



**Strategic Policing and Crime Board**

**17 November 2020**

**Police and Crime Plan Priority:** Regular Item

**Title:** Emergency Chapter Report – by exception

**Presented by:** Assistant Chief Constable Claire Bell

**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 20 October 2020.

**COVID-19 RECOVERY – CRIME PATTERNS**

*Predicted Three-Month Demand Pattern*

5. Whilst the night time economy offences remain lower than would be expected, overall crime levels have returned to normal. In fact the last two months have shown the highest recorded crime since March 2007. This trend has continued throughout October with the week commencing 12/10/20 the highest since 2006. This has been predominately due to significant increases around recorded domestic abuse crimes and harassment offences

that now make up one in every six recorded crimes. Traditionally the changing of the clocks sees increases in Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) however the force is still seeing good reductions in this area.

6. Over the past months WMP has received between 150-200 calls for service 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 guidance on numbers of people.
7. A specific policing response under Operation Reliant was put in place and dedicated resources have attended these calls for service. Operation Reliant relates to Unlicensed Music Events (UME's), large house parties and unlawful activities in licensed premises, including Shisha lounges. Officers attending those calls for service have been following the Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce (4E) model and on the vast majority of incidents we have attended we have not had to resort enforcement. Officers are also using powers outside of the Covid legislation by working with partners and using council licencing laws.
8. On the 2nd October the force along with Local Authority Partners ran a force wide enforcement day that resulted in 195 officers and PCSOs being deployed. A number of outcomes were achieved including: 400 visits to parks, opens spaces, schools and universities, licenced premises, retail outlets and transport hubs. 613 Directions To Leave were issued and 36 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued.

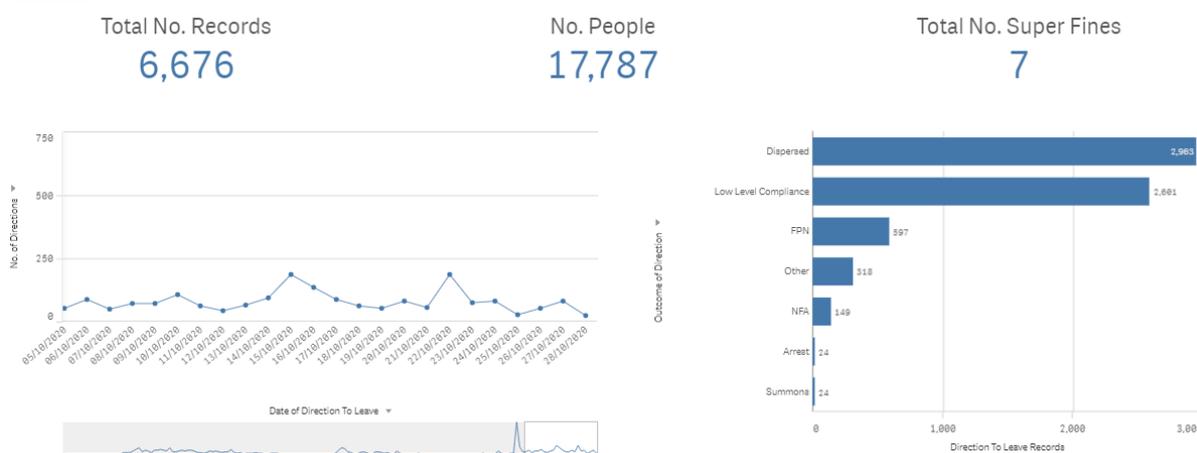
#### *Predicted Six and Twelve Month Demand Pattern*

9. The position remains broadly the same for both six and twelve month predicted demand patterns as reported in the last paper which was presented at the Strategic Policing and Crime Board on 20th October 2020. However tightening of restrictions could significantly affect demand patterns as was seen during the national lockdown in April and May, depending on the level of compliance and duration of any restrictions.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 REGULATIONS**

10. Directions To Leave have a number of outcomes including: dispersal, Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), summons and arrest. This month has seen the continued use of recording of lower level compliance as an outcome which is now the most used outcome over the last reporting period.

11. There have been a total of 6,676 Directions To Leave forms from March 2020 to 28th October 2020 (this has increased by 2675 since the last paper) as can be seen in figure 1 below. The recent increase has occurred since a number of local authorities have entered increased local restrictions and the introduction of low level compliance recording. Low level compliance records the number of people on 1 form rather than taking individuals details.



12.

