

**Strategic Policing and Crime Board**

**Date of meeting – 16 March 2021**

**End of Term Report, 2016-21**

**Foreword**

- i. It has been an honour to serve as the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner since 2014, when I was elected following the tragic and untimely death of Bob Jones, and re-elected in 2016. West Midlands Police is an excellent police force, well led, efficiently managed, and consisting of professional, courageous, hard-working Police Officers, staff and volunteers (the last both in policing and from the OPCC), who are motivated by protecting the vulnerable, making our communities better and safer places, and supporting justice. It is to them, and the work they do, that this report is dedicated, and, on behalf of everyone in the West Midlands, I offer them my thanks and deep respect.
- ii. West Midlands Police has in some respects had a difficult decade. Its budget has been cut more deeply than any other in the country – about £175 million – and we lost 2200 officers and a thousand staff from our strength as a result. Successive governments failed to properly address police funding, meaning that we don't come anywhere near to receiving what the existing police funding formula says we should. This costs us up to £40 million a year. Our police precept, the share of council tax that goes to policing, is far lower than all but one other force. At one level I'm pleased that this is the case, but there's also no sensible reason why it's appropriate for West Midlands Police to receive so much less local income than policing in, say, Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire or Merseyside. I sought to raise these issues with government repeatedly over my term of office, but was ignored. We are left with the almost unbelievable reality that while West Midlands Police, after Uplift, will still be a thousand officers smaller than it was in 2010, forces in leafy, low-crime parts of the country will have more officers than at any point in their history. This is a shocking failure of national leadership.
- iii. As a consequence, West Midlands Police, and my Police and Crime Plan, have had to reflect the need to be more efficient, to do more with less, to mitigate the impact of these cuts and inequalities. We've had to look hard at our technology, structures and business processes to support officers and staff to be as efficient and productive as we can, using our partnership with Accenture to support these changes. It means officers and staff can work remotely, rather than having to return to the station. Enter

intelligence once, rather than lots of times. It's no surprise Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) find us to be one of the most efficient, best value for money, forward looking forces in the country, and we were better prepared for the COVID emergency than others. We've had to make sure we make best use of the police estate, thinking beyond tired and simplistic notions that buildings of bricks and concrete somehow prevent crime. Police Officers and staff prevent and detect crime, not buildings, and our change programme, WMP2020, is delivering efficiencies that are equivalent to hundreds of officers' time. The cashable efficiencies we achieved have allowed us to recruit 200 extra officers, and the non-cashable savings will be worth nearly a thousand more officers in equivalent productivity gains. The programme will deliver £121 million in cashable and non-cashable savings. Keeping buildings open at the expense of these efficiency gains would be a backward step.

- iv. I have also tried to cope with the cuts by adopting a preventative approach, rather than a reactive one. It can be tempting to focus solely on solving crimes and responding to incidents, but it's always better to prevent a bad thing from happening rather than picking up the pieces after it's happened. That's why I supported a Violence Prevention Alliance, and a Gangs and Violence Commission, long before the more recent national investment in Violence Reduction Units. It's why I supported schemes to work with domestic violence perpetrators, and why I adopted a "harm reduction" approach to substance misuse, believing that taking demand out of the drug economy should sit alongside reducing supply. It's why I have supported the Precious Lives project, speaking with young people about the dangers of knife crime. It's why I've prioritised road safety – our roads policing team was singled out for praise by HMICFRS – to prevent deaths and injuries. It's also the motivation behind my investment in a West Midlands Police Data Lab, supported by a pioneering Police Data Ethics Committee (which should form the basis of a national institute), to develop our predictive analytics capability so that, given scarce resources, we can ensure that the right people, and the right places, get the right support and intervention at the right time, so as prevent threat, risk and harm.
- v. It's also why I created the West Midlands Police Cadets and continued with the Youth Commissioners. At a time of cuts, some were sceptical about reintroducing Cadets. It seemed like a luxury, a distraction from "core business". But now, with hundreds of young people involved, the benefits are clear: we're giving young people, often from diverse and challenging backgrounds, a different perception of policing. A quarter of our Cadets are young people who have caused concern to the police or their teachers. We're encouraging civic engagement through our volunteer Cadet Leaders. We're growing a new, diverse cohort of future Police Officers and staff. And finally, and most importantly, we're giving young people the skills, confidence and opportunity to make more of their lives, to become the positive contributors to society we all want to see.
- vi. My commitment to supporting young people has been unwavering, and it is the baton that I pass to my successor. I have looked for opportunities to introduce schemes that divert young people away from the risk of becoming involved in crime, support young people into employment, create out-of-court disposal routes for low level offending, and provide alternatives to custody. In my Office, I have worked with my Chief Executive to make the team more representative of the population of the West Midlands, including paid internships, apprenticeships, work experience, and

placements for ex-offenders. The team rewarded this effort by being one of the most dynamic and innovative Offices of a PCC in the country, while still taking one of the smallest shares of the overall police budget. Given the economic harm wrought by COVID, the prospects for our young people are my biggest fear for the future. The next PCC, working with partners from across the public, third and private sectors, needs to be part of a comprehensive, resourced and ambitious plan to prevent a “lost generation”. The scale of the challenge, and proposals for a response to it, are set out in my “Future Generations” report, which I published last year:

