

**Police and Crime Plan Priority: N/A**

**Title:** Emergency Chapter – by Exception and also Organisational Recovery, and Force’s assessment of the short and longer term crime patterns as the Covid emergency subsides

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**PURPOSE OF PAPER**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide assurance that West Midlands Police (WMP) has an understanding of likely crime demand during the COVID-19 recovery period, and plans in place to respond to this. It is also to demonstrate how WMP is maintaining its organisational health during the recovery period.

**BACKGROUND**

2. West Midlands Police continues to prioritise the response to COVID-19, maintaining a major incident response in partnership with the Strategic Coordination Group. WMP continues to support the effort to ‘*Stay alert, control the virus and save lives*’.
3. The ability to deliver critical services across the West Midlands throughout the COVID-19 crisis is essential. The force have done a great deal of thinking and work to understand the balance and interdependency between resourcing levels, demand, risk and service levels for the public.
4. The lockdown and the restrictions in place continue to ease however, numerous restrictions outlined by the government as part of the response to COVID-19 remain in place across the country. There are regular reviews of the restrictions and WMP needs to be able to respond to these decisions whenever and whatever form they take. WMP

need to plan and prepare for the new normal following the current restrictions that have been put in place. This will also include a number of factors that will need to be considered to determine what principles are put in place to deliver services that will manage the increase in demand we are likely to face.

## **PART 1: WEST MIDLANDS POLICE RESPONDS EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO COVID-19, AND WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC OF THE WEST MIDLANDS**

5. This section will outline the Force's activity to address the objective set by the Police and Crime Commissioner as part of the emergency update to the Police and Crime Plan 2016 – 2020. The Force will report on crime demand during the response to COVID-19, in addition to providing demand predictions and its organisational and operational response plans for the next twelve months.

### **CRIME DEMAND**

#### *Crime demand patterns during the response, restart and recovery periods*

6. Crime and demand during the period of COVID-19 restrictions has been largely as predicted by WMP. A significant and immediate reduction in all crime types was experienced at the start of the lockdown. This has slowly risen during the period with increases being seen across domestic abuse, hate crime and other violence.
7. Currently domestic abuse and hate crime are at their highest ever volumes. Violence in public places, especially concerning under 25s, is increasing week on week and is likely to continue through the summer with young people out of education and restrictions on holiday activities.
8. Online offending is also increasing, driving record volumes of harassment. Domestic abuse, hate crime and neighbour disputes have also increased.

#### *Predicted Three-Month Demand Pattern*

9. It is highly likely that restrictions will continue to be lifted and crime patterns will begin to return to normal.

10. Children and young people will return to education in some form, leading to a steady increase in reports of child abuse and other violence associated with travel to and from.
11. It is likely that large public gatherings will continue into early autumn while nights remain lighter, driven by restricted access to other entertainment. This will increase the associated violence and anti-social behaviour in a period that would ordinarily see reductions.
12. Burglary and robbery will begin to increase in line with the usual seasonal patterns.
13. Cancelled annual leave during COVID-19 has caused a large backlog of annual leave for officers and staff which may lead to significant absences for the rest of the year. This could cause issues with the policing of major events e.g. Op Pelkin.

#### *Predicted Six-Month Demand Pattern*

14. By the end of the year it is predicted that crime will have returned to its usual volume although the patterns of offending may change.
15. Residential burglary and personal robbery will be the greatest seasonal threats at this time, with risks around business crime series and sporadic violence. However planning for periods such as Christmas and New Year will have to take into account restrictions on the hospitality sector and how displacement from traditional locations for celebrations may impact on policing resources.
16. The socio-economic impact of the period of restriction will become more apparent and may impact on demand. The most notable areas of impact will be on mental health and unemployment and thus, this could create an increase in demand.

#### *Predicted Twelve-Month Demand Pattern*

17. By summer 2021 the usual seasonal pattern of crime will have resumed and WMP will be entering a period of summer demand, which will see an increase in violence and anti-social behaviour. During this period we are likely to see an increase in staff absences.
18. Domestic abuse and hate crimes are likely to have stabilised at a higher volume driven by a continued increase in crime data integrity and how crimes are ethically recorded; alongside increased public confidence in police to deal with these matters.
19. The longer term consequences of recession, unemployment and deprivation are likely to have a significant impact on the West Midlands region. This will create further demand in already high demand geographies, such as Impact Areas.

20. Preparations for Commonwealth Games 2022 and the delivery of Coventry City of Culture will require significant resource.

21. Crime, and its investigation, is likely to continue to become more complex with increased online and digital offending.