Figure 1 Directions to leave between March 2020 and 28th October 2020

13. Of the 6676 Directions To Leave issued, 44% were dispersed and 9% were for Fixed Penalty Notices or summons with 0.4% resulting in arrest. The introduction of recording of low level compliance has accounted for 2442 of the 2675 records recorded this month.

14. 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.

15. During October there were 2675 Directions To Leave were given. 83 of these were given Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's). Of the recorded proportion 23% of FPN's have been given to white people, 29% to Asian people and 36% to black people.

16. The data also shows that Directions To Leave are disproportionately used by age. 25-39 year olds have received 51% of FPN's and 18-24 year olds have received 24% of FPN's. 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 75% of FPN's, which is 45% above the 2011 census data.

17. There have been 7, £10,000 Super Fines issued since the legislation came into place.

## **WORKING AND OPERATING EFFECTIVELY WITH PARTNERS**

### *Strategic Co-ordination Group and Tactical Co-ordination Group*

18. Presently both the Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) and the Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) are maintaining a weekly rhythm with extraordinary meetings being established when required. Chairing of the SCG remains with the Local Authorities and the TCG is chaired by a Health representative. Meeting frequency is under constant review and may need to be increased to address the rise in local case numbers, but presently remains at weekly.

19. There are a number of 'place-wide' Incident Management Teams (IMTs) now in place within the region to address the rise in cases in each of the areas. 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 under the tier arrangements that are in place across the country. Response and recovery are likely to operate in parallel for some time within the West Midlands Police force area.

20. There are a number of sub-groups that have been established to support the Covid-19 response in the West Midlands and Warwickshire footprint, that report into the TCG and SCG structures. These are in addition to local incident management arrangements that feed into the SCG, such as local IMTs and test, track and trace programmes. Sub-groups resolve issues within their membership, and escalate items that cannot be resolved to TCG/SCG for further consideration, who can also feed in critical actions for the sub-groups to complete. The sub-groups can be scaled up or down as required, paused or recommenced as necessary. The current working groups are;

- Shielding and Vulnerable people
- Transport Recovery Cell
- Mortality Management
- Communication Cells (West Midlands/Warwickshire)
- Hospitality Management

21. There is senior West Midlands Police representation at the Local Resilience Forum, Strategic and Tactical Co-ordination Groups and the Recovery Co-ordination Group. Where necessary, WMP also have tactical or strategic involvement in the sub-groups.

#### *Local Resilience Forum*

22. The West Midlands Conurbation Local Resilience Forum (WMCLRF), is chaired by Wayne Brown, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer from West Midlands Fire Service. The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and its working groups continue to ensure focus on the collective responsibility to plan, prepare and communicate in a multi-agency environment with regards to the current pandemic. An action plan with 32 recommendations with clear owners and defined timescales continues to be progressed through the general working group of the LRF, of which Chief Superintendent Lee Wharmby is the interim Chair, and will own delivery of the plan and its recommendations.

#### *Recovery Co-ordination Group*

23. The RCG meets every fortnight currently and has standing agenda items which include;

- SCG
- Test Trace Isolate
- Public Transport
- Police

24. There are also six agreed Community Recovery Priorities, which incorporate a range of cross cutting issues:

- Living safely with Coronavirus
- Accessing healthcare and improving physical health
- Mental health and awareness support
- Education and young people
- Jobs and training
- Local businesses and high streets

25. Through the work of the Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG), the region is sharing best practice and looking for opportunities to collaborate where possible. As a result of the current increasing focus on responding to the secondary peak the RCG is exploring how best the work continues whilst ensuring the right focus and investment into response.

## **SPECIAL CONSTABLE BONUS ALLOWANCE**

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

### PERSONAL PROTECTICE EQUIPMENT PROVISION

27. The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) 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 regardless of whether they are displaying symptoms, or whether or not the officer is in uniform. This guidance extends to when officers or staff are inside within an enclosed space such as a vehicle.

28. 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).

29. We are expecting a revision to this guidance week commencing 2nd November 2020 which will be reviewed and implemented. WMP is in a very strong position to embed any changes immediately.