<https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/A-Future-Generations-Deal-Avoiding-the-Ticking-Time-Bomb-of-Youth-Unemployment-in-the-West-Midlands.pdf?x39505>

- vii. This is not the only challenge, however. Public confidence in policing is declining, and I believe this is in part because the public see the police struggling to cope with some of the challenges now evident. Online frauds, more traditional fraud and cybercrime affect more people than other forms of crime. Crime, like the wider economy, has shifted online, and policing needs to do more to respond; policing’s approach to technology, both to manage its own business but also to effectively investigate crimes, needs to improve. The scandal of failed and over-budget Home Office IT projects hasn’t helped. The national threat posed by child sexual abuse will require innovative thinking, including novel preventative approaches and an open approach to data sharing and publication. Victims of hidden crimes such as domestic abuse are more confident to come forward, and policing is better able to record the extent of the threat. Now the challenge is to manage this demand, while appropriately supporting victims, bringing offenders to justice and reducing reoffending. Again, thoughtful, honest, informed approaches based more on prevention than the response will be required. The drug economy continues to inflict massive damage to lives and communities, and yet the national debate appears unable to reasonably consider harm reduction approaches.
- viii. Our approach to serious and organised crime remains unfinished business. I’ve worked closely with the three other PCCs in our region to support what has become one of the best Regional Organised Crime Units in the country. We’ve achieved this in spite of a fractured and short term funding model, and a complicated approach to local, regional and national tasking. A national review of the policing response to serious and organised crime completed in early 2020 still hasn’t been published, and an HMICFRS report raising these concerns has come and gone. A clear-headed national approach, drawing from the best elements of the counter-terrorism network, is required.
- ix. The Police Uplift Programme, although belated, is a welcome investment in police recruitment, even though it will only give us back under 60% of the officers we’ve lost. Again delivered collaboratively across our region, it has been a great success – I’m delighted to report that we hit our first milestone target four months early. The challenge of inducting thousands of new recruits into the Force is much preferable to managing year after year of reductions. Even more belatedly, the government has recognised, to an extent, the need to ensure that the new recruits are reflective of the population they will serve. This has been my plan since the outset, and I’m glad government is catching up. This isn’t some idealistic notion; it’s a hard-headed recognition that a diverse, culturally competent police force will be more effective and make the most of the talents in our population. So while on the one hand it is

laudable that government is recognising the issue, Ministers, and some local representatives, need to do much more to show they take seriously the issues presented by structural inequality, racism, the problematic historic relationship between some communities and the police, and the challenges posed by unhelpful legislation. The disappointing mockery in Parliament that arose recently when we were recruiting a senior leader to take forward this work tells me there is some way to go. Diverse police recruitment is just one strand of the programme to make West Midlands Police a fair, procedurally just and representative organisation. Our work on stop and search has been ground-breaking, and our approach to complaints and police misconduct has also improved.

- x. The Uplift, with its arbitrary round target of 20,000 officers, speaks to the government's intention to reintroduce a more target driven culture in policing. A "policing outcomes framework" is expected, with a set of measures that reflects some but not all aspects of policing. No doubt any criticism of this policy will be framed as being opposition to reducing crime. The old cliché about being doomed to repeat history if you don't learn from it applies here. The catalogue of perverse incentives, gaming and adverse outcomes that have arisen from simplistic performance frameworks is a stain on the history of public services – policing among them. It will be a sad loss if the innovation and creativity facilitated by strong local governance of policing is eroded by ham-fisted direction from the centre.
- xi. Other challenges lie ahead that will impact across policing. With its usual positive, action-oriented approach, policing has done what it can to adapt to Brexit, and the loss of key EU law and order tools. The duty remains however, to be clear about the consequences, monitor these, and do what we can to mitigate the adverse implications. Similarly, police forces, like other organisations, must adapt to climate change and be part of the step away from a high-carbon economy.
- xii. Overall though, there is much from which to take encouragement. The Chief Constable and I have taken West Midlands Police through a change programme that enabled it to weather the storms of austerity and COVID. We have a police force much better prepared for the challenges of the 2020s. Our partnership working in community safety, supporting victims, criminal justice and violence reduction, are all much enhanced. Coventry's magnificent City of Culture year is about to begin, and next year we look forward to Birmingham's world class Commonwealth Games. I will watch with pride and hope.