## **ORGANISATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING TO ADDRESS DEMAND**

### *Assumptions, Plans and Objectives*

22. Current and future demand used the following key objectives for operational planning:

- Understand the current landscape, using data to develop our knowledge of the current and previous demand levels
- Identify opportunities to further reduce legacy work and outstanding suspects
- Maximise resilience across the force, in departments/NPUs during this period, particularly critical skills/roles
- Develop principles that can be adopted to manage demand during the post/part lifting of restrictions, including surge options

23. Due to the unpredictability of demand and the fact that there are no previous similar events of this kind, the team used planning assumptions to guide the operational planning.

24. The below assumptions were used to influence thinking and decision making:

- Some form of restrictions will remain in place for the rest of the year
- The majority of the public will continue to comply with restrictions
- That the variance of restrictions will be announced with little or no notice
- We will need to comply with some form of social distancing for the foreseeable future
- Schools will remain closed short term but will re-open (in some form) before the end of the year
- Self-Isolation and sickness within WMP will remain stable
- Deaths in the region will continue
- Projections from Data Laboratory are accurate

- Demand levels will increase as restrictions are partly or fully lifted
25. The arrival of the information technology system ControlWorks, at the beginning of March 2020 has seen a different way of managing calls for service; hence it is difficult to directly compare 2019 with 2020.
26. This work-stream provides the force with a clear understanding of the current demand levels and the opportunity to develop key tipping points to support the enacting of any principles that will manage an increase in demand. Working alongside key stakeholders will ensure that opportunities will be taken to continue reducing legacy work, for example, the number of outstanding suspects.
27. To identify the most appropriate resources to support the force it is imperative to understand the annual leave, training requirements and other abstractions alongside the department and neighbourhood policing unit current service offers that have been developed. Tactical activation of these principles will support the force in managing demand in any challenging periods.

#### *How we are using the COVID-19 powers*

28. The guidance and police powers in relation to COVID-19 have been updated. The main changes are in respect of gatherings. Which now state that no-one can participate in a gathering of more than 30 people that takes place in a dwelling, house boat or on public outdoor land (subject to certain exemptions). The approach is still to Engage, Explain, Educate and as last resort Enforce (4E). Where there is gathering of more than 30 people an officer may:

- Direct to disperse the gathering
- Direct a person to return to the place they are living
- Remove a person from the gathering

An officer may use reasonable force to remove a person in order to do so.

29. The amendments have also resulted in the re-opening of the majority of non-essential premises apart from a limited number, including nightclubs, swimming pools and gyms. There is continued engagement with local authorities over enforcement of premises open in contravention of the regulations.
30. The current total of directions to leave on the West Midlands Police app is 2,826. A brief overview of how we compare from ACRO Criminal Records Office data as of 22 June 2020 is shown in Table 1 overleaf.

Force	Total
West Midlands	373
Greater Manchester	303
Metropolitan	1072
South Yorkshire	366
West Yorkshire	774
Warwickshire	58
West Mercia	168
Staffordshire	42
Lancashire	771
Thames valley	796
Devon and Cornwall	978

Table 1. ACRO data comparison across force areas – 22 June 2020

### Directions to Leave

31. Directions to leave have a number of outcomes including: dispersal, fixed penalty notice, summons and arrest.
32. There have been a total of 2,826 directions to leave from March 2020 to 26 June 2020 as can be seen in figure 2 below. Over this period whilst there have been peaks and troughs, throughout March, April and May there has been a notable decrease in directions to leave in June. This coincides with the government's increased easing of restrictions.

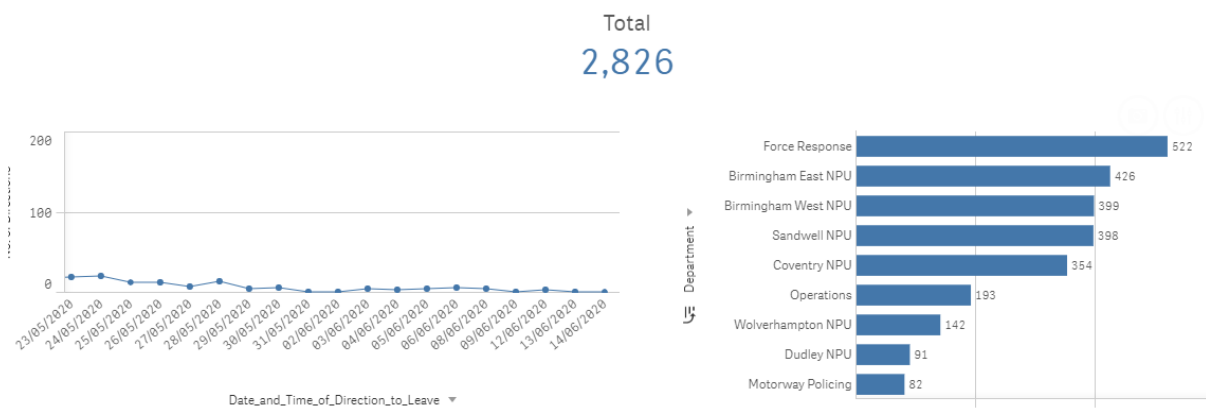


Figure 1. Direction to leave data March 2020 – 26 June 2020

33. Of the 2826 direction to leave given 74.5% were dispersed and 17% were for fixed penalty notices, 0.8% resulted in summons and 0.7% resulted in arrest.

