

**West Midlands Police and Crime Panel****Monday 3 February 2025 at 14:00 hours****Birmingham City Council, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B1 1BB**This meeting will be livestreamed at <https://birmingham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>More information about the Panel, including meeting papers and reports, can be found on the Panel website [www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk)Contact Officer: Sam Yarnall, Scrutiny Officer email: [wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk) Tel: 0121 303 2288**AGENDA**

<b>Supporting Document</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Approximate time</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>NOTICE OF RECORDING</b> 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.	<b>14:00</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
	<b>3</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY)</b> 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 <a href="#">Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct</a> .	
<b>Attached</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ACTION TRACKER</b> To consider the progress of actions arising from previous Panel meetings.	<b>14:07</b>

Supporting Document	Item	Topic	Approximate time
	5	<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To receive questions from members of the public notified to the Panel in advance of the meeting.  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 <a href="mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk">wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk</a>	14:15
Attached	6	<b>REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED POLICING PRECEPT FOR 2025/2026, REVENUE BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26 TO 2029/30</b>  The Panel will formally review the proposed policing precept 2025 and make a recommendation to the Police and Crime Commissioner.	14:30
Attached	7	<b>POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER UPDATE REPORT ON RECENT ACTIVITIES AND PUBLISHED KEY DECISIONS</b>  To provide an update on the PCC recent activity including published key decisions.	15:30
Attached	8	<b>REVIEW OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024</b>  The panel must invite the PCC to attend a public meeting to scrutinise the annual report setting out progress on meeting the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan during the financial year and consider how the Annual report can be developed.	16:00
Attached	9	<b>PANEL WORK PROGRAMME</b>  The Panel to identify issues for consideration for a work programme for 2024/25 and arrangements to take forward.	16:45
	10	<b>NEXT MEETING DATE</b>  24 March 2025 at 2pm – Walsall MBC Council Chamber	16:50
	11	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>  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.	17:00

**West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Action Tracker – February 2025**  
**Outstanding Actions**

Minute/ Action No.	Meeting Date	Action	Update/ Notes
824	22/7/24	<b>PANEL AGREEMENT AND RULES OF PROCEDURE</b> The suggestion that strengthening of the wording in paragraph 2.10 of the Panel Agreement be explored for the Panel to fulfil its role in scrutinising the decisions and actions of the PCC.	
	20/1/25	<b>PANEL TO WRITE TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ON HISTORICAL CASES OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)</b> The Panel to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding historical cases of CSE.	<b>To be discharged</b>



## **Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**

### **Review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Proposed Policing Precept for 2025/2026, Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2025/26 to 2029/30**

**Date: 3 February 2025**

Report of: Tom Senior Acting Lead 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

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#### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 Under [Schedule 5 of The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#) the Panel must review the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed policing precept. This report sets out the legal basis and process for reviewing the precept, including the requirements and steps if the Panel exercises its power of veto.
- 1.2 The Police and Crime Commissioner's report setting out his 2025/26 revenue budget, precept and capital programme and medium term financial plan (MTFP) 2025/26 to 2029/30 is attached as Appendix A.

#### **2 Recommendations**

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

- a) **Endorse the proposed 2025/26 precept of £229.50 for a Band D property without qualification or comment;**
- b) **Endorse the proposed 2025/26 precept and make recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner; or**
- c) **Veto the proposed 2025/26 precept (by the required majority of at least two-thirds of Panel members (10 members)).**

### **3 Timetable for reviewing the precept**

- 3.1 The Panel's meeting schedule reflects the statutory timetable for the Police and Crime Commissioner's formal notification of the proposed precept and the review by the Police and Crime Panel.
- 3.2 Following this Panel meeting, the Panel must report back to the Commissioner by 8 February 2025.
- 3.3 A provisional meeting date is also held for 17 February 2025, should the Panel use its power of veto requiring the Commissioner to present a revised precept to the Panel.

### **4 Responsibilities of the Panel**

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

### **5 Exercising a Veto**

- 5.1 The Panel has the power of veto of the proposed precept. A minimum of two-thirds of the total panel membership is required to veto the proposed precept. In the West Midlands this is 10 members.
- 5.2 If the veto is used, the Panel report made to the Commissioner must provide details of the reason for the veto.
- 5.3 The Commissioner is required to consider the Panel's report and issue a response, including a revised precept. Where the Panel has vetoed the proposal because the precept was too high, the revised precept shall be lower than the original proposal. Where the Panel has vetoed because the precept was too low, the revised precept shall be higher than the original proposed.
- 5.4 The Panel would then meet again on 17 February 2025 to consider the Commissioner's revised precept and make a second report indicating whether the Panel accepts or rejects the revised precept, together with any recommendations made.

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

## **6 Finance Implications**

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

## **7 Legal Implications**

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

## **8 Equalities Implications**

- 8.1 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex, and sexual orientation.
- 8.3 The Panel will ensure it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within the West Midlands; and whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

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

## **9 Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix A – Report of Police and Crime Commissioner: 2025/26 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2025/26 to 2029/30

## **10 Background Papers**

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

# **Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – 2025/26 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2025/26 to 2029/30**

**Date: 3 February 2025**

Report of: PCC Chief Finance Officer

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

## **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 This report sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed 2025/26 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme. It also contains the Capital Strategy, Reserves Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2025/26 to 2029/30.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The Government is expected to announce the police funding settlement for 2025/26 by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 and this paper is built on the assumption that this will match the draft settlement published on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
- 2.2 There is a statutory requirement for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to set the precept by 1 March, however, the Commissioner seeks to set the annual budget and precept by mid-February to assist Billing Authorities with early dispatch of Council Tax Bills.
- 2.3 Regulations require the PCC to notify the Panel of the proposed precept by 1 February, to enable the Panel to review the precept by 8 February 2025.
- 2.4 The panel does have the power to veto the proposed level and if the veto is exercised the Commissioner would need to consider the Panel's views and respond by 10 February for review by the Panel by 17 February. The Panel must respond by 17 February, but rejection cannot prevent the Commissioner from issuing the precept.
- 2.5 The panel's schedule of meetings in February accommodates this timetable should it be needed.



### 3 2025/26 Government Grant Settlement

- 3.1 The total grant settlement for the West Midlands in 2025/26 is £665.4m, which is an increase of £36.2m on the 2024/25 Settlement. This is consistent with the Commissioner's medium-term financial planning assumptions.
- 3.2 The additional funding confirmed through the settlement will cover most of the costs of the police officer pay awards announced for 2024, and most of the change in employer National Insurance rates and thresholds.
- 3.3 The settlement also contains an additional £6.1M to fund the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
- 3.4 The main points to note from the settlement are as follows:
- A 3.7% increase in Core Grant for all areas, £339m in total, £20.7m for West Midlands (this included a £4.5m transfer from the Police Uplift grant),
  - £230.3m funding nationally for employer NICs compensation, £11.6m for West Midlands, which is less than the sum required of £11.9m,
  - £100m funding nationally for the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, £6.1m for West Midlands, distributed as per the core grant,
  - A commitment to ensure that Firearm Licencing Fees will be increased to cover costs – the statutory instrument was laid on 15 January 2025,
  - Police required to participate in the Police Efficiency and Collaboration Programme, starting with national approaches to buying energy, vehicles, fuel, temporary staff, and software licenses,
  - A new Performance Unit will be established in the Home Office - to “drive up performance and standards”,
  - The opportunity for PCCs to raise their precept by up to £14 per year per Band D property in 2025/26,
  - Continuation of the existing police pension grant, £18.9m for West Midlands. This included the removal of a one-off top-up payment of £26.8m for implementation costs relating to the police pensions remedy and £14m transferred to the Counter-Terrorism Policing Grant,
  - One year funding agreement for the Violence Reduction Partnership.

### 4 Balances and Reserves

- 4.1 The prudent use of reserves to support spending, continues to be a key factor in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The following table details the anticipated level of reserves as of 31 March 2025 and the estimated level of reserves by 31 March 2026, as per the plans outlined within this budget report. **Appendix 6** contains the proposed Reserves Strategy.

4.2 Planned Movements in Reserves relied upon in the 2025/26 budget are as follows:

Reserves (Forecast position) £m	Balance @ 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025	2025/26 Planned Movement in Reserves	Balance @ 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026
Operational Reserves			
Regional / National / Collaboration Reserve	5.4	1.8	7.2
Estates Strategy Reserve	10.2	(6.9)	3.3
Change Programme	5.3	(1.5)	3.8
Budget Reserve	35.1	(7.7)	27.4
Carry Forward Reserve	3.6	0.0	3.6
Other Reserves			
Uniform and Equipment Reserve	11.6	(1.6)	10.0
Drug Squad / PPA Reserve / POCA	2.4	(0.6)	1.8
National Contingency Reserve	2.2	(0.4)	1.8
Total Earmarked Reserves	<b>75.8</b>	<b>(16.9)</b>	<b>58.9</b>
General Fund Reserve	16.7	0.0	16.7
Total Reserves	<b>92.6</b>	<b>(16.9)</b>	<b>75.6</b>

4.3 Details of the planned movement in Reserves are as follows:

4.3.1 **Regional / National / Collaboration reserve** – This reserve will be topped up by a net £1.8m in 2025/26. There are two planned drawdowns: firstly the Regional Organised Crime Unit will use £0.2m of their reserves subject to agreement by regional partners. Secondly, funding provided by the Premier League during 2023/24 of £0.6m will be used to fund the setup of the mounted unit, which will then support operational requirements including Football policing.

The reserve will be topped up by £2.6m if estimates relating to a considerable increase in planned chargeable activity are met, reflecting the force's plans to maximise income where possible to mitigate the impact of budget savings.

4.3.2 **Estates Strategy Reserve** – This utilises the estate strategy reserve to fund the in-year revenue costs of the estate's strategy.

4.3.3 **Change Programme Reserve** – This reserve is being utilised in 2025/26 to fund the replacement / development work on our core Police Records Management System: Connect.

- 4.3.4 **Budget Reserve** - The budget reserve is held to reduce the impact of financial pressures on service delivery. Due to the scale of the savings required to balance the medium-term plan, the Force has continued to drive savings in 2024/25 from increased income opportunities and reviewing staff vacancies. This will be transferred to the budget reserve and drawn down to help balance the medium-term plan allowing time to generate further long-term sustainable solutions. The current plan is to utilise £3.9m of this reserve to balance the budget and a further £3.8m is earmarked to fund additional inflation related pressures including higher than expected pay awards.
- 4.3.5 **Uniform and Equipment Reserve** – This reserve is being utilised to support the initial higher costs of purchasing non-ICE vehicles, estimated at £1m, and £0.6m to fund the first year of the new Taser contract which was delayed from 2024/25.
- 4.3.6 **Drug Squad / PPA Reserve** – This contribution is used to partially fund the Commissioner's My Community Fund, which supports projects across the West Midlands.
- 4.3.7 **POCA Reserve** – The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, allows some of the value of seized criminal assets to be returned to Forces over time as criminal prosecutions come to court. Any amount over that relied upon in-year, to support economic crime and other teams targeting seizures, is returned to this reserve to smooth the time delay between workload, seizure of goods and the return of money through the POCA mechanism. In 2024/25 and 2025/26 this reserve is also being used to fund Operation Fearless, an operation to enhance problem-oriented policing in key high crime neighbourhoods in the West Midlands.
- 4.4 The Commissioner needs to maintain an adequate General Reserve balance because:
- As a substantial organisation with a turnover of more than £0.8 billion, there are no other such reserves to call on.
  - There are no budgeted contingencies for very major incidents, which may require significant resource levels for a long period.
- 4.5 The considerations in determining how much of the earmarked reserves should be used in 2025/26, are:
- Retaining the maximum level possible, to support spending in 2025/26 and later years, when resource levels may be constrained,
  - Striking a fair balance between how much should be used to support spending over the planning period and by how much the precept should increase,
  - Risks and uncertainties in key budget assumptions, any additional spending in 2025/26, which cannot be met from in year redirections would have to be met from reserves.
- 4.6 Given these considerations and a precept increase at the maximum permitted without a referendum, it will be necessary to use £16.9m of reserves to support

revenue spending in 2025/26. The use of additional reserves will be subject to decisions and activities in year

- 4.7 These reserves are sufficient to meet any short to medium term costs of local government reorganisation, with a view to restocking those from any savings achieved, to return the value back to Policing.

## **5 Proposed Revenue Budget 2025/26**

- 5.1 The Commissioner is proposing a Revenue Budget for 2025/26, based on the following:

- The priorities in the Police and Crime Plan.
- The implications of the funding settlement.
- Existing budget commitments and inflationary pressures.
- The continued recruitment of Police Officers to ensure than planned numbers are maintained as detailed in **Section 9**.
- Maintaining the Police Uplift headcount for West Midlands Police.
- The provision of improved equipment and technology to frontline officers to support capability, safety and welfare.
- The opportunity to have a workforce more representative of the public we serve by recruiting more police officers, police staff and PCSOs from underrepresented groups.
- The continuation to support apprenticeships and the drive to increase and develop the police cadets' scheme, volunteers and specials across the West Midlands.
- An increase to the precept of £13.95 per annum, in line with the Council Tax referendum limit principles, that applies to West Midlands Police, together with the prudent use of reserves.
- Enhance the Community Safety Funding and External Commissioning, to support prevention and crime reduction activity.
- Savings required to support the revenue budget in 2025/26 of £19.5m. This is explained in greater detail in Section 5.3 below.
- Continued work on efficiencies and productivity, to redirect resources to frontline policing as a priority.
- Continued support for the Estates Strategy, and implementation of Continuous Improvement methodology and Priority Based Budgeting, to deliver savings and efficiencies in the short to medium term. These will help the Force to continually challenge the way services are provided, maximise innovation and drive efficiency and productivity.

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

- 5.3 The table below analyses the changes between the proposed 2025/26 Revenue Budget, compared to the 2024/25 budget. The subjective analysis of the proposed 2025/26 budget is shown in Appendix 1, along with the base budget from 2024/25.

Revenue Budget Movement	£m
<b>2024/25 Budget</b>	<b>757.4</b>
Cost of living Pay Awards 2024 and (estimated) 2025	32.8
Incremental Pay Banding Increases	7.5
Non-Pay Inflation	10.0
Policing additional bank holiday	0.6
<b>New Costs / Grants</b>	
Cost of National Insurance Changes	11.9
National Insurance Grant from HO	(11.6)
Cost of delivering Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee	6.1
Neighbourhood Policing Grant from HO	(6.1)
<b>Movement in Grant Income</b>	
Police Grant - PUP Ringfenced Grant	4.6
Police Grant - Additional Recruitment Top Up	(9.6)
Police Grant - Pensions Grant (CTU Top slice)	0.9
<b>Other Budget Movements</b>	
Approved Investment Requests	5.6
Approved Savings (a combination of savings in year and through budget setting)	(24.5)
RCCO increase in line with capital programme (included one off cost of connect replacement)	4.3
Operation Fearless Funded from POCA reserve	0.5
<b>2025/26 Provisional Budget</b>	<b>790.4</b>

## 6 Police and Crime Commissioner Office

- 6.1 The proposed budget for the Police and Crime Commission's office for 2025/26, compared to the budget for 2024/25, is shown in the table below. The 2025/26 budget includes provisions for the impact of the pay awards and staff increments.
- 6.2 The budget has been refocussed on improved governance and a commitment to invest in regular public engagement and surveys. This will improve the ability to hold the Force to account and measure public perceptions.
- 6.3 The Office supports the functions of the PCC, including commissioned services, statutory external audit, supporting victims, engaging with the public, joint internal audit, running grants schemes, custody visiting, managing complaints appeals and responsibility for overseeing, scrutinising, and leading the police force.
- 6.4 The Office is responsible for victim services in the region, including supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. For many of these grant funded

schemes, the Office absorbs the overhead ensuring the maximum amount of money is allocated to the recipients of these services. The Office continues to support projects such as the Regional Criminal Justice Forum, on behalf of the four-regional force / OPCC areas.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Breakdown	Budget 2024/25	Proposed Budget 2025/26
	£,000	£,000
Governance	329	426
Staff and Office Support costs	2,431	2,756
Consultation, ICT and Supplies and Services	63	101
Police Misconduct Hearings including Legally Qualified Chairs	35	40
Subscriptions	55	95
Bank Charges and External Audit Fees	178	186
Custody Visiting	10	15
Professional Services	66	118
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>3,166</b>	<b>3,737</b>

## 7 Chief Finance Officer's Statement

- 1.1 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, requires the CFO to report to the Commissioner on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the statutory budget calculations and the adequacy of financial reserves and the Commissioner must have regard to that report when making decisions about the statutory budget calculations.
- 7.1 **Appendix 8** analyses the risks and implications if key budget assumptions vary during the year. Any overspendings which cannot be contained within approved budget levels will have to be financed from the Budget Reserve.
- 7.2 Details of the Commissioners general balances and reserves are set out in **Section 4** of the report.
  - 7.2.1.1 I am recommending that the level of General Balances remains at £16.7m.
- 7.3 The 2025/26 Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan requires a use of reserves.
  - 7.3.1.1 I have advised the Commissioner that I believe this represents an entirely reasonable, balanced and prudent approach, given current levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan and the levels of Government resources likely to be available in the medium term.
- 7.4 The Insurance fund will continue to be maintained at a level consistent with the insurance cost borne by the Commissioner's reserve and the level of outstanding self-funding insurance claims at any time. Financing for the Capital Programme includes the use of borrowing, capital receipts, capital grant and revenue contributions. Other earmarked reserves will be applied as expenditure levels and service requirements dictate.
- 7.5 It will be necessary to retain as much flexibility as possible over the levels of reserves.
- 7.6 The total level of revenue reserves is estimated to be around £75.6m by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, depending on the use of earmarked reserves and the other factors influencing the use of reserves in 2025/26.
  - I am therefore able to confirm that, in my professional opinion:
    - The estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the commissioner's budget requirement for 2025/26, under Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 contained in the report are robust.
    - The Financial reserves that will remain available to the Commissioner, as a result of agreeing the proposals contained in this report are adequate.

## 8 Operational Policing Budget

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

## 9 Staffing Budgets 2025/26

- 9.1 The table below details the forecast staffing levels, including those relating to retaining the national uplift programme across the Force for police officers, police staff and PCSOs. There is a continued commitment to recruit up to the number of Police Officers outlined below:

Workforce Breakdown	Target @ 31/03/25	Target @ 31/03/26
Officer Uplift Headcount target	8,086	8,086
Police Officers Establishment (FTE)*	8,055	8,055
Police Staff Establishment (FTE)	4,324	4,324
PCSO Establishment (FTE)	300	300
Total Establishment (FTE)	<b>12,679</b>	<b>12,679</b>
<i>*The Police Officer Establishment is before any increases linked to the Neighbourhood Policing Grant.</i>		

- 9.2 Police Uplift Funding, for a headcount of 8,086 has been confirmed for 2025/26. This funding comes with a £21.4m ringfenced uplift grant, the terms are conditions of this grant are currently being finalised and will be shared with Forces over the coming weeks.
- 9.3 PCSO numbers are to be maintained at 300 FTE and Police staff numbers at 4,324 FTE.
- 9.4 We will be working with the Home Office to understand the local impact on headcount of the £6.1m Neighbourhood Policing Grant, as more information is released around the terms and conditions. The Force has expressed a preference that the funding is used to increase numbers of Police Officers, rather than PCSOs or Special Constables.