## Introduction

Every Police and Crime Commissioner has to have a Police and Crime Plan. The Plan was produced in 2016, and has lasted my entire term of my office, including the extension to my term resulting from the cancellation of Police and Crime Commissioner elections in May 2020. I added an additional emergency chapter, concerned with the response to the pandemic, in 2020. The original plan is grouped into 7 key themes:

1. Protecting from Harm
2. Supporting Victims of Crime
3. Building Trust and Confidence in our Police
4. Strengthening Communities and Growing the Economy
5. Building a Modern Police Force
6. Standing up for Young People
7. Tackling National and International Threats

The emergency chapter included four additional themes:

- Ensure West Midlands Police responds efficiently and effectively to COVID, and works in partnership to protect the public of the West Midlands
- 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
- Lead and support the partnership response to the national emergency
- Ensure the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner does all it can to effectively respond to the national emergency, commissioning services that mitigate its effect and support the return to normality

## Performance since 2016

### Indicator 1: West Midlands Police to continue to have lower recorded crime rate compared to other similar forces

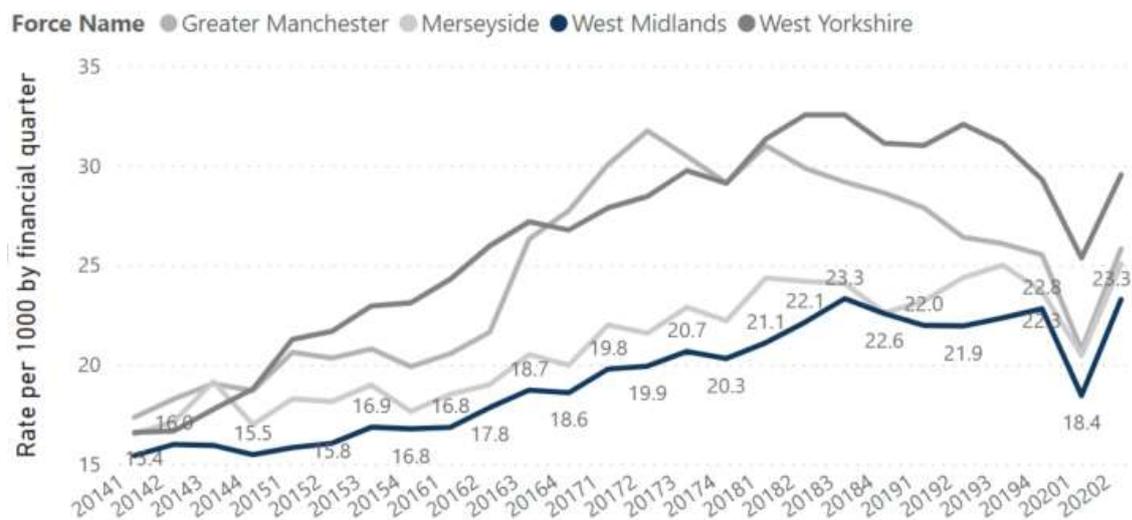
The most recent published figures with which to compare are for the year ending September 2020, this includes the first two quarters of the pandemic. Total recorded crime rate (excluding fraud) for West Midlands was 86.9 per 1,000 population. Whilst this is 3.5 points above the rate for England & Wales overall, it is the lowest when compared to the most similar force areas (MSF) and the Metropolitan Police:

Total recorded crime rate (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population:

Force	Rate per 1,000
England and Wales	83.5
West Midlands	86.9
Metropolitan Police	91.7
Merseyside	94.2
Greater Manchester	98.1
West Yorkshire	115.3

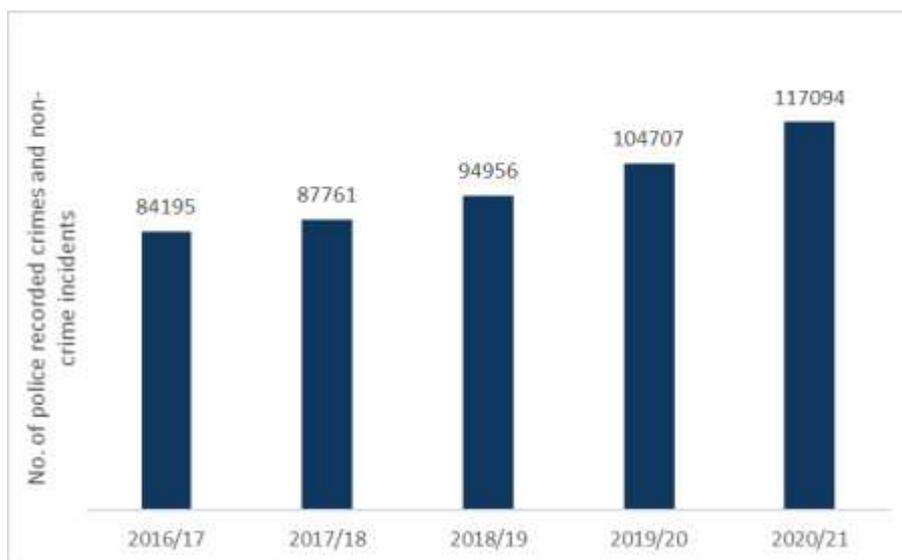
The rate of 86.9 for the West Midlands was an increase on the 85.5 reported for the year ending June 2020. All MSF apart from Merseyside saw a decrease, with the Metropolitan Police and England and Wales also seen decreases - Suggesting that the West Midlands saw a faster return to 'normal' crime rates following the initial lockdown.

That said, when breaking total recorded crime down by financial quarter the rate for the West Midlands continues to be below that of the MSF.



