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia, I provide joint scrutiny of the regional West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit (WMCTU) and oversee strategic trends, budget planning and management information.

The Head of WMCTU provides a quarterly report for Regional Governance Group, consisting of a detailed account of threat, risk and activity across the 4Ps - prepare, protect, prevent, pursue, as well as other business updates. I also receive local tailored briefings each quarter to oversee and hold WMCTU to account, with regards to activity in our area and utilise this opportunity to raise the concerns and views of our community.

Having oversight of counter-terrorism mechanisms at a national, regional and local level, I remain assured by the response, and I will continue to ensure PCCs and the public are heard in this space.

Major incidents

PCCs have a key responsibility in the event of a major incident, such as a terrorist attack. We provide community reassurance, consider our response to victims and their families and hold the force to account for their response and recovery. My office continues to keep our response capability under review.

West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (WM ROCU)

WM ROCU is hosted by West Midlands Police, who are the lead force for the ROCU in the West Midlands. I work collaboratively with PCC colleagues from West Mercia, Staffordshire and Warwickshire, to ensure that the ROCU maintains an effective and robust response to serious and organised crime across the region.

Through quarterly Regional Governance meetings, I, together with my fellow PCCs and Chief Constables across the region, ensure that the ROCU is delivering effectively for the communities of the West Midlands region. Collectively we sought efficiency savings for the ROCU from its 2025/26 budget. I am confident that they will still be able to deliver an effective service cross the region, to tackle Serious and Organised Crime.

I receive quarterly briefings from the Head of ROCU to update and inform me as to how the ROCU is tackling criminality, that affects communities in the West Midlands. I also review the progress the ROCU is making against the areas for improvement, that HMICFRS identified in its inspection of the ROCU published in 2024. I will continue to do this and expect that all of these improvements will be in place during 2025/26.

Section 4. Civic Leadership and Campaigning for Change

When I was re-elected in May 2024, I pledged to keep the views of residents at the heart of my plans for policing. Equally important, was my commitment to continuously engage, inform and communicate effectively with the people of the West Midlands, ensuring everyone, no matter which community they belong to, feels heard and informed, when it comes to policing and crime. To help me deliver on this, I have a communications and engagement team supporting me 365 days a year.

Broadcast, digital and print

I prioritise a proactive and transparent approach to communications, utilising broadcast, digital and print channels, to ensure a wide and comprehensive approach to keeping residents informed. Delivering multiple weekly updates, I work closely with regional and national journalists to keep the public informed, raise awareness of current issues and campaign for change.

One of the biggest issues I have regularly focussed on in this period, has been improving road safety across the West Midlands. Coverage of measures, including funding new speed vans, campaigning to retaining driving fines in the region and the launch of Operation Snap, all resulted in regional and national broadcast, digital and print media coverage.

I have also focussed on rebuilding community policing, tackling knife crime, reducing violence against women and girls and campaigning for fairer funding for policing in the West Midlands.

A total of 111 pro-active stories or statements were released by the communications team during 2024/25 – with dozens more reactive comments and interviews taking place.

Social Media

My communications team oversee Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn and TikTok accounts on my behalf. The Violence Reduction Partnership also has Instagram, Facebook and X accounts.

The OPCC Facebook account experienced significant growth in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24. Content interactions were up by 389% to 12,200, while link clicks trebled to 30,100. We also gained 589 new followers.

The OPCC Instagram page grew, with 50,800 accounts reached – more than triple the number of the previous year. In this time, our most viewed post on our Meta accounts was a plea for

residents to have their say on our budget and precept public engagement, reaching 130,000 people, while news of the PCC's roll out of new speed vans was seen by more than 50,000.

The OPCC began using our TikTok account in 2024/25, with several posts hitting five figures in terms of views. The most popular video in this time was seen almost 30,000 times.

We also began using LinkedIn more frequently and built up a strong network of stakeholders, partners and residents. Impressions rose by a third, with comments up by more than half.

Campaigns

The standout campaign during this year, was my awareness campaign for Operation Snap, which encourages drivers to submit dashcam footage of dangerous, careless or reckless driving to the police. The campaign used £17,000 of Safer Streets funding and was designed to raise awareness of Op Snap and how drivers can make reports.

We utilised the funding to run a significant out of home advertising campaign, with our messages appearing on billboards across the region, as well as bus shelters, and petrol pumps. We also boosted social media content across Meta platforms.

The out of home advertising was seen more than four million times, while the social media was seen more than 100,000 times. The campaign had a huge impact – with a 70 per cent increase in reports, leading to more than 6,000 motorists fined.

Other campaigns included promoting my weapon surrender bins and tackling violence against women and girls.

Engagement

Police and Crime Plan

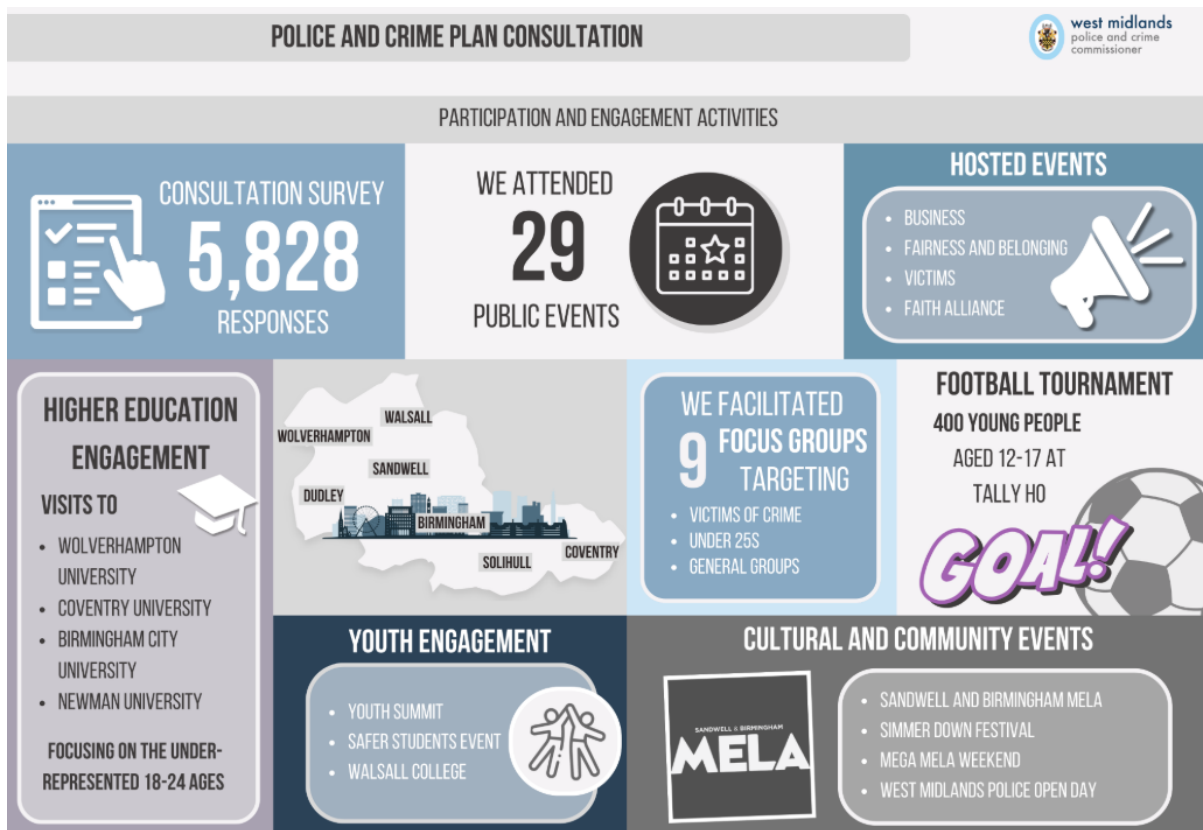
Extensive engagement and consultation took place between July and October 2024, to inform the writing of the new Police and Crime Plan. As part of this approach, the team at the OPCC ensured the public understood my priorities and sought their views on the draft plan.

To consult with the public, my team and I attended 29 public events, facilitated 9 focus groups and attended a range of events including at universities, melas and other festivals. As a result, the consultation received nearly 6,000 responses and, crucially, captured the views of a sample of residents from an extensive and diverse range of communities.

This consultation showed that the public's top three policing priorities were, preventing knife crime, investigating crimes and bringing offenders to justice, prompt response to 999/101 calls and a rapid attendance at incidents.

I launched my new Police and Crime Plan 2025 to 2029, at an event at the Brasshouse Community Centre, Smethwick, with key stakeholders, West Midlands Police, local authorities, and regional partners in attendance on 26 March 2025.

Figure 5. Police and Crime Plan consultation



Precept

My annual precept public engagement ran from January – early March 2025, with more than 700 people having their say. Using social media, as well as traditional media and business engagement, I encouraged the public to share their views. The engagement showed us that 66% were in favour of a council tax rise to support policing in the region.

Meeting with communities

Throughout the year, I have engaged consistently with residents, prioritising meaningful relationships built on accessibility, trust, visibility, and open dialogue. By spending time in communities, attending local events, and meeting people in their own environments, I gained a clear understanding of the issues that matter most to my constituents. Listening closely to their concerns and needs not only informed my work, but also strengthened my commitment to delivering on pledges, initiatives and services that reflect those needs.

I attended 257 community engagement events, including with resident’s groups, ward forums, civic events, partners, businesses, stakeholders, MPs and Councillors, faith groups and visits to West Midlands Police.

I attended and spoke at conferences, including the Midlands Fraud Forum and the International Zero Tolerance of FGM Day. I held meetings with the Transport Secretary, to discuss street racing and road safety, as well as meeting the Prime Minister to call for tightening of restrictions on social media firms. I visited new police facilities, such as the tactical training centre in Birmingham and force contact, after improvements were made to 101 and 999 call answering.

I received 365 pieces of casework, highlighting a significant level of correspondence with people and organisations from across the West Midlands, who raise a variety of concerns, issues and matters.

To further build on my public engagement, I appointed a new engagement team in January 2025, consisting of an Engagement Officer and an Engagement Coordinator.

Section 5. Good Governance, Transparency Equality and Public Engagement

Writing and Launching my new Police and Crime Plan

After being re-elected as West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2024, I commenced an extensive and wide-ranging consultation, to inform my new Police and Crime Plan as already set out above, seeking to build on my achievements in my first term. I then worked with my Head of Policy and wider team, to develop a renewed Plan to best drive forward those matters I campaigned on.

I was determined that my new Plan would be clear and transparent. I have ensured that each section is prefaced by a series of distilled 'I will' statements with key performance indicators attached and the latest KPI data, being viewable on the online version of the plan.

My new Police and Crime Plan 2025-29 is based upon my 6 key principles, all of which are necessary to ensure justice, safety and security for the people and communities of the West Midlands. They are: prevention, partnerships, trust and confidence, bringing offenders to justice, the rights and welfare of victims and rehabilitation.

My new Plan aims to deliver, amongst other matters;

- Continuing to re-build community policing with my Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee
- Tackling violence, in particular violence against women and girls, youth violence and knife crime
- Reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads
- Improving the investigation of crime
- Bringing more offenders to justice
- Ensuring compliance with the Victims' Code

I launched my Plan on 26th March 2025 at the Brasshouse Community Centre in Smethwick. Progress against delivering this Plan will be reported regularly to the Police and Crime Panel and in my next Annual Report 2025/26.

Responding to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

HMICFRS independently inspects and reports on the effectiveness and efficiency of WMP, as part of its role across England and Wales. These inspections assess how well the police force performs in keeping people safe and reducing crime, identify areas for improvement, and highlight issues of significance amongst police forces.

HMICFRS provides information to the public, by publishing inspections online about the force's performance and makes recommendations, to help WMP deliver better policing to communities across the region.

HMICFRS evaluate areas of force performance against its Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection framework, which scores each area as inadequate, requires improvement, adequate, good, or outstanding.

In late 2023, HMICFRS inspected WMP and graded the force's performance across 8 areas of policing, and found the force was 'adequate' in two areas, 'requires improvement' in three areas, and 'inadequate' in three areas. HMIC highlighted the inadequate areas as:

- How the force investigates crime.
- How it manages the risk posed by registered sex offenders and by online child abuse offenders.
- How it manages multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) to work effectively to keep vulnerable people safe.

On this basis WMP were placed into Engage status by HMICFRS. Following sustained improvements in WMP's performance, these three causes of concern are now closed and WMP were removed from Engage status. There is one cause of concern remaining. This relates to how the force carries out effective investigations, leading to satisfactory results for victims.

As part of my PCC responsibilities, I publish responses to HMICFRS inspections concerning WMP. During the 2024/25 fiscal year, I issued responses to 10 inspections. These included responses to thematic reviews, such as an inspection into public disorder during summer 2024, a State of Policing report, and inspections conducted jointly with other bodies.

Accountability and Governance

My Accountability and Governance Board continued to support me, in holding WMP to account and setting the strategic direction for the force. During 2024-25, it met in public on a monthly basis. The Board is transmitted live to the public and recordings are available for members of the public to view. All papers remain publicly available on my website. The role of the Board is to help me to deliver the aims, objectives and priorities that the people of the West Midlands elected me to deliver and which are set out in my Police and Crime Plan.

I am responsible for ensuring, that my role as the PCC is conducted in accordance with the law and high standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. This includes the maintenance of a sound system of internal audit control and that arrangements are in place for the management of risk.

The Joint Annual Governance Statement, reflects the established governance framework and it is published alongside my annual accounts. A joint corporate governance framework also sets out, how governance operates for both the Chief Constable and myself. In addition, I continued with the established arrangements for holding the force to account, adhering to the principles set out in the Policing Protocol 2011.

I met face-to-face with the Chief Constable and senior officers and staff, on a weekly basis for the duration of the year. The meetings covered wide ranging topics relating to current strategic

and operational matters. For example, I have scrutinised force performance data, including 101/999 responses and contact with the public, progress against HMICFRS recommendations as part of the now exited Engage process, as well as ongoing police recruitment and the national police officer uplift programme.

The Joint Audit Committee provides independent assurance on the governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, through its oversight and scrutiny of the work of Internal Audit, External Audit, inspectorate reports and risk registers. It provides this service to both the Chief Constable and myself. Further assurances are obtained via the Annual Governance Statement, the Statement of Accounts and review of the Scheme of Governance. The Joint Audit Committee meets in public and the Chair of the Joint Audit Committee also attends my Accountability and Governance Board annually.

Ethics Panel

My West Midlands Police Data, Technology, and Operational Ethics Panel has continued, at a national and local level, to examine new, innovative technologies and the emerging ethical considerations they bring. The independent, expert advice offered by the Panel ensures honesty, transparency, and fairness in West Midlands Police's use of technology and data and is widely recognised as a good practice model.

During 2024-25, the Panel has considered many and varied projects that are being introduced into operational policing, performance management, or pilot stages. This has included the examination of the ethical implications of various AI technologies, LLMs, predictive tools, and policing strategies. For example, the Panel considered one tool on several occasions that sought to use an AI chat-bot to answer and manage 101 calls, that has since gone into operation and contributed to West Midlands Police becoming one of the best performing forces in answering emergency and non-emergency calls nationally.

While the practical advantages were recognised and have since been made evident in deployment, the Panel raised a number of concerns that helped mould and improve the project. For example, the transparency with callers that they were not talking to a real person was introduced, following panel members' concerns that it could negatively impact effectiveness and public satisfaction.

Concerns were also raised around situations in which the AI model would be unable to cope, such as with language or understanding barriers, scenarios where a 999 call was more appropriate, and issues of disaster recovery. Subsequent redesigns alleviated these issues and mitigated risks, by allowing the bot to be sidestepped in favour of speaking to a real human.

Other projects in which AI was involved, that were considered by the panel, include focus on initiatives to alleviate the strain on officer and staff capacity, improve accuracy and analyse video evidence. For example, the Match and Merge project seeks to automatically locate duplicate records of the same offender and combine them to improve the accuracy of intelligence. Meanwhile, Video Analytics aims to use AI to recognise objects in footage and allow officers and staff to analyse video evidence in a matter of seconds and search for the objects in the footage, rather than having to manually watch for them.

The Panel raised major ethical issues, which later contributed to the policy of use for these projects. For example, any disproportionate use of Video Analytics to create a surveillance state, could infringe upon the public's right to privacy, right to protest, and public satisfaction.

As such, suggestions that the technology only be used for serious crimes were made clearly, to mitigate the risk of abusing technology and over-policing. Further comments were made in regard to both projects, emphasising the imperative of accuracy for both, whilst also addressing the potential for skill loss amongst staff by increasing AI use.

The panel has also considered a number of projects with a more predictive or risk management function. The Stalking algorithm for example, aims to estimate the probability of certain individuals going on to commit, or be a victim of, high harm crime given they have been a previous victim or perpetrator of stalking or harassment.

Having considered and recognised the potential advantages of assessing risk and avoiding future harm, the Panel raised ethical concerns over the accuracy of the model given the possibility of high numbers of false negatives/positives, as well as the potential for the project to be considered a method of predictive policing. It was subsequently requested, that the project return to the Ethics Panel after further development.

The final notable example of a project considered by the Panel concerns the storage of digital evidence, specifically the use of an indecent image database. In this instance, West Midlands Police sought the advice of the panel, as to whether national guidance should be followed and all indecent images be uploaded to a national database, or it should continue to be left to individual officer discretion.

The Panel supported the use of the database, suggesting its benefits outweighed any reservations, but did raise concerns over whether the criminalisation response was proportionate in cases of children possessing indecent images of themselves or partners, considering that to submit the evidence, phones must be confiscated and wiped.

The Panel's suggestions of a more sensitive approach, which imposed the seriousness of the offence, without criminalising children, was adopted by the presenter. It was advised an evaluation be commissioned to consider and investigate the whole process and use learnings to dictate practice and discussion, in order to appreciate the benefits of the database whilst accommodating sensitive, tailored approaches to assess and resolve independent cases.

The Panel has primarily focussed on tackling live or upcoming projects rather than theoretical ideas, an approach praised in a University of Northampton, University of Glasgow, and Northumbria University report published in September 2024. The report, focussing on the responsible use of AI in policing, highlighted the support the Panel has offered to operational policing and described it, to have provided a model nationwide for the ethical use of AI and technology in policing.

The Panel has, as mentioned in the 2023/24 Annual Report, previously received high praise from the House of Lords Justice and Home Affairs Committee's report on technology in the justice system, where the Panel's independence and commitment to transparency has influenced the development of a national model.

Similarly, and also previously mentioned, the Panel has also featured favourably in other UK leading publications, including from the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation (CDEI), the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), The Law Society, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), Ada Lovelace Institute, Liberty, The Police Foundation, The Alan Turing Institute, and The Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL).

Independent Custody Visitors

During 2024/25, our dedicated ICVs conducted 251 visits to police custody suites across the West Midlands, supporting the welfare of 1,378 detainees. The scheme has 48 dedicated volunteers, who conduct face-to-face visit every week.

Over the course of the year, the scheme has seen many measures, to maintain and improve detainee rights, dignity and welfare. The scheme operates an effective oversight and scrutiny mechanism, including panel meetings to ensure any issues can be raised directly with us and the force.

Appropriate Adults

The provision of Appropriate Adults (AA) for vulnerable adults, remains extremely important to me. Against unprecedented demand, our 14 AA volunteers supported 1,480 vulnerable adult detainees (+569 on 23/24).

I continue to support the National Appropriate Adult Network's campaign to lobby the Government to change the law, to introduce a statutory provision for vulnerable adult detainees, levelling up the statutory requirements for vulnerable adults and children. In the absence of dedicated Government funding, I have continued to lead on the delivery of this service.

Section 6. Financial Planning, Resources and Grant

Giving

Financial Planning

I review and agree a medium-term financial plan with WMP each year. The plan builds in the cost of refreshing the fleet, the estates strategy, known investments and the cost of increments for officers and staff. This assumes, that the policing strategic assessment does not change and does not take account of any unknown features of change, in the nature of crime or policing.

The Medium-Term Financial Plan beginning in 2023/24, showed that over the lifetime of that plan, a further £122.6M of savings would be required to balance the budgets of both the OPCC and WMP, even after raising council tax by £10 per annum, per Band D property, across that period.

The previous government promised a review of the funding formula from 2015 and despite reports from the Home Affairs Committee, Public Accounts Committee, National Audit Office, Institute for Fiscal Studies, the National Police Chiefs Council and HMICFRS, 10 years on, the promised review has still not taken place. HM Chief Inspector of Policing noted the following in his [Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales for 2023](#):

'The system of police funding is outdated and unfair. Funding should be distributed so it goes to where it is needed most. But currently, this isn't the case... More grant-dependent, deprived and urban parts of England and Wales are more likely to be underfunded compared to their needs... The way that the PUP [Police Uplift Programme] funding was distributed means that new officers haven't been appointed where they are needed most... In the absence of

increasing the overall spend on the police, [this] will mean taking money away from some to give it to others. This may be politically unpopular, but it is the right thing to do to make poorer communities safer.”

HMIC recent PEEL assessment of the force published 22 December 2023 also noted:

‘West Midlands Police’s funding reduced by 13 percent per capita between the year ending 31 March 2014 and year ending 31 March 2020. This means that it has been affected disproportionately compared to some other forces, and has little opportunity to obtain additional funds from increasing the police precept. West Midlands Police needs to have enough resources to prevent crime and protect the public effectively.’

The Inspectorate's acknowledgment of the Force's predicament is long overdue, but it is still a welcome development.

Financial Resources

I am responsible for setting the budget of WMP and the OPCC. The majority of the funding for this expenditure comes from central government grant, be that the main Policing grant, or smaller and more specific grants, such as the VRP funding.

The total grant settlement for the West Midlands in 2024/25 was £582.2 million, which was an increase of £12.5 million on the previous year. This grant enabled WMP to continue to maintain police officer numbers during 2024/25 and support the so-called national uplift programme.

About 20% of WMP's funding comes through council tax. I set the level of council tax for policing. The settlement for 2024/25 allowed PCCs to raise council tax by up to £13 per year per Band D property. This generated an additional income of £9.7 million. The West Midlands Police budget will still remain under significant financial pressure and the force is still projected to have about 700 fewer police officers by 2026 than we did in 2010.

PCCs are expected to pay for the Police Staff pay awards and meet rising costs and inflation on all other costs, such as energy prices and fuel, from the funding settlement and council tax. A breakdown of the police precept cost, per council tax property band, is set out below.

Table 3. Police precept cost

Band	Statutory Proportion	2023/24 Precept £: p	2024/25 Precept £: p	Change Annual £: p	Change Weekly £: p
Band A	6/9	135.03	143.70	8.67	0.17
Band B	7/9	157.54	167.65	10.11	0.19
Band C	8/9	180.04	191.60	11.56	0.22
Band D	9/9	202.55	215.55	13.00	0.25
Band E	11/9	247.56	263.45	15.89	0.31
Band F	13/9	292.57	311.35	18.78	0.36
Band G	15/9	337.58	359.25	21.67	0.42
Band H	18/9	405.10	431.10	26.00	0.50

The full budget report for 2024/2025 is available [here](#). It sets out expenditure for capital and revenue expenditure, across all areas of policing and the OPCC.

Grants

Grants, both large and small, are one of the key ways that I make a direct contribution to making the West Midlands a safer place. Projects, groups and initiatives prevent and tackle a range of issues such as domestic abuse; sexual violence; victims of crime; cybercrime; county lines; serious youth violence; mental health; sports diversion; youth justice; rehabilitation; offending; and out of court disposals. The information below sets out how grant funding has been spent, across a number of different funding streams.

Helping Communities Fund 2024/25

The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA), enables money which has been seized from criminals to be used and re-purposed. In 2024/25, this provided the opportunity to fund up to £400,000 of community projects, which aligned closely to my Police and Crime Plan and the priorities of West Midlands Police.

The funding is shared out between the 7 LPAs, with the aim of supporting organisations to invest in their communities, helping them to be actively involved in projects, which can make a positive difference and contribute to crime prevention and reduction and community safety in the local area.

Table 4. Helping Communities Fund Allocations 24-25

Local Policing Area	Allocation	Number Of Projects
Birmingham	£101,762	21
Coventry	£28,854	6
Dudley	£13,436	4
Sandwell	£21,870	5
Solihull	£6,400	2
Walsall	£29,980	6
Wolverhampton	£36,130	8
LPA Reserve	£91,568	
Community Response Fund	£40,000	
Street Watch	£30,000	
Helping Communities Fund Total	£400,000	52

Prevention and Intervention Fund 2024-25

The Prevention and Intervention budgets are allocated in line with the priorities within my Police and Crime Plan. The projects that were funded during the financial year are set out below.

Table 5. Prevention and Intervention fund

Project/ Area	2024/25
Enterprise for employment (Birmingham)	£139,000
Arrest Referral (Drug Interventions Programme)	£500,000
Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme	£280,848
Offender to Recovery	£100,000
Safer Streets	£180,000
New Town Funds	£100,000
14 Projects Under £100K, including Stop and Search Education, Family Drug and Alcohol Courts, Cautions and Relationship Abuse	£667,952
Prevention and Intervention Total	£1,967,800

Community Safety Fund Budget 2024-25

These funds allow community safety partners, to invest in meeting their responsibilities and support multi-agency responses, to delivering community safety initiatives.

Table 6. Community Safety fund

Activity	2024/25
Force Wide Commissioning Allocations	
Youth Offending	£652,108
Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	£501,000
Community Safety Partnership - Analysts	£230,000
Arrest Referral (Drug Interventions Programme)	£600,000
New Chance	£292,509
Restorative Justice West Midlands – ASB	£68,785
OPCC Contribution to Sexual Assault Referral Centres	£63,898
DA related Alcohol Violence - Early Intervention (CSP)	£120,000
Domestic Homicide Reviews	£35,000
Sub-Total	£2,563,300
Allocation to 7 Local Community Safety Partnerships	
Birmingham	£616,000
Coventry	£154,000
Dudley	£126,000
Sandwell	£154,000
Solihull	£90,000
Walsall	£126,000
Wolverhampton	£140,000
7 Local CSP's	£1,406,000
Total Community Safety Funding	£3,969,300

Victims Fund Budget 2024/25

Grants from the Ministry of Justice, which support this expenditure, have not increased in line with inflation. The PCC has therefore used reserves in 2024/25 to top up the Victims Support expenditure.

Table 7. Victims Fund Budget 24-25

Priority area	24-25
Domestic Abuse (DA)	£787,549
FGM Support Services	£38,278
Hate Crime	£157,500
Modern Slavery	£179,327
Victim Support – All crime service	£1,063,369
Restorative Justice	£236,250
Road Crime	£80,343
Sexual Violence	£61,950
Sexual Violence – Child Sexual Abuse	£530,758
Stalking and Harassment	£155,379
Those bereaved by DA	£12,855
Associated Costs	£472,000
Total Victims Fund Budget	£3,775,558

Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) Funding 2024/25

This funding is spent on advisors, who can support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, as well as on specialist providers, who develop expertise in supporting different groups with shared protected characteristics: the spend is on male victims as well as female victims and across a wide age range.

Table 8. Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) Funding 2024/25

Priority area	24-25
ISVA's	£2,253,495
IDVA's	£675,814
Total Victims Fund Budget	£2,929,309



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Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2024/25 2 February 2026

April



Pre election period (Purdah)

May



Simon Foster wins PCC election

NEWS | 04 MAY 2024 |



PCC makes big changes at the top of policing to drive down crime

NEWS | 14 MAY 2024 |



May.



PCC joins officers during West Midlands crackdown on knife crime

NEWS | 16 MAY 2024 |



PCC secures £6.5m funding to support victims of crime

NEWS | 24 MAY 2024 |



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May...


Creating a tomorrow worth fighting for.



Create it.
Shape it.
Embrace it.




PCC funds youth-led My Tomorrow campaign to tackle postcode stigma

NEWS | 30 MAY 2024 | 



June

'Fantastic' discussion as PCC joins young people to enhance police relations

NEWS | 03 JUNE 2024 | 




Special awards evening as PCC thanks 'essential' custody centre volunteers

NEWS | 04 JUNE 2024 | 



July

Neighbourhood officers move in as Quinton police station reopens

NEWS | 12 JULY 2024 | 




PCC delivers on pledge to retain a police station in Sutton Coldfield

NEWS | 01 AUGUST 2024 | 



July.

What are your police and crime priorities? asks PCC

NEWS | 14 JULY 2024 | 



My Priorities...

REBUILD COMMUNITY POLICING

- Make neighbourhoods safer
- More officers visible in communities
- Solve local problems with communities
- Work with local businesses
- Combat anti-social behaviour
- Tackle hate crime

TACKLE VIOLENCE

- Violence Against Women and Girls
- Domestic Abuse, including children
- Serious Youth Violence and knife crime
- Organised Crime Gangs and guns
- County lines and criminal exploitation
- Violence against retail workers

IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY

- Increase prevention and enforcement against speeding, phone use, drink/drug driving and failure to wear a seatbelt (the fatal 4)
- Increase 3rd party reporting
- Tackle organised street racing
- Clamp down on uninsured vehicles

REDUCE NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME

- House burglary
- Street robbery
- Car theft and theft from vehicles
- Fraud
- Online crimes

PROTECT VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

- Victim's Rights and Welfare
- Access to justice
- High quality support services for victims
- Support 'by and for' specialist services
- Amplify the voice of victims

MAKE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE EXCELLENT

- Fair funding and efficient use of resources
- High quality, well trained, well supported and representative workforce
- High performing, trusted Force
- Effective and ethical use of data/new technology
- Decarbonisation: Net Zero

My Principles...

BRINGING OFFENDERS TO JUSTICE

- Crimes accurately recorded
- Efficient and effective investigations
- More crimes detected and positive outcomes
- Greater use of Out of Court Disposals and Civil Orders
- Efficient and effective criminal justice system

PREVENTION & REHABILITATION

- Protecting the vulnerable
- Children and young people focus
- Reduce harm from illegal drugs
- Support and challenge people to turn their lives around

PARTNERSHIPS

- Bring WM partners together to make a real difference
- Work with government to deliver change
- Effective local, regional and national collaboration

BUILDING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

- Fairness and belonging
- Best policing for people and in places that need it most
- Listening and responding to the public
- Understanding and addressing disproportionality
- Learning from our history

July..



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PCC launches £330,000 My Community Fund


NEWS | 25 JULY 2024 |






August

PCC meets with Prime Minister to call for clamp down on social media firms

NEWS | 08 AUGUST 2024 | 



Investment secured by PCC enables public and police to snare dangerous drivers

NEWS | 13 AUGUST 2024 | 




September

PCC opens new police museum in Coventry after relocation

NEWS | 05 SEPTEMBER 2024 | 



New campaign puts verbal harassment in the spotlight

NEWS | 16 SEPTEMBER 2024 | 



September.



West Midlands Police moves out of special measures

NEWS | 18 SEPTEMBER 2024 |




PCC doubles down on campaign for fairer police funding

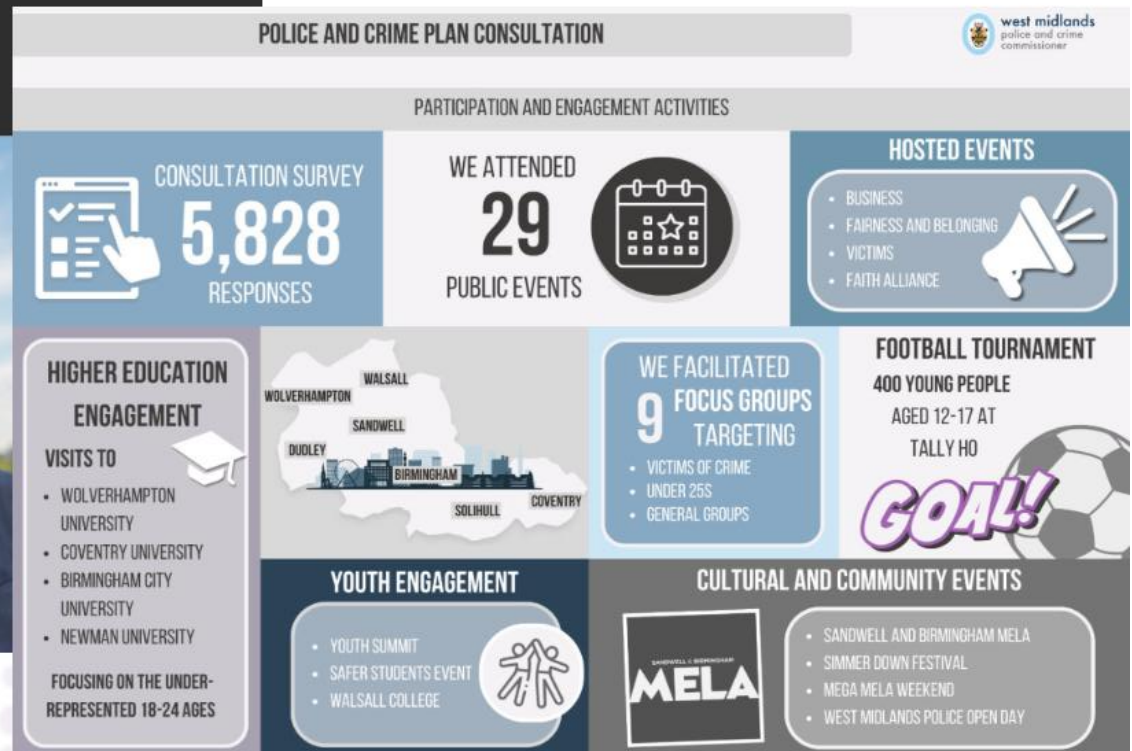
NEWS | 26 SEPTEMBER 2024 |



October


PCC in rallying call for public to have their say on policing

NEWS | 03 OCTOBER 2024 | 




October.