## 10 Medium Term Financial Plan

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

Expenditure Type	Planning Assumptions 2026/27 onwards	1% Movement £m (+/-)
Salaries	2.0%	8.1
Supplies & Services	3.0%	0.8
Premises including utilities	5.0%	0.4
Income	1.0%	0.4
Fuel	5.0%	0.1
Other Transport	3.0%	0.1
Third Party Payments	3.0%	0.4
Police Grant	2.0%	5.8
Tax Base	1.2%	1.7
Precept (£)	£13	0.8

10.2 The Medium-Term Financial Plan, reflecting the assumptions outlined above, is shown in the table below. Assuming a £13 precept increase through the medium term, the forecast funding gap is currently £18.5m in 2026/27 growing to £47.3m over the medium term.

Revenue Budget £m	Proposed 2025/26 Budget	MTFP 2026/27	MTFP 2027/28	MTFP 2028/29	MTFP 2029/30
Police Force Net Expenditure	779.2	809.8	829.4	873.0	903.3
Police & Crime Commissioner	11.2	11.9	12.5	13.2	13.8
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>790.4</b>	<b>821.7</b>	<b>841.9</b>	<b>886.2</b>	<b>917.1</b>
Police Grants	(598.1)	(609.7)	(621.5)	(633.5)	(645.8)
Precept	(175.4)	(187.0)	(199.4)	(212.0)	(224.9)
Planned Contributions to / (from) Reserves	(16.9)	(6.1)	2.1	(5.5)	2.5
<b>Potential Savings Required</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>47.3</b>

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

- The impact if pay awards are higher than the 2.0% assumption from 2025/26 onwards.
- Higher than anticipated non-pay inflation.
- Revenue consequences of nationally led ICT schemes, such as the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) and the NLED Programme, which will replace legacy data systems, such as Police National Computer and Police National Database, with the Law Enforcement Data Service (LEDS).
- Savings from adopting proposals in the Police Productivity Review.
- The cost of adequately refurbishing buildings and fleet to meet environmental targets for decarbonisation which have been reported to the Home Office as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review, but not yet incorporated into this medium term financial plan.

## **11 Capital Programme**

11.1 The capital programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30, is detailed in **Appendix 4**. The Capital Programme will be financed by a combination of revenue contributions, capital receipts, and short-term internal borrowing, as required.

## **12 Prudential Guidelines**

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

## **13 Risks and Uncertainties**

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

## 14 Precept Implications

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

Summary Precept Calculation	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Total Revenue Budget	757.4	790.4
Contribution to / (from) Reserves	(14.0)	(16.9)
Net Budget Requirement	<b>743.4</b>	<b>773.5</b>
Police Grant including DCLG	(563.2)	(579.1)
Council Tax Support Grant	(19.0)	(19.0)
Surplus / Deficit on Collection Fund	(0.1)	(0.5)
Precept Requirement	<b>161.1</b>	<b>174.8</b>
Total Tax Base	747,591.74	761,845.70
Band D Precept*	<b>215.55</b>	<b>229.50</b>

*\*An increase of £13.95 per annum*

14.2 This produces a charge for each property for 2025/26 as follows.

Band	Statutory Proportion	2024/25 Precept £: p	2025/26 Precept £: p	Change Annual £: p	Change Weekly £: p
Band A	6/9	143.70	153.00	9.30	0.18
Band B	7/9	167.65	178.50	10.85	0.21
Band C	8/9	191.60	204.00	12.40	0.24
Band D	<b>9/9</b>	<b>215.55</b>	<b>229.50</b>	<b>13.95</b>	<b>0.27</b>
Band E	11/9	263.45	280.50	17.05	0.33
Band F	13/9	311.35	331.50	20.15	0.39
Band G	15/9	359.24	382.50	23.26	0.45
Band H	18/9	431.10	459.00	27.90	0.54

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

## **15 Finance Implications**

15.1 This report solely deals with financial issues.

## **16 Legal Implications**

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

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

16.3 The Localism Act 2011 abolished the council tax capping regime and replaced it with the requirement for precepting authorities to hold a taxpayer's referendum if excessive increase is proposed. In 2025/26, an excessive increase would be £14.01 or greater.

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

## **17 Equalities Implications**

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

## **Schedule of Background Papers**

Appendix 1 – Summary of Revenue Budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26

Appendix 2 – Operational Budget 2025/26

Appendix 3 – Capital Strategy 2025/26 – 2029/30

Appendix 4 – Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2029/30

Appendix 5 – Statutory Council Tax calculations 2025/26

Appendix 6 – Reserves Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30

Appendix 7 – Statement of Prudential Indicators

Appendix 8 – Risk Assessment

## Appendix 1 – Summary of Revenue Budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26

Income and Expenditure Breakdown	2024/25 Budget £,000	2025/26 Proposed Budget £,000
Police Pay	517,238	555,967
Police Community Support Officers	11,347	12,485
Police Staff Pay	198,522	221,753
Other Employee Expenses	17,628	17,461
Sub Total	<b>744,735</b>	<b>807,666</b>
Premises	35,422	32,499
Transport	12,592	12,745
Supplies and Services	74,459	78,903
Third Party Payments	23,639	25,909
Capital Financing	17,903	15,918
External Income	(120,294)	(134,657)
Home Office Specific Grant	(47,043)	(67,330)
Change Programme including Estates	5,958	7,537
Police Force	<b>747,371</b>	<b>779,190</b>
Office of Police and Crime Commissioner	3,166	3,737
Community Safety Funding	3,863	3,519
Helping Communities Fund	400	400
External Commissioning	1,969	2,599
Victim Services Expenditure	6,500	6,697
Victim Services Income	(6,191)	(6,049)
Violence Reduction Unit Expenditure	4,887	5,839
Violence Reduction Unit Income	(4,597)	(5,515)
Total Office of the PCC	<b>9,997</b>	<b>11,227</b>
Total Revenue Budget	<b>757,368</b>	<b>790,417</b>
Government Grants	(582,183)	(598,077)
Council Tax including Surplus on Collection Fund	(161,202)	(175,390)
Net Use of Reserves	<b>13,983</b>	<b>16,950</b>

## Appendix 2 – Operational Budgets 2025/26

The tables below detail the operational budgets for the Force for 2025/26.

Operational Budget £,000	2025/26 Proposed Budget
Pay, Allowances & Overtime	790,205
Staff Pay, Allowances & Overtime	234,238
Non-Pay Costs	167,517
Capital Financing	15,918
External Income	(134,657)
Total Operational Budget	<b>838,983</b>
Change Programme including Estates Strategy	7,537
Home Office Specific Grants	(67,330)
Total Police Force Budget	<b>779,190</b>

Operational Breakdown	Budget £,000	Police Pay, Allowances & Overtime	Non-Pay Costs	Capital Financing	Income	Total Operational Budget
Local Policing		283,976	1,775	0	(4,198)	281,553
Major Crime		202,237	19,490	0	(11,744)	209,984
Support Services		85,817	113,691	15,869	(14,761)	200,616
Force Contact & Change		75,077	508	0	(323)	75,262
Operations		68,220	10,099	48	(23,789)	54,577
Security		74,879	21,953	1	(79,842)	16,991
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>Operational</b>	<b>790,205</b>	<b>167,517</b>	<b>15,918</b>	<b>(134,657)</b>	<b>838,983</b>

## **Appendix 3 – Capital Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30**

### **1 Background and Introduction**

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

### **2 Purpose**

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

### **3 Background and Introduction**

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

### **4 Purpose**

- 4.1 This Capital Strategy provides a framework for the development of the Capital Programme which sets out the investment in assets and identifies the resources



required for that investment. It also represents the intentions for capital investment reflective of strategic priorities, objectives, and outcomes. Guiding the importance of a link from capital investment to strategic outcomes.

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

## **5 Scope**

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

## **6 Governance Framework**

- 6.1 A Financial Governance Board has been established and began meeting in summer 2024.
- 6.2 The Board meets monthly and has an overview of the progress in terms of financial position, and benefits realisation. It will ensure that capital priorities are aligned to organisational priorities and see reports on revenue impact as well.
- 6.3 It will set the prioritisation framework, setting out the terms and approvals for business cases and business as usual capital plans against an agreed prioritisation framework.
- 6.4 This works in line with the 2-gateway process that is currently in place. An outline business case is prepared first and may inform the strategy and MTFP with provisional figures. However, then a full business case is prepared which may require modification.
- 6.5 The board decisions are made based upon the presentation of a business case / recommendations. These are considered and challenged at the meeting; attendees include the Director of Commercial Services, Chief Finance Officer for the PCC, Assistant Director of Finance & Procurement, and other key stakeholders as required.
- 6.6 The business case process includes a rigorous process of options appraisal including identifying the needs and benefits (both financial and non-financial) of the proposal, the associated risks and the costs profiled over the life of the project (revenue and capital).
- 6.7 All the investment decisions made follow Force Standing Orders and the usual approvals process, via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 6.8 Plans will only be revised and updated following the approval given at the Investment Board. These will then be built into the longer-term capital plan which forms part of the revenue and capital budget setting process of the Force. The budget plans are presented to the Accountability and Governance Board and the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel to ensure that there is a wide opportunity for challenge and scrutiny. Following on from this process the PCC formally approves the decision to accept the budget proposal.
- 6.9 The delivery of the capital plan is monitored monthly by the S151 Officers for the Force and the PCC and quarterly, via reports that are presented to the Accountability and Governance Board.
- 6.10 To underpin the capital investment, each year a Treasury Management Strategy is produced, which incorporates the Commissioner's investment strategy and approach to borrowing (The capital investment programme is the key driver of treasury management activity). This report is written by the CFOs of the PCC and the Chief Constable and is presented to the Joint Audit Committee in March each year for consideration before being approved by the Commissioner. Copies of the strategy can be found on <https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/finance/annual-investment-strategies/> for each relevant year. The

Joint Audit Committee also receive update reports throughout the year on the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy.

## **7 Capital Expenditure**

- 7.1 As part of the Medium-Term Financial Planning (MTFP), West Midlands Police takes a forward view of the Forces' asset needs to meet its future objectives. The MTFP links very closely with the Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 in assessing where capital investment priorities may lie.
- 7.2 In addition to the change programme the capital programme also provides for business-as-usual expenditure (BAU) such as the replacement of fleet vehicles, replacement or upgrade of core IT systems and equipment not related to change programmes but meeting the definition of capital expenditure.
- 7.3 To meet the definition of capital, the expenditure incurred must result in the acquisition, construction, or enhancement of a fixed asset (either tangible or intangible). In the case of enhancement this must be to prolong the life of or increase the market value of the asset.
- 7.4 The overarching capital strategy considers and links in the various strategies including estates, fleet, environmental and IT.

## **8 Capital Investment Priorities**

- 8.1 The PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan 2025-29 states the priorities and ambitions over the medium term. These are summarised as:
  - Rebuilding Community Policing,
  - Preventing and Tackling Violence,
  - Improving Road and Travel Safety,
  - Preventing and Reducing Neighbourhood Crime,
  - Protecting Victims and Witnesses,
  - Building Trust and Confidence,
  - An equal and fair West Midlands,
  - Bringing offenders to Justice,
  - Prevention and Rehabilitation

- 8.2 In delivering those priorities, the Plan also sets goals for how Partnerships, People and Resources and Accountability and Governance will support and embed those goals.
- 8.3 The Plan contains the following statements from the PCC:
- The police estate is a significant asset for the benefit of the people and communities of the West Midlands and WMP. It is imperative that we drive the greatest possible value out of it by ensuring well designed spaces to maximise productivity, efficiency, accessibility to the public and personal wellbeing. This will include collaborating and sharing space with other public bodies including West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service and local authorities.
  - I expect WMP to proactively scan for emerging trends and prioritise the effective and efficient use of new and existing technology, ensuring that police officers and staff have the right hardware and software to undertake their roles to the best of their abilities. Use of new technology will be lawful, ethical and proportionate at national, regional and local levels. I expect equality impact assessments to be undertaken for the deployment of new technology to ensure lawfulness, fairness and inclusivity.
  - The resources of WMP and how they are used leave a carbon footprint. I expect WMP to play its part in delivering decarbonisation and Net Zero including: complying with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008 and working with partners to achieve this across the public sector; increasing the number of officers deployed on bicycles or foot; using technology to reduce its carbon footprint and enhance operational efficiency; reducing the carbon footprint of the police estate; increasing the proportion of its vehicle fleet that are electric or low carbon; and implementing the WMP Environmental and Sustainability Strategy 2022-2027.
- 8.4 The capital strategy and capital programme underpin both the local and national priorities in the investments it makes, particularly in relation to making the best use of resources and creating a modern police service. The investments made through the IT & Digital's new approach and the Estates strategy enhance and improve the service for both staff and citizens by providing up to date technology and systems and creating better working environments, optimising available space.
- 8.5 Given the significant scope of ambition of the strategy a prioritisation matrix is to be used in approval of capital investments as set out below against which business cases and BAU capital activity requests can be more objectively prioritised.

## **9 Prioritisation Approach**

- 9.1 The Capital Strategy is led by the priorities outlined in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan. It translates these priorities into a programme of projects in the PCC's Capital Programme that will achieve the intended outcome whilst also

factoring in other key criteria that make different business cases attractive when pursuing those aims.

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

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

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

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

## **10 Capital Funding Strategy**

10.1 Under the provision of the Prudential Code, the PCC can invest in a capital programme so long as its capital spending plans are “affordable, prudent and sustainable”.

10.2 The Capital Programme is reflected in the PCC’s Treasury Management Strategy, which is reviewed by the Joint Audit Committee. It sets out the Prudential Indicators, which determine the limits set against the requirements of affordability, prudence, and sustainability.

10.3 The PCC, in consultation with the Chief Constable, will identify available sources of funding for the Medium-Term Capital Programme including the identification of potential capital receipts from the disposal of property.

10.4 The sources of funding available to the PCC to finance capital expenditure are detailed below:

10.5 **Revenue Contributions** - In some circumstances the Force does allow revenue contributions to be made to fund capital expenditure. This is usually where a piece of equipment is locally purchased, but meets the definition of a capital asset. Where affordable within achieving a balanced budget and cashflow – this method of finance avoids the need to pay interest. It is currently WMP preferred

method of funding BAU – but this must be planned carefully and budgeted into the revenue budgets at a sustainable level, with due care that revenue to capital contributions do not affect front line service adversely.

- 10.6 **Government Grants** - The Force also receives a small number and low value of in year other specific grants, which could be spent as capital or revenue to fund specific projects. Where possible additional grant income and plans to deliver should be sought.
- 10.7 In addition to the funding given to the Force some specific grants are also received by the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) and these fund expenditures specific to the CTU.
- 10.8 **Capital Receipts** - The financing of the estate's development programme is dependent on the release of property assets for sale. Achieving the full investment programme will be dependent on progressing schemes listed on the development schedule or identifying alternative assets for disposal.
- 10.9 **Prudential Borrowing** - The introduction of the 2004 Prudential Code enabled PCCs, like local Authorities, to determine their own level of capital investment controlled by self-regulation. It gives PCCs the ability to borrow provided that the borrowing is prudent, sustainable, and affordable.
- 10.10 **Internal Borrowing** – allows the PCC / Force to use its own cash resources to finance capital expenditure rather than new external borrowing. This is a prudent approach when investment returns are low.
- 10.11 In addition to revenue and funding considerations full cashflow considerations and appropriate treasury management advice should be considered in relation to levels of capital expenditure and financing decisions.

## **11 Monitoring Capital Projects**

- 11.1 Capital projects are subject to high levels of scrutiny. The precise scrutiny will vary dependant on the type of project and may be influenced by size or by the makeup of regional involvement. Each project will have a Project Manager and potentially a team to implement the project.
- 11.2 Typically, projects will have a dedicated Project Board which, if part of a larger programme, may sit under a Programme Board. Programme and Project Boards will have a Senior Responsible Officer.
- 11.3 Heads of Department have overall responsibility for ensuring that the objectives are met for all projects, but particular focus will be placed on ensuring that high-profile projects are delivered on time, achieving the intended outcome and good progress is being made in delivering the programme within planned capital and revenue funding set out in the current year's budget, the Capital Programme and the MTFP.
- 11.4 Progress against the capital programme, including considerations of capital financing, is reported quarterly to our Investment Board and a summary position

to Performance Panel / Force Executive and the Strategic Police and Crime Board.

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

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

## **12 Benefits Realisation Review**

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

## **13 Risk Management**

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

## Appendix 4 – Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2029/30

The table below details the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30.

Capital Programme £m	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
Fleet	7.0	9.0	9.2	9.5	9.8	44.5
Body Worn Video	0.4	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.4	5.3
Laptops / Desktops	3.2	2.7	3.0	10.9	3.2	22.9
IT Infrastructure including CCTV	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.1	6.8
Data Centre Relocation	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2
Mounted Unit Setup	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Connect Replacement	1.5	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0
CTU Capital Programme (estimate)	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.4	16.2
<b>Total Business as Usual Capital</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>103.0</b>
Estates Strategy	29.0	7.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	36.6
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>45.8</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>139.6</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>						
Revenue Contributions	13.8	19.9	14.9	22.7	15.5	86.8
Capital Grants	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.4	16.2
Borrowing	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0
Capital Receipts	25.0	7.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	32.6
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>45.8</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>139.6</b>



## Appendix 5 – Statutory Council Tax calculations 2025/26

The table below details the statutory Council Tax calculations for 2025/26.

West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner Precept Calculation 2024/25				
				£
	Gross Budget Requirement			790,417,293
	Less: Balances and Reserves			(16,950,500)
	<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>			<b>773,466,793</b>
	Less: Police Grant inc. DCLG			(579,051,412)
	Legacy Council Tax Grant			(19,025,734)
	<b>Gross Council Tax Requirement</b>			<b>175,389,647</b>
	Add/Less: Balance on Collection Funds			(546,059)
	<b>Net Council Tax Requirement</b>			<b>174,843,588</b>
Apportioned on the relevant tax base as follows:				
	Relevant Tax base £	Total Precept £	Monthly Instalments	
			1-9 £	10 £
Birmingham	273,244.00	62,709,498	6,270,950	6,270,948
Coventry	90,062.60	20,669,367	2,066,937	2,066,934
Dudley	95,370.90	21,887,622	2,188,762	2,188,764
Sandwell	80,364.30	18,443,607	1,844,361	1,844,358
Solihull	80,631.00	18,504,815	1,850,481	1,850,486
Walsall	74,375.36	17,069,145	1,706,915	1,706,910
Wolverhampton	67,797.54	15,559,535	1,555,954	1,555,949
	<b>761,845.70</b>	<b>174,843,587</b>	<b>17,484,360</b>	<b>17,484,348</b>
			Monthly Instalment x 9	157,359,240
			<b>Total Precept</b>	<b>174,843,588</b>
			<b>Net Precept for Band D property</b>	<b>£229.50</b>
	Proportion of Band D £	Calculated Value £	Rounded Value £	
Band A	6/9	153.0000	153.00	
Band B	7/9	178.5000	178.50	
Band C	8/9	204.0000	204.00	
<b>Band D</b>	<b>9/9</b>	<b>229.5000</b>	<b>229.50</b>	
Band E	11/9	280.5000	280.50	
Band F	13/9	331.5000	331.50	
Band G	15/9	382.5000	382.50	
Band H	18/9	459.0000	459.00	

## **Appendix 6 – Reserves Strategy**

### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 This document sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands Reserves strategy up until March 2030. This includes details of reserves currently held, the purpose of the reserves and the predicted balances by 31 March 2030.