### Indicator 2: Increased reporting of 'hidden crimes'

The reporting of 'hidden crimes', both recorded crime and non-crime incidents, has seen continued increases over the past few years.



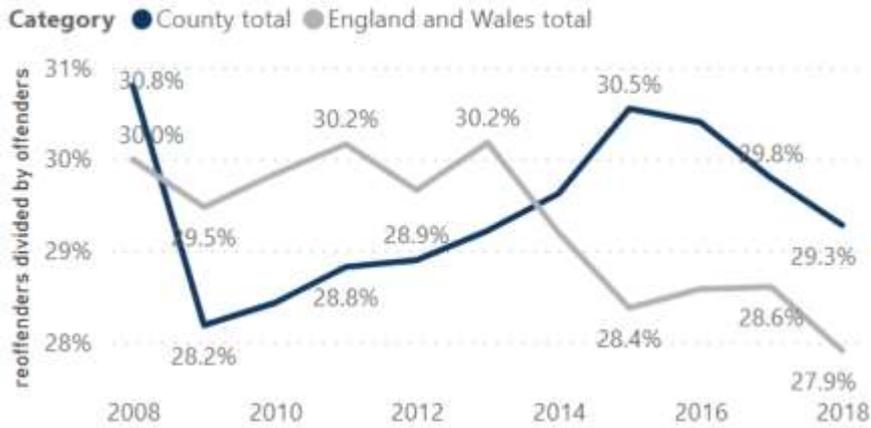
'Hidden crimes' includes domestic violence, child abuse, hate crime, vulnerable adults, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, honour-based violence, forced marriage, modern slavery and human trafficking. Those offences seeing most notable increases in reporting include domestic violence, hate crime, and modern slavery. Recorded domestic abuse crimes form almost 1 in every 5 crimes recorded by West Midlands Police, partly attributable to a focus on Crime Data Integrity (CDI). The CDI focus has also resulted in increased recording of stalking, harassment and common assault. This has further contributed to increases in hate crime reporting, and to a lesser extent crimes where vulnerable adults are victims. In addition to increases in recorded crime for modern slavery offences, there is also a more consistent approach taken to the documenting of non-crime modern slavery incidents reported via the National Referral Mechanism.

Breakdown of the hidden crimes figures:

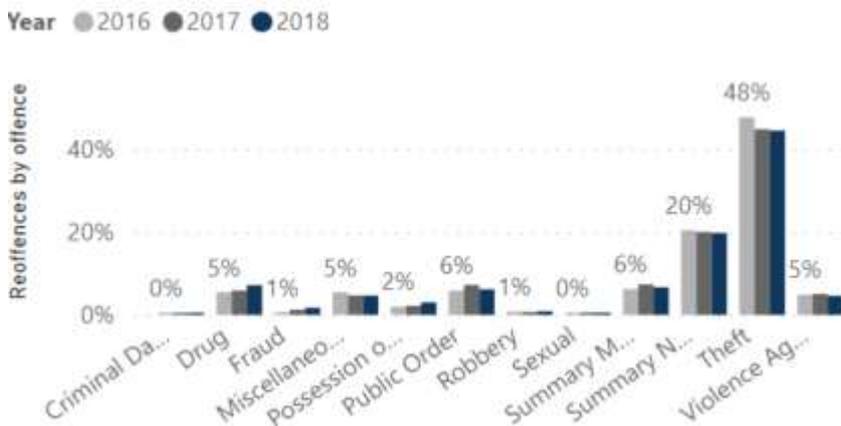
Hidden crimes										
Crimes	DA	CA	HA	VA	CSE	FGM	HBV	FM	MS	Trafficking
2016/17	22549	7114	4042	754	291	12	139	21	219	
2017/18	25672	8728	4645	909	479	2	134	29	398	8
2018/19	33513	10738	5502	1085	396	5	197	39	364	6
2019/20	41546	12098	6436	1198	339	5	206	59	535	12
2020/21	51650	10883	8105	1494	280	5	241	47	725	5
	0.396783									
Non-crime										
Crimes	DA	CA	HA	VA	CSE	FGM	HBV	FM	MS	
2016/17	30910	14273	723	1191	1608	159	125	65	0	
2017/18	30182	13027	493	1208	1556	145	97	49	0	
2018/19	28165	11742	382	1386	1189	84	101	62	0	
2019/20	29220	10509	285	1326	733	60	77	43	20	
2020/21	30086	10722	323	1456	469	21	80	43	459	

