



Strategic Policing and Crime Board

Tuesday 19 August 2020

Emergency Police and Crime Plan Priority: Objective 3:

Leading and supporting a partnership response to the national emergency

Emergency Police and Crime Plan Priority: Objective 4:

Ensure the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner does all it can to effectively respond to the national emergency, including commissioning services that mitigate its effect and support the return to normality

Presented by:

Jonathan Jardine, Chief Executive

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Strategic Police and Crime Board with an update and overview of the OPCC response to objectives 3 and 4 in the [new emergency chapter](#) of the Police and Crime plan.
2. This report will set out progress against the activities within the chapter and highlight key areas of work that have progressed since the last report to Board.
3. It is helpful to remind ourselves of some of the areas that the PCC is currently leading on, including developments that are innovative, while working in partnership and/or community led. This work is detailed in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan '[Your Police Your Priorities](#)' and also in the [Emergency Chapter](#) which was developed as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
4. The PCC chairs the Local Criminal Justice Board which brings together key criminal justice stakeholders from the region; funds the 7 Community Safety Partnerships and chairs the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership, allocates funding to the 7 Youth Offending Teams; has led the urgent strategic criminal justice response to Covid-19 (eg early prison release packages and instigating and leading the public health domestic abuse campaign #NoExcuseForAbuse; is accountable for delivery of

support services for victims of crime, the Violence Reduction Unit and its funding which traverses early intervention at infancy all the way up to adulthood and parent support, and is represented on various strategic boards around reforms to youth justice, early help and children's services. One of the PCC's flagship policies is the PCC's 8 point approach for a harm reduction drug policy – vital to reducing cost, reducing crime and reducing harm from drugs.

5. Intervention and prevention has remained a priority for the PCC throughout his term of office, including the development and implementation of the Commission on Gangs and Violence (a nationally leading programme of community engagement, research, and project delivery aimed at prevention, education, highlighting disproportionality and reducing reoffending), the delivery of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes, the delivery of urgent response government funds around early intervention for youth crime, the delivery of the Violence Reduction Unit (including projects around tackling domestic violence, leveraging peer support in schools, providing routes of escape to those in hospital with violently inflicted wounds, kick starting new place-based hubs bringing together partners to tackle the social drivers of crime, and other projects aimed at supporting young people in challenging life circumstances away from crime) and supporting partners in these efforts such as grant bid support for organisations applying for funding from the Youth Endowment Fund, some of which have successfully accessed large amounts.

Key Highlights

Recovery from Covid-19: The Importance of Policing and Crime when Supporting the West Midlands Economic Recovery from COVID-19

6. On the 2 July, the PCC launched his [Recovery from Covid-19 report](#) which sets out the importance that policing plays in ensuring that the West Midlands economy and criminal justice system recovers effectively from Covid-19. It emphasises the need for a joined up approach across the public, private and third sectors in making sure that potential risks which could threaten the economy recovering and, in turn, increase crime and anti-social behaviour need to be tackled swiftly. These include unemployment, a key determinant of criminality as well as factors such as schools being closed for a long period, the impact on organised crime and county line drugs gangs, crimes against businesses and more. This report supports the '[Future Generations Deal](#)' which was launched by the PCC in June and called for measures including a subsidy scheme to help young people into work, ways of supporting apprenticeships and investment to upskill young people so they can be at the very heart of the economic recovery after COVID-19.
7. The economic consequences of Covid-19 will be significant and can be felt already. The last few months have seen an unparalleled shutting down of large parts of the economy. It was announced on the 12 August that the UK has entered an 'unprecedented recession', the deepest we have seen in hundreds of years. UK Job Centre claimants have risen by 126% already since the start of lock down. Projections suggest these figures are only going to rise further. The West Midlands is expected to

severely feel the effects of this crisis. Consultancy firm KPMG predict that the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic will hit the West Midlands harder than any other region. They have said that an analysis of the likely impact this year on the UK's regions, showed that the closure of car plants and mothballing of hundreds of factories connected to the automotive sector, meant the region's economy would shrink by 10.1%.