34. Our baseline for assessing disproportionality is the 2011 census. We base ratios on the rate of an activity rate against the people the census says make up that ethnic group. Whilst the census has been updated with estimates since it was carried out, it is some years old. It is acknowledged that more recent estimates show that the demographics and population of the West Midlands is far more diverse than in 2011. The data also shows that 29% of people were aged 18 to 39 years, 27% were aged 40 to 59 years and 22% were aged 60 years and over.
35. During the period 59% of directions to leave have been given to white people, 20% to Asian people and 10% to black people. This means within the West Midlands policing area, Asian people are 1.3 times more likely to be directed to leave than white people, and black people are 2.1 times more likely to be directed to leave than white people. The levels of disproportionality tend to decrease when looking at neighbourhood ward levels.
36. The data also shows that direction to leave are disproportionately used by age. 25-39 year olds have received 33.8% of directions to leave and 18-24 year olds have received 22.5% of directions to leave. If this is compared to the census data the two age categories would need to be combined showing 18 to 39 years olds have received 56.3% of directions to leave which is 27.3% above the 2011 census data.
37. Fixed penalty notice data shows a similar trend to the direction to leave and as the lockdown relaxed the number of fixed penalty notices has decreased which is in line with what we would expect.
38. There have been 487 fixed penalty notices issued as a direction to leave. 47.8% have been issued to white people, 27.3% have been issued to Asian people and 5.5% have been issued to black people. This shows that Asian people are 2.0 times more likely to be given a fixed penalty notice than white people, and black people are 1.9 times more likely to be given a fixed penalty notice than white people.
39. The age data for fixed penalty data is disproportionate against 25-39 year olds at 47.2% and 18-24 year olds at 27.3%. This is significantly higher than the census data.
40. Whilst it is acknowledged that broader data is disproportionate, these levels decrease when looking at neighbourhood ward level. The numbers of directions to leave are low with 74.5% being for dispersal and 17% for fixed penalty notices. This is in line with a really robust 4E approach with a strong emphasis on engage, explain and encourage.

## **ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING AND CHANGE**

### *Background*

41. In support of the major incident response to COVID-19, an organisational learning project has been mobilised. The aim of the project is to define and deliver a strategic approach to: capture learning; document changes; and collate best practice across WMP. This will support in assessing impact of learning and decisions taken during the emergency. This co-ordinated approach provides a framework to feed the insight and recommendations into the organisation, supporting the emergency response, as well as strengthening the force's approach through to recovery and beyond.
42. A strategic approach has now been defined and implemented to capture learnings, with views being elicited from across the entire organisation. Learning has also been gathered regionally and nationally in conjunction with partners and through National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and the College of Policing (CoP) briefings.
43. To date the project team have collated over 370 insights, which have all been triaged, distilled and assessed for value.

### *Emerging themes from the Emergency*

44. A number of 'proximate' opportunities have been identified, where changes to the way we work have yielded immediate productivity benefits and were recommended to be maintained. These are being monitored and evaluated within existing governance structures and via the appropriate executive lead. Other insights, where further research and evaluation is required, has been formally commissioned through the Organisational Change Board (OCB) construct. The changes impacting the operating model are transitioning into the recovery phase for implementation via the change and transformation portfolio.
45. A number of key themes have emerged in terms of learnings, best practice and changes and some of these are summarised below.

### *Remote Capability and Agility*

46. Over the past few months opportunities have been capitalised, to uplift the force's remote and agile capability. This has supported the force in its ability to enable homeworking in accordance with government policy and also enables people to continue to work when self-isolating or shielding.



47. Opportunities have been maximised and the agility strategy and tools have strengthened the ability to continue to deliver mission critical functionality during the emergency response.

#### *Transfer of Digital Evidence to CPS*

48. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) provided WMP with a number of Egress licences that enable WMP to upload digital media electronically to the CPS. This has removed the need for the creation and delivery of physical discs, yielding significant benefit for the force. Work continues to look at the sustainability of this solution and will be managed in conjunction with the ongoing Digital Evidence Service (DES) project.

#### *Remote Witness Access to Virtual ID Parades*

49. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, witnesses completed identification by viewing remote identification parades at an agreed police station. WMP have now trialled and amended the process, whereby witnesses can now view the virtual identification parade electronically away from the station. This will continue post COVID-19 and monitored as part of the crime governance board.

