

West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**Monday 16 March 2026 at 13:00 hours****Committee Room 3, Coventry City Council, Earl Street, Coventry, CV1 5RR**This meeting will be livestreamed at [Home - Coventry City Council Webcasting](#)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.	13:00
	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 .	

Supporting Document	Item	Topic	Approximate time
	4	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>IT IS RECOMMENDED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during this item of business under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds:</p> <p>(i) it is likely to disclose exempt information listed in Paragraphs 1, and 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to any individual or information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person; and</p> <p>(ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.</p>	
Attached Pages: 5 - 20	5	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>To confirm the Minutes of the meetings held on the 5 January 2026 and 2 February 2026.</p>	13:07
Attached Pages: 21 – 22	6	<p>POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ACTION TRACKER</p> <p>To consider the progress of actions arising from previous Panel meetings.</p>	13:10
	7	<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>	13:15
Attached Pages: 23 - 134	8	<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>	13:45
Attached Pages: 135 - 174	9	<p>PEOPLE</p> <p>To consider a report on progress against the ‘People’ commitments set out in the Police and Crime Plan.</p>	14:15

Supporting Document	Item	Topic	Approximate time
Attached Pages: 175 - 214	10	FRAUD AND ONLINE CRIME To consider a report on progress against the 'Fraud and Online Crime' commitments set out in the Police and Crime Plan	15:15
Attached Pages: 215 – 218	11	POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ANNUAL COMPLAINTS MONITORING – MARCH 2025 – MARCH 2026 The Monitoring Officer presents an annual report on the Panel's delegated complaints handling duties.	16:15
Attached Pages: 219 - 226	12	PANEL WORK PROGRAMME The Panel to identify issues for consideration for a work programme for 2026/27 and review the work of the Panel from the last municipal year.	16:30
	13	NEXT MEETING DATE Proposed date 20 July 2026 at 2pm, venue to be confirmed.	16:45
	14	URGENT BUSINESS 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.	16:50

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
HELD ON 05 JANUARY 2026 AT 14:00 HOURS – COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALSALL
COUNCIL, LITCHFIELD STREET, WALSALL, WS1 1TW**

PRESENT: -

Members

Cllr Jackie Taylor (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council – Vice Chair)

Cllr Jilly Bermingham (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Rashad Mahmood (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Izzy Knowles (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Sardul Marwa MBE, JP (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)

Cllr Ram K. Mehmi, MBE (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council)

Cllr Tersaim Singh (City of Wolverhampton Council)

Amy Mullins-Downes (Independent Panel Member)

Ravinderjit Briaah (Independent Panel Member)

ALSO PRESENT: -

Simon Foster – Police and Crime Commissioner

Jonathan Jardine – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Jane Heppel – Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Simon Down – Head of Policy, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

Hannah Pittaway – Policy Manager – Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

Tom Senior – Associate Director for Law & Governance and Panel Lead Officer (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)

Sarah Fradgley – Overview and Scrutiny Manager (Birmingham City Council)

Sam Yarnall –Scrutiny Officer (Birmingham City Council)

926 NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Vice Chair announced the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast and members of the press/public may record the meeting. The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt items.

927 APOLOGIES

Cllr Suky Samra (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council), Cllr Abdul S. Khan (Coventry City Council) and Adele Brown (Independent Member).

In the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair Cllr Jackie Taylor (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council), presided over the meeting.

928 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded to declare any pecuniary and other registerable interests on any of the items of business on the agenda. Cllr Izzy Knowles declared a non-pecuniary interest due to her being in receipt of a Police pension. Independent Panel

Member Ravinderjit Briah declared two non-pecuniary interests; the first for sitting on a West Midlands Police Out of Courts Disposal Panel, and the second for being a Board Member of the Revolving Doors charity.

929 POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEMBERSHIP FOR 2025/2026

RESOLVED –

That the appointment of Cllr Jamie Scott as named substitute for Cllr Bermingham until the Police and Crime Panel Annual General Meeting, made on 2 December 2025 by Birmingham City Council City, be noted.

930 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 November 2025, be agreed and signed by the Vice Chair.

931 ACTION TRACKER

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager presented the action tracker to the Panel. It was highlighted that all the actions had been addressed and suggested that the action relating to data presentation working group, would be discussed under the work programme item on the agenda.

RESOLVED –

That the actions 898 and 921(a-d) be discharged.

932 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions at the meeting.

933 BRINGING OFFENDERS TO JUSTICE DEEP DIVE INTO POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PRIORITY

The Vice Chair invited the Commissioner and his officers to present the report to the Panel.

The Commissioner outlined the report and highlighted the key areas of activity intended to fulfil his Police and Crime Plan relating to bringing offenders to justice. He acknowledged that prevention was not always possible and then it was the work of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) bringing offenders to justice and helping to build public trust and confidence.

Section 8 of the Police and Crime Plan outlined the Commissioner's 'I Will' statements pledging to hold the Chief Constable, West Midlands Police and the wider Criminal Justice System to account in their duty to bring offenders to justice. The Commissioner explained to the Panel that he Chair's the regional Criminal Justice Board. He also highlighted the work done nationally across with the wider criminal justice system and reiterated concerns about underinvestment, noting that outcomes had not improved beyond 2002/2003 levels. The Commissioner concluded his remarks by highlighting the ongoing need for further investment to improve the effectiveness and capacity of the CJS into bring offenders to justice.

The Head of Policy for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) highlighted several key points arising from the Commissioner's discussion on this topic at his recent Accountability and Governance Board. which included:

- 13 successful 'Offending to Recovery' cases delivered, across the West Midlands.
- Increased partnership working amongst public sector partners which supported project delivery.
- Greater public involvement in the CJS, including 11 scrutiny panel meetings and two youth scrutiny panels.
- Additional work to address disproportionality, including implementation of the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan and oversight by the Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board
- Enhanced support for victims engaging with the CJS with the Commissioner's Victim's Advocate chairing the board examining hidden crimes as well as performance metrics related to victims.
- Work to improve performance around police file quality and governance arrangements contributing to a reported improvement of file quality of 70% in 2025.
- Members heard about the improvements to the positive outcome rates of crime but noted that 'violence against a person' remained comparatively low. It was noted that when compared to the Most Similar Forces, the West Midlands had a similar outcome rate, however, Merseyside Police performed strongly.
- The Head of Policy highlighted that there had been a reduction in the number of investigations terminated. This, alongside measures to improve evidence-led prosecutions, demonstrated progress in achieving longer-term improvements. However, it was acknowledged that there was further work needed to sustain this.
- Members heard of Operation Vanguard; an operation to support the quality of investigations. It included a CCTV registry enabling members of the public and businesses to register the location of their CCTV and doorbell camera.
- Crime data integrity governance was discussed, and it was highlighted that some of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were moving in the wrong direction. The Commissioner outlined some of the projects aimed to support the delivery, including the use of artificial intelligence to scan crime logs to identify underreported crimes.
- The OPCC highlighted areas of underreported crime which included domestic abuse, sexual offences and Honour Based Abuse. They outlined initiatives such as the recent police-led consent awareness campaign intended to encourage greater reporting. Following the update from the Commissioner and his Officers, Members asked questions and made the following comments.

Investigations:

Members sought clarity on the report statement that 'everyone an investigator' and the timeframe for case allocation. It was explained that the Chief Constable had committed to ensuring every police officer was capable of conducting investigations, and that within 48 hours of an offence being recorded an officer would be allocated to investigate the crime.

Concerns were raised over Police file compliance, in terms of competency. It was noted that compliance for file quality was just over 40% compliance in April 2023 and asked on the improvements to date and the percentage of compliance. The Commissioner highlighted that compliance has risen to over 70% since then and credited the neighbourhood policing guarantee, introduced back in April 2023, for supporting this but did agree that more was needed to be done.

Criminal Justice Boards and the Criminal Justice System:

Members noted that the Chair for two of the local criminal justice board sub-groups were still to be confirmed and asked about the timescales for completing appointments. The meeting was advised that the process of establishing chairs was underway and partners were working together to complete as soon as possible.

Concerns were raised about the timeliness of court cases in relation to when an offence was charged to being heard in court. The Commissioner acknowledged that delays were an issue within the wider Criminal Justice System and highlighted ongoing work to address challenges such as the data compliance and evidence-led prosecutions.

Members discussed the criminal justice boards and the work between the Commissioner and partners in supporting the improvement of bringing offenders to justice. The Commissioner explained that the partnership helped identify areas of concern and supported collective efforts to improve services.

Members asked where information relating to the regional Criminal Justice Board could be accessed and the Commissioner confirmed this was publicly available on his website.

Members asked about the use of restorative justice and asked if more could be done to expand in the West Midlands and across the country. The Commissioner expressed his support to restorative justice and acknowledged that awareness and use remained limited across the country, but he emphasised that it provided empowerment and support to victims.

Victims:

Members asked how individuals with lived experiences informed the Commissioner's schemes to bring offenders to justice and reduce reoffending. Head of Policy explained that the OPCC worked with treatment providers as well as with people with lived experiences to shape targeted support. In response to a question about the balance between volunteers and paid staff, it was highlighted that the lived experience mentors were volunteers, but the services were commissioned and predominantly delivered by paid staff.

Having heard at a previous meeting from the Victims advocate, Members discussed the interconnection with the Victims' Code and its role in bringing offenders to justice. The Commissioner highlighted that the Victims' Code had been in statute for 19 years, but it was only recently widely adopted. The OPCC was working with local partners and West Midlands Police to ensure full compliance and consistent support for victims. Members asked for future updates on the Victims' Code performance measures and the impact it is having on bringing offenders to justice.

Positive Outcome Rates and Crime types:

Members discussed the data provided on positive outcomes by offence class, noting that this showed drug offences had an approximate 70% positive outcome rate. A further breakdown of this statistic by outcome type was requested so that the Panel could understand how many drug offence outcomes related to a charge or a warning, and whether the offence was supply or possession. Given the continued problem of Nitrous Oxide cannister littering in some areas, the Panel was interested to understand whether the statistics include Nitrous Oxide since its classification as a Class C drug. It was agreed to write to the PCC for this information.

Data integrity:

Members expressed concern that the KPI for data integrity was on a downward trend. The Commissioner acknowledged this and confirmed work was underway to improve performance. The Chief Executive of the OPCC advised that data integrity formed part of the Force's performance board discussions and AI would be used to support data integrity processes. Responding to Members' concerns over the use and accuracy of AI, the Commissioner provided assurance that the Force had been asked to ensure accuracy.

Members asked if the presented data (figure 2 in the report) had been aggregated by ethnicity. The Commissioner noted the question and responded that this was a matter of conversation with the Chief Constable but noted that they were waiting for Parliamentary guidance to ensure national consistency and compliance.

Evidence led prosecutions:

Members noted that the KPI for evidence-led prosecutions was still under development and queried when this would be available to the public. The Commissioner and Chief Finance Officer explained that work was ongoing to finalise the arrangements with the Force to ensure the KPI could be measured accurately.

Reoffending:

Members raised concerns around the sustainability of funding for reoffending support programmes. Chief Finance Officer and the Commissioner explained these were largely funded through ring-fenced grants and that provision would be made in the PCC budget should external funding cease.

Members asked about partnership arrangements for reoffending support and it was noted that the OPCC worked closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority and local authorities on housing support, and health providers on both physical and mental health support.

Following Members' discussions, the Vice Chair thanked the Commissioner and his officers as well as West Midlands Police for taking the time to host the Panel's visit to C3 Contact Centre. The Panel agreed to a suggestion that another visit to hear about some of the rehabilitation programmes provided by the Commissioner, including service users would strengthen Members' understanding of this area of work and OPCC undertook to seek to facilitate.

RESOLVED - that:

- I. The contents of the report, be noted;
- II. The suggested Panel visit to reoffending support schemes be added to the Work Programme; and ,
- III. The Panel writes to the Commissioner requesting a breakdown of positive outcomes for drug offences on charges, warning, supply and possession as well as to confirm if offences relating to Nitrous Oxide were included.

934 PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was presented by the Overview and Scrutiny Manager. This highlighted the items for the upcoming meeting which included the Panel's review of the precept as well as the draft Annual report.

The Panel was asked to agree the Members and Terms of Reference for the cross-party Data Presentation Working Group, with a minimum of four members. The following Members were nominated and agreed by the Panel for the working group, Cllr S Samra, Cllr J Bermingham, Cllr I Knowles, Independent Members A Mullens-Downes and R Briah.

RESOLVED - that

- I. The Panel the work programme at Appendix A and the menu of priority be noted;.
- II. The suggested Panel visit to learn about reoffending support schemes and meet service users be added to the work programme;
- III. In consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, that the Panel Lead Officer refines the information deemed necessary in agreed work programme items to enable full scrutiny;
- IV. The Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Data Presentation in Panel Reports, be agreed; and
- V. The following Members be appointed to the Working Group on Data Presentation in

Panel Reports:

- a. Cllr S Samra
- b. Cllr J Bermingham
- c. Cllr I Knowles
- d. Independent Member A Mullens-Downes
- e. Independent Member R Briaah.

935 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Members were informed that the next meeting would be held on 2 February 2026 at Birmingham City Council.

936 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no further urgent business discussed at the meeting.

Meeting closed: 16.59 hours.

CHAIR

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
HELD ON 02 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 14:00 HOURS – COMMITTEE ROOMS 3 & 4,
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA SQUARE, BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB**

PRESENT: -

Members

Cllr Suky Samra, LLB (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council – Chair)

Cllr Jackie Taylor (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council – Vice Chair)

Cllr Jilly Bermingham (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Izzy Knowles (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Abdul S. Khan (Coventry City Council)

Cllr Sardul Marwa MBE, JP (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)

Cllr David Coles (Substitute Member for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)

Cllr Tersaim Singh (City of Wolverhampton Council)

Ravinderjit Bria (Independent Panel Member)

Cllr Alex Dale (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)

ALSO PRESENT: -

Simon Foster – Police and Crime Commissioner

Scott Green – Acting Chief Constable, West Midlands Police

Jonathan Jardine – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Alethea Fuller – Deputy Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Jane Heppel – Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Simon Down – Head of Policy, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

Carol Culley - Executive Director of Finance (Birmingham City Council)

Tom Senior – Associate Director for Law & Governance and Panel Lead Officer (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)

Sarah Fradgley – Overview and Scrutiny Manager (Birmingham City Council)

Sam Yarnall –Scrutiny Officer (Birmingham City Council)

937 NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chair announced the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast and members of the press/public may record the meeting. The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt items. The Chair also welcomed Members, Officers, the Commissioner, his officers and press and public to the meeting.

938 APOLOGIES

The Chair noted apologies from Cllr R Mahmood (Birmingham City Council), Cllr R K Mehmi, MBE (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council); including apologies from his substitute member, Cllr M Hussain (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council). There were apologies from Cllr R Holt (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council but noted that

Cllr R Coles was attending in his place). There was a final apology tendered by Independent Panel Member, Amy Mullins-Downes.

939 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded to declare any pecuniary and other registerable interests on any of the items of business on the agenda. Cllr Izzy Knowles declared a non-pecuniary interest due to her being in receipt of a Police pension. Independent Panel Member Ravinderjit Briah declared three non-pecuniary interests; the first for sitting on a West Midlands Police Out of Courts Disposal Panel, the second for being a Board Member of the Revolving Doors charity, and the third was to being an employee of De Montfort University.

940 ACTION TRACKER

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager presented the action tracker to the Panel. It was highlighted that all actions had been progressed and should remain open until resolved.

RESOLVED –

that the list of current outstanding actions noted.

941 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions at the meeting.

942 STATEMENT BY THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Chair informed the meeting that the following question had been posed to the Commissioner, as set out on the agenda: *“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.”*

The Chair invited the Commissioner to respond and reminded the meeting that in line with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public would be excluded if any information deemed as exempt was to be considered. Members agreed to go into a private/exempt session if this occurred.

The Police and Crime Commissioner emphasised that public trust and confidence were essential for effective policing. He outlined the leadership experience and achievements of both Acting Chief Constable Scott and Temporary Deputy Chief Constable Mattinson and highlighted key operational improvements within the Force including call handling, response times, increased positive outcomes and crime reduction.

The Commissioner reported that he had met with the Acting Chief Constable to discuss the shortcomings identified in Operation Parkmill and the objectives of Operation Strive that sought to rebuild trust and confidence and address areas for improvement identified by HMICFRS, the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC), Home Affairs Select Committee and the Accountability and Governance Board. The Acting Chief Constable explained that he was personally leading Operation Strive. The Commissioner spoke of his commitment to continue to hold

West Midlands Police to account and outlined plans to establish a communication and engagement strategy, consider the forthcoming reports from HMICFRS and the Home Affairs Select Committee, and continue working with the people and communities of West Midlands to deliver the Police and Crime Plan.

Members noted that Police and Crime Plan included a commitment to inclusive policing and compliance with equality duties. The Commissioner confirmed that he would continue to hold the Force to account for meeting these duties and consistent use of equality impact assessments through his weekly meeting with the Acting Chief Constable, the Accountability and Governance Board and Joint Audit Committee.

Members sought clarity on the Commissioner's oversight of the decision made to ban Macabi Tel Aviv fans. The Commissioner explained that he was neither a member of the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) nor a consultee, and this was an operational policing matter the Force worked on with the SAG. He confirmed that he first heard of the decision on the evening of 16 October 2025 after which he immediately wrote to the SAG calling for a review of the decision and requested relevant information from the SAG and West Midlands Police. He also advised that he had issued public statements on actions he had taken and had written to the Prime Minister outlining his actions and to express his willingness to work with partners to seek resolve the matter.

The Commissioner summarised the actions he had taken to hold the West Midlands Police to account in relation this this matter. These actions included engaging with the HMICFRS procedure and the Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry into Operation Parkmill, obtaining briefings from West Midlands Police on steps taken following the 16 October 2025 SAG meeting, seeking reassurance from Chief Constable regarding the reliability of intelligence obtained from Dutch Police, and commissioning West Midlands Police to prepare a detailed account for his Accountability and Governance Board meeting.

The Commissioner advised the Panel that he not received prior notice of the findings of HMICFRS preliminary letter before 14 January 2026. Following receipt' he commenced preparations for the process to dismiss the Chief Constable, but on 16 January 2026 the Chief Constable decided to retire. The Commissioner referenced the statutory process he was required to follow for any suspension commenting that it was a myth decisions could come into immediate effect as due process had to be followed. The Commissioner had subsequently referred the former Chief Constable to the IOPC. He also reported that on 27 January 2026 his Accountability and Governance Board had considered the West Midlands Police report and had robustly scrutinised the Acting Chief Constable on the preliminary HMICFRS findings. He encouraged Panel Members to view the recording of the meeting available on his website.

Responding to questions about engagement with the Jewish Community, the Commissioner stated that he did not recall the Jewish community raising concerns prior to the 16 October 2025 SAG decision, but he had since met representatives of the Jewish community on a number of occasions. He highlighted the HMICFRS finding that he had not been briefed by the Chief Constable on Operation Parkmill and therefore had not been aware of the Force's proposed recommendations to the SAG.

Members raised concerns regarding the police use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which had been identified as a key failure in the SAG decision to ban Macabi Tel Aviv fans. The Commissioner agreed that AI must be carefully managed, regulated, and

understood to maximise the benefits (such as efficiencies in call handling), and he highlighted the recent Police White Paper and the Government's pledge for investment in AI. He confirmed his Ethics Panel would consider AI use. The Acting Chief Constable clarified AI use was not widespread across the Force however Copilot had been switched off pending a review of procedures and security.

Members also sought assurances of the Force's oversight of international and national issues on community tensions given the HMICFRS finding of a lack of strategic oversight. The Commissioner highlighted this important aspect of his Police and Crime Plan.

The Commissioner was asked to outline what due diligence was undertaken when requests were made for his support for particular organisations or community groups and how due diligence informed decisions on whether such support was appropriate. The Commissioner asked that the Panel write to him with this question so he could respond in full and this was agreed.

Responding to further questions as to whether he accepted the preliminary HMICFRS findings, the Commissioner confirmed that he had raised each finding with the Acting Chief Constable at the Accountability and Governance Board meeting on 27 January 2026. The Acting Chief Constable stated that he had not been part of the Operation Parkmill structure and could not comment on individual officers, but accepted on behalf of West Midlands Police all the organisational failing identified in the HMICFRS preliminary report.

The meeting was paused to go into private session and following that Members agreed for a comfort break before starting the next item.

RESOLVED – that the Panel:

- I. Writes to the Commissioner to request a response regarding due diligence undertaken when considering support to community groups and organisations.
- II. The press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it was likely to disclose exempt information listed in Paragraphs 1, and 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to any individual or information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person;
- III. The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

Following the private session, and comfort break the press and public be readmitted for the remainder of the meeting.

943 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Given the nature of the discourse, Members agreed to go into private session to conclude discussions on the PCC's statement.

RESOLVED: - That in view of the nature of business to be transacted which includes exempt information relating to an individual (as defined in Paragraph 2 – Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the course of the following item.

944 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER STATEMENT – PRIVATE SESSION

Members sought reassurances from the Police and Crime Commissioner about the statutory processes that govern the suspension and removal of chief constables. The Commissioner explained the legal framework he must follow, including the need for evidence-based decision-making and the risks of acting outside due process. The Panel also discussed the timeline of when concerns were first formally raised and how that informed subsequent actions.

945 2026/27 REVENUE BUDGET, PRECEPT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (“MTFP”) 2026/27 TO 2030/31

The Lead Panel Officer gave an overview of the Panel’s role in reviewing the report and the proposed policing precept for 2026 which included the Panel’s ability to veto the precept, if there was a 10 Member majority.

Following the update from the Lead Panel Officer, the Chair invited the Commissioner, the Chief Finance Officer and Acting Chief Constable to present the precept and answer Member’s questions.

The Commissioner outlined the report and highlighted recent developments since the publication of the report and the issuing of the final grant settlement allocated to the West Midlands Police Force. He explained that the Force could not now afford the recruitment of new neighbourhood officers as planned and the Neighbourhood Policy Guarantee would be achieved through redeployment. The Commissioner highlighted that the funding formula for the Police was outdated and often led to the West Midlands being worse off than in comparison to similar forces.

The Commissioner highlighted that as part of his duties he had consulted with the public and business community on the proposed precept and budget proposals.

The proposed precept for 2026/27 would increase Council Tax in a Band D property by £15. This would mean an extra 29p a week and that the total amount of funding this increase would amount to would be £187.8 million and that the Capital Programme would be set at £30.7 million.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that the final settlement of £672.8million plus £22.3 million National Policing Guarantee had been announced on 30th January 2026. As this represented a less than 1% change it had been agreed with the Panel Chair she would provide a verbal update rather than reissue the panel report. Cuts to the County Lines grant and withdrawal of Anti-Social Behaviour Hot Shot Grant had resulted on a cumulative £2.8m additional budget pressure.

Details of the savings of £24.5 million were summarised as these differed from the printed report, including £25.7 permanent saving, 8.6m reduction in local government pension employee contributions, £0.8m reduction in historic debt, £3.5m would now be saved through redeployment rather than the intended recruitment of 75 new neighbourhoods officers, and £5m of one-off savings.

The tax base and collection funds and final settlements for ROCU and Counter Terrorism were still unknown.

Members asked the following:

Savings and Reserves

Members asked about the guaranteed savings and the use of reserves and whether this would impact services. The Chief Finance Officer explained these had been fully considered through the priority-based budgeting exercise and efficiencies through the Police Efficiencies and Collaboration Programme and was confident they would be delivered. Very few savings would impact on front-line services. She deemed there to be adequate levels budget reserves and pressures would be carefully managed and not expected to increase over the medium term.

Neighbourhood Policing

Members asked about the posts within the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and the impact redeployment would have on other areas. The Acting Chief Constable confirmed all neighbourhood policing posts would be filled there would be operational decisions and given the funding reduction to optimise the services provided.

Grants

Members asked about the £23 million grant increase and the impact this would have on the force. The Chief Finance Officer clarified that whilst this was a cash increase from 2025/26 to 2026/27, it amounted to less than the total of pay awards and inflationary costs so budget pressures remained.

Members were advised that the loss of ASB Hot Spot Grant for Operation Guardian might be mitigated by the new knife crime concentration fund grant as well as the neighbourhood policing grant but that more details from the Home Office were needed to understand the use of the new grant.

Members raised concerns over the Government reducing the County Lines grant funding and its impact on vulnerable young people. Acting Chief Constable confirmed that contingency had been built into the budget to continue this work.

Estate Strategy

Members raised comments on the ongoing estates strategy and if the region was starting to see the progress from the savings. The Chief Finance Officer highlighted that the Estates Strategy began in 2023 and 62% of the strategy had been delivered by December 2025 and it was on target to achieve £5.8m savings per annum by 2028/29.

Procurement

Members asked about the procurement strategy employed by the OPCC and whether programmes were value for money for residents. The Chief Finance Officer set out how the PCC worked to ensure transparency in commissioning and outcomes to meet the obligations in the new Procurement Act

Trust and Confidence

Members asked if the precept was agreed would residents get value for money. The Commissioner and his Officers explained that the increase of the precept would support residents to access vital services including implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and accessible and visible policing. Trust and

confidence and value for money would be measured in the new public survey which would be reported to Panel. It was further clarified that without the increase the policing budget would be £11.5 million worse off.

Funding Formula

Members raised concerns that the national funding formula disadvantaged the West Midlands. The Commissioner highlighted that he had been campaigning for years for the formula to change. The noted previous Government failing in their commitment to address this that the Policing White Paper indicated that any change in the formula would not be considered until 2034.

Following the update, Members agreed unanimously to recommend the precept increase and write to the Commissioner to this effect and await his response.

RESOLVED – That the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel endorsed the proposed 2026/27 Policing precept of £244.50 for a Band D property without qualification or comment.

946 REVIEW OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

The Lead Panel Officer outlined the responsibility of the Panel which was to review the draft Annual Report of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner. This included reviewing the draft report, producing any recommendations and then writing them in a report to the Commissioner. This report would then be published on the Panel's website along with the Commissioner's response.

The Commissioner provided an overview of the report before the Head of Policy provided a broader account of the year in review. Highlights included the launch of new Police and Crime Plan, the support given by his Community Fund and various campaigns such as the Consent Campaign.

After hearing from the Commissioner and his Officer, Members raised the following questions and comments.

Consultation:

Members suggested that as elected members they would be able to increase representation when consultation is undertaken by the Commissioner. The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that they were in the process of introducing a trust and confidence survey. This was said to be a survey to hear the voices of over 4000 residents in the region and to receive a deeper understanding of what was affecting local people's confidence in the Police. The Commissioner further added that there was work on social media to engage with the local community and happy for the Panel to share this amongst their socials. In terms of the survey, it was highlighted that this was under procurement and that further work on this would be report back to the Panel.

Addressing Crime:

Members asked about the work that the Commissioner was doing in collaboration with the Police to address aspects of crime such as car cannibalism as an example. The Commissioner noted priority within the Police and Crime Plan around road safety

and work with the Police to address these types of crime. It was further added that issues around neighbourhood crime was a collaborative effort with the local community and encouraged members to view neighbourhood policing team priorities communicated via the single online home.

Timeliness of the Annual Report

Members noted the annual report was presented later in comparison to other regions and asked that the report be presented to the Panel earlier in the Municipal Year to enable more timely scrutiny. The Head of Policy agreed to take on the recommendation and be able to bring the next draft report earlier to the Panel.

RESOLVED – that;

- I. The Police and Crime Commissioner's Draft Annual Report 2024-25 be noted;
- II. The Commissioner be requested to present future Annual Reports earlier in the Municipal Year to enable more timely scrutiny; and The Panel report and response from the Police and Crime Commissioner be published on the Panel's website.

Cllrs A S Khan (Coventry City Council) and A Dale (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council) left the meeting at 5:10pm

947 COMMISSIONING

The Chair and Members agreed that given the length of the meeting that this item would be rescheduled to the next meeting of the Panel. The Commissioner and his Officers agreed to bring this report back to the next meeting of the Panel in March 2026.

RESOLVED – That the Commissioning report be deferred to the 16 March 2026 Panel meeting,

948 PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager provided an update on the work programme. The March 2026 meeting would start at 1pm to accommodate a large agenda. However the March agenda would be reviewed with the Chair and the Vice Chair along with the Panel Officers and the OPCC given the number of items now scheduled.

RESOLVED - that

- I. The Panel work programme at Appendix A and the menu of priority topics be noted;
- II. That the deferred Commissioning Item be added to the 16 March 2026 agenda;
- III. In consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, that the Panel Lead Officer refines the information deemed necessary in agreed work programme items to enable full scrutiny.

949 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Members were informed that the next meeting would be held on 16 March 2026 at 1pm at Coventry City Council and that the meeting on the 16 February 2026 would be cancelled as it was no longer needed due to the precept not being vetoed.

950 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no further urgent business discussed at the meeting.

Meeting closed: 17:20 hours.

CHAIR

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

Minute/ Action No.	Meeting Date	Action	Update/ Notes
933	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.	
933	05/01/26	Panel recommends that the Commissioner and Panel explore the lived experience examples of rehabilitation.	
942	02/02/26	In light of a recent media report, can you set out what due diligence is undertaken when a request is made for your support for a particular organisation, community group or community project?	

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Commissioning

Purpose of report

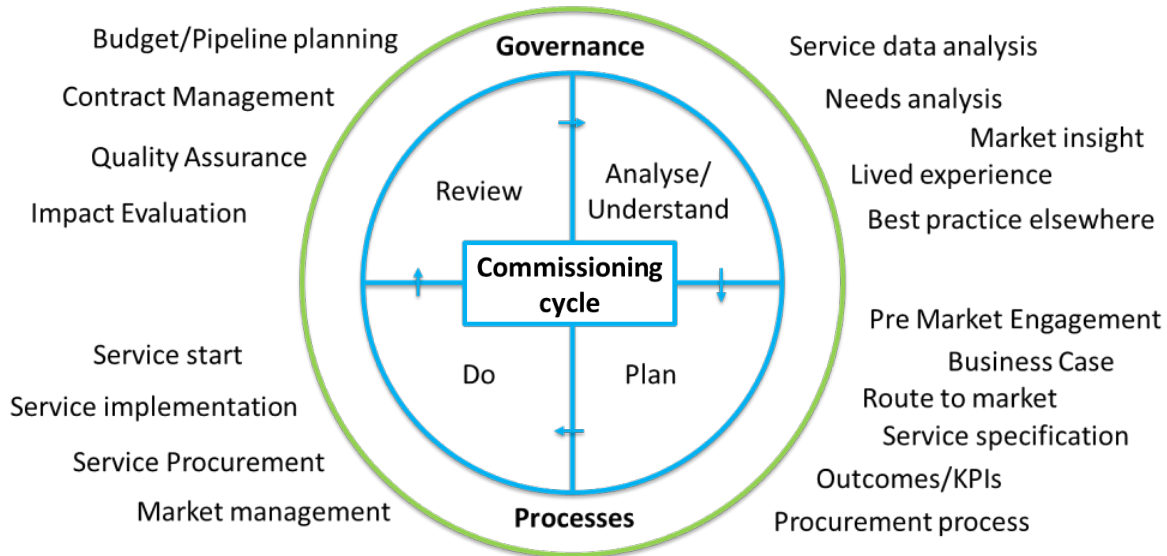
1. This report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel with an overview of commissioning processes, services delivered, monitoring and evaluation and outcomes delivered through the commissioning activity of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.
2. The [Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029](#) 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

July 2020



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.

Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
1.1 Background and Overall Aim.....	7
1.2 Aim of the Process Evaluation.....	7
1.2.1 Client study.....	7
1.2.2 Staff study	7
1.2.3. Ethics	8
1.3 Aim of the Impact Evaluation	8
1.3.1 Descriptive analysis.....	8
1.3.2 Before and after analysis	8
1.3.3 Treatment and Control analysis.....	8
Part A – Qualitative Analysis	9
2.1 Client study	9
2.2 Staff study	9
2.3 Analysis.....	10
2.4 Findings	11
2.4.1 Client response summary.....	11
2.4.2 Full description of Themes and Sub-themes.....	13
2.4.3 Staff response summary	21
2.4.4 Full description of Themes and Sub-themes.....	23
Part B – Quantitative Analysis.....	35
3.1 Outline of Statistical Methodology	35
3.2 Descriptive Statistics	35
3.2.1 Crime Numbers and Types.....	35
3.1.2 Ethnicity	36
3.1.3 Age	37
3.1.4 Employment Status.....	40
3.1.5 Treatment – Engagement Level and Length of Engagement.....	42
3.1.6 Drugs/Alcohol Misuse identified.....	44
3.1.7 Mental Health/Wellbeing issues identified	46
3.3 Reoffending.....	49
3.4.1 Significance in differences in reoffending rates across groups	55
3.4 Propensity Score Matching	56

1.4.1 Results	59
1.4.2 Robustness checks: Sub-group analysis	61
3.5 Conclusion	64
APPENDICES:	65
Appendix 1: Client interview questions	65
Appendix 2: Staff interview questions	65
Appendix 3: 30 days follow up	66
Appendix 4: 60 days follow up	67
Appendix 5: 90 days follow up	68
Appendix 6: 6 months follow up	69
Appendix 7: 12 months follow up	70

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.	<i>'...because you feel safe in here as well, you know.'</i> (C1)
		<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)
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.	<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) <i>'It's just a great project. They should do it more often...'</i> (C2)

*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.

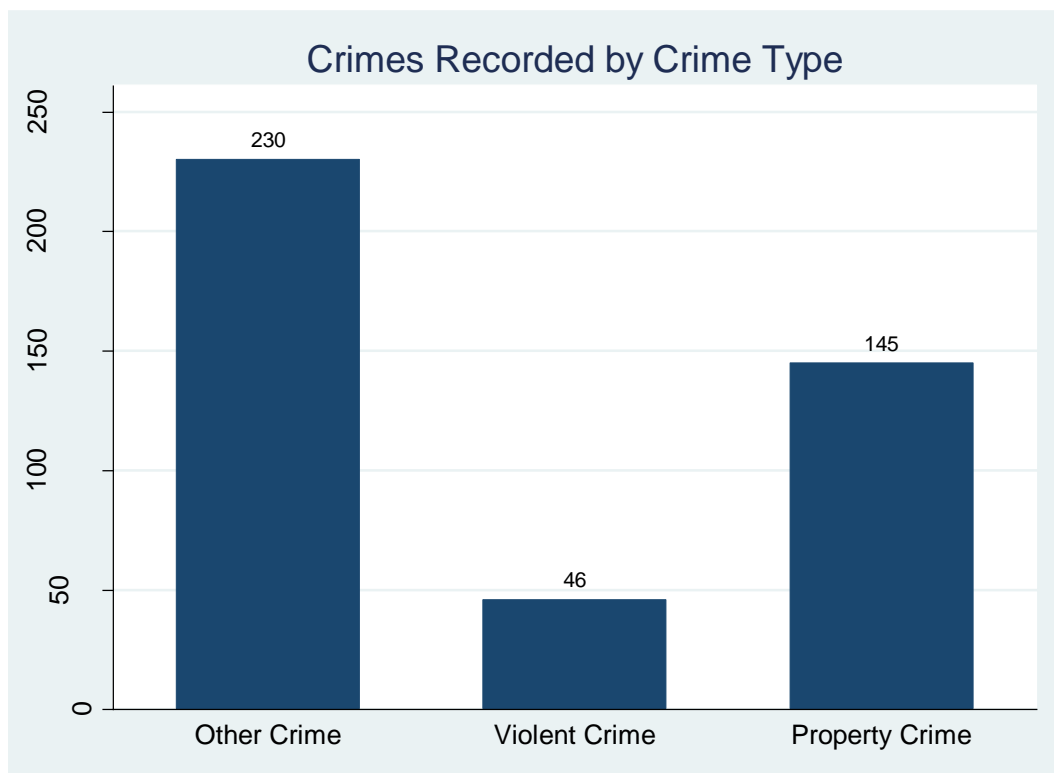
3.2 Descriptive Statistics

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:



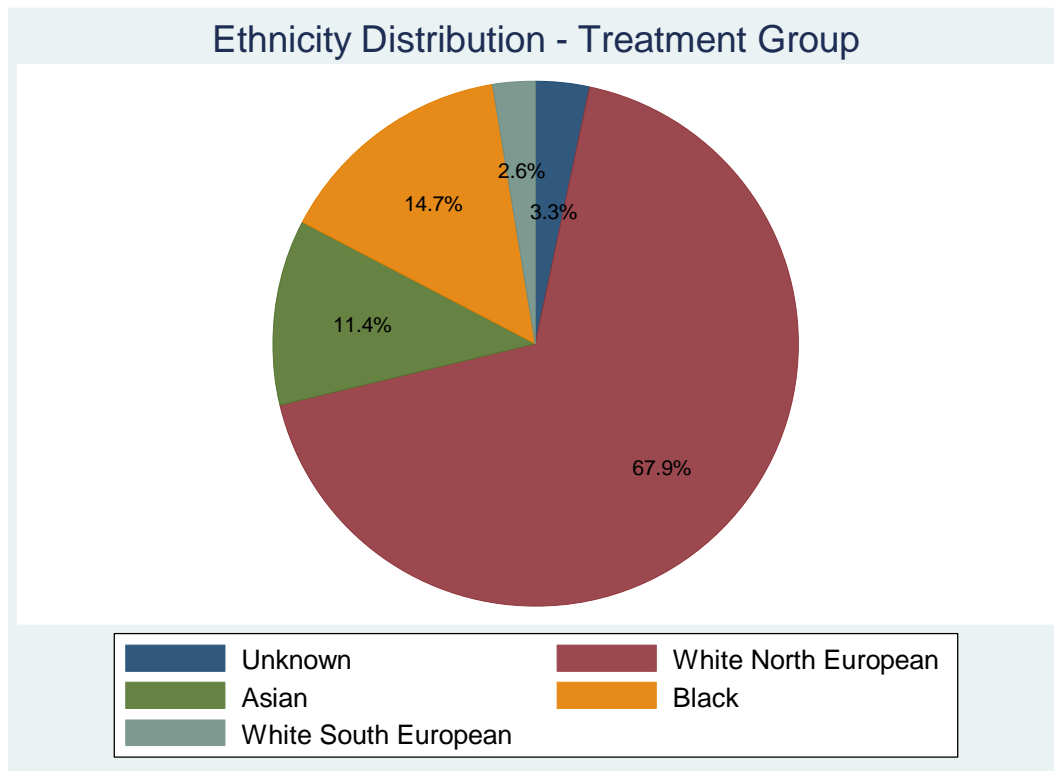
Graph 1

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:

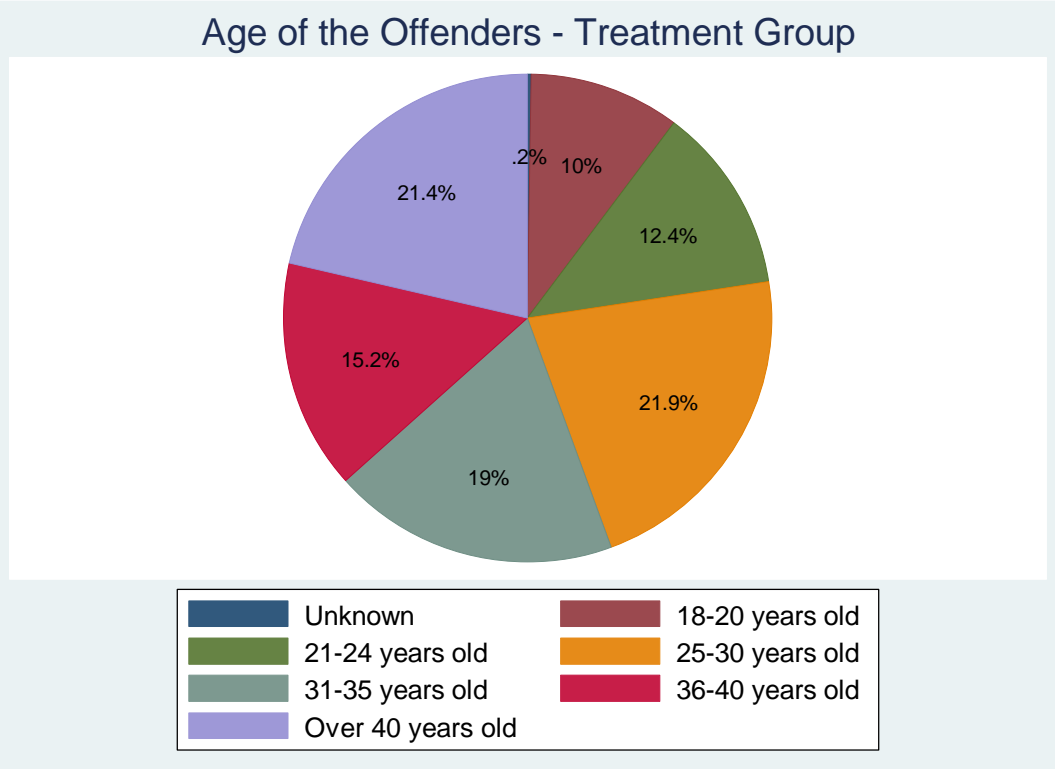


Graph 2

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

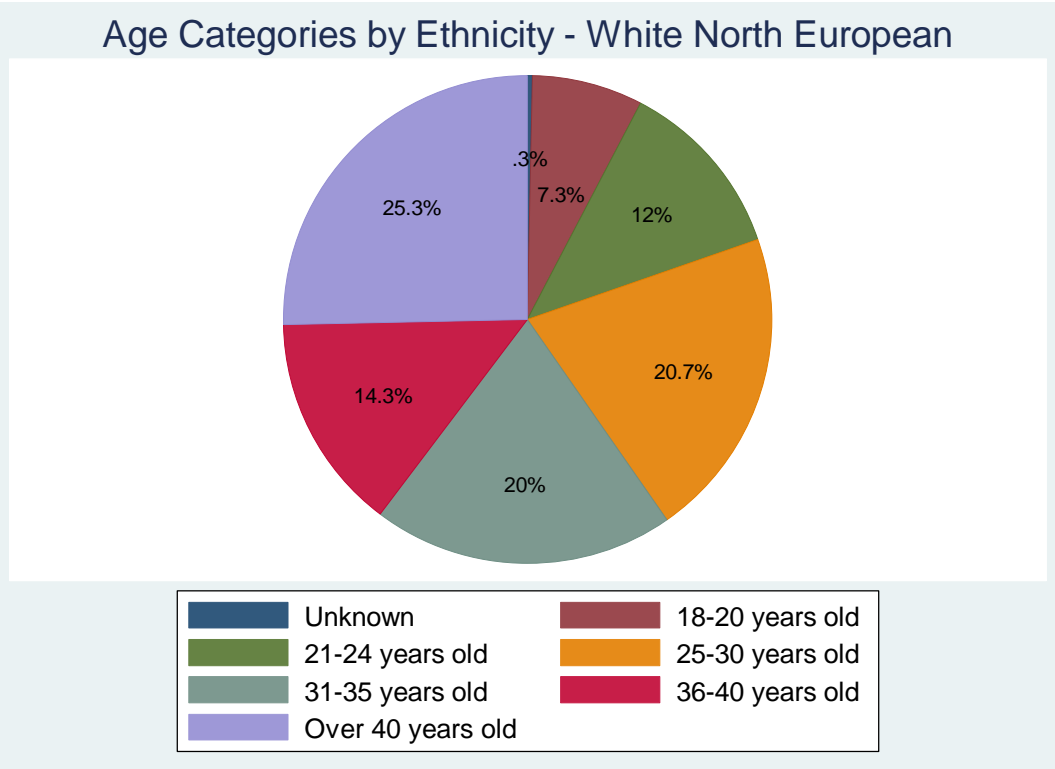
3.1.3 Age

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.

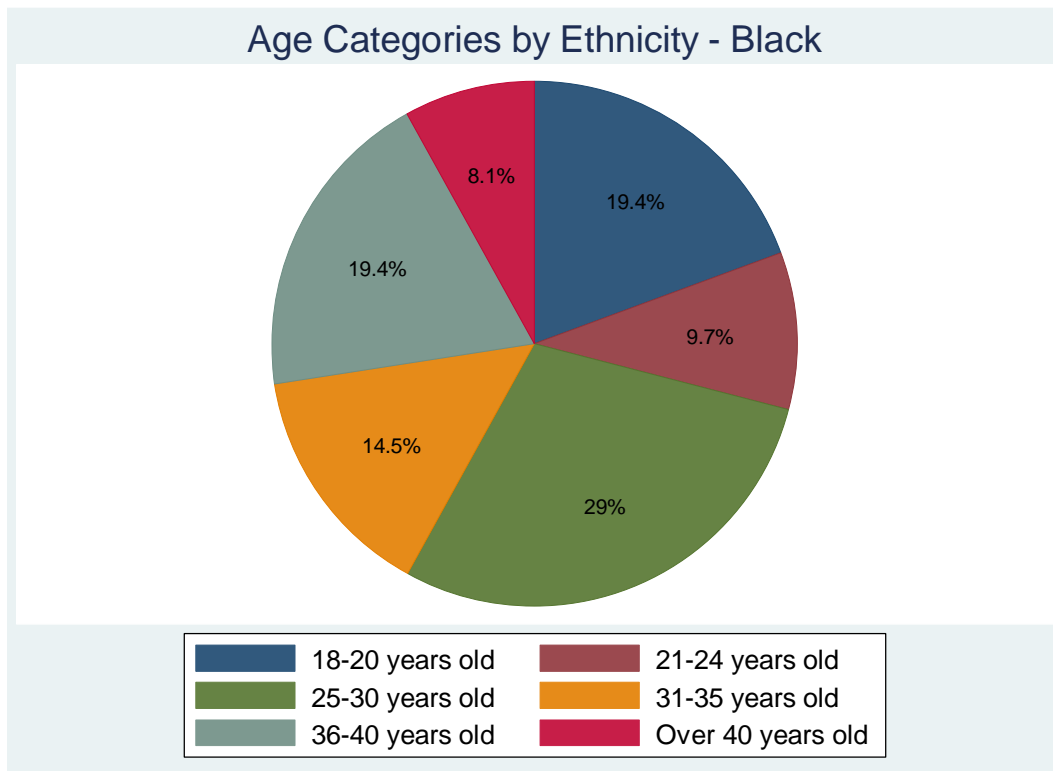


Graph 3

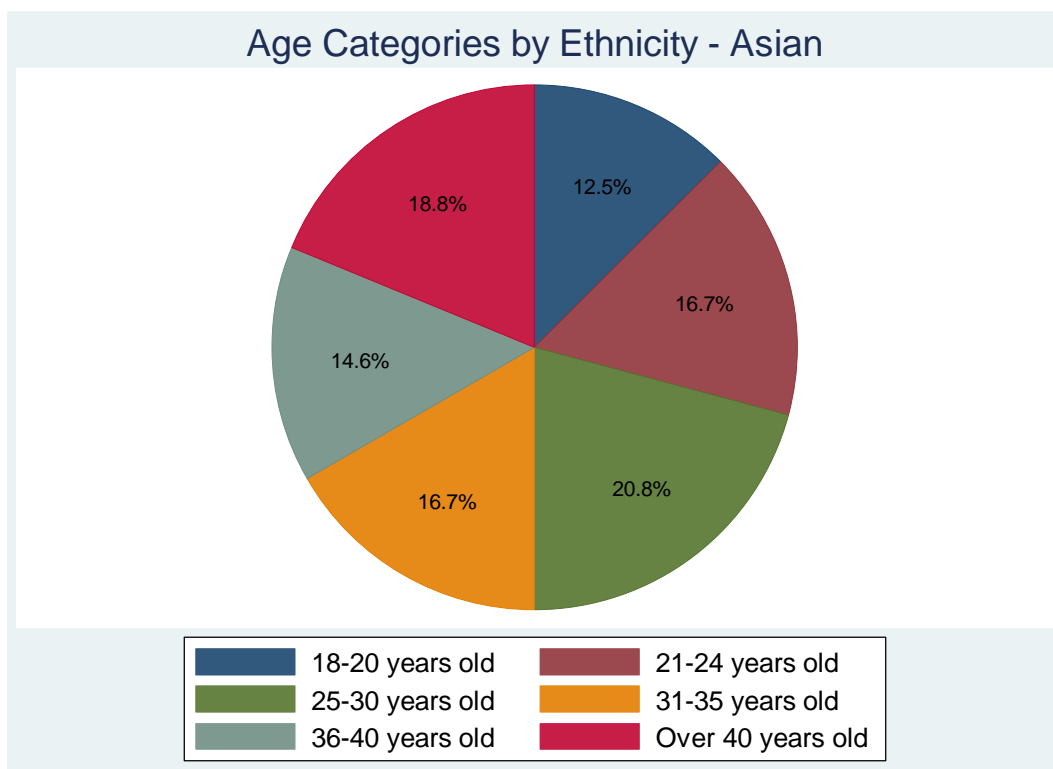
Graph 5, 6 and 7 illustrates age categories by the three main ethnicities identified in the treatment group:



Graph 4



Graph 5

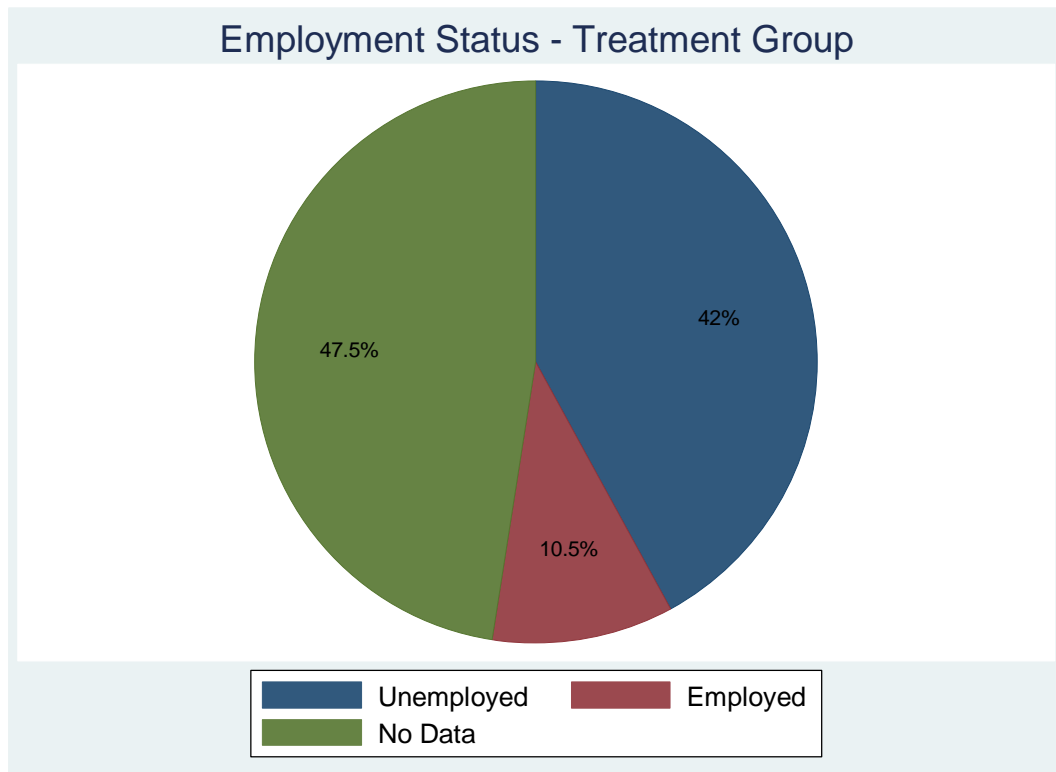


Graph 6

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

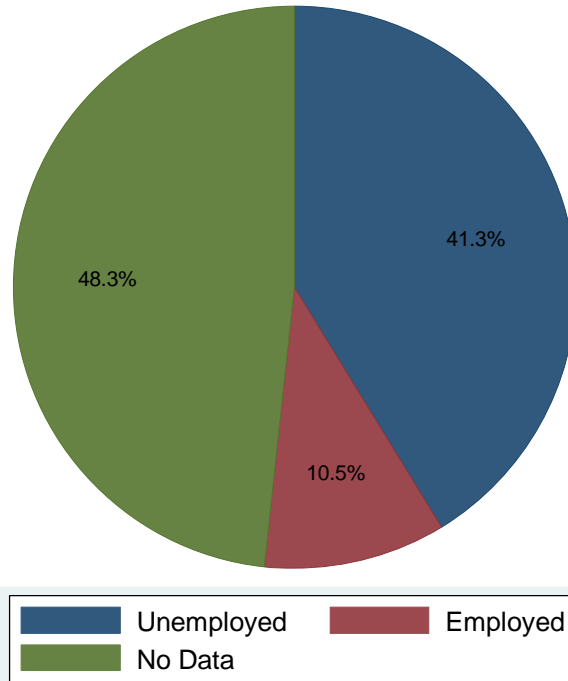
42% were unemployed, 10% were employed and for the rest there were no data in regards to their employment status. Graph 7 illustrates.



Graph 7

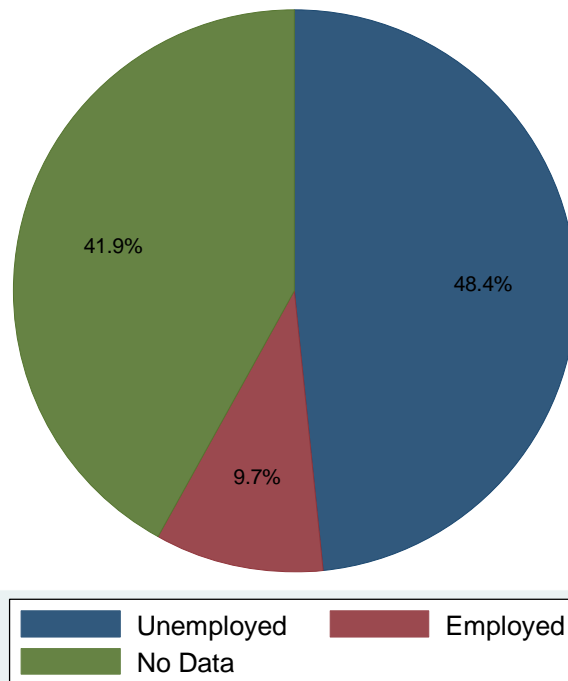
Graphs 8, 9 and 10 illustrate employment status by three main ethnicities in the treatment group.

Employment Status by Ethnicity - White North European

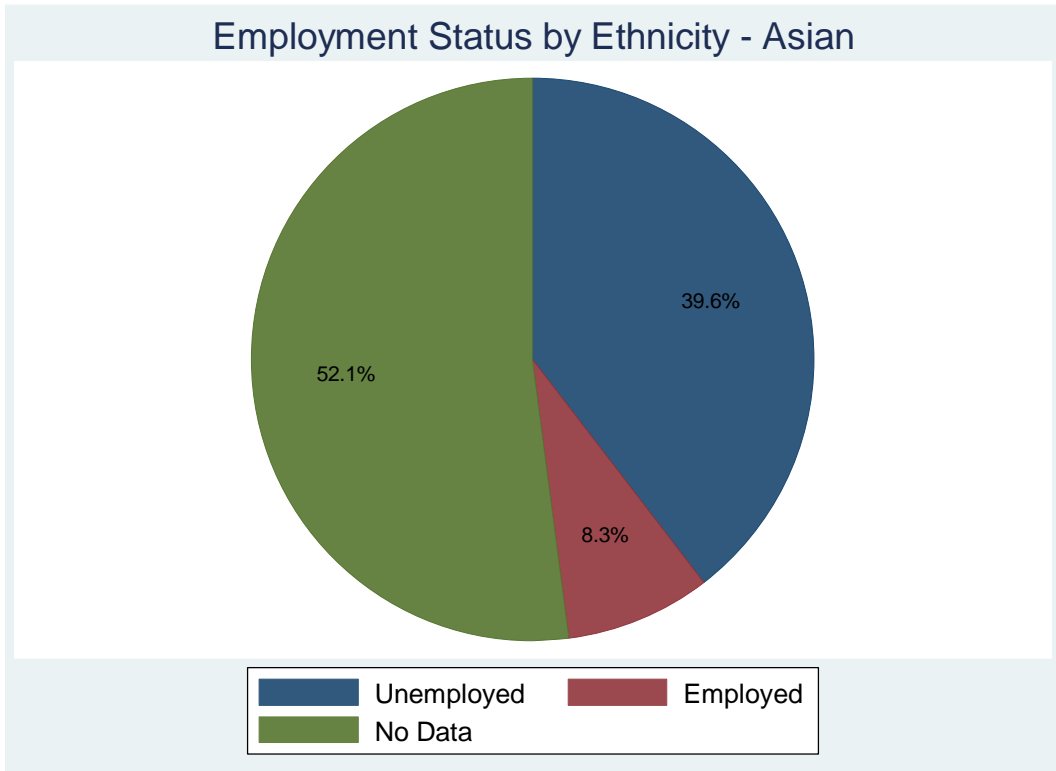


Graph 8

Employment Status by Ethnicity - Black



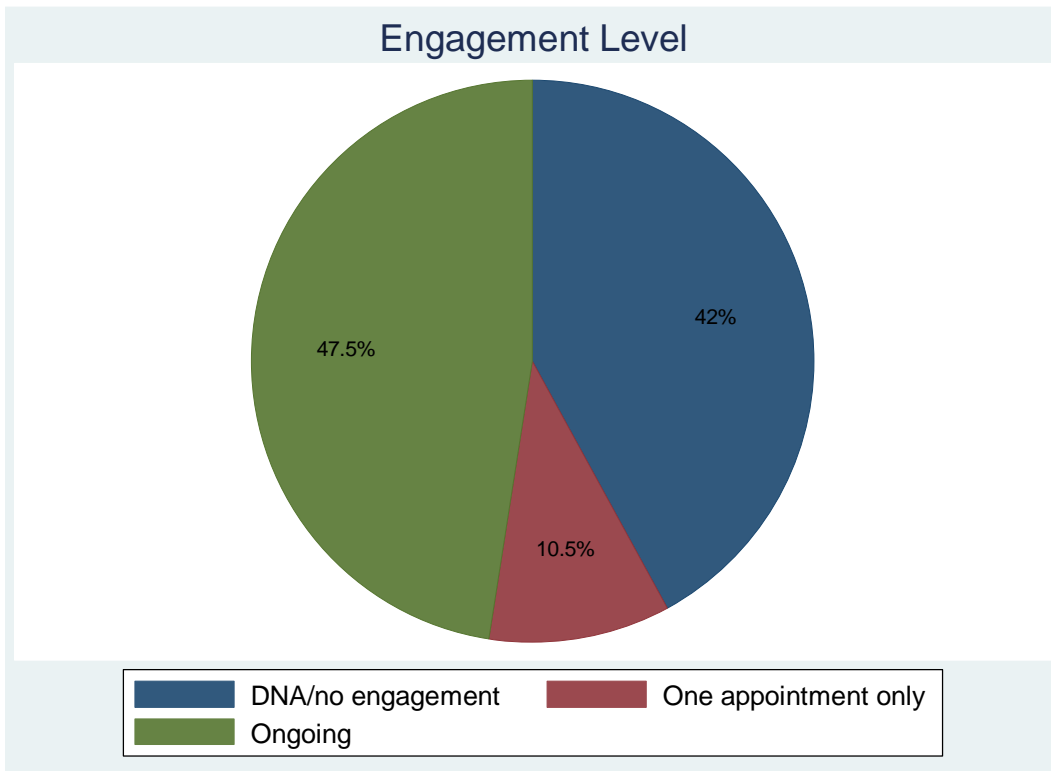
Graph 9



Graph 10

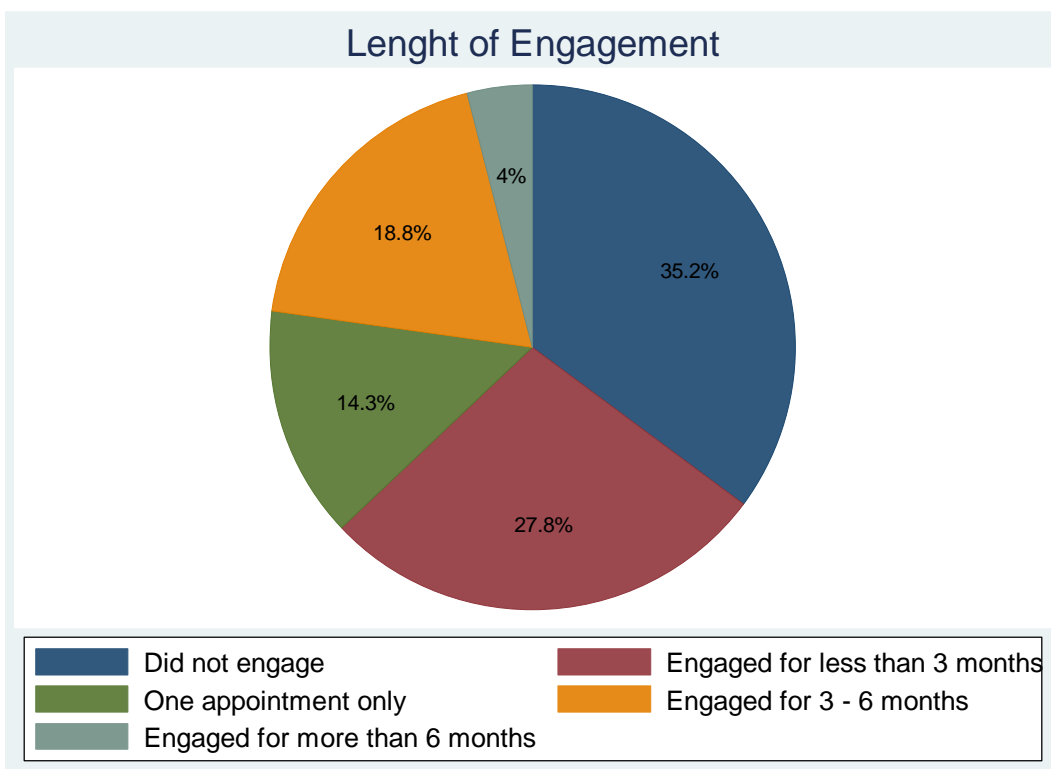
3.1.5 Treatment – Engagement Level and Length of Engagement

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

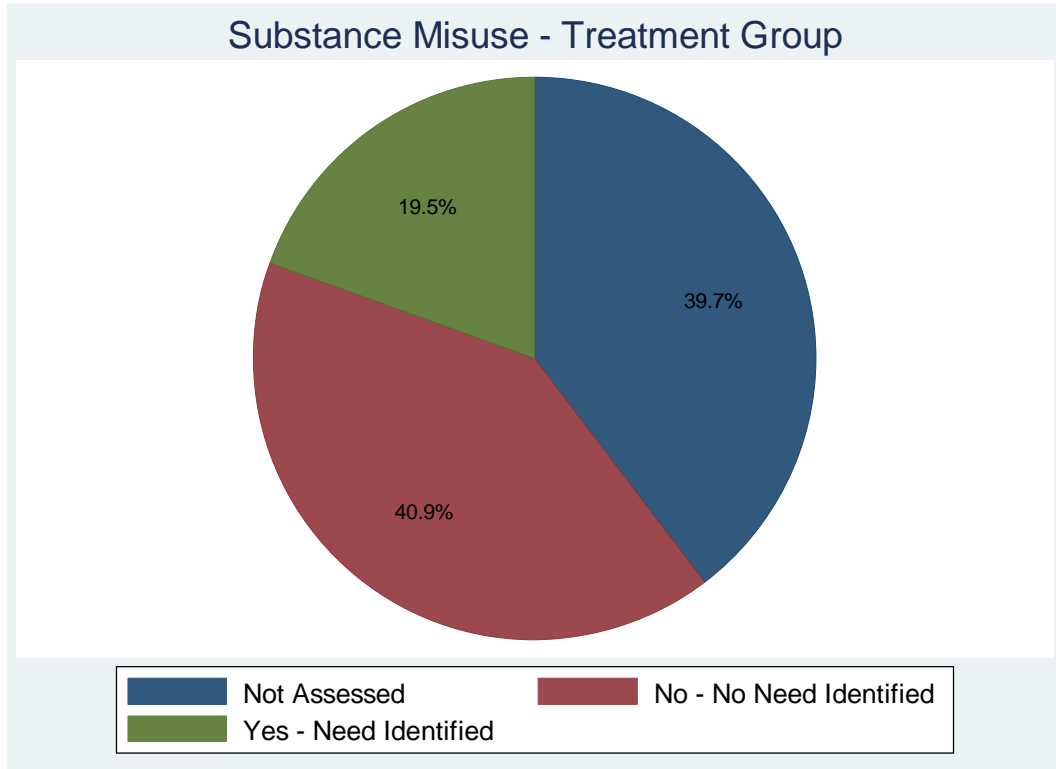
Length of the engagement also varied across all offenders:



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

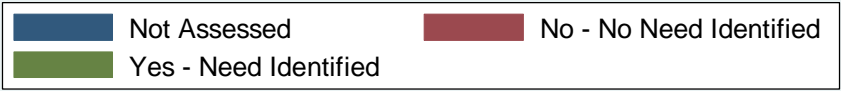
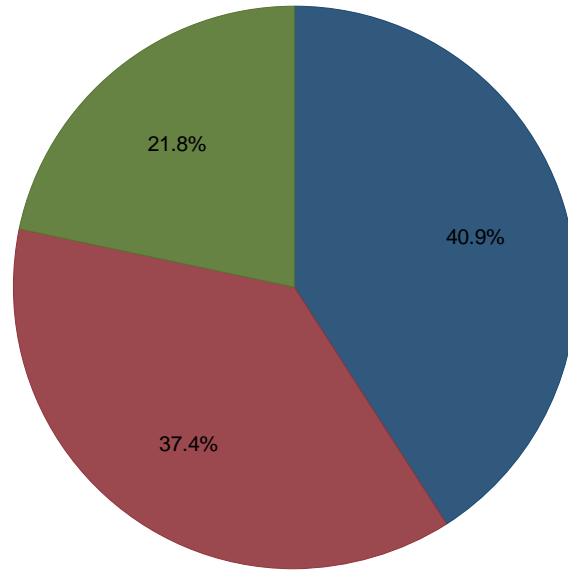


Graph 13

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

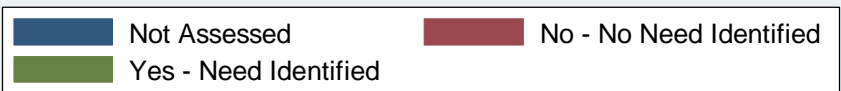
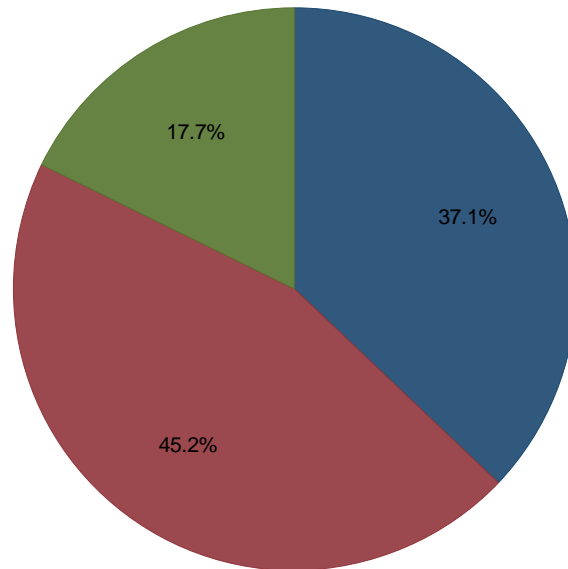
Graphs 14, 15 and 16 illustrate alcohol/drugs misuse problem identification by the three main ethnicities in the treatment group.

