



**STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD**  
**4 April 2017**

**Performance Report:  
Standing Up for Young People**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. This report is to provide an update to the Strategic Police and Crime Board on the work undertaken to fulfil the sections of the Police and Crime Plan concerned with Standing Up for Young People

**BACKGROUND**

2. There are over 944,000 people under the age of 25 living within the West Midlands – a third of the total population.
3. This proportion of young people is growing - Birmingham, for example, is currently the youngest city in Europe.
4. But young people are not just the fastest growing community in the region they are also one of its most vulnerable.
5. Those aged 10 to 24 are more likely to become a victim of violence, robbery and sexual offences in comparison to any other age group. The highest cause of death for 15-24 year olds is traffic accidents followed by suicide.
6. Against this background some young people say that they find police officers intimidating, that the police use too much technical language and that they do not have the confidence to approach a police officer to seek help in times of need or crisis.
7. This means that there may be even more young victims of crime who are not known about and, therefore, who cannot be protected.
8. In was in response to these issues that West Midlands Police refreshed its Children and Young People strategy in 2015/16.

## WEST MIDLANDS POLICE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE STRATEGY

9. The refreshed West Midlands Police strategy built upon the successful work which had already been undertaken within the force over a number of years. But, in addition, it sought to ensure that the force's approach met or exceeded national and international standards of best practice for police engagement with children and young people. These standards came from a variety of sources including:
  - The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child
  - The All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGCFC) Report of Building Good Relationships Between Children and the Police<sup>1</sup>
  - The Children's Commissioner for England Report on Children and Young People in Custody<sup>2</sup>
  - The National Police Chief Councils National Children and Young People Strategy
10. To achieve these standards the refreshed strategy adopted three new approaches:
11. First, the strategy **expanded the definition of a young person**. Previously children and young people had been described as those below the age of 18. However, the best academic evidence has recognised that the 18-24 year age range is a key stage of development; the brain is still developing, independence is gained, socialising activity increase and experimentation with drugs, alcohol and sexual relationships takes place. This coincides with a time when young people are most likely to come into contact with the police.
12. For these reasons the West Midlands Police approach to children and young people (in accordance with the national strategy) now includes everybody up to and including the age of 24 years, but split into three distinct groups:
  - Under 10 – below the age of criminal responsibility
  - 10-17 years of age – subject to the majority of legislation aimed at young people
  - 18-24 years of age – transition to young adults
13. Second, the strategy identified **five key statements of principle** that underpinned the transformational and cultural values change being sought. Using these principles, the strategy defined success as "West Midlands Police becoming a service that *universally* and *consistently*:
  - treats children first and foremost as children
  - sees children as victims first and offenders second
  - listens to the voices and needs of children and young people
  - ensures every interaction with a child or young person builds trust
  - works with partners and communities to protect children and young people from harm"
14. Third, West Midlands Police undertook an extensive and comprehensive **academic literary review** of existing national and international youth interventions programmes to ensure that all of our planned activity was grounded in recognised best practice.
15. The review highlighted that whilst the Children and Young People strategy correctly sought to achieve three broad aims:

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<sup>1</sup> It's All About Trust (2013-14)

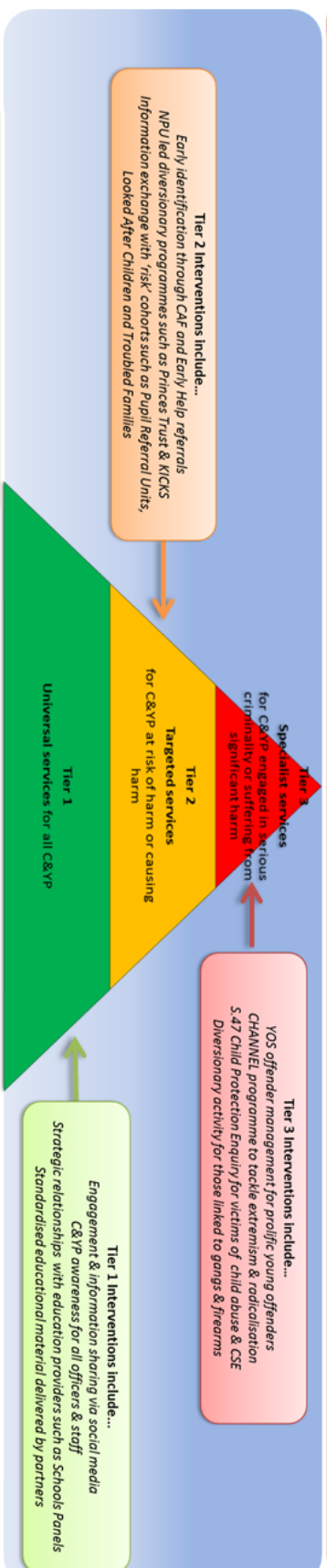
<sup>2</sup> Unlocking Potential (2015)