#### *Remote Access to Persons in Custody (PIC)*

50. WMP have amended the interview process, allowing third party agencies and legal representatives to have remote access to a person in custody, by utilising personal issue laptops. This facilitates a completely virtual interview including the officer in charge (OIC), the person in custody and the legal representative. Alternatively, a partially virtual interview whereby the OIC and the person in custody are in an interview room and legal representation joins remotely via a laptop is utilised. This practice will continue and will be monitored through the existing crime governance board.

#### *Virtual Voluntary Interviews*

51. Appointments have successfully been held over Skype with the voluntary interview being recorded, as part of the investigation. This practice will continue as the force move into recovery phase.

### *Virtual Teams: Missing persons and Domestic abuse*

52. A number of virtual teams have been created, providing the force with flexibility to enable primary investigations, for specific categories of missing persons and low risk domestic abuse. This is conducted by phone, as opposed to physical attendance. These changes continue and are being monitored and assessed for efficiency and risk under the remit of the change and transformation portfolio.

### *Virtual Teams: Force Response*

53. Mirabooks can be connected to officers work mobile phones giving all the functionality of a laptop. These were deployed to enable officers who were self-isolating, shielded or restricted to work effectively from home. A virtual team was created and working alongside Force Contact, and any calls for service deemed suitable for a response by telephone were facilitated by the virtual team.
54. This practice supported the resilience of Force Response during this time and now provides opportunity for more flexible ways of working to be explored for restricted or not fully deployable officers in the future. This approach will continue and is currently under review to assess benefits, risks and impact.

### *Agile Working – Force Contact*

55. The New Ways of Public Contact project supported Force Contact to establish 'home worker' groups on the force's Live Chat capability.
56. The ControlWorks project also enabled logs to be opened and closed remotely as it is a cloud based system. This would not have been possible on the old system. This enabled agents to work remotely and respond at home, providing service resilience during the pandemic. This now affords an opportunity to further explore remote Live Chat agents in the future.

### *Agile Working across PPU*

57. A number of teams, who would not ordinarily be able to work in an agile way, have been supported with new equipment enabling them to move exclusively to home based working. This has yielded a productivity uplift and an opportunity to trial more agile ways of working providing the force with more flexibility in the future.

### *Digital Statements*

58. Electronic statements were previously delivered via the WMP2020 Change Programme. A statement can now be emailed to the witness enabling them to sign remotely for low level crimes. This will continue to be monitored and enhanced through the New Ways of Public Contact project.

### *Virtual assessment centres and virtual recruitment processes*

59. Assessment centres have been conducted virtually, following guidance from the COP and the Force's recruitment team. The recruitment team worked virtually, utilising online video calling to complete selection interviews, replacing the need for face to face interviews. The process is on-going and working well and has removed the need to sift manually through applications, giving a better overview of applicant experience.

60. There are still many decisions and changes to be made in respect of how we recruit, but the above approaches have been well received and it's anticipated this way of working will continue in the future.

### *Citizens, Community and Volunteering*

61. Key learnings were captured around the relationships built with faith communities. Through working together, faith leaders, supported by WMP, helped ensure many religious festivals could be marked during lockdown. This network are now working intrinsically to plan for reopening of places of worship, ensuring this is done in a way which is safe for everyone, compliant with government restrictions and maintains the integrity of the community and faiths.

62. Regular calls involving colleagues from WMP, staff support associations, faith leaders and those representing the mayor's inter-faith group were also instigated. A number of practical developments were created in partnership including:

- Information and signposting for officers via the forces 'Go To app'. Officers were kept up to date with information, to enhance their understanding of how religious festivals were being celebrated differently this year;
- Signage in the most commonly spoken languages in the region were posted outside places of worship, to help communities understand why people might be present for specific and permitted purposes,

63. The new relationships and proactivity developed with faith communities and networks has enhanced community cohesion and policing legitimacy, helping to create healthier, stronger and safer communities.
64. There was an overwhelming positive response to volunteering, both internally and externally. Existing active citizen groups scaled up to deal with the response. Over 500 new citizens offered their services and internally the Force created a bank of staff volunteers from non-business critical functions, who took on alternative roles to support the Force.
65. Active citizen groups, such as Neighbourhood Watch and Safer Streets have also engaged digitally via digital Key Individual Networks (KIN), which enabled WMP to communicate effectively and reassure local communities during the emergency.
66. The learning from the unprecedented volunteering response, will help inform the Force's volunteering strategy in the future and the Citizens in Policing team are now proactively managing this increase in capacity, maximising active citizen opportunities for the future.
67. Further opportunities also exist to better harness the growing digital connectivity with citizens, volunteers and partners by ensuring the right technical capabilities are in place to support them. The requirements for these digital capabilities are being picked up by the change and transformation portfolio.