PCC joins praise for unsung heroes honoured at Knife Angel opening ceremony

NEWS | 03 OCTOBER 2024 | 




PCC secures new police base in Canley

NEWS | 21 OCTOBER 2024 | 



October..

PCC signs pledge to make Birmingham anti-racist

NEWS | 30 OCTOBER 2024 | 




West Midlands PCC joins new national taskforce to reduce knife related robberies

NEWS | 30 OCTOBER 2024 | 




November

Future of Newtown police base secured thanks to PCC investment

NEWS | 01 NOVEMBER 2024 | 



West Midlands leaders set out plan to tackle dangerous driving

NEWS | 06 NOVEMBER 2024 | 



November.

PCC slams brakes on reckless drivers thanks to new community speed devices

NEWS | 14 NOVEMBER 2024 | 



Campaign calls on public to help put a stop to dangerous driving

NEWS | 18 NOVEMBER 2024 | 




December

PCC pleased with impact of policing as officers return to new Stourbridge base

NEWS | 02 DECEMBER 2024 | 




PCC signs letter calling on more to be done to tackle violence against women and girls

NEWS | 20 DECEMBER 2024 | 




January

PCC funds £880k Operation Fearless to crack down on crime in the West Midlands

NEWS | 07 JANUARY 2025 | 




PCC joins MP to meet Transport Secretary to discuss street racing scourge and road safety

NEWS | 17 JANUARY 2025 | 



January.

PCC announces new police base for Aldridge officers

NEWS | 23 JANUARY 2025 | 



PCC welcomes drop in crime – including knife crime – in the West Midlands as new statistics revealed

NEWS | 30 JANUARY 2025 | 



February



PCC supports victims with launch of £100k fund

NEWS | 04 FEBRUARY 2025 |




'Brilliant' My Community Fund back for 2025 as PCC gives local projects £330,000 to help reduce crime

NEWS | 03 FEBRUARY 2025 |




February.

Porsche 911 GT3 among £1.8m crackdown as PCC 'takes decisive action' to recover stolen cars

NEWS | 13 FEBRUARY 2025 | 



PCC lands 'game changing' investment as West Midlands Police doubles fleet of speed camera vans

NEWS | 19 FEBRUARY 2025 | 



March

PCC calls on businesses to help tackle domestic and sexual abuse

NEWS | 18 MARCH 2025 | 




PCC applies for 150 new police officers amid 'deep and inexcusable unfairness'

NEWS | 20 MARCH 2025 | 



March.

PCC outlines priorities as he unveils new Police and Crime Plan

NEWS | 26 MARCH 2025 | 

West Midlands Police and Crime Plan

2025 - 2029

PCC Simon Foster
has today launched his
Police and Crime Plan



West Midlands Police and Crime Plan



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

2025 - 2029

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Commissioning

Purpose of report

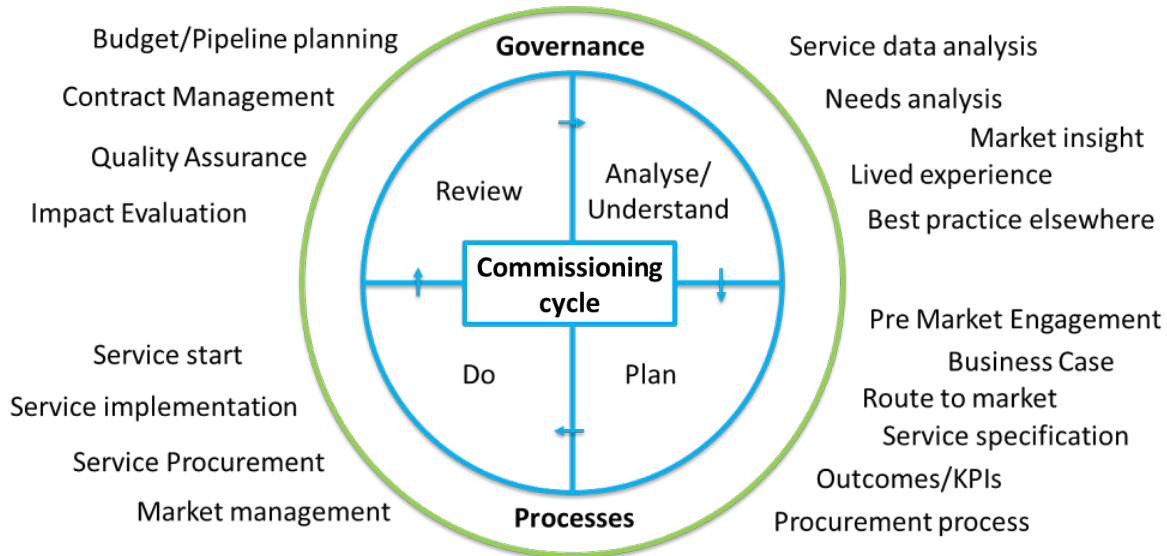
1. This report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel with an overview of commissioning processes, services delivered, monitoring and evaluation and outcomes delivered through the commissioning activity of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.
2. The [Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029](#) sets out a clear ambition for safer, more resilient and more confident communities across the West Midlands. While West Midlands Police is responsible for a significant proportion of delivery against that ambition, some outcomes cannot be achieved through policing alone. Many of the most effective interventions, particularly those relating to prevention, diversion, early intervention and support for victim, are delivered by partners across the voluntary and community sectors.
3. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Panel with an overview of the commissioning cycle, the services that we fund, the monitoring and evaluation that we carry out, and some of the outcomes achieved to date.

Introduction

4. Whilst much of the Police and Crime Plan is delivered by West Midlands Police, there is a significant amount which cannot be delivered by the police and is best delivered by the voluntary and community sector. This provision is secured and managed through our commissioning process. This is an end-to-end process, through which the needs of our communities are understood, solutions are identified, services are put in place to meet these needs, performance is monitored, and the outcomes are monitored.
5. Our commissioning approach is best considered as a cycle, as shown in figure 1 below. The cycle ensures that the PCC is able to commission services that are evidence-led,

targeted where the need is the greatest, is subject to ongoing reassurance and is able to demonstrate outcomes.

Figure1. The Commissioning Cycle



6. The process starts with the Analyse or Understand phase, where we first take stock of what we already know and determine what additional work we need to undertake, to best design future services. Work in this phase includes:
 - Analysis of performance data from the existing service(s), if they exist.
 - Undertaking a needs assessment making use of police data, local authority data and wider datasets as may be relevant.
 - Gaining an understanding of the market for provision of this type of service, that is to say, how many potential suppliers are out there that could potentially provide this service(s).
 - Engaging with those with lived experience of the matter we are addressing, to understand what they need/or needed in those circumstances.
 - Learning from best practice elsewhere, which may include visits, consideration of evaluations, speaking to other OPCCs and so on.

7. We then move onto the Plan phase where we design the service(s) we want to see delivered and determine how we will procure it. Work in this phase includes:
 - Pre-market engagement, to understand potential providers perspective and to ensure they are prepared and ready to make their bid, when the time comes to do so.
 - Business case development, to ensure we have a sound basis for investing in this service(s).
 - Agreeing how to offer the opportunity to the market, including how much money we have to make available over what period. This might be, via a full open tender

process, seeking three quotes, inviting grant applications or, in exceptional circumstances, where there is genuinely only one potential supplier, we may choose to make a direct award.

- Developing the service specification or grant criteria, that will set the parameters for service delivery. This includes defining the outcomes we expect to see, Key Performance Indicators and expected targets.
 - Preparing the procurement documentation.
8. We then move onto the Do phase where we procure the service(s) and work with the selected provider(s), to ensure they are implemented in a timely and safe manner. Work in this phase includes:
- Further engagement of the market, in the lead up to and at launch of the opportunity.
 - Opening the tender opportunity, usually through the Blue Light procurement portal, from which point bidders will have access to the service specification or grant criteria and wider procurement documentation and can commence the writing of their bids or grant applications.
 - Answering clarification questions, through the procurement portal.
 - Closing the tender opportunity and assessing the bids/grant applications.
 - Undertaking a tender or grant panel where the various markers will come together, to reach agreement on who to award the contract/issue grants to.
 - Agreeing and overseeing an implementation plan from the provider and, where relevant, the closure of the previous service.
 - The service commencing and delivering initial monitoring at the end of quarter one whereafter, if things are going as planned, then the service is moved into business-as-usual processes under the Review phase.
9. We then move onto the Review phase, where we ensure the continued delivery of the service(s), throughout the lifetime of the contract or grant. Work in this phase includes:
- Regular quarterly monitoring and contract review meetings, for higher value/risk/opportunity contracts, with monthly monitoring for some contracts.
 - Quality assurance processes – checking around continued vetting or DBS checks, quality assurance visits, including looking at case files and so on, where appropriate.
 - Undertaking formal evaluations in partnership with academic institutions.
 - Forward planning around future provision and when a further recommissioning process will need to take place and we return to Analyse/Understand.
10. The commissioning process is overseen by the Quarterly Resources Board and the Commissioning Governance Board, both of which are chaired by the Chief Finance Officer with the Deputy Chief Executive also in attendance and a joint decision maker.
11. To ensure value for money, and in addition to that already set out above, we ensure an appropriate price, quality and social value split, when tendering for services. Where a service is novel, innovative or high risk, we will put a greater weighting to quality. Where we have an established model or lower risk provision, we will put a greater weighting to

price. For projects over £100K, we ensure a minimum 10% for social value in the evaluation criteria, which ensures that our investments drive as much value as possible for the local economy.

12. We seek to ensure that our commissioning and procurement processes are accessible to all organisations large and small. We invest in capacity building smaller organisations and seek to provide services with multi-year funding, where funding sources allow.

Evaluation

13. Whilst we undertake regular performance monitoring, we also seek to gain a wider understanding of how effective our services are through wider evaluation activity. This ranges from formal evaluations undertaken by academic institutions, to in house analysis of the longer-term achievements of services.
14. Appendix one contains the formal evaluations of the New Chance service and Enterprise to Employment. These formal evaluations ensure that we are funding services that are impactful and effective and particularly enable us to share our local good practice across the UK and beyond.
15. For our more informal evaluations, we are in the process of developing an enhanced approach internally, whereby we overlay police data with service data to both quality assure the data we receive from the provider and also to gain a richer understanding of what our services are achieving.
16. It is also important for us to see the real-life impact of our services, which we gather through case studies. Appendix two shares some of these with Panel.

Transparency

17. We have, for a number of years, published our funding for the previous financial year on our website. From this month, a new funding dashboard will be live, which enables users to see in real time what funding has been allocated, through which funding type, in each local authority area. The link is here: [Funding Dashboard - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#)

Purpose and Intent of each Commissioning Area

Intervention and Prevention

This funding is intended to provide crime prevention and diversion services, across the region, which reduce crime by providing services to offenders, or, by educating vulnerable groups.

Examples of services funded through this source are:

- weapons surrender bins, Family Drug and Alcohol Courts, Offender to Recovery, Stop and Search trainers, Enterprise to Employment.

2025/26 Funding £2,598,600

Source of funding	PCC Core Budget
Procurement	Opportunities are tendered where possible in line with contract standing orders but may be offered as a PCC grant where the marketplace is limited or only a single specialist service exists.
Monitoring information	Regular monthly and quarterly monitoring information submitted by partners and reviewed by the Policy Team.
Evaluation	Quarterly monitoring via online qualitative, quantitative, and financial forms.

Community Safety Partnerships

This funding is provided to local authorities in order to enable them to deliver their community safety plans, and their statutory responsibilities for community safety. It also supports the delivery of the MARAC, which is vital to supporting local authorities in delivering their responsibilities around vulnerable groups, and [New Chance](#), which diverts women from low level offending and provides them with an opportunity to turn their lives around.

Local authorities determine the use of this funding, in partnership with the OPCC.

2025/26 Funding £3,519,600

Source of funding	PCC Core Budget (historic baselined grant allocation from 2012)
Allocation	Funding allocated between local authorities on the basis of population, Each local authority then allocates budget according to its Community Safety Partnership strategic needs assessment.
Procurement	Each local authority has its own contract standing orders to be followed.
Monitoring information	Regular monthly and quarterly monitoring information is submitted by partners and reviewed by the Policy Team.
Evaluation	Quarterly monitoring via online qualitative, quantitative, and financial forms.

Victim Grants and IDVA and ISVA funding

The PCC has a statutory duty to provide services to support victims of crime, whether or not the victim has reported the crime to the police.

In addition, during Covid, new funding was introduced to procure the services of IDVAs and ISVAs, which has been continued to date. The new VAWG strategy may change the way this is allocated.

These funds provide services to support victims, both through the criminal justice process, and with their recovery from the trauma associated with the crime. They are a vital part of fulfilling the Victims Code.

Examples of services funded: Victims Support service, Sex worker advocate, Restorative Justice, Advocacy for families after fatal domestic abuse.

2025/26 Funding £6,794,100

Source of funding	Ministry of Justice grant, topped up with PCC Core Budget
Procurement	Funding allocated in line with the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan and estimates of need in local areas
Monitoring information	Regular monthly and quarterly monitoring information is submitted by partners and reviewed by the Policy Team.
Evaluation	Detailed quarterly monitoring via online qualitative, quantitative, and financial forms which is sent to the Home Office

My Community Fund

The PCC has the power to issue grants to support local crime prevention and diversionary activities and does this through “My Community Fund”. The total fund used to be split by area, but by assessing all applications based on need, and comparing them to the Police and Crime Plan, this is a more regional approach than was taken in the past for the Active Citizens Fund.

This funding also supports Streetwatch. Examples of individual projects supported through the fund can be found in appendix three.

2025/26 Funding £468,000

Source of funding	Police Property Act funds from cash and goods seized from criminals
Application	Public Application process – criteria published on OPCC website
Decision making	Funding allocated in line with the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan by a Panel in each LPA which incorporates Policy, VRP, local WMP engagement officers and senior OPCC staff
Monitoring information	Monitoring information is sent in after 80% of the project is done, and then again at the end
Evaluation	Detailed monitoring via online qualitative, quantitative, and financial forms at the end of the project

Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Funding

The Home Office offered a time limited fund to provide stalking services and also services to the perpetrators of domestic abuse, to try to reduce reoffending.

Examples of the type of support provided with this funding are Counselling, Forensic Psychology, WMP cyberhelpline and WMP Stalking team.

2025/26 Funding £608,000

Source of funding	Specific Pilot Funding from Home Office
Procurement	Opportunities are tendered where possible in line with contract standing orders but may be offered as a PCC grant where the marketplace is limited or only a single specialist service exists.
Monitoring information	Regular quarterly monitoring information submitted by partners and reviewed by the Policy Team.
Evaluation	Detailed monitoring via online qualitative, quantitative, and financial forms at the end of the project

Violence Reduction Partnership Grant funding

The Violence Reduction Partnership has been solely funded through Home Office grant since its inception.

The service provides navigators in each area to assist vulnerable groups, by signposting them to services which are right for their needs, funded by a number of different sources.

It also directly funds prevention, diversion and education services, with each intervention having a “theory of change” which describes why the intervention works, and how the intended outcomes will be measured.

2025/26 Funding £4,791,900 Source Home Office Grant.

Source of funding	Specific Home Office grant
Procurement	Mixture of commissioning processes, from funding allocated to CSP partners, competitive commissioning, and direct award.
Monitoring information	Quarterly monitoring via online qualitative, quantitative, and financial forms. Quarterly meetings with providers. KPIs monitored quarterly.
Evaluation	Detailed monitoring via online qualitative, quantitative, and financial forms at the end of the project Some of the interventions have been subject to external evaluation via academic partners.

Conclusion and recommendation

18. As can be seen from the above, the PCC’s office has a mature and developed approach to commissioning, ensuring that value for money is delivered on behalf of the West Midlands. It enables the PCC to deliver against statutory duties, against the Police and Crime Plan, and against the wider ambition for safer, more resilient communities across the West Midlands.

19. The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



CENTRE FOR CRIME
JUSTICE AND POLICING

New Chance: Process and Impact Evaluation¹

University of Birmingham, Centre for Crime, Justice and Policing

Dr Juste Abramovaite, Prof Siddhartha Bandyopadhyay, Dr Zoe Stephenson and
Prof Jessica Woodhams

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¹ All enquiries about this evaluation should be emailed to s.bandyopadhyay@bham.ac.uk

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the experiences of clients participating in the New Chance Programme, police staff involved in the programme, and New Chance workers and a quantitative analysis of the New Chance Programme with an aim to provide insights of the effectiveness of this programme and how it affects the recidivism among the clients participating in the programme.

The first part of the project involved interviews with those involved in the programme and subsequent analysis of responses with the aim of developing an understanding of what people believe to be working well about the programme and what (if any) aspects could be improved upon. Nine interviews were conducted (four with clients; three with New Chance workers; and two with police staff). Transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis. Findings are presented in two sections: themes emerging from client interviews; and themes emerging from staff interviews. We found that:

- The programme was viewed positively by staff and clients alike.
- Staff highlighted aspects of the programme that have improved since its commencement (e.g. aspects of the referral process and communication between police and New Chance workers).
- Clients made reference to what they felt they have gained through participating in the programme; it was felt that a wide range of both practical and emotional needs were met through one-to-one meetings with their New Chance worker.
- In addition to one-to-one meetings, clients and staff noted the benefits of multi-agency cooperation in terms of additional resources at their disposal (e.g. counselling and legal advice).
- Clients highlighted additional aspects which they felt contribute to the success of the programme (e.g. staff skills/characteristics and the centre environment).
- As a result of the flexibility afforded to New Chance workers, it was felt that the programme was responsive to the needs of the individual clients.
- Staff noted that there are still less referrals than expected (although they are increasing); suggestions were made as to reasons for a lack of referrals and suggestions for improvements offered.
- Additional suggestions were made by staff regarding general improvements they felt could be made to further benefit clients (e.g. financial assistance for clients with their travel costs, and more support in the areas of housing and mental health).

The second part of the project analyses the impact on offenders who have been referred to the New Chance programme. This involved an empirical analysis of the data provided about those individuals who were participating in the New Chance Programme. Data were analysed to provide insights to the background characteristics of the participants in the programme and their offending rates were compared before and after the programme. Then using data provided by the West Midlands Police, a control group was formed (i.e. those not being supported via New Chance but who would have been eligible) so we could match offenders using Propensity Score Matching (a quasi-experimental design) to calculate Average Treatment Effect on recidivism rates which indicates the change on average reoffending (if any) due to the New Chance programme.

We start by looking at descriptive statistics which give us insights in the types of crimes recorded and the main characteristics of the offenders. We then analyse offending and reoffending rates for our given sample. Finally, we match treatment group to a control group of offenders to see what is the difference in their reoffending outcomes. We found that:

- There were a total of 421 referrals to the New Chance intervention from June 2016 to January 2020
- In the past 12 months prior to the referral date, the average number of offences per offender was 3.2 (ranging from 0 to 7). Total (police recorded) offending history was higher and the average number of offences per offender was 13.8 (ranging from 1 to 78)
- Around two thirds of the total offenders were identified as White North Europeans, two thirds were aged 22 to 40 and 42% of offenders were unemployed
- Nearly 20 % of offenders had substance misuse issues identified and over 40% had mental health/wellbeing issues identified
- 22% of offenders reoffended after/during the treatment. On average, there were 3.20 offences per offender in one year before treatment and 2.95 offences 12 months after (the difference of 0.25 was statistically significant at 5% level). We also followed up those offenders for whom we had data for 12 months (N = 247) and they had a difference of 0.32 (3.20 before and 2.88 after) which was also statistically significant.
- Reoffending rates were lower for offenders who engaged for longer than one appointment: it was 28% for those who did not engage or attended one appointment only and 17% for those

who had engagement level identified as 'ongoing'. The difference of 11% was statistically significant. Analysis of engagement length showed that reoffending rates were 26% who did not engage or attended one appointment only and 17% for those who engaged for longer (up to 3 months, 3-6 months and more than 6 months) and the difference of 9% was statistically significant.

- Reoffending rates were higher for offenders who were identified as Black or Asian, who were aged 21 – 24 and 31 - 35 years old, were unemployed, had identified substance misuse or mental health/wellbeing issues (when compared to those who had no such issues identified though we note that there were many cases where this information was unavailable)
- After matching to a control group of offenders, the difference in overall reoffending rate was 16% lower for the treatment group which was statistically significant
- The difference in reoffending was also significant within 60 days, 6 months and 12 months between treatment and control groups and ranged between 7% to 11%. These findings suggest that the intervention had a positive effect on offenders and reduced their reoffending rates
- Reduction in reoffending rates was particularly high (and statistically significant) when comparing samples of offenders with mental health (MH) and substance misuse issues:
 - Reoffending for women who were facing MH issues was 35-37% lower and was statistically significant in the treatment group
 - Women in the treatment group who had substance misuse issues identified had a 51-55% decrease in reoffending
 - These findings suggest that the New Chance intervention could have had a positive effect on offenders' MH and may have provided suitable support for their substance misuse problems, which in turn had a positive effect on the offenders' criminal behaviour.

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1.1 Background and Overall Aim

The project is an initiative funded by the WM Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to pilot an 'early intervention' approach to providing support for women who are identified as early entrants into the Criminal Justice system to support them away from further offending. This has been guided by the "Whole System Approach" for female offenders document (Ministry of Justice, November 2015) recognising the need for a multi-disciplinary approach to meet the needs of these offenders who are often from a vulnerable section of the population. This project (called 'New Chance') is a service aimed at adult (over 18) women who have been arrested but are considered suitable for out of court disposal and are felt in need of emotional and practical support. The two areas covered are Birmingham and Sandwell. They are referred (with their consent) to Women's Aid (Sandwell) and Anawim (Birmingham).

The evaluation sought to assess effectiveness of the intervention both through (i) understanding the process through which the programme helped offenders (evaluated through interviews with offenders and staff involved with the study) and (ii) focus on a number of key outputs namely reoffending rates, as well as reoffending rates across different time periods in comparison to a control group. It would have been ideal to look at children taken into care, lowered victimisation, reduced drug use and lowered domestic abuse, comparing each of these rates before and after the intervention as well as in comparison to a control group but such data were not available.

1.2 Aim of the Process Evaluation

1.2.1 Client study

The aim of the process evaluation with clients was to gain an understanding of their experiences of participating in the programme thus far. More specifically, the aims were to explore views regarding: whether (and in what ways) they felt they had benefitted from the programme (if at all); what they felt was good about the programme, what didn't work so well and, therefore what changes could be made.

1.2.2 Staff study

The aim of the process evaluation with staff was to gain insight into staff experiences of delivering the programme. Specifically, whether it is achieving its goals, what is going well, what isn't going well, and what suggestions for improvements staff have.

1.2.3. Ethics

The study received ethical approval from the University of Birmingham Ethics Committee (Reference: ERN_17-0349). All participants gave informed consent prior to the interview. They were made aware that participation was voluntary and, as such, there would be no negative consequences of not participating. They were also made aware that they could withdraw at any time during the interview or up to one week following the interview. Audio recordings were deleted following transcription and interview transcripts were held in password protected files. All data for the quantitative study was anonymised and held in the UoB researcher's secure laptop.

1.3 Aim of the Impact Evaluation

1.3.1 Descriptive analysis

The descriptive statistics helped us to gain insight into what were the offenders' characteristics for the treatment group, i.e. their age categories, ethnicities, employment status etc.

1.3.2 Before and after analysis

The aim of the before and after analysis was to understand the patterns of offending for the treatment group before and after they have been participating in the New Chance Programme. Specifically, to observe their reoffending rates overall and across heterogeneous groups of offenders after participating in the New Chance Programme.

1.3.3 Treatment and Control analysis

The aim of the Propensity Score Matching (Treatment and Control analysis) was to be able to calculate the average treatment effect of the New Chance Programme. Average Treatment Effect captures the difference in mean effect of the intervention on reoffending rates compared to the control and allows us to quantify the effectiveness of the programme.

Part A – Qualitative Analysis

2.1 Client study

Interviews were conducted with four clients between June and July 2017. All clients were engaging with the programme and had had regular contact with their New Chance worker. Two clients had been participating in the programme for approximately two months, one client for approximately three months, and one client for approximately four months. The frequency of contact varied between clients; one client had almost daily contact, one had weekly contact, and the remaining two had contact on a fortnightly basis. Three of the clients interviewed were under conditional caution, and one was there as a result of a voluntary referral. Due to the need to retain anonymity for all clients, it is not possible to provide individual level information regarding location, duration/frequency of contact, and type of referral.

All interviews were conducted by Dr Zoe Stephenson (University of Birmingham). Interviews took a semi-structured format (i.e. supplementary questions/prompts specific to the individual in addition to specific set questions; see Appendix 1). A forty-five minute time slot was allocated for each interview, however, interviews lasted between 11 and 15 minutes. The short duration was attributed to clients not having responses to questions regarding things that hadn't gone well or things they would change. Interviews were conducted in the client's respective centre (i.e. Anawim, Sandwell, or Dudley). Two interviews were conducted with only the interviewer and client present. The remaining two clients requested that their New Chance worker be present during the interview. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in full².

2.2 Staff study

Three New Chance workers were interviewed between June and July 2017 by Dr Zoe Stephenson. Interviews took a semi-structured format (see Appendix 2). Prompts and supplementary questions were used in addition to set questions. Interviews lasted between 19 and 40 minutes. Interviews with New Chance workers were conducted in their respective place of work (i.e. Anawin or Sandwell).

² There is inevitably self-selection of participants as the research team was only able to interview willing participants. The aim was to gain an understanding of the way the process worked for different stakeholders, rather than create a representative sample for detailed statistical analysis. The next part of the report conducts statistical analysis based on data received from WMP

Interviews with police staff were conducted via telephone. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in full.

2.3 Analysis

Interview transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis¹ by Dr Zoe Stephenson. The analysis involves the coding of transcripts and subsequent identification of overarching sub-themes and main themes. Themes are described and illustrative quotes provided in Tables 1 (clients) and 2 (staff). Full descriptions of themes and sub-themes are then provided.

¹See Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), pp. 77-101.

2.4 Findings

2.4.1 Client response summary

Table 1: Summary of themes derived from interviews with clients

Theme/sub-theme	Description	Example quotes
1. How has it helped me?		
1.1 Emotional needs	All women interviewed provided solely positive feedback regarding their experiences of the New Chance programme. Women described how their emotional needs had been met through having someone listen to them and through being provided with techniques to address negative emotional responses. Women also spoke about having their respective practical needs met (e.g. finances, social services) and, where necessary, being signposted to organisations that could provide additional help (e.g. legal advice and counselling). Responses also showed that women felt that they had learned a lot about themselves from their New Chance worker and were keen to highlight how they had changed as a result of participating in the programme.	<i>'I felt I can open up and been able to talk and I've felt the support has been more than I've ever known my whole life...'</i> (C1)
1.1.1 Listening ear		
1.1.2 Techniques		
1.2. Practical needs		<i>'...we did relaxation, and I went out smiling...I've been using them [relaxation techniques] at home as well at home.'</i> (C3)
1.3. Signposting		
1.4. Knowledge		
1.5. Results		<i>'...she's referred me to counselling...They point you in the right direction for things and that...'</i> (C2)
1.5.1 Behavioural change		
1.5.2 Psychological change		<i>'My temper is not as much as it was. There's been no calling out [of the police], no incidents, and mine and my partner's relationship has been a lot better since I've been on here [New Chance].'</i> (C2)
2. Why it works...		
2.1 'One-stop-shop'	In response to questions around their experiences of the programme, the women provided their thoughts on why the programme worked well for them, as well as why they felt it would also help others. Reference was made to being able to get all their needs met through one service, their views on their respective New Chance workers, the	<i>'Reliable, trustworthy, honest, good with advice and putting you on the right track...'</i> (C2)
2.2 Staff characteristics/attributes		<i>'...and there's just me, one to one, so it was lovely.'</i> (C3)
2.3 Tailored to me		

2.4 Environment	worker being able to tailor the support to their individual needs/circumstances, and the feeling of safety/escape that the centre provided.	<p><i>'...because you feel safe in here as well, you know.'</i> (C1)</p> <p><i>'...I had debt problems, housing problems and that, and I've only got like [names New Chance worker] and counselling left now, because they've all seen a big improvement.'</i> (C2)</p>
3. Perceptions	The women were asked to comment on how they felt about the programme prior to taking part and whether their views had changed. Women reported that, prior to taking part, they were unsure what to expect and had been somewhat sceptical regarding whether or not it would be something that could help them. However, all women now report that they had found the programme to be very beneficial. One woman made positive comparisons between the New Chance programme and previous support/interventions she had experienced.	<p><i>'Just a load of shite to be honest [expectation of what the programme would be like], yeah, so just, more, just like, just not help. I didn't expect to get help...Even though I needed it [help] I didn't expect to get it...'</i> (C1)</p> <p><i>'It's just a great project. They should do it more often...'</i> (C2)</p>

*Note 'C' = Client

2.4.2 Full description of Themes and Sub-themes

2.4.2.1 Theme 1. How has it helped me?

All women interviewed provided solely positive feedback regarding their experiences in the New Chance scheme. Women described how their emotional needs had been met through having someone listen to them and through being provided with techniques to address negative emotional responses. Women also spoke about having their respective practical needs met (e.g. finances, social services) and, where necessary, being signposted to organisations that could provide additional help (e.g. legal advice and counselling). Responses also showed that the women felt that they had learned a lot about themselves from their New Chance worker and were keen to highlight how they had changed as a result of participating in the programme.

Emotional needs

A common theme amongst the women interviewed was that they felt they hadn't had their emotional needs addressed in the past but that, through time spent with their New Chance worker, such needs were being met both through having someone to listen to them and also being given some practical advice regarding coping with negative emotions.

Listening ear and advice

All women made reference to feeling they could talk openly about their thoughts, experiences and feelings to their New Chance worker. Some commented that this is something they haven't experienced in the past (i.e. with friends or family).

'I felt I could open up and been able to talk...I felt comfortable...and I felt, yeah, I could open up straightaway...I don't normally feel that way, like you can't normally find that, you know...I don't open up to no one...' (C1)

'...I'm not one of the types of person to open up my feelings because I just let it bottle up...But coming here, it's...I don't do that no more.' (C2)

'I felt I can open up and been able to talk and I've felt the support has been more than I've ever known my whole life...' (C1)

It was felt that being able to talk openly to someone who cared, didn't judge them, and provided encouragement/advice (see sub-theme 2.2) had helped in such areas as increasing levels of confidence, alleviating feelings of depression and feeling more positive about the future.

'It's just time to talk about things and mistakes we've made and just things like that...just good advice really...I was like bottom, you know, where I was really unhappy and really down and things escalated out of control, and she just told me how to challenge him...I think it's just great for somebody to have somewhere to go, somebody to talk to who they can trust, and, like I say, talk openly.' (C3)

'It's settling my mind down again, if you know what I mean?...I think I would probably have slipped further down if I'd not been here and seen [name of New Chance worker].' (C4)

Techniques

In addition to listening and providing general support and advice, some women also made reference to their New Chance worker having given them some practical techniques which they can use to help cope with negative emotions.

'...when I got in I was really emotional – I was in tears. And she just calmed me down, had a cup of coffee, relax – we did relaxation, and I went out smiling...I've been using them [relaxation techniques] at home as well.' (C3)

The use of adult colouring books and puzzle books were also mentioned as a technique used to keep calm.