### **2 Reasons for holding reserves**

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

### **3 Reserves Strategy**

- 3.1 The Commissioner's overall reserves strategy is to use reserves over the medium term up to 2030 to support the medium-term financial strategy including the Change Programme and Estates Strategy. Over the next 5 years we will look to use a net £23.9m of reserves as detailed in the table below:

Contribution to / From Reserves £m	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Uniform and Equipment Reserves	1.6	2.0	0.0	8.0	0.0
Estates Strategy / Change Programme	8.4	6.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Budget Reserve	7.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
OPCC including Commissioned Services	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Regional / National / Collaboration	(1.8)	(2.6)	(2.6)	(2.6)	(2.6)
Police Property Act / Drug Squad / POCA Contributions	0.2	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)
National contingency – Hillsborough	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>(2.1)</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>(2.5)</b>

3.2 Details of the planned movement in Reserves are as follows:

- Funding for the year 1 of the taser contract due to commence in 2026/27,
- Commencing work on converting our fleet to non-ICE vehicles,
- Refurbishment costs of the estate's strategy (where expenditure cannot be capitalised),
- Replacement or development of the Connect system starting in 2025/26,
- Funding for Operation Fearless, an operation to enhance problem-oriented policing in key high crime neighbourhoods in the West Midlands,
- Funding for the setup of the Mounted Unit,
- A contribution to reserves from the increase in planned activity in average speed enforcement and the income from Abnormal loans escorts.
- Balancing the 2025/26 utilising the budget reserve.
- The budget reserve is currently being held at current levels from 2026/27 onwards, however we will look to draw down on this to support setting a balanced budget over the medium term.

- 3.3 The table below details the current level of reserves held from the outturn for March 2025 through to the forecasted level by March 2030 based on use of / contribution to reserves detailed above.

Reserves £m	31st March 2025 Forecast	31st March 2026 Forecast	31st March 2027 Forecast	31st March 2028 Forecast	31st March 2029 Forecast	31st March 2030 Forecast
<b>Funding for Planned Expenditure on Projects &amp; Programmes - Revenue</b>						
Regional / National / Collaboration Reserve	5.4	7.2	9.8	12.4	15.0	17.6
PPA / Misuse of Drugs Act	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9
POCA (Proceeds of Crime Act) Reserve	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Change Programme / Estates Strategy Reserve	15.5	7.1	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Carry Forward Reserve	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6
<b>Funding for Planned Expenditure on Projects &amp; Programmes – Capital</b>						
Useable Capital Receipts Reserve	14.5	13.6	23.4	23.4	23.4	23.4
Capital Grants Unapplied	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
<b>Reserves held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management</b>						
Uniform and Equipment Reserve	11.6	10.0	8.0	8.0	0.0	0.0
Budget Reserve	35.1	27.3	27.3	27.3	27.3	27.3
National Contingency Reserve	2.2	1.8	1.5	1.1	1.1	1.1
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>91.1</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>79.0</b>	<b>73.5</b>	<b>76.0</b>
General Fund Reserve	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7
<b>Total Useable Reserves</b>	<b>107.8</b>	<b>89.9</b>	<b>93.6</b>	<b>95.7</b>	<b>90.2</b>	<b>92.7</b>
Provisions	15.7	14.5	13.4	13.1	13.5	13.9
<b>Total Useable Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>	<b>123.5</b>	<b>104.4</b>	<b>107.0</b>	<b>108.8</b>	<b>103.7</b>	<b>106.6</b>

- 3.4 The total reserves of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner forecast as of 31 March 2025 is 16.5% of the net revenue budget (NRB), if funding is used as planned by March 2026 this will reduce to around 13.5% of the forecast NRB, dropping to 12.3% by the end of March 2030.

## 4 Individual Reserves

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

### 4.2 Category (i) Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes

- **Regional / National / Collaboration Reserve**

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

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

- **PPA / Misuse of Drug Act Reserve**

This reserve allows recovered assets of criminality to be used to fund community-based activity. Funding is secured in several ways including cash seizures and the confiscation of assets through the courts following convictions. The Home Office collect the assets, and these are shared between the Treasury, Courts, Crown Prosecution Service and Police using a prescribed formula. This reserve is being used to fund the Commissioner's Helping Communities Fund which supports projects at Neighbourhood Policing Units.

- **POCA Reserve**

The POCA Reserve has been created to hold any surplus POCA income received in year, this will be utilised in future years to either support a deficit in POCA receipts against the budget during a budget year or future planned initiatives. It has been committed over 2024/25 and 2025/26 to the Op Fearless campaign, which itself targets, amongst other things, increased seizures of cash and therefore to a degree the operation is intended to be self-funding,

- **Change Programme**

This reserve is being utilised in the medium term to fund the replacement / development work associated with developing our core Police Records Management System: Connect.

- **Estates Strategy Reserve**

This utilises the estate strategy reserve to fund the in-year revenue costs of the Estates strategy.

- **Carry Forward Reserve**

This reserve is used to carry forward specific / agreed under spends from the revenue budget and will usually be utilised the following year. Any unutilised carry forwards will be transferred to the budget reserve. This includes:

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

- **Useable Capital Receipts Reserve**

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

- **Capital Grants Unapplied**

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

#### 4.3 **Category (ii) Reserves held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management**

- **Uniform and Equipment Reserves**

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

- **National Contingency Reserve**

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

- **Budget Reserve**

This reserve will be applied as part of the Commissioner's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to reduce the impact of financial pressures. Consideration will be given to utilising the reserve to further support 2025/26 as part of the budget setting cycle.

The plan thereafter is to hold the Budget Reserve at the forecast level as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 to fund any potential future funding gaps from 2026/27 and beyond, linked to the risks associated with potential increases in inflation over and above those forecast through the medium-term financial plan.

#### 4.4 **General Fund**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Appendix 7 – Statement of Prudential Indicators**

- 1 The Prudential Code for Capital Financing in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) is applicable to the Police and Crime Commissioner and has been developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to provide a code of practice to underpin the system of capital finance embodied in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003. PCCs, like Local Authorities, are free to determine their own level of capital investment controlled by self-regulation.
- 2 The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 3 The Prudential Code supports a system of self-regulation that is achieved by the setting and monitoring of a suite of Prudential Indicators that directly relate to each other. The indicators establish parameters within which the PCC should operate to ensure the objectives of the Prudential Code are met.
- 4 In setting the prudential indicators, the PCC must give due regard to the following matters:
  - Service objectives, e.g. strategic planning for the authority
  - Stewardship of assets,
  - Value for money, e.g. option appraisal
  - Prudence and sustainability
  - Affordability
  - Practicality, e.g. achievability
- 5 The Prudential Indicators below will also be reported in the PCC's 2025/26 Treasury management strategy statement which will be reported to Joint Audit Committee in March 2025. The PCC has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA): Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. The Prudential Indicators for which the PCC is required to set limits are as follows.
- 6 The first prudential indicator is Capital Expenditure – this prudential indicator is a summary of the PCC's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously, and those forming part of this budget cycle. It also forms the background to all other indicators, given that the overall rationale of the prudential system is to provide flexibility for borrowing to fund capital investment.



- 7 The actual amount of capital expenditure that was incurred during 2023/24, and the estimates of capital expenditure to be incurred for the current and future years that are proposed in the 2025/26 Budget are as follows.

	2023/24 Actual £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m	2028/29 Estimate £m
Capital Expenditure	23.6	18.3	45.8	30.7	18.1	26.1

- 8 The second prudential indicator is the PCC's Capital Financing requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of indebtedness and so is the underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above which has not been paid for through a revenue or capital resource, will increase the CFR. That does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the indebtedness in line with each asset's life and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.
- 9 This Prudential Indicator also provides an overarching requirement that all the indicators operate within and is described in the Prudential Code as follows - "In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the PCC should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years".
- 10 In considering the proposed capital programme for 2025/26, the anticipated future borrowing requirements are considered in the context of overall capital resources and the impact on the revenue budget.

	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2027 £m	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2028 £m
Capital financing requirement (CFR)	82.9	79.4	79.8	76.1	72.5
Net External borrowing	(84.5)	(82.3)	(80.3)	(80.3)	(73.3)
Variance	(1.6)	(2.9)	(0.5)	(4.2)	(0.8)

*Note: The CFR increases when expenditure is incurred and reduces when provision is made to repay debt. The CFR numbers are **pre-IFRS16**, an update will be provided in year as part of our treasury management updates to Joint Audit Committee.*

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

	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Financing Costs	7.0	7.2	5.9	5.8
Net Revenue Stream	764.5	813.5	825.7	838.9
Ratio	0.92%	0.89%	0.71%	0.69%

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

17 The following limits are recommended.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Authorised Limit for external debt: Borrowing	120	135	125
Operational Boundary: Borrowing	115	130	120

18 The PCC's actual external debt as at 31st March 2025 is anticipated to be £82.3m, excluding transferred debt managed by Dudley MBC.

19 It is recommended that:

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

Fixed Interest Exposure	2023/24 %	2024/25 %	2025/26 %
Upper Limit	100	100	100

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

Variable Interest Rate Exposure	2023/24 %	2024/25 %	2025/26 %
Upper Limit	20	20	20

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

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

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

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

22 It is recommended that the upper limits of total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days are £30m for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28.

## Appendix 8 – Risk Assessment

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

Financial Risk Assessment	<i>Likelihood</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>Comment</i>
The Capital Programme requirement changes as work streams develop, for example, development of the Estates Strategy.	High	High	The programme has been written with some flexibility built in, but should strategic choices vary significantly the programme would be reviewed and re-shaped in line with the new requirement.
Planned savings the estates strategy included within the Medium-Term Financial Plan are not achievable.	High	High	Budget Managers have considered the planned savings and confirmed they believe them to be achievable, however if circumstances change and the planned level of savings is not achievable alternatives will be sought in year.
Further Cost Transfer from National Programmes / Projects	High	High	Further cost transfers from the centre (e.g., Emergency Services Network and IT company costs.)
Headcount is not kept at the target, to secure Uplift funding	Medium	High	The uplift numbers must be maintained, to keep grant funding. Terms and Conditions of grant funding are not confirmed for 2025/26 but loss of headcount of 120 below target, must be assumed to have financial consequences for the specific grant element of funding.
Medium-Term funding remains unclear.	Medium	High	A one-year settlement was received for 2025/26. Due to the nature of the funding settlement the future years funding remains unclear and could vary significantly to that planned. £1 change in precept results in £0.8m movement and 1% change in grant results in £5.8m movement in grant
Pay awards in the future differ from the assumptions in our financial planning	Medium	Medium	Current assumptions are in line with pay award offers to Police Officers and Staff. If pay awards are higher than this, the budget reserve will be used in year to meet any difference, net of increasing turnover and holding posts vacant to meet costs.
General inflation is different to the assumptions included in the budget.	Medium	Medium	A 1% increase would cost around £1.5m. Significant increases in building costs in the medium-term capital programme period could have an impact on some estimates.
Increase in volume and/or cost of policing public order incidents	Medium	Medium	Depending on the volume and complexity of any incidents, this could place a significant strain on current

linked to the general economic conditions or other factors			contingency budgets. In the first instance savings would look to be found across budgets areas. If this were not sufficient then reserves would need to be used.
Interest rates increase	Medium	Medium	The budget reflects the current rates of interest being received on investments. No further borrowing is planned currently.
Short Term Grants not extended by 2024/25	Medium	Medium	There are several short-term grants that are due to end in 2024/25. Not all funding is yet confirmed for 2025/26. The mitigation is to stop the expenditure however this has a cost in terms of efficiency and positive outcomes. These include County Lines £7m, VRP £4.3m and GRIP (guardian) £3.7m
Income levels not achieved	Low	Low	A 1% loss of income (excluding grants & interest) would cost around £0.4m.

# **Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**

## **Police and Crime Commissioner Update Report on Recent Activities and Published Key Decisions**

**Date: 3 February 2025**

Report of: Tom Senior, Acting Lead 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](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk)

### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 The Panel is responsible for scrutinising the actions and decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 1.2 The Panel is invited to consider the Police and Crime Commissioner's update report (attached as Appendix A) detailing the activities the Commissioner and his team have been engaged in, and key decisions published since the Police and Crime Panel held on 9 December 2024.

### **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 **That the Police and Crime Panel notes the attached update prepared by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the recent key decisions published.**

### **3 Finance Implications**

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications relating to the recommendation in this report.
- 3.2 The financial implications of the key decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner are outlined in the individual decision reports published by the Commissioner.

### **4 Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct legal implications relating to the recommendation in this report.
- 4.2 The powers and responsibilities of panels are set out in Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 which give panels the authority to scrutinise all decisions or actions in connection with the discharge of the PCC's functions.
- 4.3 The legal implications of the key decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner are outlined in the individual decision reports published by the Commissioner.

## **5 Equalities Implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct equalities implications relating to the recommendation in this report.
- 5.2 The equalities implications of the key decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner are outlined in the individual decision reports published by the Commissioner.

## **6 Appendices**

- 6.1 Appendix A - Police and Crime Commissioner Activity Update and recently published key decisions

## Recent Activities of the Police and Crime Commissioner

### Introduction

The update set out below is only a selection of the action taken by the Commissioner, since the previous Police and Crime Panel on 9 December 2024.

For a more detailed round up of action the Commissioner has been taking, since the previous Police and Crime Panel on 9 December 2024, members of the Panel are encouraged and recommended to consult the News Section on the Office of the Police and Commissioner's website.

A link is available here:

[News - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/news)

### Police Precept 2025/26

I am asking the public for their views on the level of investment they want to see in West Midlands Police. This comes as I launch my annual public engagement on the budget.

It is important to understand that West Midlands Police is already structurally under-resourced and under-funded. In the West Midlands we still have 800 fewer police officers and 500 fewer PCSOs than we had in 2010. The formula used to distribute police funding, nationally, also leaves the force £40 million short every year. In 2025/26, the force was facing a budget shortfall of £25.5 million.

The government has given me the ability to raise the police part of council tax by £1.16 per month or £13.95 a year, for a typical band D property. If I increase the police part of council tax by £1.16 per month then many of the rising policing costs next year can be met and that funding will be invested directly towards retaining police officers and police staff and preventing and tackling crime to keep people, families, businesses and communities safe and secure, despite the WMP budget remaining under severe pressure.

However, without that increase in the police part of council tax, WMP might be forced to close police buildings, reduce staffing in the 999 and 101 call handling centre or reduce the number of police cars. The West Midlands Police Council Tax is currently one of the lowest in the country at £215.55 per year for a Band D property and this increase will take it to £229.50. By comparison the Band D Council Tax per annum for Policing in local Forces is as follows:

- Warwickshire Police **£289.71** per year
- Staffordshire Police **£273.57** per year
- West Mercia Police **£277.50** per year

Most properties in the West Midlands are in bands A and B and the cost increase for them would be even lower – working out at £9.30 per year for a Band A and £10.85 per year for a Band B.



I am committed to continuing to re-build community policing, to prevent and tackle crime, to keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure. However, I am seeking the views of the public before deciding on the best course of action. I am keen to hear to what extent people want to see investment in their police force or further cuts to their police force.

These decisions require careful consideration. Deciding on the appropriate precept level is always a challenging process, particularly in recent years where I have had to strike a balance between significant financial challenges and ensuring the appropriate level of policing service that our communities are entitled to. I would encourage everybody in the West Midlands, if you work, live or study in the region to please respond to this public engagement.

### **Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls**

It is a top priority for me to eliminate male violence against women and girls and it is vital that we all work together to tackle the causes of this harmful behaviour. We must work to curb the attitudes and behaviours that lead to the harm of women and girls and it is crucial that all areas of society work together to influence positive change.

I am one of many to co-sign the letter from White Ribbon UK to the Prime Minister, calling on more to be done to prevent and tackle abuse as well as the causes of VAWG. The letter says that while it welcomes the government's commitment to halving VAWG in a decade, it can only be achieved by focussing on violence before it starts – working on a culture change, promoting equality and challenging gender stereotypes to transform harmful male cultures that lead to violence.

The letter adds that we are calling for a plan that prioritises the Primary Prevention of violence against women and girls that takes a whole society approach, engaging men and boys. We welcome the Government's focus on the education of young people, but it must take a cross-department approach that also supports workplaces, sports organisations and the media to shift harmful attitudes that lead to violence against women and girls. Such work has been underfunded for many years and much of it delivered by small charities. Proper investment is required, with statutory sources of funding made available for specialist organisations working on Primary Prevention initiatives.

The prevalence of violence against women and girls will not decrease unless we start addressing the so-called 'low-level' attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate and normalise violence and abuse. If Government works in partnership with organisations to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour that perpetuate gender-based violence, we can prevent violence against women and girls.

### **PCC's Top Priorities for 2025**

I take the duties and responsibilities vested in me very seriously indeed. I am committed to preventing and tackling crime and keeping the people and communities of the West Midlands safe and secure.

On 18 September, I was pleased to announce that West Midlands Police was, and remains, the fastest improving force in the country having successfully secured its removal from 'Engage' status in under 10 months. That was a remarkable achievement. However, it is essential that the Force continues to drive continuous improvement, as we embark on another important year in the West Midlands.

WMP is achieving and delivering against the odds, because it is structurally underfunded and under-resourced. Yet despite that, total overall police recorded crime in the West Midlands has reduced by 10%, including decreases in the crime types of homicide, serious youth violence, knife crime, burglary, robbery, theft from the person and vehicle crime.

The force is now one of the best in the country when it comes to answering both 999 and 101 calls. Emergency and priority response times have improved. Arrest rates have increased and more offenders are being brought to justice. In addition, both I and our Violence Reduction Partnership are continuing to invest in prevention, early intervention, diversion and addressing the underlying causes of crime, to prevent crime happening in the first place.

Looking ahead to 2025, I will be launching my new Police and Crime Plan. It will set the strategic direction for WMP between now and 2029. Having engaged in an inclusive, wide-ranging and extensive consultation across the entire region, you the people, have helped me to prepare this Plan. We must await formal publication of the Plan in March 2025, but you can expect the following issues to be top priorities:

- Continuing to re-build community policing
- Preventing and tackling violence, including youth violence, knife crime and Violence Against Women and Girls
- Reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads

I will continue my constant and unrelenting campaign for fairer funding, because WMP continue to have to achieve and deliver against the odds. WMP still have around 800 fewer police officers and 500 fewer PCSOs compared to 2010. Yet, in rural areas where crime is lower, many forces now have more officers than they have ever had in their force history. That is not acceptable, it is not fair and it is not just. I will continue to fight for the return of our missing officers and for fair funding for WMP in key areas of work, including violence prevention and reduction, County Lines and victim support services.