1. **Engagement to build trust**
  2. **Intervening early to prevent future offending**
  3. **Working better with *partners and communities***
16. The most effective and efficient method of delivering the strategy required bespoke programmes of activity tailored towards specific groups of children and young people according to their level or risk and vulnerability.
17. For these reasons, the strategy adopted the language and structure of children's services to define the West Midlands Police offer across three tiers:
- **Tier 1 Universal services** – policing services provided to, or routinely available to, all children and young people
  - **Tier 2 Targeted Services** – tailor-made packages provided to those children and young people who are likely to get involved in harmful behaviour or crime as a result of the presence of risk factors in their lives (e.g. familial abuse or neglect, substance abuse, school exclusion, community violence) and/or the absence of protective factors (e.g. stable family relationships, parental employment, access to adequate housing, health care and social services)
  - **Tier 3 Specialist Services** – use of specialist officers, legislation and resources to prevent young offenders reoffending and support young victims of crime

**Risk Focused Intervention & Prevention**

**Enablers & commissioning opportunities**

# Children & Young People Strategy



## A C T I V I T Y

**Engagement to build trust**

Creating a culture that ensures all staff, in all roles, understand that every contact with a young person is an opportunity for intervention and building trust

Engaging with young people to understand their concerns, perceptions of crime and personal safety

Involving young people in our decision-making

**Intervening early to prevent future offending**

Safeguarding young people who are identified as requiring additional support

Prioritising our intervention activity towards those young people who are most at risk of offending and/or becoming victims of crime

Ensuring young people are not criminalised for behaviour that can be dealt with more appropriately by other means

**Working better with partners & communities**

Working with partners and young people to understand what works well in youth crime prevention and sharing best practice

Developing data sharing agreements with partners to ensure young people receive the right level of support

Encouraging greater involvement of local communities to enhance diversionary activities with and for young people

## Outcomes

- WMP treats children first and foremost as children
- WMP sees children as victims first and offenders second
- WMP listens to the voices and needs of children & young people
- WMP ensures every interaction with a child or young person builds trust
- WMP works with partners to protect children & young people from harm

## Delivery

Children & Young People Delivery Plan

## PROGRESS REPORT

18. This report summarises some of the progress which has been made, through the children and young people delivery plan, against a number of the strategic objectives.
19. This is a non-exhaustive list of the projects, programmes and activity taking place across the West Midlands in accordance with the Children and Young People Strategy.

### ***Tier 1 Universal Services***

Active Citizens  
People & Organisational Development  
WMP2020 Digital Experience for Citizens  
Stop & Search

### ***Tier 2 Targeted Services***

Local Intervention & Prevention Programmes  
Force Intervention & Prevention Programmes  
- Prince's Trust Team Programme  
- Sport WMP (Reducing Crime through Sport)  
Looked After Children Protocol  
Preventing Youth Violence

### ***Tier 3 Specialist Services***

Reducing Youth Re-offending  
Reducing Youth Detention in Police Cells  
Voice of the Child

## ACTIVE CITIZENS

***CYP Objectives - Better engaging with young people to understand their concerns, perceptions of crime and personal safety. Involving young people in our decision-making.***

20. The roll-out of Next Generation Local Policing in November 2016 enabled the delivery of bespoke training to every Neighbourhood police officer and Police Community Support Officer. The training included inputs, case-studies and the sharing of best practice about how Active Citizen funding could be used to facilitate better engagement with young people.
21. The first year of the Active Citizen Fund has, in general, focused on awareness raising, early engagement and initial capacity building. There is universal support for the Active Citizen Fund as an enabler to encourage and support innovation amongst children and young people who, traditionally, have struggled to access community funding.
22. In coming years, it is expected that the Active Citizen Fund will continue to play a significant role in mobilising children and young people to take a more active role in their communities and the policing of those communities.

## CASE STUDIES

**Coventry Youth 'Skype' Forum** - Coventry have been successful in a joint Active Citizens application for £2315 involving Positive Youth Foundation and the CV NPU Partnership Team. Using this funding, Positive Youth Foundation will establish an online digital forum led by children and young people. It will operate by Skype and will be an opportunity for information to be shared between young people and the Police, providing a platform for the diverse communities across Coventry to discuss the issues that most affect them, directly with officers. It is hoped that by

using a “digital” platform the forum will attract and engage more young people from across the city to be involved and will provide longevity to the group.

**Solihull Army Cadets** – Warwickshire and West Midlands Army Cadet force matched funded £11k from the Active Citizens Fund to set up a new Army Cadet Force detachment in Solihull's rural sector. The rural sector had previously been identified as having a gap in youth provision and was experiencing youth related anti-social behaviour. The existing two Army Cadet Force detachments in Solihull were both full with long waiting lists. The Ministry of Defence pays for on-going costs of new detachments but not set up costs. Detachments are run by volunteers and the Active Citizen Fund will pay for recruitment and training of new volunteers enabling the new rural detachment to be up and running quickly and providing much needed opportunities for young people living in the rural areas of Solihull.