Practical needs

Women commented that New Chance workers had offered support for a variety of practical needs (e.g. finances, liaison with social services, and benefits).

'...she's [New Chance worker] helped me with like a lot of my benefits and what I probably wouldn't understand, you know, things like that...' (C4)

'...my son's in care, she [New Chance worker] helps me like...because I'm not getting nowhere with Social Work, she phoned them and explained like what happened, and now that [name of New Chance worker] spoke to her, I'm getting the right information and everything is coming through the post as it should be...' (C2)

Signposting

Half the women made mention that their New Chance worker had been able to point them in the right direction for further support where necessary (e.g. professional counselling and substance misuse support). They were aware that they could ask their New Chance worker for specific help and that their worker would be able to arrange this for them.

'...she's referred me to counselling...They point you in the right direction for things and that...'
(C2)

Knowledge

Staff were praised for the amount of knowledge they were able to impart during sessions. Comments were made by the women regarding how staff had helped them learn about themselves and helped them see how they could go about achieving their goals.

'...she'll (New Chance worker) do some work about emotional needs and relationship crisis and anti-depressants, the side effects and all that lot, and then we have some SMART goals to where I am...' (C2)

With reference to taking the advice of the New Chance worker, one woman commented that she takes it on board and uses it, implying that this is because she feels the New Chance worker is knowledgeable (i.e. trained) and good at her job.

'...because I know she's best at her job and that's what she's trained for...' (C3).

Results

Women were keen to highlight that they have changed as a result of the time spent with their New Chance worker. Both behavioural and psychological changes were noted.

Behavioural change

Examples were provided by one woman such as no longer being reliant on alcohol, no police call outs since she had started attending sessions, better relationships, and no instances of violence.

'My temper is not as much as it was. There's been no calling out [of the police], no incidents, and mine and my partner's relationship has been a lot better since I've been on here [New Chance].' (C2)

In addition, the woman commented that her New Chance worker had helped her to consider the consequences of her actions which had led to her being better able to control her behaviour.

'...and then someone gets called out, he goes into hospital and then it just...and you feel sorry and...and then it's just one...one big circle and it rotates itself again. And then I can see the side effects it's hurting onto my partner. If it keep doing it, he's going to end up walking...' (C2)

Psychological change

In addition to general positive feedback about the scheme, two women made reference to how they feel that contact with their New Chance worker has led to internal changes.

'...I'm a lot better in myself.' (C4) and *'...built up my confidence, yeah, built up my confidence.'* (C3)

2.4.2.2 Theme 2. Why it works...

In response to questions around their experiences of the programme, women commented on why the programme worked well for them, as well as why they felt it would also help others. Reference was made to being able to get all their needs met through one service, their views on their respective New Chance workers, the worker being able to tailor the support to their individual needs/circumstances, and the feeling of safety/escape that the centre provided.

'One-stop-shop'

It was recognised that the New Chance worker was able to address a wide range of needs (see sub-themes 1.1 and 1.2). They were aware that they could tell their worker about any issue and that appropriate help would be given. A range of areas of support were mentioned (e.g. housing, finances, social services, emotional support, relaxation techniques, clothing etc...). Being able to access all this support through one individual was felt to be preferable to/more effective than being directed to multiple agencies for their range of needs. However, as mentioned, it was also noted that, where necessary, being signposted to other services (e.g. counselling) could benefit them.

'[before] I had help for my alcohol, Kaleidoscope because I couldn't keep up with my debt – I had debt problems, housing problems and that, and I've only got like [name of New Chance worker] and counselling left now, because they've all seen a big improvement.' (C2)

Staff characteristics/attributes

A prominent sub-theme was that of the women's positive views of their respective New Chance workers. All women made reference to how highly they regarded their New Chance worker and implied that this was of paramount importance to the effectiveness of the support they had received.

'...like the way, you know, I can talk to her, em, you know, and she doesn't like judge. You don't feel like you're looked down on. You know, you feel like you're human...' (C1)

'...she [New Chance worker] is brilliant, she is brilliant...I look forward to her coming or she rings me up or something like that. She's brilliant, yeah.' (C4)

'Reliable, trustworthy, honest, good with advice and putting you on the right track...' (C2)

Tailored to me

The women noted a range of needs (e.g. practical, psychological/emotional, behavioural – as outlined above). Through providing descriptions of how their New Chance worker had met their needs, it was evident that the support is tailored to the individual needs of each woman. The New Chance worker assesses needs and then provides the necessary support. In addition, it was evident that New Chance workers took individual practical circumstances into consideration, for example, two women struggled with getting public transport due to health issues and said this would be a barrier to them in attending sessions at their respective locations. New Chance workers had, therefore, gone to visit them or picked them up and brought them to the centre.

'...and I don't use public transport, so [it's meant her picking me up] and stuff, which has been a big...a really big thing.' (C1)

'I'm not a good traveller and that, so [name of New Chance worker] has been coming to me.'
(C4)

In addition, all women reported having benefitted from the one-to-one approach. The majority felt that this was preferable to group work.

'...and there's just me, one-to-one, so it was lovely.' (C3)

Environment

Women who were more frequent visitors to their respective centres commented that it was a nice environment. No men are allowed in the centres and women are encouraged to feel at home (e.g. can help themselves to tea/coffee).

'...because you feel safe in here as well, you know.' (C1)

2.4.2.3 Theme 3. Perceptions

The women were asked to comment on how they felt about the programme prior to taking part and whether their views had changed. Women reported that, prior to the programme, they were unsure what to expect and had been somewhat sceptical as to whether or not it would be something that could help them. However, all women now report that they found the programme to be very beneficial.

Before starting

Women reported that they were unsure as to what to expect from the New Chance programme which they felt to be unsettling. However, in the case of one woman, she agreed to attend as she was aware of the consequences if she did not.

'Nervous, really thinking, you know, what's going to happen and what they might say, or who would be involved and all that like...They said, eh, if I don't go, there'd be – if I didn't attend my first appointment, there'd be a warrant out for my arrest.' (C2)

Some women were concerned that it would be a negative experience. However, one woman, having been told some details, felt positive about participating.

'Just a load of shite to be honest [expectation of what the programme would be like], yeah, so just, more, just like, just not help. I didn't expect to get help...Even though I needed it [help] I didn't expect to get it...' (C1)

'Well, at first I thought, do I really need to go through this, because I'm getting old now.' (C4)

'Quite positive actually when I was told about it. It still wasn't a bit what I expected it to be like...I expected to be sitting in a circle...but, em, it's better than what I thought it would be [because it's one to one].' (C3)

And now...

All women reported that, having taken part in the programme, they held a positive view of how it had impacted upon them, with some also commenting that they felt the programme would benefit others.

'...it definitely helped me...I would be lost without this place, and I bet a lot of other women would be as well...It was a blessing in disguise coming here.' (C1)

'It's gone really well actually, yeah. I'm actually getting somewhere now.' (C4)

'I think it's a good scheme, you know, for people – there's a lot of people out there with different situations, and I just think it's good for them to come...' (C3)

'It's just a great project. They should do it more often...' (C2)

With reference to how the programme compares to support received in the past, one woman noted that she felt that she had not benefitted from other programmes in the past but that she has had a positive experience of the New Chance programme.

'...I've felt the support has been more than I've ever known my whole life, because I've been, you know, through systems my whole life and I've never, ever had the support until now.' (C1)

2.4.3 Staff response summary

Table 1: Summary of themes derived from interviews with police staff and New Chance workers

Theme/sub-theme	Description	Example quotes
1. Referrals	There was predominantly positive feedback from staff in terms of how the process of referrals is working. Police staff noted that the process of referrals is well organised and generally now runs smoothly with all officers in their team being aware of the programme and the criteria which must be met for a referral to be made. Officers were reported as having a positive view of the programme and it was felt that police staff are given adequate information/training/written material. However, it was noted that referral forms from the police have lacked sufficient detail in the past, and that there have been less referrals that expected. Potential reasons for this were thought to include the criteria for inclusion in the programme, insufficient detail about the scheme in written material for potential clients, high police staff turnover, and women not engaging with the programme.	<i>'The process is quite easy now, simple, and has improved over time...people have got more comfy with it [making referrals].'</i> (P2)
1.1 Referral forms		
1.2 Number of referrals		<i>'But if it was proved to be successful and rolled out, I think the criteria would need to be looked at to help more people.'</i> (P1)
1.3 Suggestions		<i>'I did have a problem with that [referral paperwork] a lot at the start, em, because they [police] would never fill in the paperwork, em, for a lot of mine...'</i> (P4)
2. Achieving goals	Both police and New Chance workers made reference to ways in which the programme is achieving its goals. Reference was made to factors which increase the likelihood of engagement (e.g. the time at which women are approached to take part and being responsive to their individual needs), emotional and practical needs that are able to be addressed through the scheme, the wide range of programmes/individuals women can be referred to for specific needs (e.g. solicitors, registered counsellors etc...), factors which contribute to the effective running of the programme (e.g. multi-agency cooperation and good relations between police and New Chance workers), and how the knowledge and skill set of staff benefit the women.	<i>'...in every single way really. I don't think there's anything that, er, they [clients] couldn't be supported in, that they [New Chance workers] couldn't provide support and help with.'</i> (P1)
2.1 Timing		
2.1.1 Approaching in prison		
2.1.2 Timely support		<i>'...our approach is, em, it's listening and it's tailormade to suit the individual person that comes through...what we do is based on what someone presents with...I think that's really exciting.'</i> (P5)
2.2 Addressing needs		
2.2.1 Additional programmes		
2.2.2 Practical needs		
2.3 Responsivity		<i>'I love the whole ethos...in supporting women, vulnerable women...being all about them...It's not just this is what we're saying and we're doing this. It's everybody actually believes what they're doing and saying...'</i> (P4)
2.4 Relationships between police and New Chance workers		
2.5 Multiagency cooperation		
2.6 Staff skills and attitudes		

3. Reflections on the New Chance programme	New Chance workers made reference to what they felt women have benefitted from (in addition to specific one-to-one support) and what they might find helpful (i.e. group work).	<i>'...having that person and that place to come to... I think it's that second person that's not involved in the criminal justice system that they can sort of open up to.'</i> (P3)
3.1 From personal experience	Both police and New Chance workers expressed their opinions regarding client engagement with the programme (i.e. differences between voluntary participation and conditional	
3.1.1 What women find helpful	cautions, and the difficulties around encouraging women to engage when they aren't <i>ready</i> to do so).	<i>It's giving them ways that then they can carry on and function properly in society... you can see very real ways it's helped people.'</i>
3.1.2 Engagement issues	New Chance workers commented on what they felt to be barriers to the support they can offer (i.e. a lack of funds for transport and a lack of support for clients with mental health	<i>(P4)</i>
3.1.3 Barriers	needs). New Chance workers reported positive outcomes of the programme for those who engaged and all staff made suggestions as to improvements which could benefit clients (i.e.	
3.2 Outcomes	accommodation, funding for transport, mental health support, and group work).	<i>'It's like any offenders that we manage, whether they're female, male, etc., if they're not ready, they're not ready. You can't affect them. They have to be ready and they have to be ready for change.'</i> (P2)
3.3 Suggestions		

*Note 'P' = Participant. To reduce the likelihood of any particular interviewee being identified, we have not labelled Police staff and New Chance workers separately.

2.4.4 Full description of Themes and Sub-themes

2.4.4.1 Referrals

There was predominantly positive feedback from staff in terms of how the process of referrals is working. Police staff noted that the process of referrals is well organised and generally now runs smoothly with all officers in their team being aware of the programme and the criteria which must be met for a referral to be made. Officers were reported as having a positive view of the programme and it was felt that they are given adequate information/training/written material. However, some staff made mention of previous shortcomings and made suggestions as to how they could be addressed.

Referral forms

New Chance staff noted that there were some issues earlier on (now resolved) where they felt they were not provided with adequate information in the referral form from the police. In addition, there had been previous concerns by New Chance staff that some police officers were not providing potential clients with adequate information about the programme which may have made it less likely that they would agree to attend.

'I did have a problem with that [referral paperwork] a lot at the start, em, because they [police] would never fill in the paperwork, em, for a lot of mine...' (P4)

It was commented by a New Chance worker that, through no fault of police staff, the referral form will often not include the full range of needs that a woman has; it was suggested that this is because women are less likely to open up to the police than to them.

'...the police officer ticks what they think they need help with. I can get a referral form that's got one tick on it, and by the time I've done my initial assessment, I've got 80% of them ticked that they need help with.' (P3)

Number of referrals

It was reported that there have been less referrals than expected prior to the start of the programme. A number of reasons are suggested for this:

- 1) Lack of continuity of police staff (i.e. high staff turnaround in the department);
- 2) Stringent criteria (i.e. age range, historical convictions);
- 3) Referrals only being made from conditional cautions rather than on a voluntary basis (Anawim) or referrals being predominantly voluntary rather than from conditional cautions (Sandwell);
- 4) Written material given to the women being overly generic and not doing the programme justice (it is noted that this is currently in the process of being improved);
- 5) Changes in police policy/procedure on arrests since the implementation of the programme;
- 6) Police officer lack of awareness of the programme, and
- 7) A lack of engagement from women with voluntary referrals.

However, police and New Chance workers highlighted that the situation is improving (i.e. more referrals are being made) in Sandwell following the involvement of the Prison Intervention Team (PIT) who deal with out of court disposals.

Regarding continuity of police staff, it was noted that high staff turnover can have a negative impact.

'...all the restructuring in the last couple of years of the police...there's been a lot of, a huge turnover of staff moving in different departments, so it's, it's hard to get the continuity of a specific team who deal with these individuals.' (P1)

A police interviewee commented that one reason for a lower number of referrals than expected was that the number of eligible females going into custody has reduced due to changes in procedures with this type of offender.

'...a few things have changed within our service. For an example, a lot more offences are dealt with by voluntary interviews rather than coming into custody because to pass the custody threshold, you have to pass the necessity tests for arrests.' (P1)

It was further commented that not all officers are fully aware of the New Chance programme due to a heavy workload. This was thought to potentially result in some women who were suitable for the programme not being referred.

'Workload and the amount of things that each police officer has to remember and, you know, the different agencies to refer to etc...' (P1)

However, it was also noted by a police interviewee that, over time, police are becoming more familiar with the process of referrals. They have flow charts which provide them with a quick guide as to whether a woman would be suitable or not for the programme.

'The process is quite easy now, simple, and has improved over time...people have got more comfy with it [making referrals].' (P2)

Regarding criteria for referrals, it was commented by one New Chance worker that where it is a voluntary referral, women may appear to be keen to attend when at the police station but that their interest is not genuine so getting voluntary referrals is difficult.

'...it was difficult as well as first because it was voluntary referrals that we were getting, so that was women going to the police station and them saying "yeah, yeah, we'll engage with Anawim" or do anything to just sort of leave the police station...and you'd try and contact them and you weren't getting anything back. Whereas recently it's changed to conditional caution so they have to engage...' (P3)

It was felt that some women who may have been eligible could have fallen through the net due to the above issues. A suggestion is made below (see section 1.3) for an alternative mechanism of recruiting women onto the programme.

It was noted that, due to a lack of clients, it has not been possible to do group work (although this is not necessarily a negative issue). In addition, it was felt that issues with criteria restrictions may mean that women who would benefit from the programme have not be referred.

Suggestions

Although there has been an increase in the number of referrals, it was requested that these be increased further. Based on the above issues it was suggested that: criteria are reviewed and slight amendments made if viable; written material for women is revised (currently underway); and more officers to be made aware of the programme.

'But if it was proved to be successful and rolled out, I think the criteria would need to be looked at to help more people.' (P1)

Criteria referred to were the age bracket of women (i.e. extending the maximum age to include those over the age of 40) and the issue of previous convictions (i.e. potentially adapting the criteria to include women with a small number of previous/historical convictions).

It was suggested by New Chance workers that a potential way to increase referrals could be for them to have a presence in a police station at times so that they could approach women directly; it was felt this may increase the likelihood of women subsequently engaging.

'...maybe one day a week one of us went down there [police station] and was based in an office down there...just so when they have someone that comes in that is suitable for Anawim, we get to go in and just explain a little bit about it.' (P3).

2.4.4.3 Achieving goals

Both police and New Chance workers made reference to ways in which the programme is achieving its goals. Reference was made to factors which increase the likelihood of engagement (e.g. the time at which women are approached to take part and being responsive to their individual needs), emotional and practical needs that are able to be addressed through the scheme, the wide range of programmes/individuals women can be referred to for specific needs (e.g. solicitors, registered counsellors etc...), factors which contribute to the effective running of the programme (e.g. multi-agency cooperation and good relations between police and New Chance workers), and how the knowledge and skill set of staff benefit the women.

Timing

Both the timing of approaching women with details about the programme and the timing of addressing the needs of women were mentioned as being of importance in increasing the likelihood that women would engage with the programme and that they would be able to receive support when they are in the most need (i.e. as opposed to only being able to access support at specific times each week).

Approaching in prison

One police staff member noted that, in his experience, upon arrest, people are more likely to admit that they need support. As such, providing women with information at this time may increase the likelihood that they will accept help.

'So, it's a good time to go and talk to them and offer them help, and you tend to find, not just with females, with anyone really, that if they want to admit to needing help, then that's a good time to do it.' (P2)

Timely support

A New Chance worker commented that a positive aspect of the programme is that women are able to contact them and come to the centre (Anawim or Sandwell) at any time. Where women are in distress at a particular time, they are able to access support within a short space of time which may reduce the likelihood of a negative outcome.

'...if they're in a time of distress, they'll come here because they know they'll be able to talk to somebody or at least just calm down...just get that little bit of support that just will help them to just get on to the next stage without anything drastic happening or with a terrible knock-on effect...' (P3)

Addressing needs

New Chance workers mentioned a range of needs that clients tend to have. Although there is diversity amongst clients, some needs that frequently arise include substance misuse, domestic violence, past trauma, finance and mental health issues. Where possible, the New Chance worker can meet the needs of the client. However, where they feel a client may benefit from more specific support, they are able to signpost them to other programmes/individuals. Through a combination of the skills of the New Chance workers and the resources at their disposal, it was commented by a member of police staff that the programme can provide a wide range of support for women.

'...in every single way really. I don't think there's anything that, er, they [clients] couldn't be supported in, that they [New Chance workers] couldn't provide support and help with.' (P1)

Additional programmes

New Chance workers made mention of additional programmes that they are able to suggest women attend. For example, Red (Regulating and dealing with distress) for women who have specific needs

related to anxiety, and Seeking Safety for women with substance misuse issues. Programmes are also available for women who have experienced past trauma and feel they would benefit from talking about this. Other programmes/support include one-to-one sessions with psychologists, Rape Chat, Recovery, Therapeutic Art, money advice and access to a solicitor. New Chance workers were confident regarding their ability to identify whether a client would benefit from any additional support.

Practical needs

An emphasis was placed by New Chance workers on their ability to address the range of practical needs that women may have. Examples given included being able to provide clothing for a client, being able to intervene with a shop manager on the client's behalf to explain the client's situation (resulting in the shop not pressing charges), arranging temporary accommodation, helping to fill out housing application forms, and (as also noted by clients) being able to drive to see the women in cases where it is not possible for a woman to get public transport.

'...you would be amazed at the amount of women that don't know how to fill out a housing application...once you get that third party that's helping them along and saying "this is what you need to do", sitting with them, it makes a massive difference.' (P3)

Responsivity

New Chance workers emphasised that they are responsive to the needs of the individual client. Whilst they recognise that there may be commonalities amongst women in terms of what issues need to be addressed, they highlighted the need to be flexible to the needs of the individual woman. One New Chance worker went further to praise the New Chance programme for afforded them the opportunity to be responsive to the needs of the women.

'...the whole concept of New Chance is just amazing because we have so much flexibility...because we've got a broad list in terms of what we can do...because our approach is, em, it's listening and it's tailor made to suit the individual person that comes through...what we do is based on what someone presents with...I think that's really exciting.' (P5)

Relationships between police and New Chance workers

Both the police staff and New Chance workers commented on the relationship/communication with each other. Frequent communication was found to be very useful in addressing any barriers to the

effective running of the programme. Quarterly meetings between the police and New Chance staff were found to be beneficial in terms of trouble shooting and in encouraging each other by providing positive feedback.

'...that's our massive thing here, is having a good relationship with the police officers. We've found lately that we're getting a lot back, so we'll email them and say, "Just a quick update, I've met blah-blah-blah, we've done this, we've done that, this is where we're going to go next", and then actually getting an email back saying, "Thank you – it's really nice to hear". It builds a better bond between us and the arresting officers... we have quarterly meetings with the police, and it tends to be sort of, em, someone from Perry Barr, someone from Sutton, and someone from Erdington, and we just talk about what we think could maybe improve' (P3)

Multiagency cooperation

With reference to the number of agencies and individuals that work together to meet the needs of clients (as outlined above in 'Additional Programmes'), New Chance workers commented that having these agencies at their disposal is integral to being able to meet the needs of women. One New Chance worker also commented that it was useful to have feedback from other agencies on the progress of a client.

'...they let me know how she's getting on. So, it does work having multi-agencies...' (P3)

The same New Chance worker commented that she had been able to get a client six weeks of bus fare through another agency with whom the client was also receiving support.

'...so we had a multi-agency meeting and I said, "She's struggling to get over here for the courses because of her funds and bus fare", and she said, "I can supply you with six weeks", which is how long the course is, six weeks of bus tickets for that client.' (P3).

Staff skills and attitudes

All staff interviewed had a positive outlook about the New Chance programme. Police staff and New Chance workers alike felt that they had been well trained for their respective roles. New Chance staff had previous experience of working with female offenders and/or vulnerable women and were

knowledgeable regarding the needs of women they support. All New Chance workers expressed a lot of enthusiasm about their work and commented that they enjoyed their roles.

'I love the whole ethos of Anawim, you know, in supporting women, vulnerable women, and, you know, being all about them – and you come across it sort of all the time in your work. It's not just this is what we're saying and we're doing this. It's everybody actually believes what they're doing and saying, you know. And it's all about...all of us, not just the clients, it's about looking after ourselves as well, and I've never worked anywhere where it's been like that before, so I really love it...I think we were both quite enthusiastic and we could both see how it could work, so we just got stuck in straight away really...I really believe in it and I really want it to continue.' (P4)

2.4.4.2 Reflections on the New Chance programme

In addition to the focus on whether, and in what way, the programme is achieving its goals, police and New Chance staff reflected on what they have learnt about women involved in the programme. New Chance workers made reference to what they felt women have benefitted from (in addition to specific one-to-one support) and what they might find helpful (i.e. group work). Both police and New Chance workers expressed their opinions regarding client engagement with the programme (i.e. differences between voluntary participation and conditional cautions, and the difficulties around encouraging women to engage when they aren't *ready* to do so). New Chance workers commented on what they felt to be barriers to the support they can offer; a lack of funds for transport was highlighted as a hindrance, as was a lack of support for clients with mental health needs. New Chance workers also spoke of their thoughts to date on the outcomes they are seeing in the women they work with. Lastly, New Chance workers and police staff made suggestions as to improvements which could benefit clients (i.e. accommodation, funding for transport, mental health support, and group work).

From personal experience

New Chance workers spoke of what they felt women had found helpful with reference to what they feel to be key aspects of the support they provide. New Chance workers also reflected on barriers to them being able to provide effective support. Police staff and New Chance workers alike commented on the issue of programme engagement.

What women find helpful

New Chance workers highlighted that the environment which the clients come to is important to them being able to benefit from the support offered; a safe, calm environment is necessary for women to be able to relax and open up.

'I think it's that place where they can come to, feel safe, em, feel relaxed more than anything, because a lot of them have got really chaotic lives and a lot going on, and just to just have a moment, which I think is massive. So, I think that, I would say, is the biggest benefit to the women, from my experience, is them just knowing that we're here and having that person and that place to come to... So, from my feedback and my personal experience, I think it's that second person that's not involved in the criminal justice system that they can sort of open up to.' (P3)

In addition, it was noted that women will benefit from having someone listen to them in a non-judgemental way and without placing pressure on them to divulge personal details until they feel ready to do so. It was felt that, through giving practical advice, it is possible to give clients the necessary skills with which to function in society.

'...it's not just about penalising them for something. It's recognising that there's been something, recognising that they don't have to talk about it until they're ready to, but giving them ways of dealing with things, practical things that they can do, em, rather than use drugs or offend or, you know, whatever it is they do. It's giving them ways that then they can carry on and function properly in society... you can see very real ways it's helped people.' (P4)

One New Chance worker went further to say that her clients have told her that their crime was a cry for help and they feel that cry is now being recognised and addressed.

'A lot of them do say, "This is a cry for help – this is why I committed this crime", and finally, something's been done about it.' (P3)

Engagement issues

Police staff and New Chance workers alike made reference to the decision of some women to not engage with the programme. It was noted that women must feel ready to engage with the programme and that being ready may be contingent on what is happening in their lives at the time and on whether or not they recognise that they need to change and whether they are willing to take action.

'It's like any offenders that we manage, whether they're female, male, etc., if they're not ready, they're not ready. You can't affect them. They have to be ready and they have to be ready for change.' (P2)

'I think some people have chaotic lives, don't they, and this might not be their priority. You know, there may be other things that they need to prioritise over the appointment to see me, so that's what I find [it is down to]... sometimes people themselves have to recognise, and they may...and certain things may have to happen to them before they get to the point where they recognise that they need to actually do something to make things different for themselves.'
(P5)

There was a general consensus between New Chance workers and police that women who are referred to New Chance with a conditional caution are more likely to engage/attend than those who are under no such obligation to attend. However, it was noted that not all women on conditional cautions will engage (despite the best efforts of New Chance workers) despite knowledge of the consequences.

'So, often, people who are referred with "no further action" tend not to really engage, em, and...because it's no...because they don't have to attend – there's nothing that we can do about that. So, if somebody – although we have our processes for following people up, but if we contact them and they say, "Well, actually, I'm okay, I don't need the service", then that's it, you know. But the ones then that do engage, then obviously we can work with them.' (P5)

Barriers

New Chance workers commented that some women will struggle to attend appointments due to a lack of money for the bus fare to their respective location.

'...it's not fair for us to be saying spend all this money on coming... That is our massive obstacle...I think that I'd say that's a massive barrier that we face at the moment.' (P3)

In addition, it was noted by one New Chance worker that she felt there is not adequate support for clients with mental health issues; she may be aware that a client urgently needs input from a mental health professional but there is no immediate resource to draw upon. The New Chance worker provided an example of the difficulties she has faced in relation to a lack of support for clients with mental health issues.

'I think we're all being told to recognise the issue when there's a mental health problem, eh, and for people to acknowledge it and, eh, and deal with it like an illness, but then there's not the follow-up for it because there's just not the money in it, you know, the back-up for people, you know...I mean, one of my clients has been asking for help, asking for help, asking for help. In the end, she tried to kill herself and then she got sectioned, you know. And I've taken someone in to try and get sectioned, to try and get her sectioned, and [there will be times] – these are extreme cases obviously, but, em, just because I've sort of got to the point where I didn't know what to do.' (P4)

Outcomes

New Chance staff also reflected on how they have helped clients they have supported. One worker made reference to positive feedback she had received from a client and another spoke more generally about empowering women to cope with challenging current and future situations.

'...she said to me, you know, "If I'd never have met you, I would either be dead" by her own sort of doing or her partner's doing, she said, "or I just be in a really bad place." She said, "I've never been..." I mean, she's gone through a lot the past few weeks, but, em, she...is such a positive person, but she said that she's got that support now that she never had before, that she never had from family, she never had from her partner, she never had from friends. But she's got that person now, so she feels like she can do anything, like leave the relationship, be in temporary accommodation, because she's got that support.' (P3)

'...because you know you're helping them [client] and that you'll move them on from this...this current crappy bit that they're in at the moment. You know, you will get them through it, or you'll help them get through it, or make them empowered enough to know how to get through it and deal with things as they come up in the future, you know.' (P4)

Suggestions

In addition to suggestions regarding referrals (see sub-theme 1.3), staff offered general suggestions regarding improvements that could be made. The police commented that the issue of a lack of housing for vulnerable women was something that needs to be addressed. In addition, a New Chance worker suggested that it is necessary to have additional/immediate support on hand for women who have mental health issues. Furthermore, as noted above, it was suggested that money needs to be made available for women who cannot afford to travel to their respective centres for appointments. Lastly,

two New Chance workers noted that it would be good if women had the opportunity to take part in group work. These opportunities are, however, reliant on there being enough women to form groups; an issue tied in to the need for an increase in the number of referrals.

'I'd want to put them in groups as well, definitely, because of the differences I've seen in other people, but, also, I know a lot of them... I mean, there's one in particular, I've brought her in to meet different people, to talk to her about the groups, so that it's not just my perspective on it, so it might help her then, you know, and people who work here now who were users here in the past, so, you know, just so that she can get lots of different perspectives so it's not just me.' (P4)

'...the only thing I've probably noticed that's lacking is a housing option, because housing is a big...a big issue, em, because of obviously government cuts and things like that. I've had a couple of instances where the female in custody [?] housing obviously if...I don't know, if they've, em, been involved in an incident or it's not suitable to go back because of an incident. It's sometimes difficult, em, other than advice to attend the local council, present homeless. I think that strand of...that trigger of offending or...the housing situation and that support could probably be better.' (P1)

Part B – Quantitative Analysis

In this part, we analyse the impact of data in regards to offenders who have been referred to the New Chances programme.

3.1 Outline of Statistical Methodology

We used data provided to us by West Midlands Police (WMP) to first conduct a descriptive analysis, breaking down the offences committed by each offender referred to the New Chance programme as well as the composition of those referred by age, ethnicity³ and other given factors. This has allowed us to get a better understanding of the offenders' characteristics and offending rates before and after being referred to New Chance. We will refer to this group as the *treatment group*. Reoffending rates for the treatment group were then compared to 'similar' offenders who were not referred to New Chance which we refer to as the *control group*.

The effect of the New Chance intervention on the treatment group will be measured by the difference in the mean outcome measures between the treatment and control group. The outcomes we will focus on are reoffending rates across different time periods and see if it varies between the treatment and control group. However, a direct comparison of mean outcomes across these two groups is likely to give a biased effect of the treatment since the treatment and control groups may differ in their characteristics. To address this, we use a technique, *propensity score matching* (PSM)⁴ which matches the treatment and control groups on their observable characteristics (we will call them co-variates and this includes age, ethnicity, past offending history) so that post-match we can compare the mean outcome(s) of the treatment and the 'matched' control group to identify the impact of the New Chance programme (this is called the average treatment effect). We estimate the average treatment effect of the New Chance programme on reoffending rates.

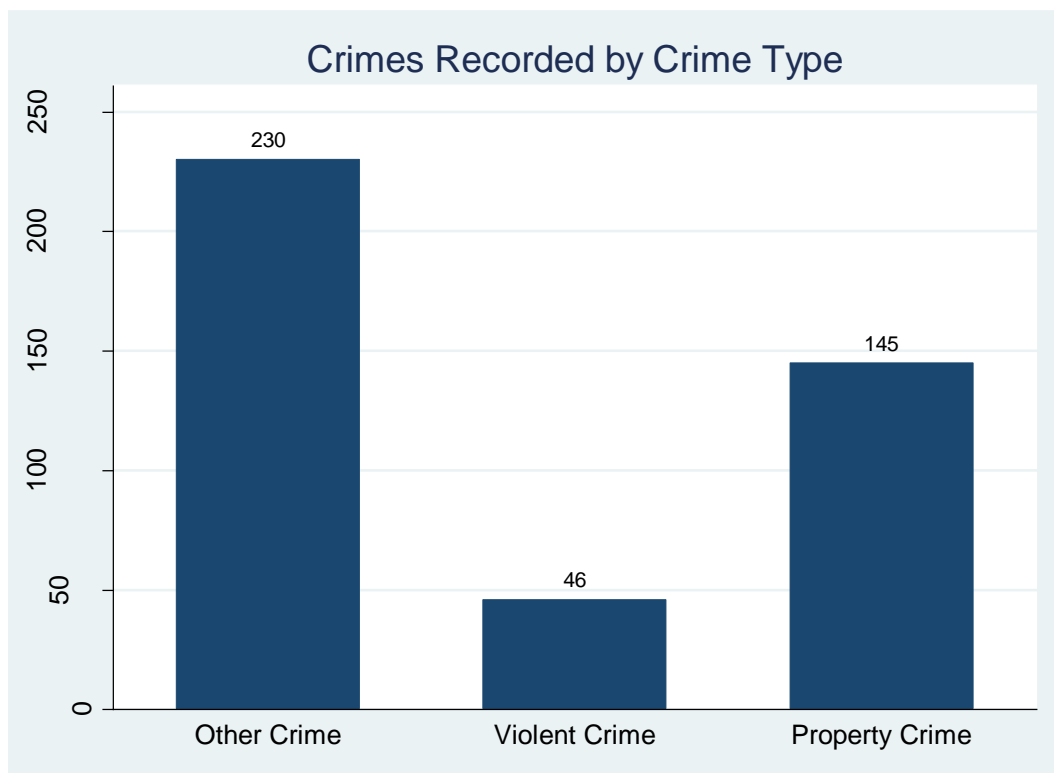
3.2 Descriptive Statistics

3.2.1 Crime Numbers and Types

³ The data provided uses the term 'ethnic appearance'.

