

**West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**

**Monday 24 March 2025 at 14:00 hours**

**Walsall Council Chamber, Litchfield Street, Walsall, WS1 1TW**

This meeting will be livestreamed at [Upcoming - Auditel Scheduler](#)

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>APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PANEL MEMBERS</b> Panel is asked to consider the report and recommendation to appoint two Independent Panel Members.	<b>14:05</b>

Supporting Document	Item	Topic	Approximate time
Attached	5	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To consider the Minutes of the meetings held on the 20 January 2025 and 3 February 2025	14:10
Attached	6	<b>POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ACTION TRACKER</b> To consider the progress of actions arising from previous Panel meetings.	14:15
	7	<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>	14:20
Attached	8	<b>POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S OVERSIGHT OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE ON TACKLING DISCRIMINATION AND MISOGYNY IN THE POLICE</b>  To receive a report from the Police and Crime Commissioner on his oversight of the Chief Constable on tackling discrimination and misogyny within West Midlands Police.	14:35
Attached	9	<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.	15:05
Attached	10	<b>DEPUTY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER UPDATE REPORT ON RECENT ACTIVITIES</b>  To provide an update on the Deputy PCC recent activity.	15:35
Attached	11	<b>ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY THE PANEL</b>  The Monitoring Officer presents an annual report on the Panel's delegated complaints handling duties.	16:00
Attached	12	<b>PANEL WORK PROGRAMME</b>  The Panel to identify issues for consideration for a work programme for 2024/25 and arrangements to take forward.	16:10
	13	<b>NEXT MEETING DATE</b>  28 July 2025 at 2pm – Venue TBC	16:25

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<b>Supporting Document</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Approximate time</b>
	<b>14</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>	<b>16:27</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.	

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## **Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Independent Panel Member Appointment**

**Date: 24 March 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 This report sets out the outcome from the independent panel member recruitment process and seeks approval to appoint to two of these positions.

### **2 Recommendations**

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

- a. **Approves the appointment of Ravinderjit Briaah to fill the vacant independent member position on the Panel for a period of four years, ending on 30 June 2029. This appointment will commence from today (24 March 2025).**
- b. **Approves the appointment of Amy Mullins-Downes to fill the third independent panel member position. This appointment will commence on 1 July 2025 for a period of four years, ending on 30 June 2029.**

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 The Panel has three independent (non-councillor) co-opted members, as outlined in [Schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#).
- 3.2 On 9 December 2024 the Panel agreed a recruitment process for two of the three positions (one vacant, one to be vacant from July 2025). The Panel appointed a four member cross-party recruitment panel. A region-wide advertising campaign was conducted via social media, WM Jobs advertising and speaking with various organisations to promote the roles and the work of the Panel.
- 3.3 Interviews for the shortlisted candidates were held on 11 February 2025 and the recruitment panel agreed that two candidates were of an appointable standard for these positions.

- 3.4 Ravinderjit Briaah was the offered the current vacant role and Amy Mullins-Downes was offered the third independent member position. Both appointments are subject to satisfactory references and the agreement of the Panel.

## **4 Implications**

### **Finance Implications**

- 4.1 The Home Office provides an annual grant to support the administration of Police and Crime Panels. The Home Office Grant covers all costs relating to the recruitment and allowances of Independent Members.

### **Legal Implications**

- 4.2 Schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 provides for police and crime panels to co-opt a minimum of two independent members. The Panel obtained agreement from the Secretary of State to increase this number to three.

### **Equalities Implications**

- 4.3 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 4.4 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex, and sexual orientation.
- 4.5 The Panel has considered its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty in the design and decision making in its recruitment process. Through the recruitment of independent members to work alongside the other members, the Panel is equipped to continuing to deliver on these responsibilities.

## **5 Background Papers**

- 5.1 [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#)
- 5.2 [Police, fire and crime panels: independent member recruitment guidance 2023](#)
- 5.3 [West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Panel Agreement \(2012\)](#)
- 5.4 Recruitment of Independent Panel Members report to WMPCP 9 Dec 2024

## **6 Appendices**

- 6.1 There are no appendices.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2025 AT 14:00 HOURS –, COUNCIL CHAMBER, SANDWELL COUNCIL HOUSE, FREETH STREET, OLDBURY, B69 3DB.**

**PRESENT: -**

Members

Cllr Jasbir Jaspal (City of Wolverhampton Council – Chair)

Kristina Murphy (Independent Panel Member – Vice Chair)

Cllr Rashad Mahmood (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Gareth Moore (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Izzy Knowles (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Abdul S Khan (Coventry City Council)

Cllr Pervez Akhtar (Coventry City Council)

Cllr Ed Lawrence (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)

Cllr Bill Gavan MBE (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council)

Cllr Waheed Rasab (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council)

**ALSO PRESENT: -**

Simon Foster – Police and Crime Commissioner

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

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

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

Magda Fox – Research Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Tom Senior – Lead Officer (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)

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

Sam Yarnall – Interim Scrutiny Officer (Birmingham City Council)

**852 NOTICE OF RECORDING**

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

### **853 APOLOGIES**

There were apologies tendered on behalf of Cllrs Mushtaq Hussain, Alan Feeney, and Jackie Taylor.

### **854 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Non-pecuniary interests were declared by Cllr G Moore, as a Trustee of the Birmingham LGBT, and Cllr I Knowles, being in receipt of a Police Pension.

### **855 MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED: -**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2024 be confirmed as correct and signed by the Chair.

### **856 ACTION TRACKER**

The Chair informed Members that there had been an update on the action tracker under minute items 840, 838 and 844.

#### **RESOLVED: -**

That the actions detailed in the action tracker, and that actions 840, 838 and 844 were discharged and noted.

### **857 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chair informed Members that there were no public questions presented prior to the meeting to be heard. Members were informed that there had been various advertisements on social media and via email to Members to encourage public engagement.

### **858 REVIEW OF DRAFT POLICE & CRIME PLAN**

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager presented the cover report to Members that set out the responsibilities of the Police and Crime Panel when reviewing the Police & Crime Plan presented by the Police and Crime Commissioner. It highlighted that the Panel was able to provide recommendations to the Commissioner to consider when the final plan was being devised.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands introduced the Draft Police & Crime Plan. The Plan was drafted following various forms of consultation which included stakeholder events, focus groups and surveys. The Commissioner outlined six key principles for the Police and Crime Plan. These were:

- Prevention;
- Partnership;
- Building trust and confidence;

- Bringing offenders to justice;
- Rehabilitation; and
- Rights and wellness of victims.

The Panel was informed that the draft plan was the second one by the Police and Crime Commissioner following his re-election in May 2024. Members were informed that there were 5,528 survey responses, nine focus group sessions and various community cultural events as well as work with the youth commissioners to work within schools to encapsulate the youth perspective. It was also noted that there were more than 36 stakeholder meetings with different partners to help develop the plan that was presented to Members.

The Head of Policy from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner gave Members further details of the draft plan. The presentation provided insight into how the draft plan compared to the previous plan that was published in November 2021. He explained that how the recommendations on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) identified by the Panel's Use of Information Sub-Group had been used in the development of the plan. This included incorporating the 'Victims Code' and performance measures for addressing alcohol related offences. The public consultation had highlighted further need to incorporate protected characteristics as well as misconduct in the police and how to improve public confidence. The Panel was also advised that Equality Impact Assessments would be prepared alongside that the development of the plan and that the plan would be published by 26 March 2025.

Following the update, Members made the following comments and questions:

- Members commented that the targets outlined within the plan were vague and asked if they could be narrowed down and made more specific so the public and Panel could monitor progress. The Police and Crime Commissioner commented that the metrics presented within the plan followed the consultation and was designed to be achievable.
- Members discussed concerns raised by residents in relation to parking. The Police and Crime Commissioner explained that the plan reflected this concern and there were aims to tackle this in partnership with the Police and Local Authorities.
- Members highlighted that 50% of respondents to the survey highlighted that they had not contacted the police in the last three years and noted the misconception of long answer times were no longer the case in the West Midlands. The Commissioner reiterated that the West Midlands now had the country's best 999 and 111 response times but acknowledged it would take time to get this message across to the public.

- Members asked questions on the functionality of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee in practice as well as the cross-service partnership with other teams in the police force such as speed watch. The response given to Members that under the plan community policing was a top priority. The Guarantee, including the named police officer was a national directive and there was continued commitment to develop this locally. The Commissioner also explained that neighbourhood policing would work in partnership with the road teams as well as partners to tackle community crimes such as criminal damage and vandalism.
- Members thanked the Commissioner for including the comments from the Panel's Use of Information Sub-Group.
- Members suggested that as part of the KPI measures that there should be further measures relating to monitoring the performance of new technologies to report crime. The response from the Commissioner was that there currently was not a service level agreement for the live chat functions to monitor crimes being reported via these methods. However, it was discussed that this could be explored later.
- Members asked for more information about the public health approach to tackling online fraud and any links to neighbourhood policing. The Commissioner highlighted that 80% of recorded crime was cyber enabled and those forms of crimes were not usually suited for traditional methods of policing to tackle. It was discussed that there had been a national concern with these types of crimes from multiple agencies. The Commissioner explained that the public health approach used within the plan promoted early intervention in institutions such as schools. It was also noted that since a sizeable portion of these types of crimes occur within the home, neighbourhood policing was could be well placed to support the tackling of these crimes. The Commissioner agreed to circulate a copy of Cardiff University academic research report into public health approach to tackling online fraud.
- There was discussion on recent discourse on the central government response to grooming and child sexual exploitation offences. The Commissioner reassured the meeting that preventing and tackling child sexual abuse and exploitation and supporting victims was embedded throughout the Plan with inclusion in the Strategic Policing Requirement, tackling violence, prevention, online crime, working in partnership, supporting victims and building trust and confidence in police objectives. The Panel agreed to write to the Commissioner separately for further information about the resources to implement the recent Government announcement on historic CSE cases and reassurances on the approach to police investigations.

- Members asked the Commissioner how the plan would tackle road safety offences, in particular cases that resulted in a fatality that was linked to driving and being under the influence of substances like nitrous oxide. The Commissioner informed Members that the use of nitrous oxide was now classed as a class C drug, however, it was noted that in terms of regulation and testing it was harder to test the use of nitrous oxide than alcohol. It was highlighted that this was a public health concern and that there would be further partnership working to address this.
- Members sought reassurance that the plan included sufficient emphasis on holding the Chief Constable to account in relation to the culture and morale within West Midlands Police. The Commissioner highlighted the focus on these issues in the Fairness and Belonging and Building Trust and Confidence sections of the Plan that lay the expectations for the highest standards of conduct, ethics, integrity and professionalism within West Midlands Police. The Commissioner further highlighted the work of the Accountability and Governance board in holding the Chief Constable to account.

Following the debate, Members agreed the following recommendations.

**RESOLVED: that the Panel-**

Reviewed the draft West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2025- 2029 and agreed the following recommendations for the Police and Crime Commissioner to consider when finalising the Plan:

- a. that the Commissioner review his 'I will' statements to include more clarity on ambitions, whether that be including specific targets (where appropriate) or how statistically significant changes will be measured. This additional information would aid the public and Panel's understanding of progress.
  - b. that the Commissioner consider including within the Plan a commitment to establish a mechanism to monitor the performance of Live Chat.
  - c. that community policing section of the Plan be expanded to include specific reference to tackling graffiti, vandalism, and low-level criminal damage.
- ii. Write to the Commissioner for further information about the resources to implement the recent Government announcement on historic CSE cases and reassurances on the approach to police investigations.

**859 LESSONS LEARNT FROM VIOLENT DISORDER IN SUMMER 2024**

The Police and Crime Commissioner summarised the report which explored the work of the Commissioner's Office with the Chief Constable during the violent disorder in Summer of 2024. The update from the Commissioner highlighted the work across the West Midlands by the Police which included supporting community events as well as promoting strong partnerships. The

Commissioner said that he met with partners both locally and nationally including meeting the Prime Minister and partners within the local criminal justice system. Best practice was shared locally and nationally to address concerns across the country and West Midlands Police officers had supported areas experiencing disorder. To further efforts to tackle unrest during that period included social media, radio, and regional news campaigns to highlight the work as well as dispelling misinformation. Following the update, Members put the following questions to the Commissioner and their officers:

- Members commended the work of the government, the police, and the Commissioner during this period to keep people safe.
- Members asked the Commissioner of what assurances he could give that perpetrators of violence and disorder would be held accountable. The Commissioner responded and assured Members that there was no place for division and hatred across the West Midlands and that such acts would not be tolerated.
- Members asked the Commissioner of how he was addressing concerns of misinformation. The Commissioner responded by saying that they recognised the role that social media had during the period and worked with national campaigns to dispel misinformation as well as collaborating with the Police's cyber teams to tackle misinformation.
- Members raised concern of the rising gang cultures during the violence and disorder in the Summer of 2024, and they asked the Commissioner what was being done to address this. The Commissioner explained that his Accountability and Governance Board in November 2024 had asked the Chief Constable about additional funding for anti-social behaviour and that they were collaborating with partners to address these concerns.
- Members asked how the sharing of resources from other police forces were funded or if it was out of the Commissioners budget. The Commissioner explained that it was based on mutual aid as well as additional Home Office funding.
- Members asked on links between the night-time economy crime, and street lighting. The Commissioner urged the Panel to write to him so a full response could be provided.
- The Chair asked how many public order officers were trained and whether there were plans for further training and development because of the disorder from the Summer. The Commissioner advised that there were currently 1000 public order trained officers and there were further plans to develop this.
- The Chair asked about whether the Commissioner had responded to the recommendations from the first tranche report of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service into the disorder

within the 56-day deadline. The Commissioner confirmed that they had responded prior to the meeting and that it was within the 56-day deadline.

