



Strategic Policing and Crime Board

15 September 2020

Police and Crime Plan Priority: Regular Item

Title: Emergency Chapter Report – by exception

Presented by: Ch Supt Claire Bell on behalf of ACC Jayne Meir

PURPOSE OF PAPER

1. Provide an update on the efficiency and effectiveness of the West Midlands Police (WMP) response to the COVID-19 national emergency.
2. To update regarding the organisational health of West Midlands Police in the recovery phase of the COVID-19 national emergency.

BACKGROUND

3. West Midlands Police continues to prioritise the response to COVID-19, maintaining a major incident response in partnership with the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG).
4. This paper provides an update on a previous paper presented at the Strategic Policing and Crime Board on 18 August 2020.

COVID-19 RECOVERY – CRIME PATTERNS

5. In regards to crime and demand during the period of COVID-19 and as we move further into the recovery phase, WMP's position remains the same as the update in the previous period of reporting. As predicted WMP saw a significant and immediate reduction in all crime types, slowly rising, driven by increased domestic abuse, hate crime and other violence.

Predicted Three-Month Demand Pattern

6. Crime has returned to normal levels, so seasonal demand and crime patterns are expected. For instance, there has been a slight increase in robbery which is consistent with the usual seasonal pattern. Crime and incidents relating to open spaces have increased over this period which is usual as part of summer demand. Whilst traditionally night time economy offences peak during the summer, they are often concentrated in certain geographies such as city centres.
7. Over the past month, WMP has received between 150-200 incidents each weekend relating to parties held outdoors (in a street or other public place) and gatherings such as weddings and house parties which exceed the national guidance on numbers of people attending. A specific policing response under Operation Reliant was put in place and dedicated resources have attended these calls for service. Officers attending those calls for service have been following the Engage, Explain, Encourage, Enforce (4Es) model and in the vast majority of incidents we have attended, we have not had to resort to Enforcement.
8. Officers are also using powers outside of the COVID legislation by working with partners and using council licencing laws. On one occasion, council officials have issued a closure notice under public nuisance regulations on a night time venue that was causing safety concerns over lack of social distancing and Anti Social Behaviour (ASB). Police continue to work with local Councils whose licencing departments are predominantly leading on enforcement of events.
9. Officers face a particular challenge around large events held in private dwellings as there is no power of entry in the COVID legislation, making it difficult to assess and tackle these types of events. Officers have largely used the first 3Es to close down large parties and encourage people to leave the location.
10. Officers have been using dispersal powers under Section 34 and 35 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. However this is only for large outdoor events and this has been used very sparingly. On one occasion, officers seized music equipment using rave legislation (Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994) which closed down a large unlicensed music event.

Predicted Six-Month Demand Pattern

11. This position remains the same as reported in the last paper which was presented at the Strategic Policing and Crime Board in August.

Predicted Twelve-Month Demand Pattern

12. This position remains the same as reported in the last paper which was presented at the Strategic Policing and Crime Board in August.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 REGULATIONS

13. Directions to leave have a number of outcomes including: dispersal, fixed penalty notice (FPN), summons and arrest.

14. There have been a total of 3,790 directions to leave from March 2020 to 23 August 2020 (this has increased by 60 in last month) as can be seen in figure 1 below. There was an increase in directions to leave following the mandatory wearing of face masks on public transport and in shops. As this directive is socialised there are less directions to leave due to not wearing a face mask were mandatory. The levels of directions to leave recorded where details have been obtained, has returned to previous levels of approximately 2 per day. The Force Operations department remain as the highest volume due to proactive work by Safer Travel teams, much of these directions to leave are due to non wearing of face masks on public transport.

