



**AGENDA ITEM 07**

**JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE  
29 September 2021**

**HMICFRS VFM Follow Up  
Response & Advanced Public Order**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. This paper follows on from the HMICFRS Value for Money Report submitted to the Committee in June 2021 and covers a more in depth view of Incident / Response Management and Advanced Public Order where the force have been cost outliers for the last two years.
- 1.2. For 2020/21, the table below shows that Advanced Public Order was £5.20 per head of population above the average for our most similar force group. In contrast Incident / response management were £16.64 below the average for our most similar force group.

Sub-objective	Objective	Subjective	2019/20 Outlier	2020/21 Outlier
Advanced Public Order	Operational supt.	Police Officer costs	£5.42	£5.20
Incident / response mgt.	Local Policing	Police Officer costs	-£16.51	-£16.64

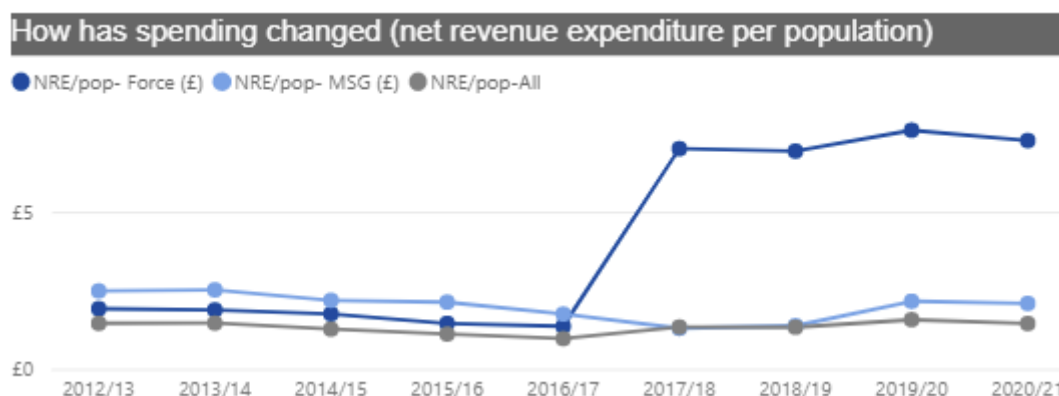
**2. CONTEXT – TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE SINCE 2014**

- 2.1. In 2014, West Midlands Police (WMP) committed to transform the force to help us meet the demands of modern policing, manage citizen expectations and reduce costs. Our five-year plan has brought about unparalleled change to the way the force operates.
- 2.2. There have been a number of phases of the transformation. First of all, we changed the way we organise our work, with a new operating model. The redesign and implementation took place between September 2015 to 2016; with a deliberate shift to a more corporate delivery model.
- 2.3. Next, we transformed our back office, our public facing systems and introduced new kit for officers since then. The next phase is focused on connecting systems, to support the changes made in earlier phases of the transformation.

2.4. After 2020, WMP continue to use innovative digital technologies and evidence-based, preventative policing techniques to help improve policing and best serve our public.

### 3. OUTLIER 1 – ADVANCED PUBLIC ORDER

3.1. From the chart below you will see that we have been an outlier on the VFM profiles for Advanced Public Order since 2017/18. This is linked to the introduction of the new operating model the force introduced in December 2016.



3.2. As part of the new operating model the force introduced a new capability to the Force called the Force Support Unit. This unit is a 24/7 uniformed capability set up to provide support and resilience to other departments. The unit provide tactical support in both pre-planned and dynamic operations across the Force and all officers are public order trained.

3.3. The West Midlands are one of the only (if not only) force in the UK to have a dedicated Force Support Unit. Since the team were established, from a Police Objective Analysis point of view, that feeds into the VFM profiles, we have captured the costs of this team against the Advanced Public Order objective. The definition Advanced Public Order is:

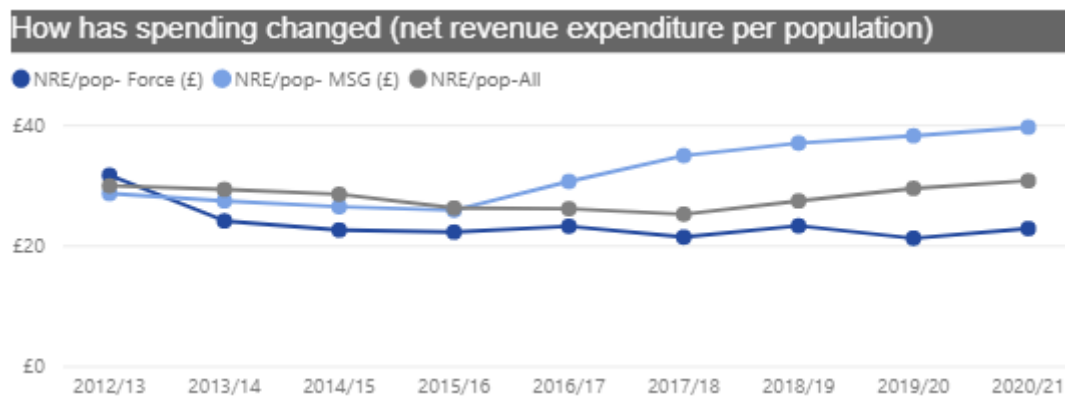
- Tactical Support unit, trained officers who deal with spontaneous disorder in any part of the forces. Core functions of the unit include:
  - To provide extra operational staff wherever required in the force.
  - To manage, maintain and provide missing person or crime scene search facilities.
  - Provide a capability to search and recover under CBRN requirements.
  - To provide trained resources for major events / incidents, planned or spontaneous (including high profile sporting events).
  - Protests e.g. EDL.
- Cost of policing civil disturbances, this is to include any income received in relation to the civil disturbances and any backfill costs (if easily identifiable).

3.4. On speaking with the operational lead for this area, we have established that a more appropriate split for this team would be to evenly split the costs between Neighbourhood Policing, Incident / Response Management and Advanced Public Order.

3.5. The 2021/22 VFM profile will therefore show a drop in the cost of Advanced Public Order in line with this change. It should however be noted that we are likely to remain as an outlier in this area due to the nature of how we are structured with a dedicated Force Support Unit.

#### 4. OUTLIER 2 - INCIDENT / RESPONSE MANAGEMENT

4.1. The chart below shows the movement in Incident / Response Management since 2012/13. The gap between our Forces' cost of Incident / Response Management per head of population and our Most Similar Group's cost per head of population has increased from around £3 to £17 over the period illustrated. There are a number of factors that contribute to this difference.



4.2. Between 2013/14 to 2015/16 officer FTE's in Response were running at around 1,300 officer for both ourselves and Greater Manchester, with Merseyside and West Yorkshire running at around 1,000 FTE as slightly smaller forces.

4.3. Between 2015/16 and 2018/19 a number of changes happened that increased the gap from £3 to £14 compare to our most similar forces.

4.4. Greater Manchester increased the number of officers within their incident / response management team by around 1,000 officers. This is linked to Greater Manchester's policing strategy delivered through its policing model which is based on Integrated Neighbourhood Policing teams. This means that a large number of their police officers are therefore included within Response and are managed through their local policing units.

4.5. Their job title is Neighbourhood Police Officer with the key aim of the job being to respond to incidents within their designated local area, responsible for problem solving and understand their community and the current issues, identify and tackle repeat demand with colleagues and partners, provide proactive capability for the LPT, responsible for less serious investigations and prisoner processing and attend appointments.

4.6. West Yorkshire Policing have also increased their numbers by around 300-400 FTE, also based and managed locally. Their officers are responsible for responding to 999 emergency calls and priority calls, respond to standard grade calls, scene guard, custody cover, missing person enquiries, proactive work, and manage their workloads, which include statements, forensic enquiries, interviewing suspects by

interview or arrest then if there is sufficient evidence to charge then a full file it required to send to CPS for pre charge advice.

- 4.7. At the same time, as part of the new operating model, West Midlands Police centralised the response teams under a central department. As part of centralising the function Force Response's sole focus is now around responding to incidents. They seek to resolve as many of the public's problems at the first point of encountering the police, using the THRIVE+ model to influence what they do (Primary Investigation). Where this is not possible, they refer cases for slower time Intervention and Prevention to Force CID / PPU; completing a hand over to Force CID / PPU who then take over the investigation. Also, a large volume of our diary appoints (Priority 4's) are also carried out by our Initial Investigation teams within Force CID.
- 4.8. To highlight, the Police Objective Analysis description for Incident / Response Management is to include officers whose primary role is to response to emergency and priority incidents. As you can see, this is the main focus of our Force Response department whilst in comparison our most similar forces also cover additional elements within their role such as diary appointments, scene guard, custody cover, interviews / further enquiries, statements and problem solving / community issues. This significantly distorts the comparison between the forces as we capture the costs of these additional elements within our Force Support Unit (as outlined above), Neighbourhood Teams and Force CID/ PPU Investigation teams.
- 4.9. Finally, from 2019/20 to date, the gap has increased by a further £3 up to nearly £17 per head of population where further investment has been made by our most similar forces. This is primarily linked to the national uplift programme where we will see an investment of 252 additional police officers during 2021/22, this coupled with the transfer of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Force Support units costs should see the gap in this area reduced. However, due to the nature and set up within our Force v's our most similar force's the gap within this area is expected to remain quite significant.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1. Members of the Committee are asked to note the content of the report and await the release of the 2021/22 VFM profiles and findings on the outliers.