#### 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 Aspire to achieve 2 metres separation or other physical measures	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"> <li>Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth</li> <li>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</li> </ul>					
Fluid resistant surgical mask (IIR)	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

Figure 2 Personal Protective Equipment

30. Providing the appropriate level of PPE to all officers and staff is and remains a key priority for WMP. WMP began planning and purchasing of PPE at an early stage and have therefore been in a strong position to respond to the changes in PHE/ NPCC guidance.
31. As part of WMP's response to COVID-19 a strong PPE 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.
32. Appropriate PPE has been rolled out 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 operational input into the PPE and how it is used.
33. The Police Federation and Trade Unions have been fully engaged and consulted throughout and positive feedback received.
34. The Force continues to have a central store for all items of PPE. We are able to assess our stock levels on a daily basis and take action where needed.
35. A weekly PPE update is provided to the executive lead for COVID-19, the update 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.
36. Strong supply lines have been developed with existing suppliers and through developing relationships with new suppliers. For the last 4 months the Force has been able to obtain 96% of its PPE needs from the national PPE policing stock. This means that as a Force we are spending very little on PPE.
37. 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. We have secured additional PPE to meet demand through the winter period.
38. 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.
39. Each NPU and department receives a weekly supply of PPE to ensure they have what they need. If there are any shortages following this delivery these are immediately addressed. WMP has continued to see a high demand for PPE from its own officers and staff. We have been proactive in embedding good practice across the Force. 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.

40. 4,000 staff and officers have requested face coverings and these were issued within 48 hours of Shared Services receiving the request. We have also offered these to volunteers across the Force. 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. We are getting really good feedback about them.
41. 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. We have also rolled out face coverings to all operational officers and staff, in line with the expectation that like for the public, they are worn in shops and enclosed spaces. These were rolled out in advance of the requirement for the public to wear them.
42. From Monday 2nd November 2020 we are asking all colleagues to wear face coverings in communal areas in our buildings. With all areas of the force now in tier two and cases of CoVID-19 rising nationally, we want to take every precaution we can to keep people safe.
43. We may mandate the use of face coverings if further restrictions are imposed within the force area or we see more infection internally through the track and trace data.
44. We have secured enough face coverings to ensure all of our officers and staff can get access to 2 each. Alongside the standard face coverings we have also purchased transparent face covers to cater for lip reading and face covers for those officers and staff that have turbans or longer beards.
45. Where staff and officers cannot wear them due to medical reasons we have secured a lanyard covered in sunflower images, which is the national symbol that makes it clear to others that the person wearing it cannot wear a face covering.

## **FORCE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

### *Assessment of the effectiveness of the COVID-19 testing regime for officers and staff*

46. Track and trace has identified learning opportunities that has allowed us to work towards a safer working environment. Without this function the infection rates would be much higher as our early interventions minimise risk reflected in the national statistic i.e. that every positive person will infect 1.5-2 people. Track and trace has allowed us to engage effectively with Public Health England (PHE) and successfully challenge some of their

initial assessments and decisions. This was due to the team’s knowledge, and interpretation of the national guidance and understanding of the organisation. The internal service has the benefit of an inbuilt escalation process where situations or questions require clinical input and expertise. The service is due to expand with the recruitment of full time resources.

47. Whilst there is a rise in positive cases amongst officers and staff it is reflective of the local picture. However, due to the in house approach we are able to confirm that the majority are due to non-operational interventions.

*Impact of COVID-19 testing on operational effectiveness*

48. The impact of the COVID-19 testing on operational effectiveness actively contributes to infection control within the organisation by quickly removing from the work place individuals at risk and raising their awareness of their own health and safety and that of their family.

49. There is an immediate efficient response to positive tests due to 7 day cover within the test and trace function, this removes the risks associated with the inbuilt delay of the PHE process which can take up to 5 days to inform employers of a positive test by which time the opportunity for further infection escalates.

50. Hotspots or areas of concern have been identified quickly enabling better informed approaches and planning. This learning has also been shared with the organisation to ensure behaviour change and improved compliance with the COVID secure requirements.

**OPERATIONAL AND ORGANISTATIONAL LEARNING**

51. There are no further operational and organisational learning updates to report in this paper.

**FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT**

*Impact of COVID-19 on the 2020-21 budget*

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

53. Table 1 below shows expenditure on Covid-19 from March to end of September 2020 and includes a forecast of expenditure in October. This will be presented to the Secure and Sustain board in week commencing 26 October 2020:

54. Category	2019-20 actuals (March)	2020-21 actuals	2020-21 est. for Oct 2020 (£000's)	Total expenditure inc.	Comments
--------------	-------------------------	-----------------	------------------------------------	------------------------	----------