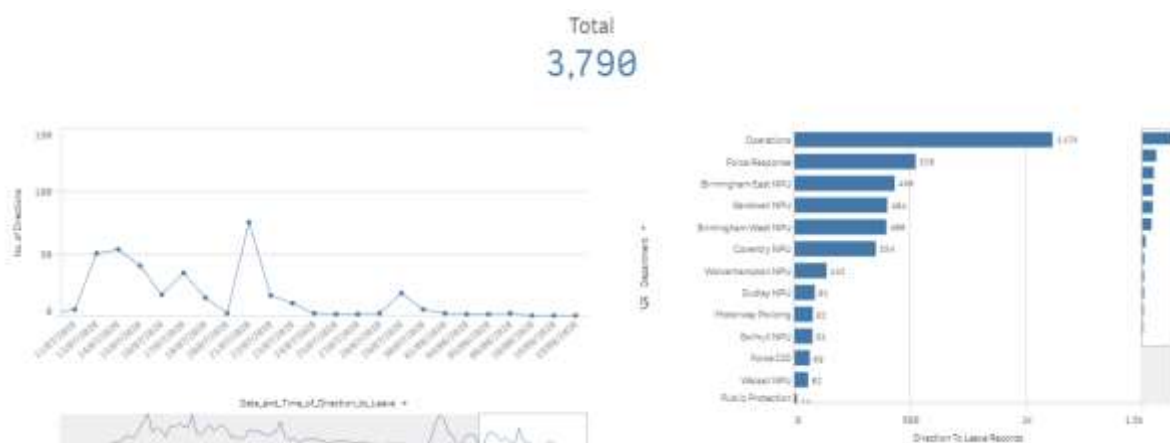


Figure 1 Direction to leave data, 14 June 2020 to 23 August 2020

15. Of the 3790 directions to leave, 73.8% were dispersals and 13.7% were for fixed penalty notices or summons and 0.6% resulted in arrest.

16. 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 initially 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 census 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.
17. The previous SPCB paper reported 60 directions to leave, 48 of these were Tier 1 interventions where limited details were recorded¹. Of the recorded proportion in this period, 41% of directions to leave have been given to white people, 25% to Asian people and 30% to black people. This means within the West Midlands policing area over the last month, Asian people are 2.3 times more likely to be directed to leave than white people, and black people are 8.8 times more likely to be directed to leave than white people. The levels of disproportionality tend to decrease when looking at neighbourhood ward levels because the direction to leave data is more proportionate in comparison to the ethnicity demographic of the ward.
18. The total data also shows that directions to leave are disproportionately used by age. 25-39 year olds have received 40% of directions to leave and 18-24 year olds have received 27% 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 67% of directions to leave, which is 37% above the 2011 census data.
19. Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) data shows a similar trend to the direction to leave and as the lockdown relaxed, the number of FPNs decreased, which is in line with force expectations. A further 4 FPNs have been issued since the last paper was published.
20. There have been 520 FPNs issued in total since March 2020 as a direction to leave. 51.5% have been issued to white people, 27.2% have been issued to Asian people and 8.8% 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 2.0 times more likely to be given a fixed penalty notice than white people.

¹ Simple request made and compliance gained, voluntarily disperse – no recording required.

21. The age data for fixed penalty data is disproportionate against 25-39 year olds at 47% and 18-24 year olds at 27%. This is significantly higher than the census data.

WORKING AND OPERATING EFFECTIVELY WITH PARTNERS

Strategic Co-ordination Group and Tactical Co-ordination Group

22. The effectiveness of the partnership arrangements has seen a change in frequency and focus. The Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) is currently meeting weekly, as is the Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG); and the careful and steady transition to a recovery framework has commenced.

23. It is recognised that the transition to recovery is likely to be significantly longer than in other emergencies or major incidents. This is particularly the case in recent approaches being taken to local outbreak management and the spectrum of interventions that are being activated across the country, depending on infection rates and the local context. Response and recovery are likely to operate in parallel for some time within the West Midlands Police force area.

24. In recognition of the ongoing threat of localised outbreaks, multiple local outbreaks or a wider infection event, such as a second wave, the SCG & TCG have agreed to continue in their multi-agency co-ordination response role but with a revived agenda and membership. Chairing of the SCG will now pass from the police to the Local Authorities and the TCG chair will be taken up by Health. The police will continue to attend both the SCG and TCG. The partnership arrangements in place are aimed at achieving this dual, evolving position and is fully supported by partners.

Local Resilience Forum

25. The West Midlands Conurbation Local Resilience Forum (WMCLRF) and its working group continue to ensure focus on the preparedness for a second wave or local outbreaks of COVID-19. Following a number of debriefs and a 'local outbreak' focused table top workshop, an action plan with clear owners and defined timescales has been drawn up. The general working group of the LRF, of which Chief Superintendent Claire Bell is the Chair, will own delivery of the plan and its recommendations.

Recovery Co-ordination Group

26. There has been no change to the Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) since the last report.
27. All the partnership arrangements continue to work well with on-going commitment from all relevant agencies, sending consistent and appropriately senior or skilled attendees. A number of the sub-groups have reduced as expected but are all in a position to step back up as required.