⁴ For more details of this technique, see Rosenbaum, P.R., & Rubin, D.B (1983). "The central role of propensity score in observational studies for causal effects". *Biometrika* 70(1), 41-55.

In our treatment group, there were a total of 421 referrals from June 2016 to January 2020. In the 12 months prior to the referral date, the average number of offences per offender was 3.2 (ranging from 0 to 7). Total offending history (based on police records) was higher and the average number of offences per offender was 13.8 (ranging from 1 to 78). From crime descriptions given to the index offence after which referral was made, we classified each offence (based on the description) into three broad categories: Violent Crime, Property Crime and Other Crime. Violent Crime includes offences where violence, robbery, assault, wounding with intent and causing bodily harm were mentioned. Property Crime includes all offences where theft, burglary and shoplifting are mentioned. And the rest are classified as Other Crime. Categories were created by utilising word search commands on STATA on the offence variable provided in the dataset. Graph 1 below illustrates the distribution of crime types:



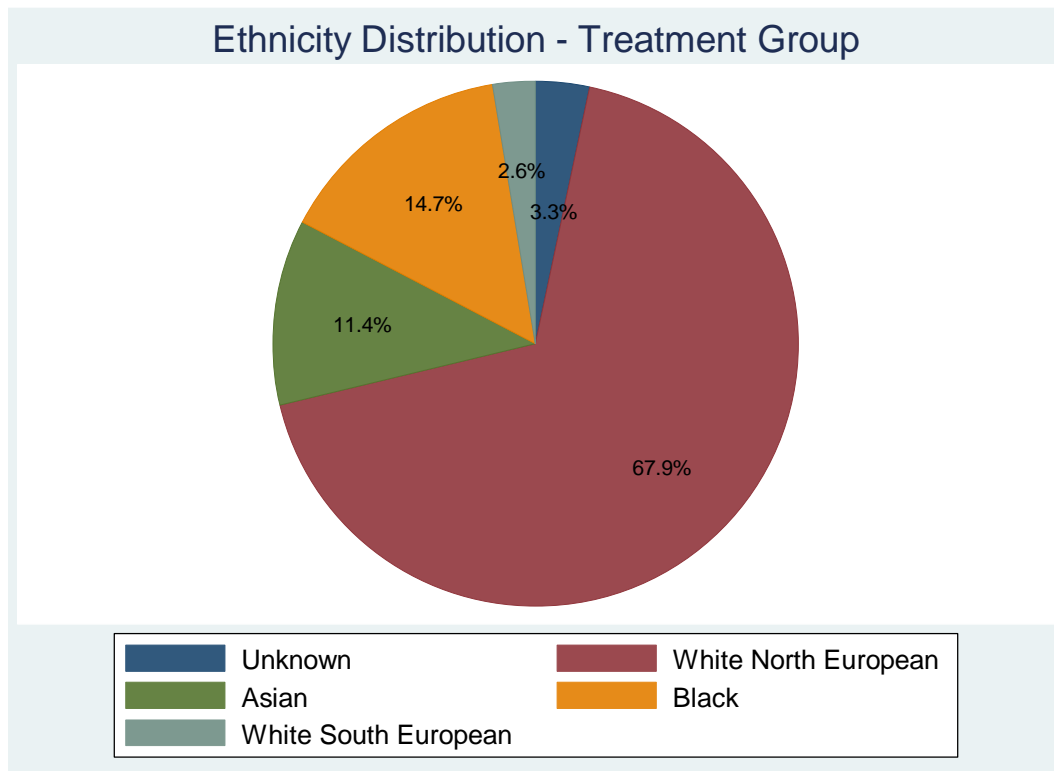
Graph 1

Just over half of all recorded offences were identified as other crimes, 34% were property crimes and 11% were violent crimes.

We now describe offender characteristics.

3.1.2 Ethnicity

Graph 2 below illustrates the distribution of ethnicity of the offenders who received the treatment:

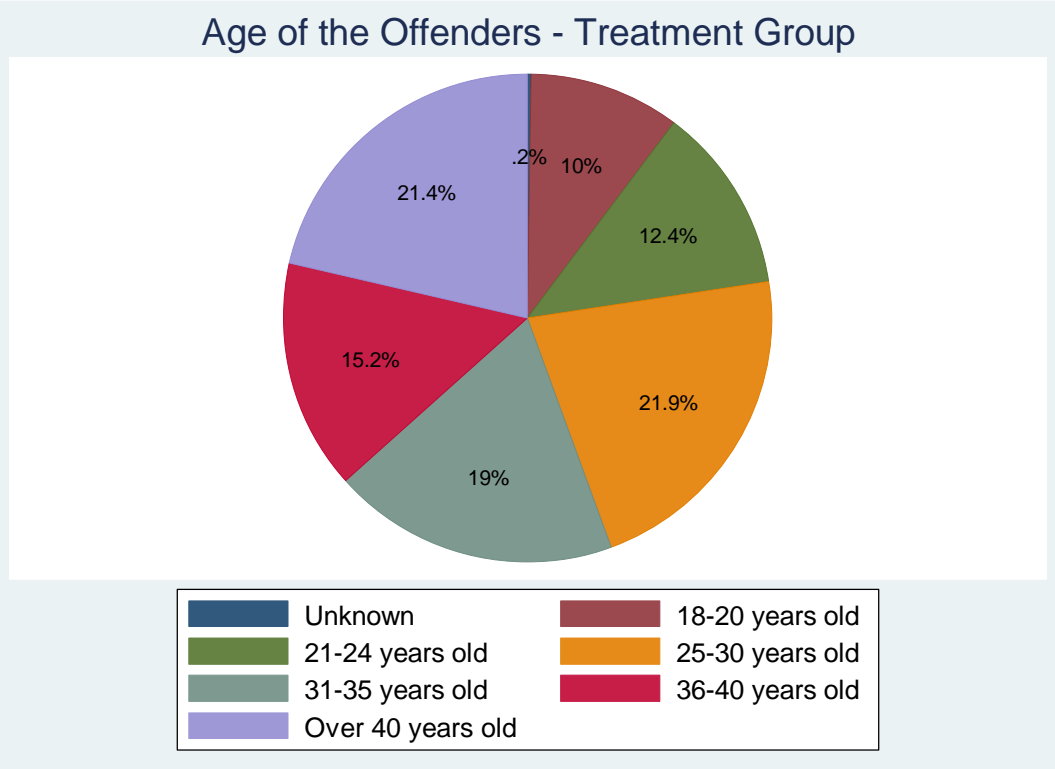


Graph 2

Around two thirds of the total offenders were identified as White North Europeans.

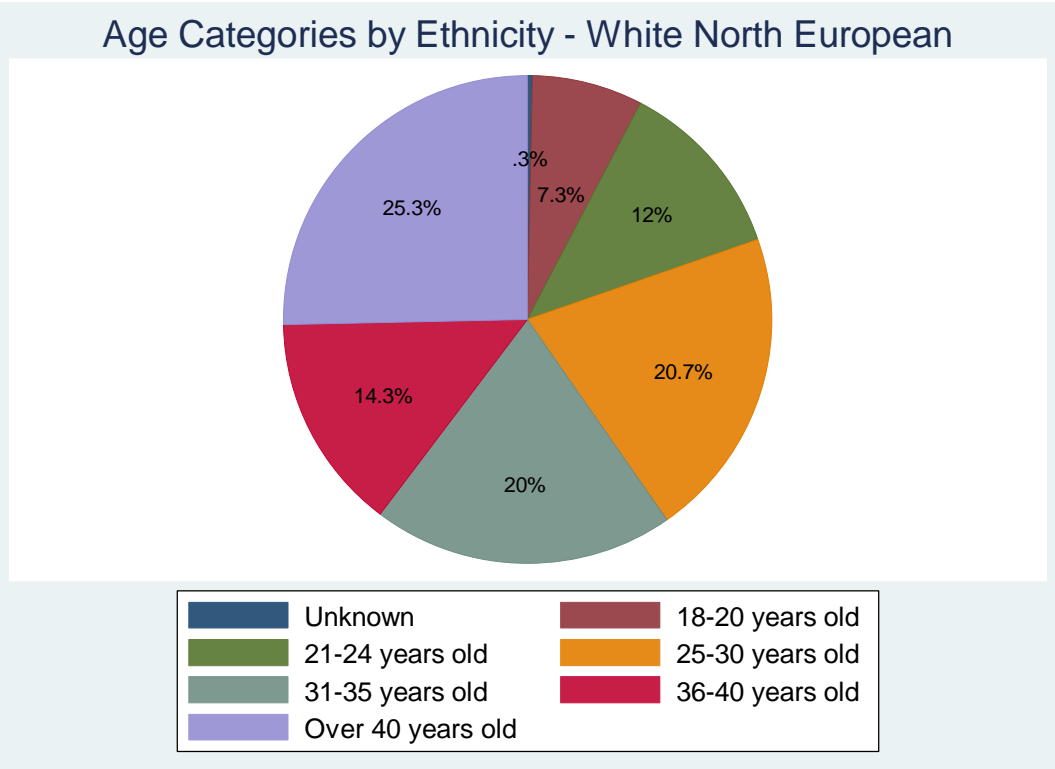
3.1.3 Age

Mean age of the offenders (when referred to the New Chance) was just over 33 years of age. The youngest offender recorded was aged 18 and the oldest one was aged 76. The age distribution is presented in Graph 3 below.

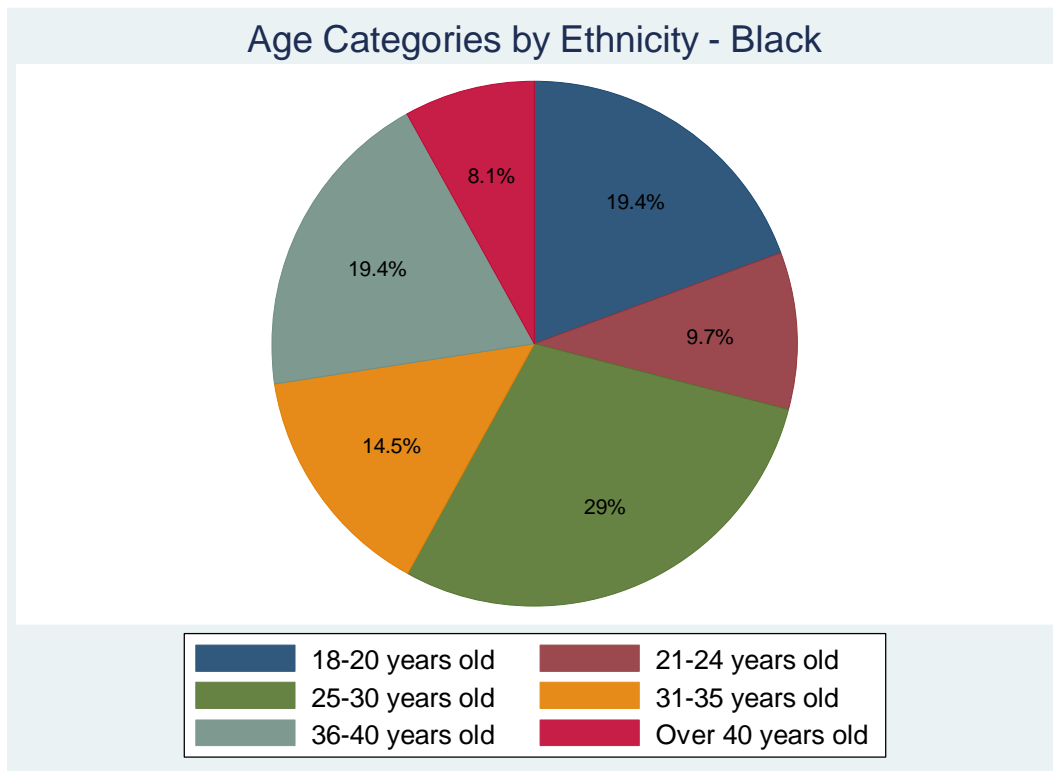


Graph 3

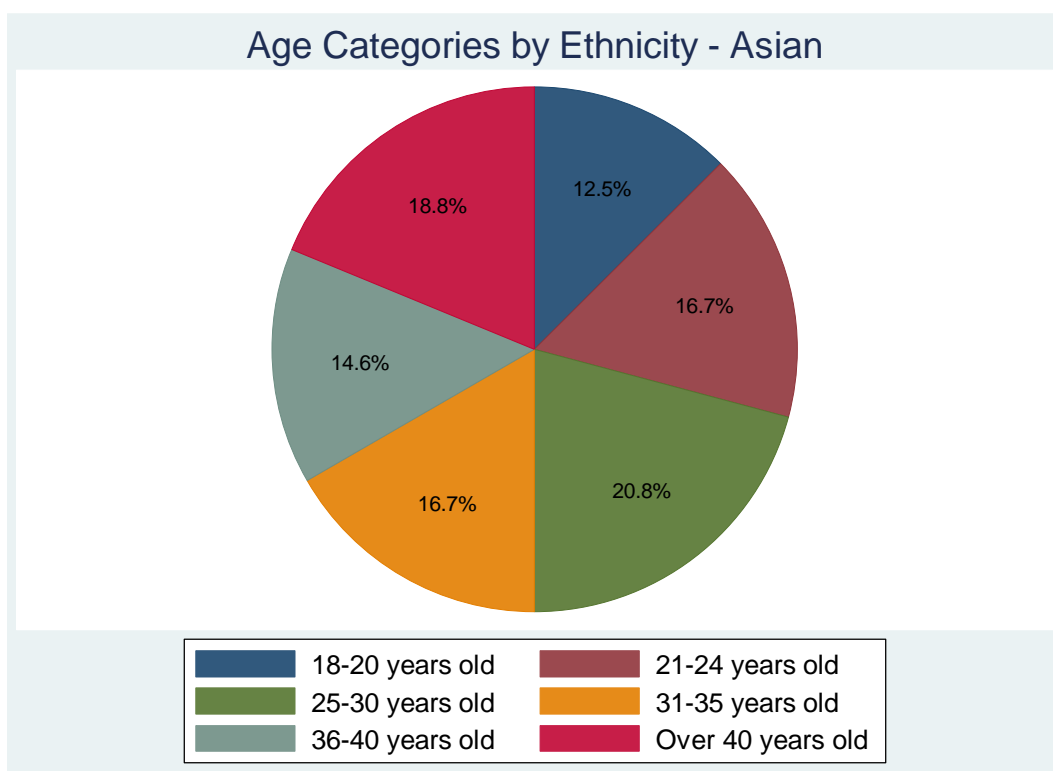
Graph 5, 6 and 7 illustrates age categories by the three main ethnicities identified in the treatment group:



Graph 4



Graph 5

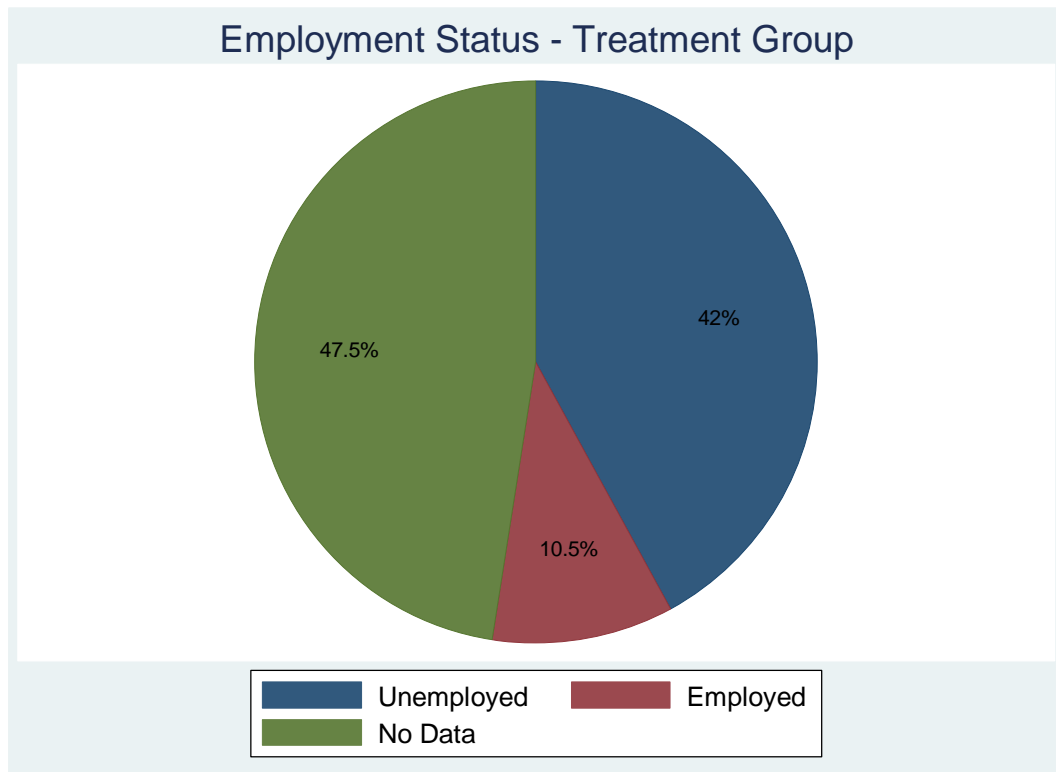


Graph 6

Women under 30 formed less than half the referrals for White North European group, more than half for Black and half for Asian groups.

3.1.4 Employment Status

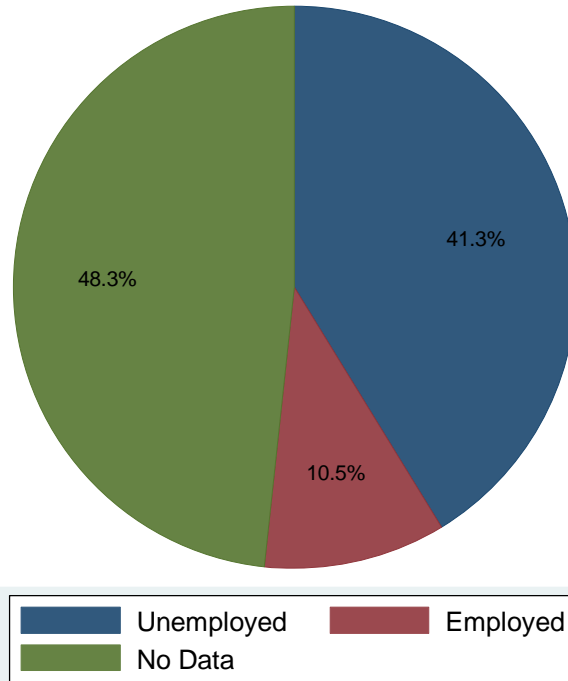
42% were unemployed, 10% were employed and for the rest there were no data in regards to their employment status. Graph 7 illustrates.



Graph 7

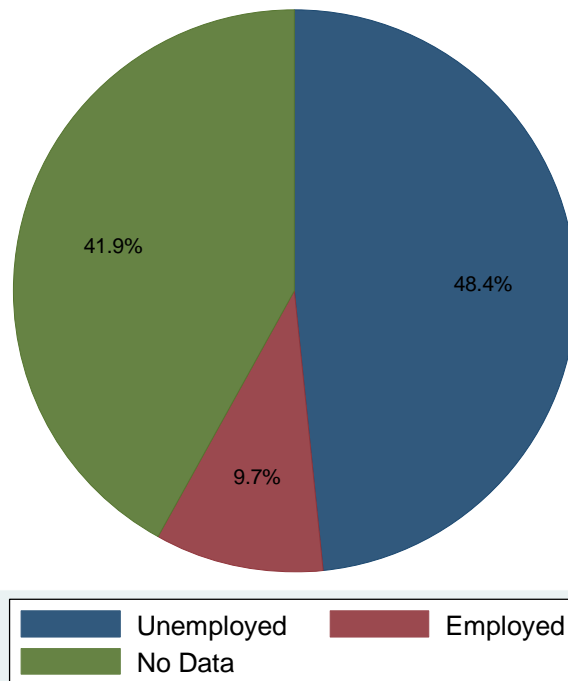
Graphs 8, 9 and 10 illustrate employment status by three main ethnicities in the treatment group.

Employment Status by Ethnicity - White North European

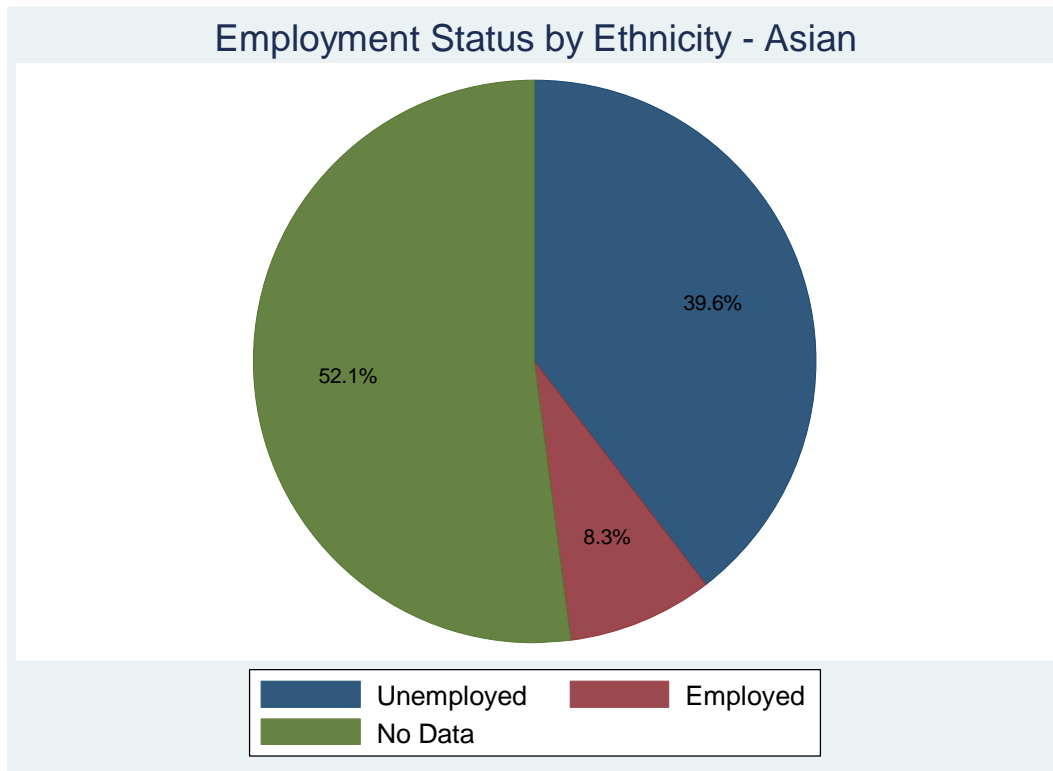


Graph 8

Employment Status by Ethnicity - Black



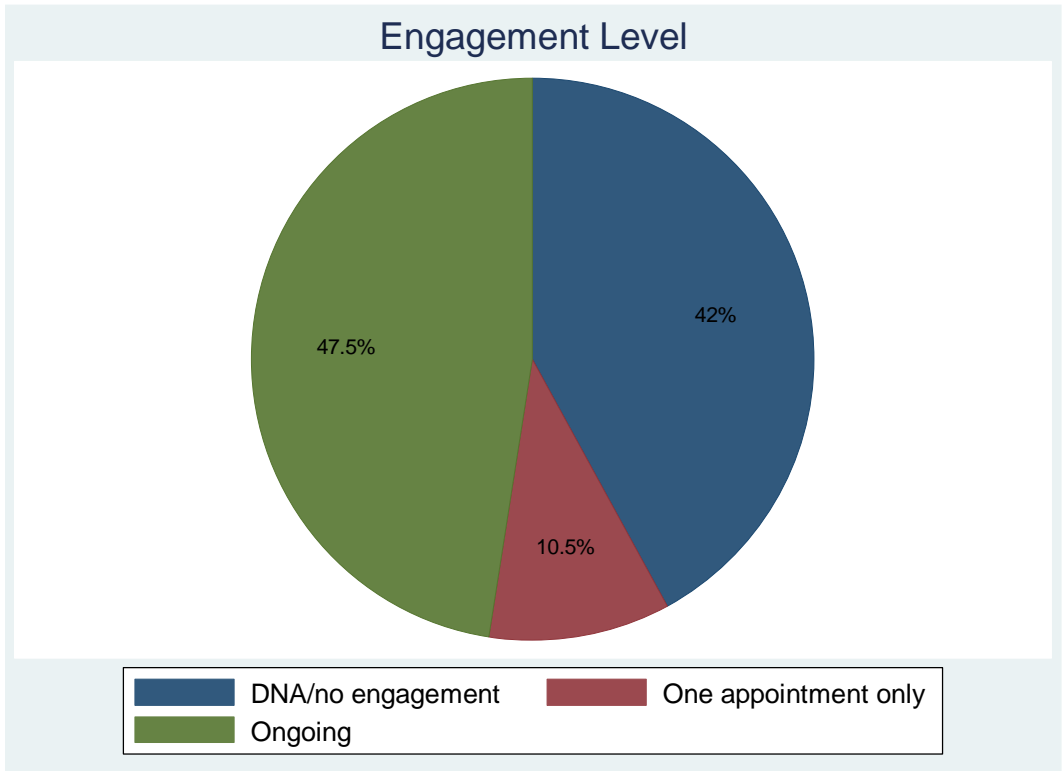
Graph 9



Graph 10

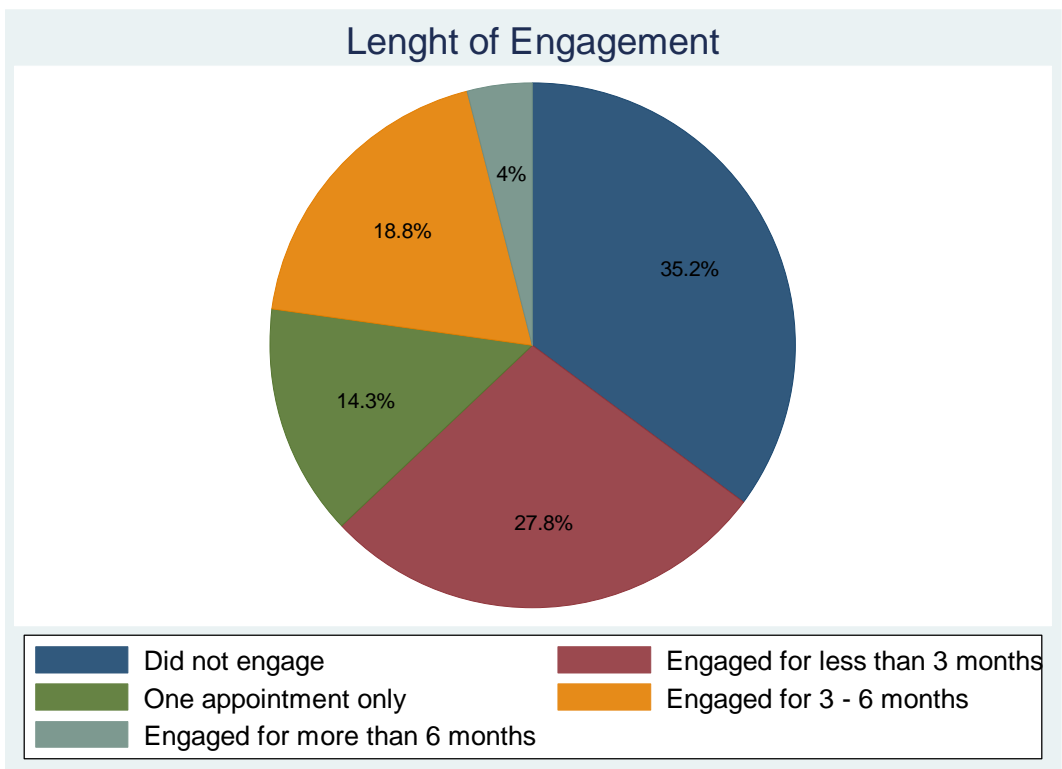
3.1.5 Treatment – Engagement Level and Length of Engagement

For most women (47.5%) referred to the New Chance programme their engagement level was identified as ongoing and 42% did not engage and the remaining 10.5% had one appointment only.



Graph 11

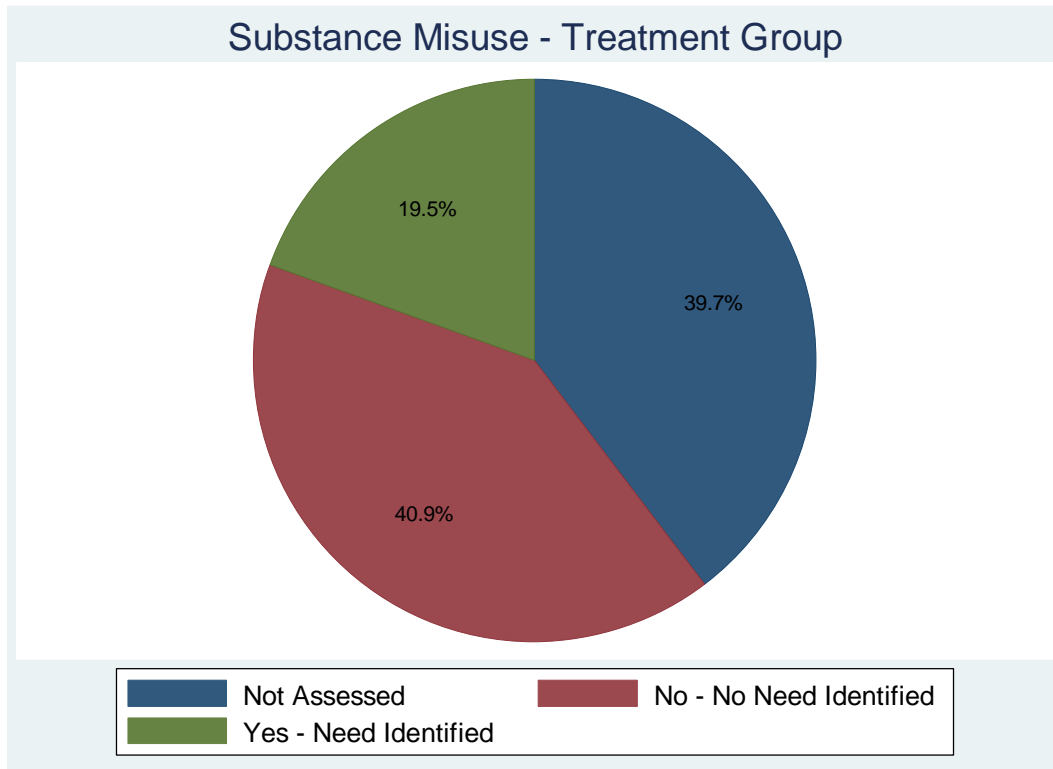
Length of the engagement also varied across all offenders:



Graph 12

Around half of all women referred did not engage in the treatment or only attended one appointment and 4% engaged for more than 6 months.

3.1.6 Drugs/Alcohol Misuse identified

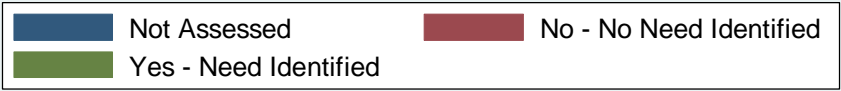
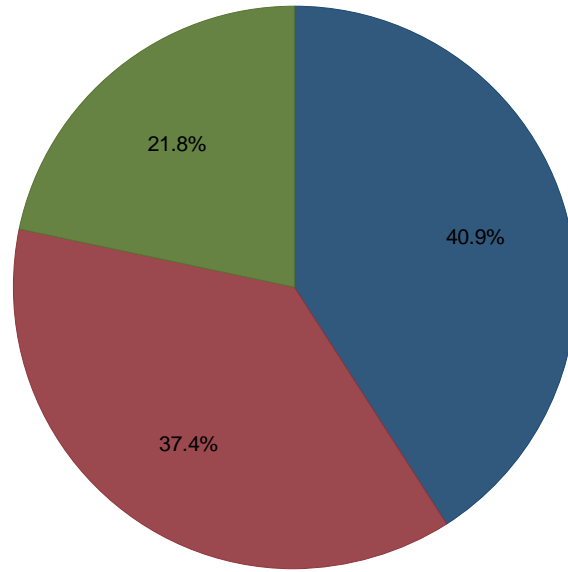


Graph 13

Just under 20% of women referred had alcohol/drugs misuse problem identified and almost 40% of referrals were not assessed for this.