- In response to further questions the Commissioner assured the meeting that he and the Police would continue their commitment to collaborate with partners such as local authorities to ensure community cohesion and to limit similar acts of disorder occurring in future.
- The Panel welcomed the report and highlighted the hard work of the Commissioner, his officers as well as the police force.

Following this Members agreed the recommendations within the report.

**RESOLVED: -**

That the contents of the report, be noted.

**860 PANEL WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager provided an update to Members. The next meeting was scheduled for the 3 February 2025, and it would allow the Panel to fulfil a statutory function to look at the Police and Crime Precept. Members had no further comments on the work programme.

**RESOLVED**

That the report and work programme, be noted.

**861 NEXT MEETING DATE**

The Chair informed Members that the next meeting was scheduled for the 3 February 2025 at 2pm to take place at Birmingham City Council. Members were informed that public questions could be raised four clear working days before the meeting.

**862 URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no further urgent business discussed at the meeting.

Meeting Closed: 16.00 hours.

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CHAIR

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME  
PANEL HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 14:00 HOURS –, COMMITTEE ROOMS  
3 & 4, BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE,  
BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB**

**PRESENT: -**

Members

Cllr Jasbir Jaspal (City of Wolverhampton Council – Chair)

Kristina Murphy (Independent Panel Member – Vice Chair)

Cllr Rashad Mahmood (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Gareth Moore (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Izzy Knowles (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Abdul S Khan (Coventry City Council)

Cllr Jackie Taylor (Sandwell Metropolitan Council)

Adele Brown – (Independent Panel Member)

**ALSO PRESENT: -**

Simon Foster – Police and Crime Commissioner

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

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

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

Craig Guildford – Chief Constable, West Midlands Police

Tom Senior – Lead Officer (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)

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

Sam Yarnall – Interim Scrutiny Officer (Birmingham City Council)

**864 NOTICE OF RECORDING**

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**865 APOLOGIES**

There were apologies tendered on behalf of Cllrs Mushtaq Hussain, Alan Feeney, Ed Lawrence, Waheed Rasab and Bill Gavan.

#### **866 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Non-pecuniary interests were declared by Cllr G Moore, as a Trustee of the Birmingham LGBT, and Cllr I Knowles, being in receipt of a Police Pension.

#### **867 ACTION TRACKER**

Members were informed that there were additional items to be added onto the action tracker which include a request for information on data pertaining to the public health approach to online fraud and the correlation of street lighting and crime. Members also highlighted that there was another action that was raised at a previous meeting to be included as part of the tracker. This was a request for information from the Commissioner's Office on the number of offenders that had been released early and if there was any data on how many had reoffended, if any.

#### **RESOLVED: -**

That the actions detailed in the action tracker were noted.

#### **868 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chair informed Members that there were no public questions presented prior to the meeting to be heard. Members were informed that there had been various advertisements on social media and via email to Members to encourage public engagement.

#### **869 REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED POLICING PRECEPT FOR 2025/2026, REVENUE BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26 TO 2029/30**

The Lead Officer for the Panel summarised the Panel's responsibility for reviewing the proposed Precept for 2025/26 and the decision options Members could choose from, these were:

1. Endorse the proposed Policing Precept for 2025/26 with no comments.
2. Endorse the proposed Policing Precept for 2025/26 with comments; or
3. Veto the proposed Policing Precept for 2025/26, but this would require a 10 Member majority vote.

The Commissioner and the OPCC Chief Finance Officer presented the report that was published along with the agenda and responded to questions from members alongside the Chief Constable.

The Panel was informed that since publication of the report the finalised Government Funding settlement had been received incorporating the

allocation of the National Neighbourhood Policing Grant, this totalled £12.2m (an £6.1m increase than stated in the report). The criteria for the new Neighbourhood Policing Grant were summarised. Final details for GRIP funding and tax base information and collection funds were yet to be confirmed.

The policing grant was only finalised 8 weeks in advance of the financial year and it equated to 80% of the funding. Members were also informed that 80% of the spending was on staffing. The current expected and budgeted pay award was for a 2% increase and the hope was for further support from the Home Office to support with this if the pay award was to be more than 2%. There were currently 8,000 officers in the Police in the West Midlands. The budget was said to be nearly £800m next year. This was broken down to roughly £271 per person in the West Midlands.

The PCC's public consultation received 708 responses 66% supported an increase in precept and the OPCC also conducted an online business-community consultation as required by legislation.

The Commissioner set out his proposed increase of £13.95 in the Band D precept in the West Midlands which equated to an extra 27p per week for a Band D property. The Commissioner explained that this increase would generate £10.2m in funding. He highlighted that this remained second lowest in country and less than local and similar forces.

The meeting discussed the funding formula and the significant impact on the West Midlands of "damping". It is also the case that on a like for like basis the West Midlands receive £40m less a year than Greater Manchester, a similar force.

It was highlighted that the forecast costs of policing the West Midlands would have, without savings, exceeded available income. However, £24m of savings had been achieved, allowing investment in priority areas. The Estates Strategy was progressing and providing capital receipts.

Following the update, Members presented the Commissioner and his Officers as well as the Chief Constable, who was in attendance, with the following questions:

- The Chair asked the Chief Finance Officer on how the savings presented as part of the paper would be made up. The Chief Finance Officer explained that the savings were not formed of front facing police portfolios but rather from commercial and people savings. There would be £5m from the review of people services, £6m from utility and fuel prices, £2.5m from

IT contact negotiations and just under £1m savings by introducing in-house student officer training. Members were also informed of additional savings such as £5.8m in direct savings, £1.2m in forensics review savings and £1m of savings reducing county lines overtime.

- The question was raised as to whether a precept rise was necessary given the underspend highlighted. The Chief Finance Officer explained that the underspend of £13m was split across budget areas and that most of those underspends were ones being used to balance the 2025/26 budget. It was also highlighted that an underspend would support ongoing resilience and assist with managing future expected deficits and the 2026/27 financial year planning. The Chief Constable advised that all underspend was planned so the Force was ahead of curve in case of a rise in costs.
- The Chair asked for further details on addressing the identified budget gaps in the future years. The Chief Constable advised that the Government had committed to review the national funding formula which is expected to be as part of the wider policing review possibly within the next 18 months. The budget position would also be affected by the savings anticipated with the national police procurement policy, more income raising opportunities and rationalising the estate.
- The Commissioner advised members that the Estates Strategy was published in 2023 setting out the principles and position on individual buildings. Full details and sales particulars were available on the PCC website. The sales strategy was progressing well. The meeting was informed that Estates Strategy was scheduled to continue till 2028/29 and that it contributed a planned £4.1m savings per year to the current Medium Term Financial Plan. In November last year two buildings were sold, seven were currently for sale. In total there were 18 projects being progressed.
- Members asked for clarity on what was “Connect Capital Expenditure”. Connect was a record management system for recording crime and victim statistics.
- Members also commented on the size of the reserves in section 3.3 of the report and asked about the reality of reserves as it appears that budget gaps would exceed reserves in future years. The Chief Finance Officer clarified the rationale for presenting the reserves picture and budget gap for transparency and highlighted other actions in place to address budget gaps beyond using reserves.
- Members asked about the oversight of the neighbourhood policing guarantee, to which the Commissioner highlighted that the terms and condition for the Neighbourhood Policing Grant had only just been released, and he would be able to report more details at the 24<sup>th</sup> March meeting.

- Clarification was sought on maintaining the mounted unit and the Chief Constable set out the rationale and engagement capabilities. Members were reminded to maintain a focus on strategic matters, and refrain from asking operational policing matters.
- Responding to question as to how the force was managing with 800 less officers, the Chief Constable advised that police officer recruitment and retention rates were good, and the force invested in staff wellbeing, training and occupational health. Changes in structure had sought to manage workloads. The Chief highlighted the success of the Force achieving an 8% reduction in crime figures and for the West Midlands no longer being regarded as an outlier for knife crime.

Following the questions from Members, they were reminded of the three options that they would be able to vote on in relating to the proposed precept. Members voted and agreed that they would endorse the proposed precept without amendments and that for this to be reflected in their report to the Commissioner.

**RESOLVED:-** That the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel endorsed the proposed 2025/26 Policing precept of £229.50 for a Band D property without qualification or comment.

## **870 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER UPDATE REPORT ON RECENT ACTIVITIES AND PUBLISHED KEY DECISIONS**

The Police and Crime Commissioner provided an update on the recent activities and key decisions taken by his Office. Members were informed of public engagement and consultation regarding the precept but that there was also engagement relating to tackling violence against women and girls. Members also heard of the Commissioner's continual campaign for the police funding formula to be re-examined by Central Government. It was explained that this would support with fairer funding across police forces as well as rebuild services such as community policing.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024 there was further information from the government on the one-year grant for the 2025/26 financial year, this was the same as the previous year and would support to fund front line services, the grant amounted to £1.34m in funding. Operation Fearless launched on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 that worked with partners to reduce crime and tackle causality. The operation had initially started in Erdington, Birmingham, but the plan was said to expand across the West Midlands. There had been early indicators of positive from the operation which included greater police presence and feedback that favoured the support for community safety. Members also heard the latest on Operation Snap with the number of submissions being as high as 13,543 people reporting street crimes and offences. As part of Safer Streets 5 there was an additional investment of £1m to support the recruitment of

officers. Following the update from the Commissioner, Members posed the following questions and comments.

- Members welcomed Operation Fearless and Operation SNAP and for the Commissioner for providing current data on the two. The Commissioner welcomed the comments and assured Members that there would be continued investment in these areas for the 2025/26 financial year.
- Members asked about the Victim's Advocate, that the Commissioner is recruiting as part of his team, and whether they would be recruiting just the one post or for two officers. The Commissioner explained that there would be the one post to ensure that the Victim's Code was being implemented by criminal justice agencies.
- Members asked about the sustainability of Operation Fearless and Operation SNAP and commented if there was further work with neighbourhood policing to ensure that the community feels safe and heard. The Commissioner agreed with Members on ensuring the sustainability of the programmes and that they would work with partners to ensure that they were sustainable. Members heard that they would look at best practice in other areas as well as areas for additional funding to provide additional resource to support the operations.
- The Chair informed Members that at a previous meeting there was discussion regarding the Commissioner's oversight of the Chief Constable on tackling discrimination and misogyny within the Police Force and asked the Commissioner if they would be willing to bring on item on this at the March 2025 meeting. The Commissioner agreed to bring a report on this in the March meeting.

Following the update from the Commissioner, Members agreed to note the contents of the report.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report, be noted.

#### **871 REVIEW OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

The Lead Officer for the Panel explained the cover report which detailed their responsibility for reviewing the annual report. This included the Panel's responsibility to write a formal response to the Commissioner with recommendations if the Panel wishes. The Commissioner outlined that the report covered the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The report was laid out in statute under the Social and Police Reform Act that a report must be produced annually and presented to the Police and Crime Panel in draft before it was published. It outlined the duties and responsibilities of the Commissioner as well as the achievements that had been accomplished. The

report would relate to key aims and objectives as part of the Police and Crime Plan for across the West Midlands. The Commissioner thanked Officers for their work over the year as well as the Police and Partners to keep residents safe.

The Deputy Chief Executive for the OPCC summarised the report and highlighted key areas for Members to consider. In June 2023, there was a greater increase in public accountability which allowed members of the public to ask question to the Commissioner and the Chief Constable. The information from these sessions had fed into themes of fairness and belonging; this was followed up with roundtable and survey research to capture more data. In October 2023, there were further conferences urging the public to further engage with the OPCC and to join their scrutiny panels. This was said to be an ongoing piece of work and was to allow provide further opportunities for scrutiny to ensure that there was greater accountability and trust.

The PCC was responsible for monitoring complaints regarding the Police Force. It was noted that complaints had risen by 5% and some of that was accounted for with the new system of recording complaints allowing for a more accurate data collection. The OPCC had 89.8 days to address a complaint. There were currently 104 reviews being conducted as part of this in which they had 26 working days to complete them for the public. Of those 26 reviews, 20 were upheld which led to the dismissal of 39 officers.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that there were 27,384 stop and searches conducted with 29% of outcomes being positive. There was an increase focus of compliance with officers wearing their body cameras and that these would be scrutinised publicly, if the needed required it. Members were also told that after a stop and search was conducted the individual that was searched would be given a QR code to provide feedback on their experience. At the time of the meeting, there was only 2% that had had gave feedback.