SPECIAL CONSTABLE BONUS ALLOWANCE

28. This remains the same as the previous period and since March 2020, 140 Special Constables have claimed the bonus allowance.

PERSONAL PROTECTICE EQUIPMENT PROVISION

29. WMP continue to have adequate stocks of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available to officers and staff. The force ensures supply chains are kept under continual review and face-coverings are made available to staff who are required to enter locations where government legislation means they are now necessary.
30. The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) have issued their latest guidance regarding the use of PPE, which has been developed in partnership with Public Health England (PHE).
31. The new guidance issued on the 10th August 2020 stresses the importance of officers and staff using PPE when required to intervene with a member of the public inside their social distance (2 meteres) regardless of whether they are displaying symptoms, or whether or not the officer is in uniform. This guidance now extends to when officers or staff are inside within an enclosed space such as a vehicle.
32. The guidance remains that in all scenarios, officers have PPE readily available and as a minimum that this is a fluid resistant surgical mask (IIR) and gloves (non-latex). Table 1 highlights the NPCC operational guidance for PPE.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) operational guidance: practical scenarios

Hygiene and PPE requirement	Inside duties			External/public facing duties		
	Cleaning of police, stations, cars and equipment	Contact with police colleagues and suppliers – Social distancing available	Social distancing not available – confined space	Contact with the public is likely – but with social distancing measures available	Close contact with the public is likely and social distancing – not available and suspected risk of infection exists	not available and symptomatic
Social distancing: first vital step in protection	2 metres	2 metres	Aspire to achieve 2 metres separation or other physical measures	2 metres	2 metres unless closer contact is essential	2 metres unless closer contact is essential
Basic hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth ■ Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and hot water and when not available use alcohol based hand sanitiser as often as possible, after incidents, and on return to station 					
Fluid resistant surgical mask (FIR)	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Disposable gloves (non-latex)	Yes	No	Risk assess	No	Yes	Yes
Disposable aprons	Risk assess	No	No	No	Risk assess	Yes
Goggles	Risk assess	No	Risk assess	No	Risk assess	Yes
Fluid repellent coverall/over-suit	No	No	No	No	No	Risk assess

3 Personal protective equipment (PPE) operational guidance

Table 1 Personal Protective Equipment

33. Providing the appropriate level of PPE to all officers and staff is a key priority for WMP. WMP began planning and purchasing PPE at an early stage and have therefore been in a strong position to respond to the changes in guidance. A strong capability that is responsible for sourcing, distributing and monitoring the use of usage of the PPE remains in place. This function is overseen by a member of the Force Executive Team.
34. Appropriate PPE has been issued to all areas of the force where there is a requirement. All PPE issued is in line with the national standard agreed for policing. There continues to be significant input from operational departments into the PPE and how it is used.
35. The Police Federation and Trade Unions have been fully engaged and consulted regarding our PPE position throughout the pandemic and positive feedback received.
36. The force continues to have a central store for all items of PPE. Stock levels can be assessed on a daily basis and action taken where needed.
37. A weekly PPE update is provided to the executive lead which details: the current stock level for each item, expected consumption over the next twelve weeks, the quantity that is on order and when that order will arrive. Each item is then given an appropriate status:

red, amber or green. This level of visibility provides ongoing assurance at an executive level.

38. Strong supply lines have been developed with existing suppliers and through developing relationships with new suppliers. For the last few months, the force has been able to obtain 99% of its PPE needs from the national PPE policing stock. Subsequently, the force is spending very little on PPE.
39. Through creative thinking and a relentless focus on PPE, the WMP position is expected to remain strong. Should the position change, this would be highlighted immediately and reported into the COVID-19 command structure. There are plans in place to prepare for additional PPE demand through the winter period.
40. Each Neighbourhood Policing Unit (NPU) and Department have designated PPE single points of contact, who are responsible for taking receipt of PPE stock delivered from the central WMP store, distributing it appropriately and feeding back to the central function if additional supplies are needed. This continues to work extremely well.
41. Each NPU and Department receives a weekly supply of PPE. If there are any shortages following this delivery, these are immediately addressed.
42. Nationally, the patterns of PPE usage continue to show a steady decline in most of the 10 PPE items that are supplied. On average, forces are now using 60% less masks and 50% less gloves than at the peak of the pandemic, despite having more colleagues back in the workplace.
43. The national PPE team are playing a proactive part in supporting other forces across the country and WMP are fully engaged with this. As part of the national PPE programme, WMP has taken responsibility for being the regional PPE co-ordinator for Staffordshire, West Mercia and Warwickshire. Regional PPE needs, are ordered from the national team by WMP and delivered to the WMP central PPE store and distributed to regional forces based on their needs. This is working well and positive feedback has been received from regional forces.
44. The force has sourced, procured and issued 2 face coverings and a bottle of hand sanitiser to all staff and officers who travel to and from work on public transport.
45. 2,800 staff and officers have requested face coverings and these were issued within 24 hours of Shared Services receiving the request. We have also offered these to volunteers across the force.