#### *Sustaining a healthy workforce*

68. Significant interventions and best practice have been captured, which have defined short, medium and a longer term approach to ensure the wellbeing and health of the organisation.
69. A dedicated Facebook page was launched. This proved really effective in connecting colleagues working remotely with both information and a series of online remote working training sessions, to build new capabilities across both line managers and colleagues.
70. Webinars, online briefings and virtual exercising programmes were launched to help colleagues and managers adjust to remote working and maintain their health and welfare. These additional support mechanisms have been well received by employees and the learning insight will be used to support the people and welfare project in the recovery phase.
71. Podcasts were produced. These have been launched and are now being delivered weekly, aimed at supporting colleagues to stay connected throughout the pandemic.

72. Ear4U is a listening scheme developed and run by trained WMP coaches. This has been launched to help and support all colleagues to feel connected throughout the pandemic.
73. There is a significantly enhanced approach to trauma support and this has been delivered to support those in 'high exposure' roles. A trauma risk assessment is complete for the individual which gives access to focussed trauma risk management resources and fast track referrals process. There is also improved education for line managers.
74. A number of dedicated contact teams were launched utilising trained and clinical colleagues to support the organisation, ranging from COVID-19 support such as testing referrals and results service for colleagues displaying COVID-19 symptoms, to support and guidance for shielding colleagues. This was led by the occupational health team communicating the updated government and Public Health England (PHE) guidance where necessary, and supporting colleagues with applying this practically to their own personal circumstances.

#### *Information Technology and Digital (IT&D) Capabilities and Tools*

75. IT&D have been instrumental in launching new software, technologies and mobile applications and forms, which have made frontline policing more streamlined and effective during the pandemic.
76. IT&D have also successfully managed to work entirely remotely and also developed the capability for the majority of laptop and mobility faults to be resolved remotely, without the need to 'dock' or attend face to face appointments.
77. Over 1300 personal issue laptops have been configured and successfully rolled out to enable those with underlying conditions, those self-isolating and departments able to work from home, to work in a more flexible and agile manner.
78. In support of remote and agile working, over thirty applications have also been approved and installed on the laptops during the past few months.
79. Mobile applications have also been created, such as the 'Direction to Leave' app, designed to record COVID-19 related dispersals and an enhanced version of the Force's 'Go To' app providing officers with all COVID-19 news and legislation straight onto their mobile devices.
80. Print outs for the Police National Computer (PNC) needed to be processed easier and quicker and a 'PNC Prints' form was created. This is now available on laptop, desktop or

mobile device which has eased pressure from other departments who would usually complete this.

81. The Force's digital contact platform also underwent some changes and enhancement. The New Ways of Public Contact project developed a COVID-19 specific chat flow for their digital assistant chat-bot, Bob-E, this enabled many queries from the public to be dealt with by this method. During one week in April alone, Bob-E was asked about Coronavirus 6,833 times, and totalling 65% of the total chat-bot demand.
82. An updated COVID-19 welcome message was recorded and deployed to the 101 phone lines in late March and a new 'breach of social restrictions' online reporting form went live early in April 2020. Both these enhancements, alongside the changes to Bob-E allowed the Force to optimise current capability, increase resilience and better support Force Contact to manage the new demand seen during the emergency.

#### *Safeguarding Goods and Services*

83. The Contracts and Procurement team took a proactive approach to ensuring goods and services, critical to the workforce, were safeguarded to keep supplies running and the organisation safe and secure. The team regularly contacted in excess of 200 suppliers to understand how the outbreak was affecting their business, and worked with them to understand their capability and identify any supply risks. This supportive approach was positively received by suppliers and the learning will strengthen the business continuity in this area in the future. The team also worked with departments to understand current stock levels to ensure we did not run out of any critical supplies. In some cases stock levels were increased from that which we would normally hold.
84. There was also an incredible effort from across enabling functions to respond to the need to roll out of personal protective equipment (PPE) to colleagues. Over 1.5 million pieces of PPE were sourced and distributed to over 7500 officers and staff and this responsive effort continues, with PPE now available to officers and staff travelling to work on public transport.

#### *Organisational Learning and Change Benefits*

85. A number of benefits and future productivity uplift opportunities have already been identified. The changes and insight gained during this time have provided further

opportunity to become more efficient and effective as a Force, as a result of new ways of working.

86. These efficiency gains are starting to emerge and be evaluated and tracked within the existing governance frameworks. As changes start to embed and the Force builds upon the new ways of working, work will be undertaken to define tangible benefits realised throughout this period of unprecedented change.