**‘Youth Engagement/Procedural Justice’ Engagement Events** – All NPUs, agreed to allocate £700 from their Active Citizen funds to facilitate a series of local youth engagement/procedural justice events which culminated in a force-wide event hosted by the Chief Constable. The events focused on engagement with BME children and young people and were designed to seek views about perceptions of fairness

**Sandwell ‘Youth Takeover’ Day** – Sandwell NPU have used Active Citizens funding to support the existing Sandwell Youth Forum – SHAPE. SHAPE gives children and young people the opportunity to come together and influence how public sector services are delivered in Sandwell. The Active Citizens funding was used to facilitate a ‘youth takeover’ of a Sandwell NPU monthly management meeting. A team of a dozen young people, aged 14-16, from a mixture of local Academy Schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) set the agenda, chaired the meeting and used it to question and challenge NPU Inspectors and senior police leaders about how local policing was delivered in Sandwell.

**Dudley SOUP** – Dudley NPU, working with Dudley Community Voluntary Sector have adopted an approach to encourage children & young people to better connect with their neighbours of all ages in order to grow social capital with their communities. They have actively encouraged young people to attend and pitch suggestions at social enterprise events alongside older members of the community so that all parties can see and be influenced by different perspectives.

## PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**CYP Objective - *Better engaging with young people to understand their concerns, perceptions of crime and personal safety.***

23. The new West Midlands Police People & Organisational Development (P&OD) department will appoint a dedicated member of the resourcing team with specific responsibility for Young People.
24. The role will cover a range of aspects including:
  - Apprenticeships
  - Graduate entry
  - Cadets
  - Industrial placements
  - College/University engagement.

25. The P&OD teams seeks to be outcomes based in its approach to engaging with young people and will identify a set of key performance indicators that will be used to demonstrate progress against our targets in this area.
26. The P&OD teams are keen to participate in and support new initiatives that will continue to expand and grow our commitment to young people.

## **WMP2020 DIGITAL EXPERIENCE FOR CITIZENS**

**CYP Objective - *Creating a culture that ensures all staff, in all roles understand and adopt the key principle that every contact with a young person is an opportunity for intervention and building trust.***

27. WMNow is West Midlands Police's new free community messaging service, launched as part of the force's on-going commitment to keeping in touch with local communities. It is free to sign up to and members of the public can register according to their interests and where they live and work.
28. It provides updates about what's happening in all areas across the West Midlands - whether it's details of incidents, timely crime prevention advice, community events or appeals for information. It ensures the public receive targeted updates that are focused on their own interests and areas.
29. At this stage of its development WMNow is not being specifically targeted at children and young people. The minimum age to register is 16 years old and of the 12,897 members of the public who have signed up only 598 of them are aged 16-24 years old (4.6%).
30. However, it is still relatively early days for the system and, to date, there has been no demographic specific marketing. Registration levels are reviewed every month and going forward this review will inform how the system is marketed if there remains a clear deficit of users in a certain demographic.
31. Opportunities have been discussed with and work is on-going to ensure the Digital Experience for Citizens (DEC) project team continues to engage with existing youth forums (Youth Commissioners/Youth Procedural Justice Forum) to ensure the voice of young people is fully heard in the design of new digital services. Young people will form a significant part of the user testing phase of the programme
32. In addition, there are a number of exciting youth digital engagements pilots, operating across the West Midlands, that are also being linked into the DEC project for evaluation.

## **CASE STUDY**

**Safebook 4 Schools** - Sandwell Neighbourhood Policing Unit has joined with Sandwell Council's Education Department and local enterprise company WAMBIZ to pilot a new student-inspired private social network that allows staff, students, parents and local neighbourhood police officers to communicate in a safe and secure environment.

Having being successfully delivered in secondary schools in Rowley Regis, plans are well advanced to roll the system out across the borough.

With no financial costs for local policing and minimal training required for officers and PCSOs, the pilot will seek to demonstrate how West Midlands Police can continue to engage with children and young people using technology and innovation already being developed within local communities.

## STOP AND SEARCH

**CYP Objective - *Creating a culture that ensures all staff, in all roles understand and adopt the key principle that every contact with a young person is an opportunity for intervention and building trust.***

33. The use of police stop and search powers is an emotive issue for many children and young people and so the C&YP delivery plan specifically references the work which has been undertaken in recent years to ensure stop and search powers are used fairly and proportionately when applied to children and young people.

**Table - Stop and Search Data**

2011/12 – 64,000 searches, 4% arrested
2012/13 – 49,500 searches, 6% arrested
2013/14 – 28,000 searches, 11% arrested
2014/15 – 15,500 searches, 13% arrested (23% positive outcomes)
2015/16 – 18,127 searches, 16% arrested (25% positive outcomes)
2016/17 to date – 12431 searches, 18.9% arrested (28.8% positive outcomes)

34. In 2014 all front-line police officers received refresher training in the use of stop and search including interacting with young people.
35. In recent years, there has been considerable investment into ensuring stop and search data is more accurate. The introduction of a new 'eSearch' database in 2014 allowed, for the first time, the accurate recoding of stop and search data included the number of positive outcomes.
36. Of the 12,431 searches conducted in 2016/17, 2490 (21.4%) relate to children and young people aged 10-17 years old.
37. Of those searches 23.5% resulted in positive outcomes which is approx. 5% lower than the Force overall total for positive outcomes. Further evaluation is currently being undertaken to better understand the reasons for this discrepancy.
38. The data also shows that, in 2016-17, there were three searches of children aged under 10. Each of these searches has been reviewed and the circumstances justified the use of police powers (two related to children in company with adults believed to be shoplifting and one related to a 9-year-old with behavioural difficulties in possession of a hammer who appropriately safeguarded and referred to children's services).
39. Following successful recruitment campaigns at the PCC's Youth Summits and the Chief Constable's Youth Procedural Justice Workshop almost all local Stop and Search Scrutiny Panels now have young people representation.
40. In 2016 POCA funding was used to launch a pilot in Birmingham to deliver stop and search inputs to secondary schools. The aim was to improve awareness about stop and search to 11-17 year olds. The initiative has now been rolled out across the force area using five Community Mentors to deliver the programme.