My pledge to continue rebuilding community policing will be pursued relentlessly, because it is the foundation stone on which policing and in particular policing by consent is built in our country. This year will see the opening of new police HQs and bases for officers, staff and teams, that will make sure they remain within the communities they serve, which is exactly where they need to be.

I am also in the process of appointing a Victims' Advocate, who will help me to ensure that the rights and welfare of victims, survivors and witnesses are always at the forefront of policing and the wider criminal justice system.

## **Violence Reduction Partnership Funded 2025/26**

I have welcomed the news that vital work to prevent and tackle violent crime across the West Midlands will continue for another year. The Government's provisional police funding settlement for 2025/6, which was set out in Parliament on Tuesday 17 December 2024, will ensure the continuation of Violence Reduction Partnerships across the country.

In the West Midlands, this funding will mean continued investment in frontline services, which support thousands of young people who are at risk of violence or exploitation, or need help turning their lives around. The one-year grant of around £4.3million will be the same as the funding settlement for 2024/5 and therefore represents a real-terms cut, as it fails to take account of the hike in inflation or increased National Insurance contributions. I have been tirelessly lobbying Government to secure the future of the VRP, which would have ceased to exist in March 2025 without a renewed funding agreement.

Our VRP's focus on prevention, early intervention and diversion is fundamental if we are to prevent and tackle serious youth violence and knife crime in the West Midlands. Its work also leads to a greater understanding of the root causes of youth violence, which we all benefit from. I welcome the news, because it means this valuable work can now continue until at least March 2026. However, the real-terms funding cut and the short-term settlement will undermine our partner's ability to plan ahead and offer long-term job security to their dedicated staff, which includes youth workers and mentors whose work has contributed to a decrease in youth violence across the region.

The West Midlands VRP also works closely with West Midlands Police, to help mitigate anticipated violence in key hotspots over school holidays. In the six months from April 2024 to September 2024, the partnerships work had reached more than 8,000 young people, contributing to an 18% reduction in youth violence involving a knife.

Its work continues at pace, following the launch of the region-wide My Tomorrow campaign in May 2024, which has also reached hundreds of young people through positive events including sports festivals, careers fairs and youth summits. The VRP has also funded a £70,000 educational programme, called My Tomorrow Change Makers, which will help schools tackle the root causes of violence.

## **Funding Operation Fearless for West Midlands**

I was pleased to announce Operation Fearless on 7 January – a major new drive with £880,000 of funding using proceeds of crime seized from criminals, to bring down crime and improve the quality of life for people in communities around the area.

The Operation has launched first in and around Erdington High Street, with a dedicated police team already taking daily action on the crimes that affect the community the most. Erdington was identified as the launch area based on crime trends, data and consultation with partners. It's estimated crime in the area has cost the economy £7m in the last year.

Working with Birmingham City Council and other agencies such as immigration, bus and rail companies and businesses we are determined to combat:

- Drugs
- Anti-social behaviour
- Robbery
- Violence
- Shoplifting
- Sale of stolen goods
- Exploitation

Erdington is just the first part of the Fearless story – with more parts of the region set to benefit in the coming months. More than 100 people, including partners from across the region came together at Villa Park to launch Fearless. While it marked the formal start, the team has already been hard at work in Erdington. Since the end of November to the launch on 7 January, the Fearless team has:

- Made 32 arrests from the High Street for offences including wounding, theft, drugs, possession of knives and recall to prison
- Made three arrests for immigration matters
- Seized eight bladed articles such as knives
- Carried out 81 stop and searches, of which 28 led to recoveries.
- Carried out 18 drug seizures resulting in two arrests for possession with intent to supply and 16 referrals to drugs support workers
- Seized 26,724 items of illicit and counterfeit goods worth £1 million, including tobacco and cigarettes
- Seized 565 items of unlicensed prescribed medication
- Secured two orders banning habitual shoplifters from the High Street
- Served nine warnings on people causing anti-social behaviour
- Worked with Immigration, Trading Standards and HMRC

And feedback from people who live and work in Erdington has been welcome, with many already noticing the difference. I am committed to ensuring there is a reassuring and visible presence out on the streets to keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure.

### **Operation Snap Active in the West Midlands**

Thanks to Operation Snap, an initiative I have backed and invested in, to educate and prosecute careless and reckless drivers using footage supplied by the public, dangerous driving is being more frequently challenged and held to account.

Drivers guilty of an offence can be fined up to £200, while footage of dangerous driving sent in to West Midlands Police has seen an increase of 70 per cent with 13,543 videos submitted across the 11-month period at a rate of 1,231 videos per month, on average.

The top reported offences were driving without due care and attention, using a mobile phone and running a red light. As well as almost 6,000 fines issued, more than 2,000

drivers were required to attend driver awareness courses, while 571 were summoned to appear in court due to driving offences.

In 2024, a total of 4,524 Op Snap reporters participated, with the most active reporter submitting 539 entries to West Midlands Police. Each piece of footage sent to the Op Snap team, whether captured on a dash cam, CCTV or a mobile phone held by a passenger, is reviewed by specially-trained officers. If an offence is identified, the driver can be prosecuted or required to take a driver improvement course.

Putting an end to careless and reckless driving is one of my top priorities and I know it's something that matters to the people of the West Midlands. Dangerous drivers need to be held to account and face the consequences of their actions. The public can assist us in doing that, so I would urge anyone who has recorded footage to share it with the police, help bring perpetrators to justice and ultimately reduce the number of people tragically and avoidably killed and seriously injured on our roads.

Reports to the Op Snap team must be submitted within 10 days of the alleged offence and footage should include the whole incident and wherever possible, one minute prior to and after the offence. Along with the footage, submissions need to include details about the date, time and location of the incident and the registration, make and colour of the vehicle.

A breakdown of Op Snap data can be viewed below.

	AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2023	JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2024
Number of submissions	3,628	13,543
AGE OF REPORTERS	AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2023	JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2024
18-24	75	397
25-34	421	1,475
35-44	842	3,058
45-54	972	3,705
55-64	813	2,930
65+	420	2,010
LOCAL POLICING AREA	AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2023	JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2024
Birmingham	1,955	8,218

<b>Coventry</b>	484	2,177
<b>Solihull</b>	193	503
<b>Dudley</b>	188	484
<b>Walsall</b>	130	373
<b>Wolverhampton</b>	111	457
<b>Sandwell</b>	108	470
<b>CAR MAKE</b>	<b>AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2023</b>	<b>JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2024</b>
<b>Ford</b>	470	1,641
<b>Volkswagen</b>	331	1,377
<b>Mercedes</b>	326	1,313
<b>BMW</b>	292	1,224
<b>Audi</b>	249	1,128
<b>Vauxhall</b>	264	929
<b>Toyota</b>	190	960
<b>Nissan</b>	135	535
<b>Peugeot</b>	108	509
<b>Seat</b>	100	428
<b>DISPOSAL</b>	<b>AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2023</b>	<b>JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2024</b>
<b>Fixed penalty</b>	942	5,919
<b>Educational course</b>	880	2,035
<b>No further action</b>	821	1,965
<b>Warning letter</b>	660	3,289
<b>Court</b>	316	571

## **Published Police and Crime Commissioner Key Decisions**

The following key decisions have been published by the Police and Crime Commissioner since 9 December 2024.

Further details of decisions, including non-confidential reports and supporting documents are available on the website: [Police and Crime Commissioner Decisions](#)

### **17 January 2025**

[\*\*Decision 004-2025 – Collaboration agreement for the Provision of Public Order Training\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

[\*\*Decision 003-2025 – Informal Use of Merry Hill Housing Office, Leasowes Drive, Wolverhampton, WV4 4PZ\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

### **3 January 2025**

[\*\*Decision 001-2025 – Medical Evidence for Criminal Cases Contract Award\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

[\*\*Decision 002-2025 – Provision of Vehicle Self Drive\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

### **30 December 2024**

[\*\*Decision 041-2024 – Sale of Sutton Coldfield Police Station\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

[\*\*Decision 040-2024 – Sale of Windmill House\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

### [\*\*Decision 039-2024 – Fees and Charges due from January 2025\*\*](#)

Decision to approve fees and charges to be made by West Midlands Police for services provided from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. Decision record can be downloaded

### **19 December 2024**

[\*\*Decision 038-2024 – Sale of Steelhouse Lane\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

[\*\*Decision 037-2024 – New Dudley HQ Refurbishment at Castlegate House, Dudley\*\*](#) The decision is a confidential matter, so no documents are published

### **16 December 2024**

### [\*\*Decision 036-2024 – Appointment of Chief Constable\*\*](#)

Decision to appoint Mr Craig Guildford as Chief Constable for the West Midlands, with effect from 16 December 2024. Decision record can be downloaded

**Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel  
Review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report 2023-2024****Date: 3 February 2025**

Report of: Tom Senior Acting Lead 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](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk)

Phone: 0121 303 1727

**1 Purpose**

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Panel has a statutory duty to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner's annual report at a meeting held in public and agree a collective response to submit to the Commissioner.
- 1.2 A copy of the PCC's cover report and draft Annual Report 2023-24 is attached at Appendix A.

**2 Recommendations**

- i) The Panel reviews the Police and Crime Commissioner's Draft Annual Report 2023-2024.
- ii) The Panel makes a report and recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner on the annual report.
- iii) Publish a copy of the Panel report and the Police and Crime Commissioner's response on the Panel's website.

**3 Statutory Responsibilities**

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



- Make a report or recommendations on the annual report to the Commissioner.

3.3 **The responsibilities of the Commissioner** regarding the annual report are set out in Section 12 of Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011:

3.4 In summary, a Police and Crime Commissioner must:

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

## **4 Preparation and Publication of Reports**

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

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

4.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner is proposing to forward the final approved version of his 2023-24 Annual Report to Panel by 24 March 2025.

## **5 Any Finance Implications**

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

## **6 Any Legal Implications**

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

## **7 Any Equalities Implications**

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

- 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;

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

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

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

## **8 Appendices**

8.1 A - West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Cover report and Draft Annual Report 2023-2024

## **9 Background Papers**

9.1 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

**Police and Crime Panel**  
**20 February 2025**

## **West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Annual Report Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**

Covering Report of West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner is required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to produce an annual report. A draft copy of the annual report has been circulated to Board members for comment and is being brought to the Police and Crime Panel for comment. The annual report from the PCC covers the 12-month period from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

### **BACKGROUND**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

There will be direct electronic dissemination to West Midlands MPs and councillors. A limited print run will enable copies to be sent to central libraries and partners across the West Midlands.

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

## **PROCESS**

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

7. All comments will be received and considered. Amendments may be incorporated, and the PCC will then forward the final approved version to the Panel for the meeting being held on the 24 March 2025.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8. The annual report will be designed and produced by the Police and Crime Commissioners Office therefore no external costs will be incurred in its preparation. Electronic dissemination incurs no additional costs. The cost of the limited print run will be met from within existing budgets.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

10. The draft report is being shared with the Police and Crime Panel in advance of publication, to allow the Panel the opportunity to consider any comments or recommendations on the content. The published annual report will come back to the Panel for information on the 24 March 2025.

# West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

## Annual Report

2023 – 2024

DRAFT

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## Foreword by Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Foster

I was elected as the Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2021. Representing the people of the West Midlands is an honour and a privilege. I take the trust and responsibility placed in me very seriously. It drives me on to take the constant and unremitting action that is required, to ensure West Midlands Police is the best it can possibly be, in order to prevent and tackle crime, to keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure.

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

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

I launched my Police and Crime Plan ('the Plan') on 1 November 2021. The Plan sets out my key objectives for policing, crime, community safety, criminal justice and the rights and welfare of victims from 2021 to 2025.

It is a comprehensive agenda for change, development and progress in policing, rebuilding community policing, putting the prevention and tackling of crime at the heart of what we do and ultimately delivering justice, safety and security, for all of our people and communities of the West Midlands.

The harsh reality is that the past 14 years has been a challenging time for policing, our essential preventative public services and our criminal justice system. That has been as a consequence of ill-advised, misconceived and poor decision making on the part of central government. That decision making was a big mistake, it was counter-productive and a false economy. Our under-funded and over worked police service has all too often been left to pick up the pieces.

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

The Report outlines the action taken and what has been achieved over the course of 2023-24, towards meeting the key aims, objectives and outcomes set out in the Plan. This has been achieved by working with the police and through strong partnerships, across the West Midlands. That action taken and progress made is detailed within the Report. However, it includes amongst many other matters:

- Campaigned for the return of our 800 fewer officers and 500 fewer Police Community Support Officers and for fair funding for the West Midlands.
- Recruited nearly 1,400 additional police officers, to keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure;

- Continued work on the Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls agenda through the Alliance, driving the essential partnership work required;
- Commissioned over 50 support services for over 61,000 victims with my core victims grant, to ensure victims have access to the right support, at the right time and in the right place;
- Continued to fund specialist victim support services and IDVAs and ISVAs across the region;
- Transformed Force Contact emergency call performance on both 999 and 101 calls;
- Delivered faster emergency and priority response times;
- Secured Investment in our VRP to commission £3 million worth of activity across the region, reaching over 55,800 children and young people, to prevent and tackle youth violence and knife crime;
- Action to tackle violence continued with tailored education in schools, youth workers in A and E Departments, custody centres, outreach and rescue workers and on school routes;
- Continued to support a network of weapon surrender bins, to remove dangerous weapons from the streets of the West Midlands;
- Secured £1 million Safer Streets 5 funding;
- Invested in preventing Violence Against Women and Girls, including in the night time economy;
- Invested in increasing the number of mobile speed camera enforcement vans, third party reporting and speed enforcement devices to improve road safety;
- Invested in the 7 Community Safety Partnerships across the West Midlands to prevent crime and disorder;
- Continued action to eliminate any and all racism and unlawful discrimination from within policing and the wider criminal justice system, including via the Fairness and Belonging Strategy;
- Backed young people with my new cohort of Youth Commissioners, now in place for 10 years, and Police Cadets Schemes;
- Invested in prevention and intervention to prevent and tackle crime, promote community safety and rehabilitation;
- Supported local communities, through my Helping Communities Fund and Outstanding Citizens Awards.

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

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

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

Thank you to my Assistant Police and Crime Commissioners, my Victims Commissioner, my Board members and the entire team within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Violence Reduction Partnership, for all of the invaluable experience, knowledge, skills and hard work that they



contribute. Thank you to all of the officers and staff of West Midlands Police, for their dedication and hard work, to keep the people and communities of the West Midlands safe and secure.

It truly is a collective and collaborative team effort. I am also grateful to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel, for the support, oversight and scrutiny it has provided throughout 2023 to 2024.

**Simon Foster**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands**

**January 2025**

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## Section 1: West Midlands Police

### Force Performance

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

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

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

### Rebuilding Community Policing

People value seeing police officers and PCSOs walking the beat in their communities. The Chief Constable and I agree, that it is important to provide a local, accessible, visible and reassuring presence. However, West Midlands Police still has around 800 fewer police officers and 500 fewer PCSOs when compared to 2010, in addition to reduced numbers of police staff.

I continue to take every available opportunity, to campaign for and to call on government, to return our 800 police officers and 500 PCSOs and to ensure that our region receives a fair share of all funds allocated to policing. Unfortunately, despite extensive and wide-ranging efforts, our region continues to be structurally under-funded and under-resourced.

### Recruitment

At 31 March 2024, the headcount across West Midlands Police was:

Police officers	Police staff	Police community support officers	Specials	Total
7,962	4,088	317	210	12,577

### Fairness and Belonging

Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded throughout my Police and Crime Plan. We are focused on delivering this work within my own office. I continue to scrutinise West Midlands Police on their progress. This includes monitoring the action taken to implement the national Police Race Action Plan locally, including recruitment and disproportionality.

This year I hosted a [Fairness and Belonging conference](#) in Birmingham, to mark Black History Month 2023 and shine a light on how communities in the West Midlands are treated by police. The conference covered recruiting under-represented groups and improving trust and confidence.

In addition, I have also worked with local criminal justice partners to promote race equality in the criminal justice system, including workforce diversity. My office is also a partner in the Mayor's [Race Equalities Taskforce](#), which publicly launched in September 2023, leading on the criminal justice strand.

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

With the benefit of an overview of this area of business, we have been tracking improvements in practices. I regularly meet with and continue to support the force's staff networks. I have spoken at several of their events and highlighted the value of these networks, in striving to make West Midlands Police an inclusive employer.

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

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

I am also pleased to say that we continue to implement the work needed to maintain the accreditation of the [Karl George Race Code](#). The Code evidences the work that we have been doing to create transformational, sustainable and lasting change, in order to achieve truly diverse governance structures and organisational senior leadership team.

A breakdown of my own team shows that in March 2024, the OPCC had 81 employees, of whom 81 disclosed their ethnicity. 57 were White/White British (70%) and 24 (30%) were from an Ethnic minority group.

### **Listening to the Public**

The complaints team continues to provide valuable data that supports my oversight responsibilities. Their work helps me monitor complaint volumes, timeliness and trends to drive improvements. Police complaints have risen by 5% toward the end of my last term, with 4,175 received in 2024. This increase is due to changes in the complaint process, making it easier for the public to raise concerns. However, the increase in volume has also extended complaint resolution times from 89.8 to 145.8 working days, which will remain a focus for the coming year.

Our complaints review process is fully embedded, with live online dashboards. In the past year we have managed 104 reviews, with an average of 26 working days to conclude them. We have upheld 20 which is an increase of 8 on last year.

Dip sampling provides an opportunity to evaluate how effectively the police manage complaints. Last year, we introduced a fresh approach by involving 14 youth commissioners to review 30 complaints filed by young people. Among the participants, 68% felt that WMP had a clear understanding of the complaints and 81% believed the police acted reasonably and proportionately in their responses. However, only 50% of the replies were delivered with empathy, resulting in 56% of participants feeling that this failed to inspire trust and confidence in policing.

With the arrival of the new Chief Constable, there is a renewed focus on misconduct. In 2024, 39 officers were dismissed compared to 25 in 2023. While dismissals are challenging, we are determined to remove unsuitable officers. Police Appeal Tribunal cases have risen from 2 in 2023 to 6 in 2024.

### Contact with the public

Following a considerable dip in WMP's performance regarding the response to 999 and 101 calls during 22/23, this year, I have worked with the Chief Constable to review Force Contact and their operating model to improve this.

From April 2023 to March 2024, West Midlands Police have considerably improved their emergency call performance on both 999 and 101 calls. This improvement has occurred as demands on both 999 and 101 services have increased compared to last year.

### Performance

Fiscal Year 2023-2024



There was an increased demand for 999, totalling 810,868 calls received. Overall, 93% of these calls were answered within 10-seconds, as per the service level agreement (SLA). Demand had also increased for 101 with 655,829 calls received, with 76% being answered within 3-minutes in line with the SLA.

There still remains scope for improvement in 999 and particularly 101 services. In the coming year, I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account, to drive continuous improvement in relation to the 999 and 101 service provided, to ensure the public receives the service it is entitled to.