Substance Misuse by Ethnicity - White North European

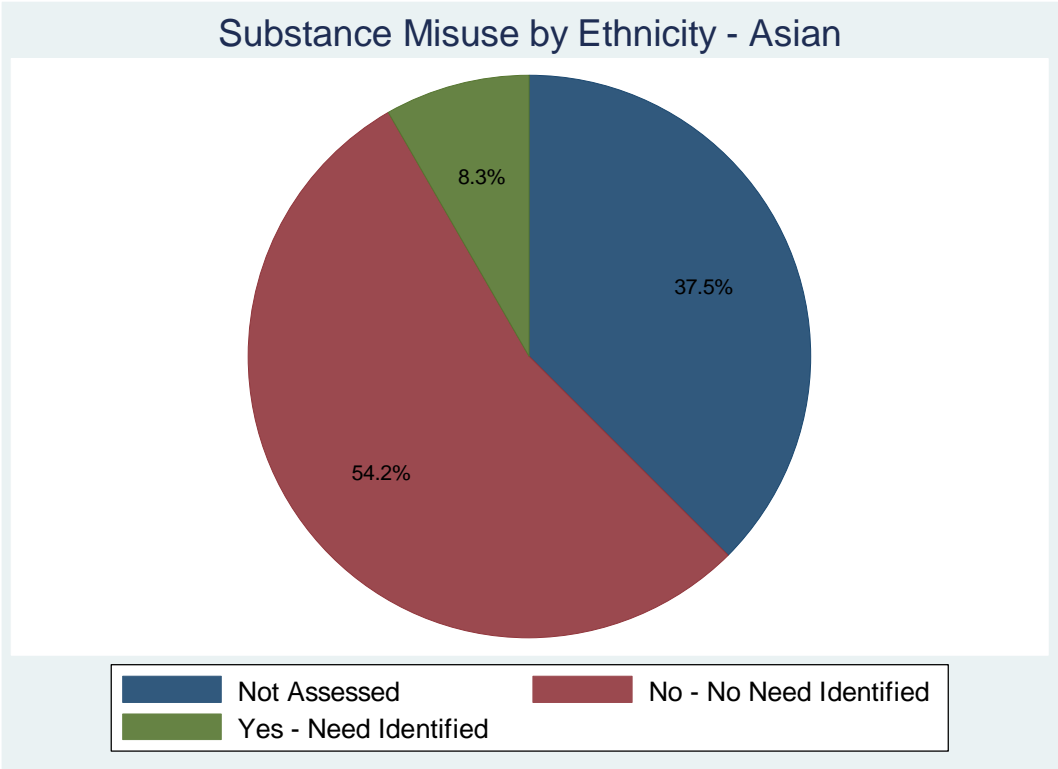


Graph 14

Substance Misuse by Ethnicity - Black

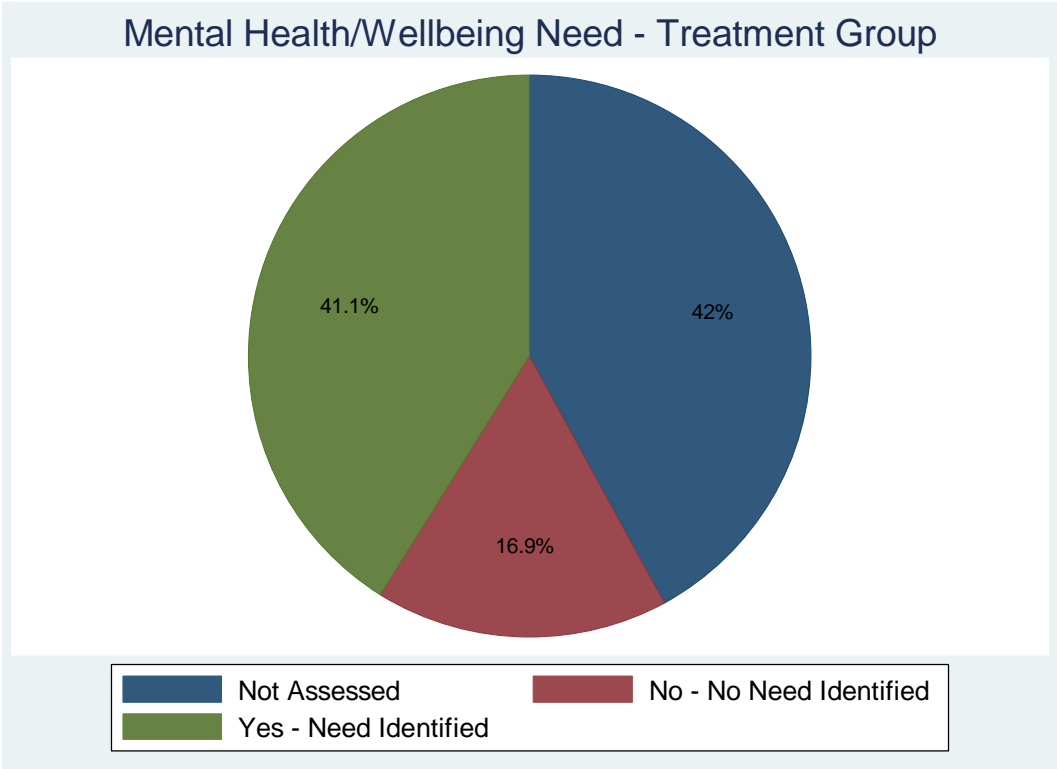


Graph 15



Graph 16

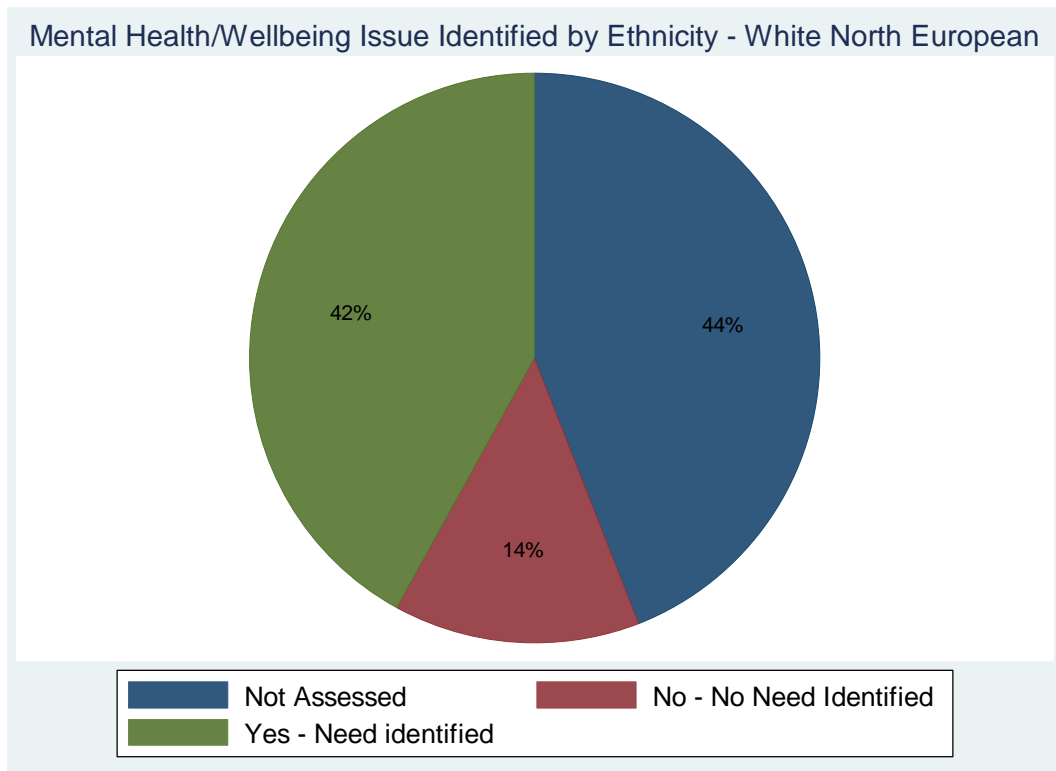
3.1.7 Mental Health/Wellbeing issues identified



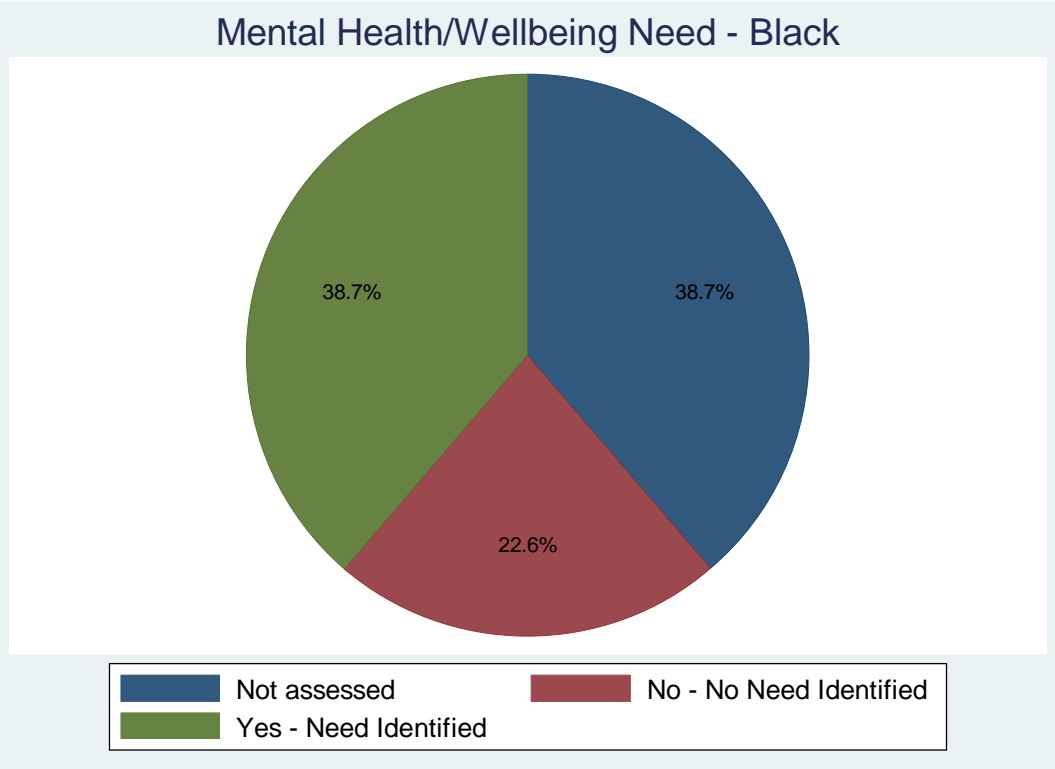
Graph 17

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

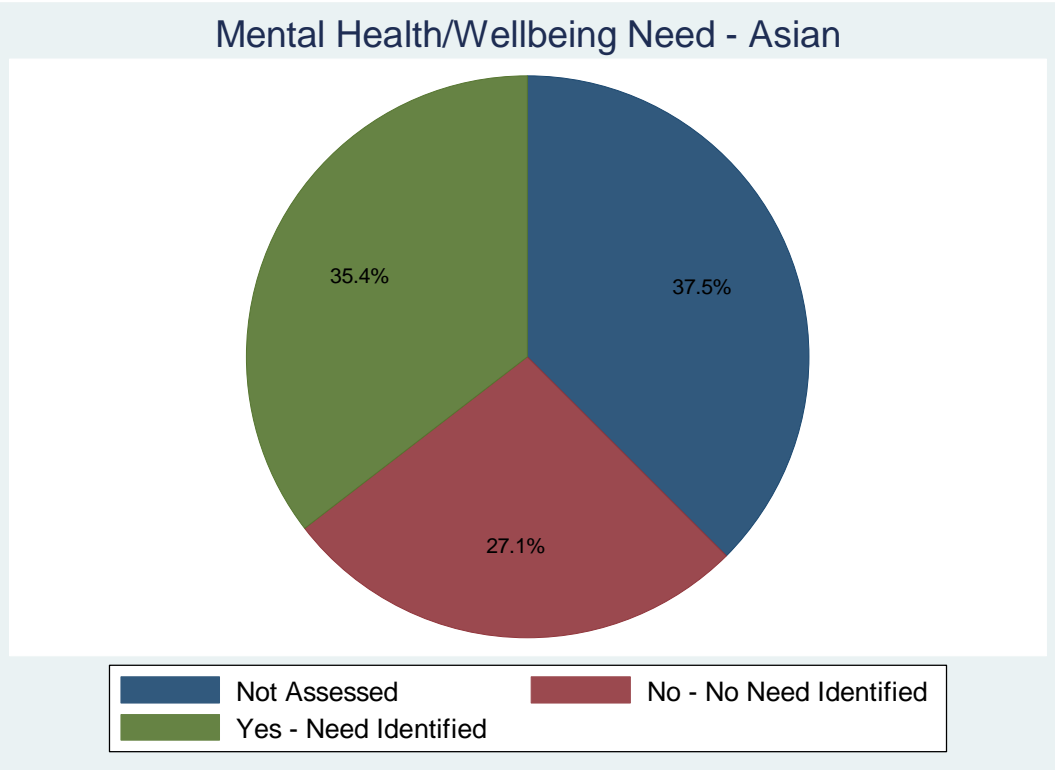
Graphs 18, 19 and 20 illustrate mental health/wellbeing need identification by the three main ethnicities in the treatment group.



Graph 18



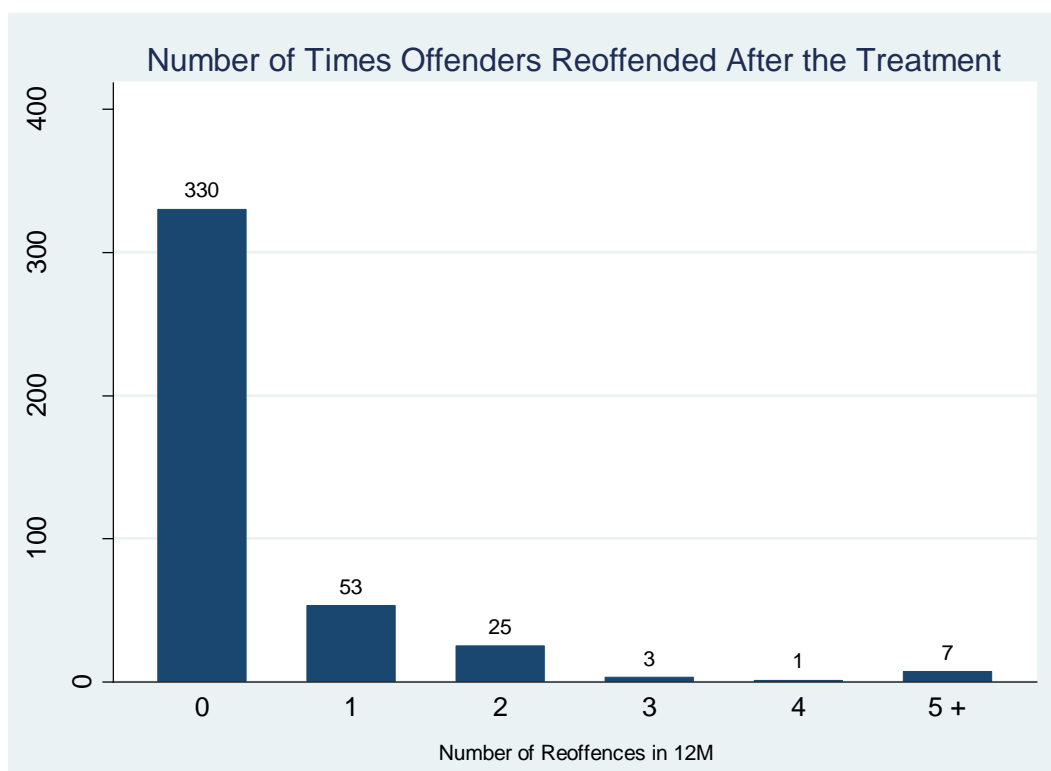
Graph 19



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):



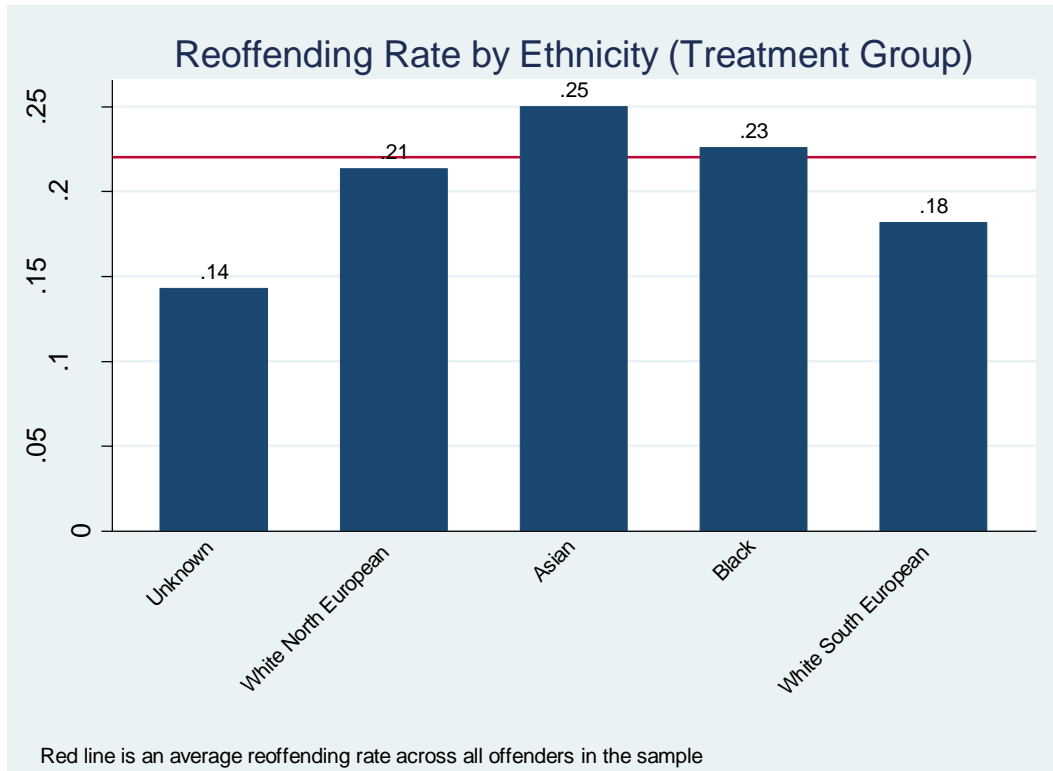
Graph 21

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.

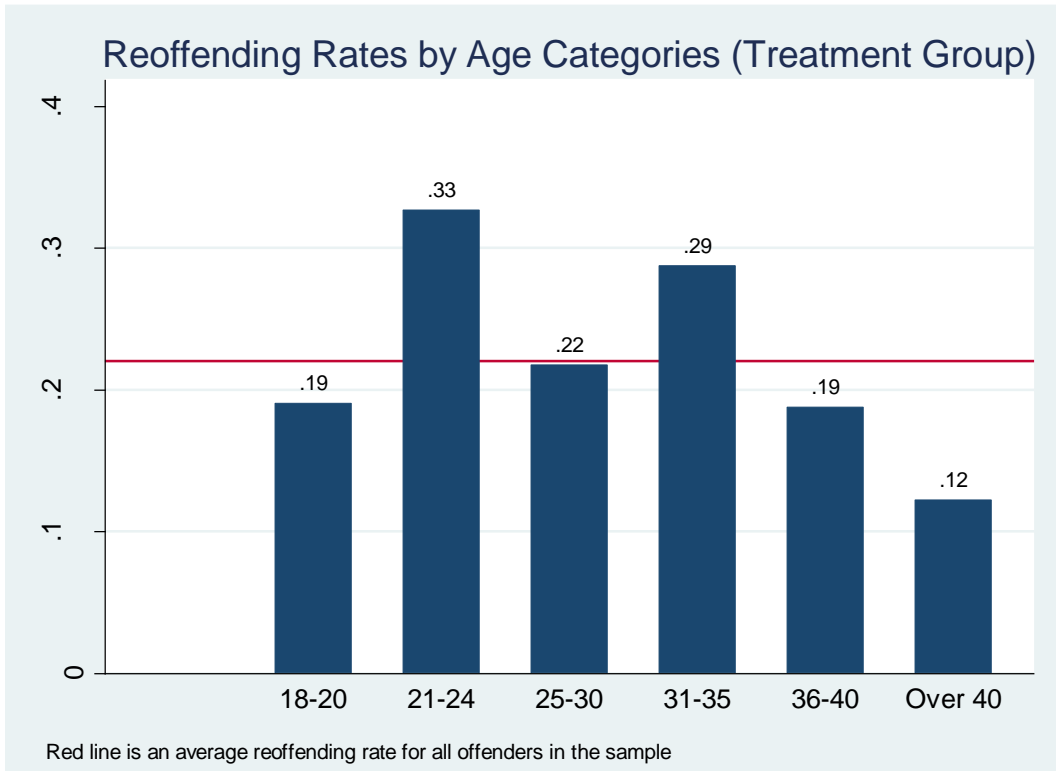
Below, we illustrate reoffending rates (how many offenders committed at least one offence after the referral to the New Chance programme by ethnicity (Graph 22), by age categories (Graph 23), by employment status (Graph 24), by substance misuse (Graph 25) and mental health wellbeing (Graph

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

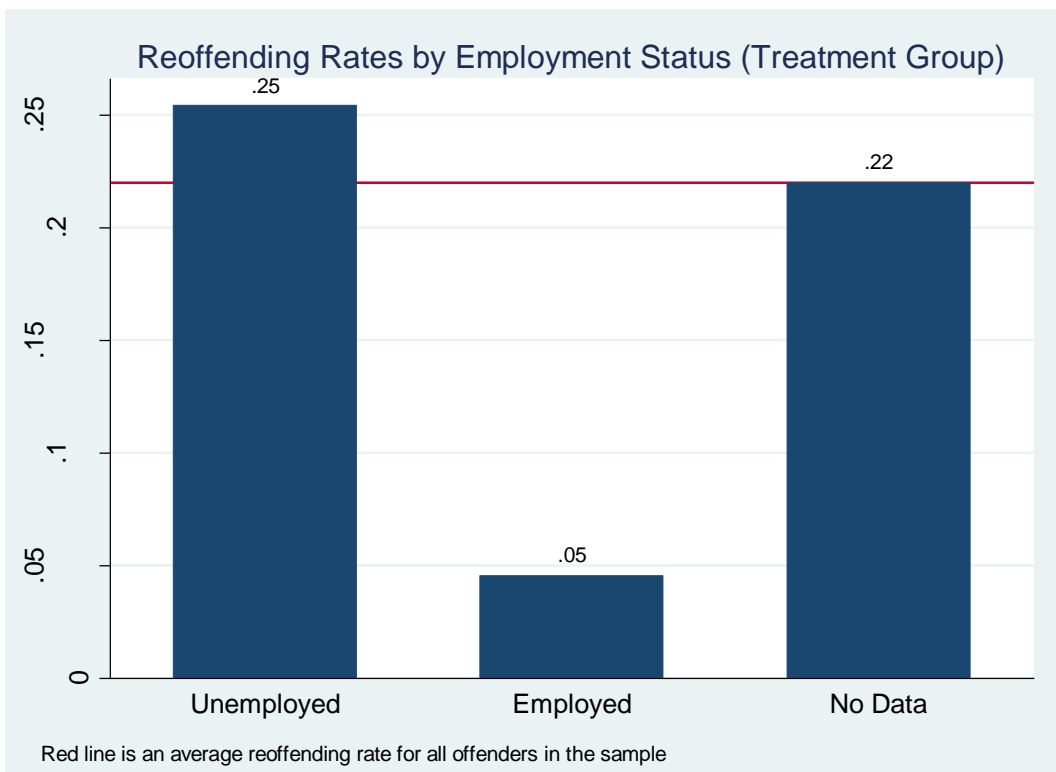
26). Graph 30 and 31 respectively illustrate reoffending rates by engagement length and level. All graphs have a red line illustrating the average reoffending rate for all offenders (i.e. total number who reoffend/total number of offenders on the programme) which is 22%. This allows us to see if reoffending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