Members heard that the Commissioner worked with partners such as the Ministry of Justice and local authorities to support various projects across the West Midlands. There were 61,000 victims supported and there was £6m from the Ministry of justice as part of the perpetrator fund to pilot custody intervention in Sandwell. Members heard that there was an expansion of the community speed watch. This would include three new mobile speed enforcement vans to promote safety.

The Deputy Chief Executive ended the updated by highlighting the campaigns that the Commissioner was involved in over the year. This included a car safety campaign to promote safety for vehicle users. There was a campaign to support victims and to ensure that they were aware of their rights. More

than 400 bleed kits were installed in key priority areas across the region. There was work to highlight fraud and financial crime that warned people of the dangers of fraud and financial crime such as online fraud. Officers welcomed Members comments and their recommendations in response to the report; Members then presented the following questions and comments.

- Members asked about the impact associated with the actions detailed within the report and if it could be made clearer within it. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that in some cases this was not easy to capture as they would want to make sure that the lived experiences were recognised. Surveys and evaluations were utilised to add in statistical information such as the numbers that accessed the victims' services but wanted to ensure that voice was captured accurately too.
- Members asked that the report highlighted a reduction in serious violent offences but wanted more information on how ethnic minority groups would be reflected within the stop and search figures. Officers reassured that this would be reflected within the report.
- Members asked about how the domestic abuse perpetrator programmes could be made mandatory. Officers explained that this was an ongoing issue in which they were working with partners on this since 2018. There was work to secure additional funding from the Home Office to support. Currently, it was heard that the offenders would need to want to be involved in order to be treated and often it was recognised that perpetrators and some agencies were known for victim blaming and these programmes were aimed to change behaviour.
- Members asked about volunteers and how many they were working with. At the time of the meeting there 11 appropriate vulnerable adult volunteers that was quoted by Members and the question focussed on how to support going forward. Officers acknowledged the work of the volunteers but recognised that there was more work that could be done. There were recruitment programmes in place and that there at the time an additional 8 volunteers being trained.
- Members noted the low response rate to the stop and search feedback and asked if the mechanism for receiving the feedback the correct method. The Officers present explained that there was a piece of scrutiny work that the Office was carrying out to determine this and that there would be further data that could be reported at a later data to the panel.
- Members asked about the progress made so far in the report against the Police and Crime Plan and how it would impact areas like road safety. The Commissioner explained that the draft Annual Plan presented to Members was based on the previous Police and Crime

Plan as part of their first term of office. Members were assured that the Commissioner had wrote to the previous Government for further support and that would be further investment into areas like road safety which would be monitored. This followed public consultation that highlighted areas like road safety as a concern and the Commissioner agreed to provide updates to the Panel on this.

- Members highlighted that the number of complaints had increased against the Police Force and asked what the OPCC was doing to address this. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that there had been significant work to address this but highlighted that the increase in numbers highlighted that the current system was more accurate as it allowed for easier recording of complaints to be lodged by the public. There was further work to build up trust amongst the public but also allowed for greater scrutiny and accountability. The statistics of which were presented to the recent Accountability and Governance Board.
- The Chair concluded the discussion by asking if the data presented within the report could be formatted to make it more accessible for the public to read. Officers agreed to note the comment and look at making the report more accessible.

Following the update, Members agreed to note the report with the following recommendation.

**RESOLVED** – that the Panel

1. Reviewed the draft Annual Report for 2023/24 and recommended for the Police and Crime Commissioner and his team review how the data was presented to make it more accessible for the public, and
2. That the Contents of the draft report, be noted.

**872 PANEL WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager provided an update to Members. The next meeting was scheduled for the 24 March 2025, and it would focus on the item proposed by the Panel on the Commissioners oversight of the Chief Constable in tackling discrimination and Misogyny in the Police. There would also be two annual reports on complaints received and the Panel's budget and expenditure.

**RESOLVED**

That the report and work programme, be noted.

**872 NEXT MEETING DATE**

The Chair informed Members that the next meeting was scheduled for the 24 March 2025 at 2pm to take place at Walsall Council. Members were informed

that public questions could be raised four clear working days before the meeting.

**873 URGENT BUSINESS**

Chair raised that this was the last year that Officers from Solihull could provide independent support to the Panel in its scrutiny of the Policing Precept. Officers of the panel would raise this matter with the MET leaders to seek ongoing finance scrutiny support.

Meeting Closed: 16.33 hours.

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CHAIR

**West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Action Tracker – March 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.	<b>Any refresh of the Panel Rules of Procedure to be explored and presented to the Panel AGM, July 2025</b>
858	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>ONGOING</b> Letter sent 05/2/25 Awaiting PCC response
867	03/2/25	<b>PANEL REQUESTED INFORMATION FROM THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO FRAUD</b> The Panel requested information on the Public Health Approach to tackling Fraud.	<b>TO BE DISCHARGED</b>  Report circulated to Members 10/3/25
867	03/2/25	<b>PANEL REQUESTED INFORMATION FROM THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ON THE STATISTICS BETWEEN REDUCTION IN CRIME AND INCREASED STREET LIGHTING</b> The Panel requested recent statistics on the impact of street lighting and the reduction of crime within the region.	<b>ONGOING</b> Letter sent to PCC Awaiting PCC response
867	03/2/25	<b>PANEL REQUESTED STATISTICS ON REOFFENDING RATES IN RELATION TO OFFENDERS THAT WERE RELEASED EARLY</b> The Panel requested if any statistics on the numbers of offenders that had been released early from prison could be shared and if there were any statistics on how many had reoffended.	<b>ONGOING</b> Letter sent to PCC Awaiting PCC response
873	3/2/25	<b>Finance Scrutiny Support for the Panel</b> <b>Officers of the panel would raise this matter with the MET leaders to seek ongoing finance scrutiny support.</b>	<b>ONGOING</b> Report to be presented to Met Leaders in June 2025

## West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

# The Police and Crime Commissioner's oversight of the Chief Constable on tackling discrimination and misogyny in the police'

### **Purpose of report**

1. This report sets out for Panel the approach and activities I and my Office have undertaken in providing oversight of the Chief Constable on tackling discrimination and misogyny within West Midlands Police ("WMP")

### **Expectations and commitments**

2. I expect Police Officers and police staff to adhere to the highest standards of conduct, ethics, integrity and professionalism at all times. There is no place for racism, misogyny, homophobia or unlawful discrimination within WMP. It will not be tolerated. That is absolute, unconditional and non-negotiable.
3. I am committed to ensuring that WMP is anti-racist, anti-misogynist, anti-homophobic and does not tolerate unlawful discrimination. If there are any police officers or police staff that are incapable of grasping, or unwilling to grasp, these basic principles, then they have no place in the police service.
4. That is because, firstly, they are failing to uphold the Declaration for Office of Constable; secondly, they are a serious risk to the public and their colleagues and cannot be trusted with the powers and responsibilities that come with being a police officer; and thirdly, they are undermining the police service and the vast majority of police officers who are professional, committed and dedicated to preventing crime, protecting people in need and helping the vulnerable.

5. The principles of diversity, inclusion, fairness, justice, equality and human rights are the basics, if WMP are to build trust and confidence and police by consent. The implementation of these principles is a top priority for me and whilst I am Police and Crime Commissioner, they will always be a top priority for WMP as well. That includes ensuring that regard is had to the Public Sector Duty, pursuant to s.149 Equality Act 2010.
6. I am holding WMP to account, to ensure it complies with vetting procedures, performance manages officers and staff and deals with complaints and misconduct. I am committed to constant and unremitting action to hold WMP to account, to ensure that the recommendations set out in the National Report of HMICFRS, on Vetting, Misconduct and Misogyny, published in November 2022, are implemented and in particular, unsuitable people are prevented from joining in the first place, any misconduct within the force is identified, and officers and staff are dismissed, if they are not fit to serve the public.
7. Since I was first elected in May 2021 and then re-elected in May 2024, I have been committed to implementing these principles. The role of a Police and Crime Commissioner, includes setting the strategic direction for the Force and holding the Chief Constable and the Force to account.
8. I have been taking action, with the aim of promoting diversity and inclusion and equality of opportunity within WMP, which includes protecting women in the Force and eliminating misogynistic, sexual and predatory behaviour.
9. The aims, commitments and priorities I have established for WMP are set out in my Police and Crime 2021-2025, and will be further developed and re-stated in my new Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029, which was considered by Panel in January 2025 and will be formally launched on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025.
10. The current Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025, makes clear my intention to hold WMP to account and work with the Chief Constable to:  
Monitor disproportionality within the West Midlands Police Force, with a view to increase the representativeness of the force across the following:
  - Workforce
  - Recruitment
  - Retention
  - Progression
11. A small number of individuals' conduct falls below required standards, including crossing the threshold into abuse of power, corruption, misconduct and illegality. For such cases, I published my clear intentions to ensure a strong professional standards department and I hold the Chief Constable to account for:
  - Vetting, personnel review processes, and proactive professional standards approaches that identify risk, including corruption and harmful behaviors

- A joined-up process that ensures concerns expressed by policing colleagues are taken seriously
  - Particular attention to the threat posed by officers and staff who abuse their position of authority for sexual gain
  - A focus on complaints concerning discrimination and sexual misconduct
  - Diverse, high quality and well trained legally qualified people and independent members sitting on police misconduct hearings
12. My new Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029 is about to be published, following an extensive and wide-ranging consultation process and having been considered and approved by the Panel in January 2025. This will be my second Plan. It provides commitments to ensure the highest standards of conduct, ethics, integrity and professionalism within WMP.
13. I have informed the Chief Constable, that I expect a culture of continuous improvement, open to challenge and learning from others, encouraging the building of mentoring relationships between new and experienced officers. I will encourage active participation, to enhance workplace culture and ensure all officers and staff feel heard. Poor performance and misconduct must be managed effectively through formal structures, with support for improvement, if appropriate, but dismissal if necessary, so as to maintain the highest standards of service to the public.
14. Racism, misogyny, homophobia, violence against women and girls, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, abuse of power and all forms of unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated. I encourage all officers and staff to challenge and change such behaviours and to be upstanders and not bystanders. I expect WMP to continue to implement the lessons learned from its review of firearms policing more widely across the force, in order to drive continuous improvement in professional standards.
15. Over the next four years it will be my published commitment to:
- Ensure that WMP takes strategic responsibility to prevent, tackle and eliminate racism, misogyny, homophobia and all forms of unlawful discrimination
  - Ensure that individual WMP officers and staff receive relevant training and take personal responsibility to prevent, tackle and eliminate racism, misogyny, homophobia and all forms of unlawful discrimination
  - Ensure that WMP is more representative of the people and communities it serves by increasing the percentage of Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers and police staff from under-represented groups, including women and racially minoritised people
  - Understand, address and challenge disproportionality in stop and search and wider use of force
  - Ensure WMP implements the National and West Midlands Police Race Action Plans

## **Holding to Account: Accountability and Governance Board (“AGB”)**

16. I use various mechanisms, in order to hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of WMP, against all of the commitments set out above. These include:

### Public reports and discussions at my AGB

17. Since May 2021, I have received annual reports to my Strategic Policing and Crime Board and since my re-election in May 2024 to my AGB, on the work of the Professional Standards Department (“PSD”). These reports have been presented to me at public meetings and the reports were published on my website, to ensure absolute transparency. The most recent discussion was on 22 October 2024, when it was reported that:

- A new network of over 100 Standards Ambassadors has been established across the force. The ambassadors are volunteers at different ranks and roles, who have shown an interest to improve and drive professional standards of behaviour in their areas. There are quarterly learning events for the ambassadors hosted by PSD and this also provides an opportunity to improve the approach of PSD, using feedback via the ambassadors
- A new Integrity Unit was established in March 2024 within PSD. This team is responsible for assessing, managing and reviewing the organisational risk posed from staff. This team work to understand risk, impose and manage risk management measures to ensure high standards, deter misconduct and maintain public trust and confidence.
- In line with vetting professional practice, the Casey Review and the Angiolini inquiry recommendations, continuous re-vetting takes place, vetting reviews follow misconduct proceedings and vetting reviews follow receipt of adverse information about staff.
- We are encouraging more use of accelerated misconduct hearings, to deal with matters of gross misconduct cases, where behaviours are admitted or evidence presented is incontrovertible. These hearings are much quicker and enable rogue Police Officers to be swiftly removed from the service.
- We have increased our commitment to suspend officers from duty, in cases of gross misconduct.
- Over the past two years there has been significant investment in resources for PSD. PSD now have 104 members of staff, which is an increase of 35 when compared to 2021.

### HMICFRS Inspection of national vetting, misogyny and misconduct, November 2022

18. The Inspection led to 43 recommendations and 5 identified areas for improvement. I have overseen Force progress in implementing these recommendations and as at October 2024, two recommendations remained outstanding.

### Recorded Conduct Cases

19. Both the Chief Constable and I have promoted a robust approach to Police Officer misconduct and have encouraged an open approach to reporting incidents. This has resulted in greater confidence in the reporting mechanisms and increases in the number of conduct matters being recorded.