41. The WMP approach to stop and search remains the subject of quarterly Executive Team oversight meetings and any issues around related to disproportionately or unfairness involving children and young people will continue to be addressed at this forum.

## CASE STUDY

**Dudley Lay Observers Scheme** - In 2016 the Dudley Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel worked with young people, Legal Services and parents to launch an initiative which allowed young people to take part in stop and search lay observations. The first session involved a 15-year-old boy witnessing a wide variety of policing activity including stop and search activity.

## LOCAL YOUTH INTERVENTION & PREVENTION PROJECTS

42. In 2015/16 a review of local policing youth activity identified over 40 local youth intervention and prevention projects involving neighbourhood police officers, PCSOs and Young Persons Officers.
43. The interventions varied in size, complexity and partnership involvement but they reflected the passion and commitment being shown by front-line staff to work in communities with children and young people who were at risk of criminalisation or victimisation.
44. Many of the projects aligned with national best practice but the review highlighted that some required greater focus on targeting the most vulnerable young people.
45. Every neighbourhood police officer and PCSO received two days training as part of WMP2020 to better understand intervention and prevention. The training included case studies about successful projects and opportunities to share their best practice and ideas.
46. In addition, the Next Generation Local Policing resourcing model retained both a local Partnerships Team within each Borough and a dedicated Young Persons Officer whose role would involve collating best practice from across the force and supporting neighbourhood officers in co-ordinating successful youth intervention and prevention projects.
47. In 2016 Force Intelligence began to work on developing a simple *evaluation toolkit* that could be used locally to assess the effectiveness of individual projects. Although the work was paused during preparations for WMP2020 Transition State 1, efforts to complete the toolkit will continue in 2017.

## CASE STUDIES

**Smethwick Boot Camp** – Sandwell 8-week initiative supporting children aged 7-11, at risk from school exclusion, to develop self-confidence, personal responsibility and resilience. Range of partners including police, fire service, local authority, primary schools, military and voluntary sector.

**Oakwood Prison Project** – Dudley initiative targeting young people at risk of exclusion or already excluded visiting prison to meet and engage with inmates and staff.

**Consequences of Crime Programme** – Birmingham North initiative working with 15-16 year old first time offenders involving peer-to-peer discussion groups involving ex-offenders and victims of crime.

## FORCEWIDE INTERVENTION & PREVENTION: PRINCE'S TRUST

**CYP Objective - *Prioritising our intervention activity towards those young people who are most at risk of offending or becoming victims of crime.***

48. West Midlands Police works in partnership with the Prince's Trust to deliver Prince's Trust Team Programmes – 12-week personal development programmes for 16-25 year olds – across all 8 Neighbourhood Policing Units.
49. The Team Programmes offer work experience, qualifications, practical skills, community projects and a residential week and are designed to divert those young people (often care leavers) at risk from social exclusion and divert them away from crime and towards education and employment.
50. The Team programmes are delivered in conjunction with local Further and Higher Education Colleges across the region. WMP provides two Team Leaders (seconded Neighbourhood police officers and/or PCSO) to each Team Programme and over the past 18 months Team Leaders have worked closely with Neighbourhood Policing Teams to ensure that referrals to the Team Programmes represent those young people who are considered most at risk from criminality.
51. The most recent Team Programmes confirm that two-thirds of the young people on the courses were offenders or assessed as being likely to offend. Two-thirds also possessed four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

**Table 1 - Prince's Trust Team Programme Participants - February Intake 2017**

	B'ham		Coventry		Dudley		Solihull		Sandwell		Walsall		W'ton		Force	
Participants	39		9		9		10		14		9		9		99	
Offender/Ex-Offender	17	44%	3	33%	0	0%	2	20%	4	29%	4	44%	0	0%	30	30%
Likelihood of Offending	12	31%	4	44%	1	11%	4	40%	10	71%	3	33%	1	11%	35	35%
4+ ACEs	23	59%	8	89%	6	67%	9	90%	8	57%	7	78%	4	44%	65	66%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	2	22%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%

\*Learning Difficulties.