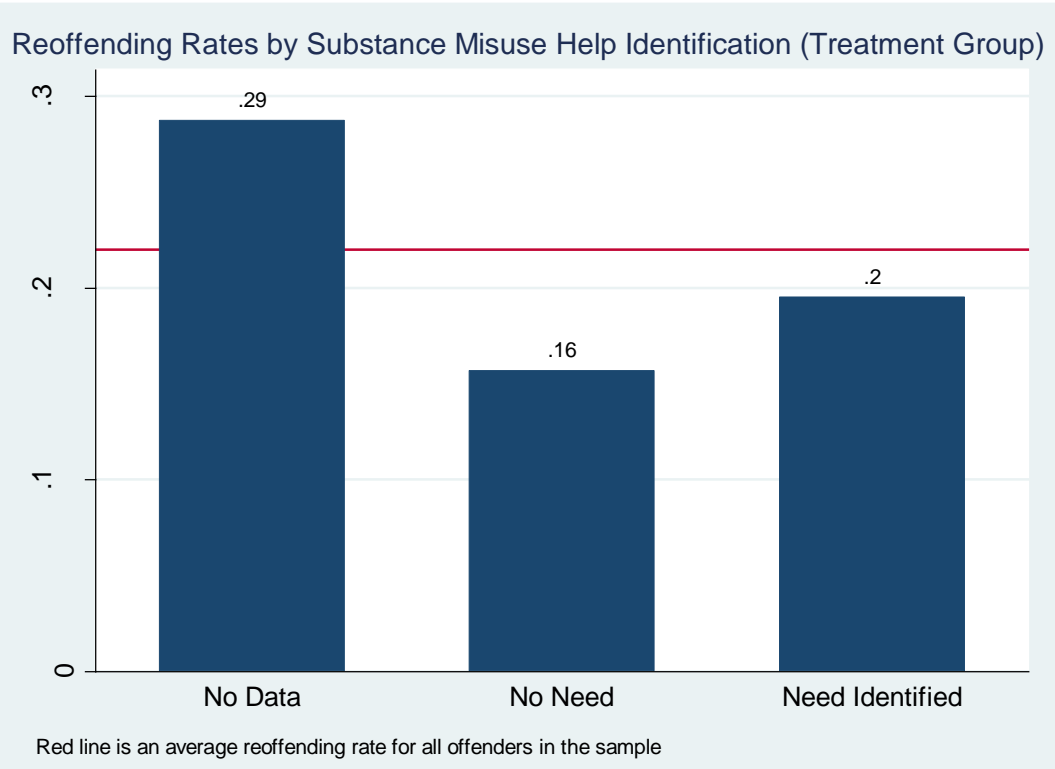
Graph 22



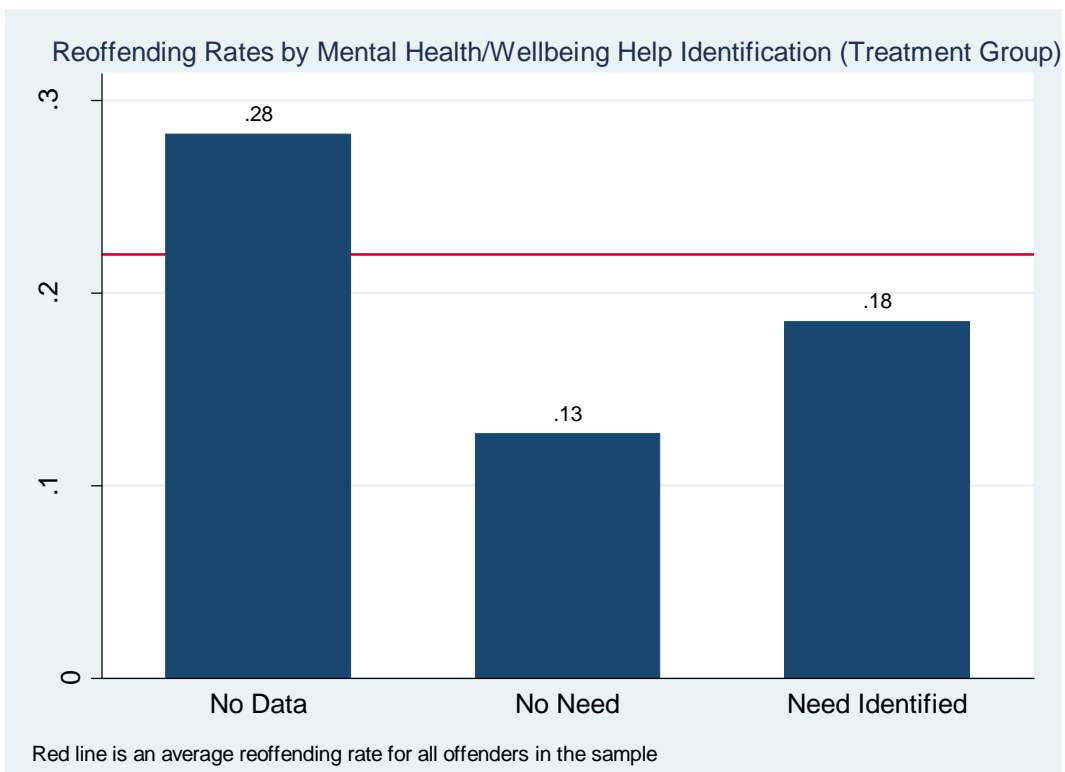
Graph 23



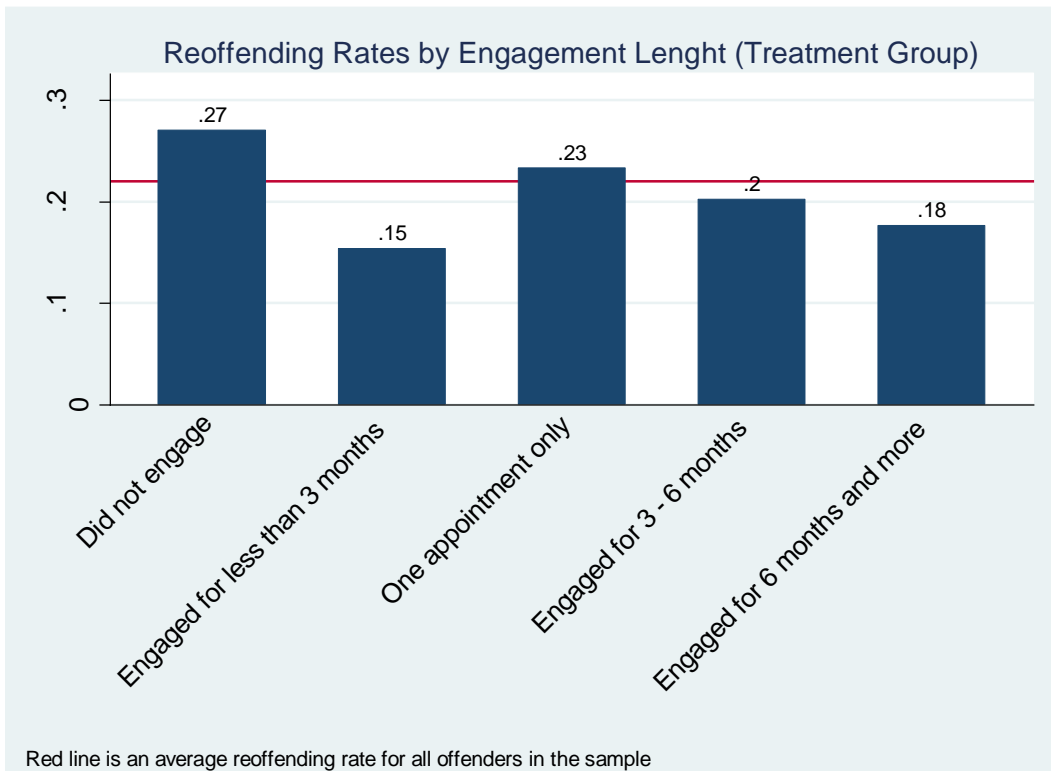
Graph 24



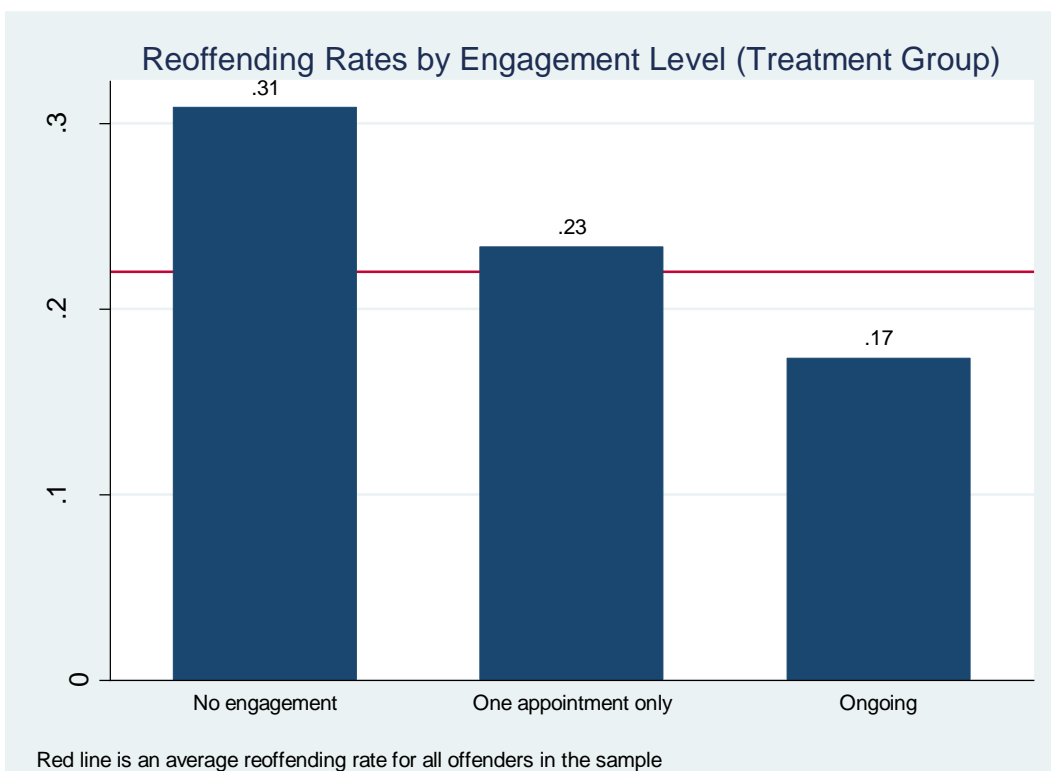
Graph 25



Graph 26



Graph 27

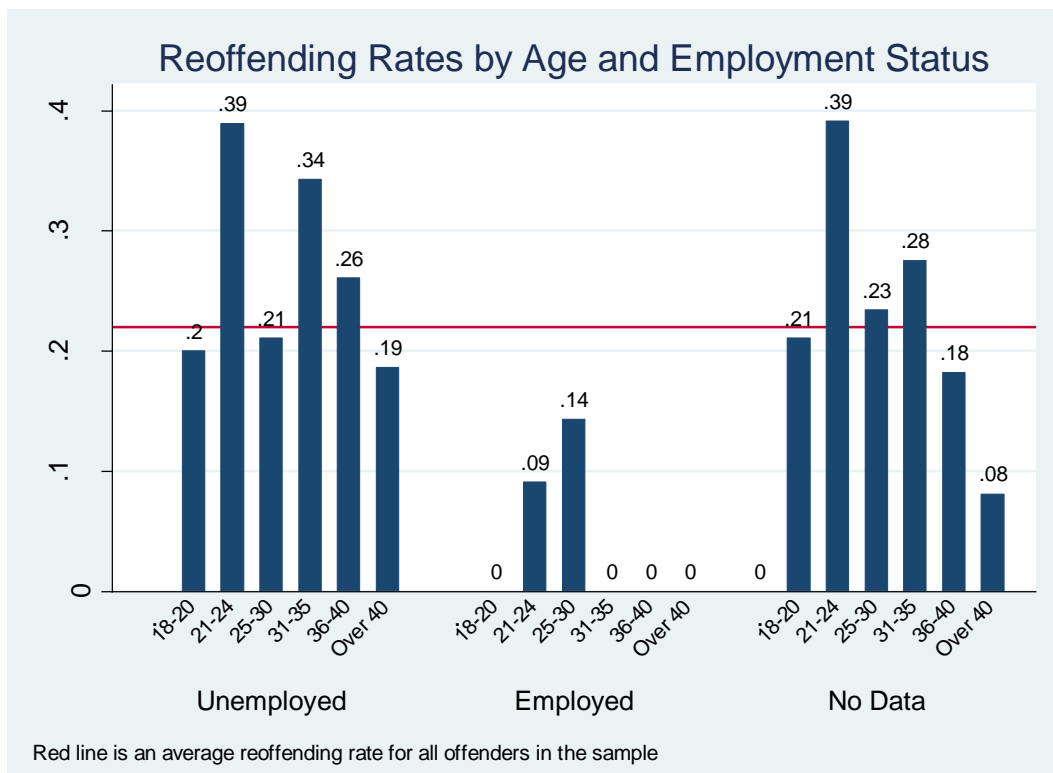


Graph 28

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

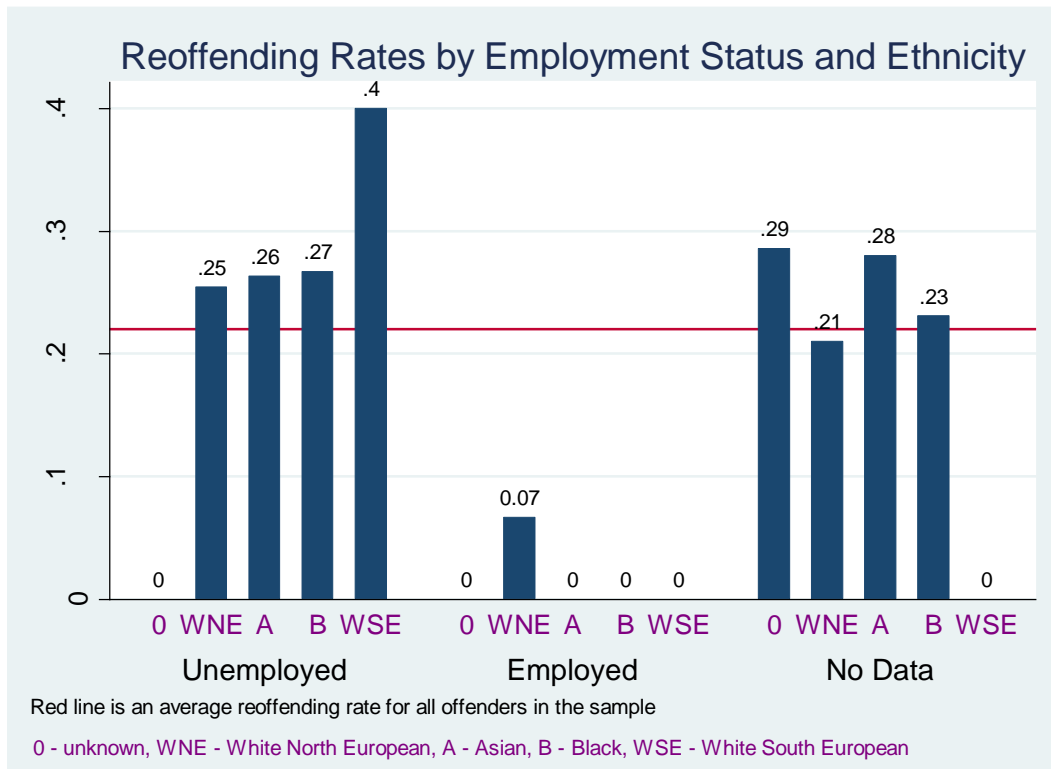
- Women who were classified as Asian and Black
- Women aged 21 – 24 and 31 – 35
- Women who were unemployed
- Substance and MH issues – higher reoffending when need is identified but there is a problem with missing data for many referrals, those with no data had the highest rates of reoffending
- Women 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.

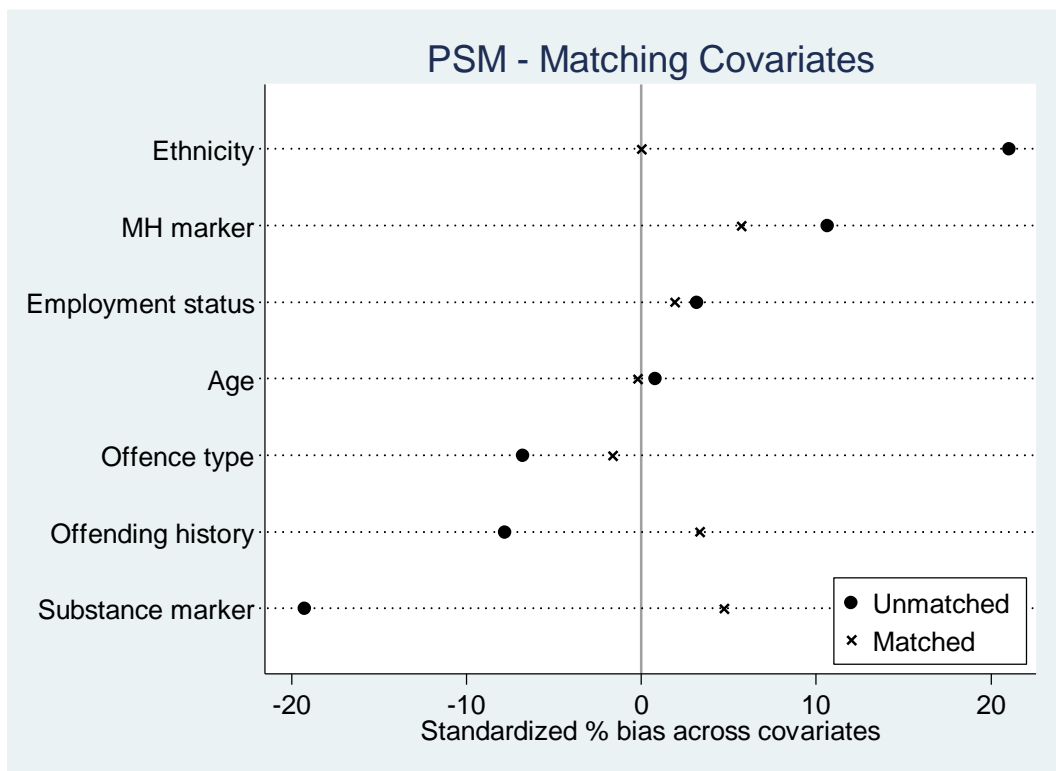
However, comparing the reoffending rates across treatment and control groups can be biased and not capture the real differences between the groups. The decision to reoffend in the future can be influenced by many factors for each offender, therefore, we use Propensity Score Matching (PSM) as described 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-variates 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

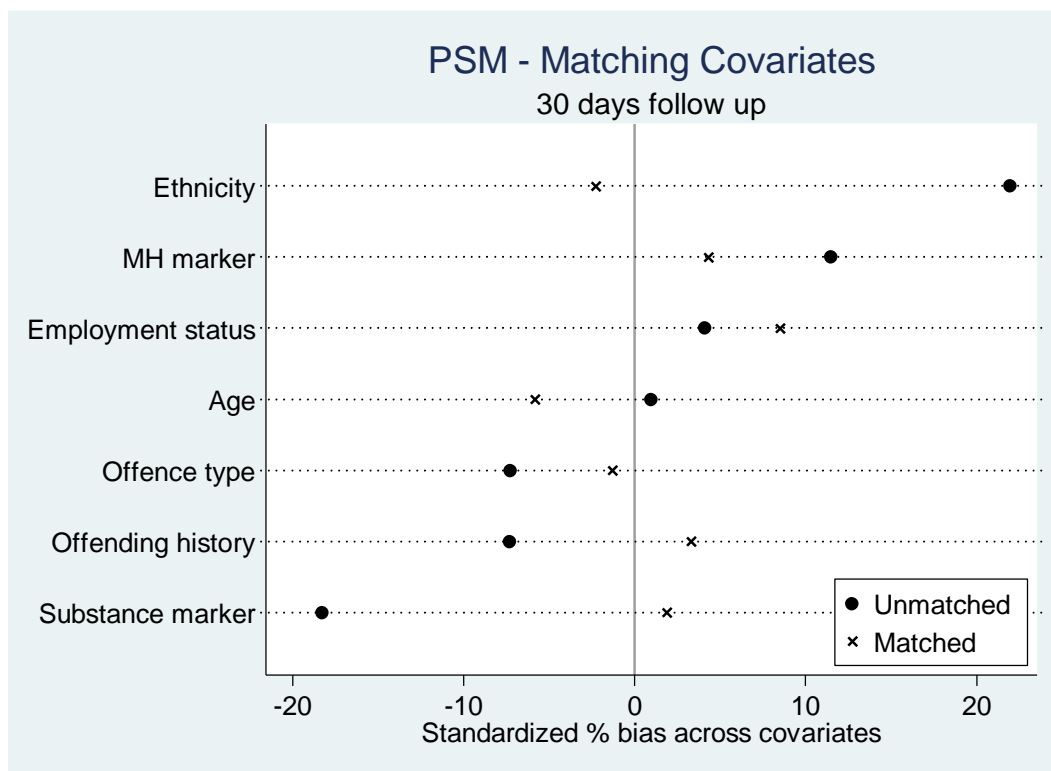
- What has been your experience of the New Chances scheme?
- What has been good about it?
- Is there anything that didn't go so well?
- Is there anything you would change about how it is run?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about the New Chances scheme?

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?

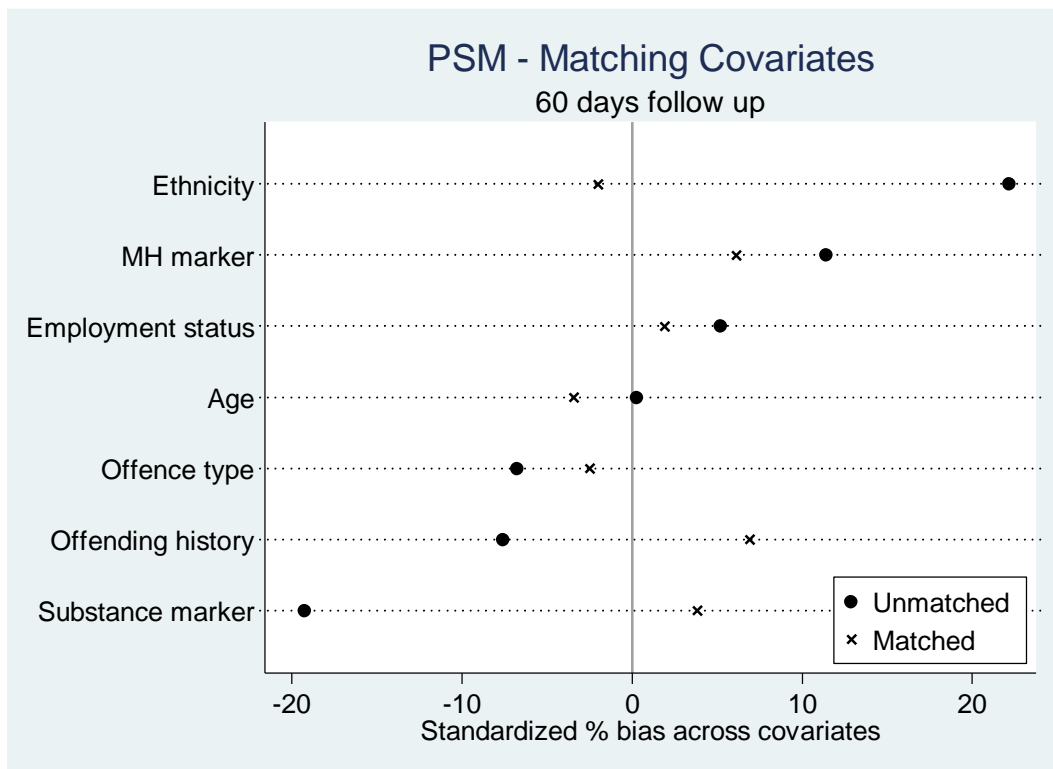
Appendix 3: 30 days follow up

Table A1: Matching Results Comparing Treatment and Control Samples on Chosen Covariates – 30 days follow up, N = 769							
	Mean						
	Unmatched		Matched			t-test	
	Treated	Control	Treated	Control	%bias	t	p> t
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



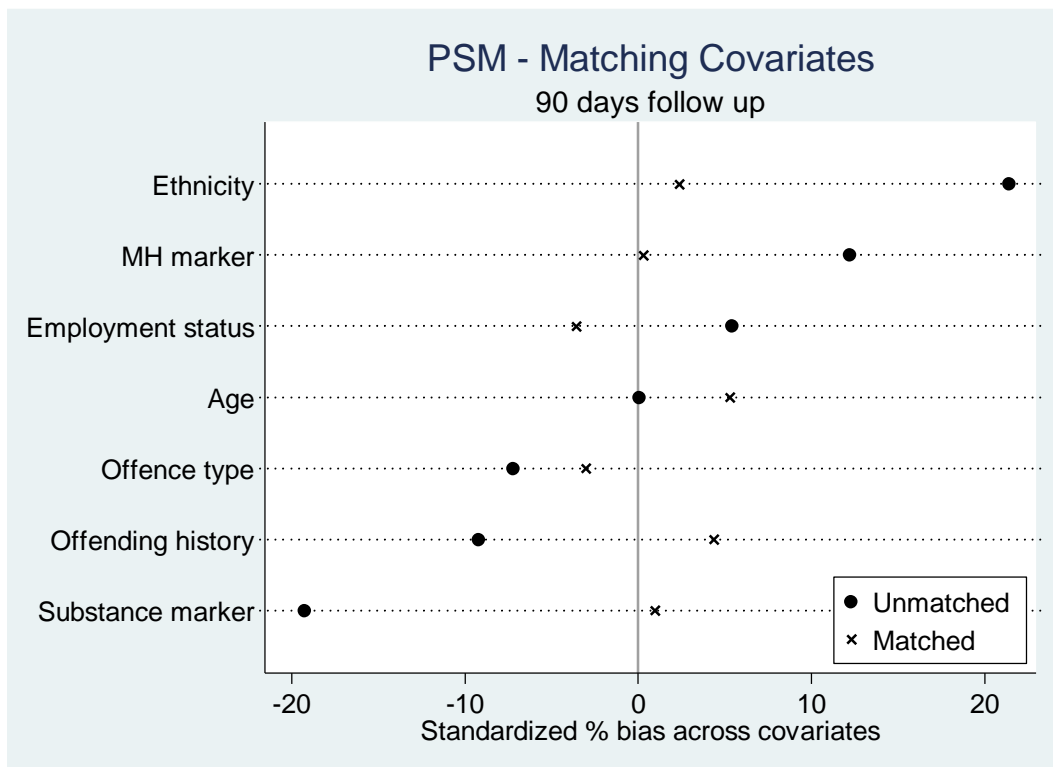
Appendix 4: 60 days follow up

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



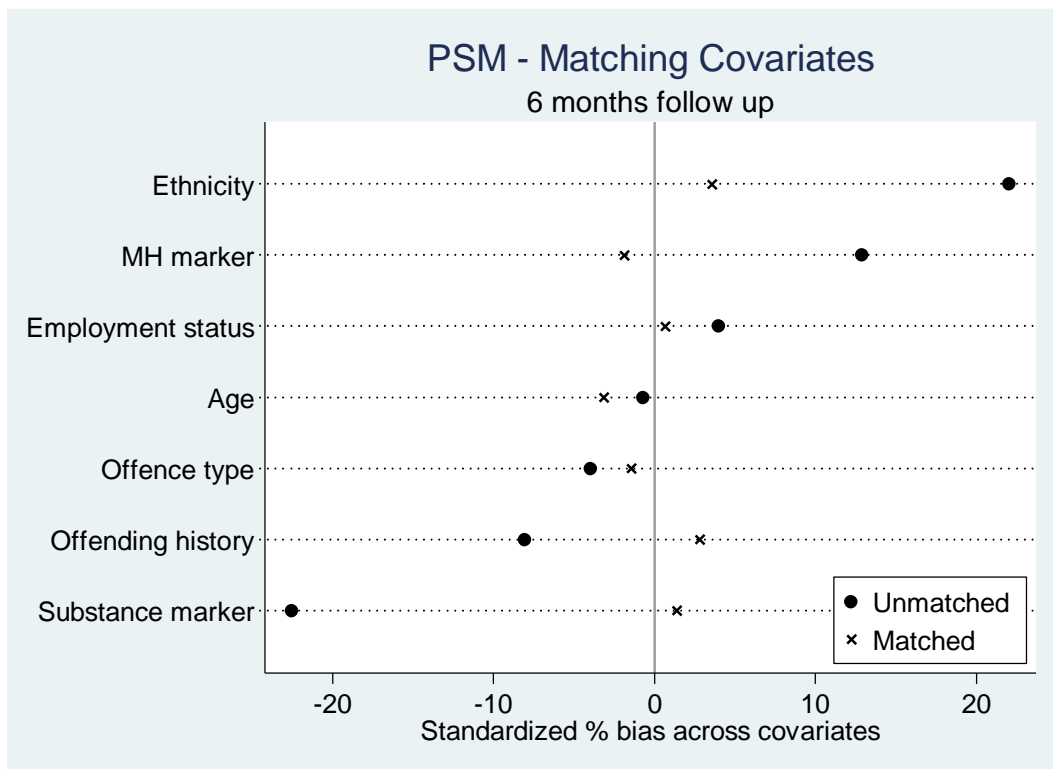
Appendix 5: 90 days follow up

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



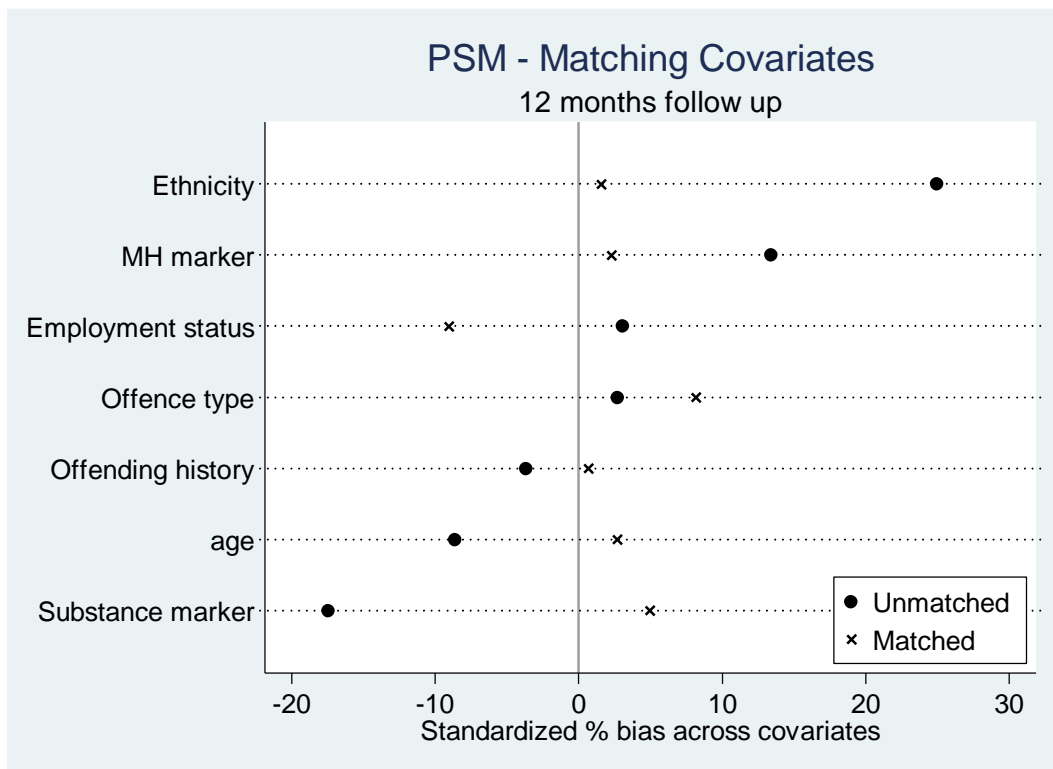
Appendix 6: 6 months follow up

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

Contents

Foreword	3
1.0. Introduction	4
1.1. IPS Model and BEST	5
1.2. Progress of the Scheme	6
1.3 Feedback from Service Users	8
2.0. Context	10
2.1. Strategic Priorities	10
2.2. Geographic context	10
3.0. Implementation	11
4.0. Concluding Remarks	11
4.1. Recommendations	11
5.0 References	13



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
Page 105 of 226

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.

5.0 References

Avril Grant, 2020. **Breakthrough Enterprise Skills Training**. Birmingham: s.n.

Bank of England, 2021. **monetary-policy/inflation-calculator**. [Online] Available at: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator> [Accessed 2021].

Home Office, 2011. **Home Office Costs of Crime Calculator**, London: Home Office.

IPS Grow. [Online] Available at: <https://ipsgrow.org.uk/about/> [Accessed 16 March 2023].

Ministry of Justice, 2021. **Proven reoffending statistics quarterly bulletin, July to September 2019**. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-july-to-september-2019> [Accessed September 2021].

WMP & Crime Commissioner, W. M. P. a. C., 2021. **Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025**, Birmingham: OPCC.

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 - 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 Club's 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

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

People

Purpose of report

1. This report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel with an overview, of the people or workforce related elements, of the Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029.

Introduction

2. The Police and Crime Plan is split into 356 deliverables. Oversight of the West Midlands Police (WMP) delivered commitments, is in part provided through the Accountability and Governance Board.
3. This paper provides updates from AGB, against relevant WMP delivered commitments, details around those commitments delivered by the PCC's own office, additional data as requested by panel and finally an update on the process to recruit a Chief Constable. Appendix 1 shows the RAG ratings of the commitments covered in this paper.

WMP delivered commitments

4. The PCC's Accountability and Governance Board on 24 February 2026, considered a paper on People and Resources related elements of the Police and Crime Plan, as per table one below.

Table 1.

Reference	Individual Commitment
4	Increased numbers of neighbourhood Police Officers and PCSOs in Local Policing Areas
10	Neighbourhood Police Officers remain in their roles for as long as possible
13	Officers and PCSOs are deployed tactically to maximise and sustain their presence and visibility in the most high-need local areas.

195	WMP will recruit, retain, progress and support Black officers, building a diverse and representative workforce
202	Work to recruit, retain, and support officers from diverse communities, ensuring WMP reflects the people and communities it serves, creating a more inclusive and representative workforce
288	WMP officers and staff must have modern, effective equipment appropriate to a diverse workforce to perform their roles safely, effectively and efficiently.
293	WMP to invest in continued welfare, well-being and professional development of police officers and staff
294	WMP to undertake workforce planning, to ensure the right resources and skills are available to meet demand, enhance efficiency and deliver effective outcomes.
295	Agile and flexible force that can embrace change, with strong recruitment practices and succession planning to develop future leaders.
296	Clear people strategy focused on all necessary policing disciplines, including science, technology and innovation to attract and train the right talent while retaining experienced WMP officers and staff to ensure capability and resilience.
297	WMP to increase the number of volunteers fulfilling specialist roles, including that of Special Constable.
299	WMP to deliver against the Police Covenant prioritising the physical and mental health of the workforce and ensuring trauma-informed training for frontline supervisors.
300	Well-being programmes will support WMP officers and staff investigating high-harm offences and those who experience violence on duty.
302	Appropriate support for leavers and the families of officers and staff.
304	WMP will continue to be an accredited Living Wage Foundation employer.

5. This paper can be found at appendix 2 and the key discussion points from the meeting held on 24th February 2026 are below:
6. The PCC focussed in on force delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee commitments, receiving assurance of the governance process overseeing this, that all DNO roles are and remain fulfilled and, that an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken at the 12 month review. It was also noted that the 1 DNO per ward requirement was giving a guard rail for Local Commanders which can be exceeded if they wish using their own resource, as has been done in some wards in Birmingham where 2 DNOs are in place. This of course requires that resource to be pulled away from other priorities. The force also confirmed that resources would be maintained in hotspot patrol areas, despite the loss of the dedicated grant funding.
7. The PCC sought particular assurance around ensuring appropriate uniform, kit and equipment for female Police Officers. The force gave assurances that they were working with the Association of Women in Policing to resolve these issues. They set out that they have recently been able to move away from national procurement approaches and are engaging with suppliers able to provide suitable uniform, kit and equipment for our diverse workforce.
8. The Deputy PCC enquired around retention and progress seen in improving this. The force set out the focus on supporting and developing first and second line managers, who are responsible for circa 95% of individuals across the organisation. They set out the positive impact Trauma Informed training is anecdotally having and how the new

Attrition and Retention Board has baselined the current position and is now starting to focus on making tangible improvements to reduce attrition and improve retention, building on the restructure recently undertaken in the HR function.