2021 – 22: 138 conduct cases recorded  
2022 – 23: 240 conduct cases recorded  
2023 – 24: 343 conduct cases recorded

20. There has been 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.

21. Other regular mechanisms I use to maintain effective oversight of professional standards and behaviours in the Force include:

- Weekly meetings with the Chief Constable to discuss current and strategic issues
- Quarterly oversight meetings with the Head of the Professional Standards Department
- Quarterly discussions with the Regional Director of the IOPC, to discuss the performance and culture of WMP.

## **Firearms Operations Unit (“FOU”)**

22. I acted to increase my oversight of the management and culture within the FOU. In addition to multiple discussions with the Chief Constable, a formal agenda item took place in public at the SPCB in November 2023. Information relating to that meeting is available on my website. The Force had established a Gold Command Group called Operation Alma, in order to respond to the serious allegations that had been raised and to directly address the cultural issues within the FOU. In order to ensure the efficiency of Operation Alma, my Internal Audit Committee undertook an audit of Op Alma.

23. When recruiting, specialist departments are considering the bespoke support they can provide to increase and support underrepresented individuals to join the team. For example, the Regional Organised Crime Unit have conducted research into positive changes they can make to their recruitment processes, to attract candidates from underrepresented groups. For example, one matter they noted was that candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds, who do just as well at interview and assessment stage as everyone else, were being disproportionately sifted out at the initial paper sift stage.

24. Staff Associations are engaged within the recruitment for specialist departments and are promoting opportunities within their networks.

## **Diverse Workforce**

25. It is my publicly stated aim, that I want to see a West Midlands Police Force that is representative of the people and communities that it serves. I am committed to monitoring disproportionality within the West Midlands Police Force, with a view to improving and increasing diversity and inclusion and equality of opportunity within the force, in terms of recruitment, retention and progression.
26. I am committed to ensuring that WMP eliminates any and all unlawful discrimination during promotion processes, promotes equality of opportunity and that a diverse and inclusive cohort of officers are enabled to rise to senior ranks. In the past 12 months, officers being promoted were representative of the overall workforce.

## **Pension Forfeitures**

27. In the small number of cases where Officers abuse their position of trust to break the law, I have applied the Police Pension Regulations and have used my pension forfeiture powers, for instance where officers have committed serious offences in connection with their service.
28. In 2024 I forfeited 25% of the pension from an ex-officer, who was found guilty of corrupt or other improper exercise of Police Powers and Privileges. In this case the ex-officer had committed a serious offence, in gross breach of trust, against a vulnerable woman. Following my decision, the ex-officer pursued an appeal to court, which I opposed. I am pleased to say that my pension forfeiture decision was upheld by the court and the former officer's appeal was dismissed.
29. This illustrates my determination to use all the powers available to me, to deal with officers guilty of gross misconduct, particularly those cases which involve the inappropriate abuse of power or position.

## **Dialogue with Staff Associations and Trade Union representatives**

30. Throughout my time as Police and Crime Commissioner, I have regularly invited each staff association and trade union to take part in an open discussion with me, to raise whatever issues are of concern to their membership. This is an invaluable way for my team and I to understand issues of concern to Staff Associations, Trade Unions and their members.

## **Public Facing Work**

31. In addition to the activity outlined above, I have engaged with the public and media. By way of example, I draw your attention to the matters set out below:
  - [PCC signs pledge to make Birmingham anti-racist - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)
  - [White Ribbon Day: PCC commends work of VRP as violence against women and girls sees 10% drop - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)

- The PCC's statement on Employment Tribunal: [PCC statement - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/pcc-statement-west-midlands-police-crime-commissioner)
- The Fairness and Belonging Conference: [Fairness and Belonging event shines light on diversity work - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/fairness-and-belonging-event-shines-light-on-diversity-work-west-midlands-police-crime-commissioner)
- The PCC's statement on the Casey Review: [PCC Statement on Casey Review - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/pcc-statement-on-casey-review-west-midlands-police-crime-commissioner)

## **Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse**

32. Preventing, tackling and reducing violence against women and girls and domestic abuse is a top priority for me in my Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025 and will remain a top priority in my new Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029. That is because of the catastrophic and devastating consequences for victims and survivors. I set out below a summary, of just some of the action I have been taking, to prevent, tackle and reduce violence against women and girls and domestic abuse.
33. I was the first Police and Crime Commissioner in the country to appoint a Victims Commissioner. It was the Victims Commissioner's role, to ensure that the rights and welfare of victims are always at the forefront of policing and the criminal justice system. I will shortly be appointing a new Victims Advocate, to ensure that the rights and welfare of victims are always at the forefront of policing and the criminal justice system.
34. I commission victim support services within the West Midlands, many of which are to safeguard the rights and welfare of victims and survivors of VAWG and domestic abuse. I have significantly increased the number of Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and Independent Sexual Violence Advocates in the West Midlands; I have implemented and obtained further funding for an Early Awareness Stalking Intervention Project; I established a Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme.
35. I have invested in safer streets, including street lighting, movable CCTV, securing access ways and alley ways; established campaigns to challenge and change men's attitudes towards women; rolled out Time to Talk to 60 schools, to provide education to boys about healthy relationships and respect; a training programme to raise awareness of the harm faced by homeless women and sex workers; and new designs to make our public spaces safer.
36. I have launched campaigns over Christmas and the New Year, based on No Excuse for Abuse, to encourage victims of domestic abuse not to suffer in silence, but to access the help and support available. This includes a dedicated website, with advice and guidance to victims of domestic abuse.
37. My Office and I have also campaigned to encourage men to be upstanders for women's safety and not bystanders to abuse, intimidation and violence, so as to ensure that women's safety is everyone's responsibility. I launched a video campaign on social media, highlighting the need to prevent and tackle the abuse, harassment, alarm, distress and intimidation experienced by women, whilst out exercising in public spaces.

38. I launched the Here and Now campaign, to encourage all men and boys to have important conversations with their peers about the need to end violence against women and girls. Within the West Midlands Safer Travel Plan, we have a focus on preventing and tackling abuse towards women and that includes Project Empower, to encourage the reporting of unwanted sexual behaviour on the public transport network.

39. I also established an Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls Alliance, with the aim of driving and promoting the essential partnership work that is required between statutory bodies and the third sector, across the West Midlands, if we are to end male violence against women and girls. I am also working with WMP and other criminal justice partners, to improve the action that is taken to ensure that victims of rape and other sexual offences obtain access to justice and are safeguarded.

## **Conclusion**

40. The matters set out above, illustrate my commitment and dedication to protecting women and to addressing any and all VAWG, domestic abuse, misogyny, sexual and predatory behaviour within WMP and the wider West Midlands. This has been a top priority for me, throughout my time as Police and Crime Commissioner and as is evidenced by the clear commitments in my Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029, will remain a top priority over the course of my term.

## **Financial implications**

41. None

## **Legal implications**

42. None

## **Recommendations**

43. That Panel note the contents of this report.

# Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

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

**Date: 24 March 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 3 February 2025.

### 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

**Date: Monday 24 March 2025**

## **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 3 February 2025.

For a more detailed round up of action the Commissioner has been taking, since the previous Police and Crime Panel on 3 February, 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)

## **PCC Update**

### **Reopening of My Community Fund**

I have once again made £330,000 available to community groups and organisations, who want to make a real difference where they live and to improve people's lives.

At the beginning of February, I officially launched the My Community Fund for 2025/2026, which will see the allocation of up to £5,000 of funding to local groups and organisations, to help them prevent crime and promote community safety in their neighbourhoods. The deadline for the first round of applications closed on Friday the 14 of March 2025

The money, which is proceeds of crime that police have seized from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, will be allocated to organisations that want to invest in crime prevention and promote community safety.

The My Community Fund has been set up to support locally based projects, which aim to make a positive difference and to make the West Midlands a safer place to live, learn and work.

Last year, anti-knife crime charity Birmingham Says No were just one of more than 50 groups who received a proportion of the PCC's £330,000. It enabled them to help aspiring rappers, aged between 14 and 21, to work in a professional music studio and to make their own music videos with the help of industry experts.

Up to £5,000 will be allocated to each group who apply for the My Community Fund. Each bid is considered, having regard to the other work already funded, through my

Prevention and Intervention funds and Violence Reduction Partnership and my Police and Crime Plan.

### **Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee**

I welcome the announcement by the Government of an extra £100 million of funding for neighbourhood policing. This additional funding, follows the initial £100 million pledged by the government to local policing in December 2024. That total £200 million will mean an additional £12.2 million for the West Midlands.

I am working with the Chief Constable, to ensure that we are able to deliver as many additional police officers for neighbourhood policing as we possibly can.

Continuing to rebuild neighbourhood policing is my top priority. I committed to rebuilding neighbourhood policing, when I was first elected on May 2021. I re-committed to that in my first Police and Crime Plan and when I was re-elected in May 2024. I did that because we need accessible, reassuring and visible policing out on the streets, keeping people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure.

We are therefore ahead of the game in the West Midlands, when it comes to rebuilding neighbourhood policing. However, there is more to do, to ensure that the people of the West Midlands have the neighbourhood policing they are entitled to.

That is why my new Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029, will include a Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, that will aim to continue to rebuild neighbourhood policing, to ensure the people of the region have the neighbourhood policing they are entitled to and need, to prevent and tackle crime, promote community safety and improve the quality of life for everyone in the West Midlands.

### **Victim's Support Fund**

I have made more than £100,000 available to organisations across the West Midlands, that provide support to victims and survivors of "hidden" crime.

I encouraged organisations to submit applications for a new round of funding, if they are helping victims and survivors recover from so-called hidden and harmful crimes committed against them. Applications were submitted up to the 28 of February 2025.

Whilst there's £110,000 available, individual grants are capped at £20,000 per organisation and tend to be aimed at smaller organisations and charities. The funding is awarded as a one-off grant.

This year, the fund will consider applications from organisations working to support victims of hidden harmful practices which include female genital mutilation, so-called honour-based abuse, forced marriage and human trafficking. I want to shine a light on these harmful practices which despite being hidden, have an immense and long-lasting impact on the victim.

The rights and welfare of victims of crime must always be a top priority. In the West Midlands we have a track record of doing all we can to help victims and survivors, and successful applications in the past have helped to pay for a 24-hour helpline to support victims of forced marriage and honour-based abuse. This funding will make a real difference to people who need it most.

### **Investment in Policing**

I will be investing a record level £174 million into policing for the West Midlands in 2025/2026.

This will mean that the total net revenue budget for West Midlands Police, including national police grant, will amount to £790 million and comes following my public engagement survey and my appearance before the Police and Crime Panel on Monday the 3 of February 2025. A total of 66% of people who responded to the public engagement survey supported the proposal. The Panel has also unanimously supported the budget, precept and investment plan.

As the democratically elected Police and Crime Commissioner, my top priority is to provide West Midlands Police with the resources it needs to prevent and tackle crime, promote community safety and keep the people of the West Midlands safe and secure.

In return for that investment, I will be holding West Midlands Police to account and working with the Chief Constable to ensure that West Midlands Police does all within its power, to prevent and tackle crime, promote community safety and keep the people of the West Midlands safe and secure.

For far too long, central government has failed to provide the police officers and investment that West Midlands Police needs. That is why we still have 700 fewer police officers and 500 fewer PCSOs than in 2010 and unfair funding that means £40 million a year less than we are entitled to.

I am committed to doing all within my power, to ensure that West Midlands Police has the investment and resources it needs to prevent and tackle crime, promote community safety and keep the people of the West Midlands safe and secure.

### **Action to Recover Stolen Vehicles**

A Porsche super car is among more than 200 stolen vehicles that have been seized from criminals in a £1.8 million crackdown, thanks to collaborative work between myself and West Midlands Police.

I have made a five-figure investment available to tackle vehicle thefts across the region. This recent funding boost is a direct response to vehicle thefts having previously risen in the West Midlands, from 11,990 incidents in 2021 to 16,232 in 2023. However, recently-published data has shown that vehicle crime has reduced by more than 10% in the West Midlands across a 12-month period.

This new funding, meanwhile, has enabled West Midlands Police to significantly enhance its resources dedicated to recovering stolen vehicles and bringing offenders

to justice. This intensified action, under Operation Vantor, has already yielded substantial results, with 27 stolen vehicles recovered across a 16-day period, with a combined market value of £527,250. Among the recovered vehicles is a high-profile Porsche 911 GT3, valued at £140,000.

The recent recovery haul takes the total number of stolen vehicles seized to over 200 since Operation Vantor first commenced in May 2024. The combined value of stolen cars that have been recovered, is now estimated to be around £1.8 million.

The funding has been instrumental in supporting proactive policing operations, intelligence gathering, and the use of advanced technology to track and locate stolen vehicles. West Midlands Police is working tirelessly to dismantle organised crime groups involved in vehicle theft and resale, often linked to other serious offences.

### **Investing in Speed Enforcement**

I have made a six-figure investment, that has enabled West Midlands Police to double its fleet of mobile speed enforcement camera vans. It means that enforcement can take place at even more hot spot locations across the West Midlands, to help put the brakes on speeding drivers.

I have invested £130,000 to purchase three new speed camera vans and approved additional funding for a fourth worth £58,000, to double the number of speed enforcement vehicles from 4 to 8 in total. It is important to understand that this is only part of the West Midlands wide strategy and action plan.