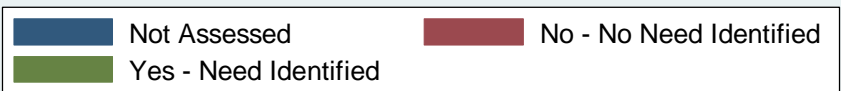
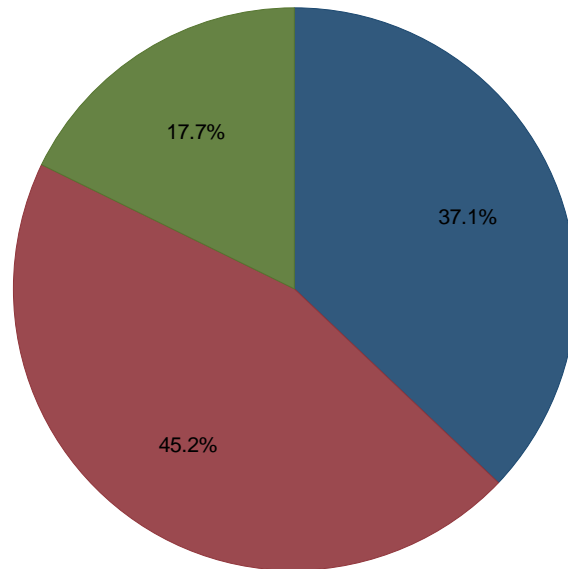
Graphs 14, 15 and 16 illustrate alcohol/drugs misuse problem identification by the three main ethnicities in the treatment group.

Substance Misuse by Ethnicity - White North European

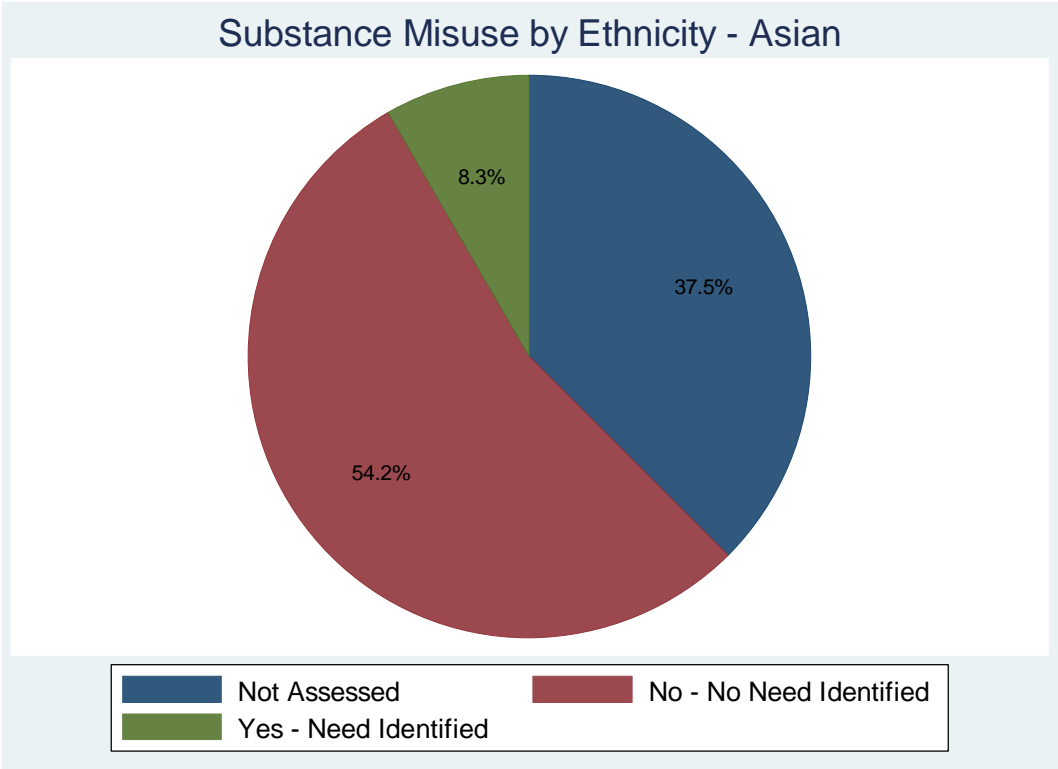


Graph 14

Substance Misuse by Ethnicity - Black

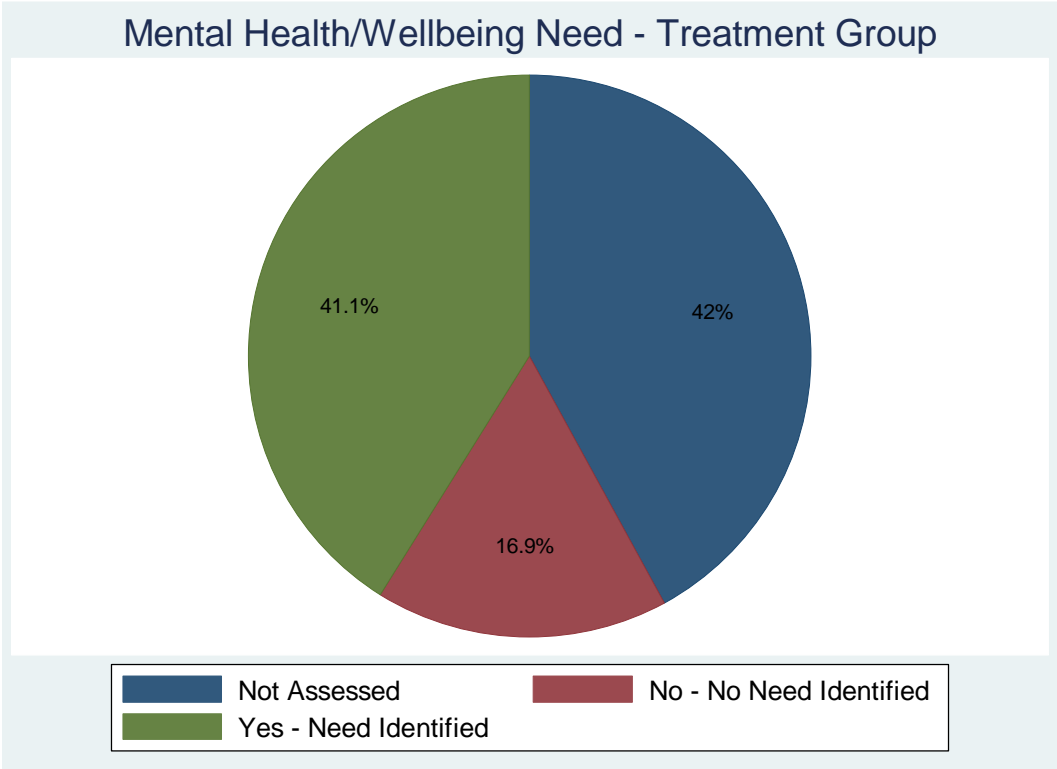


Graph 15



Graph 16

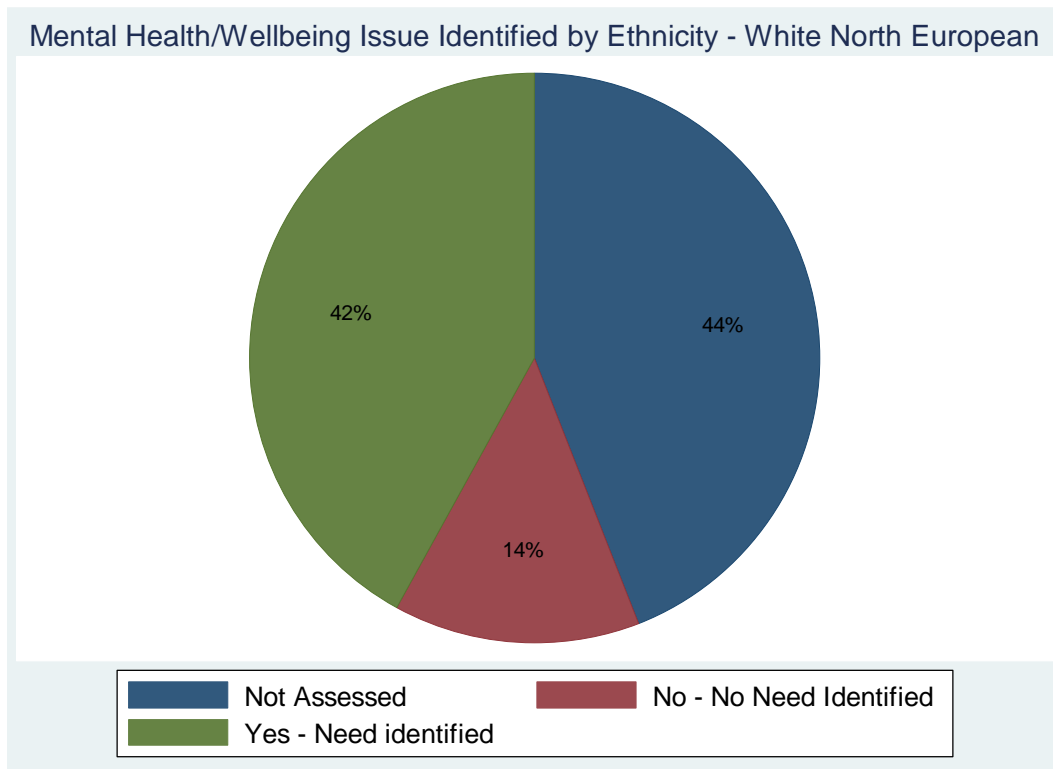
3.1.7 Mental Health/Wellbeing issues identified



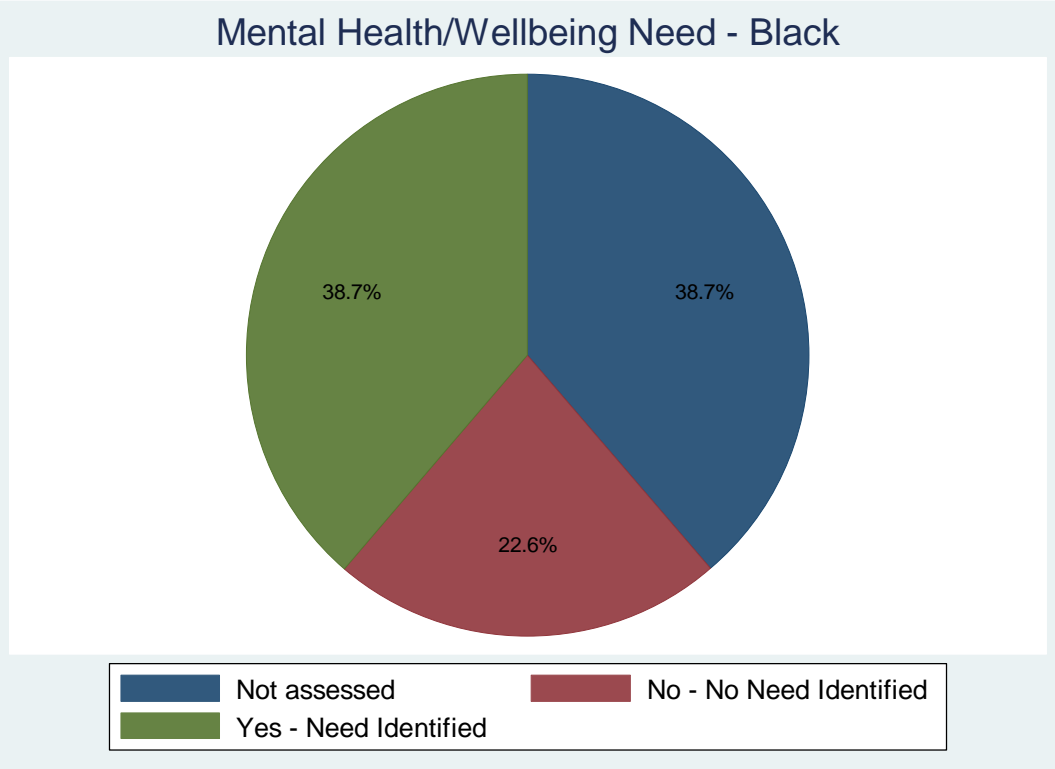
Graph 17

For over 41% of all women referred, mental health/wellbeing issue was identified. 42% referrals were not assessed for this.

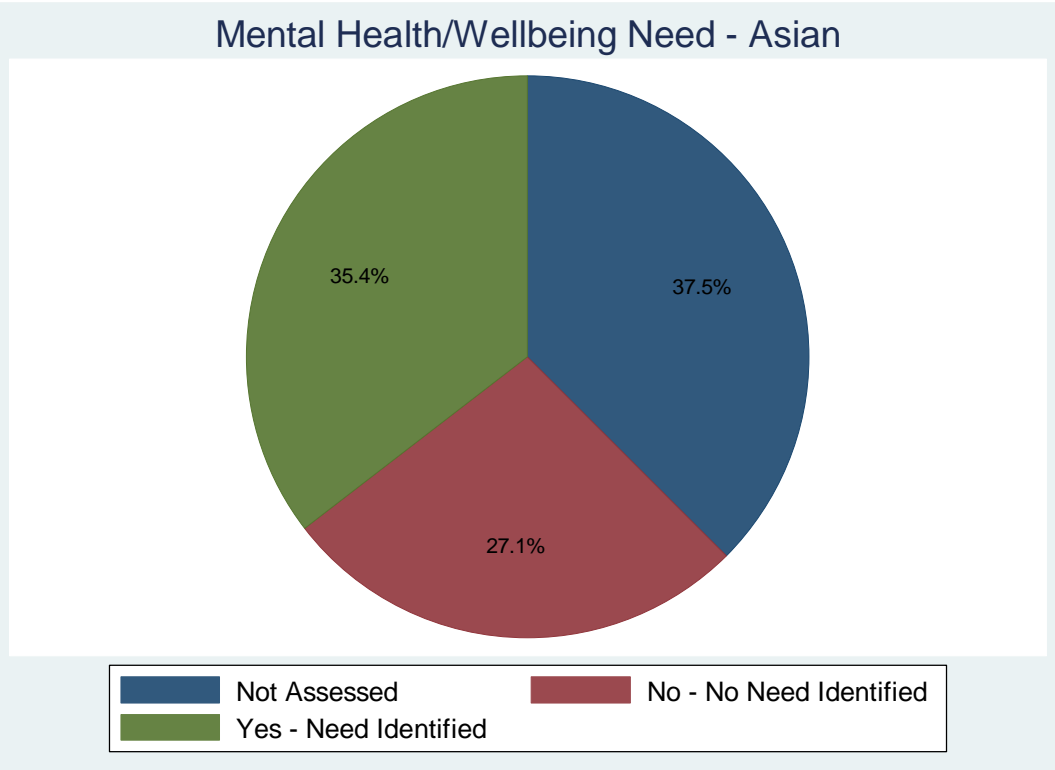
Graphs 18, 19 and 20 illustrate mental health/wellbeing need identification by the three main ethnicities in the treatment group.



Graph 18



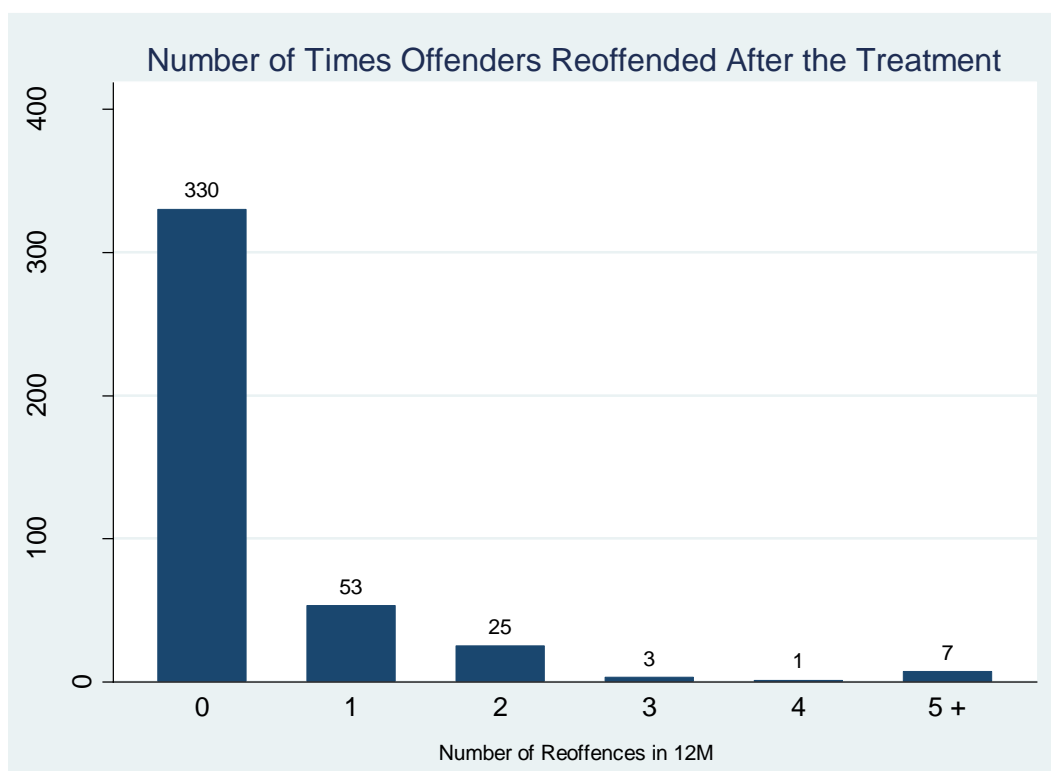
Graph 19



Graph 20

3.3 Reoffending

We are interested in the effect the treatment had on reoffending rates for those who received it. We start by presenting reoffending rates, the frequency of reoffending and reoffending across different sub-groups. 91 offenders (22%) reoffended after the treatment, Graph 21 below shows the frequency of reoffending up to 12 months after the referral (the total sample size of N=421 is used, but given the different dates of entry into the programme, not everyone was followed up for 12 months):



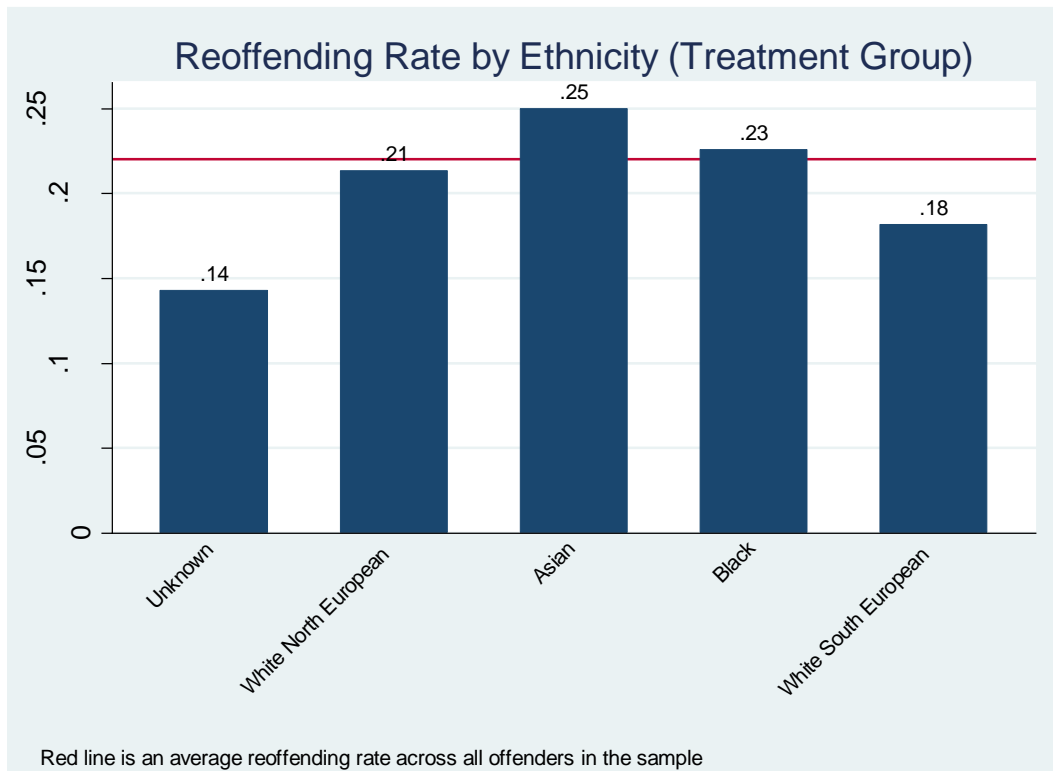
Graph 21

Before/after analysis: Most offenders did not reoffend after the treatment but some reoffended multiple times. On average, there were 3.20 offences per offender in one year before treatment and 2.95 offences 12 months after (the difference of 0.25 was statistically significant at 5% level⁵). For the sample of those who could be followed up for 12 months (N = 247), the difference was 0.32 (3.20 before and 2.88 after) which was also statistically significant.

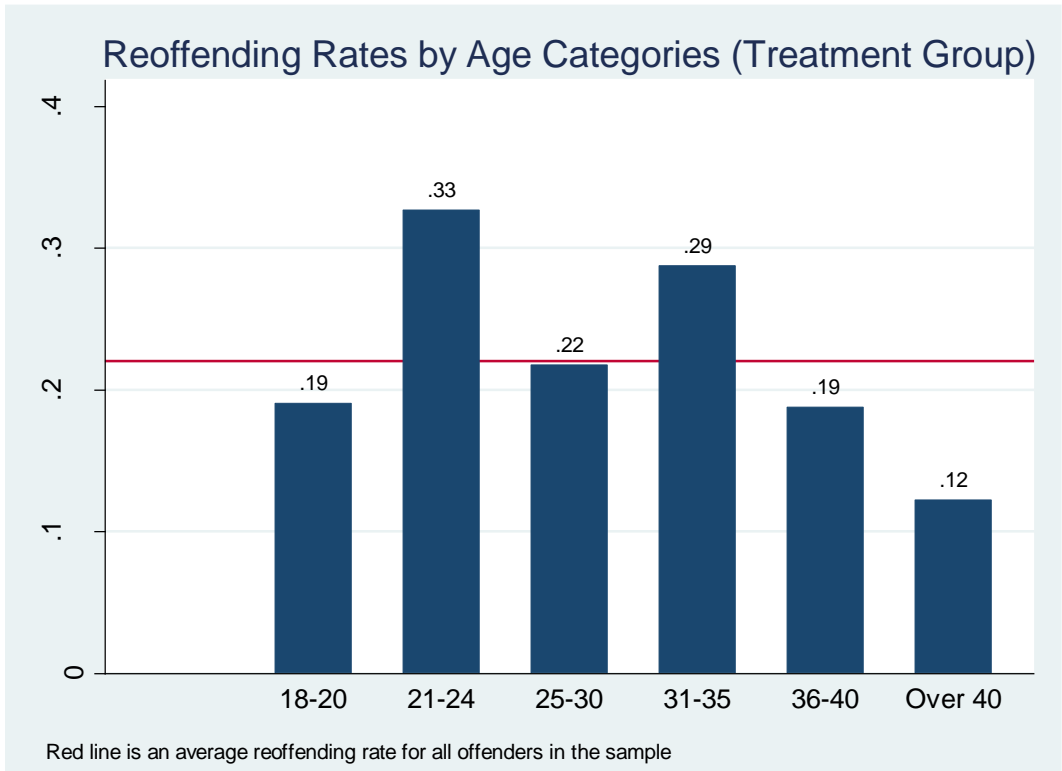
Below, we illustrate reoffending rates (how many offenders committed at least one offence after the referral to the New Chance programme by ethnicity (Graph 22), by age categories (Graph 23), by employment status (Graph 24), by substance misuse (Graph 25) and mental health wellbeing (Graph

⁵ Unless indicated otherwise all statistical significance is at 5% level.

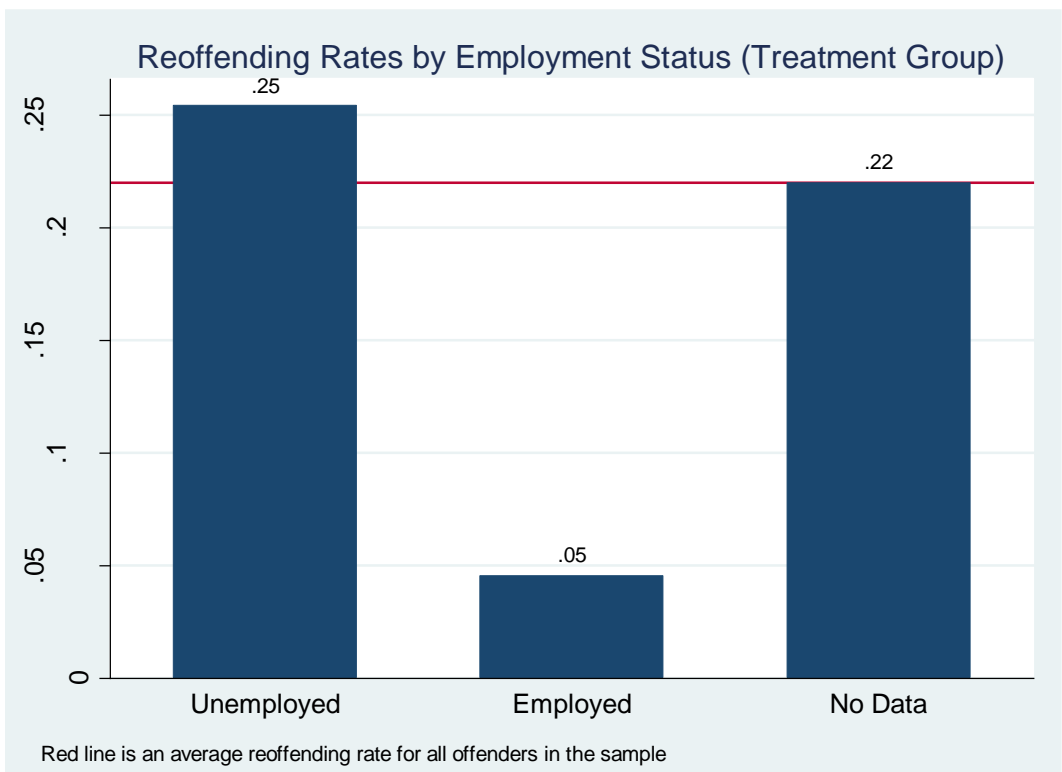
26). Graph 30 and 31 respectively illustrate reoffending rates by engagement length and level. All graphs have a red line illustrating the average reoffending rate for all offenders (i.e. total number who reoffend/total number of offenders on the programme) which is 22%. This allows us to see if reoffending was higher or lower compared to the average for offenders with certain characteristics.