9. At the same AGB meeting a paper was also tabled on An Equal and Fair West Midlands, which covered three further Police and Crime Plan commitments of particular relevance to this paper. These are as set out in table 2 below:

Table 2.

Reference	Individual Commitment
211	Work with WMP to address racial disparities in misconduct and professional standards processes, improving support for Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff.
194	Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the National Police Race Action Plan.
352	Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan. (N.B. Workstream 1 of the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan focuses on workforce).

Delivery of the Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) and West Midlands Police Race Action Plan (WMPRAP)

10. The relevant excerpt of that report can be found at appendix 3 and the key discussion points in relation to these commitments are below.
11. The PCC focussed in on Operation Jigsaw and how and when, this will start to deliver improvements in disproportionality data. The force set out how they are taking a hearts and minds approach, rather than a purely performance based one. They agreed to report back to the PCC in a months time on progress made and to agree an ambitious date to publish full force wide disproportionality baselines. Assurance was also given around the escalation of disproportionality concerns, with Performance Board and/or Force Executive Team meeting (FET) being the ultimate senior structures to be escalated to.
12. The PCC sought to gain a greater understanding of the current position around police officer numbers and disproportionality with the force, confirming that Black Officer representation is 4% versus 10.5% in the local population and agreeing to share with the PCC, the report given to the Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board (ISOB) regarding promotion processes.
13. The PCC enquired around the Say and Stay scheme and what trends were emerging from this. The force set out that the main reasons were relating to unhappiness regarding postings which was often resolveable and that this approach is leading to reductions in attrition across all ethnicities. Any specific issues are also fed into the relevant boards for further consideration, as where wider improvements can be made.
14. The Deputy PCC asked the force for assurances around delivery of the PRAP, what the greatest risks/challenges were and the degree to which local communities were being engaged in this work. The force set out the governance approach being taken, the use of reference groups, scrutiny panels and the ISOB, to ensure ongoing and regular community engagement and set out recruitment and retention being aligned to the local

population being the biggest challenge/risk, noting that this is both a national and wider public sector problem, but one where we are working hard to achieve this.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioners Office commitments

15. Alongside the commitments for WMP, sit those to be delivered by the PCC's own office. These are as set out in table 3 below:

Table 3.

Reference	Individual Commitment
298	Campaign for Special Constables being placed on a similar footing to magistrates, ensuring minimum yearly service levels with the right to take time off work to perform their duties.
303	Support of the Police Federation's campaign to secure collective bargaining on Police Officer pay.

16. We are supporting the passage of the Employment Rights (Special Constables) Bill, which is seeking to add Special Constables, to the list of those granted the right to take time off work to perform their duties.

17. The Bill is currently in its second reading in the House of Commons and we are hopeful of its eventual progression into law

18. We continue to support the Police Federation's campaign.

Need for additional resource

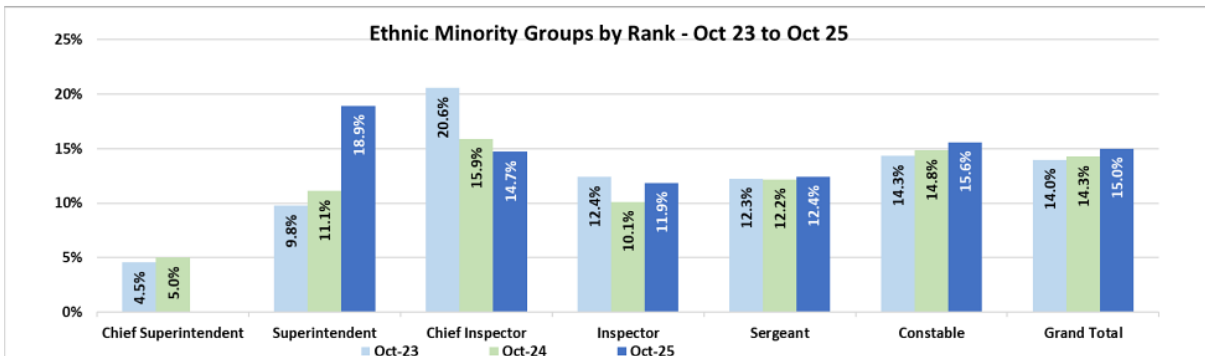
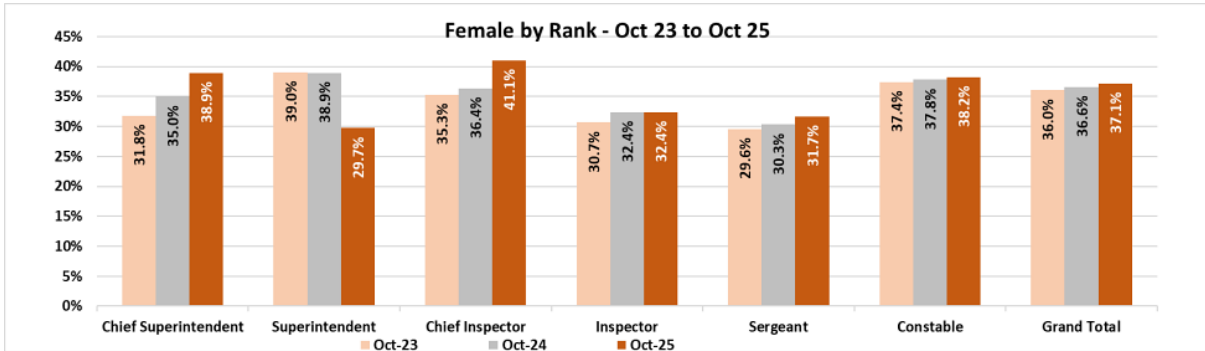
19. We have identified a need for additional resource to oversee all these commitments, as there is currently no policy lead for workforce or people matters. This explains much of the red and amber RAG rated items in appendix 1.

20. We are recruiting a 12 month fixed term Policy Officer to drive delivery of these commitments, enhancing our ability to hold WMP to account.

Additional data requested by Panel

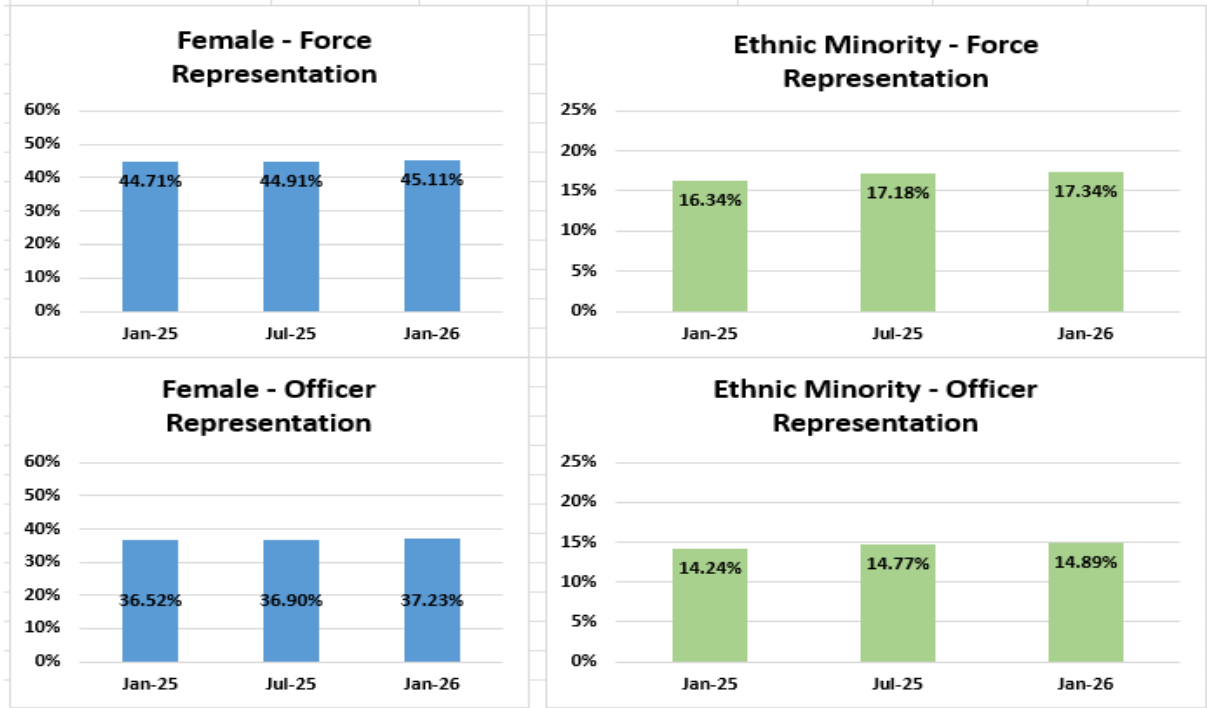
21. Figure 1 below shows the percentage of police officers that are female by rank over 3 years, from October 2023 to October 2025. Figure 2 shows the percentage of police officers from minoritised communities, over the same period.

Figures 1 and 2.



22. Figures 3-6 show more recent staff demographic data over the last 12 months up to January 2026. Starting top left and going clockwise, figure 3 shows female representation for the whole force, officers plus staff, figure 4 shows minoritised communities representation for the whole force, figure 5 shows the female representation of officers and figure 6 shows the minoritised communities representation for officers.

Figures 3-6.

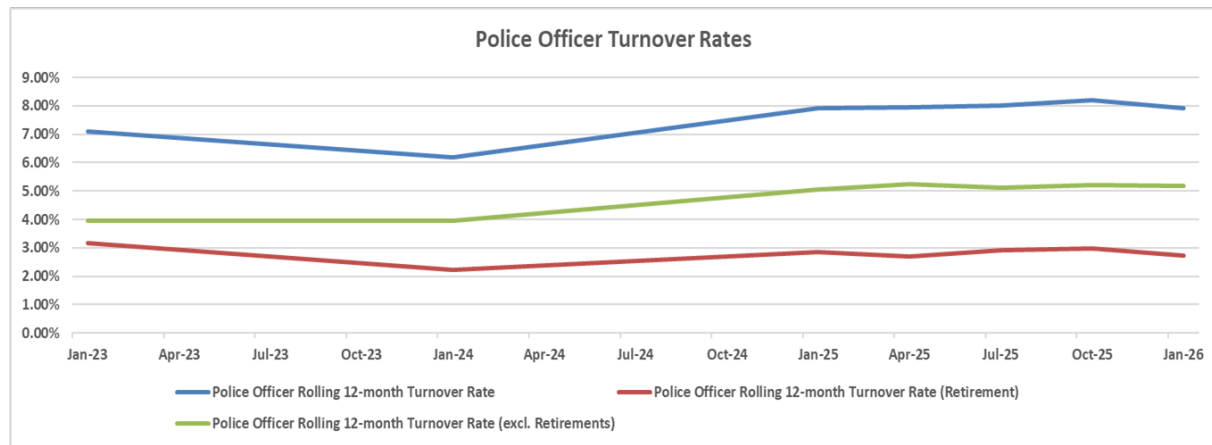


23. Figures 7 and 8 show turnover rates going back three years in tabular form (broken down by police officers, police staff, PSCOs and specials) and then graph form (broken down by police officers, police officers – retirements, and police officers – excluding retirements)

Figures 7 and 8.

Rolling 12 month turnover rates

Person Type	Turnover Rate	Jan-23	Jan-24	Jan-25	Apr-25	Jul-25	Oct-25	Jan-26
Police Officer	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	7.11%	6.19%	7.92%	7.96%	8.03%	8.20%	7.92%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (Retirement)	3.15%	2.22%	2.86%	2.70%	2.90%	2.99%	2.73%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (excl. Retirements)	3.96%	3.97%	5.06%	5.26%	5.12%	5.21%	5.19%
Police Staff	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	13.84%	13.36%	11.67%	10.98%	11.27%	11.23%	10.91%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (excl Joining Regular Force)	12.70%	11.43%	10.59%	10.12%	10.64%	10.61%	10.39%
PCSO	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	22.45%	35.79%	18.10%	14.88%	16.11%	18.44%	19.19%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (excl Joining Regular Force)	12.06%	11.44%	9.03%	8.79%	8.35%	10.02%	9.73%
Specials	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	34.63%	46.47%	30.81%	27.21%	27.74%	29.79%	27.46%



Chief Constable recruitment process

- 24. We are currently in the early stages of the recruitment process, with the aim of holding interviews in early September 2026. The process is being conducted in accordance with Section 38 and Schedule 8 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, and with regard to relevant guidance and good practice
- 25. We are currently updating the recruitment pack and Chief Constable role profile, with the purpose of sending these out to various stakeholders, for consultation and feedback.
- 26. We will appoint an interview panel and three stakeholder panels: Youth Panel, Staff and Officer Panel and a Community Panel. The stakeholder panels will include members that we currently work with from the Advisory Panel, ISOB, Youth Commissioners, Cadets and Staff Associations, due to them already having been through a recruitment process.
- 27. A Policing Adviser will be appointed, to ensure the candidate is assessed against the highest operational and technical policing standards. We will also recruit an Independent Panel Member, who will ensure that the process is fair, open and free from bias.
- 28. As per the previous recruitment process, we will send a letter of invite to the Police and Crime Panel, to observe the proceedings, including stakeholder panel and

interview panel. As we progress further through the process, we can continue to update the Police and Crime Panel.

Conclusion and recommendation

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

Appendix 1

Reference	Individual Commitment and Q3 RAG rating
4	Increased numbers of neighbourhood Police Officers and PCSOs in Local Policing Areas
10	Neighbourhood Police Officers remain in their roles for as long as possible
13	Officers and PCSOs are deployed tactically to maximise and sustain their presence and visibility in the most high-need local areas.
194	Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the National Police Race Action Plan.
195	WMP will recruit, retain, progress and support Black officers, building a diverse and representative workforce
202	Work to recruit, retain, and support officers from diverse communities, ensuring WMP reflects the people and communities it serves, creating a more inclusive and representative workforce
211	Work with WMP to address racial disparities in misconduct and professional standards processes, improving support for Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff.
288	WMP officers and staff must have modern, effective equipment appropriate to a diverse workforce to perform their roles safely, effectively and efficiently.
293	WMP to invest in continued welfare, well-being and professional development of police officers and staff
294	WMP to undertake workforce planning, to ensure the right resources and skills are available to meet demand, enhance efficiency and deliver effective outcomes.
295	Agile and flexible force that can embrace change, with strong recruitment practices and succession planning to develop future leaders.
296	Clear people strategy focused on all necessary policing disciplines, including science, technology and innovation to attract and train the right talent while retaining experienced WMP officers and staff to ensure capability and resilience.
297	WMP to increase the number of volunteers fulfilling specialist roles, including that of Special Constable.
298	Campaign for Special Constables being placed on a similar footing to magistrates, ensuring minimum yearly service levels with the right to take time off work to perform their duties.
299	WMP to deliver against the Police Covenant prioritising the physical and mental health of the workforce and ensuring trauma-informed training for frontline supervisors.
300	Well-being programmes will support WMP officers and staff investigating high-harm offences and those who experience violence on duty.
302	Appropriate support for leavers and the families of officers and staff.
303	Support of the Police Federation's campaign to secure collective bargaining on Police Officer pay.
304	WMP will continue to be an accredited Living Wage Foundation employer.

352	Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan. (N.B. Workstream 1 of the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan focuses on workforce).
-----	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

RAG Rating Key
On track – can be delivered by lead
Not on track – requires support from SMT lead to resolve
Not on track – requires support from wider SMT to resolve

Appendix 2

ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

24th February 2026
People and Resources
Presented by: Alex Godden

1 . Police and Crime Plan

This paper will provide an overview of how the Force is having regard to the targets set in the Police and Crime Plan regarding its people and resources. The paper will cover details on Visibility, Wellbeing, Diversity, Strategy and Development of Officers, Staff & PCSO's

Visibility:

Increased numbers of neighbourhood Police Officers and PCSOs in Local Policing Areas

The 2025-2029 Workforce Plan delivers against an increased number of Police Officers, PCSOs and Specials in line with the Neighbourhood Guarantee. It is focused on delivering an additional 150 officers, at the mid-year point we had delivered an additional 40 officers over the baseline, and we are on target to deliver the uplift by March 2026. We are keen to maximise any additional funding opportunities from the Home Office and our recruitment and training plan can deliver numbers above the main target if allocated additionality.

Neighbourhood Police Officers remain in their roles for as long as possible

All new officers are posted into Local Policing Areas for the 2 years of their probationary period. They are deployed in-line with the priorities of the LPAs, however over the course of the year Local Policing have consistently been resourced at above 99% of their establishment (i.e. less than 1% vacancy factor). PCSO numbers have been consistently strong with a vacancy factor regularly below 3% in the past 12 months. In July 2025 we implemented a new '2-year rule' for all newly substantive officers meaning they remain in the department they are posted to for a minimum of 2 years before applying for other roles across the force, except in exceptional circumstances. This will mean that we increase stability in departments with newly substantive officers consolidating their knowledge and skills before moving on to new roles.

As part of the new modernised neighbourhood policing model, every ward now has officers that have taken on the newly defined Dedicated Neighbourhood Officer (DNO) role. All officers undertaking these roles will be in post for a period no less than two years and all officers are made aware of this prior to undertaking the role. ACC Local Policing has directed that there is to be no vacancies held in DNO roles at any time

across force. Where officers may move due to promotion, progression, retirements etc. the DNO role will be immediately filled as a priority post.

Officers and PCSOs are deployed tactically to maximise and sustain their presence and visibility in the most high-need local areas.

Using data and analysis, key areas have been identified across force as Targeted Guardian Patrol within Local Policing. In addition to being present on foot patrol in those locations and undertaking stop and search activities to prevent knife crime, officers are required to actively engage with the public, outlining why they are there and updating on local events and issues.

WMP to increase the number of volunteers fulfilling specialist roles, including that of Special Constable.

Against a backdrop of onboarding a significant increase in officers attracting and recruiting Specials has been challenging. Overall numbers have decreased this year however, the workforce plan for 2026 to 2029 increases the overall number by 180 from a March 2024 baseline. Despite overall number of Specials being lower than average the total number of hours completed by Specials has remained high with the number of hours completed in October 2025 being 6% higher than October 2024, this indicates that the Specials that we have are more active.

We continue to explore specialist volunteer roles across force, currently developing volunteer roles in the Mounted Unit and Forensics.

Wellbeing:

WMP officers and staff must have modern, effective equipment appropriate to a diverse workforce to perform their roles safely, effectively and efficiently.

The Occupational Health (OH) and Wellbeing team have had some early conversations with the WMP uniform team relating to the uniform and equipment options available to those working for WMP. We are supporting work already underway, to ensure that Uniform and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is both efficient and effective. Better data capture from management referrals, is ongoing within OH to ensure that any changes are delivering the required change and promoting safety for all. The Women in Policing association are also heavily involved in conversations associated to the uniform issued to female colleagues. Feedback has indicated some have experienced health challenges relating to the fit of PPE, and for female colleagues this is the focus of the changes being made.

WMP to invest in continued welfare, well-being and professional development of police officers and staff

WMP continue to invest in the welfare, wellbeing and professional development of its officers and staff through a broad programme that reflects both national and local priorities. The force places emphasis on preventative approaches to mental and physical health, this is supported by extensive occupational health provision, access to psychological support services, early-intervention pathways and specialist trauma support for those exposed to distressing incidents. WMP promotes a culture that encourages openness around mental health and aims to reduce stigma by integrating wellbeing into daily supervisory practice and leadership

expectations. The force has dedicated wellbeing leads and trauma-informed practice boards. Wellbeing initiatives range from lifestyle and financial wellbeing advice to peer support networks, chaplaincy engagement and partnerships with national services such as Oscar Kilo.

Access to professional development is fundamental to building skills, capability and professional confidence across the organisation. Within the Learning Delivery framework, officer and staff welfare and wellbeing are embedded as core priorities, recognising the direct link between wellbeing, performance and sustainable operational effectiveness. This is delivered through:

- Embedding Wellbeing from Entry to Leadership – including new recruits’ training, as well as reinforced at key career transition points, including promotion.
- Operational Excellence Programme – Newly Promoted Sergeants and Inspectors Programme, designed to strengthening operational competence through high-quality, ensuring supervisors are equipped to support their own wellbeing and that of their teams.
- The “golden thread” of wellbeing awareness and early warning is also reinforced through related learning inputs, including Supporting staff through Professional Standards Department investigations. As well as post-incident management and aftercare procedures.
- Supervisor and Manager Development Programme – aimed at first line leaders includes a dedicated module focused on supporting and maintaining welfare and wellbeing. Objectives include; Creating and sustaining a psychologically safe working environment. Building confidence and resilience in oneself and others.

In response to the most recent national engagement and wellbeing survey results, WMP has commissioned a wider Learning Needs Analysis. This resulted in the introduction of structured, wellbeing-focused CPD for CI’s and Insp, and police staff equivalents, commencing in January 2026.

WMP to deliver against the Police Covenant prioritising the physical and mental health of the workforce and ensuring trauma-informed training for frontline supervisors

Under the national training framework (driven by the Covenant, and implemented by the College of Policing), new training has been rolled out for all new police recruits, highlighting mental health, trauma support, diet/nutrition, sleep, and physical fitness.

WMP’s own “Right Person, Right Care” emphasises improving training and leadership for operational officers to safeguard mental-health and public-safety outcomes. Circa 500 frontline officers and staff have been trained in “Trauma Informed Practice,” delivered by Barnardo’s.

Well-being programmes will support WMP officers and staff investigating high-harm offences and those who experience violence on duty

Those exposed to violence, serious crime scenes, or high-risk investigations are covered by a targeted welfare offer, we have adopted Op Hampshire and use this as the force response to ensure all staff and officer welfare needs are met when they are assaulted, including tracking “high frequency teams” that are repeatedly victims of assaults and using that data to inform resource deployment and risk management. Officers/staff who are assaulted are entitled to welfare follow-up: medical care, OH referral, trauma support, and workplace adjustments e.g. temporary reduction in duties, recovery time.

Appropriate support for leavers and the families of officers and staff

WMP provides a range of support to families of officers and staff, and to those who are leaving WMP. For families, support is most visible during and after critical incidents, when WMP offer assistance that often extends to dependents when appropriate. Trauma support practitioners, including TRiM-trained staff, help families understand the possible emotional and psychological effects of trauma and advise on coping strategies. In cases of serious injury or death, a dedicated Family Liaison Officer is appointed, acting as the main point of contact and ensuring that families receive clear information, guidance and emotional support. WMP also helps families navigate complex processes such as compensation, pensions, benefits and entitlements and maintains connection through pastoral care, memorial support and engagement with charities such as Care of Police Survivors (COPS) and the Police Dependents' Trust. Those retiring are offered pre-retirement courses that cover financial planning, pension information and lifestyle changes.

The force conducts exit interviews and welfare check-ins for all leavers, giving individuals the chance to share concerns, reflect on their experience and request additional support. This combined framework of wellbeing, trauma support, pastoral care and structured transition helps uphold the organisation's commitment to the Police Covenant and to the long-term welfare of both its workforce and their loved ones.

Diversity:

WMP will recruit, retain, progress and support Black officers, building a diverse and representative workforce

Training and progression are central to this approach, our Learning Delivery Framework includes a dedicated strategic pillar focused on fostering an inclusive development culture, ensuring fair and equitable access to learning opportunities and embedding inclusion across all programmes. This framework is specifically designed to reduce barriers to progression and ensure development pathways are transparent, accessible and supportive. Complementing this, the Leadership Delivery Framework incorporates a Talent and Inclusion Gateway, which enables the identification and targeted support of officers from underrepresented groups through the Talent Management Board. This gateway provides access to national and internal development opportunities, including the College of Policing Aspire programme, internal positive action initiatives and locally agreed inclusion priorities, enabling Black officers to access tailored support at key transition points in their careers.

The Race Action Plan workstream, led by ACC O'Hara continues its focus upon black and black heritage officers and staff. Recruitment, retention and progression are key measures within the 'Investment' strand and work continues to progress in this area. In the 2024 attraction campaign we targeted promoting careers in WMP to Black and Black Heritage communities. It takes time for applicants to work through the selection and onboarding processes, but we have seen some improvements in the new recruits from Black and Black Heritage backgrounds over the course of the year. In the 6 months from 1st December 2024 to 30th May we had 12 Police Officers start with West Midlands Police from Black and Black Heritage communities in the 6 months from 1st June 2025 to 30th November 2025 this increased to 18. We are continuing to engage with a range of marketing agencies that have experience with engaging with Black and Black Heritage Communities to promote careers in WMP. Our Outreach Delivery Plan

targets all our outreach recruitment activity on improving representation and recruiting a workforce that is representative of our communities with a specific focus on Black and Black Heritage candidates

Work to recruit, retain, and support officers from diverse communities, ensuring WMP reflects the people and communities it serves, creating a more inclusive and representative workforce

Overall, force representation continues to increase, this has been the trend since 2019 with an increase of 4.4% over the period. This can be seen in the table below:

Staff Type	Ethnic Minority Group %						
	Nov-24	Dec-23	Jan-23	Jan-22	Jan-21	Jan-20	Jan-19
Police Officer	14.2%	13.9%	13.7%	12.9%	11.9%	11.0%	10.5%
Police Staff	19.8%	18.3%	17.7%	17.1%	16.0%	15.3%	13.7%
PCSO	14.4%	12.9%	11.8%	11.1%	12.2%	13.6%	13.7%
Specials	30.7%	31.0%	29.2%	27.2%	30.0%	29.1%	27.0%
Force Total	16.3%	15.6%	15.3%	14.6%	13.7%	12.9%	11.9%

The proportion of officers from ethnic minority groups on the 1st April 2025 was 17.7%, the proportion that were from Black heritage was 3.49% and the proportion that were female was 37.2%. In the past two years, 20.7% of our Police Officer joiners have been from ethnic minority groups, 4.6% have been from Black and Black Heritage backgrounds and 39.7% have been female, rates more than the current demographics of the Police Officer workforce.

WMP has launched its new Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy in December 2025, to achieve our mission to provide a service that works for local people, engages with our communities and is an employer of choice, we must create a representative organisation that demonstrates the highest level of integrity, fairness and respect towards each other as colleagues and the public we serve.

The Strategy is carefully designed to incorporate the focus of the College of Policing and NPCC "Culture and Inclusion Strategy" but using a model of cultural competence to deliver effective and lasting change. It has ten strategic objectives, five people focused (internal) and five communities focused (external), supported by several measures which will allow us to capture impact and progress. It also has six pillars for progress; gender, race, religion, LGBTQ+, Neurodiversity and Disability, and our Race Action Plan, each led by a Force Executive Team member to ensure that diversity and under representation is considered in its widest sense. Our governance structure has been revised, and we are utilising a comprehensive data pack to generate discussion and drive action, working closely with our Staff Networks and Associations.

One of our inclusion initiatives is the Step-Up Programme which provides targeted leadership development for police constables from underrepresented groups who were unsuccessful at their most recent promotion process. This focused intervention offers tailored support, coaching and development opportunities, helping individuals to strengthen leadership

capability, build resilience. Success rates are monitored through all promotion processes; in the past 12 months officers being promoted were representative of the overall workforce.

In the 2025 Inspector process, 38% of all officers promoted to Inspector were female and 9% were from an Ethnic Minority Group. The success rates for females was 60%, which was significantly above the average success rate of 49%; the success rates for ethnic minority groups was 50% which was slightly greater than the average success rate.

In the 2025 Sergeant process, 39% of all officers promoted to Sergeant were female and 12% were from an Ethnic Minority Group. The success rates for females was 71% which was above the average success rate of 67%; the success rates for ethnic minority groups was 66% which was slightly lower than the average success rate.

Development & Strategy:

WMP to undertake workforce planning, to ensure the right resources and skills are available to meet demand, enhance efficiency and deliver effective outcomes.

WMP has a 10-point delivery plan for its workforce planning and governance strategy to address the specific requirements aligned to the Police and Crime Plan. It also ensures alignment with national requirements and opportunities ranging from officer uplift, College of Policing guidance, NPCC direction and key benchmarking. It ensures a focus on integration and collaboration of any short- and medium-term financial planning including digital, estates and capability strategies. On a more tactical level the approach focuses on ensuring maximised operational capacity, capability and resilience at its core, maximising service to the public and ensuring the force can deliver its overarching vision.

Through workforce governance and planning WMP ensures it has a robust understanding of current and projected demand, uplift requirements, promotional processes and the critical continual fluctuation of workforce establishments. Detailed assessment of current workforce capability, including specialist skills, leadership capacity, and future skill gaps is continually assessed and understood. Significant work has been undertaken in respect of Detective capability with the total number of detectives required across force quantified and a recruitment and training plan that closes the gap.

Workforce Governance provides a critical holistic force overview to ensure there is an accurate assessment of establishment, vacancy factors, requests to recruit and posting information. Continually forecasting joiners, leavers, abstractions, and internal movements providing assurance processes to maintain establishment versus funded strength. Using a single version of the truth via integrated QLIK dashboards, practical user applications and analytical insights, Workforce planning give assurance to the forces and drive a culture of self-serve where possible to deliver greater efficiency and overall impact.

The workforce planning document directly informs training department planning by identifying current and forecasted workforce requirements, enabling targeted decisions on where training resources are deployed and which learning and skills priorities must be developed. This is reinforced through regular attendance at portfolio boards and close working with business leads. Core specialist skills are identified as KPIs and are tracked to provide assurance of capability and capacity. The external training budget is a critical enabler in the process, allowing specialist and hard-to-replace skills, that cannot be delivered in house.

Agile and flexible force that can embrace change, with strong recruitment practices and succession planning to develop future leaders

This is delivered through strong recruitment practices and structured succession planning to ensure continuity in critical roles and the development of future leaders. Local People Development Boards routinely review critical roles, skill gaps and emerging risks, with local HR teams providing direct support to develop and maintain effective succession plans. At a force-wide-level, the Force Talent Strategy provides a coherent framework for the identification, development and progression of talent, with the Talent Management Board holding accountability for talent pools and overseeing the development of future leaders to meet current and future organisational needs.

Clear people strategy focused on all necessary policing disciplines, including science, technology and innovation to attract and train the right talent while retaining experienced WMP officers and staff to ensure capability and resilience

Technology enabled learning is embedded within training delivery, including the use of innovative approaches such as virtual reality within the new recruit's programme. The force actively keeps pace with emerging technology and specialist operational requirements, including the rollout of new Taser devices, with associated training and accreditation. Innovation in learning design is well embedded, enabling efficient, engaging and agile learning that supports career-long development, retention of experienced officers and staff, and readiness to meet evolving policing demands.

There has been a refocus on better understanding turnover and attrition over the past year.

Say & Stay was relaunched in January 2025 which gives any officer or police staff the opportunity to speak to an independent person. The aim is to understand their reasons for considering leaving the force and to put interventions in place to improve retention

Our Attrition and Retention Strategy identifies the key workforce retention priorities for the force and explores the preventative actions that can be deployed to minimise the organisational impact. The Board reports directly to the Strategic People Governance Board which includes Chief Officers.

From November 2025 exit interviews have been standardised across force and refocused to better help us understand the reasons people leave WMP. Questions have been designed to have alignment with the national wellbeing survey so that we can make comparisons across engagement tools. Offering an exit interview to all leavers is now mandated with local HR receiving reports of leavers so that they can schedule interviews.

Mechanisms to capture lessons learned from operations, HR processes, misconduct panels, and staff feedback will be critical to deliver and evidence organisational learning. Incorporation of HMICFRS findings and NPCC national guidance and annual reviews of workforce strategy against outcomes and environmental changes will also be important to ensure workforce planning impactful.