8. The West Midlands is already home to some of the UK's poorest communities. Three of its seven local authorities - Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton - are in the top 20 most deprived in the country. Many people within these communities work in low paid and insecure jobs. The economic downturn we are now seeing has meant many of these jobs are disappearing first, with the West Midlands disproportionately affected and at risk of mass unemployment. As McKinsey found in their recent report *'People and places with the lowest incomes are the most vulnerable to job loss. Nearly 50% of all the jobs at risk are in occupations earning less than £10 per hour'*. The forecasted economic effect of Covid-19 is very likely to hit these already disadvantaged communities extremely hard. We will only start to see the true effects of this as the furlough scheme is tapered down
9. The report highlights how the OPCC anticipates the links between economic activity and crime will play out over the next few months. We have articulated what the OPCC is doing to support the West Midlands with the issues highlighted and how we are working to support the region through the economic recovery in this crisis. Coupled with this, we have also explained what partners can do to mitigate the potential harms to come from these factors. We face a challenging period ahead of us as a region, but through a pre-emptive and coordinated response we can work to support each other through this next stage of the crisis.

Disproportionality Work Programme - Fairness and Belonging

10. The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable have jointly launched 'Making West Midlands Police a Fairer Force' - a programme of work to ensure that West Midlands Police is as inclusive, diverse and as fair an organisation as possible.
11. The PCC has also made a commitment to ensure that 1,000 new BAME police officers are recruited over the next three years to accelerate plans to make the force look more like the communities it serves.
12. The OPCC and West Midlands Police have set out a plan of work to increase the confidence of all the communities of the West Midlands. This work will examine how we can improve the fairness of recruitment, retention and promotion, as well as ensuring that police powers are used fairly towards everyone in the West Midlands, as part of a wider review of practices.
13. Part of the work includes learning from what has gone before by checking if we have done what Scarman, MacPherson and Lammy told us needed doing. We are going to

address the issues that undermine public confidence in the police and the criminal justice system and look at whether and how the police build networks across all communities. We will ensure that our officers have the cultural competence to police diverse populations and challenge racism and that the training gives officers these skills, it will be informed by the lived experience of those who have seen policing at its best and worst. We will also be including the community in our senior appointments processes and looking at our complaints and misconduct processes. We will also be engaging with the public as part of this work to ensure that they take part and can have their say.

14. There are a number of key strands within the work programme and they are:

- Learning from our people and our history
- Recruitment and fair representation
- Training and cultural competence
- Promotion, progression and retention
- Treating our people fairly; management, leadership, complaints and misconduct
- Equitable service delivery
- Exercise of police powers
- Fairness and the criminal justice system
- Data, analysis and the understanding that drives action
- Engagement to ensure we listen, learn and act
- Engagement with local, regional and national partners.

15. It is important to recognise that we will be working with partners to look at some of these areas, and we will be reporting back to the Board on progress on a quarterly basis.

Enterprise for Employment Scheme

16. As part of the ongoing work of the Commission on Gangs and Violence, the PCC has commissioned a new programme that will help break the cycle of crime by helping people set up their own business or find a job. The report, *Uniting to Improve Safety*, was launched in December 2017 and includes 24 recommendations which were a community response to serious violence and are aimed at preventing violence and reducing harm. [The full report can be found here.](#)

17. This programme will provide a personalised, effective mentoring service for individuals associated with criminality, to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to be employable and/or an entrepreneur.

18. The £200,000 programme is for a 2 year period and will see grants offered to get new businesses off the ground. People will be referred to the scheme by the police, probation service and other partners.

- 19.** The project is being evaluated by Birmingham City University who will be looking at how effective the programme is in keeping offenders out of prison. There are two key outcomes which we are looking to assess:
- Do service users who gain support through this programme have a reduced likelihood in engaging in further or future criminality and
 - Does the service have an impact on employability or entrepreneurship outcomes for service users who gain support through the service?
- 20.** The report states that if we want to break the cycle of crime we need to ensure that we give people the opportunities they need to thrive and contribute to society and we will be able to test this theory while also helping former offenders build new businesses to support themselves and the economy.
- 21.** Regular updates on progress will be given the Board.