## **OPERATIONAL LEARNING**

87. The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) (2004) establishes a legislative framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom. It imposes a clear set of roles and responsibilities on those organisations with a role to play in preparing for and responding to emergencies. The CCA (2004) details six statutory duties which Category 1 responders, including the police, must adhere to. These are:

- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
- Put in place emergency plans
- Put in place business continuity management arrangements
- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
- Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination
- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency

88. The work stream utilises the six statutory duties, alongside the Cabinet Office's Civil Contingencies Secretariat and National Resilience Standards, as a framework for the operational learning. Operational planning reviews WMP's response, resume and recovery through the lens of the CCA (2004) and Resilience Standards.

89. This programme of work captures and understand the lessons arising from WMP activities in the response, resume and recovery phases of COVID-19 including:

- Undertake force-wide environmental scanning
- Undertake environmental scanning to understand WMP's key external partners' response to COVID-19

- Establish a programme to engage internal and external stakeholders to capture learning
- Analyse operational decisions, policies and procedures adopted
- Identify any lessons for enhancing response to future civil emergencies and/or business continuity planning, testing and exercising
- Regularly engage and influence the national business continuity recovery working group
- Effectively communicate to stakeholders throughout the transition phase
- Ensure any learning develops WMP's Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) model and future training
- Ensure that lessons learnt will inform the response to other major incidents and any potential second phase of COVID-19

90. We will be collecting the learning points through a number of activities including: questionnaires, structured debriefs, feedback sessions and targeted interviews.

91. The operational learning programme has started with questionnaires and structured debriefs looking at the initial response and command structure. This will enable an early report with recommendations, to the Recovery Board in case of a second wave or concurrent incident. A questionnaire has also been sent to all commanders and heads of departments to capture specific feedback in the following thematic areas:

- Communications
- Staffing
- Estates
- Supply Chain
- Stakeholders
- IT/Equipment

92. In addition to capturing internal learning of the activities actions taken by WMP, lessons learnt by other forces will also be key.

93. The Emergency Planning College have provided free online training with an overall aim of enabling continuous improvement amongst local resilience forums and partner organisations in their COVID-19 response and recovery operations. This includes



establishing a basis for ongoing collaboration and development (e.g. what works, what good looks like, standards and guidance).

94. Operational learning work will continue after the other recovery streams have finished to ensure all lessons have been captured.

## **PART 2: PROTECT THE ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH OF WEST MIDLANDS POLICE, SO IT NOT ONLY RESPONDS TO THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY EFFECTIVELY, BUT RECOVERS AND RETURNS TO NORMALITY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE**

95. This section will outline the Force's activity address the objective set by the Police and Crime Commissioner as part of the emergency update to the Police and Crime Plan 2016 – 2020. The Force will report on PPE, COVID-19 testing, force sickness, absence and self-isolation data and future financial implications.

### **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

96. PHE set out guidance around PPE. The best line of defence remains regular handwashing, staying two metres and sanitising work stations often.

97. Providing the appropriate level of PPE to all officers and staff is a key priority for WMP.

98. A weekly PPE update is provided to the executive lead, the update details the current stock level for each item, expected consumption over the next 12 weeks, the quantity that is on order, and when that order will arrive. Each item is then given an appropriate status: red, amber, green. This level of visibility provides ongoing assurances.

99. The Force has sourced, procured and issued two face coverings and a bottle of hand sanitiser to all staff and officers who travel to and from work on public transport.

100. 2800 staff and officers have requested face coverings and these were issued within twenty-four hours of Shared Services receiving the request. We have also offered these to volunteers.

101. The face coverings are good quality and can be washed 100 times each and therefore we expect the two face covers issued will last around six months. The Force has received positive feedback about the quality of the product.

102. The end to end process was put in place a week before the start date of the government mandating face coverings being worn on public transport.

103. The national PPE project is currently procuring face coverings and once these are delivered to WMP in the next 2 weeks, we will use these for any further requests. By purchasing these ourselves we have been able to supply them from day 1 of the government mandate to use them.

#### **COVID-19 TESTING UPDATE**

104. As of 24 June 2020, WMP have tested 759 people in total, which includes 629 employees and 130 family or household members.

105. 533 results have been received and 483 of these were negative with 45 being positive and 5 showing as inconclusive. The 5 that were inconclusive are now symptom free and have returned to work.

#### **FORCE SICKNESS, ABSENCE AND SELF-ISOLATION DATA**

106. Over the period there have been a total of 3,032 people who have reported COVID-19 symptoms and have self-isolated. There are presently 191 employees self-isolating. Contact is made with all colleagues who are self-isolating by the People and Organisational Development (POD) team. The number of colleagues who are self-isolating has significantly reduced.