46. The face coverings are good quality and can be washed 100 times each and therefore we expect the 2 face covers issued will last around 6 months. Positive feedback has been received in terms of the face coverings.
47. The end to end process was implemented a week before the start date of the government mandating face coverings being worn on public transport. Face coverings have also been issued to all operational officers and staff, to be worn in shops and enclosed spaces. These were rolled out in advance of the requirement for the public to wear them.
48. The NPCC have updated that the use of face coverings is likely to be extended to other settings. This will be assessed and any information shared as soon as it is available.

FORCE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

49. The force operational effectiveness in relation to: Impact of sickness and self-isolation; colleague counselling and support services; effectiveness of the COVID-19 testing regime; the impact of COVID-19 testing on operational effectiveness remains the same as previously reported in the August SPCB paper.

OPERATIONAL AND ORGANISTATIONAL LEARNING

Organisational Learning

50. To date, the project team have collated 408 learnings and insights, which have all been triaged, distilled and assessed for value to the force. Over 80% of learnings captured came from internal sources. External sources included other forces and agencies as well as Operation Talla and the national response to capturing COVID-19 learning, led by the College of Policing (CoP).
51. The main sources of learning can be seen in figure 2 below. A significant proportion of the learning came through the major incident command structure. Wider engagement activity across the organisation also provided further insights through a number of other mechanisms and sources including an internal COVID-19 Portal.

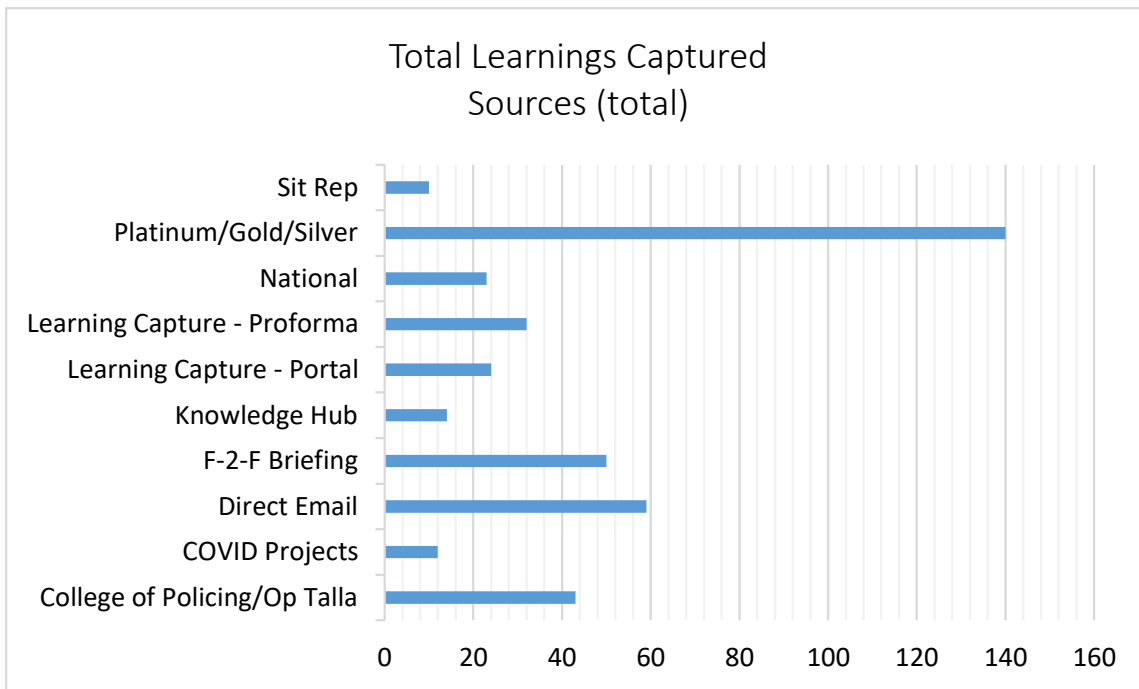


Figure 2 Total learnings captured

52. 90% of the learnings captured have already been shared with the relevant parts of the organisation. Overwhelmingly, learnings are local and did not impact the wider business. 20 changes were identified which have required further detailed analysis due to their potential impacts upon the force's wider operating model and these are being progressed within existing business processes and change governance groups. These were highlighted in previous reports.