WMP will continue to be an accredited Living Wage Foundation employer

West Midlands Police continue to be an accredited Real Living Wage employer, as such we will always pay equivalent to, or greater than the RLW rate as determined by the living wage foundation, supporting colleagues in the lowest pay scales. This usually requires a twice annually review of pay rates and pay scales.

2. Achievements and Challenges

The main achievements delivered in the last 12 months relate to the progress realised since the implementation of the People Services structure in November 2024, these include:

- Establishment and delivery of new Reasonable adjustments policy and review panel
- Implementation of the OH OPAS2 system upgrade
- Tighter control over absence management procedure due to local HR ownership
- Uplift maintenance target achieved and on track to deliver growth target by Mar 26
- Reduction in appointment wait time and HR being embedded into OH process

When reflecting on Challenges, the following continue to be worked through and managed:

1. Maintaining ongoing high Recruitment volume delivery across whole Onboarding process
2. Retention of officers and numbers of restricted officer numbers
3. Wellbeing of Inspectors through to senior officers due to operational demand
4. Planning and achieving training demands without interrupting service delivery and training of new recruits
5. HR admin and IT sophistication challenges

3. Actions undertaken to address challenges

1. Mitigation in place to deliver but this will always remain a high priority
2. Plan in place through the Attrition & Retention board with expected progress over the next 12 months, delivered through Local HR and Workforce leads
3. CPD and focused support in place for early 2026 for these ranks
4. Regular collaborative working across People Services directorate and continuous approach to service delivery
5. Planned staged review of HR admin processes to streamline wherever possible

4. Future Work

The force is progressing the procurement of a new learning management system (LMS), recognising current gaps in provision and the significant organisational and learner benefits that a fit-for-purpose LMS will bring in supporting learning, skills acquisition and visibility of capability across the force in a modern, data-driven way. Ongoing investment in the training estate at Tally Ho further supports effective learning and tactical delivery, providing appropriate facilities for specialist and operational training.

5. Financial Implications

The People services SLT have worked hard with Finance colleagues to support the balanced finance picture for 26/27 finding efficiencies in External training budgets and officer entry routes.

6. Legal Implications

There are no current legal implications in consideration of the details outlined in this paper.

7. Equality Implications

Our HR policies and processes ensure we deliver our requirement to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty

Author(s): **Alex Godden**

Job Title: **Service Director People Services**

Appendix 3 – Excerpts from the An Equal and Fair West Midlands AGB paper

1. **Ensure that WMP is more representative of the people and communities it serves by increasing the percentage of Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers and police staff from under-represented groups, including women and racially minoritised people (E&FWM KPI)**

Action ref 195: WMP will recruit, retain, progress and support Black officers, building a diverse and representative workforce.

Action ref 202: Work to recruit, retain, and support officers from diverse communities, ensuring WMP reflects the people and communities it serves, creating a more inclusive and representative workforce.

WMP continues to strengthen its commitment to building a workforce that reflects the communities it serves. This includes focused action to recruit, retain, progress, and support Black officers and staff, as well as colleagues from all underrepresented groups.

In 2025, WMP launched the Say and Stay Scheme, a confidential listening service for colleagues who may be considering leaving the organisation. This approach enables early intervention, allowing the force to understand concerns, identify trends, and take action to improve retention.

The scheme is complemented by the exit interview process, which provides further insight into workforce experiences. In line with Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) commitments, Black and Black heritage colleagues are offered the option for their Say and Stay or exit interview to be conducted by the PRAP Coordinator or a Force Executive Team lead. This ensures culturally competent support and creates a safe space for honest feedback.

To provide strategic oversight, WMP has also established an Attrition and Retention Board, chaired by People Services. This board monitors workforce stability, identifies risks, and ensures the force maintains a sustainable, skilled, and motivated workforce.

WMP recognises that recruitment alone does not create a representative workforce, retention and progression are equally critical. To complement external positive action activity, the force has developed an internal positive action plan focused on empowering colleagues from underrepresented groups to thrive and progress into leadership roles.

This work aims to turn recruitment gains into long-term representation by:

- Increasing access to development opportunities
- Supporting career pathways
- Building confidence and capability among aspiring leaders
- Addressing barriers that disproportionately affect Black officers and other minority groups

The diversity and representation of the workforce is regularly reviewed through several governance forums, ensuring transparency and accountability:

- People Services Governance Board

- Police Race Action Plan Board
- DEI Progress Boards
- DEI Governance Board

These structures ensure that workforce data, trends, and outcomes are scrutinised at senior levels, enabling targeted action where disparities are identified.

Action ref: 211: Work with WMP to address racial disparities in misconduct and professional standards processes, improving support for Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff.

WMP continues to strengthen its approach to identifying, understanding, and addressing racial disparities within misconduct, complaints, and professional standards processes. This work is essential to ensuring that Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff are treated fairly and receive appropriate support throughout these procedures.

Although the overall number of grievances submitted in 2025 was relatively small (85 cases), the data shows that colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to submit a grievance than those identifying as White British. Importantly, this disproportionality appears only within the *aggrieved* group; it is not reflected in the subjects of grievances, nor does race emerge as a theme within the submissions or outcomes.

To ensure consistency and early identification of any conduct issues, cases involving bullying, harassment, or discrimination are reviewed by the Dignity at Work Triage Panel. This panel brings together Employee Relations, Diversity & Inclusion, and the Professional Standards Department (PSD), ensuring that each case is directed into the correct process and handled appropriately from the outset.

Grievance data is routinely shared with key internal stakeholders, including the Police Federation, Trade Unions, and Staff Networks, through the Stakeholder Engagement Group. It is also reviewed within the DEI Progress Boards, where further work can be commissioned as required.

In late 2025, People Services established a Learning the Lessons Board to examine themes, trends, and insights emerging from grievance cases. This provides a structured mechanism for organisational learning, enabling actions such as targeted training, policy revision, or deeper analysis of emerging issues.

Ethnicity data is monitored at every stage of PSD processes, from initial referral to final outcome. Current data shows:

- **No disproportionality in public complaints**, with Black and Asian officers and staff represented proportionately.
- **Disproportionality in internal referrals**, where Black and Asian colleagues are more likely to be reported into PSD by internal sources.

To understand this disparity, PSD's Prevention and Intervention Team commissioned an academic research study with Staffordshire University. The findings indicated that Black and Asian officers and staff were less likely to receive local, lower-level interventions. Instead,

supervisors appeared more inclined to escalate matters to PSD, potentially due to a lack of confidence in managing issues directly.

The academic findings have directly shaped WMP's response. Key actions include:

- Enhanced training and support for first- and second-line supervisors to build confidence in local intervention.
- Development of a network of 158 Standards Ambassadors—trained colleagues outside PSD who provide peer support and help resolve issues locally before escalation.
- Strengthened PSD training that explicitly highlights disproportionality and equips supervisors to intervene fairly and consistently.

The Head of PSD chairs a Regional Scrutiny Panel across the West Midlands forces, enabling shared learning, consistency in decision-making, and identification of good practice.

Internally, the composition of the Misconduct Cadre is reviewed annually to ensure appropriate representation. Regular training supports consistent, transparent outcomes in misconduct hearings.

Officers and staff involved in misconduct or grievance processes receive support from:

- Federation or Trade Union representatives
- Staff Association Networks, including BAPA, the Sikh Police Association, and AMP

PSD also holds dedicated engagement meetings with these networks, sharing anonymised case studies, discussing disproportionality data, and seeking feedback to improve processes. The Head of PSD attends network AGMs to maintain open dialogue and ensure racially minoritised colleagues have direct access to senior leadership.

2. Ensure WMP implements the National and West Midlands Police Race Action Plans (E&FWM KPI)

Action ref 194 and 352: Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the National Police Race Action Plan, and the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan.

The Police Race Action Plan sets out changes across policing to improve outcomes for Black people who work within or interact with policing, and WMP continues to make meaningful progress in delivering both the National Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) and the locally developed West Midlands Police Race Action Plan (WMPRAP)

The force has prioritised building robust foundations for sustainable change, focusing on data integrity, governance, workforce representation and strengthened community scrutiny. This approach reflects a commitment not only to compliance, but to long-term cultural transformation. Please find attached the WMPRAP Plan on a Page at appendix 4.

Building a Robust Performance Framework

WMP has worked closely with the national PRAP team as an early adopter of the Maturity Matrix, a research-based performance framework designed to assess progress towards anti-racism. The Matrix supports structured self-assessment against defined standards, enables informed community scrutiny and provides a mechanism for benchmarking progress. Through early adoption, WMP has influenced the development of this national tool, positioning the force as a constructive contributor to shaping how anti-racism is measured across policing.

Improving Data Quality and Transparency

Recognising that poor data quality presents a national barrier to addressing disproportionality, WMP has implemented Operation Jigsaw, a force-wide behavioural change campaign aimed at improving the recording of ethnicity, sex and gender. Accurate data underpins evidence-based decision making, enables reliable disproportionality analysis and strengthens organisational accountability. This work is particularly significant for PRAP workstreams focused on policing powers and internal workforce outcomes, where precision and transparency are critical.

Cultural Education and Organisational Learning

The force has invested significantly in training and cultural education to deepen understanding of Black history, lived experience and structural racism. All officers and staff have received 'Learning From Our Black History', which has been positively received. Nigel Best's 'A Lived Experience' programme is mandatory for new joiners and response officers, embedding awareness early in operational careers. In addition, Project Seshat, delivered in partnership with the University of Warwick in 2025, has introduced creative and reflective learning methodologies to operational colleagues. Together, these initiatives strengthen

cultural competence and reinforce WMP's ambition to become an explicitly anti-racist organisation.

Workforce Representation and Positive Action

Workstream 1 of WMPRAP provides quarterly updates to the Gold Board on recruitment, progression and retention of Black and Black heritage colleagues. This has led to refinements in joining processes, promotion pathways and the introduction of tailored 'Say and Stay' and exit interview mechanisms. These measures ensure that improvements in recruitment translate into sustained representation and progression.

The other workstreams address; powers and procedures; trust and reconciliation, and safety and victimisation. Communications and engagement is also a key commitment.

Governance and Organisational Accountability

WMP has established a comprehensive governance structure to ensure clear accountability from frontline teams through to senior leadership. Each WMPRAP workstream is led by a Chief Superintendent or Superintendent, reporting quarterly to the Executive Lead, ACC O'Hara, via the WMPRAP Gold Board. A funded WMPRAP Coordinator provides continuous oversight, tracking delivery, monitoring progress and ensuring alignment across workstreams. This structure ensures accountability from frontline teams through to the most senior levels of the organisation.

In addition, the WMPRAP SPOC network has been reinvigorated, with SPOCs reporting into Workstream 3 on local activity

In 2025, annual WMPRAP Roadshows were introduced, requiring departmental senior leaders to present evidence of local delivery. The WMPRAP Single Point of Contact (SPOC) network has also been reinvigorated, strengthening local implementation and reporting lines into central governance structures. This layered framework ensures anti-racism commitments are operationalised across the organisation rather than remaining at policy level.

Community Engagement and Independent Scrutiny

Engagement with Black communities is embedded through multiple mechanisms.

- The African Caribbean Reference Group (ACRG) meets bi-monthly, receiving WMPRAP updates and providing constructive challenge as critical friends. Senior leaders attend regularly to seek feedback and insight.
- In partnership with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, we recruited an Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board (ISOB) in September 2025. This group comprises paid community experts who will scrutinise Gold Board documentation, progress reports and Maturity Matrix updates. Full operational capability is expected by March 2026.
- At local level, each Local Policing Area has been tasked with establishing a Black and Black Heritage Independent Advisory Group to support delivery and provide direct feedback into WMPRAP governance structures.

Public transparency has also been strengthened. WMP's Single Online Home has been updated to improve reporting on WMPRAP-related performance measures, including use of force, stop and search and crime data. Internally, partnership working between WMPRAP leads and the Black and Asian Police Association (BAPA) has supported joint initiatives such as Black Inclusion Week, Black History Month and Windrush commemorations, reinforcing internal and external community confidence. Collectively, these arrangements ensure that Black communities can influence, scrutinise and shape the force's anti-racism work in a structured and meaningful way.

Managing Risk Amid National Changes

Recent restructuring of the national PRAP team presents risks, including the discontinuation of national initiatives such as the 'Our Black Workforce' survey, reduced central oversight of the Maturity Matrix and potential reputational impact on local PRAP teams. There is also an increased likelihood that forces will need to self-fund future development activity. Despite these changes, WMP has maintained momentum due to strong internal leadership, organisational stability and clearly embedded governance structures. The force's progress is underpinned by a supportive culture and visible senior commitment to anti-racism.

Safeguarding Momentum

To sustain progress, it will be critical to:

- Maintain Executive Lead, Coordinator and Workstream Lead roles
- Embed WMPRAP metrics within corporate performance monitoring frameworks

- Ensure continued oversight at governance boards
- Build internal ownership so WMPRAP becomes integrated within routine business rather than operating as a standalone programme

Long-term success will be evidenced when WMPRAP delivery is self-sustaining, with accountability embedded across the organisation and anti-racism principles reflected consistently in operational practice, workforce outcomes and community confidence.

Key Areas of Progress include;

- Positive Action, Recruitment and Workforce Representation.

Workstream 1 of WMPRAP provides quarterly updates to the Gold Board on:

- Recruitment
- Progression
- Retention of Black and Black heritage colleagues

This has led to refinements in:

- Joining processes
- Promotion pathways
- Say and Stay / exit interview options tailored for Black colleagues

These changes ensure that recruitment gains translate into long-term representation.

- Recruitment of an Independent Oversight and Scrutiny Board took place in November 2025. The overarching purpose is to
- Strengthen public accountability and transparency in policing.
- Improve community confidence by ensuring that policing services are fair, equitable and proportionate
- Provide independent scrutiny of key areas such as the Police Race Action Plan (PRAP), stop and search, Use of force, and the experiences of Black communities in their interactions with the police.
- Offer evidence-led, independent insight and recommendations that inform the PCC's holding to account processes.
- The ISOB represents a central part of the Commissioner's commitment to create a fair, inclusive and accountable policing system, where communities are not only listened to but actively influence the improvement agenda.

The Board will provide a visible and transparent layer of external oversight. It will review police activity through an independent lens, reducing the risk of insular decision-making and ensuring that scrutiny is credible to communities. It will add an additional layer of community-led scrutiny to the PCC's scrutiny process, ensuring fairness, equity and disproportionality are considered alongside operational effectiveness and the lived experience of communities.

It will also enhance transparency through independent, published observations and recommendations and provide a structured mechanism for the PCC to triangulate evidence between police data, internal assurance, and lived community experience. It will also encourage learning and improvement through co-production rather than adversarial oversight.

- West Midlands Police launched Operation Jigsaw on 1 December 2025.

This initiative will drive behaviour change and improve compliance with the recording of ethnicity, sex, and gender. The initial focus is on targeted communication and officer engagement, ensuring that staff understand both the requirement and the importance of accurate data capture.

In the longer term, Operation Jigsaw will expand to include other protected characteristics. This will enable the force to build a more complete picture of disproportionality across the criminal justice system and take informed action to address it.

Performance improvements in ethnicity recording are now monitored weekly through the Accountability Report and monthly via Performance Day. Early indicators show progress in the recording of ethnicity for both victims and suspects.

This strengthened approach to data quality underpins WMP's ability to:

- Understand where disproportionality exists
- Address the root causes
- Challenge practices that may contribute to unfair outcomes
- Regularly scrutinise decision-making to ensure transparency and accountability

By embedding these principles, WMP is building the foundations necessary to drive sustained improvements and ensure fairness and justice for all communities.

West Midlands Police Race Action Plan

Improving policing for Black people



West Midlands Police is committed to providing a service that is anti-racist and trusted by Black people

We will create an anti-racist, inclusive culture throughout West Midlands Police for our employees and the communities we serve. Actively seeking to understand the lived experiences of Black and Black Heritage communities, we will continue to reflect on and learn from history and identify and respond effectively to current challenges.

We are focused on changing this through the following four areas:

Culture and workforce

1. Increase overall representation through recruitment, retention & progression of individuals of Black and Black Heritage
2. Implement anti-racist & Black History training packages to create an inclusive culture, support shared understanding and promote allyship
3. Provide support for Black and Black Heritage colleagues in their careers through empathetic leadership, resilience development and aftercare following hate crime
4. Review complaints, misconduct & grievance processes and data addressing inequalities where appropriate
5. Ensure Black and Black Heritage colleagues' views are heard and acted upon through Our Black Workforce Survey, staff networks and internal advisory groups

Powers and procedures

1. Refine data collection, recording & analysis processes to assist with identifying and understanding disproportionality
2. Deliver robust scrutiny through internal use of force / police powers panels and effective supervision to increase accountability and organisational learning
3. Ensure members of Black and Black Heritage communities are provided opportunities to scrutinise our use of powers & procedures through a WMP Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board (ISOB) and Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs)
4. Produce data and engage with Black and Black Heritage communities utilising an "Explain or Reform" approach regarding powers & procedures
5. Incorporate racial and cultural issues / considerations into training courses and products to support staff in delivering an informed and fair service

Trust and reconciliation

1. Engage with Black and Black Heritage communities in a meaningful and transparent manner
2. Demonstrate an ability to conduct outreach work in Black and Black Heritage communities to understand trauma and re-establish positive links
3. Understand Black and Black Heritage communities and respond to their needs through a "You said, we did" model
4. Actively report on the work undertaken within WMP, gather feedback and consider this in our service delivery
5. Develop a framework whereby we can monitor engagement, the associated impact and overall confidence in policing from Black and Black Heritage communities

Safety and victimisation

1. Improve data collection and recording processes to support effective analysis of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability in Black and Black Heritage communities
2. Utilise partners, subject matter experts and research to understand and address the wider context surrounding issues such as disproportionality and "Adultification"
3. Provide resources and training within our workforce to support colleagues in dealing with sensitive or complex matters affecting Black and Black Heritage communities
4. Improve the sense of security and safety in Black and Black Heritage communities through local policing efforts and positive engagement
5. Identify any barriers resulting in possible under-reporting of crime in Black and Black Heritage communities and implement measures to reduce this

Outcomes

- Protecting the public
- Increasing confidence
- Being recognised as an anti-racist organisation
- Improving lives of Black officers and staff

To find out more please visit westmidlands.police.co.uk



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

Police and Crime Panel

People

16 March 2026

Diversity

- Police Race Action Plan (Local and National)
- Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy
- Learning Delivery Framework
- Leadership Delivery Framework
- Step-Up Programme
- Staff Networks and Associations

Police Race Action Plan



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

West Midlands Police Race Action Plan Improving policing for Black people



West Midlands Police is committed to providing a service that is anti-racist and trusted by Black people

We will create an anti-racist, inclusive culture throughout West Midlands Police for our employees and the communities we serve. Actively seeking to understand the lived experiences of Black and Black Heritage communities, we will continue to reflect on and learn from history and identify and respond effectively to current challenges.

We are focused on changing this through the following four areas:



Culture and workforce

1. Increase overall representation through recruitment, retention & progression of individuals of Black and Black Heritage
2. Implement anti-racist & Black History training packages to create an inclusive culture, support shared understanding and promote allyship
3. Provide support for Black and Black Heritage colleagues in their careers through empathetic leadership, resilience development and aftercare following hate crime
4. Review complaints, misconduct & grievance processes and data addressing inequalities where appropriate
5. Ensure Black and Black Heritage colleagues' views are heard and acted upon through Our Black Workforce Survey, staff networks and internal advisory groups



Powers and procedures

1. Refine data collection, recording & analysis processes to assist with identifying and understanding disproportionality
2. Deliver robust scrutiny through internal use of force / police powers panels and effective supervision to increase accountability and organisational learning
3. Ensure members of Black and Black Heritage communities are provided opportunities to scrutinise our use of powers & procedures through a WMP Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board (ISOB) and Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs)
4. Produce data and engage with Black and Black Heritage communities utilising an "Explain or Reform" approach regarding powers & procedures
5. Incorporate racial and cultural issues / considerations into training courses and products to support staff in delivering an informed and fair service



Trust and reconciliation

1. Engage with Black and Black Heritage communities in a meaningful and transparent manner
2. Demonstrate an ability to conduct outreach work in Black and Black Heritage communities to understand trauma and re-establish positive links
3. Understand Black and Black Heritage communities and respond to their needs through a "You said, we did" model
4. Actively report on the work undertaken within WMP, gather feedback and consider this in our service delivery
5. Develop a framework whereby we can monitor engagement, the associated impact and overall confidence in policing from Black and Black Heritage communities



Safety and victimisation

1. Improve data collection and recording processes to support effective analysis of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability in Black and Black Heritage communities
2. Utilise partners, subject matter experts and research to understand and address the wider context surrounding issues such as disproportionality and "Adultification"
3. Provide resources and training within our workforce to support colleagues in dealing with sensitive or complex matters affecting Black and Black Heritage communities
4. Improve the sense of security and safety in Black and Black Heritage communities through local policing efforts and positive engagement
5. Identify any barriers resulting in possible under-reporting of crime in Black and Black Heritage communities and implement measures to reduce this

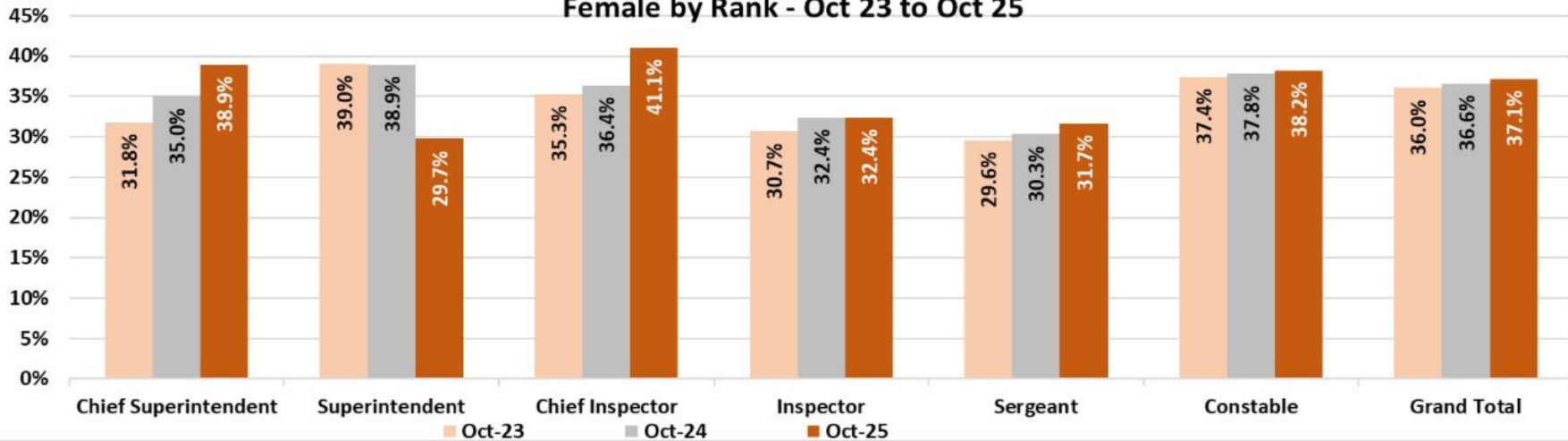
Outcomes

- Protecting the public
- Increasing confidence
- Being recognised as an employer of choice
- Improving lives of Black officers and staff

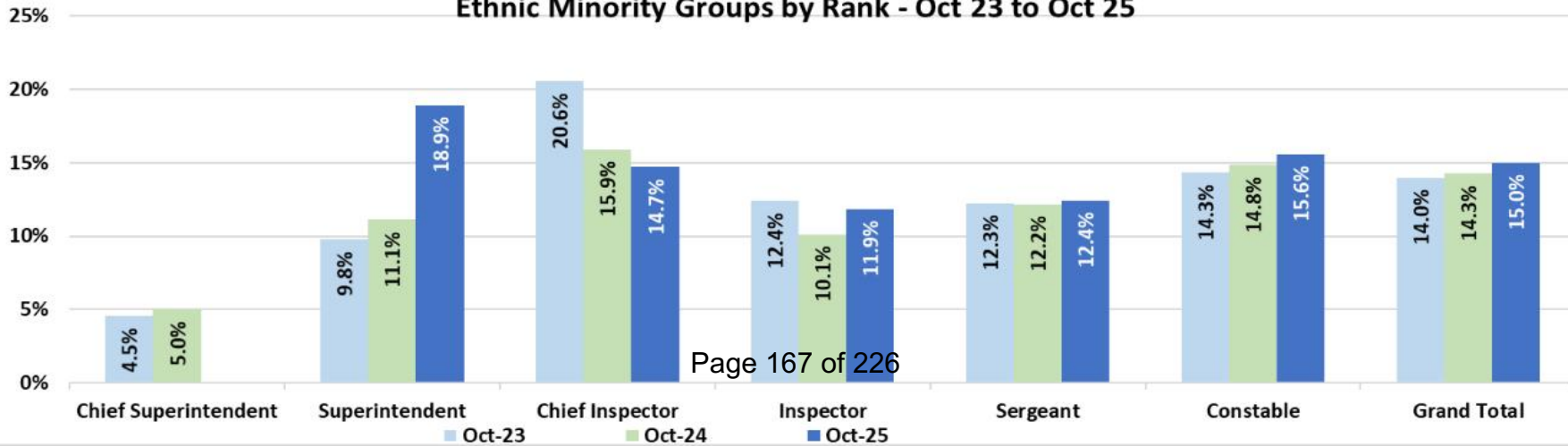
PRAP

- Early adopter of Maturity Matrix
- Operation Jigsaw
- Learning From Our Black History
- Project Sheshat
- Strong governance
- Ongoing community engagement

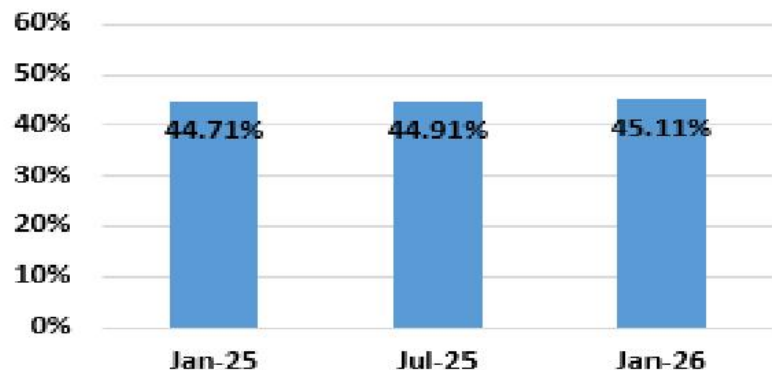
Female by Rank - Oct 23 to Oct 25



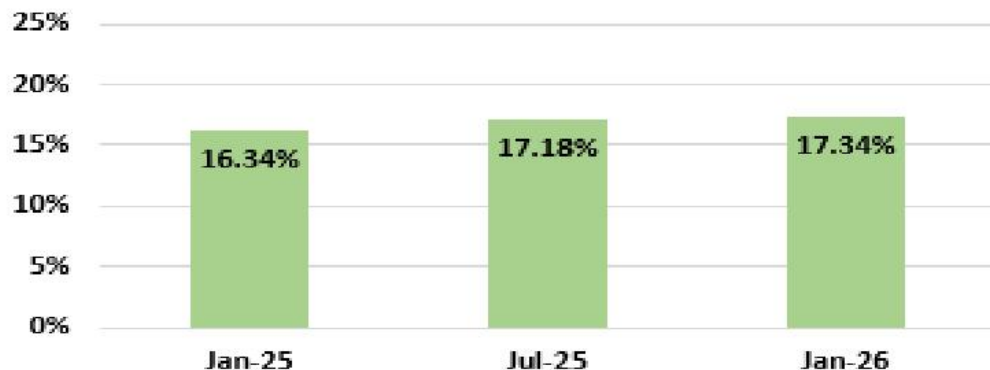
Ethnic Minority Groups by Rank - Oct 23 to Oct 25



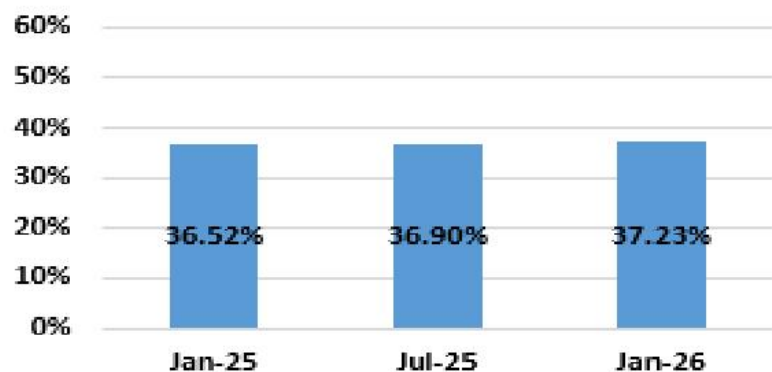
Female - Force Representation



Ethnic Minority - Force Representation



Female - Officer Representation



Ethnic Minority - Officer Representation



Workforce planning

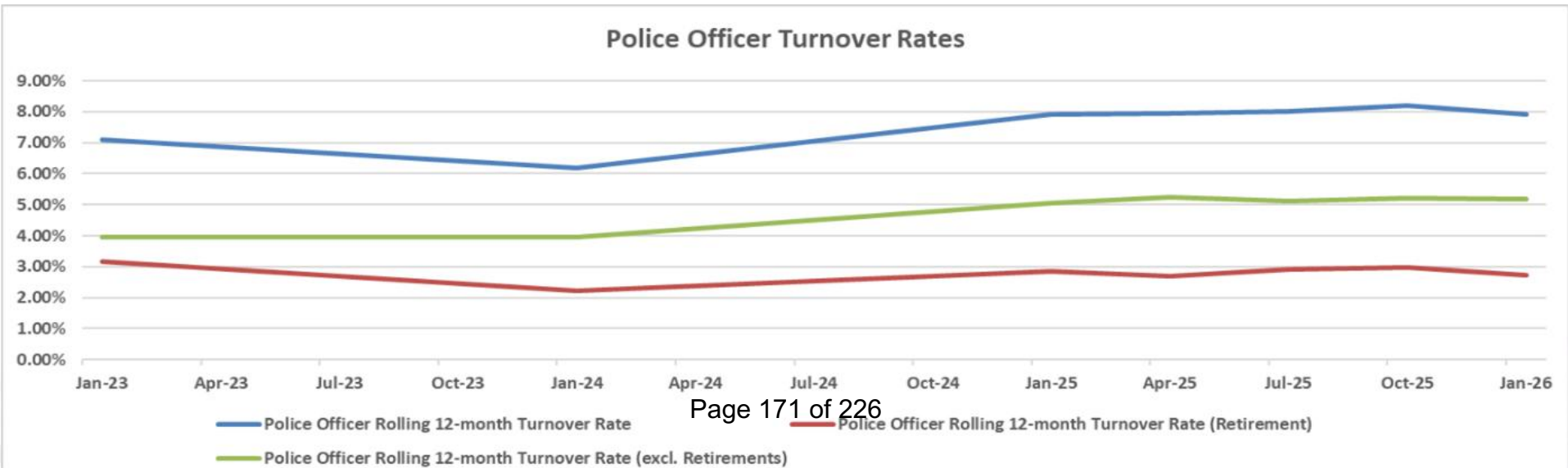
- 10 point delivery plan for workforce planning
- Local People Development Boards
- Force Talent Strategy
- Talent Management Board
- Supported by the right technology, equipment and estate

Retention

- Say and Stay
- Attrition and Retention Strategy and Board
- Exit Interviews
- Lessons learned from wider HR processes
- Living Wage Foundation Employer

Rolling 12 month turnover rates

Person Type	Turnover Rate	Jan-23	Jan-24	Jan-25	Apr-25	Jul-25	Oct-25	Jan-26
Police Officer	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	7.11%	6.19%	7.92%	7.96%	8.03%	8.20%	7.92%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (Retirement)	3.15%	2.22%	2.86%	2.70%	2.90%	2.99%	2.73%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (excl. Retirements)	3.96%	3.97%	5.06%	5.26%	5.12%	5.21%	5.19%
Police Staff	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	13.84%	13.36%	11.67%	10.98%	11.27%	11.23%	10.91%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (excl Joining Regular Force)	12.70%	11.43%	10.59%	10.12%	10.64%	10.61%	10.39%
PCSO	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	22.45%	35.79%	18.10%	14.88%	16.11%	18.44%	19.19%
	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate (excl Joining Regular Force)	12.06%	11.44%	9.03%	8.79%	8.35%	10.02%	9.73%
Specials	Rolling 12-month Turnover Rate	34.63%	46.47%	30.81%	27.21%	27.74%	29.79%	27.46%



Officer wellbeing

- Women in Policing helping to shape the uniform offer
- Wide ranging wellbeing offer
- Investment in officer learning and development
- Delivering against the Police Covenant

Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee



- 150 additional Officers – 40 recruited at mid year and on target for full 150 by end of March
- All new Officers spend 2 years in an LPA
- LPAs consistently resourced at above 99% of establishment
- PCSOs vacancy rate regularly below 3%
- DNO posting minimum 2 years and priority post which is immediately filled when vacated.