### Indicator 3: Low levels of reoffending

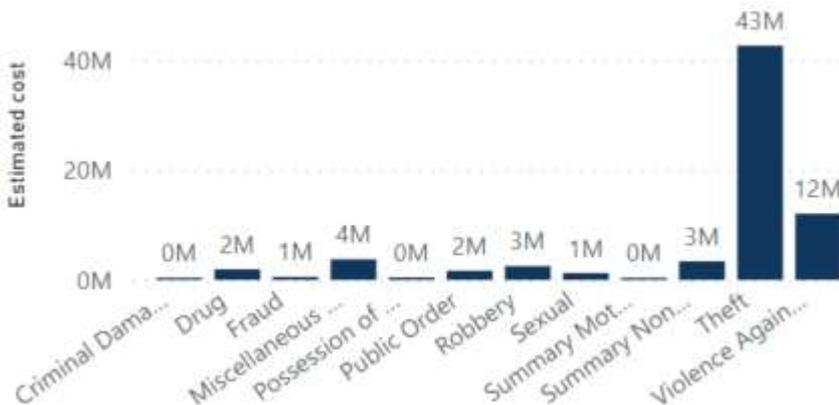
The most recent published proven reoffending rates relate to 2018, with the cohort period covering January to December. Following reoffending rates for adults reaching a peak of 30.5% in 2015, rates have fallen on a yearly basis with the gap between the West Midlands and England and Wales as a whole reducing from 2.1% to 1.4%.



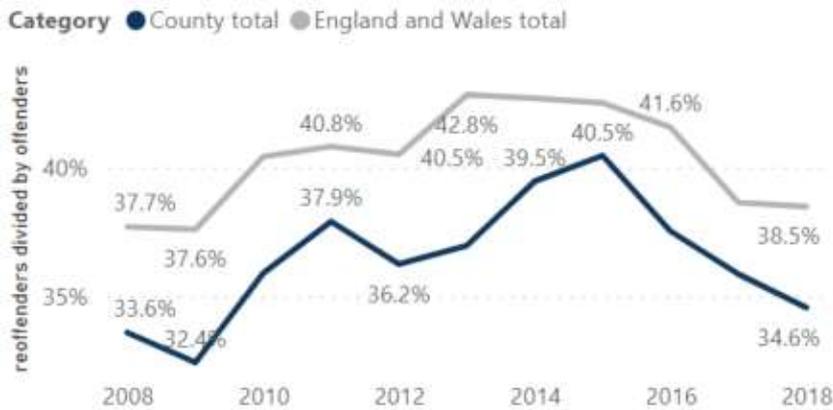
Over the past few years, theft offences have accounted for circa 45-48% of reoffences committed.



Using the unit costs detailed in the MoJ report on the economic and social costs of reoffending, the cost of theft reoffences to the West Midlands society and economy in 2018 was circa £43m.

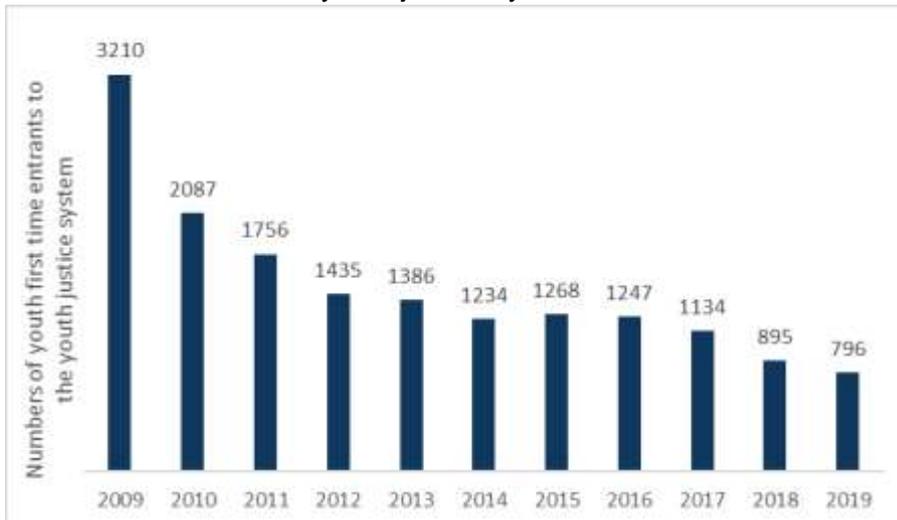


While the reoffending rate for adults in the West Midlands has fairly closely aligned to the national average, our areas has continued is good performance for preventing reoffending by young people. Since 2015, the rate in the West Midlands has decreased at a faster rate and is now 4% below that of England and Wales:



#### Indicator 4: Fewer young people entering the criminal justice system

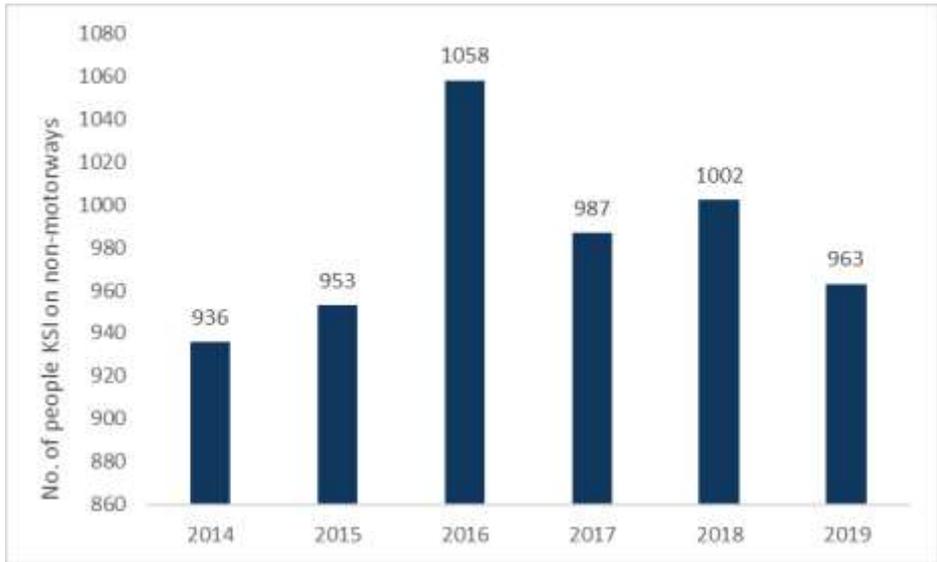
The most recent published proven reoffending rates relate to 2019, with the cohort period covering January to December. After seeing a slight increase in 2015, the number of youth first time entrants to the youth justice system has continued to decline.



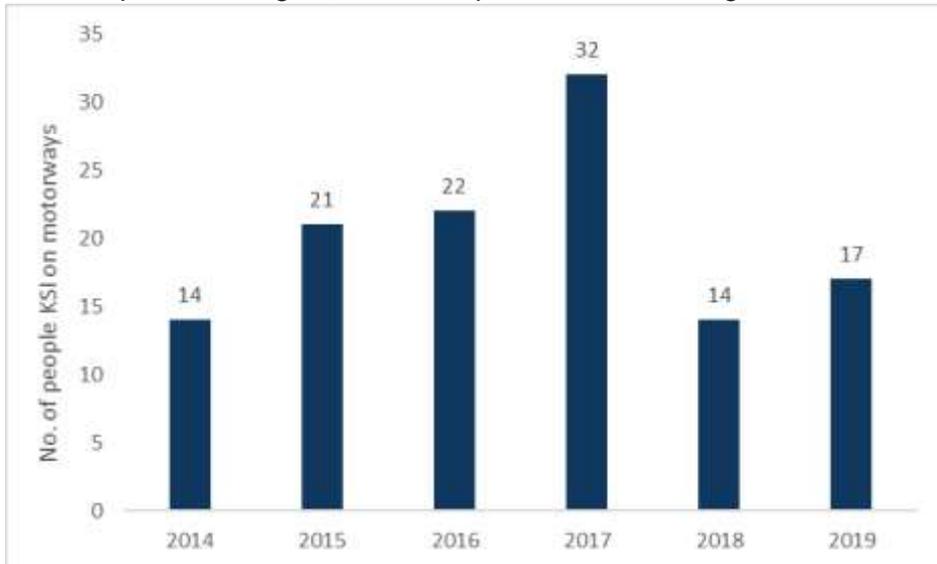
Whilst numbers are continuing to go down, the rate of first time entry per 10,000 in the West Midlands is higher than that seen for England and Wales (27 vs 21).

#### Indicator 5: Reductions in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads

The number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on non-motorway roads saw a decreasing trend over 2016-2019 despite continued increases in the number of vehicles using the roads.

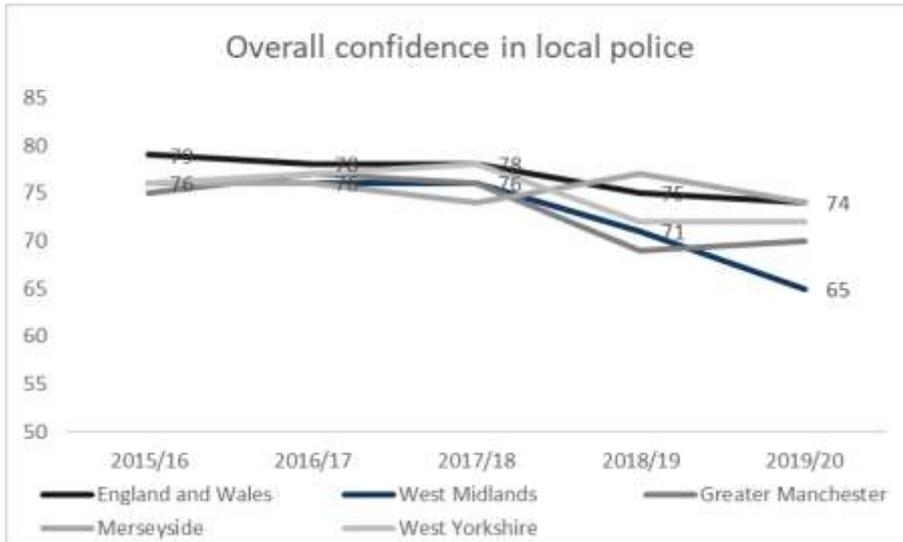


Following a high seen in 2017, the number of people KSI on motorways is in line with figures seen for pre-2015. Again, this is in spite of an increasing number of vehicles on roads.