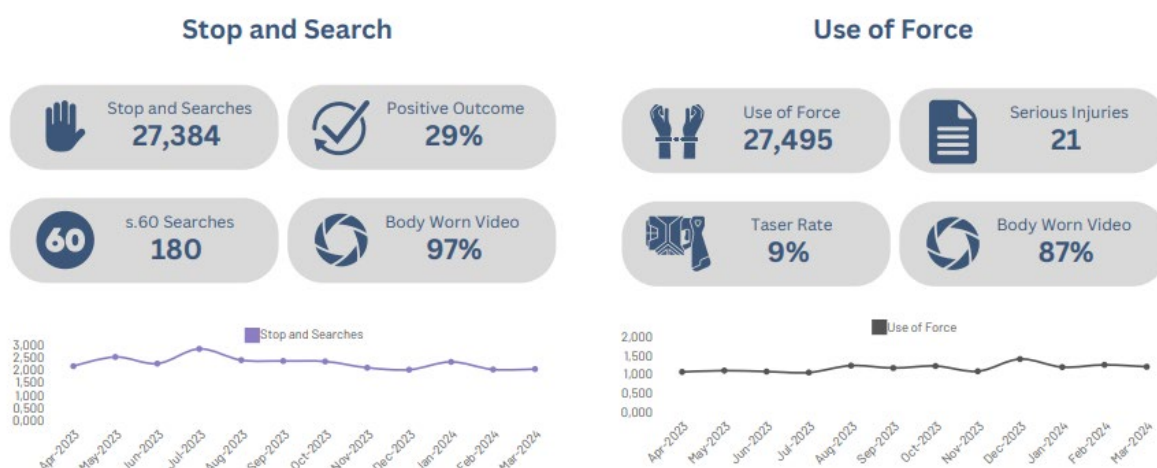
## Stop and Search and Use of Force

We have seen high rates of Body-Worn Video compliance during both Stop and Search and Use of Force. For stop and search, compliance has remained at 97% as it was in 22/23, having previously increased from 42% in 2018/19 to 95.1% in 2021/22. Compliance for Use of Force has continued to increase and is now at 87%, up from 83% in the previous year.

Positive outcome rates, which is the rate at which an illegal item is found during a stop and search, has dropped slightly to 29% during 2023/24, having previously been 30% in the previous year.

### Performance

Fiscal Year 2023-2024



As of March 2023, WMP began using the 2021 Census data to calculate disproportionality rates, which has improved its accuracy.

Search ratios show how many times more likely an ethnic group is to be stopped and searched, compared to the white population. Across the WMP force area, the Asian search ratio is 1.7 and the Black search ratio is 2.7. Disproportionality figures for use of force are 0.7 for Asian and 2.0 for Black.

There has been a force-wide roll out of officers using a unique QR code on their phone that people who have been stopped and searched can scan to give feedback on matters such as, how fairly they felt they were treated by the officer and whether or not they understood why they were stopped. So far, as of April 2024, 2% of all those stopped and searched who received a QR code gave feedback this way. We will continue to raise awareness of the QR code, to encourage members of the public to tell us about their experiences.

During this year, a new Stop and Search training package has been developed for all officers to embed learning and drive best practice. My office has been working alongside the force to deliver this. WMP is a pilot force for the roll out of Serious Violence Reductions Orders (SVRO). SVROs are a civil order, whereby someone who has an SVRO can be stopped in public spaces by the police and searched, without the need for there to be reasonable grounds, to find out if they are carrying a bladed item or offensive weapon. My office has developed a community led working group to hold WMP to account on its use of the SVRO power throughout the pilot, which will end in April 2025.

## **Section 2: Working in Partnership Locally**

### **West Midlands Community Safety Partnership**

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

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

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

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

### **Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)**

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

The LCJB has responded to a number of key emerging issues during the year. I continue to closely monitor and scrutinise the time taken for victims to have their case heard at court, particularly for people who have been subject to serious crimes and offences that continue to have a disproportionate impact on communities, such as violence against women and girls and domestic abuse and sexual violence. I have worked with partners to improve offender management to prevent and reduce crime and reoffending.

### **Victims**

Throughout 2023-24, I have continued to deliver on the pledge in my Police and Crime Plan, to provide quality assured support services to victims, survivors and witnesses, whether or not they reported the crimes to the police; to ensure victims and survivors were able to access justice; and to ensure that perpetrators of crimes are held to account.

To achieve my priorities, I have worked closely and collaboratively with the specialist victims' sector and criminal justice agencies, whilst listening to the voices and experiences of victims and survivors, by having appointed the first Victims Commissioner.

### **Commissioned services**

Between April 2023 to March 2024, I commissioned 50 support services that supported a total of 61,383 victims across different thematic areas through the Core Victim Services fund, provided by the MOJ, which was around £6m.

My office also received £2.78m from the Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Fund, to continue the Early Awareness Stalking Intervention, a psychological intervention for managing perpetrators of stalking and the introduction of an innovative pilot in custody which seeks to change the behaviours of perpetrators.

Following on from Safer Streets Fund 4 last year, I also secured £999,239 through the Safer Streets Fund 5 from October 2023. This funding was made up of three successful bids; two bids will be awarded to my office to continue our VAWG and anti-social behaviour work across the region; and one bid will be awarded to Birmingham City Council, to implement VAWG and anti-social behaviour work in the city.

My office has developed a [dashboard](#), which shows the VAWG interventions and victim's services, commissioned through the PCC and VRP.

### **The Victims and Prisoners Act 2024**

The Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 came into law, following a lengthy period of consultation. I responded to the consultation, which included a range of measures to better serve victims and the public, by improving victims' experiences of the criminal justice system.

The Act enshrines the 12 rights of the [Victims Code](#) into law and places a duty on PCCs to monitor compliance with and delivery of the Code and for criminal justice bodies to collect and share data on compliance and victims' feedback.

The Act also introduces a 'duty to collaborate' on PCCs and other commissioners, to co-deliver support services for victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and serious violence. This includes a requirement to develop a joint-strategic need assessment (JSNA) and strategy that demonstrates how they will collaborate to deliver and improve relevant victim support services and to consult with key partners.

My office has been proactive in preparing for the implementation of this duty. The governance structure will sit with the WM Domestic Abuse (DA) and Sexual Assault and Abuse (SAA) Commissioning subgroup, which was established to support partners to collaboratively commission domestic and sexual abuse services and has multi-agency membership from criminal justice, health, local authority, specialist service and other agencies. This group is accountable to the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership.

Throughout 2024, the membership of this group has been reviewed to address gaps and members have been asked to share information about the duty with relevant stakeholders and partners in preparation for further Government announcements.



## Violence Against Women and Girls

The Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls (EMVAWG) Alliance provides a single point of ownership and strategic leadership and direction, across the West Midlands and leads a whole-system approach to preventing and reducing VAWG. The Alliance's priorities up until 2024 include, focusing on eliminating hidden forms of VAWG such as FGM, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, and stalking and creating a multi-agency data-set to enable rigorous monitoring of performance.

During 23-24, multi-agency partners in the Alliance have worked together to create the [Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault and Abuse Standards](#), which will help organisations ensure victims get the most appropriate support. In addition, I commissioned [best practice guidelines](#) for designing EMVAWG campaigns with underrepresented communities. The intention is to increase the reporting levels of VAWG crimes.

I secured funding for several rounds of Safer Streets, in which VAWG has been a prioritised thematic and worked with my Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) to develop several large regional campaigns, including the establishment of a stand-alone website for [#NoExcuseForAbuse](#), which is a hub for those impacted by VAWG.

## Operation Soteria

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

I made an application for a Home Office Special Grant for £9.053m, to request much sought after resources and an uplift in capacity for WMP to continue utilising the improvement tools and plans available through Soteria and to continue the work that has led to a current 6% positive outcome rate for charging offenders of RAOSO.

In the Criminal Justice Scorecards, adult rape, published quarterly, WMP are performing well in the areas of Early Investigative Advice (EIA) and the CPS are making significant progress towards having a sexual offence only specialist team.

This work, alongside my commissioned Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) and specialist sexual assault and abuse services, has seen an increase in engagement with victims and witnesses, particularly through the employment of Victim Engagement Officers within the force.

I have continued work with local MP's, the Chief Constable and others to clearly highlight to central Government the discrepancies between funding and embedding a sustainable specialism within both West Midlands and wider police forces that are in jeopardy, due to the existing funding formula and previous policing cuts.

## Domestic Abuse - Cost of Living Survey

During the year, my Victims Commissioner carried out a cost-of-living survey to assess the impact the economic crisis is having on both victims of domestic abuse and on service providers. Findings from the survey showed that the biggest concern for providers was around victims not being able to leave violent or abusive situations, or returning to abusers, due to the cost-of-living crisis and not wanting



to face the prospects of having to struggle with increasing food, bills or rent costs, especially when children were involved.

Following these survey results, I made around £150,000 available to victim's services, via a Cost-of-Living Victims Fund to support and alleviate these pressures. Through this, I supported victims' services with increasing running costs due to additional demand, as well as providing funds or care packages for women and children accessing their services.

## **Domestic Abuse**

### **Perpetrator interventions**

After securing nearly £3m of funding during the year, two interventions aimed at changing the behaviour of domestic abuse and stalking perpetrators are now being delivered in the West Midlands. I have continued to work with West Midlands Police to ensure they are prioritising work to tackle stalking and my office has supported work to set up Stalking Triage Clinics and Scrutiny Panels.

### **Domestic Abuse Related Reviews (DARDRs) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)**

Formerly known as Domestic Homicide Review's (DHR's), Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs) are multi-agency reviews, commissioned by community safety partnerships, into the deaths of adults which may have resulted from violence, abuse, or neglect by a person to whom they were related; or with whom they had an intimate relationship; or where they were a member of the same household.

I have commissioned the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership, to deliver a region wide DARDRs project to upskill frontline workers on their knowledge and understanding of DARDRs, as well as to create opportunities to share themes and learning in a consistent way across the West Midlands. Birmingham has been working to create a centrally located repository for all published DARDRs to be placed into, that can be easily accessed by all agencies.

I also commissioned Birmingham Community Safety Partnership to create a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) which will provide a consistent and streamlined process for CSPs to commission DARDR authors across the West Midlands Region. I am currently working in partnership with CSPs, to sign up to the DPS and will be launching a recruitment drive for DARDR chair to join the DPS pool.

During this year, MARAC has been subject to significant change as a result of WMP's rapid response to HMIC inspection findings. A new governance structure also implemented this year – a regional Operational Governance Group and a regional Strategic Governance Group – should improve MARAC governance, provide a clear escalation route for concerns and bring together partners for regional consistency.

### **Public health approaches**

During 2023, the West Midlands Domestic Abuse Board adopted a new five-pillared public health approach and introduced an updated action plan focused on building foundations, prevention and intervention, care and support, enforcement, and intersectionality.

In November 2023, my office and the VRP held an Anti-Slavery Day Conference, which showcased our public health approach in combatting modern slavery and exploitation across the region and built on

partnerships. It included key national stakeholders, such as the Modern Slavery Policy Unit and ministers with relevant portfolios. The public health approach is based on academic research from the University of Sheffield, regarding emerging practices to refine a public health framework to address modern slavery in the UK.

In addition, regarding modern slavery, my office also worked with a local authority area in the region who were concerned that the National Referral Mechanism processes were failing and co-ordinated several meetings with the Exploitation and Missing and Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Boards and local authority areas to make sure statutory processes were working effectively. My office won a Marsh Charitable Award 2023 for our work on modern slavery cases.

I also responded to a [parliamentary inquiry](#) regarding Modern Slavery and the need to protect vulnerable victims who may be seeking asylum.

### **Restorative Justice**

During 2023-24, I worked with the University of Gloucestershire to carry out and finalise an independent evaluation which explored the range and impact of Restorative Justice in the region, with a particular focus on the agencies I fund. The report found that there is strong data from providers that shows good levels of user satisfaction with the Restorative Justice services they receive. For example, three-year data from one provider shows:

- 91.7% of victims and 99.3% of offenders were satisfied with the service they received.
- 90.9% of victims would recommend the service to other.
- 99.3% of offenders would recommend Restorative Justice to others.

I have also continued to lobby for the importance of Restorative Justice. I have fed into the development of the NPCC guidance on Restorative Justice which is currently in draft form and advocated for the strengthening of restorative justice within the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024.

### **West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (WMVRP)**

I am the joint Serious Violence lead for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, alongside the PCC for Cleveland. On behalf of all PCCs, we are the advocates to the Home Office for this significant area of responsibility.

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

### **The WMVRP partnership and delivery model**

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

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

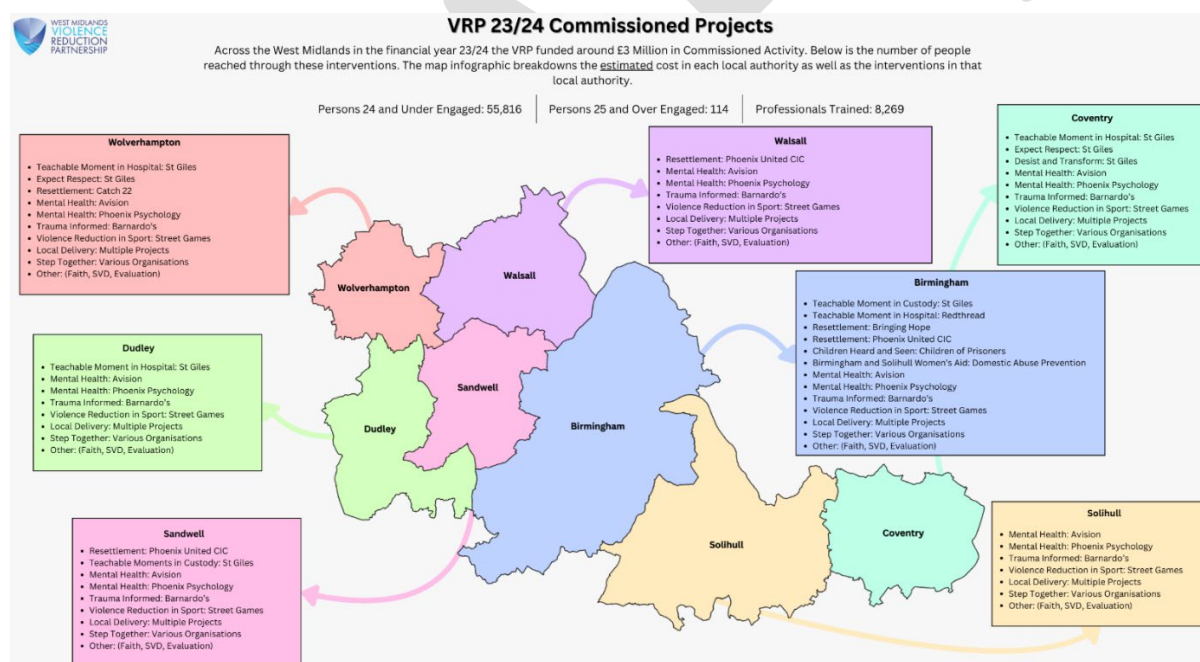
West Midlands Police plays an integral role in the WMVRP, providing support and bringing policing knowledge and expertise into the different thematic areas. They ensure that the whole force play an active role in the WMVRP, working in partnership locally and regionally, to prevent and reduce violence.

The WMVRP delivery model aims to:

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

## Working in Local Places

During 2023-24, the VRP funded around £3 million in commissioned activity across the West Midlands. These interventions reached 55,816 children and young people aged 24 and under, and 114 over 24. The training and awareness raising provision the WMVRP delivered benefitted 8,269 professionals including teachers, social workers, youth workers and others – an increase of over 1,000 professionals from the previous year.



The [VRP Annual Report 2023-24](#) sets out more highlights of delivery in 2023-24.

## Serious Violence Duty

During 2023/24, the Serious Violence Duty (SVD) was introduced, which requires a range of 'authorities' to work in partnership to formulate an evidence-based analysis of serious violence in a local area, and to use this to develop a partnership delivery plan. The VRP developed the [West Midlands Violence Reduction Strategy 2023-2026](#), which sets out the ambition for the West Midlands and clearly demonstrates how we will work together in our efforts to improve outcomes for our young people.

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

## **Children and Young People**

A new cohort of 16 Youth Commissioners were elected in November 2023 to serve two-year-terms. The election took place over a two-week period, with more than 1,000 votes cast by under 18s across the region. The new cohort embarked on new engagement, to provide an overview and gain experience around operational policing.

Since their election in 2023, Youth Commissioners have completed their first year in their roles. They have been developing their knowledge around operational policing and holding WMP to account on behalf of the PCC. At the beginning of the year, Youth Commissioners joined WMP patrols around Birmingham city centre and the Christmas markets to observe how the police protect these areas during a busy time period.

Throughout the year, youth commissioners met with various elements of operational policing. They interviewed their local police commanders, response and patrol teams and addressed issues of local crime prevalent in each local policing area and how they affect young people. They visited and met with the WMP Dog units and the policing units, who oversee policing Birmingham Airport and how they work in conjunction with Border Force to keep the West Midlands safe.

In April, the Youth Commissioners hosted the 2024 Annual Youth Summit, which was held with approximately 150 people in attendance and centred on advocating for more safe spaces for young people. The summit highlighted the many different forms of safe spaces from working and educational environments; youth spaces for young people to develop themselves and chosen safe spaces of sports and faith communities supporting young people. The Summit also celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the Youth Commissioners and gave opportunities to former Youth Commissioners to be celebrated for the work by them over the last 10 years.

The Youth Commissioners supported regional and local events, like launch of the 'My Tomorrow' campaign, the Walsall Youth Summit and facilitating the Criminal Justice Workshops at the West Midlands Young Combined Authority Race Equalities Youth Summit, to further support young people and ensure that their views are represented in spaces across the West Midlands.

## **Drugs and alcohol**

### **The Drugs Strategy**

It has been estimated that half of all homicides and acquisitive crimes are drug related. Accordingly, preventing and reducing substance misuse might be the single most important action that we can take to tackle crime and make our communities safer. Policing alone cannot resolve the issue of drugs in our community. I am committed to the innovative work being done by my office, to work with a wide range of partners and to deliver a whole-system approach and to cut drug-related crime and harm.

Ensuring a joined-up local system is vital and the publication of the Government's 10-year Drug Strategy ['From Harm to Hope'](#) in 2021, has resulted in the development of partnerships across the

country to steer how progress against the aims of the strategy are delivered. I continue to chair the West Midlands Combating Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (CDAP), which was established in August 2022, as Senior Responsible Owner. In this role, I have been able to represent the partnership at a national level and support progress against the national outcomes that are being sought.

The partnership has undertaken a range of activity to support an improved response by all partners across enforcement, treatment and prevention, to the harms caused by drugs. For example, the partnership has worked to increase numbers in treatment in all West Midlands local authority areas during 2023-2024 compared to the previous year, including reaching and engaging those whose needs had not previously been met by treatment services.