Questions

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Fraud and Online Crime

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel with an overview of the commitments made in relation to Fraud and Online Crime in the Police and Crime Plan 2025-29 (PCP), and what work has been undertaken so far, by the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), to achieve those commitments.

Introduction

- 1.2. The Panel asked for this report to cover the Fraud and Online Crime PCP commitments, with focus on these specific areas:
- 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 Orders and Sexual Risk Orders used to address online crimes
 - Campaign for and support stronger regulation of social media companies.
- 1.3. All of the individual PCP commitments related to Fraud and Online Crime are set out in full in Appendix 1.
- 1.4. Each commitment has a RAG rating, as set out in Appendix 1. As of January 2026, the current RAG rating, for all of the Fraud and Online Crime commitments is green. These commitments all share the same KPI, to Increase the Number of Fraud and Cyber Crime Reports. Good performance and progress has been made, and delivery is on track.

- 1.5. West Midlands Police (WMP) prepared a paper on Fraud and Online Harm for discussion at the Accountability and Governance Board (AGB) in December 2025. The AGB is designed for the PCC, Deputy PCC and the Victims' Advocate, to hold the Chief Constable and WMP to account for their delivery of the PCP. WMP's AGB paper on Fraud and Online Harm, is attached in full at Appendix 2. It should be read alongside this paper, for a full overview of activity.
- 1.6. What follows is an update on the six commitments in the PCP, that relate to Fraud and Online Harm, and are delivered by the OPCC and/or local partnerships. As noted above, the WMP delivered actions are covered in WMP's AGB report at Appendix 2.

2. Developing a 'public health' partnership approach to fraud and online crime

- 2.1. The OPCC delivers and works with WMP and within local partnerships to deliver the following two PCP commitments:
 - Local, 'public health' approach, that prevents fraud, including online fraud, supports effective investigations, and protects and supports victims.
 - Collaborate with partners to enhance capacity and capability, ensuring the police are equipped to tackle fraud criminal investigations.
- 2.2. Taking a public health approach is central to the Police and Crime Plan, and all the work of the PCC and OPCC. As such, our work on fraud and online harm focuses on effective prevention, diversion, awareness raising, protecting and supporting victims, as well as having a clear focus on ensuring effective enforcement. Effective partnership working with key stakeholders, is fundamental to delivering this approach.
- 2.3. The PCC launched the first ever public health approach to fraud on 30 January 2024, following the commissioning of a viability and recommendations report, to look into what a Public Health Approach to Fraud would look like in a West Midlands context, so we could develop a tailored regional response. This research was led by Professor Michael Levi at Cardiff University and is publicly available on the OPCC website. This approach continues to underpin our work on fraud, and has been recognised by other OPCCs and national organisations as best practice.
- 2.4. During 2025-6, our focus has been on establishing and developing positive and effective joint working relationships. The OPCC Policy Lead for fraud, the West Midlands Victims' Advocate, and the Regional Policy Manager who works to 4 PCC areas, West Midlands, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia, are working closely to join up and develop this approach, and maximise positive impact.

Fraud Prevention Partnership Board

- 2.5. A key element of delivering a local public health approach to more effectively prevent and tackle fraud, and support fraud victims across the West Midlands force area, is through relaunching the PCC's quarterly Fraud Prevention Partnership

Board: Fraud Board. The inaugural meeting of the relaunched Board was held in February 2026, chaired by the PCC.

2.6. The purpose and focus of the Fraud Board is:

- Maximising awareness about fraud
- Preventing people and businesses becoming victims of fraud
- Building resilience across the West Midlands
- Ensuring an effective response and support for the victims of fraud.

2.7. The intention of the Fraud Board is to develop strategic partnerships with businesses, statutory partners and community representatives, to help prevent fraud and protect the public and minimise the harm caused to communities in the West Midlands, from this increasingly prevalent crime. The Fraud Board will lead by example and model what effective local strategic action against fraud can look like.

2.8. There are two overarching aims of the Fraud Board, set out below:

1. To collaborate with WMP and the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) and support them in the service they provide to the West Midlands public. This meeting will give the Board space to:
 - Understand the threat from fraud in the West Midlands
 - Identify opportunities to strengthen the resilience of communities
 - Enable effective joining-up, awareness raising and prevention delivery
 - Support enhancements in the 'victims' journey' and the support of victims of fraud
 - Identify opportunities to influence government, businesses and other law enforcement partners both locally, regionally and nationally, to ensure an effective response to fraud.
2. To focus on developing an effective 'public health' approach to the prevention of fraud in the West Midlands. This board will provide a forum to discuss wider fraud protect and prevent programmes which can be piloted and developed, and potentially rolled-out across the West Midlands, and more widely. The membership of the board will then be tasked with both the oversight, review, implementation and promotion of these programmes.

2.9. The Fraud Board is chaired by the PCC, with attendance from the Deputy PCC and the West Midlands Victims' Advocate. Membership of the Fraud Board includes senior representation from WMP, including their Economic Crime and Cyber Crime Units.

2.10. Representation also includes regional and national fraud experts. Regionally, there is representation from the investigations and enforcement teams at the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) and Regional Economic Crime Unit (RECU), as well as ROCU's 3Ps Fraud Prevention Manager (3Ps refers to Protect, Prepare, Prevent fraud), and the Regional Fraud Development Officer, who works across

both RECU and ROCU. Nationally, there is representation from the National Fraud Co-ordinators Office (City of London Police).

- 2.11. Board membership will also include representation from an expert charity/third sector organisation, an academic, a member of the business community, a Local Authority representative, likely from both Community Safety and Public Health, Trading Standards, and the West Midlands Fraud Forum. It will also include an individual, who has lived experience of fraud victimisation.
- 2.12. Members will shape the development of the Board and membership will be regularly reviewed as the Fraud Board develops, to ensure the right partners are present. Board members will be expected to feed back progress and decisions made by the Fraud Board, to the organisations and forums they represent. Board members are also expected to be ambassadors for, and represent the Board, in the forums they engage with across the West Midlands.
- 2.13. The inaugural Fraud Board meeting was well attended by all key partners, who agreed the Board will play an important role in enabling a more effective joined-up approach, to tackling all aspects of fraud and supporting victims effectively. At the inaugural meeting, WMP's Economic Crime Unit and Cyber Crime Unit, and the Regional Organised Crime and Regional Economic Crime Units provided an overview and insight, into all aspects of fraud in the West Midlands region. The OPCC also provided an update on fraud-related actions in the PCP and the planned and current work underway to deliver that.
- 2.14. The Board welcomed and approved the OPCC proposal, that a fraud webinar programme be developed and delivered, to complement and run alongside the Fraud Board. This webinar programme will initially offer four fraud-related webinars each year, approximately one every quarter. This will be co-ordinated by the OPCC, working in partnership with the ROCU Regional Fraud Development Officer, and Professor Mike Levi at Cardiff University. Both are Fraud Board members and have agreed to facilitate webinar sessions on key relevant topics, to deepen learning and understanding about fraud and tackling it effectively. Webinar programme topics will be agreed by the Fraud Board. These webinars will be open to partners and more widely, and play a useful role in deepening the awareness and understanding of fraud, thus helping to better prevent and tackle it.

Other partnership work

- 2.15. The OPCC is working closely with the senior representatives at the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), in the Department of Health and Social Care for the Midlands region. They are committed to and keen to support the public health approach we are taking to tackling fraud. OHID see this as linking with a number of their key agendas, including the impact of poverty on health, gambling as a particular concern, safeguarding and public health. OHID reported that many vulnerable people on low incomes and living in poverty, are being targeted by those committing fraud, as well as gambling organisations. The impact of both is a further reduction of their low incomes, debt and worse health outcomes.

- 2.16. The OPCC is working closely with OHID to arrange a series of meetings in March, to determine the most appropriate representation on the Fraud Board from Public Health and Safeguarding health teams.
- 2.17. The OPCC is working with the Cyber Resilience Centre as part of our ongoing work on fraud and online harm, including the victims-focused work, and development of the Fraud Board.
- 2.18. The OPCC Policy Lead has quarterly meetings with the Regional Organised Crime Unit, the 3Ps Supervisor at the Regional Economic Crime Unit (RECU), the Regional Fraud Development Officer (City of London – national Fraud Lead Team), who is based with ROCU, fraud investigations teams in ROCU / RECU, the WM Cyber Crime Unit, and the ROCU Communications Lead.

Reporting fraud

- 2.19. A key part of the public health approach, is ensuring effective reporting and enforcement. Action Fraud transitioned to Report Fraud as the nationwide reporting mechanism for fraud in December 2025, and it was officially launched in January 2026. The OPCC attended the Action Fraud/Report Fraud briefing for PCCs regarding the transition. WMP (Economic Crime Unit and Communications) and ROCU/RECU are also in close contact with Report Fraud.
- 2.20. ROCU and WMP colleagues have reported significant issues with the technical transition of Action Fraud to Report Fraud and they, and other forces, have flagged these concerns to Report Fraud. Report Fraud have confirmed they are working to resolve the new technology issues, but communication is apparently limited, and the ongoing issues are problematic in terms of it's negative impact on enforcement and victim support delivery.
- 2.21. The latest fraud report data, as published on the Police and Crime Plan KPI dashboard, is up to the end of September 2025, so covers Action Fraud rather than Report Fraud data and shows an 8.37% increase as set out in table 1 below.

Table 1 – Fraud and Cybercrime Data Comparison, sourced from Police and Crime Plan KPI Dashboard

	Baseline (Year Ending March 2024)	Current (Year Ending September 2025)	Percentage Change
Total Number of Fraud and Cyber Crime Reports	15,877	17,206	+8.37

3. Preventing and supporting victims of fraud and online crime

- 3.1. A key commitment in the PCP is reducing the number of victims of fraud, especially repeat victims, and mitigating the financial and emotional harms of fraud. Once

someone is a victim of fraud, they are more likely to be targeted again and potentially become repeat victims.

- 3.2. ROCU reported to the OPCC that the details of fraud victims are sold by criminals via the 'dark web' for more money than the details of someone who has apparently not been a victim of fraud. It is vital, therefore, that the support provided to victims of fraud includes building their resilience and raising awareness of repeat targeting of victims. The teams must be resourced effectively to enable this work to be undertaken via ROCU 3Ps Team, WMP Economic Crime Unit and Neighbourhood Teams in all seven Local Policing Areas (LPAs), who all work with fraud victims. We also need to consider how we can enhance support for victims, via specialist charities and third sector organisations. The OPCC Policy Lead and West Midlands Victims' Advocate will be working jointly with ROCU, RECU and WMP to explore this.
- 3.3. In late 2025, the West Midlands Victims' Advocate held a 'Victims of Fraud' workshop. It brought together relevant prevention and enforcement partners, including representatives from ROCU, RECU, the Cyber Crime Unit, the national Fraud Lead/Co-ordinator at City of London Police, WMP's Economic Crime Unit, and OPCC Policy Leads, to start work on improving the victim's experience and support they receive. The OPCC, the West Midlands Victims' Advocate, and ROCU are working closely together to progress this.
- 3.4. The second meeting of the Fraud Board in March 2026, will focus on fraud victims and their journey. This is in recognition that all we do regarding tackling fraud must be with victims and their experience at its heart, and focused on preventing fraud victims, building resilience, supporting victims and working to prevent people becoming repeat victims of fraud. The agenda for this meeting will be developed by the Victims' Advocate and OPCC Policy Lead, in partnership with ROCU's 3Ps Team and Regional Fraud Development Officer.
- 3.5. Much fraud crime is online, or has significant online elements, and can be seen as 'online harm', which also crosses over with other high-harm crimes, such as exploitation. Romance Fraud is one example of this. October was 'Romance Fraud awareness month'. The OPCC policy and communications teams worked with ROCU and RECU colleagues to amplify and reinforce the ROCU / City of London Romance Fraud awareness raising campaign.
- 3.6. In February 2026, the PCC issued a public warning about romance fraud scams ahead of Valentine's Day, with information about how to stay safe online and recognise signs of fraud, how to report if you suspect fraud, and how to access victim support.

Preventing victims of fraud through raising public awareness

- 3.7. The OPCC are committed to raise public awareness of fraud prevention and common risks, both in person and online, and helping individuals to protect themselves, as per the PCP.
- 3.8. The OPCC is working with WMP Communications and Campaigns Leads, as well as communications leads in the other three regional police forces and the OPCCs

West Mercia, Warwickshire and Staffordshire, to ensure a joined-up approach and effective joint working on awareness-raising campaigns regarding fraud. This work has focused on:

- Developing an initial proposal for a regional four force-wide awareness raising campaign regarding fraud, which was seen by partners as the most effective approach and much needed at this time.
 - Seeking to utilise existing impactful communications and fraud awareness raising resources, including 'Stop, Think Fraud', to ensure best use of resources and a coherent approach.
 - Ensuring that WMP and the three other regional force's proposed awareness raising campaigns join up with Report Fraud's national launch and communications, to amplify their information and the reporting route, alongside the fraud-awareness raising and prevention approach.
- 3.9. The OPCC is currently finalising plans to run a joint regional force-wide awareness campaign for a month, likely to be in April with the dates to be confirmed.

4. Online crime/harm and children and young people

- 4.1. The OPCC are committed to work with partners, to raise children's awareness about the range of online crimes that could affect them. We are working with the Education, and Exploitation leads in the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP), and other partners, such as WMP and ROCU, to jointly ensure children understand the consequences and risks of online harm such as cyberbullying, becoming a money mule, making threats, sharing explicit imagery, grooming and online child sexual abuse.
- 4.2. The OPCC are currently researching best practice in engaging children and young people in online safety, raising their awareness, building resilience and preventing harm. The research is focused on regional and national practice by other OPCCs, police forces, third sector specialist charities, for example, Childline, NSPCC, Barnados, education settings and Ofcom, to identify approaches that are most successful. This is with a view to potentially utilising these existing materials and approaches in the West Midlands, to identify and potentially replicate effective partnerships to deliver this work, and to help inform any awareness campaigns that the OPCC, VRP, WMP and other partners may decide to deliver. This work is being done in liaison with the VRP, the Youth Commissioners and OPCC and WMP communications and campaigns teams.
- 4.3. The OPCC have recently contributed to the development of the Association of the Police and Crime Commissioner (APCC) scrutiny questions on online harm. These scrutiny questions are for PCCs to put to Chief Constables, to assist in effectively holding the force to account, regarding tackling online harm. The OPCC's input has meant the APCC will now include a scrutiny question for police forces to clarify how they are monitoring and reviewing the geographic and demographic data on reports of online harm, victims and perpetrators, to identify any patterns or flag potential issues that the force should investigate.

Youth Commissioners' report on online harm

- 4.4. The Youth Commissioners are recruited by the PCC to give young people a voice, when it comes to crime and policing and how it impacts young people. In 2025, the outgoing tranche of Youth Commissioners focused on online safety and harm impacting young people and carried out a wide-ranging survey of their peers, to find out how they use social media, and what negatives they may have faced. More than 1,000 young people from across the West Midlands took part.
- 4.5. The report found that one in four young people in the West Midlands had experienced online harm – a quarter of those surveyed had experienced cyberbullying, harassment, scams and/or exposure to inappropriate content. Young people who responded reported cyberbullying and harassment, as the most common harm experienced. Young people also reported a growing concern about the lack of reporting structures around the issue, and a culture, both online and in person, where concerns are dismissed and undervalued. The report found that the top three social media sites where they experienced harm were Snapchat, TikTok and Instagram, suggesting platforms with visual-led content can lead to over exposure of harm for young people.
- 4.6. The PCC has committed to work with WMP, and other partners, to take forward the Youth Commissioners' recommended actions, to protect and safeguard young people from online harms.

Community safety partners and online harm

- 4.7. The OPCC has had feedback from the Heads of Community Safety (HOCS), in the seven local authority areas across the West Midlands, that online safety, particularly for children and young people is a key issue. In October 2025, the OPCC Policy Lead ran a specific session with HOCS on online harm, to reflect on:
 - The level of awareness regarding online harm within their local authority.
 - What the Community Safety Partnership are currently doing to raise awareness and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults regarding online harm.
 - How the OPCC can support with these concerns, such as sharing best practice, establishing regional partnerships and so on.

This information and feedback from the local authorities, is now informing our planning and work regarding online harm.

- 4.8. We showcased the positive, pro-active work in tackling the issues of Online Harm that is being developed by the Solihull Local Safety Partnership's Online Harm Task Group. Solihull MBC's Community Safety Lead gave an overview of how this partnership work was being developed, in response to direct feedback by residents raising online harm as their main community safety concern, and requesting support to keep their children and young people safe online.

Stronger regulation of social media companies

- 4.9. The PCP includes a commitment to campaign for and support stronger regulation of social media companies, to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable users.
- 4.10. In 2025, the OPCC attended an Ofcom stakeholder webinar, at which they introduced their proposed additional safety measures under the Online Safety Act 2023. The session set out new proposals to strengthen their Codes of Practice. The focus was on how the measures aim to better protect users, particularly children, from online harms. The OPCC then worked in partnership with the Head of Public Protection at WMP to participate in, and respond to, the Ofcom consultation regarding these updated online safety proposals, as it required technical, specialist input from the force, and in order to effectively ensure WMP views and insights were included.

5. Accountability and Governance Board

- 5.1. Fraud and Online Crime was discussed at the AGB on 16 December 2025. WMP presented its AGB paper, attached in full at Appendix 2. This section is taken from the AGB minutes and summarises the PCC's key lines of enquiry, to WMP on its paper and the resulting discussion.

'This item was presented by Assistant Chief Constable Ian Parnell, Chief Superintendent Tony Hopkins and Superintendent Ryan Chambers. The following discussion took place:

How does WMP measure victim outcomes in fraud and online harm cases and what tangible improvements have been delivered in the last 12 months?

- WMP receive two strands of information, crimes committed in the West Midlands, and victims living in the West Midlands targeted by individuals outside of the area.
- The Economic Crime Unit (ECU) review a list of victims and assess their cases using a triage model. This model considers the needs of the victim and the service WMP can offer.
- WMP have made a national commitment that 100% of victims of fraud and online harm will receive a form of victim care.
- Assessing the individual needs of victims allows WMP to protect vulnerable individuals and linking victims in with partner services.
- WMP have a significantly increased their output in this area to 12.6% and anticipate a 15% output rate by the end of the financial year.

How has WMP assured itself that it has the right investigative capability, digital skills, and supervisory oversight at scale, particularly at first contact and investigation handover point?

- Investment has been made into LPAs to ensure that front line staff have adequate knowledge and awareness of fraud.
- Fraud investigator officers are based locally to drive investigations.
- The Cyber Crime Unit (CCU), within the ECU, work collaboratively with a variety of partners and teams to generate innovative tactics, to address fraud and online harm.

- WMP will be utilising the Report Fraud AI driven data, to inform signposting and awareness campaigns.

How is the Force shifting from being a re-active victim led model to pro-actively engaging in prevention, and how does it measure success in relation to these strategic aims?

- WMP utilise a SOC master list that details the most harm caused to individuals
- When reviewing sanctioned investigations WMP utilise a matrix and national threat assessment, to identify any secondary threats such as fraud, financial and online crime.
- The local ECU and Regional ECU work with other investigational teams to identify factors that may be enabling their criminal activity.
- WMP are at the forefront of utilising a national restorative justice programme to address strands feeding into Fraud and Online Harm. For example, low level money mules washing illicit funds through legitimate bank accounts. Education and Diversion, directed at these strands, reduce repeat victims and offenders.

Provide a brief insight into the 4 newly fraud-trained officers, what training they have undertaken, and how this will help tackle fraud in their local areas?

- The 4 newly trained LPA officers have undertaken a Fraud Intelligence Officer Course. Although these officers have not completed the national fraud investigation course, they have an elevated awareness, can conduct some financial enquiries on behalf of the banking authorities, and understand/ interpret data available from the banking sector.

Does the Report Fraud change include section 22 agreement or framework setting out expectations?

- There is no section 22 agreement, changes have been owned and driven by City of London Police.
- The changes will modernise/ update the method of reporting, allowing WMP to view vulnerable person alerts, request for questions, cancel crime requests and transfer crimes to other forces, and provide access to metrics and performance data. This will provide the Force with greater understanding and awareness of fraud.

What expectations are placed on financial institutions to prevent fraud, and how are they being held to account if these safeguards fail?

- WMP expect all financial institutions to abide by the UK National Banking Protocols.
- WMP identified that Bank of China and Bank of India, were not adhering with these protocols. Work with these organisations has resulted in compliance and mitigated risk for customers in the UK.

How prepared is WMP for the growth in AI enabled fraud, deep fake scams and synthetic identity crime?

- The introduction of cyber teams has ensured officers are at the forefront of skill capacity and capability in policing to address these offences.
- WMP have also identified challenges with crypto enabled crime, that are specifically designed to prevent police from recovering funds.
- WMP assured the Board that they will pursue everyone to maximum legal capacity, to regain lost funds and bring offenders to justice.

Provide an update on the implementation of the Force vulnerability desk.

- The vulnerability desk is currently live, and staff members are undergoing initial training.
- The Force is digitising the intranet system with an ECU page, signposting all WMP employees to key information, learning, and timescales.
- Digitalised training and video boxes will be made available to allow staff to undertake training flexibly and quickly.

Are there any plans to update technology infrastructure to meet demands on the system?

- The Force has made substantial investment into digital hubs for all LPAs and relevant departments.
- This investment will significantly enhance the capacity and capability of WMP to process all digital exhibits and meet the demands placed on Fraud and Online Harm work.

Is WMP satisfied it is making best use of civil preventative orders in fraud and online harm?

- Legal services are to attend a performance day to discuss civil prevention orders. Following this session, the DCC will update the PCC.'

6. Conclusion and recommendation

6.1 As can be seen from the above, there is much activity being undertaken by the PCC and WMP, to deliver the fraud and online crime commitments. The PCC will continue to work with WMP and other partners, to deliver on this section of the Police and Crime Plan.

6.2 The Recommendation is that the Panel note the contents of this report.

Appendix 1 – Police and Crime Plan (PCP) Delivery Plan tracker

Every quarter, an update and RAG Rating is provided, for each commitment in the PCP. Below is a table of the individual commitments related to Fraud and Online Crime in the PCP, and the RAG rating for quarter 3 2025/26. The update for quarter 3 activity was inputted in January 2026.

Action 139: Local, 'public health' approach that prevents fraud (including online fraud) , supports effective investigations and protects and supports victims.	Green
Action 141: Collaborate with partners to enhance capacity and capability, ensuring the police are equipped to tackle fraud criminal investigations.	Green
Action 142: Continue to develop our local 'public health', partnership-based approach to preventing fraud, reducing the number of victims, especially repeat victims and mitigating financial and emotional harms.	Green
Action 143: Raising public awareness of fraud prevention and common risks, both in person and online and helping individuals to protect themselves.	Green
Action 146: Children and Online Crime: Work with partners to raise children's awareness about the range of online crimes that could affect them. Jointly ensure children understand the consequences and risks of cyberbullying, becoming a "money mule", making threats, sharing explicit imagery, grooming and online child sexual abuse.	Green
Action 150: Campaign for and support stronger regulation of social media companies to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable users.	Green

RAG Rating Key
On track – can be delivered by lead
Not on track – requires support from SMT lead to resolve
Not on track – requires support from wider SMT to resolve

AGENDA ITEM 7



ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

16th December 2025

Fraud and Online Harm

Presented by: ACC Parnell, DCS Tony Hopkins and D. Supt Ryan Chambers

Cover Report

1. Police and Crime Plan

This report outlines West Midlands Police's current approach to tackling fraud and online harm, with a clear focus on increasing the identification, investigation, and reporting of fraud and cybercrime. In line with the Police and Crime Plan commitment to increase the number of fraud and cybercrime reports, the work described here demonstrates how WMP is enhancing capacity, capability, and partnership working to improve victim support, raise awareness, and ensure more offences are accurately recorded and investigated. The report also highlights the strategic use of resources, training, and governance to deliver measurable improvements in this area.

2. Achievements and Challenges

Achievements:

- Establishment of a dedicated Economic Crime Unit (ECU) with specialist training.
- Implementation of a tiered approach to fraud management (Tier 1–4).
- Delivery of fraud surgeries and frontline training to constables and LPA teams.
- Introduction of fraud-trained officers in LPAs from January 2026.
- National rollout of a fraud awareness course as an out-of-court disposal option.

Challenges:

- Inconsistent crime recording due to staff turnover and training gaps.
- Limited understanding of fraud among LPA supervisors.
- Under-reporting of fraud due to victim stigma and ineffective national systems.
- Resource allocation not proportionate to the scale of fraud (41% of all crime).

3. *Actions undertaken*

- Training of contact centre staff and probationary constables.

- Development of bespoke investigation plans for each fraud report.
- Ongoing support and training from ECU to LPAs.
- Engagement with financial institutions and third-sector partners.
- Implementation of a force vulnerability desk to improve early victim support.

4. *Future Work*

- Expansion of fraud training to LPA supervisors.
- Continued development of local fraud leads and integration into ECU training.
- Enhancement of asset recovery processes and reinvestment into ECU.
- Increased collaboration with financial institutions for prevention and education.
- Strengthening of partnerships with the Cyber Resilience Centre and ROCU.

5. *Financial Implications*

- Current asset recovery does not financially benefit ECU.
- Reinvestment of recovered assets could significantly enhance fraud prevention, training, and investigation capabilities.

6. *Legal Implications*

Nil.

7. *Equality Implications*

Nil.

Background Report

Action re 140: More fraud crimes are identified and investigated

- **What is your current approach to delivering this commitment?**

WMP have a dedicated Economic Crime Unit (ECU) with specialist investigators who are trained according to the Economic and Cyber Crime Academy's Professional Training Pathway.

The ECU manage demand using a tiering process 1 – 4. Tier 1 being Local Policing Area (LPA) owned under the Policing Crime Plan for fraud to be recognised and managed as a neighbourhood crime. Fraud is managed using a 4P approach (pursue, protect, prevent, prepare) as the mechanisms of the crime necessitates that protect and prevent are as important as bringing offenders to justice to mitigate future victims. ECU fully support local policing by setting investigative strategies, delivering fraud surgeries to give advice and support. ECU deliver frontline training to probationary constables and LPA teams. LPA's from January 2026, will also have Fraud trained officers to support investigations to a foundation level

Contact centre staff have extensive training on the recording and risk assessment of fraud offences to ensure that appropriate response and support is given to victims at the earliest opportunity.

- **What barriers are you facing in delivering this?**

Despite the training given to all contact centre staff, some crimes are not always accurately recorded under the correct offence. With a high turnover of staff within contact it can be challenging to keep on top of the training regime impacting accuracy and quality.

There is a need for additional training to LPA supervisors about Fraud. Action Fraud are a recording mechanism and do not investigate. The national process is for all frauds to be recorded as "non-crimes" which needs a change of mindset as they are crime incidents that impact victims and need effective investigation and management of victim needs and safeguarding. Therefore, supervisors need to effectively manage those investigations in line with our investigation principles to follow active lines of enquiry and bring offenders to justice in accordance with the victims' code. ECU are in the process of delivering training to the local departments.

Fraud is a significant problem for victims in England and Wales, accounting for an estimated 41% of all crime (Crime Survey for England and Wales in the year ending September 2024). The harm it caused - financial, psychological and emotional -with immense impact. (NCA, 2025) Due to the perceived low risk of harm, the equivalent amount of resources are not allocated to the demand as seen in other crime types with a higher risk factor.

- **As Fraud is currently the largest crime type – how are WMP utilising resources differently in response?**

WMP have adopted a tier process for the effective management of fraud crimes based on complexity and risk to share the demand and deliver the best quality of service to the victims. Each report is given a bespoke investigation plan with clear direction and support to the

investigation. ECU remain a point of contact for ongoing support and facilitate teams' surgeries for officers to seek assistance at any point within the investigation. All Investigators within the ECU are trained according to the Economic and Cyber Crime Academy's Professional Training Pathway. The Foundation Course is allocated on joining the department.

From January 2026, all LPA's will have trained Fraud leads as local subject matter experts to drive fraud investigations. These leads will be brought into ECU training days for ongoing training and development. This maximises local investigators with the skills and confidence to deliver fraud investigations. ECU will maintain ongoing support and enhance wider training to front line supervisors and teams driving capacity and capability to deliver outcomes for victims.

WMP have explored opportunities for out of court disposal options; one of which is a fraud awareness course. This course has been rolled out nationally to educate and divert offenders away from fraud related criminality.

- **It is generally agreed that Fraud is under-reported. Why do you think this is and what can be done to enable greater reporting of all types of Fraud?**

According to the National Crime Agency (NCA), a significant proportion of fraud instances are estimated to go unreported, this may be due to a variety of reasons but often it is due to a feeling of embarrassment or shame at having fallen victim to the fraud.

Ways to improve recording:

1. Ensuring victims are supported when they call police and get the best resource, reduce the stigma
2. Improvement of Action Fraud system which has been failing victims for years
3. Positive and effective communications raising awareness of fraud through policing and financial institutions.

Action ref 141: Collaborate with partners to enhance capacity and capability, ensuring the police are equipped to tackle fraud criminal investigations.

- **Are the police currently equipped to tackle fraud criminal investigations?**

Only a small percentage of police funding and personnel are dedicated to tackling fraud, with many officers lacking the time and expertise to investigate it effectively. WMP are trying to counteract this by having a dedicated ECU with specially trained officers. As well as the support and training that is being cascaded to LPA's to effectively deliver a good service to victims.

Every intake of probationary constables receives training on Fraud as part of their learning journey to educate officers at the earliest opportunity. Training to Force Contact staff has been instrumental to recognise, record and safeguard victims of fraud.

- **What needs to happen to ensure WMP are fully equipped to tackle this?**

Asset recovery to seize stolen money and other tangible property gained by criminals who commit fraud is a significant part of the work undertaken by the ECU. If a portion of the recovered funds were reinvested into the ECU, it would strongly support increasing capacity

and capability to combat fraud, seize stolen assets and bring offenders to justice. Presently ECU does not financially gain through the asset recovery scheme. This would include increased education and prevention work as well as greater levels of training for local officers and supervisors to support fraud investigations.

Education and prevention is not just a policing issue. Financial institutions and businesses have a significant responsibility to negate fraud and give support and advice to customers to recognise and deter fraudsters.

WMP is implementing a force vulnerability desk, training will be delivered to recognise and record fraud effectively at the earliest point. By accurately understanding threat and vulnerability of victims will mean appropriate support and safeguarding will be considered from the outset. This will ensure that calls for service are dealt with correctly with the right signposting and ownership.

- **How are WMP working with partners to tackle fraud?**

ECU continue to nurture relationships with financial institutions, businesses and third sector organisations to actively make those institutions be accountable in taking all reasonable steps to prevent and protect customers being the victim of fraud. It is recognised that there is a need for greater information sharing by such institutions to mitigate fraud and support the seizing of criminal commodities where a crime is suspected.

ECU also work with several third sector organisations to share preventative information and work with victims to safeguard and protect them from being a victim of fraud in the future including within the cyber environment. There is a significant educational factor needed in particular within the elderly community where technological barriers can be an impact to mitigating fraud.