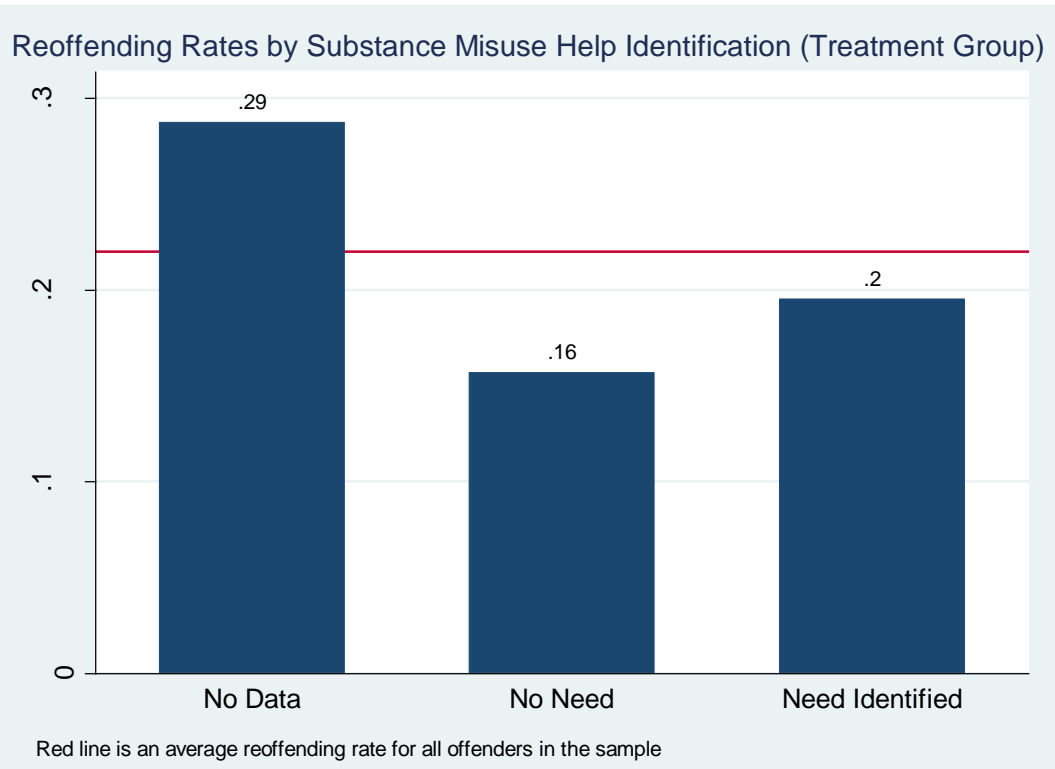
Graph 22



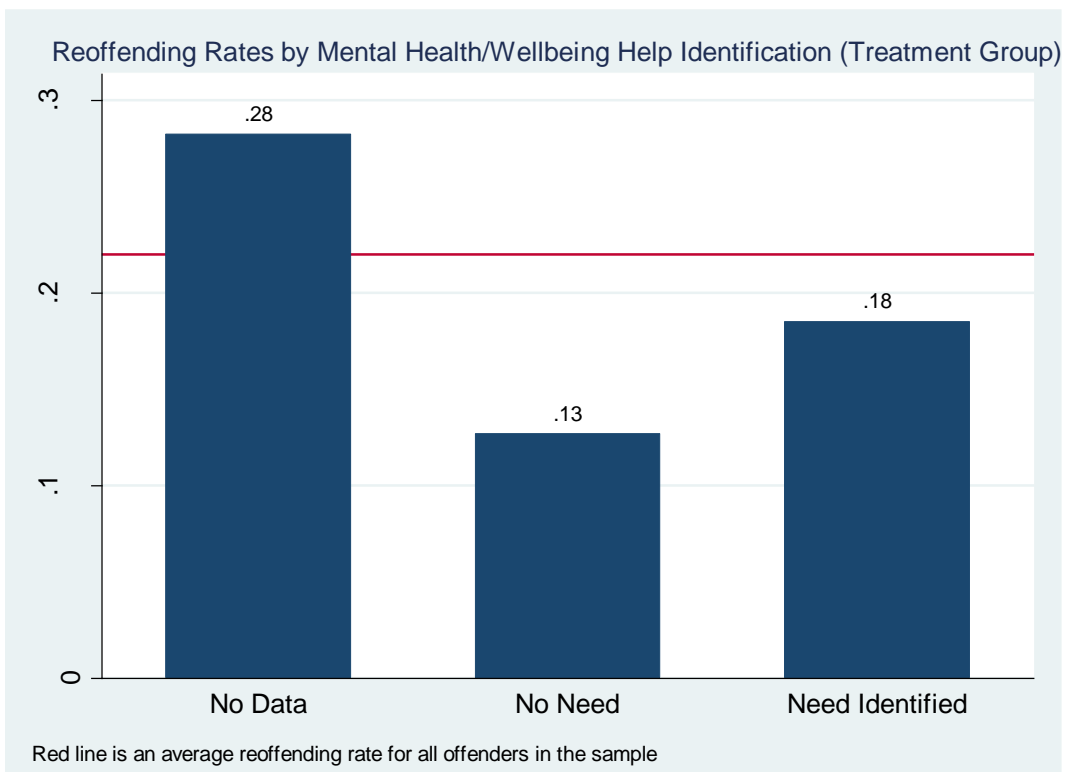
Graph 23



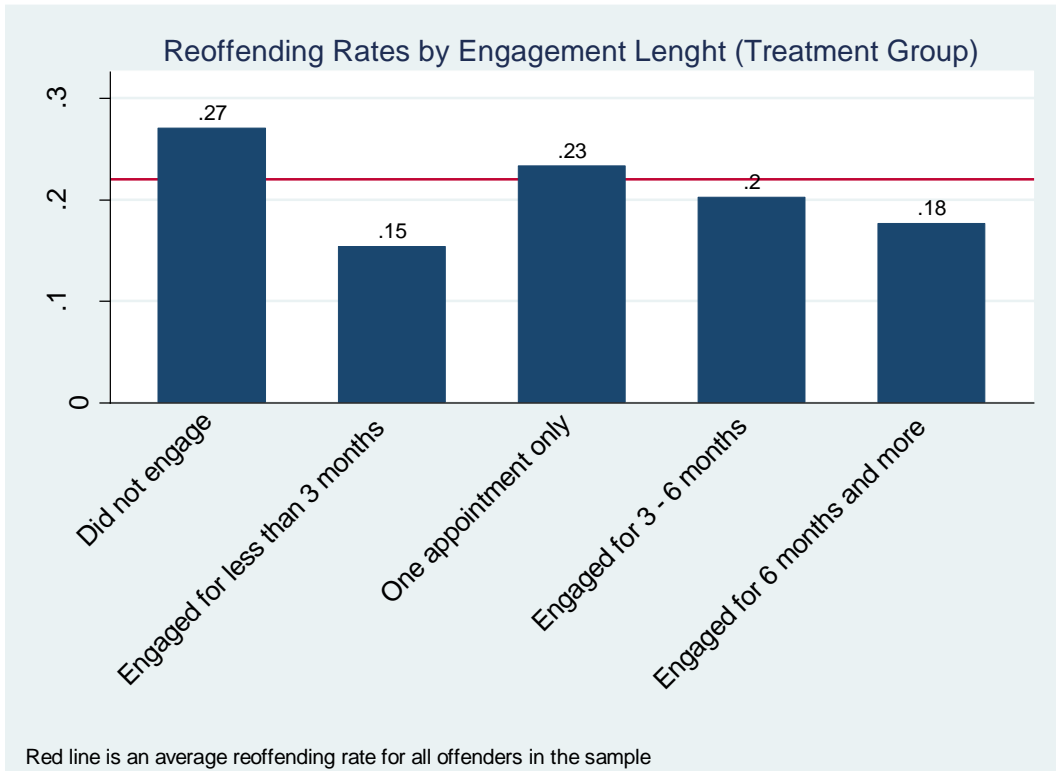
Graph 24



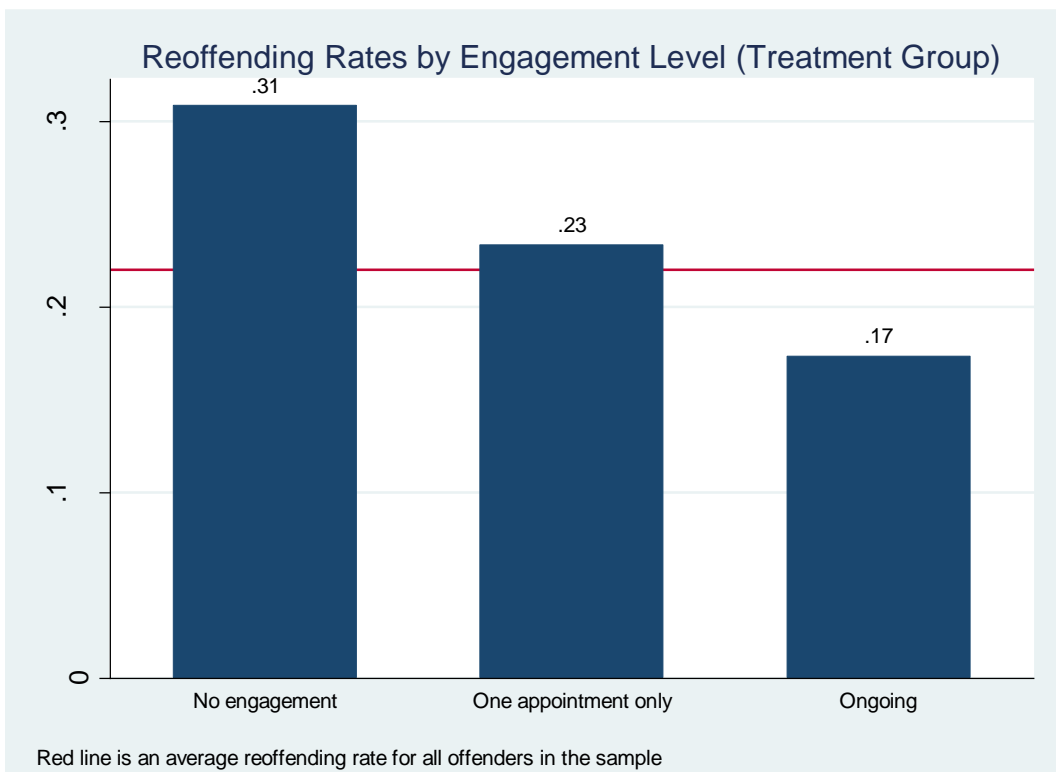
Graph 25



Graph 26



Graph 27

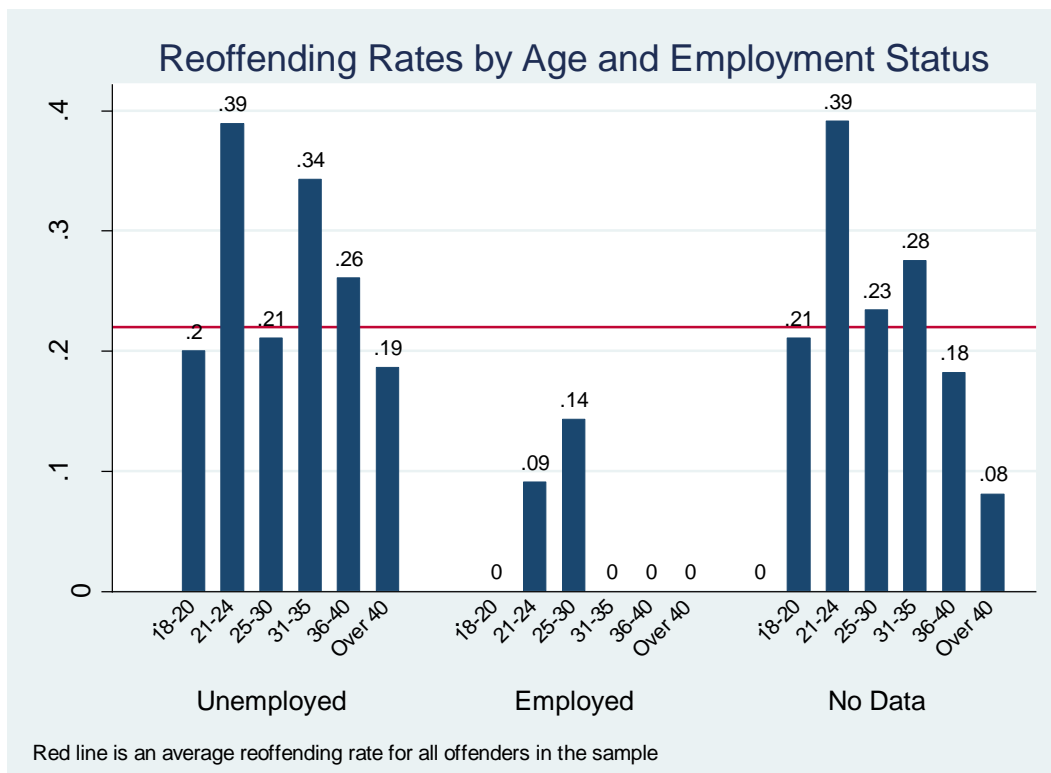


Graph 28

Overall, reoffending was higher than average for the following groups⁶:

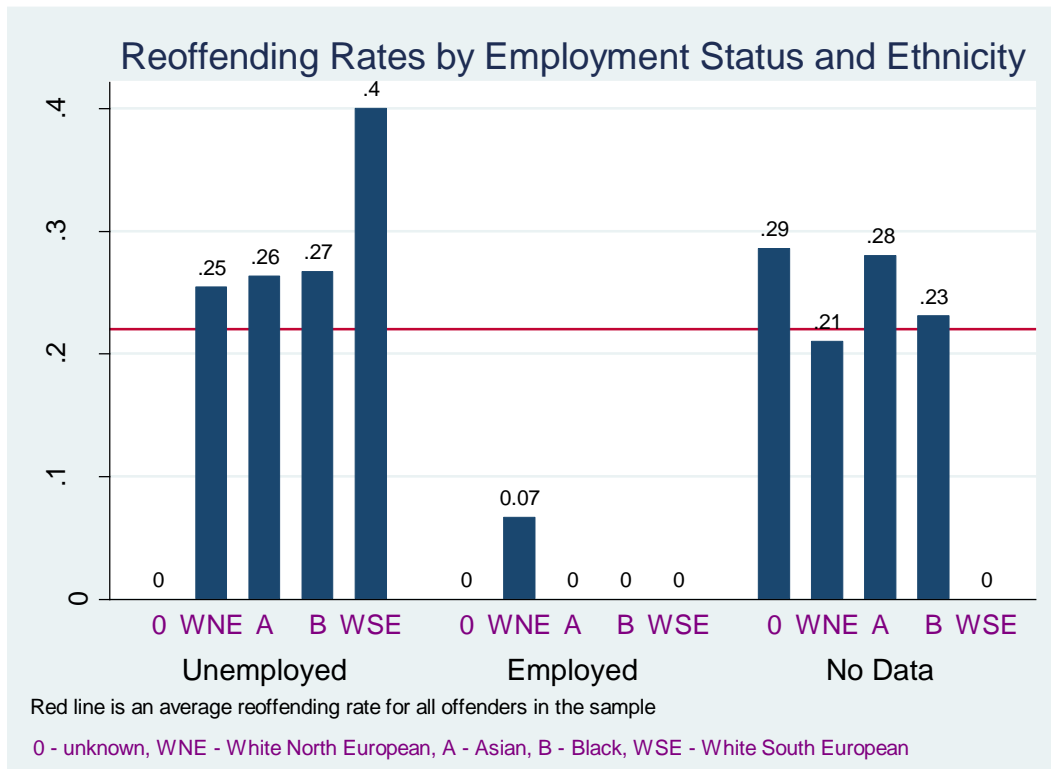
- Women who were classified as Asian and Black
- Women aged 21 – 24 and 31 – 35
- Women who were unemployed
- Substance and MH issues – higher reoffending when need is identified but there is a problem with missing data for many referrals, those with no data had the highest rates of reoffending
- Women who did not engage or only attended one appointment and showed no engagement

Graphs 29 and 33 illustrate reoffending rate by age and employment status and employment status and ethnicity.



Graph 29

⁶ This has no causal interpretation and the differences (except for employment status) are statistically insignificant (see 1.4.1)



Graph 30

3.4.1 Significance in differences in reoffending rates across groups

We tested for statistical significance in differences in reoffending rates across groups with two variables. We separated all variables to be binary as following: White (0) and Non-White for Ethnicity (1), "age <25" (0) and "age >=25" (1) for Age, Employed (0) and Unemployed (1) for Employment Status, No Need (0) and Need Identified (1) for Mental Health and Wellbeing and No Need (0) and Need Identified (1) for Substance Misuse.

Results are as described below:

Difference in reoffending for Ethnicity: 2.8% (offenders identified as White reoffended less on average), statistically insignificant (N = 408)

Difference in reoffending for Age: 6.1% (offenders aged less than 25 reoffended more on average), statistically insignificant (N = 421)

Difference in reoffending for Employment Status: 20.9% (offenders who were employed reoffended less on average), statistically significant at 5% level (N = 221)

Difference in reoffending for Mental Health: 5.9% (offenders who had No Need identified for Mental Health and Wellbeing reoffended less on average), statistically insignificant (N = 244)

Difference in reoffending for Substance Misuse: 4.1% (offenders who had No Need identified for Substance Misuse reoffended less on average), statistically insignificant (N = 254)

Difference in reoffending for those who engaged vs those who did not: 11% (offenders who engaged reoffended less on average), was statistically significant (N = 421). Analysis of engagement length for the same sample showed that reoffending rates were 26% who did not engage or attended one appointment only and 17% for those who engaged for longer (up to 3 months, 3-6 months and more than 6 months) and the difference of 9% was statistically significant.

3.4 Propensity Score Matching

In this section, we compare reoffending across treatment and control groups using Propensity Score Matching.

Treatment and Control group data: We used data provided to us by WMP for the control group offending history and reoffending. We cleaned the data and created a variable for crime type and by doing a similar word search categorised all offences into Violent Crimes, Property Crimes and Other Crimes. For the control group, we identified their 'start' date as the first offence recorded between 6 May 2015 and 31 May 2015 and then calculated the days in between their start date and reoffence date. This allowed us to compare reoffending across both files for similar time periods, i.e. a follow up period of 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 6 months and 12 months from the first offence from which we are measuring reoffending. We created a binary variable for marker for substance misuse and mental health issues. We also re-categorised Ethnicity and Employment status across treatment and control Files in the same way allowing us to merge the data together. Also, the control group contained data on girls under 18 years old which we deleted as the intervention was only for those aged 18 and above.

For the treatment group, we deleted referrals from January 2020 due to insufficient follow up time and three entries where reoffending date was earlier than the referral (index) offence date or reoffending status was unknown.

Our 'Treatment and Control Joint Data File' contains 772 observations (of offenders) – 410 treatment group observations and 362 for control group. 251 offenders (32.5%) committed another offence

during their observational period. Reoffending for the treatment group was 22.0% and for the control group it was 44.5%. The difference of 22.5% was statistically significant at 1% level.

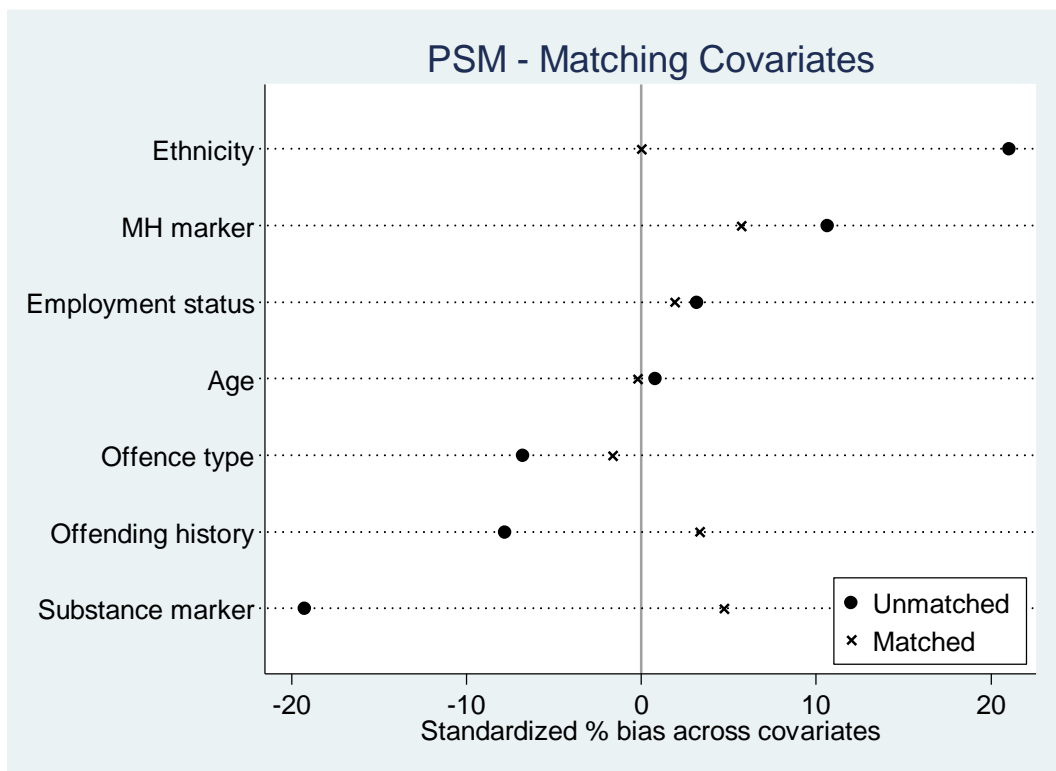
However, comparing the reoffending rates across treatment and control groups can be biased and not capture the real differences between the groups. The decision to reoffend in the future can be influenced by many factors for each offender, therefore, we use Propensity Score Matching (PSM) as described earlier to match control and treatment Groups. Recall that this method allows us to form a Matched Control Group from our control file observations which is statistically similar to the group which received the treatment. We can compare the reoffending rates between treatment and control group after matching and analyse if receiving treatment had any effect on recidivism outcomes. We use six covariates for matching – offender’s age group, employment status (Unemployed (0) and Employed (1) or No data), ethnicity (White (0), Non-White (1)), offence type (Other Crime (1), Violent Crime (2) and Property crime (3)), mental health issue marker (No/Not assessed(0), Yes (1)), substance misuse issue identified (No/Not assessed (0), Yes (1)) and total known offending history (number of all known offences by the offender to police).

Means of matched and unmatched groups are presented on the left hand side of Table 1 and we can see how close the characteristics between treatment and control groups are after matching compared to without matching. Before matching, there were differences in background factors between offenders who were selected for the New Chance intervention and the ones who were not. For example, before matching offenders who were subject to New Chance intervention were less likely to have a substance misuse issue identified than ones in the control group. After matching, the two groups became much more similar in their characteristics. An important step in any PSM analysis is to assess the balance of the measured covariates between the treatment and control groups, where balance refers to the similarity of the covariate distributions. We use a quantity similar to the effect size, known as the standardized bias, to quantify this balance. The standardized bias for covariates is calculated by dividing the difference in means of the covariate between the treated group and the comparison group by the standard deviation. On the right of the Table 1, the standardised bias after matching satisfies the recommended condition i.e. to be under 5% for all apart MH marker which is 5.7%. Also, t-tests demonstrate that all the differences between the co-variables after matching were insignificant.

Table 1: Matching Results Comparing Treatment and Control Samples on Chosen Covariates				
	Mean			
	Unmatched	Matched		t-test

	Treated	Control	Treated	Control	%bias	t	p> t
Age	33.04	32.96	33.15	33.17	-0.2	-0.02	0.98
Ethnicity	0.30	0.21	0.29	0.29	0.0	0.00	1.00
Substance Marker	0.25	0.34	0.25	0.23	4.7	0.54	0.59
MH marker	0.47	0.42	0.47	0.44	5.7	0.62	0.54
Employment	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.29	1.9	0.20	0.84
Offence Type	1.77	1.83	1.78	1.79	-1.6	-0.18	0.86
Offending History	23.23	24.88	23.37	22.66	3.3	0.37	0.72

Graph below illustrates how matching made a difference to Control and Treatment Groups after matching:



Graph 31

We can see that that once matched, most covariates are much closer together – the black dots show the standardised bias across covariates before matching and the crosses show the same after the

matching. We can see that after matching, it became much closer to zero on most covariates indicating that the groups are much more statistically similar.

1.4.1 Results

After matching Control and Treatment Groups, we use a one-to-one nearest-neighbour matching method (i.e. each person in the treatment group was matched to the person closest to her in the control group) with replacement (allowing for someone in the control group to be matched with more than one person in the treatment group) to calculate the average treatment effect of being referred to New Chance Programme on reoffending rates. Table 2 below shows our findings on overall reoffending and follow up of 30, 60, 90 days and 6 and 12 months (matching illustrations are provided in Appendices):

Table 2: Average Treatment Effect: Propensity Score Matching						
Variable	Sample	Treated	Control	Difference	S.E.	T-stats
Reoffending total (full sample, N = 772)						
	Before Matching	0.23	0.44	-0.21*	0.04	-5.40
	After Matching	0.23	0.38	-0.16*	0.05	-3.48
Reoffending within 30 days (Treatment file up to 10 th December 2019, N = 769)						
	Before Matching	0.03	0.08	-0.05*	0.02	-2.30
	After Matching	0.03	0.07	-0.03	0.02	-1.34
Reoffending within 60 days (Treatment file up to 10 th November 2019, N = 758)						

	Before Matching	0.06	0.14	-0.09*	0.03	-3.33
	After Matching	0.06	0.13	-0.07*	0.03	-2.43
Reoffending within 90 days (Treatment file up to 10 th October, N = 742)						
	Before Matching	0.10	0.18	-0.08*	0.03	-2.66
	After Matching	0.09	0.13	-0.04	0.03	-1.16
Reoffending within 6 months (Treatment file up to 10 th July, N = 710)						
	Before Matching	0.13	0.26	-0.13*	0.03	-3.71
	After Matching	0.13	0.24	-0.11*	0.04	-2.77
Reoffending within 12 months (Treatment file up to 10 th January, N = 610)						
	Before Matching	0.20	0.33	-0.12*	0.04	-2.8
	After Matching	0.20	0.31	-0.11*	0.05	-2.17

Note: * Indicates statistical significance of at least 5% level (two tail t test at .05 level)

If we were to compare overall reoffending across control and treatment Groups without matching, the difference is 21%. After matching, the difference in overall reoffending rate between treated and control groups is 16 % and is still statistically significant. We also look at differences in reoffending (after matching) across different time periods. The difference in reoffending within 30 days is 3% but is not statistically significant. The difference in reoffending within 60 days between treatment and control groups is 7% and is statistically significant. Longer term follow up of 6 and 12 months also show that

there was a significant reduction in reoffending rates of 11%. These findings suggest that the New Chance intervention had a positive effect on offenders in terms of reducing their reoffending rates in the short and long term.

1.4.2 Robustness checks: Sub-group analysis

We test if the intervention has an impact across different sub categories of offenders. Therefore, we also ran PSM analysis on samples of unemployed only (N = 415), by ethnicity, for Whites only⁷ (N = 573), by MH marker (N = 325) and by substance misuse marker (N = 208). We looked at the differences between treatment and control groups on total reoffending and reoffending within 6 and 12 months⁸.

Variable	Sample	Treated	Control	Difference	S.E.	T-stats
Reoffending total (Unemployed only, N = 415)						
	Before Matching	0.26	0.53	-0.27*	0.05	-5.62
	After Matching	0.26	0.45	-0.19*	0.06	-3.14
Reoffending within 6 months (Unemployed only, N = 399)						
	Before Matching	0.26	0.53	-0.27*	0.05	-5.46
	After Matching	0.26	0.46	-0.20*	0.06	-3.33

⁷ The sample for other ethnicities was too small to run a PSM analysis

⁸ Due to smaller sample sizes we had to match on less covariates than in the main analysis, as a result, unemployed sample was matched on age, ethnicity, substance misuse maker, MH marker and offence type; sample with white women only was matched on age, employment, MH marker and substance misuse marker; sample with a present MH issue where MH marker = 1 was matched on age, employment, ethnicity and substance misuse; and sample with a present substance misuse issue where substance misuse marker = 1 was matched on age, ethnicity, offending history and offence type.

Reoffending within 12 months (Unemployed only, N = 351)						
	Before Matching	0.27	0.53	-0.26*	0.06	-4.67
	After Matching	0.27	0.43	-0.16*	0.06	-2.51
Reoffending total (White only by Ethnicity, N = 573)						
	Before Matching	0.21	0.49	-0.28*	0.04	-7.35
	After Matching	0.21	0.40	-0.19*	0.08	-2.28
Reoffending within 6 months (White only by Ethnicity, N = 529)						
	Before Matching	0.21	0.49	-0.28*	0.04	-6.97
	After Matching	0.21	0.42	-0.21*	0.08	-2.63
Reoffending within 12 months (White only by Ethnicity, N = 458)						
	Before Matching	0.22	0.49	-0.26*	0.05	-5.81
	After Matching	0.23	0.47	-0.24*	0.08	-2.84
Reoffending total (MH marker 'Yes', N = 325)						

	Before Matching	0.19	0.66	-0.47*	0.05	-9.68
	After Matching	0.19	0.57	-0.37*	0.07	-5.64
Reoffending within 6 months (MH marker 'Yes', N = 299)						
	Before Matching	0.20	0.66	-0.46*	0.05	-8.92
	After Matching	0.20	0.57	-0.37*	0.06	-5.59
Reoffending within 12 months (MH marker 'Yes', N = 253)						
	Before Matching	0.20	0.66	-0.46*	0.06	-7.81
	After Matching	0.20	0.55	-0.35*	0.07	-4.88
Reoffending total (Substance misuse marker 'Yes', N = 208)						
	Before Matching	0.20	0.79	-0.59*	0.06	-10.23
	After Matching	0.22	0.76	-0.55*	0.07	-7.71
Reoffending within 6 months (Substance misuse marker 'Yes', N = 193)						
	Before Matching	0.21	0.79	-0.58*	0.06	-9.28
	After Matching	0.23	0.76	-0.53*	0.08	-6.86
Reoffending within 12 months						

(Substance misuse marker 'Yes', N = 175)						
	Before Matching	0.20	0.79	-0.58*	0.07	-8.41
	After Matching	0.21	0.72	-0.51*	0.09	-5.90

Note: * Indicates statistical significance of at least 5% level (two tail t test at .05 level)

The findings in Table 3 above show that the effects of the intervention are highly significant (i.e. crime reducing) on the sample of Unemployed women as well as on those who were identified as White. They all show a reduction of 26-28% in reoffending as a result of the intervention which is statistically significant. The reduction in reoffending for women who were facing MH issues is 35-37% and it is statistically significant. Women who had substance misuse issues identified had a 51-55% decrease in reoffending as a result of intervention. These findings suggest that the New Chance intervention would likely have had a positive effect on offenders' MH and provided suitable help for their substance misuse problems, which then had a positive effect on the offenders' criminal behaviour.

3.5 Conclusion

An impact evaluation of the New Chance programme showed a significant drop in overall re-offending as well as reoffending across 60 days, 6 and 12 months for offenders who were supported by the programme compared to a matched control group. This effect is confirmed across a number of sub-groups. The impact was particularly strong for those with MH markers or substance abuse. Given the direct cost of prison as well as its criminogenic effect, there has been interest in such whole system approaches. Our results indicate that this particular programme is effective and we would encourage the collection of cost data to gauge its cost effectiveness.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Client interview questions

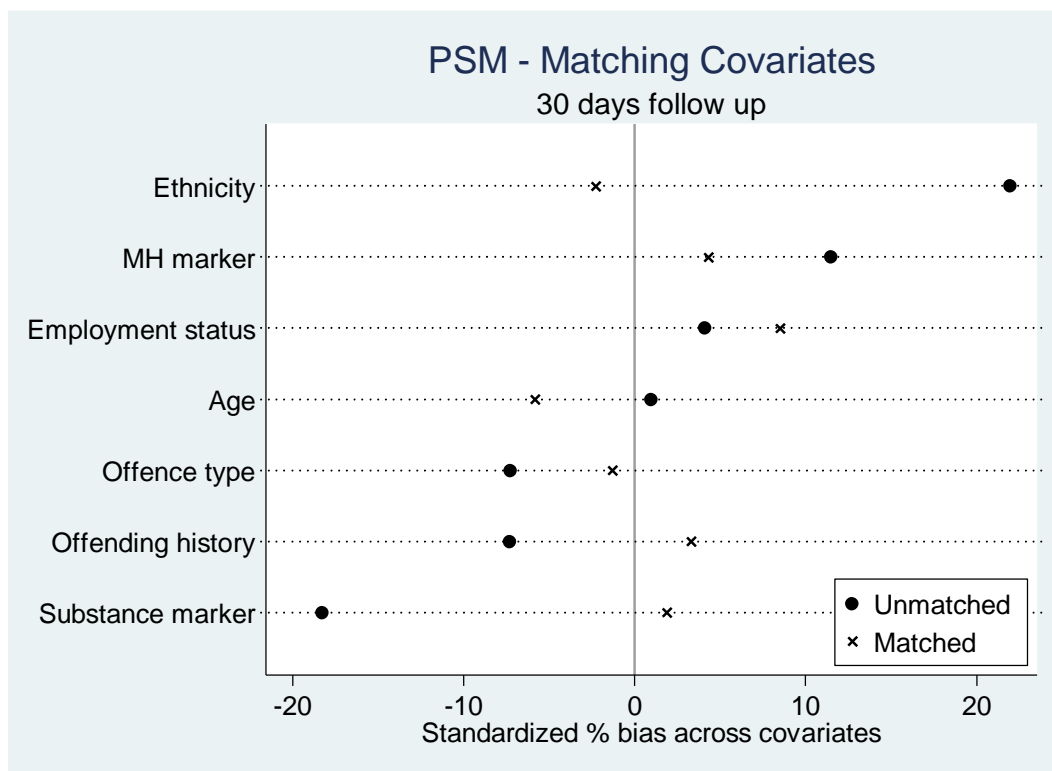
- What has been your experience of the New Chances scheme?
- What has been good about it?
- Is there anything that didn't go so well?
- Is there anything you would change about how it is run?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about the New Chances scheme?

Appendix 2: Staff interview questions

- What has been your experience of delivering the New Chances scheme?
- Have there been any changes made in how it is being delivered since it started?
- How do you think the scheme can benefit women who are enrolled on it?
- Do you think it is achieving its goals at the moment?
- Does it work as well for all women?
- What is good about the scheme? What about it works well?
- Is there anything that hasn't gone so well?
- Is there anything you would change about how it is run or delivered?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about the New Chances scheme?