Organisational Learning and Change Update

53. A number of opportunities have been identified where changes to the way we work have yielded immediate productivity benefits, and recommendations have been made to maintain the new way of working. These are being monitored and evaluated within existing governance structures through the appropriate lead from the Force Executive Team. Further research and evaluation is required and this has been formally commissioned through the Organisational Change Board (OCB). The following builds upon those opportunities already identified in July and August 2020 reports.

54. New organisational learning capture has reduced significantly over the past month as the force concentrates further on recovery from the COVID pandemic and balancing the need to get people back into work whilst balancing an agile workforce where possible. This

reduction has also been seen at a national level as most immediate and significant learnings have already been identified and knowledge shared moving into a 'business as usual' structures.

55. A national operation to lead the police response was established under Operation Talla with the College of Policing leading the learning and knowledge sharing work stream. The majority of external learnings were sourced from here and West Midlands Police has been engaged with knowledge sharing events, leading on occasions when appropriate.

- **Knowledge Sharing Events:** Two events have been held recently. The first was to identify how the pandemic has affected vulnerable children and families, as well as managing the return to school and the likelihood of increases in grooming, criminal and sexual exploitation and other harmful practices. The second discussed the challenges of returning to the workplace post-COVID and explored the practices in place across force to assist in addressing these challenges. Learning was distributed to the appropriate departments to progress.
- **Guidance - Taking trauma related work home:** This is advice for reducing the likelihood of secondary trauma. Exposure to distressing material such as traumatising conversations, images and written or auditory testimony occurs in the work of many people. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in this type of work being undertaken in the home. In these circumstances, there is an increased risk of secondary trauma and compassion fatigue when the support of understanding workplace colleagues is less available and the boundary between work and home life eroded. This learning has been disseminated across those operational areas where needed.

56. Further knowledge sharing events are scheduled with Lancashire Police and Leicestershire Police sharing their experiences of dealing with local lockdowns. Northumbria Police are leading a session on understanding vulnerability in relation to night time economy post easing of COVID-19 restrictions, which WMP will be in attendance.

Organisational Learning and Change: Benefits

57. Although a number of benefits and future productivity uplift opportunities have already been identified, efficiency gains are emerging and will 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 is progressing to define tangible benefits realised

throughout this period of unprecedented change. These will be monitored through the formal groups' route, previously mentioned.

Organisational Learning and Change: Next Steps

58. WMP has now moved into the recovery phase where insights and learning have lessened significantly but will continue to be gathered when received. The Recovery Board will continue to identify opportunities, improvements and changes to inform the continuous improvement agenda, as well as inform the organisations path to recovery. The process employed to capture learning is being integrated into the already established learning framework internally to ensure and maintain the organisation's ability to become a more dynamic learning organisation.

Operational Learning

59. The lockdown exercise was delivered in July and explored the situation in Leicester where a local lockdown took place. The scenario was replicated in Coventry to work through the WMP response to such an incident. Attendees at the event included both operational and support functions who considered existing planning assumptions and structures against a series of challenges created by lockdown. A summary report identifying considerations has been drafted and circulated to the appropriate COVID-19 groups and attendees.

60. Learning will commence soon via a series of one to one interviews aligned to the six statutory duties of the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2014 exploring the strategic considerations to the incident response. Previous draft reports from completed learning have been signed off by the senior responsible officer for this strand of the recovery project and shared appropriately.

61. A virtual exercise is planned to explore the impact of implementing a COVID secure estate and the consequences on continuity planning for building loss.

62. A pre scoping meeting is being held in relation to the European Union (EU) Exit to establish planning assumptions and structure considerations. This work will also encapsulate the considerations and implications of EU Exit against a COVID19 backdrop. This will be supported with the facilitation of an exercise in due course to explore this further.

FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

Impact of COVID-19 on the 2020-21 budget

63. The finance department has identified and reported actual and planned costs associated with COVID-19 across the force since March 2020.