*Figure 1: Total individuals in treatment (including opiate, non-opiate, non-opiate and alcohol, alcohol) by local authority area during 23-24*

	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
22/23	8,177	1,824	1,750	1,983	1,075	1,742	1,697
<b>23/24</b>	<b>8,490</b>	<b>2,025</b>	<b>1,777</b>	<b>2,095</b>	<b>1,177</b>	<b>1,785</b>	<b>1,899</b>

*Figure 2: Number of new presentations to treatment (opiate, non-opiate, non-opiate and alcohol, and alcohol total) by local authority area during 23-24*

	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
22/23	3,319	869	904	773	582	775	835
<b>23/24</b>	<b>3,542</b>	<b>1,049</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>1,093</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>1,045</b>

Examples of some of the work of the CDAP this year are:

- Setting up a lived experience group to influence and feed into the partnership
- Organising a deep dive into nitrous oxide to understand levels of use and best interventions to tackle this
- Working towards increasing the number of community sentence treatment requirements made in sentencing
- Beginning to map and improve referral pathways and joint working between criminal justice drug and alcohol services and the wider treatment system and other services.

### **Arrest Referral Service**

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

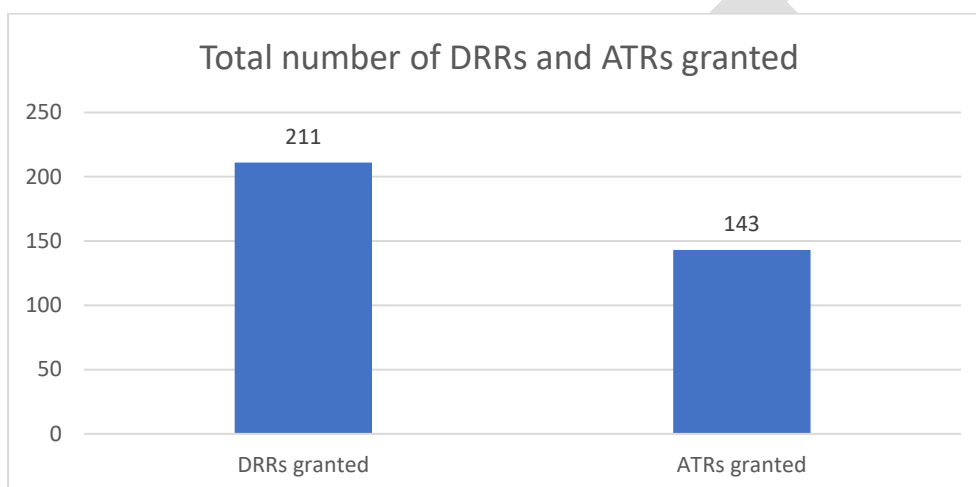
In 2023-24, there were 15,522 contacts, assessments and interventions delivered by the Arrest Referral Service. Figures 3-5 show what my Arrest Referral service has achieved over the course of the year.

Figure 3: Total number of assessments undertaken during 23-24 per quarter

Assessments Completed	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Required Assessments following a positive drug test on arrest	605	562	636	697	2500
Voluntary Custody Assessments	255	214	172	122	763
Court Assessments (DRR/ATR)	76	34	30	45	185
Court Assessments (Conditional/Pre-Sentence)	74	110	114	79	377

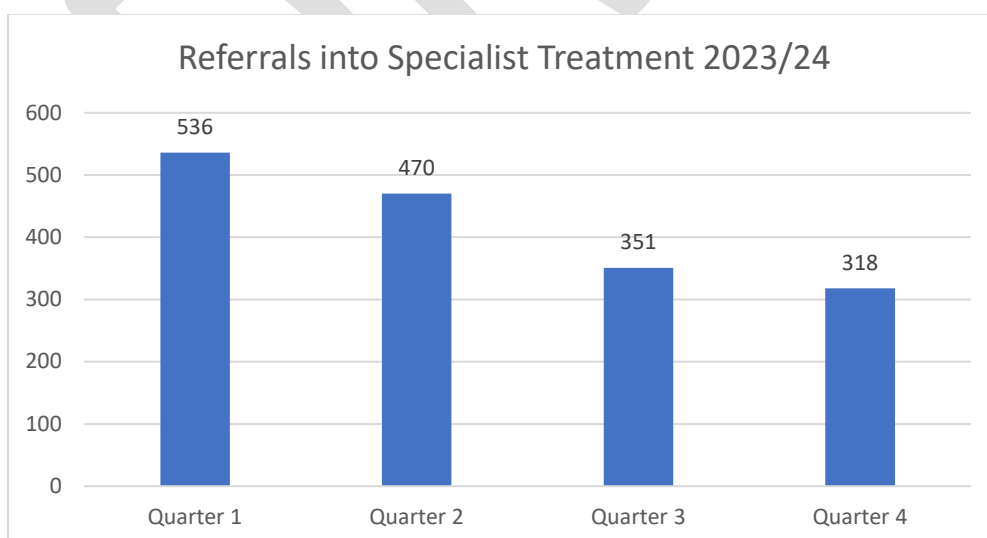
During 2023/24, 211 DRRs were granted and 143 ATRs were granted by the courts as shown below.

Figure 4: Total number of DRRs and ATRs granted during 23-24



In total, 1,675 people were referred to local drug treatment during 2023/24.

Figure 5: Total number of people referred to local drug treatment during 23-24 per quarter



## Divert

My Divert service aims to contribute to a culture change in policing. WMP strategy is to work with partners and divert emerging offenders from court, into the most appropriate intervention, to reduce reoffending. Divert is an education programme, that aims to divert drug users from longer term drug use and is available to anyone found in possession of any illicit substance including, but not limited to:

- Cannabis
- Cocaine
- Heroin
- Nitrous Oxide
- MDMA
- Ketamine
- Amphetamines.

The content of the programme includes:

- Drug specific harm reduction advice
- Naloxone advice
- Economic and lifestyle impact of drug use
- Tailored individual advice and support
- Onward referrals to specialist treatment.

Between July 2023 and March 2024, there were 2,403 referrals made through the Divert Programme. 1,888 initial interventions/assessments were carried out and 1,136 individuals attended group sessions. Cannabis was the most common drug individuals were found in possession of when referred onto the Divert Programme (1,233 adults and 171 young people). In regards to adult referrals, there were 139 for cocaine, 30 for illicit heroin and 23 for nitrous oxide. The most common age of those referred was 18 to 24.

Figures 6-9 below, show the work undertaken by the service during this period in 23-24.

*Figure 6: Divert programme activity (referrals, assessments and groups) by month during 23-24*

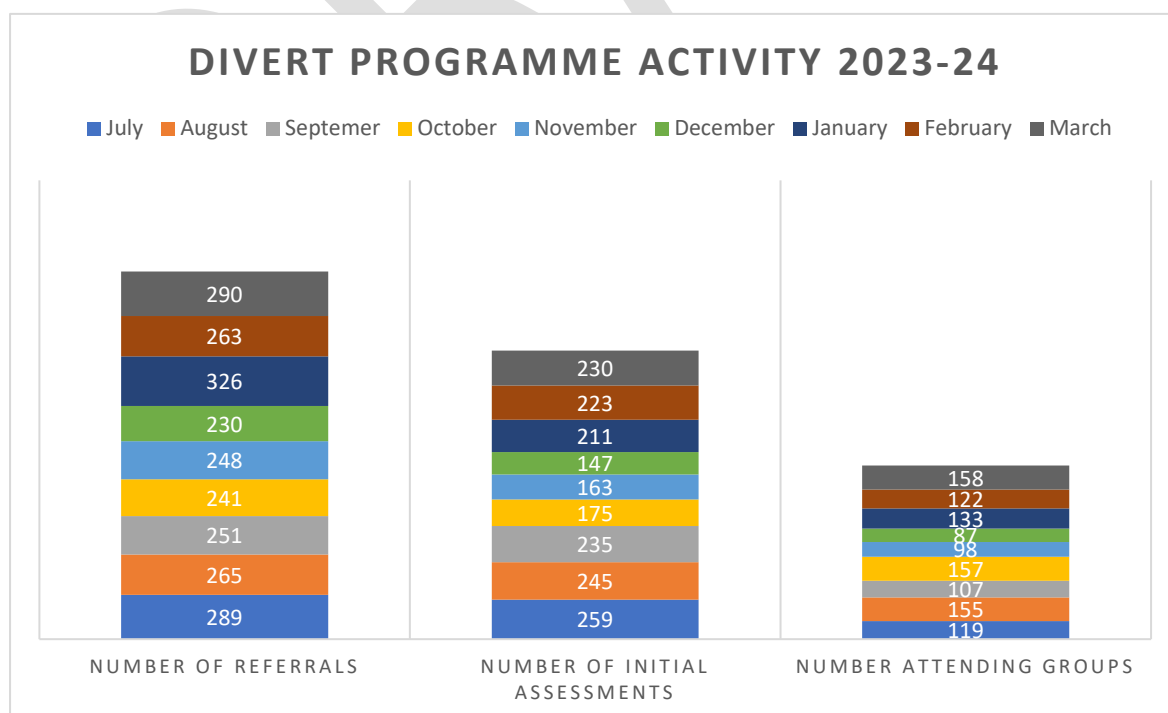


Figure 7: Engagement from those referred between July 23 to March 24

Level of engagement	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
% of all referrals who attended an initial intervention	89.6%	92.5%	93.6%	72.6%	65.7%	63.9%	64.7%	84.8%	79.3%	78.6%
% of all initial interventions who go on to attend a group session	45.9%	63.3%	45.5%	89.7%	60.1%	59.2%	63.0%	54.7%	68.7%	60.2%

Figure 8: Referrals of adults and young people (under 18) by place of residence for each West Midlands Local Authority Area

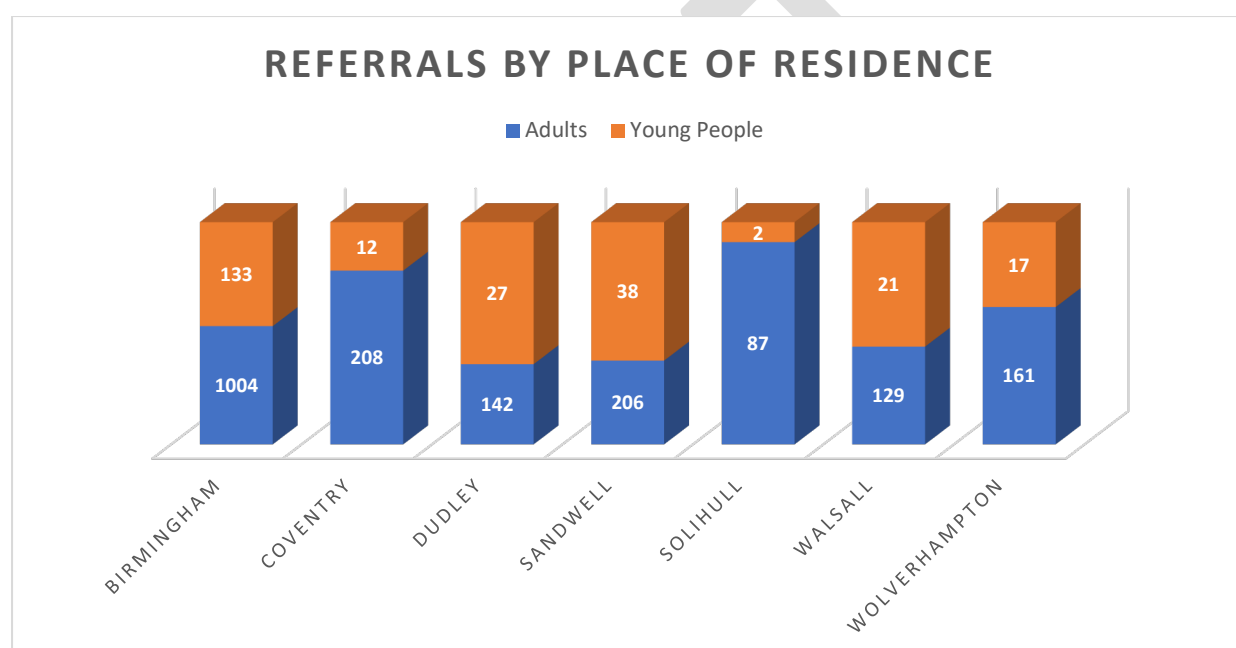
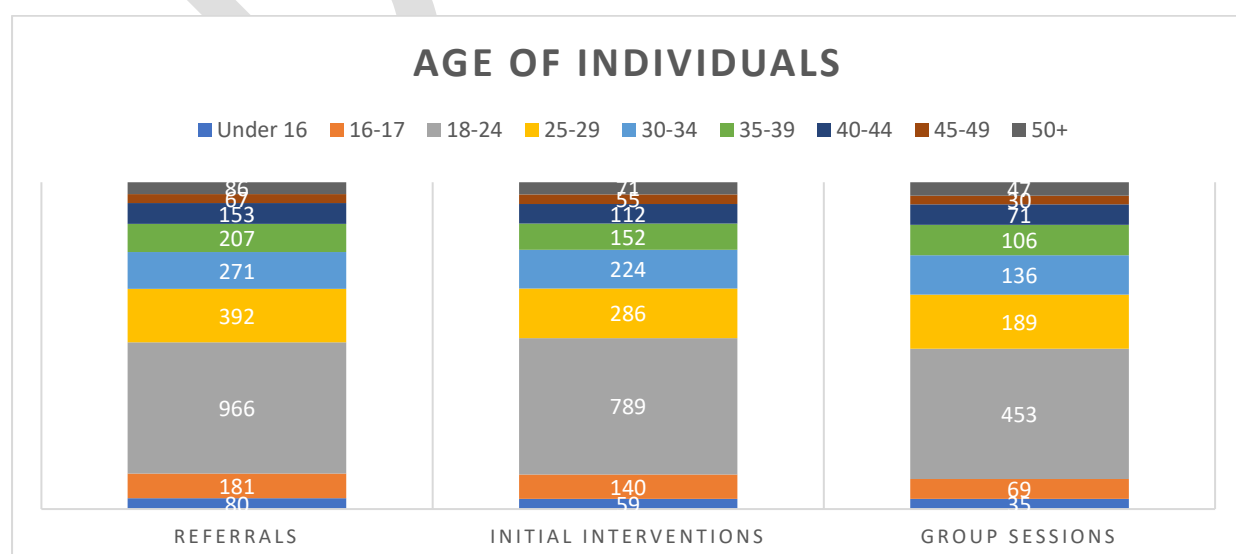


Figure 9: Age of individuals who were referred, attended initial interventions and group sessions





## **Offending to Recovery**

My Offending to Recovery (O2R) programme has been in existence since 2018, initially implemented locally within the Erdington neighbourhood policing team. During this time, it proved effective in successfully rehabilitating people with severe drug addictions who prolifically offend to fund their prolonged and very high levels of drug use. The effectiveness of the programme has resulted in the reduction of retail crime.

The programme has been shown to be effective in reducing crime and positively impacting the lives of offenders. I therefore widened its reach to ensure sustainability and resilience, by bringing more facilitators on board and widening the scope to cover Birmingham East and Birmingham West Neighbourhood Policing Units (NPU's).

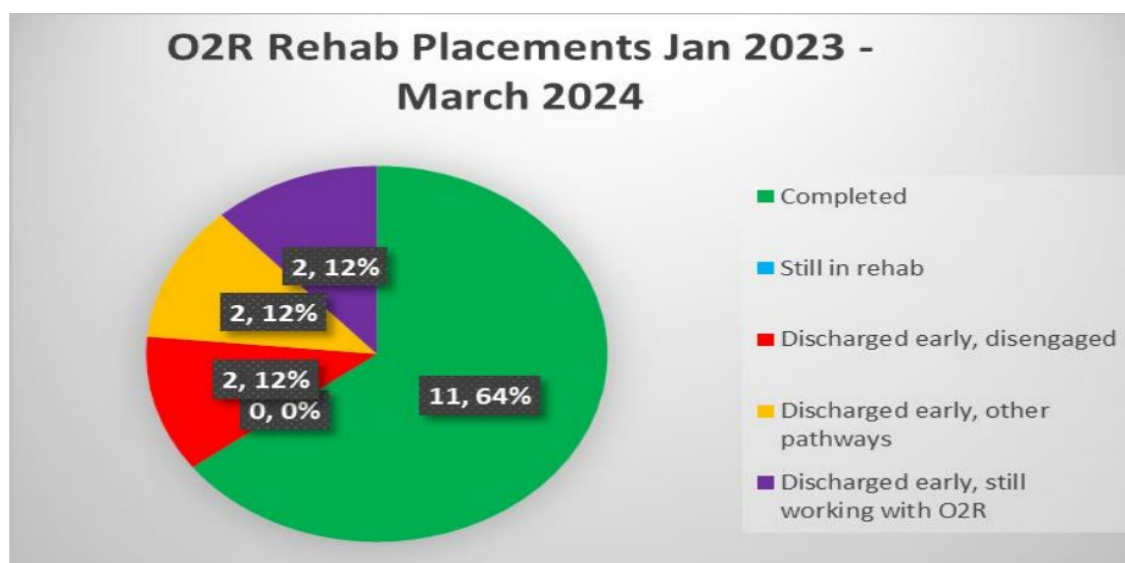
The intention is to use Offending to Recovery as part of a wider violence to business staff solution, and to address the specific issue of drug addiction in prolific business crime offenders. The pilot was independently evaluated from July 2021 to July 2022, which proved the effectiveness of the concept.

The nature of the programme also allows for management and re-engagement of offenders who may relapse, giving a better chance for long term change. Due to the nature of addiction and a complicated background and lifestyle, relapse can occur. However, if a person does relapse then it is more likely that, having begun the programme, they will re-engage with support, ensuring that the work and time already invested is not meaningless. The programme provides the option to get people back into drug treatment.

Of the 96 referrals that took place in 2023, 74 were in open cases with O2R with only 5 being unwilling to engage. There has also been an increase in the number of referrals from retailers. In Quarter 4 of 2023-2024, there were 23 referrals into the Birmingham O2R Programme. When added to the 96 referrals already received throughout 2023 this brings the total to 119 referrals in to the programme for 2023-24.

Of the 17 clients admitted to residential rehab over the year, nearly 90% either completed the rehabilitation; were discharged early but were still working with O2R; or were discharged early but moved on to other treatment pathways. Additionally, there has been an increase in other treatment pathways.

Figure 10: Completion rates for individuals placed in rehab between January 2023 and March 2024



Questionnaires of clients in rehab indicated the 2023-24 cohort were spending a minimum of £500 a week on drugs, with one reporting spending £2,000. From their time spent in rehab alone in 2023, approximately £290,000 was saved by retailers in estimated losses.

During the pilot, 30% of residential rehab clients remained abstinent from drugs and crime post rehab. Furthermore, for every 20 offenders that the project supports, it is estimated that it could prevent between £760,000 to £1,140,000 worth of goods from being stolen.

## Road Safety

### The Regional Road Safety Partnership

I have continued to chair the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group, where all strategic partners convene to direct road safety across the region. I have been holding the Partnership to account for publishing the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030, launched in September 2023. The Strategy sets out the target to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on West Midlands roads by 50% by 2030. I continue to hold the Partnership to account, regarding the creation and publication of the action plan, which will put the strategy into practice.

### Retaining Fixed Penalty Fines

I have lobbied the government, writing to the Department for Transport, to request that the West Midlands be allowed to ringfence money made from fixed penalty fines in the West Midlands to invest in local road safety schemes, rather than being sent to the Treasury. This proposal was supported by the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel. In summer 2023, my office organised a public consultation and 94% of people who responded, also agreed with and supported my campaign.