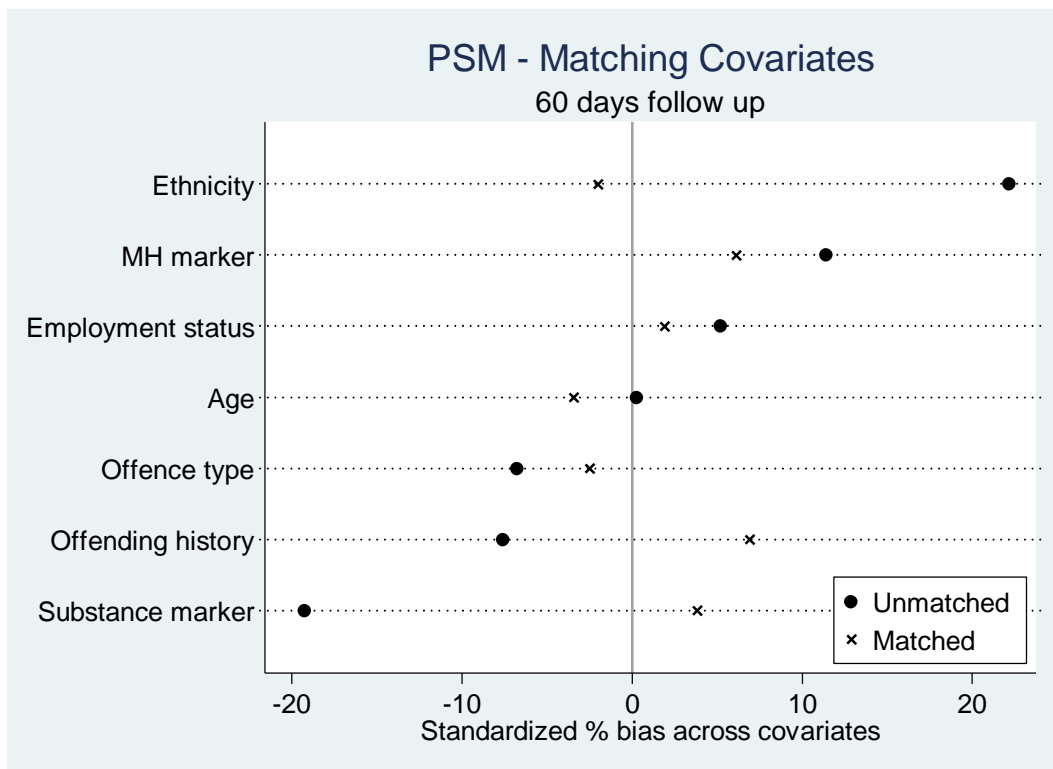
Appendix 3: 30 days follow up

Table A1: Matching Results Comparing Treatment and Control Samples on Chosen Covariates – 30 days follow up, N = 769							
	Mean				%bias	t-test	
	Unmatched		Matched			t	p> t
	Treated	Control	Treated	Control			
Age	33.10	32.96	33.16	33.78	-5.8	-0.60	0.55
Ethnicity	0.30	0.21	0.29	0.30	-2.3	-0.23	0.81
Substance Marker	0.25	0.34	0.26	0.25	1.9	0.21	0.83
MH marker	0.48	0.42	0.47	0.45	4.3	0.46	0.64
Employment	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.26	8.5	0.93	0.36
Offence Type	1.76	1.83	1.77	1.78	-1.3	-0.14	0.89
Offending History	23.34	24.88	23.48	22.79	3.3	0.36	0.72



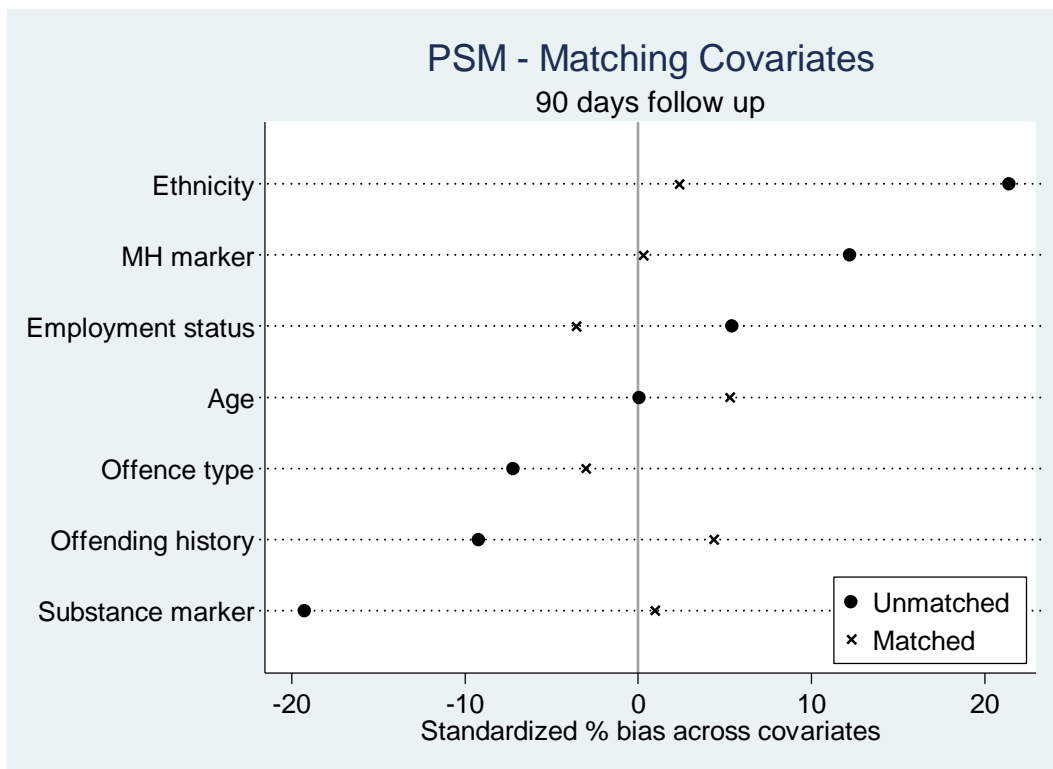
Appendix 4: 60 days follow up

Table A2: Matching Results Comparing Treatment and Control Samples on Chosen Covariates – 60 days follow up, N = 758							
	Mean				%bias	t-test	
	Unmatched		Matched			t	p> t
	Treated	Control	Treated	Control			
Age	32.98	32.96	33.09	33.45	-3.4	-0.35	0.73
Ethnicity	0.30	0.21	0.30	0.30	-2.0	-0.20	0.84
Substance Marker	0.25	0.34	0.25	0.23	3.8	0.43	0.67
MH marker	0.48	0.42	0.47	0.44	6.1	0.65	0.51
Employment	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.30	1.9	0.20	0.84
Offence Type	1.77	1.83	1.78	1.80	-2.5	-0.27	0.79
Offending History	23.28	24.88	23.42	21.97	6.9	0.76	0.45



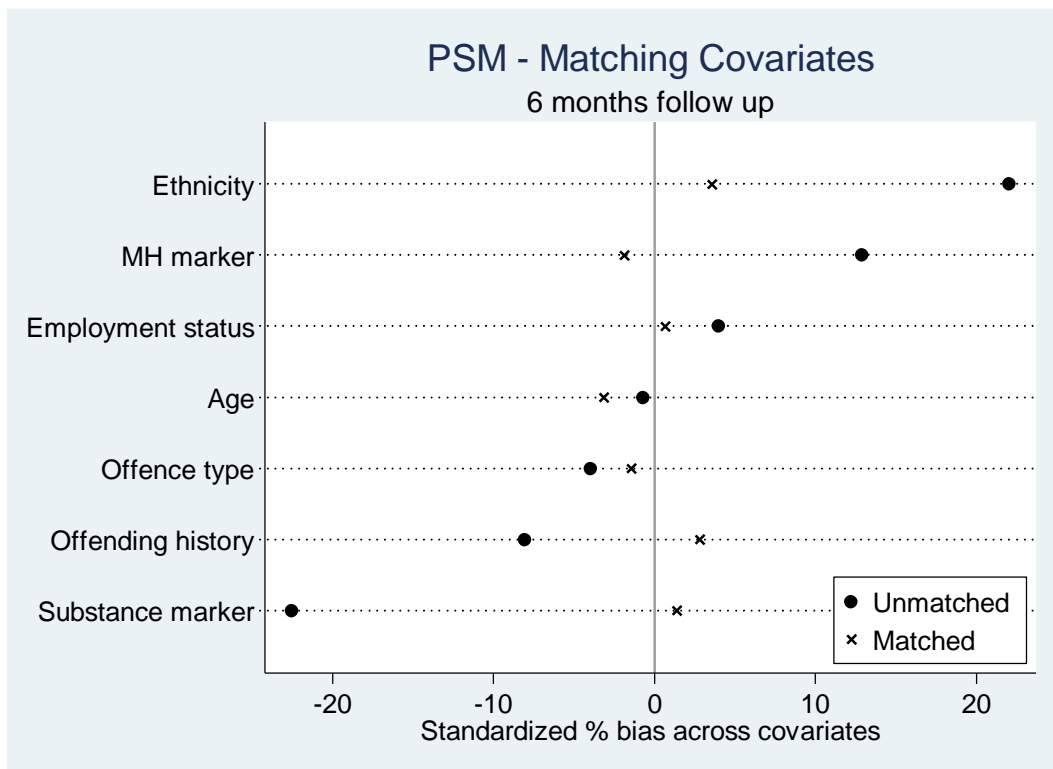
Appendix 5: 90 days follow up

Table 3: Matching Results Comparing Treatment and Control Samples on Chosen Covariates – 90 days follow up, N = 742							
	Mean				%bias	t-test	
	Unmatched		Matched			t	p> t
	Treated	Control	Treated	Control			
Age	32.96	32.96	33.07	32.51	5.3	0.55	0.58
Ethnicity	0.30	0.21	0.29	0.28	2.4	0.24	0.81
Substance Marker	0.25	0.34	0.25	0.25	1.0	0.11	0.91
MH marker	0.48	0.42	0.47	0.47	0.3	0.03	0.98
Employment	0.30	0.28	0.31	0.32	-3.6	-0.37	0.71
Offence Type	1.76	1.82	1.77	1.80	-3.0	-0.33	0.74
Offending History	22.95	24.88	23.08	22.17	4.4	0.48	0.63



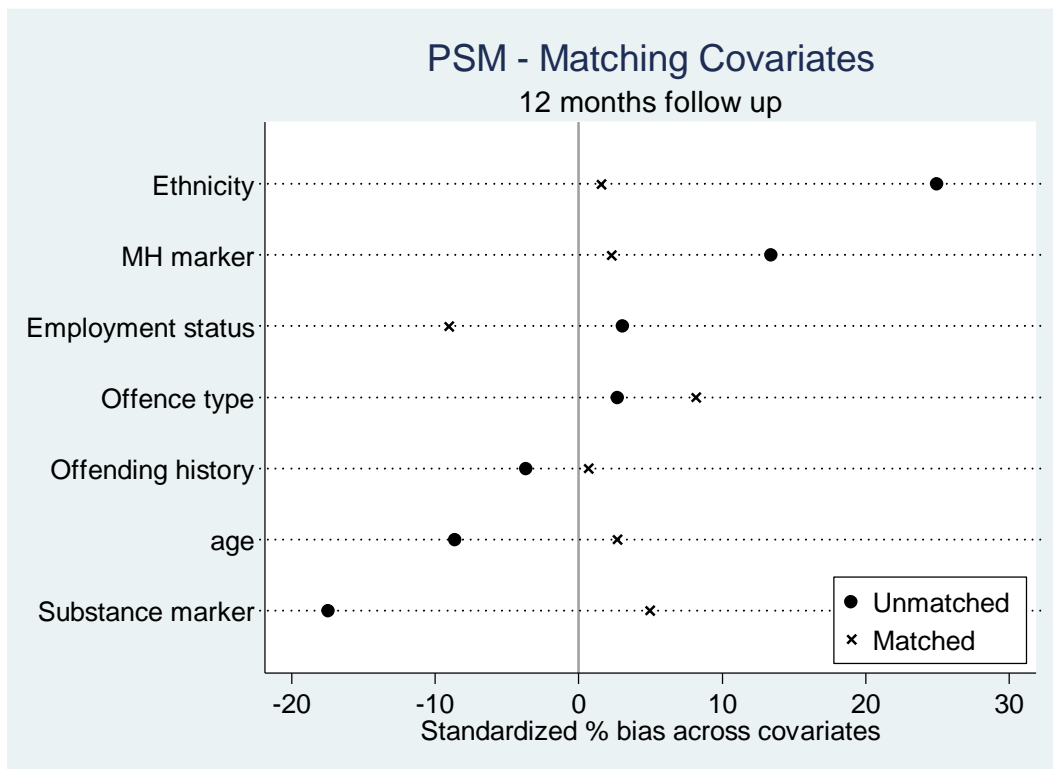
Appendix 6: 6 months follow up

Table A4: Matching Results Comparing Treatment and Control Samples on Chosen Covariates – 6 months follow up, N = 710							
	Mean						
	Unmatched		Matched			t-test	
	Treated	Control	Treated	Control	%bias	t	p> t
Age	32.89	32.96	33.03	33.35	-3.2	-0.32	0.75
Ethnicity	.30	0.21	0.29	0.28	3.6	0.36	0.72
Substance Marker	0.25	0.34	0.24	0.23	1.4	0.15	0.88
MH marker	0.48	0.42	0.48	0.49	-1.9	-0.19	0.85
Employment	0.29	0.28	0.30	0.30	0.7	0.07	0.94
Offence Type	1.79	1.82	1.80	1.81	-1.4	-0.15	0.88
Offending History	23.19	24.88	23.39	22.80	2.8	0.30	0.76



Appendix 7: 12 months follow up

Table A5: Matching Results Comparing Treatment and Control Samples on Chosen Covariates – 12 months follow up, N = 610							
	Mean						
	Unmatched		Matched			t-test	
	Treated	Control	Treated	Control	%bias	t	p> t
Age	32.1	33.0	32.2	31.9	2.7	0.23	0.82
Ethnicity	0.32	0.21	0.32	0.31	1.6	0.13	0.90
Substance Marker	0.26	0.34	0.26	0.24	5.0	0.45	0.65
MH marker	0.49	0.42	0.48	0.47	2.3	0.19	0.85
Employment	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.33	8.2	-0.75	0.45
Offence Type	1.85	1.83	1.86	1.78	8.2	0.71	0.48
Offending History	24.12	24.88	24.16	24.03	0.7	0.06	0.96



Graph A



Enterprise FOR Employment Project

Concluding Evaluation Report (31/1/23)

Independent Evaluator- Ron Winch: Senior Lecturer in Policing and Criminology, Birmingham City University

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Foreword

The Commission on Gangs and Violence Report was written by Reverend Doctor Carver Anderson and published in November 2017. The Report included a recommendation to deliver an interdisciplinary business hub. The Enterprise to Employment Project ('the Project') was a direct response to that recommendation.

The Project is consistent with key themes in my Police and Crime Plan ('my Plan'). Firstly, prevention; because the prevention of crime is always better than having to deal with the consequences of crime. Secondly, partnership; because no matter how effective policing is, it cannot prevent, tackle and reduce crime all on its own. Thirdly, rehabilitation; because that will mean less crime and less victims of crime.

My Plan includes a pledge to support and expand the Project. That is because it is consistent with the key themes in my Plan. This evaluation forms a clear foundation on which to, not only continue to support the Project, but to expand it across the West Midlands. I aim to do that during the course of my remaining tenure as Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Enterprise to Employment service uses a place, then train model, to support people in Birmingham, with violent convictions, who are aged 18-35, from where they are at in their job hunt, to where they want to be, together with an individual placement support model. The project uses the success metric of ensuring that people keep their jobs for a prolonged period. The focus is not just that they get a job, but that they keep their job.

Using this approach, the project has seen people turn their lives around. This includes people who would otherwise have been likely to have had further interaction with the criminal justice system, due to a history of violent offending. As this report comprehensively sets out, Enterprise to Employment has saved the tax payer a significant amount of money.

However, the fundamental benefit of the project, is that it has provided people with the opportunity to make a positive contribution to society, not only for the benefit of that individual, but also for the benefit of their families, the local community and the greater good of society as a whole.

I record my commendation and give my thanks to: Ronald Winch for conducting this evaluation and to the wider team at Birmingham City University for sponsoring it; Avril Grant and the team at AVision, for their tireless commitment and hard work in making this project a success; and the Steering Group, who have guided this project over the past few years, with specific thanks to Andy Caulton of Hope Energy, who has chaired this group.

I look forward to continuing my support for and expanding the Project; to prevent and tackle crime; promote rehabilitation; change lives; and make a positive difference; for the benefit of the people and communities of the West Midlands.

Simon Foster
Police and Crime Commissioner
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1.0 Introduction

This concluding report completes the independent evaluation of the Enterprise for Employment project and follows the interim report from March 2022.

Tackling violent crime forms a substantial element in the Police and Crime Plan for the West Midlands 2021- 25. In September 2020, after a competitive tendering process, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Midlands appointed, AVision for Empowerment CIC, a not-for-profit organisation, to undertake a project of work with men and women referred with violent crime convictions. The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Midlands allocated £200,000 for the project, to run over two years. As the Enterprise for Employment project established itself over the first 12 months- and it is worthy of comment that this coincided with the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic- considerable evidence emerged of the project's capability to transform lives and reduce re-offending. Therefore, a further £100,000 was invested by the PCC for the financial year 2022-23, with another £100,000 allocated for 2023-24. Thus, bringing total funding of £400,000 up to March 2024.

The project's terms of reference include coaching, mentoring, and supporting offenders over the age of 18 into employment and enterprise. There is also strong evidence that training and learning opportunities have also been developed to the benefit of Service-Users. Since the launch of the programme, Service-Users have been referred from a range of agencies including the National Probation Service, West Midlands Police and Birmingham Multi Agency Gangs Unit (MAGU). The operational aims of the programme involved the resettlement and rehabilitation of offenders, the reduction in violent crime, including the harms caused by violence, reduced re-offending, and the stabilisation of often chaotic lives. The aim of this report is to conclude the independent evaluation, comment on the qualities of the project, highlight the successes and learning outcomes and assess value for money for the PCC. Recommendations are also provided in terms of supporting the work of the project going forwards and how the Enterprise for Employment model can be expanded across the West Midlands Police force area.



1.1. IPS Model and BEST

BEST is the concept title for the Enterprise for Employment work undertaken by AVision and stands for '**Breakthrough Enterprise Skills Training.**' The small team at AVision, led by Avril Grant, further consists of an administration function with experienced and accredited caseworkers, coaches, and mentors. BEST seeks to apply the established Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model principles (<https://ipsgrow.org.uk/about/>, 2023), in facilitating Service-Users into paid and meaningful work or business start-up opportunities. Support also applies in enabling Service-Users to benefit from training and education to further increase opportunities in employment and life chances. The IPS model was originally designed and developed to improve the employability and life chances of people suffering from mental health and addiction issues. The model can equally be framed to support veterans, people with physical health issues and prison leavers (<https://ipsgrow.org.uk/about/>, 2023). IPS has a strong evidence base within a number of countries for enabling Service -Users to achieve competitive employment. Within the UK, up to July 2021, Service-Users on IPS schemes gained a 22% competitive employment rate compared to 12% for those who were not on IPS schemes (<https://ipsworks.org/index.php/what-is-ips/>, 2023). My evaluation firmly supports that AVision applies the following eight principles of IPS.

1. The Service-User is integrated into the team (this is evidenced through bespoke intervention measures that meet the Service-User's needs)
2. Competitive employment
3. Job search is rapid- within 30 days
4. The Service-User decides when it's the right time to return to work
5. Employment specialists are engaged within the team to support a job search that is Service-User centred
6. Building relationship with employers in order to access the hidden labour market
7. Benefits counselling is provided to support the person through the transition from benefits to paid work
8. Availability of time unlimited support (Avril Grant, 2020)



The IPS model has not previously been applied within the Service-User cohort currently engaged through AVision and further emphasises the credibility of AVision's work and emphasises the level baseline or starting point for Service-Users as they embark on their competitive employment journey (and further rehabilitation). Service-Users receive support in completing a comprehensive CV and also benefit from coaching and mentoring- including training in interview skills, motivation and advice on resettlement and general rehabilitation. Many Service-Users have very serious previous convictions, including serving terms of imprisonment for serious violent offences. These offending profiles can make unsupported success in gaining permanent employment highly challenging. AVision therefore seeks to provide additional self-employment

opportunities, via accredited training courses and qualifications to enable agency appointments including building, driving, railway maintenance and warehouse work. A small number of Service-Users have started small businesses, supported by modest grants, provided through the commissioning funds.

1.2. Progress of the Scheme

Remarks on quantitative data: Since September 2020, the BEST team have dealt with 236 Service-Users and have 59 ongoing clients. 60 are now in full-time employment with a further 5 who have entered self-employment. This amounts to a competitive employment rate for the cohort of 27.5%, which exceeds the UK's IPS (Individual Placement Support) cohort average up to July 2021 of 22% (<https://ipsworks.org/index.php/what-is-ips/>, 2023). The reference to figures up to July 2021 are intended to exclude the AVision IPS cohort in order to provide further contrast around outcomes. In addition, over the same period, 5 Service-Users have been re-convicted for non-violent crimes- none have been re-convicted of a violent crime. **Subsequently, this equates to a reoffending rate of 2.1%.** This compares to the recognised national reoffending rates of 25.6% for all offences and 33.4% for custodial sentences, i.e. recognised as committing a further offence within 12 months of release or previous non-custodial conviction. (Ministry of Justice, 2021).

Taking the lower average re-offending rate of 25.6%, we would have expected 60 Service-Users to re-offend. In terms of the financial costs of crime to the relevant agencies, including Health, Local Authorities, Criminal Justice System, physical and emotional impact on the victim, lost output etc, two reasonable estimates of the cost benefits in relation to the project are proposed.

The first estimate is based on those 60 Service-Users who could have been expected to re-offend. Had each committed a crime amounting to violence against the person, this would have amounted to £989,000 in costs (Home Office, 2011) (Bank of England, 2021). The second estimate takes violent crime as being a third of total crime, therefore, those 60 re-offenders would reduce to 20 who could have been expected to re-offend with a violent crime against the person. This takes the figure to £329,000 (Home Office, 2011) (Bank of England, 2021).

These figures are conservative estimates and relate to average costs of an offence of violence against the person. Violence against the person can range from the minor, i.e., common assault etc to the very serious, i.e., homicide. Clearly, the individual commission of more serious offences escalates the relevant costs. For example, each offence of serious wounding amounts to £34,000 and the current relevant costs of one homicide incident amounts to £2.1m. It cannot be known for certain whether Service-Users would have gone onto commit crimes of serious violence had it not been for the BEST interventions. However, the above estimates are reasonable in the circumstances and indicates a strong value for money element for the PCC's investment.

Statistical Significance

In terms of competitive employment, comparisons have been made between the AVision cohort and the national IPS employment rate. The ratio of 27.5% employment amongst the AVision cohort compared to the 22% rate for the UK IPS rate is just outside (0.06) of the recognised null hypothesis test result where p is 0.05 and **cannot** be generally recognised as statistically significant. However, a firm inference can be argued that AVision's local outcomes are better than the national picture.

In relation to the re-offending rates, applying the null hypothesis test to indicate a correlation between re-offending rates of a non IPS cohort and re-offending rates of Service-Users subject to the IPS model through AVision also requires examination. In the circumstances of the Enterprise for Employment scheme and the associated evaluation, resources were unavailable to identify and monitor a local random control sample for offenders not subject to the IPS model. However, national re-offending rates remain a highly credible dataset and have been applied in this instance. When applying the null hypothesis test, the AVision cohort's re-offending rate of 2.1% is better (0.007) than the p value of 0.05 of the 33.4% national re-offending rates for custodial sentences. This can therefore be argued to be statistically significant and also further strengthens the offending cost benefit analysis under the Home Office costs of crime matrix.

Remarks on qualitative data: As part of the independent evaluation, numerous conversations with Service-Users have taken place. For the purposes of Service-User trust and confidence, all feedback about the programme has been anonymised. Many within the Service-User cohort are motivated by similar ambitions to the wider community, i.e., healthy relationships, family stability, self-actualisation, and self-respect. Overwhelmingly, Service-Users are positive about the impact of BEST (IPS) on their lives and spoke of the benefits of gaining or working effectively towards competitive employment, personal stability and training or education opportunities.

It could be argued that a number of Service-Users have matured out of the main crime age range of between 15 and 25. However, many Service-Users maintain that if it wasn't for the interventions of AVision and BEST, they would have continued to suffer from a lack of hope and the strong likelihood of entrapment within an ongoing cycle of re-offending, custody, and diminished life chances.



1.3 Feedback from Service Users

Over the project's life, feedback has been received from a number of service users. This amounts to an indication of the qualitative evidence, designed to inform and support the quantitative details gathered for the interim report.

The emerging themes from Service-User feedback are (a) greater support in breaking the cycle of offending, (b) greater personal confidence in securing competitive employment or enterprise opportunities, (c) increased financial stability, (d) improvements in personal and family relationships, (e) personal empowerment and self-actualisation.

(a) Greater support in breaking the cycle of offending.

'They supported me through my mental health conditions and helped me get into college.'

'If it wasn't for AVision, I'd have no financial security and that's a driver for crime.'

'They have a passion to help and support feels like being in a family.'

(b) Greater personal confidence in securing employment or enterprise opportunities.

'I knew the direction I wanted to go in- it helped me from within.'

'They helped me write a CV and gave me an interview course. I'd never had an interview before and my first two were successful- I had a choice of jobs.'

(c) Increased financial stability.

'When I came out of prison, it was a bit hopeless- I'd be on the dole now.'

'I've had help setting up a business with a £1500 grant.'

(d) Improvements in personal and family relationships.

'The job saved me and gave my partner the confidence to agree to marry me.'

'Most people I know haven't been successful in life- my family want to thank the programme.'

(e) Personal empowerment and self-actualisation.

'It's good to have people that believe in you.'

'The mind-set sessions worked well- words can't say what a difference it made for me.'

'I now don't let the past affect my future.'

'I'm being encouraged to go to university- they 'nag' onto us.' (Nag being used in a positive sense).

In terms of Service-User's views in improving the programme, one Service-User said that they expected to be given business opportunities immediately, rather than going through some of the formal structures of the programme. Another Service-User suggested that seminar sessions would have been helpful, with a number of Service-Users meeting with a facilitator, for mutual support and shared experiences. Service-Users overwhelmingly spoke of the commitment of the AVision Team. The qualities of staff and growing the skills base of case workers is essential for the future success of the project and any expansion into other geographical locations within the West Midlands force area.

2.0. Context

Violence in the West Midlands has followed the national trend and has risen consistently for a number of years. It has led to an increased fear of crime, a rise in the mental and physical injuries suffered by members of our community and many preventable deaths (WMP&Crime Commissioner, 2021).

2.1. Strategic Priorities

The Enterprise for Employment programme links with the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner's, 'Second Chance Charter' and Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 in tackling violent crime through public health and partnership approaches- particularly through the five strands of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership.

The 5 main strands to the VRP's work include, supporting:

1. Communities and professionals to work together
2. Interventions to prevent violence
3. The use of evidence to inform decisions
4. Leaders to connect around a shared long-term ambition
5. Production of guidance, advice, and toolkits (WMP&Crime Commissioner, 2021)

2.2. Geographic context

The Enterprise for Employment programme is currently only available for Service-Users living in Birmingham. Whilst this is appropriate for the purposes of the project and is aligned to A' Vison's geographical location, the evidence highlighted within this report indicates that a broader West Midlands application would increase the scope, reach and success of the project.



3.0. Implementation

The commitment from Avril Grant and her team to the programme is admirable and the outcomes indicate tangible benefits for the lives of service users and their families. The achievements are all the more impressive, given the challenging conditions prevailing through the pandemic and associated lockdowns. Despite the current cost of living crisis, the post pandemic environment has seen some increased employment opportunities, with the UK now carrying more vacancies than the number of those unemployed. There are no current operational issues or concerns with the programme that would prevent it from thriving across a broader West Midlands context.

4.0. Concluding remarks and recommendations

Evaluation of the Enterprise for Employment programme provides excellent evidence of tangible and sustainable success. Remarks around cost effectiveness and feedback around outcomes and outputs are positive and the programme aligns with the ambitions of the PCC's Police and Crime Plan 2021-25. Feedback from service users is highly positive and they particularly value the ongoing and bespoke support from AVision and the confidence engendered through the development of skills and entry into stable employment, enterprise training and education opportunities.

The leadership of AVision is also a significant element of the programme and Avril Grant's personal investment and engagement is demonstrably transformative. Having observed her work with Service-Users, she is a charismatic and pivotal figure.

The evidence indicates a strong sense of purpose and positive outcomes for the Service-User group. I have been impressed with the passion of Avril and her team and they can reflect on an excellent two years of outstanding service delivery of the project. The evidence speaks to the substantially positive cost/ benefit analysis and changed lives, representing excellent value for money for the PCC and fully justifies the commission and funding of the project to date.

4.1. Recommendations

There is capability for AVision and the programme to grow further and become more ambitious around the securing of even more employment, business, learning and education prospects within a post-pandemic environment.



- Evidence supports the expansion of the programme across the remaining NPUs of the West Midlands Police area. This is based on the feedback, outcomes and outputs and would allow other Service-Users across the region to access services. It is inequitable that a successful programme of this nature is available only to people who live in Birmingham. AVision have the skills and experience along with the credibility of consistent service delivery to facilitate the broadening across the West Midlands force area, either through organisational and operational expansion- with the required increased capacity- or through acting as a consultant in developing new teams. In short, this amounts to an 'Avril equivalent' for each local Policing area.
- Further commissioning opportunities should be investigated, in order to facilitate the above approach. In addition, mainstreaming the programme as part of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership structure- from existing funding streams- would be equally appropriate in terms of effective offender management. This can be achieved through intensified partnership working with the Probation Service and engaging further with Health, Education and Social Care agencies. This should include clear, ethical, achievable, and agreed performance measurement outcomes.
- West Midlands Police development of Artificial Intelligence in predicting and managing high-harm offenders is class leading and is supported through the PCC's Ethics Committee. Consideration should be given to developing links with WMP Offender Managers to implement an appropriate referral mechanism for those at risk of becoming high harm/ violent offenders. AI could be used effectively to supplement and add further objectivity to the current project's often, self-selecting referral system. This will require careful oversight and governance, for example, to avoid similar issues of data-bias seen elsewhere within the Metropolitan Police Gangs Matrix. Individuals referred as Service-Users under such a mechanism, may have an absence of criminal convictions, but may nevertheless represent substantial risks of causing high harm in the future. These Service-Users could benefit considerably from support via the IPS model and therefore add further reach within the violence prevention strategy for WMP.

- Further technological innovations should also be considered for the programme, including increased social media use and the provision of an app to include advice, support and further signposting for Service-Users and potential Service-Users.
- Service-User expectations can be further effectively managed through clearly highlighting the programme's structure and the benefits accrued at each stage.
- As Service-Users become successful, consideration should be made for them to share their journey and experiences with other clients during seminars, for mutual support and learning for AVision staff. This will enhance evidence-based best practice.
- An additional benefit of the programme has been supporting Service-Users into training and further education. Although, not strictly within the original terms of 'employment and enterprise', this is an area that has justifiably been expanded in framing the programme and providing substantial personal and work-based opportunities for service users.
- The recent launch of the PCC's, 'Second Chance Charter' and the encouragement of employers to recruit ex-offenders also presents a vehicle of opportunity for reducing violent crime and re-offending behaviours.

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Appendix 2 – Real People, Real Impact

Offending 2 Recovery

A grateful mother from Birmingham has made a personal donation to the Offending 2 Recovery (O2R) programme, to thank the team who helped turn her son's life around after years of addiction and crime.

Anita Kelly, whose son James battled heroin and crack cocaine addiction for over a decade, said she wanted to give something back to the scheme that "gave me my son back." The money will now fund counselling sessions to support others on their own recovery journeys.

James, 38, was once spending up to £1,000 a week on drugs and surviving through shoplifting and theft. After meeting Police Constable (PC) Sharon Manboard-Jones through O2R, he joined an intensive support and rehabilitation programme. Nearly three years later, he is clean, thriving, and now supports and advises Nottinghamshire Police, helping other addicts find a new path away from crime.

Anita Kelly, mother of James, said: "For years I lived in fear of a phone call telling me my son was gone. The Offending 2 Recovery programme didn't just help James – it helped our whole family.

"The compassion and belief Sharon and the team showed him changed everything. My donation is a small way to say thank you and to help others find the hope my son found."

James Kelly, now in recovery and supporting others, added: "When I met Sharon, I was at rock bottom. I didn't think I was worth helping. But she believed in me more than I believed in myself. O2R gave me a reason to live again and a chance to make things right. I owe my life to this programme – and to my mum for never giving up on me."

Hate Crime - Remedi

A victim of hate crime and related verbal abuse was referred into the service, multiple reports had been made to the police by the victim. On the initial call, the victim explained it was always the same people who were abusing her, she lived in a block of flats and expressed how much she hated living there because of this. She went on to explain that she had received threats of harm and as such was too scared to collect evidence because of the potential repercussions from the offenders.

During the assessment, the victim explained that the offenders didn't live in the block of flats but were being let in by other tenants, which had left her feeling unsafe. She felt this was because there was a known drug dealer in the property and that was attracting the offenders to visit.

The victim spoke of how she had struggled communicating with her housing officer and at the time was not even aware of who it was. The support worker focused on building that relationship between the victim and housing officer, which she was initially able to do. However, the housing officer didn't engage and would cancel any meetings at the last minute due to the victims property not being safe to visit. The victim had made a number of complaints about the lack of support from them.

Throughout the support, the victim reported back that the abuse continued and there had even been an attempted murder outside the building due to the drug related matters, which meant it wasn't safe for the support worker to visit in person. All support from then on was delivered over the phone or via teams.

From the outset the victim had expressed only needing practical support, but as the support continued it was evident to the support worker that emotional support was needed as well. The support worker completed weekly check ins with the victim to focus on the victims safety and mental health and because of the support provided, the victim started to feel more confident in contacting WMP when needed.

Eventually, a new housing officer was appointed and the support worker was able to arrange a meeting with them and the victim, with the goal of bridging the gap in communication and repairing the relationship. The housing officer was able to provide the victim reassurance of reporting and commitment to help resolve any issues and agreed steps she could take, to eradicate the current behaviour of the offenders.

Towards the end of the support, the offending had almost completely stopped, the victim felt her trust in authorities had been restored and felt a lot safer in her current property. During the final evaluation, the victim reported that she felt safe leaving her home now, and that she would not of been able to get through that period without the help of the support worker, she stated that Remedi had "changed her life."

Domestic Abuse - WAITS

Victim and two young children

The victim is a survivor of domestic abuse who fled violence from her husband, who was in the UK on a working visa. She has two young children. Due to safeguarding concerns, the family was repeatedly relocated by local authorities from across the country, and eventually placed in a one-bedroom shared HMO by Social Services. The accommodation was unsuitable and negatively affected the family's wellbeing.

