



## STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD 4 April 2017

### Performance Report: Standing Up for Young People

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Strategic Police and Crime Board on the work undertaken by the Youth Commissioners which are reflected in the section of the Police and Crime Commissioners Police and Crime Plan entitled 'Standing Up for Young People'.

#### BACKGROUND

2. The Youth Commission was established in 2014 and is made up of two elected representatives from each Neighbourhood Policing Area (NPU). In 2015, Birmingham (at that time made up of 4 LPU's) representatives were increased from 2 to 8 in order to better reflect the size of Birmingham, the youth demographic and the 4 NPUs. This resulted in a Youth Commission made up of 20 Youth Commissioners.
3. Young people are more likely to be victims of crime and, unfortunately, become involved in criminal activity and the work of the Youth Commission has been vital in highlighting significant issues such as child sexual exploitation, mental health and knife crime.
4. There is flexibility in the term of office, with Youth Commissioners serving 1 or 2 year terms. The Youth Commission is serviced by one of the Engagement and Partnership Officers who is the Youth engagement lead for the Police and Crime Commissioners office.
5. In 2014, the model relied on a negotiated level of support from Local Authority Youth Services and UK Youth Parliament workers responsible for Youth Parliamentarians. Local Authority staff organised bi-annual elections (or when a vacancy arose). They also provided regular support and safeguarding when required for Youth Commissioners to attend activities and meetings. This provided valuable ongoing support regarding contact and engagement of Youth Commissioners by the Police and Crime Commissioners office.
6. Since 2014, Youth Service resources have radically reduced, and most Local Authorities have either chosen between support for Youth Parliament based engagement and a Youth Council. The PCC's office is grateful for the commitment of these partners in continuing to

prioritise limited resources to support Youth Commissioners. In 2015 Birmingham Youth Services indicated they could no longer provide any form of support and this has resulted in us looking at where there could be the potential for recruitment through West Midlands Police, schools, youth clubs or other youth organisations.

### **The Terms of Reference for the Youth Commission**

7. Youth Commissioners represent young people in the relevant city or town and sit on a Youth Commission.

The Youth Commission will:

- Lead on consultation with young people on the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, monitoring of priorities and police responses to young people
- Be the voice of young people. Commission members will have the opportunity to speak directly with the Police and Crime Commissioner, police officers and decision makers. One of the key roles is to make sure you represent the views of young people in their area.
- Engage and consult with other young people in their local communities and listen to their views
- Be able to question, challenge and inform policy
- Help to build relationships and break down barriers that exist between the police, young people and the community
- Raise the profile of young people with the community in a positive way.

Time commitment

- There will be 5 meetings a year
- The term of office can be for a year or 2 year period.
- There will be an annual youth summit, led by the Youth Commission, where Youth Commissioners will report back on the work that they have done, and consider the issues that young people want to raise during the coming year.

### **Current cohort of Youth Commissioners**

8. 15 Youth Commissioners are currently serving, with 5 vacancies existing across the two Birmingham LPU's. The demographic of the Youth Commission is representative in gender and race of the West Midlands population and their ages range from 13 to 18 years of age.

Youth Commissioner	Area serving
Shahnoor Adill	Birmingham North and East
Connor Fowler	Birmingham North and East
Jack McTavish	Birmingham West
Lucy Hunt	Sandwell
Adam Shaikh	Sandwell
Anil Kararra	Coventry
Yazmin Francis	Coventry

Alex Russell	Dudley
Louise Pardoe	Dudley
Chloe Gibbs	Solihull
Charlotte Oliver	Solihull
Adam Anwar	Walsall
Luke McDermott	Walsall
Emma Curran	Wolverhampton
Elizabeth Williams	Wolverhampton

### **The Youth Commission**

9. Meetings of 2 hours duration take place bi-monthly between 6-8pm in Lloyd House, and are timetabled outside academic exam periods. They are chaired by a Youth Commissioner and are attended by the Commissioner and/or APCC Ashley Bertie. West Midlands Police are represented at all meetings by the Silver Lead Officer, currently Chief Superintendent Matt Ward. Other subject lead officers attend dependent on the agenda.
10. Induction sessions are conducted as required for new Youth Commissioners, generally one or two a year. Induction includes a welcome and explanation of the role of the PCC and Youth Commissioners from the PCC or APCC. WMP outlines the learning and experience of operational policing that is offered, as well as their responsibility to represent the views of other young people. The session explores the motivation and the areas of crime which most concern Youth Commissioners and young people from their area, and also includes a session on responsible use of social media and communications delivered by the PCC's Communications Manager, Richard Costello.

### **2016 Leadership Course**

11. During 2016, the cohort of Youth Commissioners benefitted from a leadership course run over a 4 month period. The course was provided by UpRising, an UK wide youth leadership development organisation that runs regular programmes for 16-25 year olds.
12. This be-spoke training for Youth Commissioners was trialled to invest in their development as volunteers, providing them with skills to create effective campaigns around issues raised by the previous Youth Summit and in ways that would resonate with other young people and stakeholders.
13. The course which ran from July to November, gave them the opportunity to acquire skills in identifying goals, developing issues and campaigns, identifying the symptoms and causes of crime, mapping solutions, creating an action plan, recognising risks, working in teams, project management, setting SMART goals, stakeholder mapping, market research, digital campaigning, measuring impact, evaluation and making a presentation.
14. A number of campaigns were developed from issues raised by young people at the previous Youth Summit. Prior to the summit the Youth Commissioners received support and advice on what assistance could be provided to get the campaigns out to a larger audience and identifying appropriate support from WMP subject leads and Youth Officers to link in with existing structures.
15. Feedback from the participants on the Leadership course has been positive, as was the view from CS Matt Ward who took part in many of the sessions, and the campaign presentations were enthusiastically received by young people at the Youth Summit. It is recommend that a similar Leadership course is commissioned on a bi-annual basis as part of the overall Youth Strategy.