I consider preventing and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and reducing the number of people tragically and avoidably killed and seriously injured on our roads to be a top priority. Together with other West Midlands partners, I have pledged to work with partners, to halve the number of people killed and seriously injured on West Midlands roads by 2030.

West Midlands Police and I are continuing to urge members of the public to play their part in making our roads safer, by submitting footage of dangerous driving to Operation Snap. Every piece of evidence submitted is reviewed by officers and, where appropriate, enforcement action will be taken, to deal with careless, dangerous and reckless driving.

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

The following key decisions have been published by the Police and Crime Commissioner since the 3 February 2025.

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

### **4 February 2025**

[Decision 007-2025 – Lease of Warehouse - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) – This is decision is a confidential matter; no documents have been published.

[Decision 008-2025: Contract Award for the Provision of Laundry and Dry Cleaning Services - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) – This is decision is a confidential matter; no documents have been published.

[Decision 009-2025: Sale of Bradford Street Police Building - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) – This is decision is a confidential matter; no documents have been published.

[Decision 010-2025: Fees and Charges due from February 4 2025 - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) - Decision to approve fees and charges to be made by West Midlands Police for services provided from 4 February 2025 to 31 December 2025. Decision record can be downloaded

### **13 February 2025**

[Decision 011-2025 – Sale of Canley Police Station - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) – This is decision is a confidential matter; no documents have been published.

### **28 February 2025**

[Decision 012-2025 - 2025/26 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan \(MTFP\) 2025/26 to 2029/30 - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) – This decision sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner's 2025/26 Revenue Budget, Precept and Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30 and MTFP to 2029/30. Decision record can be downloaded

### **4 March 2025**

[Decision 013-2025 – Integrated Ballistics Identifications System \(IBIS\) – Support and Maintenance - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) – This is decision is a confidential matter; no documents have been published.

[Decision 014-2025 – Combined Insurance - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) – This decision is a confidential matter; no documents have been published.

[Decision 015-2025 - Lloyd House Purchase - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner](#) - This decision sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner's purchase of Lloyd House. Decision record can be downloaded

# Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

## Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Update Report on Recent Activities

**Date: 24 March 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 and their team.
- 1.2 The Panel is invited to consider the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner's update report (attached as Appendix A) detailing the activities the Deputy Commissioner and his team have been engaged in.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Police and Crime Panel notes the attached update prepared by the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.**

### 3 Finance Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications relating to the recommendation in this report.

### 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.

### 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 report by the Deputy Commissioner.

## **6 Appendices**

6.1 Appendix A – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Activity Update.



## 1. Police and Crime Panel Update: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025

### 2. Purpose

As requested, I have set out below a summary of the many activities that I have been engaged in since I was appointed, as well as a list of my portfolio responsibilities.

### 3. General Update

#### (A) MP and Government Engagement

I have supported Members of Parliament by providing briefings on the work of the OPCC, helping to promote our initiatives and ensuring that key recommendations and requests are considered in decision-making at a national level. Additionally, I accompanied the Home Secretary during a visit to Wolverhampton, representing the OPCC and highlighting our work in the region.

#### (B) My Community Fund

The PCC makes money available to support communities in the West Midlands who want to make My Community a safer place to live and work. The purpose of the My Community Fund is to encourage local people to bring forward ideas which reflect their local knowledge and understanding of how to improve community safety.

The fund has undergone significant changes to make it more transparent, community-focused, and inclusive. By rebranding and improving its governance, we now have stronger oversight, ensuring that decisions are made fairly and in partnership with key stakeholders. The new panel format means that funding decisions are not just made internally but involve community representatives and local partners who understand the needs of their areas. This ensures that the fund directly benefits grassroots projects, helping to create safer, more resilient neighbourhoods.

#### (C) Fire Authority

I attend Fire Authority meetings on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), ensuring that policing interests are represented in discussions around public safety and emergency response.

#### (D) Public Engagement

Attending events across the region is a key part of my role, whether engaging directly with communities or representing the Commissioner. These events provide an opportunity to talk about our work, listen to public concerns, and build relationships with local residents and organisations

## **(E) Working with Communities**

I have worked closely with communities across the region to build trust and confidence, particularly in response to the violent disorder over the summer. This has involved engaging with local groups, faith leaders, and grassroots organisations to listen to concerns and ensure communities feel heard and supported. A key focus has also been working with organisations that support new arrivals, helping them settle and integrate into local life while addressing any policing or safety concerns they may have.

## **(F) Supporting and Holding to Account**

### Accountability and Governance Board

As a member of the Accountability and Governance Board, I support the Commissioner in holding West Midlands Police accountable. This involves reviewing police performance, scrutinising key decisions, and ensuring transparency in policing practices. This also ensures the force is efficiently and effectively working towards the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan.

I am an active member and make regular and significant contributions to the monthly AGB meeting. I lead of key scrutiny areas on behalf of the PCC which led to productive debates with the Force Executive Team, including the topics of:

- **Firearms Licensing (25<sup>th</sup> February 2025)**

Given the announced increases in firearms licensing fees, please can the Chief Constable provide details of:

1. How much additional income the increase in fees is expected to generate, all things being equal?
2. The new "net" cost of the joint firearms licensing function, given the anticipated additional income?
3. How the performance of our joint firearms licensing function compares to that seen elsewhere?
4. What information is available on the potential national Service Level Agreement for firearms licensing?

- **Tipton NHT (28<sup>th</sup> January 2025)**

In September 2024, operational changes to the Tipton NHT, began to parade from West Bromwich and not Tipton. Advised this would have no impact on response times or visibility in the neighbourhood and that this operational change was a trial, pending review.

Can you confirm that response times in the Tipton area have not worsened and that crime has not increased? In your view, was the trial a success and if so, why was it a success and will it continue?

Response:

- The trial lasted two weeks and was stopped due to operational reasons.
- WMP confirmed there was no impact.
- WMP advised contacting local neighbour inspector for additional details on this local decision.

- **Female Officer Recruitment (28<sup>th</sup> January 2025)**

At Accountability and Governance Board on 26 November 2024, the Chief Constable advised that whilst female officer recruitment was down that quarter, it was unlikely to remain low, and was expected to pick up.

Can the Chief Constable advise whether this has occurred, and if so, what worked well to return numbers to previous levels, and if this has not happened, what actions taken?

Response:

- There was minor impact, with the figures for the year-end. The total was 39.3% vs 2023 figures of 41.3%.
- Recruitment marketing took place over the Christmas period and into the new year. 432 applications were received. 44.7% of those applications were from potential female officer recruits. An increase to the numbers from last year.
- There are no specific actions as trends remain similar to previous years.

• **Night Time Economy (17<sup>th</sup> December 2024)**

What plans and preparations do WMP have in place with local authorities and licensed premises to ensure our Night Time Economy (NTE) is safe and welcoming across Christmas and New Year?

Response:

- Operation Silent Night is underway and will run until new year to ensure a safe night time environment.
- The number of Officers on duty during the Christmas/ New Year period will not increase. However, Officer visibility will increase and Operation Advance will ensure consistent foot patrols with partners to address vagrancy.
- The Force is working with licensing partners and licensees across the city to improve safety, alongside the safe space at Arcadian.
- The Force is continuously reviewing and testing licensed premises ensuring campaigns such as Ask Angela are positively enforced.
- Special Constables are provided with additional training to ensure security staff in city centres and at Christmas Markets have appropriate levels of training/ awareness.
- A key priority is to ensure that the night time economy is vibrant and safe.

• **Drug and Drink Driving (17<sup>th</sup> December 2024)**

How will WMP and partners address the threat posed by drug and drink driving over the Christmas, New Year, and Winter period?

Response:

- There is a national Christmas campaign to address the threat posed by drug and drink driving in the festive period.
- The campaign is organised by the Roads Policing Team and incorporated into Operation Advance.
- Previous campaigns have resulted in impressive arrest/ success rates.
- WMP also invest in an awareness campaign highlighting the consequences of drug/drink driving as a deterrence. Furthermore, WMP to embrace technology advancements with provision in place to avail themselves with new equipment ie. advanced breathalyser devices.

• **Retail Crime (22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024)**

Given the significant increase in police recorded retail crime over the previous 12 months, not only within the West Midlands, but across the country:

1. What factors have been driving this increase;

2. What steps have West Midlands Police been taking whether locally, regionally or nationally, to prevent and tackle this, whether by disruption and enforcement or by working with retailers and other partners?
3. What more needs to be done to prevent and tackle retail crime?

Response:

- There has been a sharp increase in reported retail crime in the West Midlands and nationally. Only an estimated 42% of all retail crime is reported to police.
- There are a number of contributions to the increase, including: the cost of living crisis, availability of goods within stores and other external factors. The new LPA operating model means officers are attending more shop lifting offences. This is consequently encouraging shop owners to report crimes.
- Communities are becoming more confident in that it is being reported locally and responded to quickly.
- Prison capacity is at maximum. While it is not a policing role to comment on criminal justice outcomes, it is the case that many of those convicted for shop lifting offences will not be given a custodial sentence. Alternative outcomes advocated by the PCC are a positive alternative.
- The Force are focussing on attendance times to ensure that the grade is right when there is an offender detained within the store and because actions within the first few hours of offending massively impact outcomes. Investigations are relatively straightforward due to availability of CCTV, witnesses, etc.
- Retail crime/shoplifting is treated much more seriously than it was 18 months to 2 years ago.
- Shoplifting is a standard agenda item at the Force's performance day. Recording levels have now plateaued. Encourage the public, shopworkers, store owners and store managers to report incidents.
- Data indicates that serious and organised crime is not a driving factor behind the increase in shoplifting.
- The discrepancy in positive outcome rates across the Force is being addressed. It is largely attributed to different levels of innovation by local authorities working in conjunction with the Force and PCC, leading to better positive outcome rates.

- **Road Safety (24<sup>th</sup> September 2024)**

What action is West Midlands Police taking to prevent and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour on our roads and reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads?

Response:

- This is a local concern, and both the Chief Constable and neighbourhood inspectors are regularly briefed. The number of resources has been increased so that traffic officers can focus on the roads. In addition, there is a focus on areas where there have been a lot of collisions, as well as education. Enforcement has increased, which has required an increase in the ticketing capacity.
- Road awareness courses are no longer out-sourced, and they are now held in community venues.
- Work continues with local authorities in order to have a common agreement and approach, and will facilitate better partnership working. This will enable more data sharing between organisations.
- There has been investment in equipment such as Stingers, as well as investment in the roads policing team. There is also a focus on anti-social use

of off-road bikes and quad bikes, with a team available to respond to such issues.

- An investment has taken place to enable a response to the reports submitted by members of the public from their own camera footage. The majority of such reports are investigated.

- **Prison Releases (24<sup>th</sup> September 2024)**

What action does West Midlands Police take, in collaboration with the probation service and other agencies, to monitor and supervise people released from prison, particularly those considered to have a high risk of reoffending, so as to ensure public safety?

Response:

- This question partly to the early release scheme, which has provided relief to the system. Community officers do a lot of visits and monitoring, as well as probation support.
- MAPPA support is well-established, and helps with the decision making that certain prisoners are not suitable for early release.
- The bulge in the system has resulted in a high demand for electronic tags. The Force is working with the Company to ensure this demand is met.
- Any breaches of conditions are closely monitored.
- Local authorities have been impacted, most notably due to the increased demand for housing. The councils and probation are working closely to solve this, but we cannot be certain that every released individual has appropriate housing.

## **(G) Recruitment and Selection**

### Advisory Panel

In September 2024, the new Advisory Panel was launched by the PCC where thirty members were appointed to work alongside him during his term in office.

I instrumentally led on recruitment of the Advisory Panel, selecting members that were right for the role and would be able to deliver the most significant contributions and support to the PCC. This has created a strong and independent Panel that meets regularly and supports the PCC, providing critical thinking and expertise that will help support him when holding West Midlands Police to account.

### Assistant Chief Constable and Victim's Advocate

I have also played an active role in helping select Assistant Chief Constables and the new Victim's Advocate. This ensures that those in key positions reflect the values of fairness, inclusivity, and community engagement.

## **(H) Development of Police and Crime Plan**

I have attended various events to support the development of the Police and Crime Plan, ensuring that it reflects the priorities and concerns of the people it serves.

## **(I) Recognition and Civic Engagement**

I have attended the Chief Constable's Awards, celebrating the dedication and hard work of officers and staff. Additionally, I have represented the OPCC at civic events across the region, strengthening relationships with local leaders and community figures.

## **(J) Casework Management**

I have worked closely with business support teams to ensure that casework is handled efficiently, keeping case volume low and maintaining response times within the set

timescales. This ensures that community concerns and individual cases are dealt with promptly and effectively.

#### **4. Portfolio Responsibilities**

I have regular meetings with the Chief Executive and other members of OPCC Staff to progress work on my portfolio. This includes the below responsibilities:

**Local Policing Engagement** – Supporting and accompanying OPCC staff during Local Policing Area (LPA) visits and meetings with local authorities.

**Youth Commissioners Programme** – Supporting young people in influencing policing policy and attending key meetings and events.