Action ref 145: WMP to prevent and tackle online crime, this will include utilising the expertise of the West Midlands Cyber Resilience Centre.

- **What is your approach to preventing and tackling online crime?**

WMP approach is documented in the WMP Cyber Crime Strategy. This strategy contains the delivery plan which is centred around the 4P principles of Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare.

We operate within the National lead, regionally managed and locally delivered model. With the force being accountable to the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) who is accountable to the NCA.

- **Is enough resource currently focussed on prevention? If not, what additional support and resource would help you address this effectively?**

Prevention is key. Within the ROCU there are 2 prevent officers and a 3P (Protect, Prepare, Prevent) co-ordinator who take a holistic view of the 3 Ps leading in this area for the region. There is more to be done in this space and if funds were redistributed from recovered criminal assets then it would be directed partly into the prevent space for greater impact.

- **How closely and effectively do you currently work with the West Midlands Cyber Resilience Centre?**

The Cyber Resilience Centre (CRC) is an integrated part of the governance structure for cyber within WMP and the region. CRC sits within the co-ordination and practitioners' meetings and are an active part of the ecosystem.

There are plans locally to drive CRC referrals by doing targeted events with the CRC.

Pursue officers offer CRC referrals to companies that have been victims of crime during the investigation process. To date some businesses have declined support as the services the CRC offer is already available to them or they are / have explored investment in through private industry.

- **How can this joint working be improved?**

The more prevent work that can be carried out the greater the reach of the department and more communities and members of the public that can be educated. Uplift of staff would assist in the range of initiatives and projects that can be developed.

Emphasis moved from solely being the cyber-crime unit driving referrals, scope for partnership teams and neighbourhoods to also drive the referrals.

Action ref 147: Ensure effective prevention of and enforcement against online child sexual abuse, such as online sexual extortion and the sharing and storage of abusive images, including those generated by artificial intelligence.

- **What is WMP's current approach to prevention and enforcement against online child sexual abuse?**

WMP adopts a proactive and intelligence-led approach to tackling online child sexual abuse, with a strong emphasis on prevention. The Online Child Sexual Exploitation Team (OCSET), Force Priorities and Op Atari are central to this strategy. These teams focus on identifying individuals with a sexual interest in children before any contact offences occur, thereby intervening early and preventing harm.

Both units operate entirely on an intelligence-led basis, using advanced investigative techniques to detect and disrupt potential offenders. This approach has enabled WMP to maintain operations in line with national timescales for the past two years. Notably, there are currently no backlogs of unmanaged risk within OCSET or Atari.

In terms of enforcement, WMP has demonstrated measurable success. The number of charges related to online child sexual abuse in the last financial year reached approximately 289, which is double the figure from the previous year. This increase reflects both the effectiveness of the intelligence-led model and the force's commitment to prevention.

- **Do WMP currently have the level of resource and technical skill required to effectively address this high impact and fast-moving crime?**

WMP have made notable strides in resourcing to meet the demands of high-impact and fast-moving crime, particularly in the area of online sexual extortion. Over the past two years, staffing levels have been increased twice in response to rising demand, which has been growing at an approximate rate of 20% year-on-year since 2012. Much of this increase is attributed to the current challenges posed by the NCA.

Performance and outcome rates indicate that current staffing levels are effectively meeting operational demand. However, the complexity of online sexual extortion—combined with the rapidly evolving digital environment—requires continuous investment in technical skills and capabilities. As offenders increasingly exploit sophisticated technologies and platforms, WMP must remain agile and proactive in adapting to these changes to maintain effectiveness.

While current resources appear sufficient, sustaining this capability will depend on ongoing training, technological investment, and strategic foresight to keep pace with the dynamic nature of digital crime.

- **If not, what resource does WMP need to ensure you can effectively prevent and enforce against online sexual abuse?**

OCSET resourcing is appropriate when the team is fully staffed and operating under the 'four-team model'.

With a modest uplift in the intelligence development team, current staffing levels are sufficient to meet operational needs. However, there is a growing concern around the technological infrastructure.

The increasing size and complexity of data downloads now exceed the capabilities of existing laptops and viewing devices, which are struggling to process and display the vast volumes of digital evidence. This highlights the need for a review and potential upgrade of equipment in the coming months to ensure continued efficiency and effectiveness.

Action ref 148: WMP will work closely with the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit and the National Crime Agency and other partners to address these (online child sexual abuse, such as online sexual extortion and the sharing and storage of abusive images) threats.

- **Is this close working currently happening? What does that mean in practice?**

OCSET maintains a close working relationship with the NCA, receiving approximately 90% of its workload directly from them. The team actively participates in both regional and national POLIT/OCSET meetings, and holds monthly internal meetings to review case volumes, assess demand, and discuss emerging issues at national and international levels.

The NCA also serves as a valuable knowledge hub, facilitating case discussions, inter-force coordination, and the movement of investigations. For instance, it is currently leading a national review into the rising demand associated with COMM group offending, aiming to develop a unified national response.

Within West Midlands Police, online operations under OP Atari are jointly managed by ROCU and the Priorities team based in Major Crime Team.

- **If not, how can the necessary close working with ROCU and NCA, and other partners, be improved?**

Due to the rapidly evolving nature of online offending, new risks are frequently emerging. Timely decisions and clear guidance on ownership when new trends are identified—such as COMM group offending—would be highly beneficial. Although this currently sits within local teams, it has significant national and international implications.

We do have access to both local and national working groups, which support collaboration and information sharing across forces.

- **In your view, what will be the impact of the Crime and Policing Bill on this area of work?**

The emergence of offences involving AI-generated Child Sexual Abuse Material imagery is a rapidly growing area that requires focused attention. In response, new powers granted to Border Force are being implemented, with West Midlands Police actively supporting this initiative. Operation Excalibur has been reactivated at Birmingham Airport, enabling the use of these powers to examine devices of individuals entering the UK. WMP has also contributed to the training efforts associated with this rollout.

Additionally, the offence category of facilitating online child sexual abuse has proven valuable. Current investigations into COMM group offending within WMP would have previously fallen under this category, offering enhanced enforcement options and legal pathways.

Action ref 149: Sexual Harm Prevention Orders and Sexual Risk Orders used to address online crimes, including child abuse, CSAM images of children, and revenge pornography.

- **We are aware that PPU have an analytical product focusing on all civil and criminal orders – when will the results of this work be shareable and will it give further detail on the amber flag particularly highlighting SHPO and SRO's?**

Details relating to Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPO) and Sexual Risk Orders (SRO) are securely held within the VISOR system and reported through PPU governance structures. Due to the sensitive nature of this information, it is not appropriate for wider

organisational oversight of individuals subject to these orders. As a result, the Civil Orders App has had all SHPO and SRO data removed.

- **How is the evidence-led prosecutions team supporting outcomes and civil and criminal orders for SAA and CSAE – is there learning that can be taken across in this area?**

The national response is coordinated under Operation Rhybosalt, led by ACC Andy Hill, with support from DCI Olly Clark, the National Coordinator for CSAE.

At the regional level, ROCU WM is establishing a Regional Threat Group to support and coordinate national requests and facilitate necessary returns from regional forces. The ROCU WM response is designated as Operation Driftglen, led by DCI Phil Davies. This operation supports both intelligence collection and prevent messaging. Additionally, DCI Mark Dickson will lead for PPU, ensuring that partner organisations are effectively supported in this work.

While there is no standalone evidence-led prosecutions team, the principles of evidence-led prosecution are actively embedded within adult abuse investigations. These approaches aim to secure outcomes even when victims are unable or unwilling to support a prosecution, ensuring that safeguarding and justice remain priorities.

In the context of CSAE, investigations are inherently evidence-led due to the nature of the offending. For example, in cases involving indecent images of children, prosecutions often proceed without the need to identify or locate individual victims.

The use of evidence-led prosecution formats is not limited to CSAE or SAA, it is a flexible approach applicable across all investigative functions. By embedding evidence-led approaches more broadly, teams can improve both criminal justice outcomes and the use of civil orders to protect vulnerable individuals—regardless of their ability to participate in proceedings.

- **Is an Op Soteria approach to CSAE (currently nationally Op Soteria is adult focused) being considered given that other forces such as Warwickshire are implementing this approach?**

Operation Soteria primarily focuses on adult victims, and there is currently no directive from the Op Soteria Joint Unit to extend this approach to child cases. However, the associated materials and guidance are accessible to all investigators across West Midlands Police.

The National Operating Model app has now gone live and is available for use by practitioners, managers, and senior leaders.

- **How can future focus on CSAE within WMP increase cross departmental working and communication?**

Robust governance in this area is essential. West Midlands Police has recently established a strategic CSAE meeting, underpinned by a monthly tactical assessment. This structure reinforces the existing 4P approach and ensures representation and accountability across the entire Force.

This governance model may align with the ongoing vulnerability mapping initiative within the Force, helping to ensure that each department maintains a clear focus on vulnerability-related activity. Capturing this work effectively will support integration into existing governance frameworks.

Author(s): **DCS Tony Hopkins and Supt Ryan Chambers**

Job Title: **DCS Hopkins (Head of PPU), Supt Ryan Chamber (Major Crime Unit)**



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

Police and Crime Panel Fraud and Online Harm

16th March 2026

Police and Crime Plan (PCP) Delivery Plan tracker

Delivery is 'on track'.

Action 139: Action 139: Local, 'public health' approach that prevents fraud (including online fraud) , supports effective investigations and protects and supports victims.	Green
Action 141: Collaborate with partners to enhance capacity and capability, ensuring the police are equipped to tackle fraud criminal investigations.	Green
Action 142: Continue to develop our local 'public health', partnership-based approach to preventing fraud, reducing the number of victims, especially repeat victims and mitigating financial and emotional harms.	Green
Action 143: Raising public awareness of fraud prevention and common risks, both in person and online and helping individuals to protect themselves.	Green
Action 146: Children and Online Crime: Work with partners to raise children's awareness about the range of online crimes that could affect them. Jointly ensure children understand the consequences and risks of cyberbullying, becoming a "money mule", making threats, sharing explicit imagery, grooming and online child sexual abuse.	Green
Action 150: Campaign for and support stronger regulation of social media companies to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable users.	Green

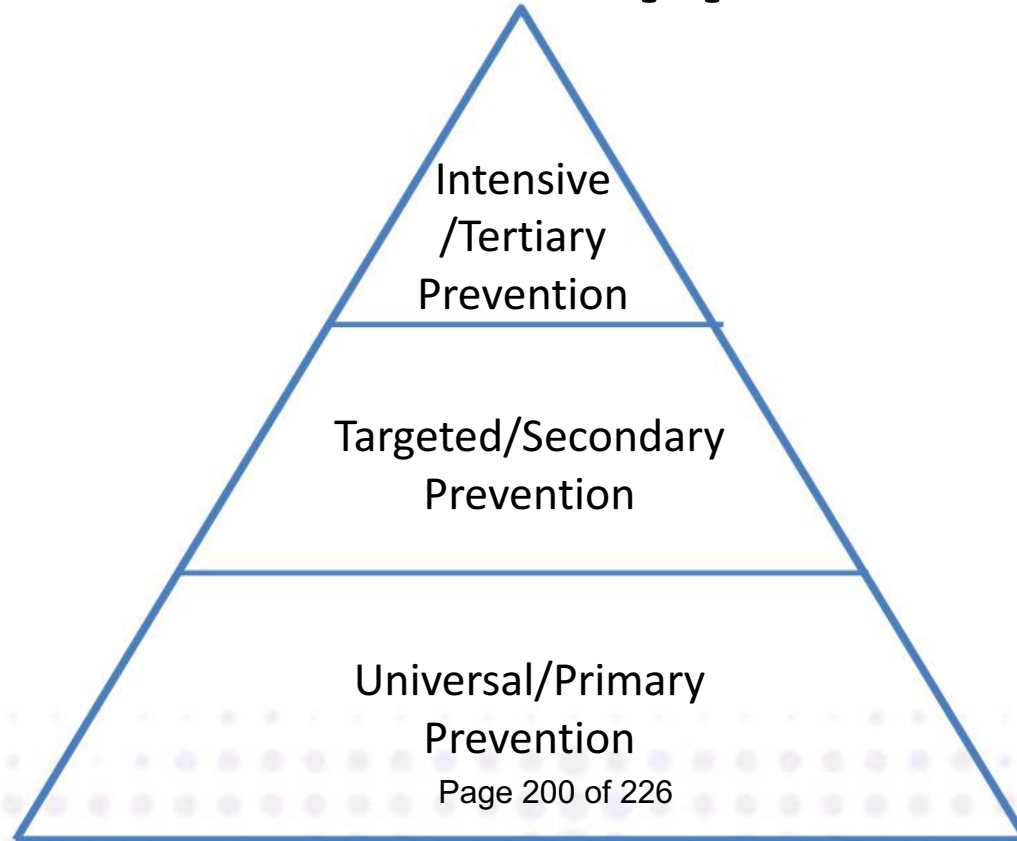
A 'Public Health' approach

The Public Health Approach



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A 'Public Health' approach.



In January 2024...

- The PCC launched the first ever public health approach to fraud
- Followed the commissioning of a viability and recommendations report
- Report looked at what a Public Health Approach to Fraud would look like in the West Midlands (WM)
- Supported us to develop a tailored WM regional response
- This research was led by Professor Michael Levi at Cardiff University (Criminology).
- This approach continues to underpin our work on fraud
- Has been recognised as ‘best practice’ by other OPCCs and national organisations
- The ‘Money Mules’ awareness pack for use in schools – to raise awareness and prevent harm, developed in this initial phase of the Fraud prevention work, is still being used by schools with young people across the WM and beyond.

2025 – 2026...

- Following an unexpected ‘pause’ in this work due to staff capacity issues
- Recent focus is on establishing and developing positive, effective joint working relationships – with ROCU including 3Ps (prevention team), Cyber Crime Unit and with relevant colleagues leading on Fraud and Online Harm in WMP, and external partners
- The OPCC Policy Lead for fraud, the West Midlands Victims’ Advocate, and the Regional Policy Manager (works to the 4 local PCC areas), work in partnership to develop this approach, and maximise positive impact.
- Significant progress has been made since summer 25

Fraud Prevention Partnership Board

- Reshaping and re-launching the PCC's quarterly Fraud Prevention Partnership Board (Fraud Board) is a key element of delivering a local public health approach to more effectively prevent and tackle fraud, and support fraud victims across WM
- The successful, well-attended inaugural meeting of the relaunched Board was held in February 2026, chaired by the PCC.

The Fraud Board

- Intention is to:
 - develop strategic partnerships with businesses, statutory partners and community representatives to help prevent fraud and protect the public
 - to minimise the harm caused to communities in the West Midlands from this increasingly prevalent crime.
- The Fraud Board will lead by example and model what effective local strategic action against fraud can look like

Fraud Board membership, includes...

- Senior representation from WMP, including their Economic Crime and Cyber Crime Units.
- Regionally, representation from the investigations and enforcement teams at the Regional Organised Crime Unit and Regional Economic Crime Unit, including ROCU's 3Ps Fraud Prevention Manager (3Ps refers to Protect, Prepare, Prevent fraud), and the Regional Fraud Development Officer who works across both RECU and ROCU.
- Nationally, there is representation from the National Fraud Co-ordinators Office (City of London Police).

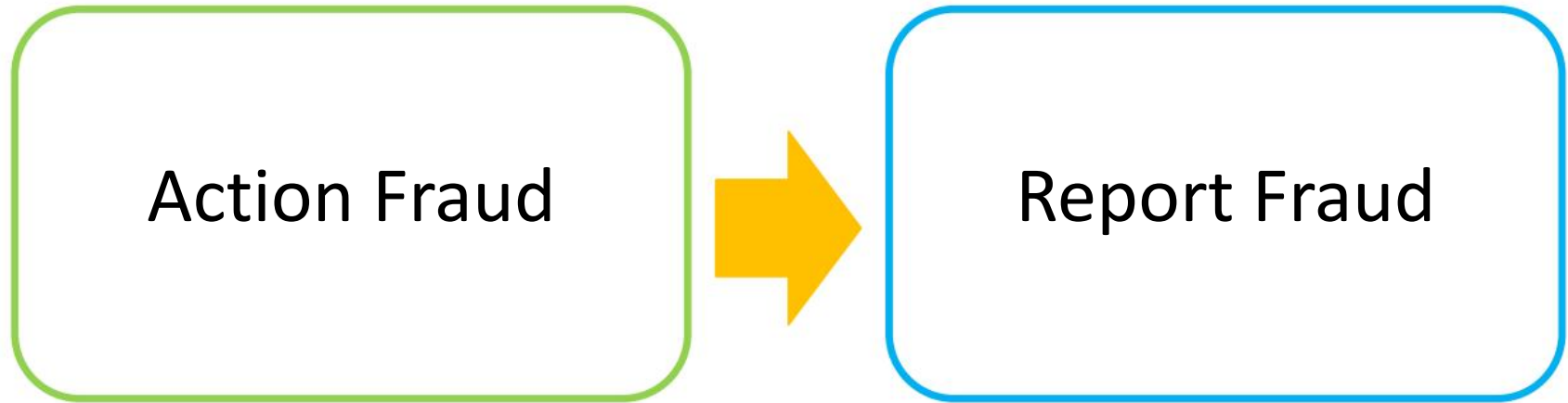
Board membership...

- Rep of expert charity/third sector organisation
- Health / NHS - Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
- The academic – Professor Mike Levi (Criminology)
- Member / Rep of the business community
- Local Authority representatives - Community Safety and Public Health
- Trading Standards
- West Midlands Fraud Forum.
- An individual who has lived experience of fraud victimisation.

Fraud Webinars...

- OPCC proposal that a fraud webinar programme be developed and delivered – welcomed and approved by Fraud Board
- To complement and run alongside the Fraud Board and reach a wide audience
- Initially offering four fraud-related webinars each year approximately one every quarter.
- Co-ordinated by the OPCC, in partnership with the ROCU Regional Fraud Development Officer, and Professor Mike Levi - Fraud Board members.
- They will facilitate the webinar sessions on key relevant topics, to deepen learning and understanding about fraud and tackling it effectively.

Reporting Fraud




Fraud and Cybercrime Data

	Baseline (Year Ending March 2024)	Current (Year Ending September 2025)	Percentage Change
Total Number of Fraud and Cyber Crime Reports	15,877	17,206	+8.37

Fraud Victim's Journey

- In late 2025, the West Midlands Victims' Advocate held a 'Victims of Fraud' workshop.
- It brought together relevant prevention and enforcement partners, including representatives from ROCU, RECU, the Cyber Crime Unit, the national Fraud Lead/Co-ordinator at City of London Police, WMP's Economic Crime Unit, and OPCC Policy Leads to start work on improving the victim's experience and support they receive.
- They are working closely together to progress this.
- The second Fraud Board meeting in March 2026 will focus on fraud victims and their journey - in recognition that all we do re tackling fraud must be with victims and their experience at it's heart

A man and a woman are shown in a dark room, both looking down at their smartphones. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right. The scene is illuminated by the light from the screens and has a digital, glitchy aesthetic with horizontal lines and a grid pattern overlaid on the woman's face and the background.

**DO YOU
REALLY KNOW
WHO YOU'RE
TALKING TO?**

ROMANCE FRAUD IS ON THE RISE

Online crime/harm and children and young people

- OPCC are committed to work with partners to raise children's awareness about the range of online crimes that could affect them.
- Working with the Education, and Exploitation leads in the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP), and other partners, such as WMP and ROCU, to jointly ensure children understand the consequences and risks of online harm such as cyberbullying, becoming a money mule, making threats, sharing explicit imagery, grooming and online child sexual abuse.



Questions



Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Police and Crime Panel Annual Complaints Monitoring – March 2025 – March 2026

Date: 16 March 2026

Report of: Tom Senior, Associate Director for Law and Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer, 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

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an annual update on the handling of complaints made against the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner under the Police and Crime Panel's Complaints Procedures. This report covers the period March 2025 – March 2026.
- 1.2 In addition, the report suggests the Panel schedule a future agenda item on the Police and Crime Commissioner's governance arrangements for his statutory oversight responsibilities of the West Midlands Police complaints system and role as independent review body for certain police complaints.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the annual update on administration of West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Complaint Procedure be noted; and**
- 2.2 **That the Panel request the Police and Crime Commissioner present a report to a future meeting outlining the governance arrangements for his oversight of the West Midlands Police complaints system and his police complaint review function.**

3 Background

- 3.1 The Panel has a statutory responsibility under the [Elected Local Policing Bodies \(Complaints and Misconduct\) Regulations 2012](#) for handling complaints made against the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Deputy PCC.
- 3.2 In October 2012, the Panel approved its complaints procedure based on the legal requirements set out in the Regulations. In line with Home Office guidance the

Panel agreed in January 2013 to delegate all complaint handling responsibilities to the Birmingham City Council Monitoring Officer. Birmingham City Council's Scrutiny team supports the Monitoring Officer in this function.

- 3.3 The Panel further agreed to an annual complaint monitoring report to update Members on the complaints that have been dealt with by the Monitoring Officer on its behalf. This report advises Members on the number of complaints received and provides a summary of any actions taken. Details of the complaint, complainant and case files will remain confidential.

4 The Panel's Complaints Procedure

- 4.1 The Panel's complaints procedure, together with an online and downloadable version of the complaint form are available on the Panel website www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk
- 4.2 In summary, when a complaint is received, the Monitoring Officer first assesses whether it falls within the scope of the Panel's complaints procedure and decides whether it should be formally recorded.
- 4.3 The Panel's remit covers only the conduct of the PCC and Deputy PCC. It does not extend to complaints about operational policing matters, the Chief Constable, members of the PCC's staff, or dissatisfaction with the outcome of a police complaints review conducted by the PCC.
- 4.4 The Monitoring Officer must refer any a serious complaint to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) for investigation. A serious complaint is defined in legislation as conduct which "constitutes or involves, or appears to constitute or involve, the commission of a criminal offence".
- 4.5 Where a complaint is formally recorded but does not meet the definition of a serious complaint requiring referral to the IOPC, the Regulations require the Monitoring Officer to arrange for the complaint to be addressed through an 'informal resolution' process.
- 4.6 Informal resolution is a way of dealing with a complaint by solving, explaining, clearing up or settling the matter directly with the complainant, without investigation or formal proceedings.

5 Summary of Complaint Activity - March 2025 – March 2026

- 5.1 A summary of complaints activity between March 2025 and March 2026 is set out in tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Potential complaints against the PCC

Total potential complaints received	7
Not recorded as a complaint - beyond the remit of the Panel's complaints procedure	4

Recorded as a complaint and progressed to Informal Resolution	3
Recorded as a serious complaint	0

Table 2: Potential complaints against the Deputy PCC

Total potential complaints received	0
--------------------------------------------	----------

6 Police and Crime Commissioner Oversight of West Midlands Police Complaints

- 6.1 The PCC has no remit to act as an advocate for individuals in police complaints nor can he direct the Chief Constable on how to manage an individual complaint. However, he has a statutory responsibility to oversee how West Midlands Police manages complaints, ensuring the system operates efficiently and effectively. He also serves as an independent review body for certain police complaints. These responsibilities are reflected in the West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029.
- 6.2 Given the importance of this oversight role, it would be appropriate for the Panel to seek assurance on how the PCC fulfils these responsibilities. It is therefore suggested the Panel invite the PCC to present a report to a future meeting outlining the governance arrangements for his oversight of the police complaints system and the police complaint review function.

7 Implications

Finance implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications in relation to the recommendation contained in this report. The cost of administration of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel's Complaints Procedure in handling complaints submitted against the PCC and Deputy PCC are met by the Home Office grant funding.

Legal Implications

- 7.2 The Panel has a statutory responsibility under the [Elected Local Policing Bodies \(Complaints and Misconduct\) Regulations 2012](#) for handling complaints against the PCC and Deputy PCC. The Regulations are applied to each complaint received and determine the actions taken on a case-by-case basis.

Equalities Implications

- 7.3 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.

7.4 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

8 Appendices

none

9 Background Papers

Report and Minutes from Police and Crime Panel 30 September 2013

Report and Minutes from Police and Crime Panel 19 January 2015

Policing Protocol Order 2023

Elected Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme for 2025/2026

Date: 16 March 2026

Report of: Tom Senior Associate Director for Law and Governance and
Deputy Monitoring Officer, 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

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an opportunity to reflect on the work undertaken by West Midlands Police and Crime work during the 2025/2026 Municipal Year.
- 1.2 The report includes an update from the Member Working Group on Data Presented to Panel and also invites Members to suggest future topics areas that could be incorporated into the 2026/2027 work programme.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Panel
 - i. Reflect and comment on the work undertaken during the 2025/2026 Municipal Year;
 - ii. Considers the update on the Working Group on Data Presented to Panel; and
 - iii. Identifies any topic areas for the 2026/2027 Police and Crime Panel work programme.

3. Context

- 3.1 Police and Crime Panel was established under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel acts as a joint scrutiny body of the West Midlands Local Authorities with a dual role to 'support' and 'challenge' the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 3.2 The Panel must perform the following statutory functions:
 - Scrutinise the decisions and actions of the PCC
 - Review and comment on the PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan and any draft variations to the Plan
 - Review 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.
- Handle non-criminal complaints about the conduct of 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 if they are charged with an imprisonable offence which carries a maximum term of two years or more.
- appoint an acting PCC if the elected one cannot carry out their role due to incapacitation, suspension, resignation or disqualification.
- play a role in any call made by a PCC for a Chief Constable to resign or retire.

2.2 The Panel's work programme consists of statutory tasks (from the above list) and wider exploratory work to fulfil its role to hold the PCC to account on the strategic policing and the wider community safety and criminal justice landscape.

2.3 The Panel must maintain a strategic focus in scrutinising the work of the PCC, rather than operational detail. The Panel does not provide oversight of the Chief Constable - this is the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

4 Key activities of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel during 2025/2026

4.1 **In May 2025** the districts made their annual appointments to the Panel. To support new and returning members, the Birmingham Scrutiny Team delivered induction training covering the remit and role of the Panel in the wider policing governance arena. A planning session was also held where members explored the principles of good scrutiny and skills for interrogating and understanding data. Members supported taking a thematic work programme approach aligned to the Police and Crime Plan priorities.

4.2 **In July 2025** the Panel held its Annual General Meeting at Dudley Council House. The Panel heard from the PCC's newly appointed Victims' Advocate on her work to contribute to the delivery of the PCC's *Protecting Victims and Witnesses* Police and Crime Plan commitments, specifically to raise the visibility of support to victims, strengthening collaboration across the criminal justice system and commissioning partners, and promoting the 12 rights within the Victims' Code.

4.3 **In September 2025** the Panel met at Solihull Council Chamber. The meeting focused on the delivery of the PCC's *Rebuilding Neighbourhood Policing* Police and Crime Plan commitments. The Single Online Home portal www.police.uk was showcased as the key source of information for residents and ward councillors on neighbourhood policing team priorities and meetings. During the

debate, Members obtained reassurances from the PCC on his oversight of the police recruitment plans to fulfil the National Policing Guarantee, the delivery of high-quality training and monitoring of neighbourhood officer abstractions through his Accountability and Governance Board. Members requested that new Dedicated Neighbourhood Officers specifically contact local ward councillors as part of the community engagement plans.

- 4.4 In **November 2025** the Panel met at City of Wolverhampton Council. The meeting examined the Police and Crime Commissioner's commitments around *Crime Reporting* and *Improving Road and Travel Safety*. The reports highlighted how the Commissioner and his team were collecting, recording and utilising crime data, how key performance indicators were measured and actions to address areas of underperformance. Panel noted West Midlands Police were now ranked second best force in the country for call-handling. The Panel also examined the PCC's partnership work and activities designed to enhance road and travel safety across the region.
- 4.5 In **December 2025** the Panel were invited by the Commissioner's Office to visit the C3 Contact Centre and the Missing Persons Unit. The visit offered members a behind-the-scenes look at the contact centre as well as how Officers approached locating missing people. The Panel were grateful for the time that Officers gave and strengthen their understanding of the operational areas of the force and how this connected with the Commissioner's strategic responsibilities. The OPCC also delivered a Performance Workshop, showcased performance dashboards and provided a reference guide to support Members' understanding of police performance information.
- 4.6 In **January 2026** the Panel met at Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council and scrutinised the *Bringing Offenders to Justice* commitments in the Police and Crime Plan. This looked at the Commissioner's role within the wider criminal justice system to improve outcomes and strengthen support to victims.
- 4.7 In **February 2026** the Panel met at Birmingham City Council to seek assurances from the Commissioner in his confidence in the Acting Chief Constable and senior leadership of West Midlands Police following the Home Secretary's announcement of lost confidence in the former Chief Constable. Members scrutinised the PCC's oversight of the Force, including the objectives of Operation Strive to rebuild public trust and confidence and actions to address improvements identified by HMICFRS, the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) and the Home Affairs Select Committee. The Panel also conducted its statutory review of the Policing Precept, endorsing the PCC's proposals. In addition, Members reviewed the PCC's 2024/25 Annual Report and recommended earlier publication in future to enable timely scrutiny.
- 4.8 On 16 March 2026 the Panel will meet in Coventry to scrutinise the PCC's *People Police* and Crime Plan commitments as well as the way in which the

Commissioner commissions services and aims to address *Fraud and Online Crime*. The Panel will also discuss the annual complaint handling report.

5. Working Group on Data Presented to Panel

5.1 At the 17 November 2025 meeting, the Panel agreed to form a working group to look further into how data was presented within Panel reports to support both Panel members and public understanding of the information presented. The Terms of Reference and Membership were agreed in January, and since then the group has held the following sessions:

- Session 1 - Assess Current Practice: reviewed examples of panel reports and examine the accessibility of data presented for members.
- Session 2 - Identify Improvements: explore ways to make data presented in reports clearer and more user-friendly.
- Session 3 - Discussion with OPCC: Understanding performance data and dashboards.

5.2 The Working Group will next collate its findings to be presented to a future Panel meeting.

6. Developing the 2026/2027 Work Programme

6.1 Appendix A provides an outline of the 2026/2027 Panel Work Programme plotting the new member induction and the known statutory tasks. This leaves capacity for deep dive scrutiny items. Members are invited to suggest future topics to be considered to assist in the development of the work programme for the next Municipal Year. Any suggestions will be subject to the agreement by the 2026/2027 Panel.

7. Implications

Finance Implications

7.1 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.

Legal Implications

7.2 The Panel work programme should reflect the duties required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and relevant Regulations.

Equalities Implications

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

- 7.3.1 eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;

7.3.2 advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

7.3.3 foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.4 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.

7.5 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.

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

8. **Background Papers**

[Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)

[Policing and fire governance: guidance for police and crime panels](#)

Terms of Reference: Working Group on Data Presentation in Panel Reports
January 2026

9. **Appendices**

9.1 None

OUTLINE West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme 2026/2027

Dates TBC	Item/Topic	Scrutiny Objectives	Additional Information
June/July	Member Induction and Development	Role of Police and Crime Panel Good scrutiny skills Performance information Member Visit: Rehabilitation service providers	
Meeting 1 July 2026	AGM Items	Election of Chair and Vice Chair Panel membership for 2026/27 Annual approval of Panel Arrangements and Rules of Procedure	
	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.
	HMICFRS National Child Protection Inspection of WMP (Deferred from March 2026)	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
Meeting 2 September 2026	Review of PCC Annual Report 2025/2026 (Statutory Task)	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.	This is a statutory duty of the Panel.
	PCC Complaints Oversight	Governance arrangements for PCC oversight of the West Midlands Police complaints system and his police complaint review function.	
Meeting 3			
Meeting 4			
Meeting 5 1 February 2027	PCC Proposed Policing Precept 2027 and budget. (Statutory Task)	Formally review the proposed policing precept 2027 and make a recommendation to the PCC.	PCC Proposed Policing Precept 2027 and budget. (Statutory Task)
<i>15 February 2027 Provisional date if veto</i>	<i>PCC Proposed Policing Precept for 2027</i>	<i>Formally review the proposed and revised precept</i>	<i>Provisional meeting date if veto on 1 February 2027.</i>
Meeting 6	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