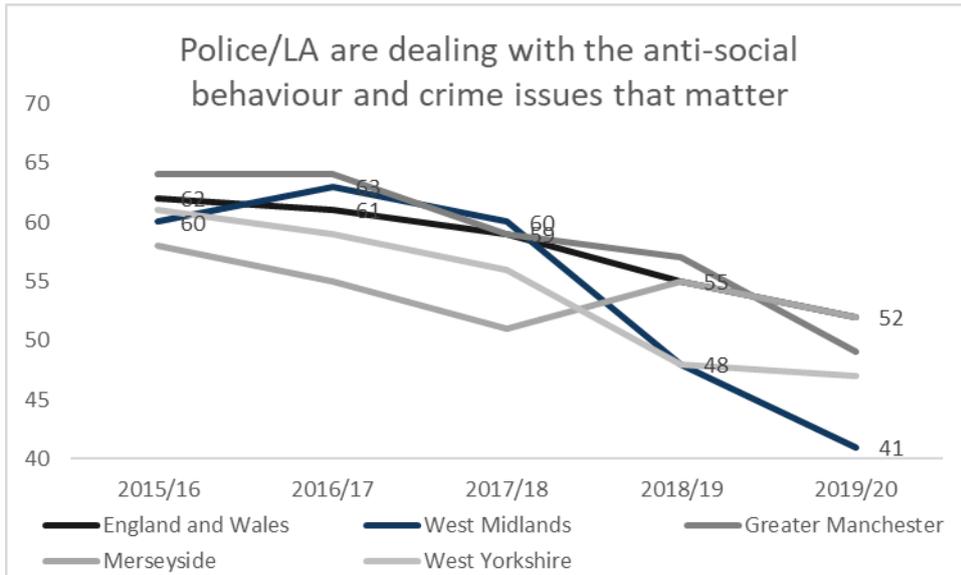
**Indicators 6 & 7: Increased confidence in West Midlands Police by 2020, Reductions in the disparities of confidence in the police across different areas**

Confidence in policing is declining in urban areas. Overall confidence in West Midlands Police has seen similar decreases recently, with confidence now lower than that for similar forces.



This decrease appears to be partially linked with a rise in the proportion of individuals experiencing or witnessing anti-social behaviour in their local area and a decrease in the proportion who believe that West Midlands Police/Local Authorities are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter.





The Force is implementing a new survey methodology in 2021 which will give more local information on the issues and concerns raised by residents, including their confidence in the policing response.

**Indicator 8: Satisfaction of victims of crime and anti-social behaviour to increase by 2020**

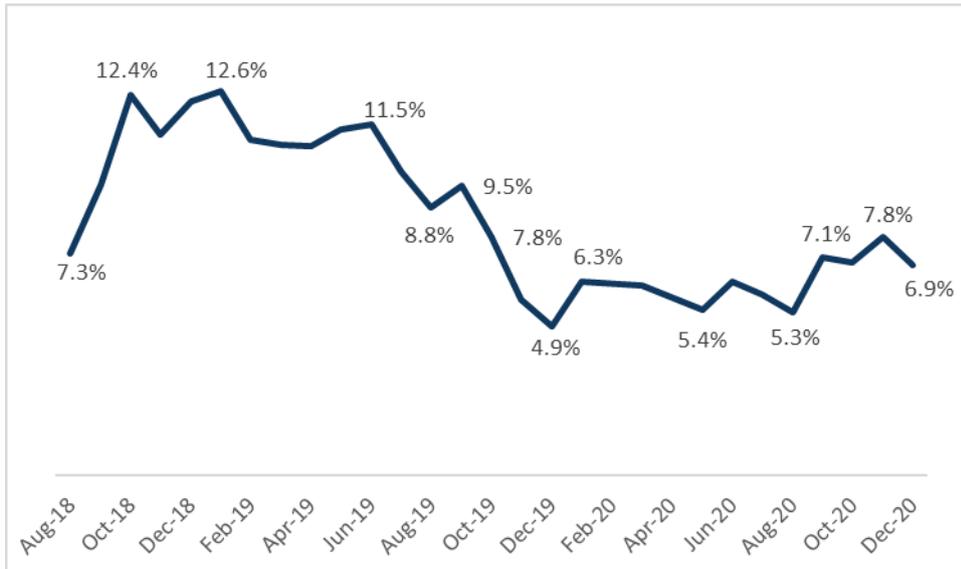
The primary method of measuring victim satisfaction is via an online survey emailed out to victims 6 weeks following the closure of cases. Over the past few years, the number of victims being invited to take part has averaged around 4,200 per month.

The number of victims invited to take part saw a reduction in 2020 when compared to 2019, down from 48,428 to 39,507. In the main due to no surveys being conducted during February or April and due to lower numbers invited during March and June.

The response rate from victims also saw a decrease, down from 9.6% to 6.3%, with 2,497 victims completing the survey in 2020.