### Safer Streets Five

In the Autumn of 2023, I secured investment of £1 million from Safer Streets 5. Part of that money was used to address the criminal and anti-social use of roads. Sixteen new speed devices have been purchased for enforcement and Community Speedwatch groups across the seven local policing areas

in the West Midlands, to help expand Community Speedwatch operations. Three new mobile police speed vans will also be purchased to address speeding, which is one of the main causes of serious collisions. This will improve safety and feelings of safety on our roads and trust and confidence in the police.

Part of the funding has also gone towards investing in the Third-Party Reporting Team in West Midlands Police, to process dashcam and mobile phone footage of criminal and anti-social behaviour on roads, uploaded by the public.

The team has seen an increase in reports being submitted by the public and in positive outcomes. Between July 2023 and March 2024 reports to the Third-Party Reporting team have increased from 325 to 1,325. During the same period, positive outcomes, a warning letter, penalty notice or prosecution, increased from 4% to 86%.

*Figure 11: Total number of reports and outcomes during 2023-24 by month*

	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Positive Outcome Rate</b>	<b>NFA</b>
<b>July 2023</b>	325	4%	96%
<b>August 2023</b>	557	53%	47%
<b>September 2023</b>	640	65%	35%
<b>October 2023</b>	734	81%	19%
<b>November 2023</b>	854	92%	8%
<b>December 2023</b>	828	94%	6%
<b>January 2024</b>	931	90%	5%
<b>February 2024</b>	1,139	89%	10%
<b>March 2024</b>	1,325	86%	11%

## **Operation Hercules**

Operation Hercules is a West Midlands Police led initiative, working with West Midlands Fire Service and local councils to address street racing. West Midlands Police are able to gather intelligence, which identifies people who take part in these activities. They are required to take part in a diversionary course to better understand the risks involved.

West Midlands Fire Service work with partners to educate people involved and tackle this issue through the diversionary course they have developed. Dedicated Officers from the Fire department open and deliver the course with Police Officers from Operation Hercules and the Road Peace charity speak with the delegates about their personal stories in relation to bereavement due to road traffic collisions. I initially contributed £42,000 to this operation.

In February 2024, a new three-year injunction was granted by the High Court, banning street racing across Birmingham and the Black Country. The order, an extension of a series of interim injunctions put in place across the West Midlands, prohibits drivers, riders or passengers from participating in street racing anywhere in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall, as well as now including organisers, promoters and spectators.

As of February 2024, 160 individuals had been highlighted and referred onto the diversionary/educational course and 18 drivers had been arrested for breach of the High Court injunction, all of which either plead or were found guilty. These individuals received fines and suspended sentences.

### **Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims**

Every year in November, people come together to remember victims who have lost their lives or have been seriously injured on our roads. On the 19 November 2023, I attended the Road Peace Service in Birmingham to mark World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. This day of remembrance is an important and poignant reminder of all the people who are tragically and avoidably, killed and seriously injured on our roads.

My thoughts are with the victims, their families and friends. Preventing and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and reducing the number of people, tragically and avoidably killed and seriously injured on our roads is a top priority and will continue to be so during my new term.

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## Section 3: Police Collaboration

### Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threats to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. The SPR supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables, to plan, prepare and respond to these threats, by clearly linking the local, regional and national responses and highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs, to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023, which set out seven identified national threats: Serious and Organised Crime (SOC); Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder; Civil Emergencies and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). This revised version provided significant detail around the local and regional action required from policing, in order to respond to these critical national threats.

This requires me to ensure that West Midlands Police has the capacity and capability to respond to national policing threats. This means joint working with other Forces and agencies, as part of a national response, requiring standardisation and co-ordination of equipment and processes. As well as receiving regular updates from the Chief Officers, I have also taken annual reports to SPCB, as part of this 'have regard' duty. Whilst the reports have highlighted how reductions in police numbers have stretched the capacity and capability to respond to a major public order incident, I am satisfied that West Midlands Police remains ready to meet the SPR.

Collaboration between police forces and PCCs requires investment in the mechanisms for joint working. My Office continues to host two Regional Policy Officers, who work across the four OPCCs in the region on areas of formal collaboration and joint cooperation. As a result, we have increased scrutiny of areas such as counter-terrorism policing, serious and organised crime, the National Police Air Service (NPAS) and Regional Operations.

A key mechanism of maintaining scrutiny in our region is through a Regional Governance Group, where all four Police and Crime Commissioners meet quarterly with the four Chief Constables and Chief Executives to scrutinise regional and national collaborations, upholding the 'holding to account function' outlined in the SPR. Key performance updates are provided by: the West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit (WMCTU); West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (WMROCU), Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP); National Police Air Service (NPAS) and other collaborations concerning public order training.

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

I have also ensured engagement and appropriate oversight of national projects. The role that NPAS brings to police is changing, as advancing drone technology gives police forces different options. However, it remains imperative and continues to be mandated by the Home Secretary, that forces should collaborate on the provision of a national police air capability. I therefore support the ongoing exploration of transformation work that NPAS will undertake, as it develops alongside the new technologies that are available. I also remain informed of the Emergency Services Mobile

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

### **West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit (WMCTU)**

The threat of terrorism to the UK remains and continues to change at pace. This year has seen significant developments within CT legislation and policy including: The Independent Review of Prevent: One Year on Report and, the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, formerly known as Martyr's Law.

Both regionally and nationally, I am the counter-terrorism lead for PCCs, holding the APCC portfolio, as well as, Chair of the National Counter-Terrorism Collaboration Agreement Strategic Board. In this position, I have ensured that PCCs have a strategic understanding of national threat and risk, whilst ensuring that the views of all members are reflected. The importance of this Board is considerable, allowing PCCs to support and scrutinise the implementation of national policy, to ensure the safety and security of the people and communities we serve.

Regionally, PCCs scrutinise the performance of the West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit (WMCTU) and oversee strategic trends, budget planning and management information. The Head of WMCTU provides a quarterly report for Regional Governance Group, consisting of a detailed account of threat, risk and activity across the 4Ps as well as other business updates.

In addition to this, in February 2024, myself and my regional colleagues convened a Deep Dive Session, which covered detailed updates from MI5 and CT Policing on the threat picture developing globally, nationally and regionally. It also consisted of updates from all 4 Ps regional leads, a detailed session on inclusion and diversity, as well as other topics of interest, including drones and election safety.

Through national and regional mechanisms, I have ensured PCCs receive assurance that improvements are consistently being made to the counter-terrorism network and agencies are working effectively to stop terrorist attacks from happening, protect the public, prepare for the impact of an attack and prevent people from being drawn into or supporting terrorism.

### **Major Incidents**

PCCs have a key responsibility in the event of a major incident, such as a terrorist attack. We provide community reassurance, consider our response to victims and their families and hold the force to account for their response and recovery. Following a regional exercise in March 2022, I developed our OPCC critical incident plan, which sets out the responsibilities and actions required by myself and my office, in the event of an incident.

This plan was tested and the post-incident report includes recommendations and next steps for consideration and implementation. Although everything cannot be prepared for, the document outlines roles, responsibilities and considerations needed at every stage of an incident, activation process, pre-incident, incident in progress and post-incident.

### **West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (WM ROCU)**

Strategic oversight of the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (WMROCU) continues to be a shared responsibility, with PCC colleagues from across the region. At our quarterly Regional

Governance Group meeting, the regional PCCs and Chief Constables receive a detailed report in respect of the WMROCU. The report covers all aspects relating to the operation of the WMROCU, a performance summary, details of the range of capabilities deployed and staffing levels. Along with my PCC colleagues, we scrutinise the operation of the ROCU closely, to ensure that they are effectively tackling those serious criminals who pose the most harm to communities across the region.

At a local level, I receive regular briefings on the work of the WMROCU and its impact for the West Midlands Force Area, to ensure I have oversight of the local issues and priorities. Following the HMICFRS inspection of West Midlands Police Serious Organised Crime response and the ROCU, I have improved my local briefings to include progress and performance updates in these key areas. I remain assured that West Midlands Police are working effectively to tackle serious and organised crime.

The ROCU is the bridge between the West Midlands Force and the National Crime Agency. It is imperative that the work of these three agencies is coordinated and synchronised, in order for the public to be kept safe and secure and the most dangerous criminals operating within our area to be brought to justice.

## **Section 4: Civic Leadership and Campaigning for Change**

When I was elected in May 2021, I pledged to keep the views of local residents at the heart of my plans for policing. Equally important, is ensuring that I can engage effectively with communities of all kinds across the West Midlands.

I have prioritised community engagement through attendance at meetings with community groups, residents, Ward Forums, stakeholder networks, civic events, projects, faith groups and the voluntary sector. This is all in an effort to engage with, listen to and work with the people and communities of the West Midlands, to enable them to participate and have a say in how their region is policed.

### **Traditional Media**

I adopt a proactive and transparent approach to communications and use a wide range of channels. Broadcast, digital and print organisations are vital to help communicate with residents and taxpayers. It allows me to raise awareness of current issues, provide a platform for campaigns and deliver updates on progress and challenges within policing and crime.

Amongst many significant issues covered during this period was my announcement to restructure the estates portfolio within West Midlands Police. I also updated constituents on reductions in violent crime and my successful Judicial Review challenge, to prevent the Mayoral takeover of the role of Police and Crime Commissioner.

My Communications team began a new monitoring programme in the autumn. Between October 2023 and March 2024, the Express and Star, Birmingham Mail and regional BBC online platforms all covered PCC stories the most.

Of the 128 stories covered by the media, the Mayoral takeover was, by far, the story that garnered the most media attention amounting to 42 stories, whilst the changes to the police estates portfolio garnered 11 stories and knife crime attracting 9. Seventy-seven of the stories covered by the media were instigated or generated by my Communications team, whilst 51 were initiated by journalists.

### **Social Media**

In 2023-24 we saw an increase in reach and follower numbers consistently across the board as we increased both my profile and that of the office.

Some key stats include:

- Our messages were seen more than 1.9 million times across all platforms
- Our follower numbers increased by 8% across all platforms
- Our most popular YouTube video was viewed more than 100,000 times, with a watch time of more than 2,300 hours

### **Campaigns**

I launched a public consultation into my plan to retain money raised from fixed penalty notices issued to drivers in the West Midlands, with the money being invested in road safety improvement schemes. A four-week campaign was supported with paid for social media, a press release and appearances on local radio. We also targeted community groups on Facebook organically. The consultation was completed by a then-office record of 1,300 people, with 93 per cent supporting my plan. I



subsequently wrote to government on the issue and opened a dialogue with the Department for Transport.

Focussing on the issue of women's safety while exercising, ['I'm Tired of This'](#) was an online advert paid for through the Safer Streets Fund. Scripted, casted and co-produced by the OPCC and an external VAWG comms specialist, the video was filmed and directed by a local advertising agency in Birmingham. Highlighting the reality women face when out exercising in public, the video had more than 150,000 views across social media platforms, with almost 101,000 of those coming on YouTube.

## Engagement

Our annual precept public engagement ran from mid-December to mid-January, with more than 1,500 people having their say. Using organic and paid for posts on Twitter, as it was called, Facebook and Instagram, as well as traditional media and business engagement, the PCC urged the public to have their say.

The engagement gave us some rich data, including showing that 89 per cent of people did not feel there are enough police on the streets and the top three crimes they were worried about were burglary, knife crime and anti-social behaviour. 52% voted in favour of a council tax rise to support policing in the region.

My policy team and I have launched major communications campaigns that aim to make the West Midlands safer, including focusing on some of my priorities, such as fair funding for West Midlands Police, ending violence against women and girls, road safety, serious youth violence and knife crime, and fraud. My last year of campaigns included:

**Fair funding formula:** I have campaigned for the government to face up to the acute financial challenges faced by West Midlands Police and called for fair funding and the return of our 800 fewer police officers and 500 fewer Police Community Support Officers. I have opened various funds throughout the year allocated to key areas, such as tackling domestic abuse, dangerous drivers and violent crime.

**Car safety:** A major on-going campaign throughout my term in office, I have continued my call for car [manufacturers to sort out failures in their vehicles](#), including retrofitting security fixes, and to give away/encourage the use of steering wheel locks and Faraday pouches for free.

**Promoting the victims code:** I have supported West Midlands Police in launching their [new victims strategy](#), which aims to increase compliance with the victims code and the MoJ [awareness campaign](#), so victims across the region are aware of their rights.

**Tackling youth violence:** A major on-going campaign, throughout my term in office, has been to raise awareness of the work being carried out to prevent, tackle and reduce serious youth violence, such as virtual reality headsets deployed in schools.

**Knife crime:** I have continued my campaign against knife crime, including the installation of a network of 400 additional [bleed kits](#) and more [weapons surrender bins](#), now totalling 36 across the region.

**Fraud and financial crime:** A social media and leaflet [campaign](#) in Birmingham, warning people of the dangers of borrowing from illegal money lenders, as well as publicly [supporting businesses](#) across the West Midlands hit by fraud and business and retail crime.

**Targeting anti-social behaviour:** I backed the [#Safer6 campaign](#) in Sandwell as it targets and clamps down on anti-social behaviour, as part of a Home Office-funded pilot project. The West Midlands is one of 10 force areas, piloting extra patrols in ASB hot spots and other partnership activities.

## **Fraud**

In February 2024, I launched the first ever [public health approach to combat fraud](#), by bringing together a new strategic partnership from across the region, including police, academics and key stakeholders from the local fraud prevention landscape – ranging from Trading Standards, West Midlands Police and the Credit Industry Fraud Avoidance System. The new partnership will aim to empower the public, challenge fraudsters and help transform the West Midlands into one of the most difficult places to commit fraud.

This public health approach to fraud is based on innovative research carried out by Cardiff University, funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Midlands Fraud Forum and the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit. Partners have now been tasked on delivering the eight key recommendations published by Cardiff University, to ensure the key components of the public health approach are in place – such as being data driven, focused on prevention, centred on collaboration and providing different levels of intervention.

In addition, I have continued my calls for the government to have a better national approach to prevent, tackle and reduce fraud by recognising it as a priority and increasing resource.

I have also continued my focus on specific types of fraud harming vulnerable people in the West Midlands, such as romance scammers and loan sharks. I have issued [advice](#) on signs of romance fraud and how online daters can protect themselves and commissioned a social media and leaflet [campaign](#) in Birmingham warning people of the dangers of borrowing from illegal money lenders.

## **Meeting, engaging, listening and working with you**

Building safe, secure and strong communities has always been at the forefront of my work, with a wealth of initiatives taking place across our region that are focused on achieving that. This section provides a snapshot of the extensive work that is taking place.

I have attended 207 community events and meetings and engaged with hundreds of members of the public and community safety partners at formal meetings, community and stakeholder meetings and forums, local resident events, civic events, conferences, workshops and business meetings. This is an immensely important and much valued part of my role.

Highlights from the meetings have been working with my fantastic Youth Commissioners who represent young people from across the force area. My inspiring Police Cadets and I have been out and about, participating at events. It has been a pleasure to meet recipients of my Helping Communities Fund as they showcase the best of the work that people in our communities are doing every day.

I am regularly out at community and residents' meetings, engaging with, listening to, talking to and working with people and businesses from across the West Midlands, discussing local issues and solutions, encouraging people to report any concerns and crucially, providing reassurance on the action being taken to prevent, tackle and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, to keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure. My office links in closely with our local

policing teams and partners, to identify issues of concern and the wide-ranging action that is necessary, to help and support our communities.

My office has received 257 pieces of casework, alongside numerous letters and correspondence from people and organisations from across the West Midlands, that raise a variety of different concerns, issues and matters.

### **Outstanding Citizens Awards**

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual [Outstanding Citizens Awards](#) took place in June 2023. This event shines a light on people who go above and beyond to make a difference within their communities. A volunteer who has dedicated his life to tackling knife crime won my Outstanding Citizen Award.

For the last 17 years, Syed Muhammad Faisal Sami has volunteered with Dawat-E-Islami UK and spearheaded campaigns to tackle knife crime, as well as a range of other issues including drugs, speeding, gang culture, county lines, fly-tipping, theft and nitrous oxide. He is recognised as a true community champion and has inspired and supported thousands of people to bring a positive change in their lives, not just in the West Midlands, but nationally and globally.

My Outstanding Young Citizen Award went to Mohammed Al-Hassan, an 18-year-old who chairs the SHAPE Youth Forum (Sandwell) and has campaigned to reduce harassment and violence towards young women and girls.

Two community projects were awarded for their support for young people. The Bright Future Association, which uses football to support around 150 children every year and engage them in positive activities, won the Outstanding Young Community Project. Founder Nassim Saif and his team of coaches deliver FA affiliated, high quality, minimal cost, football training to the children of Sparkbrook and Balsall Heath.

Meriden Adventure Playground was also recognised with the Outstanding Community Project, for its positive engagement with young people. Their highly-skilled team have a wealth of experience and knowledge to support families and create community resilience.

## Section 5: Good governance, transparency, equality and public engagement

### Responding to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)

HMIC evaluate areas of force performance against its PEEL inspection framework, which scores each area as inadequate, requires improvement, adequate, good, or outstanding.

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
		Preventing crime	Responding to the public	Investigating crime
		Police powers and public treatment	Developing a positive workplace	Protecting vulnerable people
			Leadership and force management	Managing offenders

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

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

As a result of these areas of concern, HMIC moved West Midlands Police into an enhanced level of monitoring in November 2023, known as the 'Engage' process. Following this decision, I worked with the Chief Constable to ensure immediate and swift action was taken to implement necessary improvements, with the aim of being removed from special measures as soon as possible.

Regular re-inspections took place and inspectors found significant improvements. HMIC closed three of the four causes of concern by July 2024. The only remaining cause of concern relates to investigations. After less than 10 months, West Midlands Police were [removed from the Engage process](#) in September 2024, and were recognised as the fastest improving force in the country.

As part of my PCC obligations, I [publish my responses to HMIC PEEL inspections of WMP](#). Following my appointment to office in May 2021, I have provided formal responses to 40 WMP inspections, 17 of which were published in 23-24.

### The Strategic Police and Crime Board

The Strategic Police and Crime Board continued to support me in holding WMP to account and setting the strategic direction for the force. During 2023-24, it met in public on a monthly basis, and provided an opportunity for the public to submit questions and petitions, relating to my duties and responsibilities. All papers remain publicly available [on my website](#). The role of the Board is to help me to deliver the aims, objectives and priorities that the people of the West Midlands elected me to deliver.

## Internal Audit

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

## Accountability and Governance

The Joint Annual Governance Statement, reflects the established governance framework and it is published alongside the annual accounts of the PCC. A joint [corporate governance framework](#) also sets out how governance operates for both the Chief Constable and the PCC.

In addition, I continued with the established arrangements for holding the force to account, adhering to the principles set out in the Policing Protocol 2011. I met face-to-face with the Chief Constable and senior officers and staff on a weekly basis for the duration of the year. The meetings covered wide ranging topics relating to current strategic and operational matters. For example, I have scrutinised force performance data, including 101/999 responses and contact with the public, progress against HMIC recommendations as part of the Engage process, as well as ongoing police recruitment and the national police officer uplift programme.