**West Midlands Police Cadets** – Visiting and supporting cadet units after their relaunch to encourage youth participation in policing.

**Young People Portfolio** – Engaging with initiatives such as the VRP Youth Assembly, Young Combined Authority, My Tomorrow, and Change Makers.

**Acquisitive Crime Portfolio** – Working with stakeholders, including car manufacturers, to tackle acquisitive crime.

**Use of Police Powers** – Attending Stop and Search and Use of Force panels, ensuring fair and proportionate policing.

**Stop and Search Commission** – Chairing the commission to review and improve stop-and-search practices.

**Safer Detention** – Attending Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) and Appropriate Adult (AA) meetings, supporting recruitment, and accompanying ICVs on visits.

**Diversity and Inclusion** – Participating in the Fairness and Belonging programme to promote equity within policing.

**Second Chances Charter** – Engaging with employers to encourage them to support rehabilitation and second chances.

**Building Blocks** – Acting as a trustee to support and develop this initiative.

**My Community Fund** – Chairing the decision-making panel to ensure fair and impactful distribution of funds.



## **Report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Police and Crime Panel Annual Complaints Monitoring – March 2024 – March 2025**

**Date: 24 March 2025**

Report of: Tom Senior, Acting Lead for Law and Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, 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 This report provides an annual update on the handling of complaints made against the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Deputy PCC under the Police and Crime Panel's Complaints Procedures. This report covers the period March 2024 – March 2025.

### **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 **That the annual update on administration of West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Complaint Procedure be noted.**

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 The Panel has a statutory responsibility under the [Elected Local Policing Bodies \(Complaints and Misconduct\) Regulations 2012](#) for handling complaints made against the West Midlands PCC and Deputy PCC, and for informally resolving non-criminal complaints, and any complaints or conduct matters that are referred back to the Panel by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).
- 3.2 In October 2012, the Panel approved its complaints procedure based on the Regulations and following further guidance from the Home Office, agreed in January 2013 to delegate all complaint handling responsibilities to the Birmingham City Council Monitoring Officer. Birmingham City Council's Scrutiny team supports the Monitoring Officer in this function.
- 3.3 The Panel further agreed to an annual complaint monitoring report to update Members on the complaints that have been dealt with by the Monitoring Officer on its behalf. This report advises Members on the number of complaints received

and provides a summary of any actions taken. Details of the complaint, complainant and case files will remain confidential.

#### 4 The Panel's Complaints Procedure

- 4.1 A copy of the Panel's Complaints procedure is attached as Appendix 1. The Panel's complaints procedure and an online complaint form is also available on the Panel website [www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk)
- 4.2 Upon receipt of a complaint, the Monitoring Officer first determines whether it falls within the remit of the Panel's complaints procedure and makes a recording decision.
- 4.3 The Panel's complaints procedures cover complaints about the conduct of the PCC and Deputy PCC. The procedures do not cover complaints about operational policing matters, the Chief Constable, PCC staff or complaints about the outcome of a police complaints review conducted by the PCC.
- 4.4 The Monitoring Officer is required to forward any 'serious' complaint it receives against the PCC or Deputy PCC to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). The definition of a 'serious' complaint is 'a qualifying complaint made about conduct which constitutes or involves, or appears to constitute or involve, the commission of a criminal offence'.
- 4.5 Non-criminal recorded complaints are subject to an 'informal resolution' process. Informal resolution is a way of dealing with a complaint by solving, explaining, clearing up or settling the matter directly with the complainant, without investigation or formal proceedings. The regulations also permit the Monitoring Officer to 'dis-apply' the informal resolution process, should the complaint fall into particular categories outlined in the Regulations.

#### 5 Summary of Complaint Activity - March 2024 – March 2025

- 5.1 A summary of complaints activity between March 2024 and March 2025 is set out in tables 1 and 2 below.

**Table 1: Potential complaints against the PCC**

<b>Total potential complaints received</b>	<b>7</b>
Not recorded as a complaint - beyond the remit of the Panel's complaints procedure	4
Recorded as a complaint and progressed to Informal Resolution	3 These complaints are ongoing
Recorded as a serious complaint	0

**Table 2: Potential complaints against the Deputy PCC**

<b>Total potential complaints received</b>	<b>0</b>
--------------------------------------------	----------

## **6 Implications**

### **Finance implications**

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

### **Legal Implications**

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

### **Equalities Implications**

- 6.3 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 6.4 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## **7 Appendices**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Complaints Procedure

## **8 Background Papers**

Report and Minutes from Police and Crime Panel 30 September 2013

Report and Minutes from Police and Crime Panel 19 January 2015

## **West Midlands Police and Crime Panel Complaints and Misconduct Procedure**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This procedure has been developed to ensure compliance with the elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”) issued under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (“the Act”). It set out the process and responsibilities for dealing with complaints about the conduct of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC). Nothing in this procedure overrules the provisions of those Regulations.

### **2.0 Role of Panel under the Regulations**

- 2.1 The West Midlands Police and Crime Panel (“the Panel”) has a statutory responsibility under the Regulations for handling complaints regarding the non-criminal behaviour of the PCC and DPCC, and for informally resolving such complaints. In addition, the Panel is responsible for recording and referring Serious Complaints and Conduct Matters to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and dealing with any such complaints the IOPC refers back to the Panel.
- 2.2 There are separate procedures for complaints about operational policing matters, complaints about the Chief Constable and other police officers, and complaints about the PCC’s staff, Assistant PCCs and the Non-Executive Strategic Policing and Crime Board Members which are not covered in the Regulations and so are beyond the remit of the Panel. Further clarification on the remit of the Panel’s complaints procedure is set out in paragraph 5 below.

### **3.0 Powers Delegated to the Birmingham City Council Monitoring Officer**

- 3.1 In accordance with the Regulation s28(3), the Panel delegated responsibility for all complaint handling, recording decisions and the brokering of informal resolutions to the Birmingham City Council Monitoring Officer. Birmingham City Council is the Panel’s Host Authority. Any reference within this procedure or the Regulations to ‘the Panel’ should be read as ‘the Monitoring Officer acting on behalf of the Panel’.
- 3.2 The Monitoring Officer is supported in this function by Birmingham Scrutiny Office.
- 3.3 In practice it will be the Monitoring Officer who will make formal decisions on complaints under delegation from the Panel, but in exercising that function the Monitoring Officer and Scrutiny Office will work with the Chief Executive of Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to ensure that complaints received are correctly identified as being complaints which are subject to the Regulations, and other complaints (for example complaints about the PCC’s staff or the police force) are redirected as appropriate.

## 4.0 Key Definitions

4.1 The Regulations and the Act contain the following of key definitions:

A “**Complaint**” means a general complaint about the conduct of the PCC (or DPCC), whether or not that conduct is potentially criminal (*s31(1) (a) of the Act*).

“**Conduct**” includes acts, omissions, statements, and decisions (whether actual, alleged or informed) (*Reg. 2 (1)*).

“**Criminal Offence**” means any offence triable in England and Wales (*Reg. 2 (1)*).

A “**Recorded Complaint**” means a complaint that the Panel formally records because it has determined it is a complaint about the conduct of the PCC (or DPCC), and it is the correct Panel to handle it (*Reg.9 (5)*). The Panel will formally record the complaint by entry in the Recorded Complaints and Conduct Matters Register.

A “**Conduct Matter**” means a matter where there is an indication (whether from the circumstances or otherwise) that the PCC (or DPCC) may have committed a criminal offence (*s31 (1)(b) of the Act*), which comes to light other than via a complaint, e.g., a media report or legal proceedings (*See Home Office Guidance Note*).

A “**Serious Complaint**” means a complaint about the conduct of the PCC (or DPCC) which constitutes, involves, or appears to constitute or involve the commission of a criminal offence (*Paragraph 2 (6) Schedule 7 to the Act*). The Panel must notify the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) of a Serious Complaint.

## 5.0 Clarification on the remit of the Police and Crime Panel complaints procedure

5.1 The Panel handles complaints relating to the personal conduct of the PCC and DPCC in their Office for Policing and Crime capacities primarily, although complaints may extend to their conduct in their private or other public capacities.

### 5.2 **Complaints Against West Midlands Police**

5.3 West Midlands Police (WMP) is responsible for dealing with most complaints about the force and the conduct of police officers and staff, while the IOPC investigates the most serious complaints, incidents, and allegations of misconduct. Both deal with appeals from people who are not satisfied with the way their complaint has been dealt with.

5.4 The PCC’s role is to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the force. This includes oversight of the WMP complaints process: how WMP manages complaints, conduct and performance. The PCC role is set out in the Policing Protocol Order 2011 as being to “monitor complaints made against officers and staff [of WMP]”

5.5 The PCC fulfils the obligation in paragraph 5.4 through the Strategic Police and Crime Board (SPCB). The SPCB receives regular reports from the Chief Constable on the

number of complaints about misconduct and corruption, the police disciplinary processes and outcomes, and the management of conduct matters.

5.6 The management of police complaints is an operational matter. Under the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Policing Protocol Order 2011, the PCC cannot fetter the operational independence of the Chief Constable. The PCC has no remit to act as an advocate for individuals or to investigate individual cases. The PCC cannot direct the Chief Constable on how to manage an individual complaint.

5.7 The Panel therefore cannot consider complaints about the PCC's:

- (i) intervention or lack of it into complaints against West Midlands Police, its police officers, and staff
- (ii) failure to act as an advocate for an individual
- (iii) failure to investigate a personal case.

### 5.8 ***Complaints against the Chief Constable***

5.9 The PCC is responsible for handling complaints against the Chief Constable. Such complaints are formally recorded by the PCC and serious allegations are referred to another police force to be investigated.

5.10 The Panel is not an appeals body for complaints against West Midlands Police or the Chief Constable and has no legal power to handle, investigate or order actions to be taken in such cases. Such complaints fall beyond the Panel's jurisdiction.

### 5.11 ***Complaints about the merits of a PCC decision or policy***

5.12 The Regulations and this complaints procedure do not cover complaints about the merits of a PCC decision, for example where somebody disagrees with a policy the PCC has introduced. Although complaints about whether a decision was taken properly and in accordance with procedures can be considered.

5.13 Concerns from the public about a particular policy is something the Panel should be aware of and reflect upon as it scrutinises the PCC's policies. However, these cannot be taken up through this complaint procedure.

## 6.0 **Submitting a Complaint**

6.1 Complaints about the conduct of the PCC (or DPCC) should be submitted in writing on the Panel's Complaint Form:

WMPCP, Scrutiny Office, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B1 1BB. Or by email: [wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk)

6.2 Complaints cannot be accepted via Twitter, Facebook, or telephone.

6.3 The Complaint Form has been developed to assist complainants set out the necessary information. The form can be completed online, or downloaded from the Panel's website, or emailed or posted on request.

- 6.4 Complainants may wish to arrange for someone to act on their behalf, such as a friend or relative. However, written consent must be provided by the complainant before the Panel can discuss the case with them.
- 6.5 Where the Monitoring Officer considers that a complaint requires further information or detail in order for him to properly consider it under the Regulations, the complainant may be asked to provide such detail.
- 6.6 ***Direct complaints to the PCC and preservation of evidence***
- 6.7 The PCC must notify the Monitoring Officer of a complaint made to them no later than the end of the following working day writing via email to [wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk), and provide details of the steps they have taken to preserve such evidence, including its location and in whose possession it is in.
- 6.8 Where a complaint is made directly to the PCC then she/he is under a statutory duty to take all such steps as appear to them to be appropriate for obtaining and preserving evidence in relation to the conduct in question, both initially and from time to time after that. In discharging this duty, they shall take such steps as a reasonable person would consider appropriate in the circumstances to obtain and preserve evidence, and in any event shall comply with any requests of the Panel.
- 6.9 ***Direct complaints to the Police and Crime Panel Members***
- 6.10 Any complaint addressed to an individual Panel Member should be immediately directed by the recipient to the Monitoring Officer via email to [wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk), along with any other available information that is relevant to the complaint, in accordance with the Regulations.
- 6.11 ***Direct complaints to the Police***
- 6.12 Where a complaint is made to the Chief Constable, they have a duty to notify the Monitoring Officer in writing via email to [wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk).
- 6.13 ***Direct complaints to the Independent Office for Police Conduct***
- 6.14 When a complaint is made to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), it has a duty to notify the Panel to enable a recording decision to be made, unless the IOPC considers that there are exceptional circumstances to justify notification not being given.

## **7.0 Triage and Recording of Complaints**

- 7.1 Upon receipt of a complaint the Monitoring Officer will determine whether it falls within the scope of the Regulations and Panel Complaints Procedure and whether to record the complaint. If recorded, the Monitoring Officer will determine how the recorded complaint will be dealt with under the Regulations.

- 7.2 If the complaint falls outside the remit of the Panel, (e.g., is relates to operational policing) the complainant will be advised of the appropriate body.
- 7.3 Complaints that purport to be a complaint about the PCC but in fact relate to the situations described in paragraphs 5.7 and 5.10 will generally not be recorded. Regulation 10 applies to such cases.
- 7.4 The Monitoring Officer will advise the complainant if a decision is made not to record the whole or part of a complaint and take no action upon it giving the ground for this decision.
- 7.5 If the complaint relates to another police force area it will be passed to the relevant police and crime panel (Reg. 9 (2)(b)).