### CASE STUDIES

'Andy', aged 20, was referred to the Dudley Team Programme by a local neighbourhood police officer. 'Andy' had come to police attention after he had made several hoax bomb calls, whilst he was drunk. 'Andy' was a binge drinker and would often put himself and others in danger whilst intoxicated. As an alternative to the criminal justice system 'Andy' was given a conditional caution, referred to specialist addiction support and invited to participate in the Team Programme. 'Andy' was a very shy young man when he joined team and he struggled to communicate with others purely because of his low self-confidence and self-esteem. However, he completed every challenge which was set and achieved a full qualification by the end of the 12 weeks. After the programme, 'Andy' went to work in a retail store on a voluntary basis for eight weeks. He proved

to be trusted and reliable worker and is now working there on a full-time basis. 'Andy' has had no further dealings with the Police.

'Billy', aged 17, was a daily cannabis user at a very young age. He has seven offences and three convictions between 2011 and 2015, including supplying Class A drugs, driving whilst drunk and without a licence and a two-year sentence to a Youth Offending Institute for armed robbery. 'Billy' successfully completed the Sandwell Team Programme in 2016 and went on to complete the Construction Skills Certification Scheme. He no longer smokes Cannabis and has been in full-time employment for eight months in a construction store. Since completing the Team Programme 'Billy' has not committed any further offences.

'Carly' was placed in care when both of her parents were serving custodial sentences. She has one previous conviction for assault from 2016 resulting in a referral order for four months and a restraining order. She was a regular missing person from care and assessed as a high-risk victim of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). 'Carly' participated in the Birmingham Team Programme in 2016 where she was described as *'the lead female in the team who proved her leadership qualities throughout the latter parts of the programme.'* After successfully completing the Team Programme, she commenced a college course. She is no longer considered a CSE risk and has not come to the attention of the police since.

52. The Prince's Trust Team Programme continues to demonstrate reductions in reoffending demand, helps next generation local policing to better understand and reduce vulnerability amongst young people and builds strong strategic partnerships with many local businesses and community organisations.
53. West Midlands Police is not exploiting the full potential of the Prince's Trust – in addition to the Team Programme there are other preventative programmes offered by PT which are not currently being utilised and the local partnership engagement with businesses would benefit from.
54. A comprehensive business case is being developed to consider how and if West Midlands Police should continue to work with Prince's Trust as part of the WMP2020 operating model. The business case has already identified the need for an automated performance framework.

## **FORCEWIDE INTERVENTION & PREVENTION: SPORT WMP**

***CYP Objectives – Encouraging greater involvement of local communities to enhance divisionary activities with and for young people. Prioritising our intervention activity towards those young people who are most at risk of offending or becoming victims of crime.***

55. Sport WMP (formerly Reducing Crime through Sport) is a three-year programme of sporting activity aimed at reducing youth related anti-social behaviour.
56. The project, which will run through to May 2017, is the result of a successful bid of £245,000 from Sport England's Community Sport Activation Fund. It is the first time that Sport England has worked with a police force, using sport to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
57. The programme is targeted at 14-24 year olds at risk of offending.
58. Based on consultation with children and young people the programme includes a varied range of activity including football, street dance and even training for coaching qualifications.

59. The programme is being delivered in 15 'Priority Areas' across the West Midlands through qualified sports, mentors and coaches identified and/or deployed by County Sports Partnerships
60. Sport WMP is currently on target to exceed the anticipated number of participants

**Table 2 - Number of Target Participants per year for Sport WMP**

	<b>Participants</b>
<b>Year One</b>	3500
<b>Year two</b>	2605
<b>Year Three</b>	1360
<b>Total</b>	<b>7465</b>

61. The programme has compared the reductions youth-related ASB in the target 15 'Priority Areas' against the wider force reductions. In total, there has been a greater reduction in youth-related ASB in those areas where Sport WMP has been in operation compared to the rest of the force area.

**Table 3 - Recorded ASB with 14-24 year old Offender**

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Priority Area</b>	<b>Change from Yr1 to Yr2</b>	<b>Change from Yr2 to Yr3</b>
Birmingham	Sparkbrook and Sparkhill	-27.8%	-10.4%
	Kingstanding	-25.4%	-8.5%
	Three Estates Kings Norton	-51.7%	-23.8%
	Aston	-20.6%	+1.9%
	Soho Road	-17.5%	-56.3%
	Summerfield & Winson Green	-30.3%	+21.0%
Coventry	Hillfields and Stoke	-42.5%	+20.6%
Dudley	Dudley	+15.9%	-33.3%
Solihull	Smiths Wood	-36.4%	+2.9%
Sandwell	Princes End	+26.4%	-38.8%
	Smethwick Soho and Victoria	-26.8%	-38.9%
Walsall	Birchills Blakenall Coalpool	-37.8%	+7.8%

	St Matthews Caldmore	-23.9%	-7.1%
Wolverhampton	Heath Town and Park Village	-43.9%	+5.4%
	Low Hill and The Scotlands	+19.2%	-32.3%
Total for Sport WMP areas		-22.7%	-13.6%
Total for West Midlands Police		-9.9%	-11.6%

62. The Sport WMP project is continuing to develop strategic relationship with the Rathbone Trust, Dame Kelly Trust, Princes Trust and others to provide long-term positive outcomes for the participants.
63. Sport England has used Sport WMP as an evidence-based example of good practice at a national conference about the power of sport to prevent crime. This was the only project showcased by Sport England.
64. Sport WMP has started utilising Substance Views, an independent evaluator approved by the Home Office, to evaluate the outcomes of the project. Loughborough University, Street Games and Sport WMP lead are keen to evaluate Sport WMP in support of national research into the benefits of sport related activity to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
65. Three regional celebration events will be held at the end of Year Three to acknowledge the achievements of the young people.

## LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

**CYP Objective - *Ensuring young people are not criminalised for behaviour that can be dealt with more appropriately by other means***

66. Children in care continue to be significantly over represented in the youth justice system relative to their non-looked after peers.
67. There are challenges in relation to available data but we know that they are at least two or three times more likely to offend than their peers.
68. Nationally, in 2013, 6.2% of children in care aged 10 to 17 were convicted of a criminal offence or were subject to a final warning, compared to the national average of 1.5% for all children. One third of children in custody have been in care, although children in care make up just 1% of the total child population. Over 25% of the prison population have spent time in care during their childhood.
69. Children in care often have a negative view of police which can be based on their experiences of police engagement with their family or passed onto them from their birth parents. They are more likely to be vulnerable to becoming a victim of crime or being exploited and the boundaries within which they behave are often different to those in a 'traditional' family unit. They are likely to have experienced trauma which will affect their behaviour disproportionately.

70. Children in care also make up a significant proportion of the cohort of children and young people who go missing on a regular basis and we must recognise the potential risk of harm to the individual and put measures in place to mitigate this.
71. Within the West Midlands work has begun to establish a Looked After Children working group involving representatives from police, local authorities, care providers and care leavers. The ambition is to agree a Looked After Children Protocol that will minimise the likelihood that a child in care will be criminalised.
72. In addition, work is currently on-going to identify how best to record West Midlands Police contact with every looked after child to provide much more accurate data for assessment and evaluation.

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

***CYP Objectives – Working with partners and young people to understand what works well in crime prevention and sharing best practice. Develop data sharing agreements with partners to ensure young people receive the right level of support.***

73. Due to the West Midlands Police's priority to reduce Violence and the specific risks to children and young people it was agreed that a specific subject matter expert (SME) would be appointed to co-ordinate the force's activity to prevent youth violence.
74. The work by the West Midlands Preventing Violence Alliance (WMPVA) identified that addressing adverse childhood experiences (ACE) in young people was a significant factor in reducing violence. Over the past 12 months activity has been undertaken to progress many of the WMPVA's recommendations:
75. **Education programme to reduce youth violence** – Providing strong relationships who can support individual self-reliance is a key measure to mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experiences. The Mentors in Violence Programme aims to deliver inputs using students in Years 10-11 to support children in Year 7. The programme continues to be trialled in six Birmingham Schools and is currently being evaluated through the Force Academic Research in partnerships with Keele University.
76. Early feedback suggests strong school support for the programme leads to the positive outcomes, with school attainment, behaviour and attendance all improving. Conversely, without school support positive outcomes have been limited.
77. The programme has been adopted across schools in Coventry, with teachers having attended the training in Glasgow. Other boroughs are aware of and exploring the programme, however relationships with schools are in different places and this impacts on the opportunities to develop the approach.
78. **Embedding a restorative justice approach in schools (Ages 7-16)** – This is a pilot programme taking place across schools in Solihull using the principles of Restorative Justice to address all internal school conflicts and issues between students. Early findings from one school suggest that where restorative justice is used regularly fixed-term exclusions have reduced from 215 to 12 in the course of a year, school attendance has increased by 1.5% and students have described being much happier and safer at school.
79. **Educating parents whose children are at risk of being involved in violence** - Adopting the ACEs learning that children exposed to or witnessing domestic violence are more likely to be offenders or perpetrators of violence. Dudley Neighbourhood Policing Unit has adopted

best practice from Cheshire Police and is piloting Operation ENCOMPASS – an initiative which seeks to break this cycle by identifying and supporting children at an early stage through educational awareness and informing parents of the process. This requires notification to the child’s school when attending to monitor the child’s behaviour to understand they have witnessed domestic abuse during the previous 24 hours.

80. The Force Academic Research Unit have, separately, commissioned work to evaluate which ‘parenting programmes’ nationally offer the greatest opportunities for the West Midlands.
81. **Keeping children safe on our roads** – Central Motorway Patrol Group (CMPG) are now working closely with West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) to develop and embed programmes which seek to educate children and young people about the dangers on the roads. There has been the investment of an officer from CMPG to work within WMFS partnership team to support this work.
82. **Enhance partnership support for children experiencing multiple ACEs** – In 2016 WMPVA held a series of regional and local conferences to share knowledge and experiences of ACEs across partnerships. In November 2016, to coincide with the roll-out of the West Midlands Targeted Intervention & Prevention Tool (TIPT) to identify ACE children and young people, a regional seminar was held in Birmingham attended by over fifty representatives from schools, local authorities and policing units from across the West Midlands. Development of an educational programme to support ‘Craig’s Story’ is on hold at the moment due to examination of the use of Craig’s Story.
83. **Tackle the growing problem of teenagers in violent intimate relationships** – The Mentors in Violence programme incorporates aspects of education with regards to healthy relationships. Public Health are commissioning a theatre production company to design a production which can be delivered in schools which raises awareness of healthy relationships and seeks to highlight the impacts of violent relationships in young people.
84. **Tackling Gang Violence** – As part of WMP2020 a dedicated Force CID Prevent Team has been established. The aim is to ensure that intervention and prevention remains a core role within the investigative world in addition to responding to incidents of violence. The Force CID Prevent Team are currently leading on a range of ‘gang’ schools inputs across secondary schools within the West Midlands. The team will also work to support and implement the findings and recommendations from the PCC’s Commission on Gangs and Violence.