	(£'000s)	(Apr-Sep) (£000's)		estimates (£000's)	
PPE equipment	939	1,373	18	2,330	This PPE is net of orders via National Procurement. All medical grade PPE costs (£1.76m) will be reclaimed from the Home Office and paid by 9 November 2020. The £4.25m costs for the national order should also be paid at that point.
Officer and Staff pay costs	0	691	45	736	Officers and staff moved from posts including Common Wealth Games planning, creation of Multi Agency Response Team (MART) and work by Guardian team on Covid-19. New costs include People Organisation and Development track and trace roles.
Overtime pressures	65	765	443	1,273	Actuals on custody, intelligence cell, IT & D contingency, MART team, Neighbourhood Policing Units public holiday leave, planning and patrols in hospitality sector. Future cost estimates for enforcement work across the force. Note £1.8m has been received from Home Office to support this cost from October 2020 to March 2021.
Temporary staff	0	542	30	572	25 additional staff for force Contact – now extended to 30 September. Public Protection Unit extension of temp staff contract to 30 December to clear backlog of Domestic Abuse cases
Other non-pay	25	740	9	774	Costs include decontamination, clinical waste, screens for contact staff, and amendments/reinstatement of police buildings to make them Covid secure.
Loss of income	107	2,318	260	2,685	Loss of income at Airport and other force Operations, Police led prosecutions and traffic investigations, vehicle recovery and DBS. Airport income loss reduced from July as some operations recommenced.
Home working (laptops and devices)	533	177	27	737	3,650 machines purchased between March and May of which approx. 420 were directly related to supporting the forces Covid-19 response. Cost includes mobile devices and SIM cards for mobile data in laptops.
Budget savings	0	(673)	(110)	(783)	Savings in fuel (per BP fuel offer which ended on 8th June) business travel and accommodation.
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,669</b>	<b>5,933</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>8,325</b>	

Table 1: Expenditure on Covid-19 from March to end of September 2020

55. The table highlights a number of areas for discussion. The overall cost of Covid-19 to the Force (excepting the national order of PPE) was £7.60m at the end of September and is expected to reach £8.33m by 31 October 2020.
56. Expenditure on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is now £2.31m. After placing a national order for over £4m (not included in the above table) it is expected that this will continue to provide for 98% of the force's PPE requirements. Further local PPE expenditure will be required to satisfy requirements for officers to wear face coverings in relation to the latest national guidance 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. The PPE classified as medical grade of £1.76m and the national order value of £4.25m are expected to be reimbursed to the force by 9 November 2020.
57. A loss of income of £0.1m was identified in March 2020 and this has grown to an estimated £2.31m by the end of September 2020. The loss of income for 2020-21 principally relate to Birmingham Airport, roads policing, events policing (football) and from the criminal justice processes.
58. The force has just completed a return to the Home Office on income loss from April to July in which we are able to reclaim 75% of lost income where this is budgeted. The submitted claim for this period recognised lost income of £1.11m which was then subject to a 5% deduction against budgeted values, resulting in a 75% claim of £0.72m for the period from April to July. This scheme will enable the force to report further income losses for the remainder of the financial year which will be reported to the Home Office in December 2020 and April 2021.
59. 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 £0.47m have been identified from April to September. This level of saving is expected to continue for the remainder of the financial year and will help to offset some of the costs in the table above for which there is no current offer of compensation.
60. It is pleasing to note that the government will provide additional funding to Forces to cover the costs of medical grade PPE required in relation to COVID-19; 75% of lost income; and enforcement activities. However, it is not yet clear whether the government will provide additional funding to Forces to cover all other costs associated with the pandemic.

Table 2 below shows the forces net costs in relation to Covid-19 after income up to 31 October has been applied.

**Net position expected to 31 October:**

	<b>Expenditure £'000s</b>	<b>Income £'000s</b>	<b>Net position £'000s</b>
PPE	2,330	(1,760)	570
Overtime pressures	1,273	(305)*	968
Other costs	2,819	0	2,819
Income loss	2,685	(1,300)	1,385
Budget savings	(783)	0	(783)
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,325</b>	<b>(3,365)</b>	<b>4,960</b>

*Table 2 Net Position expected to 31st October*

*\*Note this income is indicative of 1 month's pro-rata element of the £1.8m surge funding provided in October*

61. The table shows that after income has been received for medical grade PPE, surge enforcement patrol overtime funding and loss of income the force will have spent £4.96m in dealing with the impacts of Covid-19 since March 2020.

**Impact of Covid-19 on the Medium Term Financial Plan**

62. 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 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 meeting of the Board.

**NEXT STEPS**

The board is asked to consider this paper.

**Authors:** Chief Superintendent Lee Wharmby, COVID-19 Chief of Staff; Keith Trivett – Senior Accountant; Stuart Gardner Senior intelligence Manager. Dean Sweet Assistant Director of Shared Services.