## **8.0 Record of Complaint**

- 8.1 If the complaint relates to the conduct of the West Midlands PCC (or DPCC) it will be recorded on the West Midlands Recorded Complaints and Conduct Matters Register unless the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that any of the following exceptions apply, (in whole or in part) (Reg. 9 (6)):
- (i) if it has been or is currently being dealt with by criminal proceedings: this will normally be the case where the Police have formally charged the person complained about or information alleging an offence has been laid before a magistrate's court; or
  - (ii) the complaint has been withdrawn in accordance with Regulation 16.
- 8.2 If the Monitoring Officer decides not to record the complaint due to the above and, therefore, to take no action upon it, the complainant will be notified and given the grounds on which that decision was made, whether in relation to whole or part of the complaint (Reg.10 (2)).
- 8.3 Where a complaint is recorded, a copy of the record will be sent to the complainant with information about the next steps to be taken in relation to the complaint (Reg.31 (1) (a)).
- 8.4 When a complaint is recorded the person complained against, and the Chief Executive of the OPCC, will also be informed and provided with a record of the complaint (Reg. 31(1) (b)). However, the record may be altered to hide the identity of the complainant or any other person. In addition, a record may not be sent if in doing so might prejudice any criminal investigation or pending proceedings or otherwise be contrary to the public interest. The Monitoring Officer will take these decisions and will keep this under review (Reg. 31(2) to (4)).

## **9.0 Notification and Recording of Conduct Matters**

- 9.1 If an issue arises other than via a complainant, for example through legal proceedings or media report, where there is an indication (whether from the circumstances or otherwise) that the PCC (or DPCC) may have committed a criminal offence in England

or Wales or, although committed elsewhere, it is an offence triable in England or Wales, this is referred to as a Conduct Matter.

9.2 A Conduct Matter, therefore, occurs where no formal complaint has been received.

9.3 Where the existence of such a Conduct Matter is brought to the Panel's attention by virtue of either

- (i) the Conduct Matter, or
- (ii) the facts relating to the incident giving rise to the Conduct Matter forming part of either: -

- (a) civil proceedings being brought; or
- (b) likely to being brought,

against either any PCC (or DPCC), the Panel will record the Conduct Matter, or refer the matter to the Panel responsible for that PCC or DPCC (Reg 11).

9.4 A Conduct Matter must be recorded, and entered onto the Recorded Complaints and Conduct Matters Register, unless the Monitoring Officer is satisfied either of the following exceptions apply (Reg. 12(2)):

- (i) the matter has already been recorded as a complaint under regulation 9(5); or
- (ii) the matter has been, or is already being, dealt with by means of criminal proceedings against the PCC (or DPCC). This will normally be the case where the Police have formally charged the person with a criminal offence or information alleging an offence has been laid before a magistrate's court.

9.5 If the IOPC becomes aware of a Conduct Matter which has not been recorded by the Panel, it may direct the Panel to record the matter (Reg.12 (3)).

9.6 To enable the Panel to discharge its duties under the Regulations, the Panel needs to be informed about any proceedings where the PCC (or DPCC) is the defendant to or an interested party in legal proceedings.

9.7 The PCC, (or DPCC), the Chief Executive of the OPCC, every counsel, solicitor or legal or other advisor, instructed or retained by them are therefore required, as soon as reasonably practicable, to notify the Monitoring Officer via email to [wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk).

9.8 Such persons are expected generally to cooperate with the Panel in the discharge of its statutory duties under the Regulations (Reg.11) to such extent as is not inconsistent with any legal professional privilege or obligation of confidence.

## **10.0 Conduct Occurring Outside England and Wales**

10.1 The PCC (and DPCC) is under an individual duty to notify the Panel via the Monitoring Officer of any allegation, investigation or proceedings relating to their conduct outside

England or Wales. The Panel can handle the matter in whatever manner (if any) it thinks fit in these circumstances (Reg.17). This decision will be made by the Monitoring Officer.

- 10.2 Accordingly, by no later than the end of the working day following the day on which the investigation, allegation, or proceedings (as above) comes to his/her attention, the PCC (or DPCC) shall notify the Monitoring Officer in writing via email to [wmppc@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmppc@birmingham.gov.uk) of the matter.
- 10.3 This obligation applies to conduct within England and Wales that took place before the PCC was elected to office.

### **11.0 Referral of Recorded Serious Complaints and Recorded Conduct Matters to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC)**

11.1 The Monitoring Officer has authority for filtering complaints and deciding which may amount to criminal conduct as a Serious Complaint and should be referred to the IOPC (using IOPC Referral Form 7.1). The Monitoring Officer may take advice from the IOPC before making a referral.

11.2 The Monitoring Officer must refer the following to the IOPC:

- (i) All Recorded Conduct Matters.
- (ii) All Serious Complaints (i.e., a complaint that constitutes or involves or appears to constitute or involve, the commission of a criminal offence).
- (iii) Any Serious Complaint or Recorded Conduct Matter where the IOPC has called it in.

11.3 If any of the above comes to the attention of one of the named Panel Officers at a point when liaison with the Monitoring Officer is not possible i.e., out of office hours or Bank Holidays, then it may be referred to the IOPC without reference to the Monitoring Officer.

11.4 On referring a Recorded Complaint or Conduct Matter to the IOPC, the Panel will notify the complainant (where there is one) and the person complained about of the referral, unless it appears that notifying the PCC (or DPCC) might prejudice a possible future investigation (Reg. 13(6)). The Monitoring Officer will make this decision.

#### **11.5 *Call-in by the IPCC***

11.6 The Panel must refer a Recorded Complaint to the IOPC if required to do so (Reg. 13(3) and (4)).

#### **11.7 *Timescales for Referral to the IOPC***

11.8 Referrals should be made as soon as is practicable, and in any event no later than the end of the day following the day on which it becomes clear to the Panel that the Recorded Complaint or Conduct Matter is one that should be referred or was required to (Reg. 13 (3)). The details in the Recorded Complaints and Conduct Matters Register

will be made available to the IOPC, together with such other information considered appropriate.

### **11.9 Referral-back from the IOPC**

11.10 Where the IOPC decides it does not need to investigate a Serious Complaint referred to it, it will refer the complaint back to the Panel to resolve in accordance with Part 4 of the Regulations (Set out in Section 16 of this procedure). The IOPC will notify the complainant and the person complained against about this decision (Reg.14 (2)(a) and (3)).

11.11 Where the IOPC decides that it does not need to investigate a Conduct Matter it will refer the matter back to the Panel to be dealt with in such a manner, if any, as the Panel thinks fit. The IOPC will notify the PCC (or DPCC) about this decision (Reg. 14(2)(b) and (3)).

### **12.0 Circumstances where the Panel does not need to deal with a complaint**

12.1 If the Monitoring Officer considers that a Recorded Complaint (which is not one that otherwise must be referred to the IOPC) is one in respect of which no action should be taken, and it falls within the circumstances set out below, then they may decide to handle the Recorded Complaint in whatever manner they think fit (Reg. 15 (2)).

12.2 The types of Recorded Complaint where the Regulations may be disapplied and dealt with in this way are:

- (i) A complaint concerned entirely with the PCC's (or DPCC's) conduct in relation to a person who was working as a member of the PCC staff at the time when the conduct was supposed to have taken place (Reg.15 (3) (a));
- (ii) Where more than twelve months have elapsed since the incident and there is no good reason for the delay, or injustice would be caused by the delay (Reg.15 (3) (b));
- (iii) The matter has already been the subject of a complaint (Reg.15 (3) (c));
- (iv) The complaint is anonymous (Reg.15 (3) (d));
- (v) The complaint is vexatious, oppressive, or otherwise an abuse of the procedures for dealing with complaints (Reg.15 (3) (e)); or
- (vi) The complaint is repetitious (Reg.15 (3) (f)).

12.3 A "Repetitious Complaint" (above) is one which is:

- (i) the same, or substantially the same, as a previous complaint, or concerns substantially the same conduct as a previous conduct matter, contains no fresh allegations which affect the account of the conduct complained of, no fresh evidence which was not reasonably available at the time the previous complaint; or
- (ii) has already been referred to the IOPC and dealt with appropriately (Reg. 15 (4)).

- 12.4 The Monitoring Officer may handle these complaints in whatever manner (if any) they think fit (Reg. 15 (2)).
- 12.5 The Monitoring Officer will notify the complainant of any decision not to apply the Regulations to a Recorded Complaint or to take no further action in relation to it and provide the grounds for that decision (Reg.15 (5)).

### **13.0 Habitual or vexatious complaints**

- 13.1 The Monitoring Officer can disapply the Regulations and take no further action in accordance with Regulation.15 (3) (e) where, in the reasonable opinion of the Monitoring Officer, the complaint is either:
- (i) made with the objective of causing disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation, or distress to either the PCC, (DPCC) the Police and Crime Panel, or the Monitoring Officer; or
  - (ii) is a disproportionate, manifestly unjustified, inappropriate, or improper use of the complaints process,

### **14.0 The Panel's duties to obtain and preserve evidence**

- 14.1 When a complaint or conduct matter comes to the attention of the Panel, it is under a duty to ensure all appropriate steps are taken to obtain and preserve evidence in relation to the conduct in question, both initially and from time to time after that. It is not the Panel's role to investigate matters and it is likely that before taking steps to obtain or preserve evidence it will normally consult the IOPC. The IOPC may also give the Panel and the PCC (or DPCC) directions for obtaining and preserving evidence (Reg. 8).
- 14.2 Accordingly, the Panel may make formal requests of any of the following persons to take such steps as the Panel considers are expedient or necessary for obtaining and preserving evidence in relation to the conduct in question, both initially and from time to time after that. This includes requests that steps are taken concerning the disposition of the property and resources of the PCC's office (such as its buildings, assets, equipment, supplies, accounts, records, information, electronic data etc. in their widest sense and wherever located) or other persons:
- (i) The PCC
  - (ii) The DPCC
  - (ii) Any employee of the PCC's office
  - (iii) Any member or employee of a functional body
  - (iv) Any person or organisation having a current or past contractual relationship with the PCC's office or its predecessors or in receipt of a grant from such bodies.
- 14.3 A person given a direction by the Panel under this procedure shall comply with it in full and generally cooperate with the Panel and its authorised officers in the discharge of their statutory duties under the Regulations.

- 14.4 Such persons shall also permit access and render possession of any such evidence in relation to the conduct complained about to the Panel as is in their possession, custody, or control in accordance with instructions.
- 14.5 The Panel shall be informed of any instances where there has been a complete or partial failure by any person or organisation to comply with any request regarding evidence.

## **15.0 Timescales**

- 15.1 Wherever possible complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days and concluded within 12 weeks if dealt with through informal resolution.
- 15.2 However, each case is different, and the time taken to reach a conclusion will be determined by the nature of the complaint. The complainant and the person complained about will be provided with regular updates of progress.
- 15.3 These are locally agreed timescales as none are specified within the Regulations.
- 15.4 If the Serious Complaint or Conduct Matter is referred to the IOPC, this must be done as soon as possible, and no later than the close of business the day after the Panel becomes aware that the matter should be referred (Reg.13(3) and (4)).

## **16.0 Withdrawal of Complaints**

- 16.1 At any stage a complainant can decide to withdraw their complaint or discontinue it. If the Panel receives written notification to this effect, signed either by the complainant, their solicitor or other person acting on their behalf, it will record the fact on the Recorded Complaints and Conduct Matters Register (Reg. 16).
- 16.2 If the Recorded Complaint is with the IOPC, the Panel must notify the IOPC that it has recorded the withdrawal of the complaint. The IOPC will then consider whether the complaint should be treated as a Conduct Matter. The IOPC will notify the Panel accordingly and the Recorded Complaints and Conduct Matters Register will be updated.
- 16.3 If the complaint had not been referred to the IOPC, or was referred and then referred back, the Panel must decide whether the complaint should be treated as a Conduct Matter. A complaint should be treated as a Conduct Matter where there is an indication that a criminal offence has been committed (Reg. 16(4)). The Monitoring Officer will make this decision.
- 16.4 Where it is determined (by the IOPC or Monitoring Officer) that a withdrawn complaint should be treated as a Conduct Matter, the Panel must record it as a Conduct Matter, and apply the Regulations accordingly (Reg. 16 (6)).
- 16.5 The Panel will follow the provisions prescribed in the Regulations for contacting the complainant if they indicate they wish to withdraw their Recorded Complaint but not submitted a signed the withdrawal request (Reg.16 (8)).

16.6 The Panel will notify the person complained against and the Chief Executive of the OPCC if it records a complaint as being withdrawn or discontinued, if it is being treated now as a Conduct Matter, or if the Regulations cease to apply to the complaint on the basis that it has been withdrawn or discontinued (Reg. 16(9), unless it was previously decided not to notify the person complained against.

## **17.0 Informal Resolution of Complaints**

17.1 Under Part 4 of the Regulations the Monitoring Officer must make arrangements to informally resolve Recorded Complaints which the Monitoring Officer has:

- (i) Not referred to the IOPC, or having referred it to the IOPC, has had it referred back; and
- (ii) Decided not to disapply the regulations.