## **Police and Crime Commissioners Youth Summit 2016**

16. The Commissioner's annual event was held on December 3 2016 and was attended by over 120 young people, West Midlands Police Officers and representatives of youth organisations. The evening was hosted by APCC Ashley Bertie and Youth Commissioner Adam Shaikh, from Walsall.
17. Invitations were extended to all Local Authority youth groups within WMP area, to all young people who had participated in the Chief Constable's Procedural Justice engagement activity, all YOT teams within WMP area, St Basil's Youth Forum, Princes Trust, neighbourhood policing teams and WMP senior command, the 7 Heads of Community Safety, and stakeholder agencies who had supported Youth Commissioners with their 2016 campaigns.
18. The Summit opened with an address by the Commissioner, which outlined his on-going commitment to ensuring that his Police and Crime Plan directed policing to harness the talents of young people and in partnership with other agencies, empowers young people to build stronger safer and more prosperous communities. He also thanked the young people for their on-going commitment to the role and for ensuring that the voice of young people continue to be part of our agenda.
19. There was also a presentation from Chief Superintendent Sally Bourner on the digital transformation of West Midlands Police under the WMP2020 programme. It brought the audience up to date on work 'behind the scenes' to consult on the new ways to communicate, provide information and be accessible. Curtis Holness, Sally's co-presenter, gave his personal and positive reflection on how he had been one of the participants in work with young people as future service users.
20. The summit included a lively and fast paced session on active citizens. This built upon activity started by the Chief Constable on 'Fairness in policing' which was carried out in the autumn of 2016. WMP and the PCC's office sought to ensure that the interest shown by young people in the WMP sessions was then sustained in three ways:
  - Continuing contact by neighbourhood and partnership officers with young people so that they could be actively involved in creating local activity to respond to the key issues raised by the focus groups, sustaining a positive relationship between the police and young people and improving trust and confidence more generally
  - Include them in the PCC Youth Summit and raise awareness of the opportunity to become an elected Youth Commissioner
  - Further raise awareness of what active citizenship could look like, and the active citizens funding available to support and make interventions a reality from young people wanting to improve their communities.
21. This session consisted of 3 short group discussions on tables followed by feedback on what active citizenship was, where and who was actively taking part in local communities, and what young people could actively do. There was a wide range of feedback, much of it thought provoking on the anxiety felt around other people mis-interpreting a kind act in public, inter-generational, cultural and gender barriers, but also some real, pragmatic and positive opinion on the desire and need for community cohesion and development.

22. Feedback has been collated and will inform further joint awareness raising activity in 2017/18 on the active citizen's fund targeted at young people to increase the number of applications from them and sustain their involvement in local decision making.
23. The Youth Summit culminated in the award of achievement certificates to Youth Commissioners who had come to their end of term, and a welcome to new Youth Commissioners for 2017 onwards.

### **Future development of the Youth Commission**

24. A Youth Strategy with an action plan is currently being developed and will be considered by the Board shortly. The 12 objectives within the Youth Strategy reflect the Standing Up for Young People section of the Police and Crime Plan.
25. Areas of work that will be focused on by the Youth Commission includes cyber bullying, which like bullying in schools, on the street or at home, causes misery for the victim. Youth Commissioners will be working on a strategy to address online bullying, alongside the Force, as well as continuing to ensure that West Midlands Police listens to the voice of young people and that voice is integrated into its work. We will continue to work to ensure that they remain an effective channel for both communicating with and on behalf of young people.
26. The Commissioner will continue to develop policy on youth engagement and the involvement of young people in crime reduction and victim support services for young victims of crime. He will also work with the Youth Commission to maximise the ways in which young people can become active citizens.
27. The reduction in capacity of Youth Services across the West Midlands means that we are exploring how we ensure that Youth Commissioners go through an election process and continue to be chosen by their peers as local representatives. This is an important aspect of the role, and one that we need to ensure is robust.
28. We will also be raising the profile of the Youth Commissioners and the work that they are doing in the coming year. Young people need to be aware that they have this resource within the Police and Crime Commissioners office and that they have a representative that they can contact to raise issues on their behalf. This will be a priority this year. They also need to be better integrated in local policing, and community safety.
29. The number of Youth Commissioners needs to be considered in order to reflect the number of NPPUs and the make-up of the Force. This will be done in alignment with the work being done on the election process.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

30. The budget for Youth Commissioners is included in the budget for the Police and Crime Commissioner's office.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

31. The PCC produces a Police and Crime Plan covering their term of office that sets out the priorities for local policing for the whole force area, and how they are going to be addressed. The Plan sets out the PCC's objectives for policing and reducing crime and disorder in the area and how policing resources will be allocated. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 places a statutory duty on PCCs to consult and obtain the views of people in that force area before the Police and Crime Plan is issued.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

32. Members of the Board are asked to note the progress being made by Youth Commissioners and the Youth Commission.

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