The victim and her 8-year-old daughter were experiencing anxiety and depression. The victim was suicidal, and her daughter showed signs of disordered eating and worrying weight loss. The family had no extended support in the UK and faced significant cultural and language barriers.

The victim's husband was reported to his employer by the police and was later returned to India. The victim was awaiting the outcome of her asylum appeal, with her local church covering legal fees as she had no access to public funds.

The family was involved with children's services on several occasions, due to the victim's limited understanding of safeguarding responsibilities. They were also targeted by racially motivated abuse following negative media coverage, which caused further trauma to the victim and her two young children.

During a fire inspection, the HMO unlawfully disposed of the family's belongings, causing further distress and trauma. WAITS intervened by coordinating with the social worker and church leader, challenging the HMO, and advocating for the family's rights. WAITS also contacted the immigration solicitor, to request urgent progression of SJ's appeal due to her declining mental health.

As the victim's mental health deteriorated, WAITS provided emergency telephone counselling and allocated a befriender, to reduce isolation and offer ongoing emotional support. This intervention was critical in stabilising the victim, during a period of acute crisis.

Outcomes:

- The victim and her children were granted Leave to Remain, providing long-term safety and stability.
- WAITS secured a £4,000 Turn2Us grant, enabling the family to move out of unsuitable accommodation.
- The local church is supporting the family to secure safe private rented accommodation

Impact:

WAITS played a vital role in reducing suicide risk, stabilising the victim's mental health, and advocating across housing, immigration, social care systems and coordinating various agencies to meet the victim's needs. Support workers helped the victim to understand and engage in child protection core meetings, ensuring her voice was heard, and referred her to the Freedom Programme and free ESOL to build confidence and independence. The victim expressed deep gratitude for WAITS' consistent, compassionate support, describing the organisation as "walking alongside her" while she navigated complex systems without family support.

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Birmingham	2,002,198
Community Safety	896,441
Birmingham Children's Trust (YOS)	
Youth Offending Service	283,250
Birmingham City Council	
Community Safety Partnership	613,191
Intervention and Prevention	220,857
AVision for Empowerment CIC	
Enterprising for Employment	143,170
St John's Ambulance	
Safe Space	77,687
Victims	90,410
Social Orientation and Relief Association (SOORA)	
Empowering Communities: Awareness and Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the West Midlands	15,350
Women Acting In Todays Society (WAITS)	
WAITS Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	37,530
Anawim (New Chance Contract 2025-29)	
Anawim Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	37,530
Violence Reduction Partnership	442,068
Birmingham City Council	
Local Delivery VRP Birmingham	201,130
The Blesst CIC	
Faith Alliance Youth Spaces Birmingham	9,936
Phoenix United CIC	
Choices Project	115,501
Bringing Hope	
Inside Out - Focused Deterrence	115,501
My Community Fund	175,554
Guru Ravidass Football Club	
Guru Ravidass Football Club	5,000
Birmingham United FC Foundation CIC	
Beyond the Game	4,900
Illuminate Minds CIC	
Break the Cycle Knife Crime Awareness course	5,000
Re. Future Collective	
Security Cameras for Perrott's Folly	3,520
blesstcic	
Young People Faith After School Intervention and Preventative program	5,000
ROCKC CIC	
Project Youngen	5,000
Birchfield Community Association	
Birchfield multi-sports sessions for young people	5,000
Open House Community CIC	
Inspiring youth	5,000
Crescent Archers	
Aim Together	4,930
Autistic Girls Network	
In-person Peer Support Group for Autistic Girls, 13-18, South Birmingham	5,000
New Hope Global	
Choices Matter	4,923
CASBA	
Accessible Easy Speak and Easy Read Freedom Programme course for women with Learning Disabilities	5,000
Sport 4 Life UK	
Hodge Hill Weekly Football for 'at risk' Young People	4,970

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Handsworth Association of Schools Children and Families DV Support	4,950
ELOQUENT PRAISE & EMPOWERMENT DANCE COMPANY CIC 'Rootz': Boys only dance and mentoring programme	4,830
Youths 2 Legends Ltd Binnis Bladez	5,000
Highfield Hall Community Club Hall Green Safer Streets	5,000
Ward End Residents' Group (Glebe Farm & Tile Cros Cottesmeadow Estate Summer Programme	3,500
The Feast Youth Project Developing Identity and Well-Being: Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls	5,000
Strike9T CIC My Community Fund	5,000
Association of St Kitts & Nevis Descendants "Heritage 4 Hope": Reducing Youth Crime with St. Kitts-Nevis Arts and Music Skill-Building Initiatives	5,000
Essence Youth Mentoring CIC Essence Evolve	5,000
Warkwickshire Cricket Foundation Breaking Boundaries	5,000
Aspiring Young Minds CIC AYM Internships	4,180
Sports for Youth Community Interest Company Empowering Young Lives	4,850
Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust Helping Hands - Tackling VAWG and Exploitation Through Theatre In Education	5,000
Aston Manor Cricket Club Safe Spaces Cricket Initiative - æ Aston Manor Cricket Club (AMCC)	5,000
5Up CIC Muay Thai Futures: Empowering Youth Through Discipline and Community	4,290
BYSA foundation Making Birmingham better	3,500
utx academy UTX Freerunning, Parkour & Acrobatics for Youth Empowerment	4,955
Birmingham Wheelchair Basketball Make Change Birmingham Inclusivity Day	1,500
The Britannia Youth Organisation CIC Safe Spaces: Youth Crime Prevention Programme	5,000
Acocks Green Village in Bloom/part of Acocks Gree Community Wellbeing	1,000
Team Yafai (CIC) My Tomorrow - Birmingham Boxing Academy	5,000
Urban Devotion Birmingham (UDB) Safe spaces for young people	5,000
Epic Entrepreneurs C.I.C. Masterclass Projects	4,851
The Gina Project CIC Immediate specialist counselling support for women subjected to male violence & abuse	4,905
RISE ABOVE BARRIERS "RAB" CIC Box safe	5,000
Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspots	176,869
Birmingham City Council (Contact for ASB Hotspot) Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspot Patrols Birmingham	176,869

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Operation Fearless (Erdington)	19,495
My Community Fund	19,495
Real Direction	
Operation Fearless	5,000
Operation Fearless - Education and Prevention Legacy	5,000
Strike 9 football project	
Active Futures (Erdington Op Fearless)	4,495
Donate 1 Create 1 CIC	
HAC (Hub Activity Club) After-School	5,000

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Coventry	958,891
Community Safety	260,848
Coventry City Council (YOS)	
Youth Offending Service	87,550
Coventry City Council (CSP)	
Community Safety Partnership	153,298
Coventry City Council (DARDRs)	
Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews	20,000
Intervention and Prevention	75,563
Coventry City Council (FDAC)	
Family, Drugs and Alcohol Courts (FDAC)	46,723
Mentoring West Midlands	
Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) – Project Coventry	28,840
Victims	434,487
Coventry Haven Womens Aid	
CHWA Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	150,120
Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	
Counselling	45,455
CRASAC Independent Sexual Violence Advisor	126,322
Panahghar	
Panahghar Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	112,590
Violence Reduction Partnership	80,298
Coventry City Council (VRP)	
Local Delivery VRP Coventry	80,298
My Community Fund	63,478
Pak Shaheen	
Breaking Boundaries	3,500
Empowr-U	
Outdoor Youth Space	5,000
Kairos Women Working Together	
Outreach and drop-in to support women at risk of or subject to sexual exploitation including women involved in street based prostitution.	5,000
AG Boxing and Fitness	
Empowering Youth through Boxing	4,572
Willenhall Community Forum	
CCTV for Willenhall	3,079
Creative Optimisic Visions	
Changes	5,000
St Francis Employability	
Safe spaces	4,586
Coventry Riders Action Group	
Motorcycle Security	3,000
Trees residents group	
Street games and activities for kids	4,850
Vanny Radio-Community Broadcasters	
Music Our Passion project	4,971
Media Mania	
The Drop	4,960
Positive Youth Foundation	
PYF Saturday Football in Hillfields	4,960
Unity in Coventry	
Subway Art Competition	5,000
MIZIZI BOYS MENTORSHIP	
Project Name: Empowering Young Boys: Safe Streets, Bright Futures	5,000
Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspots	44,217

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Coventry City Council (ASB Hotspot Contacts) ASB Hotspot Patrols Coventry	44,217

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Dudley	370,038
Community Safety	188,916
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	
Community Safety Partnership	125,426
Dudley Metropolitan Council (YOS)	
Youth Offending Service	43,490
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DARDRs)	
Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews	20,000
Victims	37,530
Churches Housing Association of Dudley & District	
CHADD Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	37,530
Violence Reduction Partnership	72,600
Community Skills and Knowledge Partnership (CSKN) CIC Ltd	
Empowering Young People Through Music and Mentoring	9,400
Cranstoun (VRP agreements)	
Dudley Local Delivery Poor Impulse Control Programme	9,400
Dudley Voluntary Council Service	
Dudley local interventions - School holiday delivery	35,000
Phase Trust	
1 to 1 Mentoring	9,400
Phase Trust HSB support	9,400
My Community Fund	34,814
Young Enterprise	
Learn to Earn - Transforming Futures	5,000
Community Skills and Knowledge Network CIC (CSKN)	
Plain Speaking	4,930
Challenge Academy CIC	
Branching Out, Rising Roots	4,000
Enlight Projects	
Written by the Stars	5,000
Real Mama Tribe	
Weekend Mamas: Nature Craft and Play Session	2,535
YMCA Black Country Group	
Wrens Nest Youth	5,000
Team Pumpkin ABC	
Get the knives off our streets	3,391
Tough Enough To Care	
Mental Health First Aid in community spaces	4,958
Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspots	36,178
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (ASB Hotspot Contacts)	
ASB Hotspot Patrols Dudley	36,178

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Sandwell	901,517
Community Safety	250,548
Sandwell Children's Trust	
Youth Offending Service	77,250
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (CSP)	
Community Safety Partnership	153,298
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (DARDRs)	
Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews	20,000
Intervention and Prevention	270,000
Cranstoun	
Diamorphine Assisted Treatment (DAT) Service	270,000
Violence Reduction Partnership	290,000
Sandwell Children's Trust	
Sandwell Prevention Partnership Panel Pilot	200,000
Sandwell MBC	
Local Delivery VRP Sandwell	90,000
My Community Fund	43,938
West Brom Basketball Club	
Hoops for change	5,000
Just Play Basketball CIC	
InHerCourt	5,000
WEST BROMWICH AFRICAN CARIBBEAN RESOURCE CENTRE	
NEW VISION YOUTH CLUB	3,908
Windmill Amateur Boxing Club	
Summer Programme 2025	4,925
Dorothy Parkes Centre	
BoxClever	3,804
West Brom All Stars	
Street-2-Soccer Skillz Program	4,617
BoxClever Mentoring CIC	
School-based Therapeutic non-contact Boxing Programme.	5,000
Sporting Your Futures CIC	
Empowering Young Futures	4,440
AnyGirl Netball CIC	
AnyGirl Leads	5,000
Awesome Dance & Performing Arts	
Lets Make More Noise	2,244
Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspots	47,031
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (ASB Hotspot Contact)	
ASB Hotspot Patrols Sandwell	47,031

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Solihull	256,666
Community Safety	142,960
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (CSP)	
Community Safety Partnership	90,000
Solihull Metropolitan Council (YOS)	
Youth Offending Service	32,960
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (DARDRs)	
Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews	20,000
Violence Reduction Partnership	60,047
Solihull Community Safety Partnership (VRP local Interventions)	
Local Delivery VRP Solihull	60,047
My Community Fund	29,540
Urban Heard Youth Engagement Specialist	
Breaking the Cycle	4,855
Vision For All CIC	
N-gage	4,850
Re-Imagine Me CIC	
The Harm Reduction Project	4,945
Solihull Moors Foundation	
Youth Crime & Violence Prevention	5,000
Fitcap CIO	
Street Doctors	4,990
Push On Wellbeing CIC	
Wellbeing Help Today	4,900
Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspots	24,119
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (ASB Hotspot Contacts)	
ASB Hotspot Patrols Solihull	24,119

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Walsall	510,731
Community Safety	224,618
Walsall City Council (CSP)	
Community Safety Partnership	125,426
Walsall Council (YOS)	
Youth Offending Service	79,192
Walsall Council (DARDR)	
Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews	20,000
Violence Reduction Partnership	219,981
Midland Langar Seva Society	
Faith Alliance Youth Spaces Walsall	10,000
Walsall Council Children's Services: "Youth Offer and Participation Team".	
Walsall Prevention Partnership Panel Pilot	125,000
Walsall City Council	
Local Delivery VRP Walsall	84,981
My Community Fund	37,993
West Midlands Sports Development CIC	
Walsall Gamefit - Learning By Doing - Another Shot	4,650
FNB Mentoring and Coaching CIC	
Disparity and Disproportionality - Supporting Walsall's Black Youth	5,000
BMYG Youth Work c/c t/a Youth Connect	
Engage Together	5,000
Vision For All CIC (Walsall Application)	
Phoenix Foundations	4,750
Bloxwich rangers Football club	
Bloxwich Rangers Football for all	1,500
Walsall Bangladeshi Progressive Society	
SHIINE (Supporting Helping Involving Nurturing Empowering) Girls & Young Women	4,836
RicNic	
Unlock Your Summer- Workshop Programme	5,000
Kids In Communication	
KIC Knife Crime (podcasts and engagement)	5,000
Frank F Harrison Community Association	
Beechdale Youth Sessions	2,257
Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspots	28,138
Walsall City Council (ASB Hotspot contact)	
ASB Hotspot Patrols Walsall	28,138

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Wolverhampton	786,576
Community Safety	227,342
Wolverhampton City Council (CSP)	
Community Safety Partnership	139,362
Wolverhampton Youth Offending Team	
Youth Offending Service	67,980
Wolverhampton City Council (DARDR)	
Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews	20,000
Victims	187,650
The Haven Wolverhampton	
THW Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	187,650
Violence Reduction Partnership	290,734
St Giles Trust	
Expect Respect Wolverhampton	85,000
Wolverhampton City Council	
Wolverhampton Prevention Partnership Panel Pilot	125,000
Local Delivery VRP Wolverhampton	35,000
Catch 22 (CJS project)	
Wolverhampton Violence Reduction Resettlement Service	45,734
My Community Fund	40,652
Base 25	
Empowering Youth Through Media	4,182
Motive8 Youth C.I.C	
DIVERT WITH PLAY	4,620
Wolverhampton Community Radio Training Ltd	
Let's Talk	4,860
Wolves Martial Arts Community CIO	
Martial Arts for the community	600
Aspiring Futures CIC	
Combating Domestic Abuse	4,956
Bilston People's Centre	
Oneighty Youth	3,300
Beatsabar Music Project CIC	
Reality Check Project	4,410
CitizenAID	
Stop The Bleed (STB)	4,090
Reach and Unite Outreach and Empowerment CIC	
Tripple A programme	5,000
Let Us Play Wolverhampton	
Sporty Summer 25	4,634
Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspots	40,198
Wolverhampton City Council (ASB Hotspot contact)	
ASB Hotspot Patrols Wolverhampton	40,198

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
West Midlands Region	10,508,499
Community Safety	1,323,823
Black Country Womens Aid	
New Chance	25,390
West Midlands Police	
CSP Analysts	236,900
Multi- Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	501,000
Anawim (New Chance Contract 2025-29)	
New Chance	377,927
Cranstoun (ARDA and ARV contracts)	
Alcohol Related Violence	37,381
DA Related Alcohol Related Violence Early Intervention	81,346
Green Square Accord	
New Chance	23,875
Changing Lives (New Chance)	
New Chance	22,808
Pioneer Group	
Restorative Justice West Midlands – ASB	17,196
Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Funding	228,387
Black Country Womens Aid	
Victim Support - EASI Project	87,257
Forensic Psychology Consultants Ltd	
Psychology Services - EASI Project	77,010
HMPPS Psychology Services	
Psychology Services - EASI Project	52,020
Leeds Trinity	
EASI Project - Evaluation	12,099
Intervention and Prevention	1,929,505
Birmingham & Solihull Family Drug and Alcohol Court Team (FDAC)	
FDAC Core costs	7,720
Birmingham Solihull Womens Aid (FDAC)	
Family, Drugs and Alcohol Courts (FDAC)	52,320
Black Country Womens Aid	
Family, Drugs and Alcohol Courts (FDAC)	46,723
Cranstoun	
Regional Pre-Arrest Diversion Service (PADS)	253,023
Arrest and Referral Service (ARS)	513,379
Weapon Surrender Ltd	
Weapon Surrender Bins	100,000
West Midlands Police	
Offending to Recovery	100,000
CARA (Cautioning and Relationship Abuse)	154,500
Cranstoun Arrest Referral Service Contacts	
Arrest Referral Service	701,840
Victims	5,527,477
Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA)	
Bereaved Family Project	13,733
Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid	
DA Desk	75,060
BSWA Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	975,780
Birmingham LGBT	
BLGBT Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	75,060
Black Country Womens Aid	
Hospital Advocates	79,735
Modern Slavery	84,719

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Sex Work Advocate	39,867
Sexual Assault and Abuse	206,812
Stalking Advocates	79,735
Stalking Service	161,283
BCWA Independent Sexual Violence Advisor	202,200
BCWA Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	713,070
Changing Lives - ISVA contacts	
CL - Independent Sexual Violence Advocate	32,455
Coventry Haven Womens Aid	
Female Genital Mutilation	39,733
Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	
Sexual Assault and Abuse	109,867
DORCAS (Daughters Optimistic, Respect, Courage, A	
FGM Community Support & Therapeutic Services	15,604
Remedi	
Hate Crime Service	163,485
Restorative Justice	245,228
Roshni	
Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage Hub	117,371
ROSHNI Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	37,530
Sikh Women's Aid (SWA)	
Addressing Harmful Practices in the Sikh Panjabi Community	19,905
DA Project	41,473
Sophie Hayes Foundation	
Long-term Freedom for Survivors of Exploitation in the Midlands	16,500
Sundial Centre for Education on Harmful Practices	
Hidden Harms Web Cafes	6,500
The Rape and Sexual Violence Project (RSVP)	
Counselling	87,733
Sexual Assault and Abuse	234,248
The Red Project – supporting sex worker survivors of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation	16,246
RSVP Independent Sexual Violence Advisor	267,240
Victim Support	
First Contact Assessment and Referral	1,103,777
Road Collision Support	83,396
West Midlands Anti Slavery Network	
Essential in community support for victims of modern slavery and human trafficking	20,000
Independent Modern Slavery Advocate	40,108
West Midlands Anti Slavery Network Contribution	25,103
West Midlands Police	
SARC Contribution	61,950
Women Acting In Todays Society (WAITS)	
Womens Group Support	13,079
Trident Reach the People Charity	
Male Independent Domestic Violence Adviser	21,893
Violence Reduction Partnership	1,499,308
AVision for Empowerment CIC	
Be At Your Best (BAYB)	38,750
CIRV Support	7,250
Birmingham Women's and Childrens Hospital	
Clinical Lead	52,346
Neighbourhood Watch	
Faith Alliance Youth Spaces Admin Support	16,743
St Giles Trust	
A&E and Custody Navigators (reachable moments) in Coventry & the Black Country	253,974

Row Labels	Sum of Sum Approved
Custody Navigator Scheme	212,509
Volunteer recruitment service - Coventry & Wolverhampton	4,000
Specialist mentoring and family support service contracts -Wolverhampton & Coventry	57,400
University of Wolverhampton and University of Edgehill	
Evaluation	61,044
Positive Youth Foundation	
Change Makers Youth Movement	80,000
Wolverhampton City Council	
CIRV Wolverhampton Family Support Workers	12,578
Research Core Ltd	
VRP Evaluation	75,000
Coventry City Council (VRP)	
CIRV Coventry Family support Workers	4,000
Catch 22 (VRP Hospitals)	
A&E Navigators (reachable moments) in Birmingham hospitals	93,177
Phoenix Psychological Services Ltd	
Mental health services Phoenix Psychology	151,246
StreetGames UK Ltd.	
Violence Reduction in Sport	45,000
Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid VRP Contract	
Domestic Abuse Prevention	103,042
Children Heard and Seen (CHAS)	
Identification and support for children who have a parent incarcerated	46,200
Barnardos	
Trauma Informed Practice	140,000
Prospects	
CIRV Coventry Education, Employment and training advisor and opportunities finders	28,449
Wolverhampton Connexions	
CIRV Wolverhampton Education, employment and training advisor and opportunities finders	16,600
Grand Total	16,314,611



Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme 2025/2026

Date: 2 February 2026

Report of: Tom Senior Interim, Associate Director – Law & Governance, Dudley
MBC - Lead Officer of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

Report author: Sarah Fradgley, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, Birmingham City
Council

Email: wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk

Tel: 0121 303 1727

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel work programme for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal and invites comments from Members.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the Police and Crime Panel:

- i. Reviews the work programme and menu of priority topics at Appendix A;
- ii. Considers any requests for further topics to add to the work programme, and agrees the outline aim and scope of any additional item; and
- iii. Agree that the Panel Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, refine the information deemed necessary in agreed work programme items to enable full scrutiny.

3 Context

- 3.1 The Police and Crime Panel was established under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel is a joint scrutiny committee of the West Midlands Local Authorities with a dual role to 'support' and 'challenge' the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Its statutory functions include:

- Reviewing the PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan and any draft variations to the Plan
- Reviewing the PCC's Annual Report
- Review (with the power to veto) the PCC's proposed policing precept.
- Hold confirmation hearings for senior appointments (Chief Constable,

Deputy PCC, Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer), with the power to veto for the Chief Constable appointment.

- Handling non-criminal complaints about the PCC and Deputy PCC, referring serious complaints to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (This function is delegated to the Monitoring Officer).
- Suspend the PCC under specific legal conditions.
- Appoint an acting PCC if necessary.
- Play a role in any call made by a PCC for a Chief Constable to resign or retire.

3.2 The Panel's work programme consists of statutory tasks (from the above list) and wider exploratory work to fulfil its role in holding the PCC to account on the strategic policing, community safety and criminal justice landscape.

3.3 The Panel must maintain a strategic focus in scrutinising the work of the PCC, rather than examine operational detail. The Panel does not provide oversight of the Chief Constable or police force.

4 Developing the Panel Work Programme 2025/26

4.1 On 30 June 2025, Panel Members participated in a work planning workshop facilitated by Frontline Consulting and agreed that aligning its work programme against the priorities of the West Midlands Police and Crime Plan would enhance the focus of scrutiny.

4.2 It is recognised that the Panel does not have the capacity to examine all elements of the Plan in one year and some prioritisation was necessary. The Menu of Topics at Appendix A lists the topics suggested at the workshop that might be programmed at a later stage.

4.3 The work programme will remain flexible to accommodate any emerging public interest or performance issues that might arise throughout the year.

4.4 The Panel will liaise with the PCC and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to communicate the issues the Panel would like to explore, and the content and structure of information required by the Panel to undertake effective scrutiny.

5 Finance Implications

5.1 The Home Office provides an annual grant to support the administration of the Police and Crime Panel. The Home Office grant covers all costs relating to the secretariat and administration to support this work programme.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The Panel work programme should reflect the duties required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and relevant Regulations.

7 Equalities Implications

7.1 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex, and sexual orientation.
- 7.3 The duties will be embedded in all aspects of the work programme, including topic selection, evidence gathering, and making recommendations. This should include considering how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within the West Midlands; and whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

8 Background Papers

- 8.1 [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)
- 8.2 [West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Panel Agreement \(2012\)](#)
- 8.3 [West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2025-2028](#)

9 Appendices

Appendix A: West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme 2025/2026 – February 2026

West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme 2025/26 – February 2026

Meeting Date	Item/Topic	Scrutiny Objectives	Additional Information
28 July 2025	AGM Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election of Chair and Vice Chair Note Panel membership for 2025/26 Annual approval of Panel Arrangements and Rules of Procedure 	
28 July 2025	PCC Introduction, Police and Crime Plan and Performance Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the PCC role and responsibilities To receive an overview of the Police and Crime Plan priorities To examine Police and Crime Plan delivery performance and impact to date. 	The Police and Crime Plan is published on the PCC Website. The PCC's Accountability and Governance Board May 2025 discussed police and crime plan performance.
28 July 2025	Victim's Advocate and Protecting Victims and Witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the PCC appointed Victim's Advocate Natalie Queiroz, and her areas of responsibility. To understand the Police and Crime Plan Protecting Victims and Witnesses priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I will increase compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice across the criminal justice system</i> <i>I will improve victim satisfaction with the police</i> <i>I will continue to commission high quality support services for victims.</i> 	
28 July 2025	Panel Budget and Expenditure	To consider and approve the total budget and expenditure of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel	Annual Report of the Lead Panel Officer.
8 September 2025	Neighbourhood Policing	<p>To receive a report on Neighbourhood Policing.</p> <p>To examine how the PCC is progressing with the Plan commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I will continue to re-build community policing in the West Midlands</i> <i>I will deliver my Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee</i> <i>I will increase Neighbourhood Police Officers and PCSO</i> 	<p>Item suggested at the WMPCP workshop. The session will examine the national and PCC neighbourhood policing guarantees, the neighbourhood policing performance framework, recruitment, and what residents can expect from local neighbourhood teams.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee in December 2024 and 150 neighbourhood police officers have been secured for the West Midlands.</p>

17 November 2025	Thematic deep dive into PCC's Improving Road and Travel Safety plan commitments – including the associated metrics	<p>To understand the impact of activity the PCC has undertaken and his local, regional and national partnership work to deliver his Improving Road and Travel Safety commitments:</p> <p><i>I will work in partnership to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads</i> <i>I will increase enforcement against "Fatal 4" criminal activity</i> <i>I will reduce organised criminal street racing on our roads</i> <i>I will increase third-party reporting to the police and the proportion leading to a positive outcome</i> <i>I will increase police seizures of vehicles unlawfully on the roads</i> <i>I will work in partnership to reduce crime on bus, train and metro</i></p> <p>To seek reassurance on the progress made to date through examining the related performance metrics</p> <p>To understand any challenges or risks to progressing these commitments and any mitigations put in place.</p>	
17 November 2025	Crime reporting	<p>To understand and seek reassurance on the following issues raised by Panel Members relating to crime reporting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Public confidence and work to encourage people to report crime. Accessibility to reporting 101, 999, LiveChat, online reporting The progress and impact of PCC activity to deliver his Bringing Offenders to Justice police and crime plan commitments 	
Member Visit	12 December 2025 10:00 – 14:00	The visit will provide members with the opportunity to expand knowledge of key activity, including understanding performance data.	
5 January 2026	Member briefing on police finance and budget	To provide Panel members with briefing information about police finance and the funding settlement to prepare for the statutory duty to review the proposed precept in February.	

5 January 2026	Thematic deep dive into PCC's Bringing Offenders to Justices commitments – including the associated metrics	To understand the impact of activity the PCC has undertaken and his local, regional and national partnership work to deliver his Bringing Offenders to Justice commitments :	
2 February 2026	PCC Proposed Policing Precept 2026 and budget. (Statutory Task)	Formally review the proposed policing precept 2025 and make a recommendation to the PCC.	This is a statutory duty of the Panel. The Panel has the power to veto the proposed policing precept. If this happens, the PCC will present a revised precept to Panel on 16 February 2025.
2 February 2026	Commissioning	To provide an overview of PCC's commissioning processes, services funded, how monitoring and evaluation is carried out and outcomes delivered through the commissioning activity.	To deliver the Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029 ambitions for safer, more resilient and more confident communities, many interventions relating to prevention, diversion, early intervention and support for victims, are delivered by partners across the voluntary and community sectors.
2 February 2026	Review of PCC Annual Report 2024/2025 (Statutory Task)	<p>The PCC must publish an Annual Report on the exercise of functions in each financial year, and the progress made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the police and crime plan.</p> <p>The Panel has asked that information is provided on outcome and impact of grant funding and commissioning, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An explanation of the criteria used to decide which projects receive funding - The process for monitoring intended objectives. - Evidence to illustrate the impact of funded projects and grants. 	<p>This is a statutory duty of the Panel.</p> <p>The Panel must invite the PCC to attend a public meeting at which it will scrutinise the annual report.</p> <p>Following review of the Annual Report, the Panel must publish a report and recommendations for the PCC to consider</p>

16 February 2026 Provisional meeting date	PCC Proposed Policing Precept for 2025/26	Formally review the proposed and revised precept	Provisional meeting date – if the proposed precept was vetoed on 3 February 2025. The Panel does not have a second veto.
16 March 2026	Thematic deep dive into the People commitments of the Police and Crime Plan, including associated metrics	To understand the impact of activity the PCC has undertaken to deliver the 'People' commitments within the Police and Crime Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvements to capturing data on police visibility and abstractions - Investment in wellbeing, welfare and professional development of officers and staff - Work to recruit, retain and progress officers to create an inclusive and representative workforce - Increasing the number of police volunteers 	
16 March 2026	Fraud and Online Crime	To examine the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan commitment to increase the number of Fraud and Cyber Crime reports from the public: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the identification and investigation of fraud and cybercrimes - Develop a local 'public health' partnership approach to prevent, tackle and support victims of fraud and online crime. - Working with partners to ensure prevention and enforcement against online child sexual abuse - Use of Sexual Harm Prevention Order and Sexual Risk Orders used to address online crimes - Campaign for and support stronger regulation of social media companies. 	Tackling fraud and cybercrime is one of National Policing Priorities. Fraud Policing Research by The Police Foundation recommended a public health approach
16 March 2026	HMICFRS National Child Protection Inspection of WMP	To examine the Commissioner's response to the HMICFRS Child Protection Inspection of WMP and activity holding the force to account on child protection, including Operation Hydrant.	The HMICFRS National Child Protection Inspection of West Midlands Police was published in November 2025
16 March 2026	Annual report on Complaints received by the Panel	The Monitoring Officer presents an annual report on the Panel's delegated complaints handling duties.	Annual Report of the Lead Panel Officer

Menu of Topics for Prioritising

The Panel work programme workshop identified the following topics, and the Panel is invited to prioritise and schedule onto the Panel calendar. This a live work programme and new items may be added, or items removed during the course of the year. Proposed aims and objectives may also be subject to change.

Topic	Link to Police and Crime Plan	Scrutiny Objectives	Additional information
Anti – Social Behaviour	Rebuilding Community Policing	<p>To examine how the PCC is progressing with the Plan commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>I will prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, working in partnership</i> - <i>I will introduce a chain of responsibility with partners and escalation in ASB incidents</i> - <i>Increase support for victims of ASB</i> - <i>Increase the use of civil orders and current ASB powers</i> - <i>Increase awareness of ASB case review mechanism ensuring transparency and empowering victims</i> <p><u>Areas the Panel could examine</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A rise of 11.1% in ASB from previous year was reported in May 2025 - What focus is given to understanding the causes of ASB? - What support does PCC commission for victims of ASB? - ASB Case Reviews: new duty of PCCs in the Crime and Policing Bill - PCC and partner responsibilities in relation to ASB. - Is there anything local councillors can take back to their Community Safety Partnerships and Crime and Disorder Committees to improve partnership working? 	Item suggested at WMPCP workshop.
Understanding the Causes of Crime	Prevention and Rehabilitation	<u>Areas the Panel could examine</u>	Item suggested at WMPCP workshop

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes of Crime – Reassurances that the PCC is confident that strategies being implemented to prevent and reduce crime are based on a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of root causes? - What is the evidence base behind prevention strategies and how are changing social, economic, or technological factors are taken into account. 	
Equal and Fair West Midlands	An Equal and Fair West Midlands	<p>To examine how the PCC is progressing with the Plan commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>I will ensure WMP takes strategic responsibility to prevent, tackle and eliminate racism, misogyny, homophobia and all forms of unlawful discrimination</i> - <i>I will ensure that individual WMP officers and staff receive relevant training and take personal responsibility to prevent, tackle and eliminate racism, misogyny, homophobia and all forms of unlawful discrimination.</i> - <i>I will ensure that WMP is more representative of the people and communities it serves by increasing the percentage of Police Officers, PCSOs and police staff from under-represented groups, including women and racially minoritised people.</i> - <i>I will understand, address and challenge disproportionality in stop and search and wider use of force.</i> - <i>I will ensure WMP implements the National and West Midlands Police Race Action Plans.</i> 	Item suggested at WMPCP workshop
PCC Statement of Accounts	People and Resources	To note the PCC accounts and seek reassurances on the accounts and audit. To provide the Panel with useful information and context to inform its scrutiny of policing precept in February.	
PCC Medium Term Financial Plan	People and Resources	To provide the Panel with useful information and context to inform its scrutiny of policing precept in February.	