17.2 Informal Resolution is a way of dealing with a complaint by solving, explaining, clearing up or settling the matter directly with the complainant, without investigation or formal proceedings. It is a flexible process that may be adapted to the needs of the complainant and the individual complaint. This may be done by correspondence or in a face-to-face meeting.

17.3 The Monitoring Officer will act as a broker to the informal resolution and in attempting to secure resolution of the complaint, will consider whether further information / clarification / explanation is required and/or whether any actions are required.

17.4 There can be no formal sanctions applied as part of the informal resolution; ultimately the PCC is held accountable by the ballot box. However, the Panel may publish a report or recommendation.

17.5 The following formal requirements for Informal Resolution are set out in the Regulations:

- (i) No investigation can take place. The Panel has the power to require the person complained against to provide information and documents and to attend to answer questions. This does not amount to investigation (Reg. 28 (7)).
- (ii) The complainant and the person complained against must be given the opportunity to comment on the complaint as soon as practicable (Reg. 28 (9)).
- (iii) Any failure by the person complained against to comment on the complaint when invited to do so will be noted in the written record (Reg. 28 (10)).
- (iv) No apology can be tendered on behalf of the person complained against unless the person had admitted the alleged conduct and agreed to the apology (Reg. 28 (11)).

17.6 Where it appears to the Monitoring Officer that a Recorded Complaint against the PCC (or DPCC) has in fact already been satisfactorily dealt with by the time it was brought to the Panel's notice, the Monitoring Officer may, subject to any further

representations by the complainant, treat it as having been resolved and take no further action. The Monitoring Officer will make this decision (Reg. 28 (8)).

## **18.0 Complaints Sub-Committee**

- 18.1 If the Monitoring Officer deems that the complaint cannot be resolved based on the written information available, a Complaints Sub-Committee of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel may be convened, as permitted in Regulation 28 (3), to which the PCC (or DPCC) will be invited to respond to the allegations in person.
- 18.2 The Complaints Sub-Committee is not an appeal body to reconsider previous Monitoring Officer decisions or resolutions.
- 18.3 The Complaints Sub-Committee will consist of three Panel Members drawn from the full membership of the Panel, in conjunction with the Panel Chair (or Vice Chair) and based on availability. The Complaints Sub-Committee will include, where possible, one Independent Panel Member. Named Substitute Panel Members can be appointed to the Sub-Committee.
- 18.4 At the meeting the Monitoring Officer, or their representative, will present the available written information to the Sub-Committee.
- 18.5 Given the Panel's inability to investigate, normally the Complaints Sub-Committee will only be able to call upon the complainant and the person complained about to attend. Both parties will be invited to make a statement in support of their position and will be expected to answer questions, and where necessary, provide additional evidence to the Sub-Committee.
- 18.6 The Complaints Sub-Committee will consider the written and oral evidence and secure an informal resolution.
- 18.7 It is likely that the Complaints Sub-Committee will need to consider whether to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from meetings on the basis of discussion of sensitive personal data e.g., alleged offences, in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

## **19.0 Record of Informal Resolution**

- 19.1 A record of the outcome of the informal resolution will be made as soon as practicable after the process has been completed. Copies will be sent to the complainant and the person complained against (Reg. 28 (12)).
- 19.2 The record of the outcome of informal resolution (or part of it) may be published if considered to be in the public interest. Before making the decision, the Monitoring Officer will give the complainant and the person complained against the opportunity to make representations in relation to the proposed publication (Reg. 28 (13)).
- 19.3 In cases where an informal resolution cannot be agreed the record will detail the reasons given by the parties why the matter could not be resolved.

## **20.0 Appeals and Complaining to the Local Government Ombudsman**

- 20.1 There is no right of appeal regarding a recording decision or outcome of a complaint handled by the Panel.
- 20.2 The Local Government Ombudsman has jurisdiction over the administrative functions of the Police and Crime Panel and complainants can contact them if they are unhappy with the way that the complaint was handled.
- 20.3 The Panel's complaints procedure will need to be followed to its conclusion, before the Local Government Ombudsman will become involved.

## **21.0 Provision and Recording of Information**

- 21.1 The Panel must maintain a formal register for the purposes of recording complaints and conduct matters under the Regulations. The Recorded Complaints and Conduct Matters Register is an electronic database recording all key details pertaining to a complaint including the date received, the complainant, a summary of the complaint / the category into which it falls (Recorded Conduct Matter, Serious Recorded Complaint, or other Recorded Complaint), the date on which it was recorded, actions taken on the complaint under the Regulations and any other information deemed relevant.
- 21.2 The Panel shall keep records of every complaint and purported complaint made to it or received by it; every conduct matter recorded by the Panel and every action taken under the Regulations (Reg. 34).
- 21.3 The Panel shall provide to the IOPC all such information or documents specified, and all evidence or other things so specified or described by the IOPC in a notification given by the IOPC to the Panel and in a manner and within a time so specified (Reg. 35).
- 21.4 Summary reports (such as can be reported in public), regarding complaints dealt with under this procedure will be submitted to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel on a regular basis for monitoring purposes and at least annually.

Publication Date: 30 September 2014

Updated: July 2016

Accessibility checked July 2022

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

**Date: 24 March 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

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## 1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the work that the Panel had undertaken over the 2024/2025 Municipal Year.
- 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 As part of the planning for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year, preliminary suggestions for themes and topics from the current Panel are invited.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Panel
  - i. Note and comment on the work the Police and Crime Panel undertook during 2024/2025;
  - ii. Identifies any themes/topic areas for the Police and Crime Panel work programme for the next Municipal Year; and
  - iii. Note the planned work of the Use of Information Sub-Group to examine and report back its recommendations on how Panel can use information to shape its work programme.

## 3 Context

- 3.1 Police and Crime Panel was established under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel acts as a joint scrutiny body of the West Midlands Local Authorities with a dual role to 'support' and 'challenge' the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 3.2 The Panel must perform the following statutory functions:
  - Scrutinise the decisions and actions of the PCC

- Review and comment on the PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan and any draft variations to the Plan
- Review the PCC's Annual Report
- Review (with the power to veto) the PCC's proposed policing precept.
- Hold confirmation hearings for senior appointments (Chief Constable, Deputy PCC, Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer), with the power to veto for the Chief Constable appointment.
- Handle non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the PCC and Deputy PCC, referring serious complaints to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (This function is delegated to the Monitoring Officer).
- suspend the PCC if they are charged with an imprisonable offence which carries a maximum term of two years or more.
- appoint an acting PCC if the elected one cannot carry out their role due to incapacitation, suspension, resignation or disqualification.
- play a role in any call made by a PCC for a Chief Constable to resign or retire.

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 Key activities of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel during 2024/2025**

4.1 **In May 2024** new members were appointed to the Panel and all members and named substitute members were invited to participate in an online induction. The session covered the role and responsibilities of the Panel and a work programming session.

4.2 **On 22 July 2024** - The Panel held its AGM and considered reports by the PCC on recent activities and performance monitoring. Members also provided constructive challenge on the development of the PCC's Police and Crime Plan and public consultation associated with this.

4.3 The Panel also held a confirmation hearing for the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner post. Members put questions to the Commissioner's proposed candidate, Mr Wasim Ali, to assess his suitability and experience for the position. The Panel recommended the PCC proceed with the appointment.

- 4.4 **On 7 October 2024** – The Panel considered a second update report on the development of the PCC Police and Crime Plan. Members sought reassurances on the work of the commissioner’s office to evaluate the responses to the call for evidence from partnership organisations and experts, as well as comments gathered from public consultation events.
- 4.5 The Chief Constable also addressed the meeting reporting back on the work to respond to HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) concerns that led to it placing the West Midlands Police into Engage Status of enhanced monitoring in December 2023. The Panel commended the PCC and Chief Constable for the rapid improvement that had led to the Inspectorate removing the force from Engage Status in September.
- 4.6 The Panel also examined the PCC’s Statement of Accounts to build knowledge and insight of the financial position ahead of the Panel’s review of the PCC’s budget and proposed precept in February.
- 4.7 In October the Panel’s Use of Information Sub-Group to examine in detail the performance metrics associated with the development of the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan.



- 4.8 **In November 2024** Members were invited to a site visit of the West Midlands Police C3 Contact Centre and Firearms Unit in Aston, Birmingham. This included a tour of the call handling operations as well as the firearm storage. The visit included talks from senior officers and the Commissioner on the PCC responsibilities, the operation of the Contact Centre, as well as future developments in neighbourhood policing.
- 4.9 **In December 2024** the Panel considered an update on the recent activities and key decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner, and his

Medium-term Financial Plan and Reserves Strategy. The Panel received a report from the Use of Information Sub-Group and endorsed the Sub-Group's comments relating to the draft Police and Crime Plan key performance indicators (KPIs).

- 4.10 The Panel also conducted a Confirmation Hearing for the reappointment of Mr Guildford as Chief Constable. As part of the Confirmation Hearing, Members heard from the Commissioner on the process for reappointment and the suitability of Mr Guildford to continue in the role. Panel Members put a series of questions to the Mr Guildford to assess his professional competence and independence for the role. Following this, the Panel endorsed the PCC's preferred candidate, and Mr Guildford was confirmed as the Chief Constable.



- 4.11 **In January 2025** the Panel fulfilled its statutory function of reviewing the PCC's Draft Police and Crime Plan. The Plan sets out the PCC's priorities during their term of office that would run from 2025 to 2029. The Commissioner also responded to the recommendations developed by the Panel's Use of Information Sub-Group relating to Key Performance Indicators within the Plan.
- 4.12 The Panel was satisfied that the Plan reflected current priorities across the West Midlands and would support the continuation of the existing work by West Midlands Police and partner organisations to reduce crime and improve community safety. It recommended the PCC to consider including more clarity on ambitions and include specific targets where appropriate or explain how statistically significant changes would be measured, consider establishing a mechanism to monitor the performance of Live Chat, and expand the Plan to include specific reference to tackling graffiti, vandalism and low-level criminal damage.
- 4.13 The Panel's Review Report and the PCC's Response to the recommendations are available on the publications section of the Panel website [www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk).
- 4.14 **In January 2025** the Panel also reviewed the work of the Commissioner and the West Midlands Police in identifying any lessons learnt from the violent

disorder that had taken place in the Summer of 2024. This explored the work to ensure residents of West Midlands were safe, working with partners on community cohesion and collaborating with other police forces to ensure that there was an adequate police response in the region and nationally to address any future disorder across the country.



- 4.15 **During January 2025** Members received two briefing sessions to prepare for its scrutiny of the proposed Policing Precept for 2025/26, examining how police funding structured and how Members could scrutinise the budget and precept proposals.
- 4.16 **In February 2025** the Panel reviewed the PCC's proposed Policing Precept for the 2025/26 financial year and considered the PCC revenue budget and capital programme, The Panel endorsed the proposed precept of £229.50 for a Band D property.
- 4.17 **Also in February 2025**, Members reviewed the PCC's draft 2023/24 Annual Report. The Panel recommended that the PCC include more detail about the impact that the PCC's activities are having. The Panel's review report and PCC response can be viewed on the Panel's Publications webpage [www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandspcp.org.uk).
- 4.18 **During January and February**, the Panel ran a regional advertising campaign to recruit two Independent Panel Members. Independent Members provide impartial perspectives to the Panel and bring further expertise to support the work of the Panel. Formal interviews were undertaken by a cross party sub- group of Panel members. Two appointments are due to be ratified in March.

## **5 Looking Ahead to 2025-2026**

- 5.1 The Panel's work programme consists of a combination of statutory tasks 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.

- 5.2 The Panel must maintain a strategic focus in scrutinising the work of the PCC, rather than operational detail. The 2025-2029 Police and Crime Plan sets out the Commissioner’s priorities and objectives.
- 5.3 Panel members may wish to make some preliminary suggestions for topics and themes the Police and Crime Panel consider incorporating within its 2025/2026 work programme.

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

- 6.1 In July 2024 the Panel established a Member Subgroup appointing Independent Member Kristina Murphy, Councillor Jackie Taylor, Councillor Izzy Knowles and Councillor Gareth Moore.
- 6.2 The sub-group was charged with undertaking 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.
- 6.3 The primary focus of the subgroup to date has been the examination on the draft Police and Crime Plan key performance indicators (KPIs).
- 6.4 It is suggested the Subgroup meet during April to examine the areas in paragraph 6.2 and report back to the next full panel meeting.

## **7 Implications**

### **Finance Implications**

- 7.1 The Home Office provides an annual grant to support the administration of the Police and Crime Panel. The Home Office grant covers all costs relating to the secretariat and administration to support this work programme.

### **Legal Implications**

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

### **Equalities Implications**

- 7.3 The Panel has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
  - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

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

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

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

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

## **8 Background Papers**

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

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

8.3 [Home Office Guidance - Police, fire and crime panels](#)

8.4 [West Midlands Police and Crime Panel – Panel Agreement \(2012\)](#)

8.5 WMPCP Use of Information Subgroup Terms of Reference June 2024

## **9 Appendices**

9.1 None