64. The project structure supporting the forces recovery phase replaced 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.

65. Finance is represented on 5 projects which feed into the Recovery Board. These cover civil contingencies, people and welfare, finance and infrastructure, organisational change and Local Policing.

66. The table below shows expenditure on Covid-19 from March to end of July 2020 and was presented to the recovery board week commencing 10 August 2020:

67. Category	2019-20 actuals (£'000s)	2020-21 actuals (Apr-Jul) (£000's)	2020-21 est. for Aug 2020 (£000's)	Total expenditure Inc. estimates (£000's)	Comments
PPE equipment	939	1,112	2	2,052	This PPE is net of orders via National Procurement. All medical grade PPE costs will be reclaimed from the Home Office
Officer and Staff pay costs	0	602	134	736	Officers and staff moved from posts including CWG planning, creation of MART team and work by Guardian team on Covid-19
Overtime pressures	65	305	41	411	Actuals on custody, intelligence cell, IT and D contingency, MART team, NPU PHLs and planning teams. Future costs from support the reopening of the hospitality sector due in July and August
Temporary staff	0	357	116	473	25 additional staff for force Contact – now extended to 30 Sept. PPU extension of temp staff contract to 30 Dec to clear backlog of DA cases
Other non-pay	25	589	147	761	Costs include decontamination, clinical waste, screens for contact staff, and amendments/reinstatement of police buildings to make them COVID secure
Loss of income	107	1,689	255	2,051	Loss of income at Airport and other force Operations, Police led prosecutions and traffic investigations, vehicle recovery and DBS. Airport income to be reviewed from July as some operations recommence
Home working (laptops and devices)	533	179	0	712	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	(448)	(50)	(498)	Savings in fuel (per BP fuel offer which ended on 8 th July) business travel and accommodation
Total	1,669	4,385	645	6,699	

Table 2. Force expenditure on COVID-19 since March 2020

68. The overall cost of COVID-19 to the Force was £4.90m at the end of June and reached £6.09m by 31 July 2020.
69. The overall cost of Covid-19 to the Force was £6.08m at the end of July and is expected to reach £6.70m by 31 August 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. Now that the force has entered a recovery phase they 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 £0.712m.
70. 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 2 batches of machines received in 2020-21 are an acceleration of replacements which would have been completed later this year and into 2021-22. The net cost of laptops, mobile devices and data supplied to colleagues as a result of the pandemic, purchased in addition to replacement machines is £0.71m.
71. Expenditure on PPE is now £2.05m. After placing a national order for over £4m (not included in the above table) it is expected that this will provide for 98% of the force's PPE requirements. Further PPE expenditure will be required to satisfy requirements for officers to wear face coverings in retail and restaurant premises and this continues to be managed by the Shared Services team. The Home Office have confirmed that force's will be reimbursed for all medical grade PPE purchased from March 2020 including the national order. It is estimated that £1.75m of the £2.05m PPE should be classified as medical grade and is expected to be refunded to the force.
72. A loss of income of £0.1m was identified in March 2020 and this grew to £1.8m by the end of July 2020. The sources of the loss of income for 2020-21 are principally from Birmingham Airport, roads policing, events policing and from criminal justice processes.

73. In July Birmingham Airport resumed some flights and more officers are returning to duties. We will be reviewing income for the Airport over the summer period and expect to report a reduction in income loss in the next report.
74. The latest Home Office advice indicates that we should expect to reclaim 75% of lost income subject to satisfying terms and conditions – this would allow the force to recover around £1.5m of the lost income to date.
75. 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 £0.25m have been identified from April to July.
76. As detailed previously, the government will provide additional funding to Forces to cover the costs of medical grade PPE required in relation to COVID-19 and for 75% of lost income. However, it is not yet clear whether the government will provide additional funding to forces to cover all other costs associated with the pandemic. The Home Office continue to ask forces to collate and report their actual and estimated costs estimates of dealing with the crisis on a monthly basis as forces continue to lobby Central Government for additional funding to cover all COVID-19 related costs.

Impact of Covid-19 on the Medium Term Financial Plan

77. 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 including 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 finance team will continue to monitor the long-term situation to address these impacts if and when they crystallise. When the national position becomes clearer, the Medium Term Financial Plan will be updated and brought to a future board meeting.

NEXT STEPS

The board is asked to consider this paper.

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