#### **COMPLIANCE WITH COVID-19 WORKPLACE GUIDANCE**

107. When COVID-19 began to significantly affect the country in mid-March 2020, the Force made necessary adjustments in how it operates, to ensure that it was and continues to be best placed to respond to the impacts of the pandemic. This included provision of cleaning materials around the Force and a communications poster campaign advising officers and staff on preventative actions such as hand washing.

108. Work was undertaken to enable those that could, to work from home which included the provision of additional laptops. During May 2020, the government produced guidelines for "Working safely during COVID-19 in offices and contact centres" which reinforced the "Staff should work from home if at all possible" message but also provided guidance for the workplace for those who could not work from home. A project has been set, led by the Director of Commercial Services, which reports into the Recovery Board chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Johnson QPM to ensure the Force meet the guidelines.

109. The guidelines provide a five step check list for organisations:

- We have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and shared the results with the people who work here
- We have cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures in line with guidance
- We have taken all reasonable steps to help people work from home
- We have taken all reasonable steps to maintain a 2m distance in the workplace
- Where people cannot be 2m apart, we have done everything practical to manage transmission risk

110. The Force's head of health and safety produced a report following a review of all sites. This highlighted sixteen locations which we have assessed as 'high risk' and required actions to align to the guidelines. For example, Digbeth Police station was highlighted as high risk and measures were introduced including: relocating desks and computers to provide greater distance between colleagues when working; providing additional office space to enable teams to spread out; re-purposing meeting rooms and the introduction of Perspex screens between desks in some areas where moving desks apart has not been possible.

111. Guidance has been issued to officers and staff through a clear communications strategy including: a frequently asked questions intranet page; a number of blogs and news articles providing progress updates.

112. Trade Unions and the Federation have been engaged throughout with weekly meetings with the Director of Commercial Services, both organisations have also been in attendance at site visits.

113. Corporate signage has been introduced to all buildings advising staff to remain two metres apart.

114. In sites where the public come into the reception area, floor line markings, setting out the need for two-metre distancing, have been installed using yellow and black floor tape.

115. 'Keep Your Distance' signage has been installed outside lift entrances whilst inside the lifts 'please stand here' signs showing footsteps facing the lift car walls have been laid out.

116. Floor line markings, setting out the need for two-metre distancing, have been installed using yellow and black floor tape leading to sink/tea making areas along with signage on walls.

117. Signage installed on walls along with arrow signage to create a one way system for entry/exit into areas such as printer areas have been introduced where possible.
118. Arrows and 'Keep Your Distance' signage on staircases and corridors have been added to ensure social distancing is maintained in these areas.
119. Cleaning materials have been provided to all of our sites from the initial outbreak. This initial response is being enhanced as more permanent sanitation stations are installed and additional cleaning equipment provided in areas such as showers, printer areas and kitchens.
120. The spacing out of desks where possible or marking desks as not to be used has been undertaken to support social distancing. This has reduced our occupational capacity in offices by 50%. This in the most part has been accommodated by home working but to help ease the situation in some stations and to support a return to workplace, two buildings which were out of operation are to be reinstated providing 120 additional desks.
121. To reduce risk of transmission local solutions have been employed, these include the fitment of screens between desks, reduced lift occupancy and in some teams', introduction of phased start and finish times as well as use of "bubbles".
122. Operationally, guidelines for officers have been introduced which include:
- Staggered parade times (this is partly achieved by the Force Response banding)
  - No group briefings, alternative airwave remote briefings to be supported by emails
  - Identified separate rooms/floors for the pre-shift and post-shift staff
  - Where double crewing is required, posting the same staff together for the full set of shifts
  - Reinforced message for officers to update systems via their mobile devices while on patrol to avoid time in the office
123. The health and safety team are performing checks across sites and actions are being put in place for any comments made either through local interventions or into business as usual processes.
124. A review of the capacity available in our buildings is being undertaken looking at re-location and re-population. The review will provide options and recommendations which will be shared with heads of departments. This is to support locations where the impact

of social distancing is proving a challenge and for teams and individuals who are finding home working to be difficult or ineffective.

## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE 2020/21 BUDGET

125. The finance department has identified and reported actual and planned costs associated with COVID-19 across the Force since March 2020. The project structure which is now in place as the force enters a recovery phase replaces the Gold and Silver command structures and continues to provide a platform for all expected costs and savings to be identified and a governance structure for future expenditure to be agreed.

126. Finance is represented on five projects which feed into the Recovery Board. These cover civil contingencies, people and welfare, finance and infrastructure, organisational change and local policing.

127. Table 2 shows expenditure on COVID-19 since March 2020 and was presented to the Recovery Board in the week commencing 22 June 2020.