The Joint Audit Committee provides independent assurance on the governance, risk management and internal control frameworks through its oversight and scrutiny of the work of Internal Audit, External Audit, inspectorate reports and risk registers. It provides this service to both the Chief Constable and myself.

Further assurances are obtained via the Annual Governance Statement, the Statement of Accounts and review of the Scheme of Governance. The Joint Audit Committee meets [in public](#) and the Chair of the Joint Audit Committee also attended my Strategic Policing and Crime Board annually.

## Ethics Committee

My [Ethics Committee](#) has continued, at a national level, to place attention on the emerging ethical considerations that come with new technologies in policing and to be recognised as a good practice model. During 23-24, the Committee has considered the implications of various AI technologies and predictive tools that are being introduced into operational policing. For example, the Committee considered one tool that sought to predict which offenders under police management were more likely to commit further serious offences, based on historic data trends.

While the potential advantages of this model were recognised, for example, focusing police resources on people at highest risk of committing harm, the Committee raised major ethical issues which subsequently helped to shape and improve the design of the project. For example, any coercive type of intervention such as surveillance based on a 'prediction', could result in serious injustices.

Concerns were also raised over whether stop and search data was being factored in and whether this might present racial bias. Redesigns subsequently made much clearer references to public health and supportive interventions that might follow, to mitigate the risk of inaccurate predictions and any measures that could be used as a proxy for ethnicity were assessed and discounted.

The Committee's approach to tackling and focusing on live projects, rather than theoretical discussions, was praised in a recent report led by the University of Northampton, the University of Glasgow and Northumbria University, published in September 2024. This report highlighted how the Committee have supported operational policing and provided a model for the responsible use of AI in policing nationwide.

The Committee was previously singled-out by the House of Lords Justice and Home Affairs Committee in a report on [new technologies in the justice system](#) on a similar basis and highlighted how the Committee's independence, commitment to transparency and remit has influenced the development of a national model.

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

### **The work of our voluntary Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs)**

During 2023/24, our dedicated ICVs conducted 221 visits to police custody suites across the West Midlands offering to check on the welfare of 1,034 detainees. The scheme has 40 dedicated volunteers, who conduct one face-to-face visit per week. Over the course of the year, the scheme has seen many measures to improve detainee dignity. The scheme operates an effective scrutiny mechanism, including panel meetings to ensure any issues can be raised directly with us and the force.

### **Appropriate Adults**

The provision of Appropriate Adults (AA) for vulnerable adults remains extremely important to me. Our 11 AA volunteers supported 911 vulnerable adult detainees and I continue to support the National Appropriate Adult Network's campaign to lobby the Government to change the law, so as to introduce a statutory provision for vulnerable adult detainees, levelling up the statutory requirements for adults and children. In the absence of dedicated Government funding, I have continued to lead on the delivery of this service.

## Section 6: Financial Planning, Resources and Grant Giving

### Financial Planning

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

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

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

‘The system of police funding is outdated and unfair. Funding should be distributed so it goes to where it is needed most. But currently, this isn’t the case... More grant-dependent, deprived and urban parts of England and Wales are more likely to be underfunded compared to their needs... The way that the PUP [Police Uplift Programme] funding was distributed means that new officers haven’t been appointed where they are needed most... In the absence of increasing the overall spend on the police, [this] will mean taking money away from some to give it to others. This may be politically unpopular, but it is the right thing to do to make poorer communities safer.’

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

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

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

### Financial Resources

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

The total grant settlement for the West Midlands in 2023-24 is £569.7 million, which was an increase of £10.3 million on the previous year. This grant enabled WMP to continue to maintain police officer numbers during 2023-24 and support the national uplift programme and also to fund the 2023-24 police officer and staff pay awards.

About 20% of the funding comes through council tax. I set the level of council tax for policing. The settlement for 2023/24 allowed PCCs to raise council tax by up to £15 per year per Band D property.



This generated an additional income of £11.07 million. The West Midlands Police budget will still remain under significant financial pressure and the force is still projected to have about 800 fewer police officers by 2023 than we did in 2010.

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

Band	Statutory Proportion	2022/23 Precept £: p	2023/24 Precept £: p	Change Annual £: p	Change Weekly £: p
Band A	6/9	125.03	135.03	10.00	0.19
Band B	7/9	145.87	157.54	11.67	0.22
Band C	8/9	166.71	180.04	13.33	0.26
Band D	<b>9/9</b>	<b>187.55</b>	<b>202.55</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>0.29</b>
Band E	11/9	229.23	247.56	18.33	0.35
Band F	13/9	270.91	292.57	21.66	0.42
Band G	15/9	312.58	337.58	25.00	0.48
Band H	18/9	375.10	405.10	30.00	0.58

The full budget report for 2023-2024 is available [here](#). It sets out expenditure for capital and revenue expenditure across all areas of policing and the OPCC.

## Grants

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

### Helping Communities Fund 2023-24

The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA), enables money which has been seized from criminals to be used and re-purposed. In 2023-24, this provided the opportunity to fund up to £400,000 of community projects, which aligned closely to my Police and Crime Plan and the priorities of West Midlands Police. The funding is shared out between the NPU's, with the aim of supporting communities to invest in their neighbourhoods, helping them get actively involved in projects, which would make a positive difference and contribute to crime prevention and reduction and community safety in the local area.

Local Policing Area	Allocation	Number of Projects
Birmingham	£139,408	32
Coventry	£44,029	10
Dudley	£41,565	13
Sandwell	£43,645	13
Solihull	£29,437	6
Walsall	£37,112	9



Wolverhampton	£34,806	9
Street Watch	£30,000	
Helping Communities Fund Total	<b>£400,002</b>	<b>92</b>

#### Prevention and Intervention Fund 2023-24

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

Project / Area	2023/24
Enterprise for employment (Birmingham)	£100,000
Arrest Referral (Drug Interventions Programme)	£503,000
Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme	£300,000
Joint Working with WMCA on Road Safety	£100,000
18 Projects Under £100K, including Stop and Search Education, Family Drug & Alcohol Courts, Cautions & Relationship Abuse	£802,538
<b>Prevention and Intervention Total</b>	<b>£1,805,538</b>

#### Community Safety Fund Budget 2023-24

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

Activity	2023/24
<b><u>Force Wide Commissioning Allocations</u></b>	
Youth Offending	£652,108
Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	£454,000
Community Safety Partnership - Analysts	£230,000
Arrest Referral (Drug Interventions Programme)	£500,000
New Chance	£270,000
Restorative Justice West Midlands – ASB	£63,785
Op Hercules – Forcewide Injunctions	£42,000
DA related Alcohol Violence - Early Intervention (CSP)	£120,000
Local Commissioning Allocations	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£2,331,893</b>
<b><u>Allocation to 7 Local Community Safety Partnerships</u></b>	
Birmingham	£660,000
Coventry	£165,000
Dudley	£135,000
Sandwell	£165,000
Solihull	£90,000
Walsall	£135,000
Wolverhampton	£150,000
<b><u>7 Local CSP's</u></b>	<b>£1,500,000</b>

<b>Total Community Safety Funding</b>	<b>£3,831,893</b>

#### **Victims Fund Budget 2023-24**

Grants from the Ministry of Justice, which support this expenditure, have not increased in line with inflation. £150,412 of community safety funding was therefore used in 2023-24 to top up the Victims Support expenditure.

<b>Priority</b>	<b>23-24</b>
Domestic Abuse	£745,271
Hate Crime	£150,000
Modern Slavery	£170,788
Victim Support - Other Services	£1,012,732
Restorative Justice	£225,000
Road Crime	£76,517
Sexual Violence	£95,455
Sexual Violence CSA	£505,484
Stalking and Harassment	£147,980
Victims Fund 9	£150,000
Associated Costs	£326,588
<b>Total Victims Fund Budget</b>	<b>£3,605,815</b>

#### **Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) Funding 2023-24**

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

<b>Priority</b>	<b>23-24</b>
ISVA's	£2,146,185
IDVA's	£643,632
<b>Total Victims Fund Budget</b>	<b>£2,789,817</b>

Simon Foster  
West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

**Keep in touch**

This report is important as it gives you the opportunity to review my progress and I welcome your feedback.

There are lots of ways to keep in touch.

You can:

Write to us: Police & Crime Commissioner's Office, Lloyd House, Colmore Circus Queensway,  
Birmingham, B4 6NQ

Tel: 0121 626 6060 Fax: 0121 626 5003

[www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)

[wmpcc@westmidlands.police.uk](mailto:wmpcc@westmidlands.police.uk)

WestMidsPCC  
@WestMidsPCC

If you require any part of this document in Braille, larger print or another language, please contact my office

## Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme for 2024/2025

**Date: 3 February 2025**

Report of: Tom Senior Acting Lead 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](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk)

Tel: 0121 303 1727

### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed work programme of key issues to be considered by the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel ('the Panel') during 2024/25 and provides an opportunity for Members to identify further topics to be added.
- 1.2 The work programme is structured around the statutory duties the Panel must undertake and wider exploratory work that enable the Panel to scrutinise and support the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) decisions and actions.
- 1.3 The work programme will be updated throughout the year to enable the Panel to respond to emerging issues in a flexible and timely way.

### **2 Recommendations**

#### **2.1 That the Panel**

- i. **Note the updated work programme at Appendix A.**
- ii. **Identifies any further topics to add to the work programme.**
- iii. **Agrees, subject to further input from the Chair and Vice-Chair, the issues that the Panel will consider in March 2025 and the proposed aims and objectives.**

### **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.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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 Panel Work Programme 2024/25**

- 4.1 A well planned and timely work programme enables the Panel to consider the right issues in an informed way.
- 4.2 The current work programme is attached as Appendix A.
- 4.3 It may be necessary for the Panel to also prioritise issues and consider factors such as public interest and performance when further shaping its work programme.
- 4.4 The Panel will liaise with the PCC and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to communicate the issues the Panel would like to explore, and specific areas of focus.

#### **5 Member Sub-Group – Use of Information**

- 5.1 In July 2024 the Panel established a Member Subgroup appointing Independent Member Kristina Murphy, Councillor Jackie Taylor, Councillor Izzy Knowles and Councillor Gareth Moore.

- 5.2 The sub-group will undertake a focussed piece of work to draw conclusions on the following and report back to the full Panel to consider:
- What information does the Panel need and how can it make best use of this information to fulfil its statutory duty to scrutinise the Commissioner's performance in delivering the ambitions of the Police and Crime Plan.
  - How can the Panel use performance data to inform the development of its work programme.
- 5.3 The subgroup met for the first time in October to examine in detail the performance metrics associated with the development of the new police and crime plan and consider the performance information requirements of the Panel.
- 5.4 At the 9 December 2024 meeting, the Panel received a report from the Use of Information Sub-Group that presented the work of the group that focussed on the comments developed by the Use of Information Subgroup that related to the draft Police and Crime Plan key performance indicators (KPIs).
- 5.5 At the 20 January 2025 meeting, the Panel were informed that the work of the Use of Information Sub-Group was used when the Police and Crime Commissioner was developing their draft Police and Crime Plan.

## **6 Finance Implications**

- 6.1 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.

## **7 Legal Implications**

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

## **8 Equalities Implications**

- 8.1 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
  - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex, and sexual orientation.

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

## **9 Background Papers**

- 9.1 [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)
- 9.2 [Policing and fire governance: guidance for police and crime panels](#)
- 9.3 [Home Office Guidance - Police, fire and crime panels](#)
- 9.4 [West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Panel Agreement \(2012\)](#)

## **10 Appendices**

- 10.1 Appendix A: West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme January 2025

## West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Work Programme 2024/25 – December 2024

Meeting Date	Item/Topic	Aims and Objectives	Additional Information and Outcome*
22 July 2024	Deputy PCC Confirmation Hearing (Statutory Task)	The Panel must hold a public confirmation hearing, requesting the candidate to appear for the purpose of answering questions relating to the appointment.	The <a href="#">scrutiny of senior appointments is a statutory task of the Panel</a> . The Panel must prepare a report and recommendations for the PCC to consider.
22 July 2024	PCC Performance Update	To provide an overview of West Midlands Police performance across key areas between April 2023 to March 2024.	The report includes an update on the Engage Status of WMP requested by the Panel in February 2024.
22 July 2024	PCC Accountability and Governance Arrangements	To inform the Panel of the PCC's revised accountability and governance arrangements for the exercise of his strategic direction, holding to account and public engagement functions.	
22 July 2024	Development of the Police and Crime Plan	To inform the Panel on progress and further plans for the <a href="#">development of the Police and Crime Plan</a> 2025-2029	The Panel's must schedule its review based on the development timetable. The <a href="#">review of the draft Police and Crime Plan is a statutory task of the Panel</a> . The Panel must prepare a report and recommendations to the PCC to consider before finalising the Plan.
22 July 2024	Establishment of Use of Information Subgroup	To undertake a focussed piece of work to draw conclusions and report back to the full Panel on: a. What information does the Panel need and how can it make best use of this information to fulfil its statutory duty to scrutinise the Commissioner's performance in delivering the ambitions of the Police and Crime Plan. b. How can the Panel use performance data to inform the development of its work programme	Panel terms of reference approved by Panel on 22 July Membership: Cllr Izzy Knowles, Cllr Gareth Moore, Kristina Murphy and Cllr Jackie Taylor
22 July 2024	AGM Items	Panel Membership Election of Chair and Vice Chair Annual approval of Panel Arrangements and Rules of Procedure	



Meeting Date	Item/Topic	Aims and Objectives	Additional Information and Outcome*
7 October 2024	PCC Statement of Accounts	To note the PCC accounts and seek reassurances on the accounts and audit. To provide the Panel with useful information and context to inform its scrutiny of policing precept in February.	
7 October 2024	Draft Police and Crime Plan	The PCC to present an update on the development of the police and crime plan. The Panel will examine how the draft plan takes into account local priorities, resourcing, partnerships to fulfil the plan objectives and how delivery of priorities will be measured.	The <a href="#">review of the draft Police and Crime Plan is a statutory task of the Panel</a> . The Panel will formally review the Plan at a later date and prepare a report and recommendations for the PCC to consider before finalising the Plan.
7 October 2024	PCC Update on Recent Activity	Update on recent activity including published key decisions. The Chief Constable will contribute to this item and update the Panel in the recent HMICFRS decision to remove West Midlands Police from Engage Status.	
21 October 2024 (Online)	Use of Information Sub-group	First session to examine the Police and Crime Plan performance metrics	Panel terms of reference approved by Panel on 22 July Membership: Cllr Izzy Knowles, Cllr Gareth Moore, Kristina Murphy and Cllr Jackie Taylor Following the session a report and recommendations will be prepared for the 9 December Police and Crime Panel meeting.
5 December 2024	Member Visit	Visit will include a tour of the C3 Contact Centre and briefings on Neighbourhood policing and work of the OPCC. This will provide an opportunity for members to learn more about the work of the PCC and OPCC.	Members of the Panel visited the C3 Contact Centre and received a briefing on Neighbourhood policing, the work of the OPCC and the firearms unit.
9 December 2024	Report of the Use of Information Sub-Group	Report back by the Use of Information sub-group on findings and recommendations pertaining to the Draft Police and Crime Plan metrics.	

Meeting Date	Item/Topic	Aims and Objectives	Additional Information and Outcome*
9 December 2024	Confirmation Hearing of Chief Constable	Following notification from the PCC, the Panel must hold a Confirmation Hearing to review the proposed appointment to Chief Constable and make a recommendation to the Commissioner.	<a href="#">This is a statutory duty of the Panel</a> under schedule of the Police Reform and Social Act 2011
9 December 2024	PCC Activity update	To provide an update on the PCC recent activity including published key decisions.	
9 December 2024	Independent Panel Member Recruitment	To appoint a three member appointment panel to recruit to the vacant independent panel member position.	It was agreed that a four member appointment to recruit to the vacant independent panel member position be agreed.
9 December 2024	PCC Medium Term Financial Plan	To provide the Panel with useful information and context to inform its scrutiny of policing precept in February.	
20 January 2025 Sandwell	Review of draft Police & Crime Plan (Statutory Task)	The PCC to present the draft police and crime plan. The Panel will scrutinise how the draft plan takes into account the local priorities, resourcing and how delivery of priorities will be measured.	<a href="#">This is a statutory duty of the Panel</a> . The panel must publish and report and recommendations for the PCC to consider
20 January 2025	Lessons learnt from violent disorder in Summer 2024	To understand the actions and activities of the Police and Crime Commissioner in the immediate response to the violent disorder in Summer 2024 and to identify any lessons learnt from a prevention, collaboration, community safety and criminal justice perspective.	
20 January 2025	Member briefing on police finance and budget	To provide Panel members with briefing information about police finance and the funding settlement to prepare for the statutory duty to review the proposed precept in February.	
3 February 2025	PCC Proposed Policing Precept 2025 and budget. (Statutory Task)	Formally review the proposed policing precept 2025 and make a recommendation to the PCC.	<a href="#">This is a statutory duty of the Panel</a> . The Panel has the power to veto the proposed policing precept. If this happens, the PCC will present a revised precept to Panel on 19 February 2024.

Meeting Date	Item/Topic	Aims and Objectives	Additional Information and Outcome*
3 February 2025	PCC Update on Recent Activity	To provide an update on the PCC recent activity including published key decisions.	
3 February 2025	Proposed item PCC Annual Report 23/24	The panel must invite the PCC to attend a public meeting to scrutinise the annual report setting out progress on meeting the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan during the financial year and consider how the Annual report can be developed.	This is a statutory duty of the Panel. The Panel must publish a report and recommendations for the PCC to consider
17 February 2025	<i>PCC Proposed Policing Precept for 2025/26</i>	<i>Formally review the proposed and revised precept</i>	<i>Provisional meeting date – if the proposed precept was vetoed on 3 February 2025. The Panel does not have a second veto.</i>
24 March 2025	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
24 March 2025	Panel Budget and Expenditure	To consider and approve the total budget and expenditure of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel	Annual Report of the Lead Panel Officer.
24 March 2025	PCC Update on Recent Activity	To provide an update on the PCC recent activity including published key decisions.	
24 March 2025	Item – TBC		

### Menu of Options for Future Consideration

The Panel is invited to identify potential topics for future consideration. This approach enables the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel to remain flexible and respond in a timely manner to emerging issues. This is a live work programme. New items may be added, or items removed during the course of the year. Proposed aims and objectives may also be subject to change.

Meeting Date	Item/Topic	Aims and Objectives	Additional Information and Outcome*
To be programmed	Use of Information Sub-group	Additional sessions to be scoped and timetabled in line with the agreed terms of reference	Members: Cllr Izzy Knowles, Cllr Gareth Moore, Kristina Murphy and Cllr Jackie Taylor

To be programmed	Suggested Topics for Work Programme	<p>Items to be scoped to demonstrate aims and objective before scheduling on work programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local high streets, tackling anti-social behaviour and business crime.</li> <li>• Appropriate adults and support to those questioned by the police.</li> <li>• Stop and Search.</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Policing.</li> <li>• Road safety.</li> </ul>	Invitation to the Stop and Search Consortium to be organised.
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