



**Public Inquiries
and the
Birmingham Pub Bombings Inquest**

Purpose of Report

1. This report is to provide an overview of the work undertaken to support the Undercover Policing Inquiry (UCPI) and the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). There are currently a number of Public Inquiries which are engaging forces nationally and as a large metropolitan force West Midlands Police anticipates that the demands on officers and staff created by such inquiries will continue. This report also gives an outline of the work undertaken by West Midlands Police to support the inquest into the Birmingham Pub Bombings.

Introduction

2. As indicated above West Midlands Police's involvement in Public Inquiries has, like many forces increased in recent years. The issues are invariably of a national importance and ultimately seek to identify and examine good and bad practice with a view to assuring the public that the policing of the future is accountable and fit for purpose.
3. West Midlands Police has a duty to respond to the requests for information from inquiries. The information it provides must be accurate and complete in order to provide transparency accountability and the maintenance of public confidence. Appropriate levels of resources need to be available, these resources are to a large extent the officers and staff in the relevant departments who can review huge swathes of material to ensure that relevant information is provided within a limited time frame.
4. Following on from the determination by the Senior Coroner of Birmingham and Solihull to reopen the inquest in to the deaths of the 21 victims who died in the Birmingham Pub Bombings West Midlands Police has undertaken a substantial disclosure exercise. This report provides details of the work undertaken to meet the directions of the Coroner.

Under Cover Policing Inquiry (UCPI)

5. On 12 March 2015 the Home Secretary announced a Public Inquiry to examine the conduct of police forces nationally with regards to undercover operations. The Inquiry is known as the "Undercover Policing Inquiry" (UCPI) and is headed by senior judge Lord Justice Christopher Pitchford. The Inquiry team has been given wide ranging terms of reference and will examine how forces have managed undercover policing since 1968 through to present day.
6. The Inquiry's purpose is to investigate and report on undercover police operations conducted by English and Welsh police forces since 1968. The Inquiry will examine the contribution undercover policing has made to tackling crime, how it was and is supervised and regulated, and its effect on individuals involved – both the police officers and those who came into contact with them.
7. There have been seven formal requests made to the force since the inception of UCPI, which have required extensive research, recovery of material and examination of a large amount of documentation and databases. It may take several months to provide a comprehensive, accurate and credible response to the Inquiry. The requests have so far been coordinated through the NPCC. West Midlands Police is not a Core Participant but like all forces is responding to requests for information and statements as requested by the Inquiry.

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)

8. The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is chaired by Professor Alexis Jay OBE. There are a number of investigations being conducted by the Inquiry including the nature and extent of, and the institutional responses to, child sexual abuse within the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales. The Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham is within the scope of the Inquiry, (the Archdiocese covers a wide geographic area including Oxford and Staffordshire as well as the West Midlands region).
9. All forces have been requested to preserve their records relating to the care of children so that they will remain available for inspection by the Inquiry. The force has searched for any information relating to investigations conducted by, or referrals made to West Midlands Police concerning persons associated with the Archdiocese of Birmingham. In addition, a methodical trawl of historic crime records not held on crimes systems and associated papers, emails, meeting minutes or notes to identify material that may be of interest to the Inquiry is on-going.
10. The IICSA is yet to make any specific requests of the force.

Birmingham Pub Bombings

11. On the 1 June 2016 the Senior Coroner of Birmingham and Solihull made a determination to resume the inquest in to the deaths of the 21 victims who tragically died following the Birmingham Pub Bombings on the 21 November 1974. Leading up to that decision West Midlands Police assisted the Coroner by providing a series of submissions both to the Coroner and to the Families/ Interested Persons.
12. WMP have travelled to Shetland and Ireland to further enquiries in support of the inquest proceedings. Officers have ensured the material is safely stored and couriered to the various parties, WMP have provided a small number of lap tops, 80 pen sticks and has undertaken 70 different journeys (including visits to Belfast) to disseminate the material.
13. HHJ Thornton QC was appointed last year as Coroner, he held his first hearing on 28 November 2016. There are a number of preliminary issue he is resolving regarding the running of the inquest but of particular importance is the scope and timetable of the Inquest which is still to be determined. It is understood that Solicitors to the Inquest will be appointed and will coordinate any further collation of material. A further hearing will take place on 23 February 2017.