## REDUCING YOUTH REOFFENDING

***CYP Objectives – Working with partners and young people to understand what works well in crime prevention and sharing best practice. Develop data sharing agreements with partners to ensure young people receive the right level of support.***

85. Within the integrated offender management (IOM) re-modelling West Midlands Police has now standardised its approach to children and young people from a reducing (re) offending perspective.
86. All NPUs now have specific resources under their vulnerability strands for children caught or at risk of offending. The model introduces two roles within police IOM teams: Youth Crime Officer (YCO) and a new role of Youth Offender Managers (YOM).
87. Youth Crime Officers work with Youth Offending Services to support children and young people who are subject of out-of-court disposals (OOC) such as condition resolutions, youth cautions and youth conditional cautions.

88. Youth Offender Managers work with Youth Offending Services to support those children and young people who have been sentenced by a court.
89. The WMP2020 model saw West Midlands Police increase investment into dedicated support for children and young people from an initial 10 Youth Crime Officers to a combined resource of 33 FTE incorporating both Youth Crime Officers and Youth Offender Managers.
90. The approach and increased investment for Youth Crime Officer and Offender Managers demonstrates the commitment to invest to intervene earlier and prevent children from becoming repeat offenders.
91. The approach highlights an increased focus on out-of-court disposals and criminal justice disposals that better tackle the triggers of offending.
92. Youth Disposal Panels continue to operate and extend the provision for local partners to make beneficial disposal decisions that are suited to prevent and deter re-offending without the need for formal court sanction. There is clear support for proportionate interventions that do not stigmatise children that may have made poor choices rather than clear intent to adopt a criminal route of life.
93. Youth Crime Officers and Youth Offender Managers are engaging with more multi-agency panel discussions, such as risk and vulnerability meetings, in an attempt support earlier, more proportionate interventions into children and young people. This new role is a far cry from the '*catch and convict*' interpretation of historic offender management.

#### **PARTNERSHIP WORKING CHALLENGES**

**Youth Offending Service** - Across the region, as a result of funding pressures, there has been a notable reduction in service delivery amongst WMP's main partner - Youth Offending Services. Even in some of the historically strongest boroughs service delivery is being impacted, such as lack of available interventions both for statutory and non-statutory outcomes.

There is growing evidence of Youth Crime Officers beginning to carry YOS caseloads, diluting the distinct role of these specialist officers at a time when West Midlands Police is ambitious to increase its appetite to intervene earlier. Examples include YOS staff unable to support out-of-court disposals plans and instead waiting until they are court disposals. This approach risks earlier entrance into the criminal justice system and the increased likelihood of repeat referrals into the YOS – both of which cause further costs to services and poorer outcomes for children and young people.

**Taylor Review of Youth Justice System** - The 36 recommendations within the Taylor Review have featured within discussion at the West Midlands Reducing Reoffending Steering Group, however at present no formal local response has been formulated. The forum for YOS managers is yet to re-convene and the position regarding the governance locally for youth offending management remains unclear.

West Midlands Police's increased capacity and appetite for earlier intervention and prevention, combined with an intervention and prevention focus for neighbourhood policing teams, bodes well for the force to respond to the challenges posed within the Taylor review. However, the capacity for Youth Services to engage in this ambitious approach remains unclear.

#### **REDUCING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DETAINED IN POLICE CUSTODY**



**CYP Objective - Ensuring young people are not criminalised for behaviour that can be dealt with more appropriately by other means**

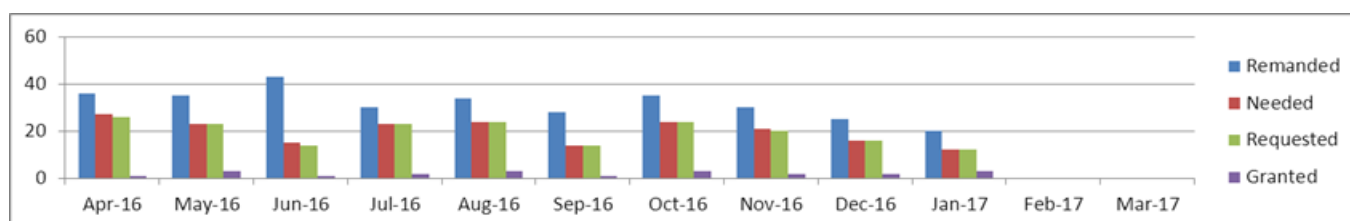
94. Between April 2016 and January 2017 West Midlands Police detained a total of 54,929 detainees at one of the force's custody suites. Of these 4472 (8%) were children or young people aged under 18.
95. Half (54%) of children and young people were detained at Perry Barr and Oldbury custody suites. These custody suites have been purposely designed to benefit the detention of children and young people including the use of a discrete entrance, charging desk area and detention rooms which minimise the likelihood of a juvenile detainee coming into contact with an adult detainee.
96. The average length of detention for children and young people in police custody was 09:35 hours (compared to 15:09 hours for adults). The Taylor Review of Youth Justice recommends no more than six hours.