Category	2019-20 actuals (£'000s)	2020-21 actuals (Apr-May) (£000's)	2020-21 est. to June 2020 (£000's)	Total expenditure inc. estimates (£000's)	Comments
PPE equipment	1,006	1,188	27	2,221	This PPE does not include orders via National Procurement. All costs expected to be reclaimed from Home Office
Officer and Staff pay costs	0	109	365	474	Officers and staff moved from posts including CWG planning, creation of MART team and work by Guardian team on Covid-19
Overtime pressures	65	82	112	259	Actuals on custody, intelligence cell, IT and D and contingency. Planned OT on MART team, NPU PHLs and planning teams
Temporary staff	0	28	307	335	25 additional staff for force Contact. PPU extension of temp staff contract to 30 Dec to clear backlog of DA cases
Other non-pay	25	237	433	695	Costs include decontamination, clinical waste, screens for contact staff, and amendments/reinstatement of police buildings to make them Covid secure
Loss of income	107	876	438	1,421	Loss of income at Airport and other force Operations, Police led prosecutions and traffic investigations, vehicle recovery and DBS
Home working (laptops and devices)	533	56	0	589	3,650 machines purchased between March and May of which approx. 420 were directly related to force Covid-19 response. Cost includes mobile devices and SIM cards for mobile data in laptops
Budget savings	0	(282)	(91)	(373)	Savings in fuel (per BP fuel offer) business travel and accommodation
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,736</b>	<b>2,294</b>	<b>1,591</b>	<b>5,621</b>	

Table 2. Expenditure on COVID-19 since March 2020

128. The overall cost of Covid-19 to the Force was £4.03m at the end of May and is expected to reach £5.62m by 30 June 2020. It should be noted that we have previously reported

the costs of laptops and devices as £3.43m since the start of the pandemic resulting to total costs of £8.5m. The above table and this report recognises only the proportion of those devices that were purchased as a direct consequence of the Force's response to Covid-19, rather than the overall purchase of machines. Most of which were accelerated purchases of machines which, now that the force has entered a recovery phase, will be used as replacement machines for those which are at the end of their life. So, the net cost of laptops and devices purchased directly as a result of the force response to Covid-19 is £0.589m.

129. Expenditure on PPE is now £2.21m. This is a reduction in spend since the last report due to some items being refunded where the order could not be completed by the supplier. After placing a national order for over £4m it is not expected that any further expenditure will need to take place on PPE until July, and this will only apply to approximately 2% of items which are not available from the national order. The Home Office have made part of the Police Uplift Programme grant from April to September 2020 available for COVID-19 related costs. In addition, the Force will continue to request that all PPE expenditure including the national order is reimbursed by the Home Office.
130. Expenditure on laptops and mobile devices to support home working is expected to be £3.44m with a total of 3,650 laptop machines purchased and issued by early May. The first 600 machines purchased in March were part of an ongoing replacement programme and were redirected for home workers. The next two batches of machines received in 2020-21 are an acceleration of replacements which would have been completed later this year and into 2021-22.
131. A loss of income of £0.1m was identified in March 2020 and this is expected to grow to £1.4m by the end of June 2020.
132. This followed a review of income for each service area in the Force carried out by finance colleagues in conjunction with service managers in April 2020. The £1.3m loss of income covers a period from April to June inclusive and for each additional month beyond June the expected loss of income is up to £0.45m. In areas such as National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS) training and Criminal Justice, departments are working with stakeholders to identify different ways of working to enable the processing of income to continue.
133. We have identified areas where the Force has made savings as a result of reduced demand in some areas. Following BP's offer of free fuel for police vehicles during the pandemic, the Force has saved £0.2m on fuel costs for police vehicles. Savings have

also been noted in business travel and accommodation where savings of £0.17m have been identified from April to June.

134. As the Force progresses with the recovery phase of its response to the pandemic it is clear that the further relaxing of restrictions will require specific policing responses. The first of these is expected to be in relation to the opening of pubs, bars and restaurants from 4 July 2020. The enhancement of policing resources in our cities over this weekend will incur additional overtime costs. We will continue to monitor and report on these costs within the Recovery Board on a weekly basis.

135. There is no provision for the above costs in the overall 2020/21 budget of the Force. It is expected that the government will provide additional funding to forces to cover the costs of PPE required in relation to COVID-19. However, it is unclear whether the government will provide additional funding to forces to cover all other costs of COVID-19. The Home Office asked all forces to provide the indicative costs estimates of dealing with the crisis.

#### **IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

136. In relation to the medium term financial plan it is expected that some impacts may be felt from the government reprioritising public spending due to COVID-19, council tax collection fund deficits, tax base contraction and more permanent changes to income as the UK settles into a new normal. At present, it is too early to model these potential impacts. However, the Force will continue to monitor the long-term situation to address these impacts if and when they crystallise. The medium term financial plan will be updated and brought to a future meeting of the Board.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

137. The board is asked to consider this paper.

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