Approximation of Work Undertaken and Indicative Costs

14. In order to assess the current impact on force resources, a subjective summary has been prepared and appears in Appendix A attached. This summary gives an indication of the working hours associated with the Inquiries and an indicative financial value as it relates to those working hours. Please note that the assessments are approximate, and conservative. There are other assistive resources such as Force Operations, Information Technology, etc. which have not been captured, but have provided assets to enable the appropriate responses. Vehicles and Estates costs have not been included, as existing accommodation and operational vehicles have been utilised. As a force we do not time record the activities of officers and staff but the detail provided is presented as illustrative of the level of resources and commitment made by the force so far.
15. It is difficult to predict the demands that will continue to be placed on the force. However, it is anticipated that the demand related to UCPI will continue in its present form for some time and IICSA hearings relevant to WMP are likely to be held in the latter part of 2017 or early 2018.
16. Public inquiries are invariably complex and lengthy. The Pitchford Inquiry has published costs accrued between 2015 to Sept 2016 of £6.7 million this figure will not include the costs for representation of many of the Core Participants or the type of costs recorded

in Appendix A. There are concerns at a national level as to how forces should manage the costs associated with these matters.

17. In preparing for Inquiries and Inquests the force needs to consider what if any financial contingencies should be set aside to cover all associated costs. This has been the case in the Birmingham Pub Bombings. The scope of this inquest is yet to be determined and the force has so far worked to ensure that it provides the Coroner with all the material necessary to make any appropriate determinations. The details set out in Appendix B show the work that has been undertaken by the team of officers working with Legal Services. It is now understood following the last hearing on the 28 November 2016 before HHJ Thornton QC that any further disclosure will be facilitated through the Solicitor to the Inquest that the Coroner will be appointing. It is therefore not thought that the disclosure and travel previously undertaken will be required in the future. Given these developments and once the scope of the inquest is determined it will be possible to reassess the level of contingency budget required.
18. Eight of the families have been represented in the Inquest proceedings by KRW a legal firm from Northern Ireland. However there has been a lack of funding for the Families legal representation. The force now understands that changes to the Legal Aid Agency funding will enable KRW to obtain the funding they need. This development is very much welcomed by WMP and will greatly assist in the running of the Inquest.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None other than outlined in this paper.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Public Inquiries Act 2005 places legal duties and responsibilities on Core Participants and those subject to Rule 9 requests.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

None

Appendix A

UCPI/IICSA

Role/Activity	Est Hours	Indicative Cost
ACC	120hrs	£8779
Legal Services		
Director	208hrs	£11,353
Deputy	48hrs	£1893
Information Management	104hrs	£4921
D/Supt (UCPI)	224hrs	£10,826
D/Supt (IICSA)	16hrs	£773
DCI (UCPI)	224hrs	£8335
DCI (IICSA)	40hrs	£1488
DI (UCPI)	448hrs	£15,510
DI (CT/UCPI)	224hrs	£7755
DS (UCPI)	224hrs	£6218
DS (UCPI)	1040hrs	£28,870
UCPI Investigators	1000hrs	£23,450
IICSA Investigators	80hours	£1876
HOLMES (UCPI)	1200 hours	£18,348
Secretarial (UCPI)	52hrs	£795
Overtime/Expenses (UCPI)		£4140
UCPI Total	5116hrs	£151,193
IICSA Total	136hrs	£4137
Public Inquiry Total	5252hrs	£155,330

Appendix B

Birmingham Pub Bombings

- i. Research and review of material further to Coroner's directions and in support of submissions

Activity/Role	Est Hours	Indicative cost
HOLMES*	2250 hours	£42,795
D/SGT's	1360 hours	£38,447
Legal Services	300 hours	£16,374
Counsel's fees		£32,170.07**
DC's	2520 hours	£61,916
Police Staff	1000 hours @ £27.03	£27,030
Police Staff	60 hours @ £12.86	£772
Travel	Shetland Isle and Cork ROI	£2,180
		£221,684.07

- ii. Preparation and delivery of disclosure packages to Interested Parties and Coroner

Activity/Role	Hours	Indicative cost
D/SGT	160 hours	£4,523.20
DC's	210 hours	£5,157.70
Travel	2 visits to Belfast	£1,045.00
		£10, 725.90

- iii. **Total cost £ 232,409.97**

*HOLMES – Home Office Large Major Enquiry System

** actual cost