	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17
Juv det length	08:41	08:59	09:25	09:58	08:34	08:26	10:07	09:40	11:18	10:44
Adult det length	14:31	14:14	15:04	15:00	14:48	15:24	15:18	15:22	16:12	15:39

97. During an HMIC inspection of West Midlands Police custody suites in February 2017 the following concern was raised:

*'Despite attempts at joint working with partners to try and obtain alternative accommodation for children charged but refused bail, this had not resulted in an improved position. Most children in these circumstances remained in custody overnight because there was no appropriate alternative accommodation available.'*

98. West Midlands Police is a signatory to the multi-agency 'Concordat on Children in Custody' which states that when an arrest is necessary, every effort should be made to avoid holding children overnight in police cells and alternative, local authority, accommodation sought.
99. Between April 2016 and January 2017, 316 juveniles were remanded in custody following charge. This remains a high number and further work is on-going to establish whether custody officers are applying to low a threshold when deciding to remand a child or young person in custody.
100. Of these 316 juveniles, 199 required alternative accommodation (The remaining 117 were arrested under warrants or breach of bail and are therefore exempt from the alternative accommodation legislation).
101. Of these 199 juveniles, alternative non-police accommodation, was only provided for 21 children and young people (10%).



102. In three cases this was because West Midlands Police failed to make the proper request, but in the other 175 cases it was because no suitable local authority accommodation was available.
103. There is an agreed escalation policy between West Midlands Police and all seven local authorities and failures to provide alternative accommodation is routinely highlighted to Local Children Safeguarding Boards. However, despite these measures the provision of accommodation remains scarce.
104. It is likely that without a significant improvement in the availability of accommodation this will continue to an issue identified by the HMIC.

## VOICE OF THE CHILD

***CYP Objectives - Creating a culture that ensures all staff, in all roles understand and adopt the key principle that every contact with a young person is an opportunity for intervention and building trust. Involving young people in our decision-making.***

105. One of the many important lessons learnt following the tragic deaths of Khyra Ishaq (aged 6), Keanu Williams (aged 2), Levi Blu Cassin (aged 4), Fenton Hogan (aged 2) and Daniel Pelka (aged 4) was that front-line staff needed to start 'seeing' and 'hearing' what children and young people were telling us – not just verbally – but by behaviour, actions, reactions and surroundings.
106. The ambition for West Midlands Police is to become a 'service for children' – where every interaction with a child or young person is an opportunity to protect, care and offer friendship. This is particularly relevant to children who have witnessed domestic violence. A dip sample of 210 domestic abuse incidents in 2016 where children were present found that, in 48% of the incidents officers could not provide any evidence of having spoken to or seen the children.
107. In 2016 the Public Protection Unit (PPU) launched a force-wide campaign, supported by local senior leadership teams, to raise awareness about the 'Voice of the Child' - the need to ensure that officers attending any incidents involving children took into account the 'whole picture' and paid particular attention to children within the household.
108. Voice of the Child remains subject to regular qualitative and quantitative audit and examples of best practice shared across the force through the Project SENTINEL training and governance.

## CASE STUDY

**Coventry Domestic Abuse Incident** – One evening, at approximately midnight, Response officers attended an address following a call from a neighbour about a disturbance. A male was found drunk with a fresh black eye. A female was present with cuts and grazes to her cheek. Neither party would tell officers how they came by their injuries albeit the assumption was they had been fighting.

Officers checked 2-year-old baby in cot and found him fully dressed in day time clothes. Officers advised the mother to change baby's nappy and dress him but mother seemed unable to clean the child properly or find any bedclothes that were clean and dry. Officers asked to see the child's Red Book and found a letter from the hospital detailing a suspected non-accidental injury from a few months earlier. Mother was later found to only have supervised access to the child. Both parents arrested for public order offence and child taken into police protective custody.

As a result of the Response officers assessing the whole scene a vulnerable young child was successfully protected.

## **CONCLUSION**

109. Over the past 18 months the children and young person strategy has helped to focus a range of different police activity into a comprehensive delivery plan designed to recognise the unique vulnerabilities that children and young people face and the unique opportunities that West Midlands Police has to engage with and protect them.
110. At both a local and force level there are many examples of national best practice. There are also many opportunities for further improvements and continued development.
111. The consistent approach, however, has been the ambition and intent of West Midlands Police to put children and young people at the heart of its mission statement to prevent crime, protect people and help those in need.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

112. None

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

113. None

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

114. The Board is asked to note that significant progress has been made to achieve the strategic aims of the West Midlands Police Children and Young People Strategy.

**Matthew Ward**  
**Chief Superintendent**  
**Children and Young People Lead**