Intervention and Prevention - Diversion Hub

- 22.** As can be seen from the drug strategy mentioned in the early paragraphs, the PCC has already engaged heavily in identifying and supporting opportunities to tackle the underlying causes of crime, to prevent reoffending and keep communities safe. The PCC has also supported the development of two Family Drug and Alcohol Courts in the region and funded a domestic violence worker in both to work alongside the multi-agency team. This is a problem solving approach which uses judicial monitoring and a multi-agency approach to tackle the root causes. A problem solving approach is proven to reduce cost to the taxpayer in the long term by reducing reoffending and improve outcomes for victims. Some of our existing out of court disposals and community resolutions can reduce reoffending by up to 70%, based on data from West Midlands Police. The PCC now wants to take this work into a new stage; elevating this best practice in a
- 23.** The development of a diversion hub, where officers will think 'diversion first' will significantly increase the numbers of out of out of court disposals and learn from the success of the Turning Point trial which is held up nationally as the precursor to the likes of Checkpoint in Durham and other diversion schemes. This would also be a significant opportunity to integrate existing restorative justice practice into other community-based responses to crime. The PCC recognises that restorative elements to our crime response are vital for public confidence and satisfaction in terms of perceiving the system as fair. It also provides one of the ingredients to meaningful long-term rehabilitation. Having additional government support to enable the PCC to deliver on his statutory restorative justice duties, in a way that better assimilates it with other necessary support interventions, would help form an even more holistic and effective community response.
- 24.** Importantly, a diversion hub would achieve some other vital developments including: more integrated support services recognising that tackling reoffending or criminal behaviour often involves working on more than one social issue; providing greater public and professional visibility around WMP and its partner's diversion services to

help create a hub of expertise and opportunities for new collaboration; provide a hub of evidence and evaluation activities which will help substantiate the case for ongoing investments in interventions and crime reduction developments; and a hub of diversion activity to connect to the problem solving court proposal, ensuring that ideal solutions are actually being implemented in the communities.

25. The ambitious work is also supported by key partners such as the Centre for Justice Innovation and Revolving Doors who have offered resource and expert guidance in the development of some of this work.

Work with Victims of Crime

26. The funds from the MoJ Extraordinary Covid Fund have been received by providers which has enabled them to pay for necessary PPE, IT infrastructures and screens so that effective remobilisation can take place. The Domestic Abuse Consortium and other members of the Victims Commission were disappointed that the Ministry of Justice had focused recovery completely on the here and now and felt it was shortsighted. There was no ability to plan for the anticipated rise in numbers of victims post Covid-19 lockdown, and unspent money had to be sent back to the MoJ. The victim's team and the DA Consortium are looking to take this up with the MoJ.

27. The breakdown of the allocations regarding spend during the Covid period of March 23-October is set out below:

Organisation	Thematic area	Amount	Extraordinary funding category (<i>sexual Violence, DA commissioned, DA non-commissioned</i>)
1. Black Country Women's Aid (BCWA) Sexual Violence Service	Sexual Violence	£80,528.42	Sexual Violence
2. The Rape and Sexual Violence Project (RSVP)	Sexual Violence	£130,005.67	Sexual Violence
3. Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (CRASAC)	Sexual Violence	£35,577.10	Sexual Violence
4. Black Country Women's Aid (BCWA) Domestic Abuse Service	Domestic Abuse	£114,818.97	DA PCC commissioned
5. Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid (BSWA)	Domestic Abuse	£126,003.77	DA PCC commissioned
6. Coventry Haven	Domestic Abuse	£43,216.00	DA PCC commissioned

7. Wolverhampton Haven	Domestic Abuse	£73,930.00	DA PCC commissioned
8. Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum	Domestic Abuse	£1,265.00	DA PCC commissioned
9. Sikh Women's Action Network (SWAN)	Domestic Abuse	£9,758.60	DA PCC commissioned
10. Roshni	Domestic Abuse	£22,538.09	DA PCC commissioned
11. Panahghar	Domestic Abuse	£19,326.00	DA PCC commissioned
12. Forced Marriage Helpine (Forced Marriage consortia)	Domestic Abuse	£14,494.20	DA PCC commissioned
13. Aaina Hub	Domestic Abuse	£9,880.00	DA PCC non-commissioned
14. Churches Housing Association OF Dudley & District (CHADD)	Domestic Abuse	£34,350.00	DA PCC non-commissioned
15. Muslim Women's Network UK (MWNUK)	Domestic Abuse	£4,900.00	DA PCC non-commissioned
16. WE:ARE (Women's Empowement and Recovery Educators Ltd)	Domestic Abuse	£18,219.00	DA PCC non-commissioned
Total = £738,810.53			

23. The Victims Commission meeting took place on the 23 July and was updated on the work going on in the forced marriage and honour based abuse space. There is a lot of effective work going on, some of which includes the distribution of temporary tattoos for the back of people's hands and car stickers on all CMPG cars and some other response cars saying "Stop Forced Marriage". There is work taking place with faith leaders to create videos against forced marriage and honour based abuse as well as a candle campaign which began on the 14th July which helped to share the helpline number. Posters and banners have been distributed to all local authorities and will be placed in prominent places such as town halls.

Author:

Alethea Fuller, Deputy Chief Executive, Police and Crime Commissioner West Midlands