	Invitations sent	Traced response rate
2019	48428	9.6%
2020	39507	6.3%

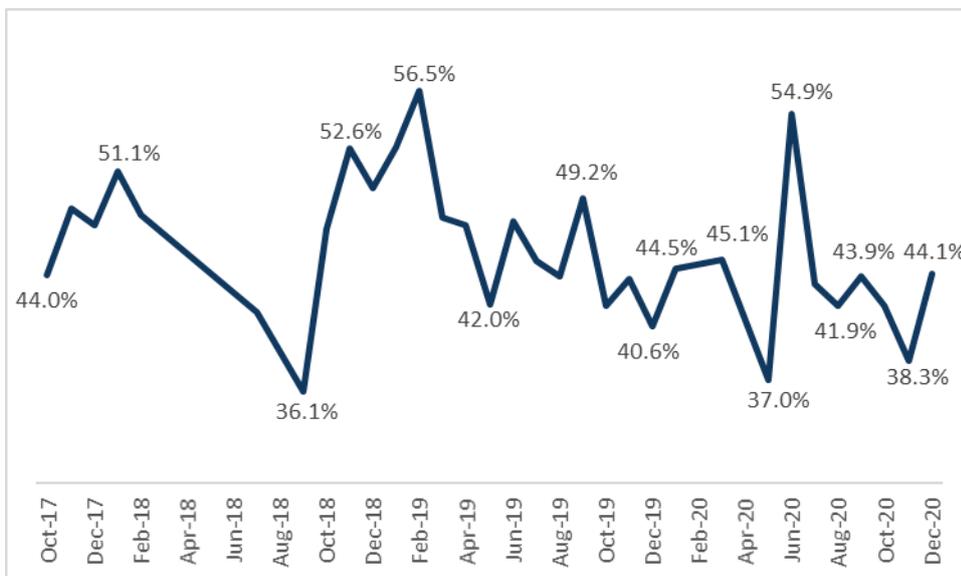
Response rates have seen a decreasing trend since June 2019, but did start to increase for the last few months of 2020.



As a part of the survey, victims are asked “Taking the whole experience into account, are you satisfied with the service provided by the Police in this case?” The proportion answering yes to this question decreased from 47% in 2019 to 43% in 2020. N.B. Total answers were significantly lower in 2020 to 2019.

	Total answers	Total satisfied	% Satisfied
2018	3081	1412	45.8%
2019	3806	1793	47.1%
2020	1916	819	42.7%

Historically, there has been significant monthly variance in the proportions of victims satisfied overall. May 2020, saw a low of 37% which would have related to cases closed during Feb/Mar 2020. June 2020, on the other hand, saw a high of 55% and would have related to cases closed during March and April 2020 when recorded crime was lower than normal and additional resources available for investigations.



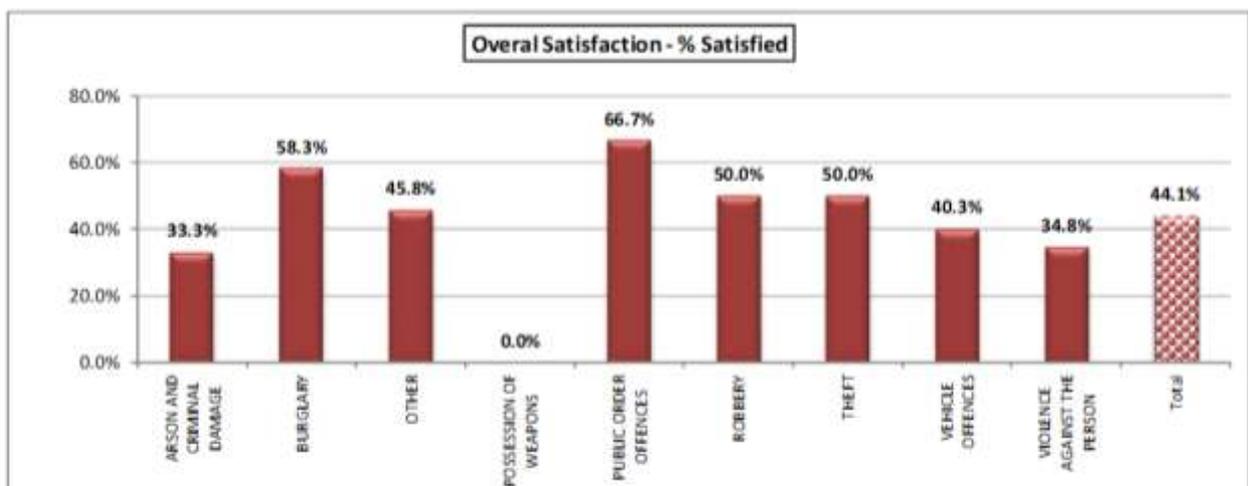
Some areas which have a lower satisfaction rates or are currently trending below average include:

- Initial contact
  - Did the person you spoke to tell you if Police Officers would come to see you?
  - How satisfied are you with how easy it was to contact someone who could assist you?\*
- Action
  - Did the person who you spoke to next provide you with contact details for someone dealing with your case?
  - Did the person who you spoke to next offer practical help or advice?
  - Did the person who you spoke to next give you details of other organisation who could offer support and assistance?
  - Did the person who you spoke to next ask if you felt vulnerable?
  - Are you satisfied with the initial actions taken by the Police?

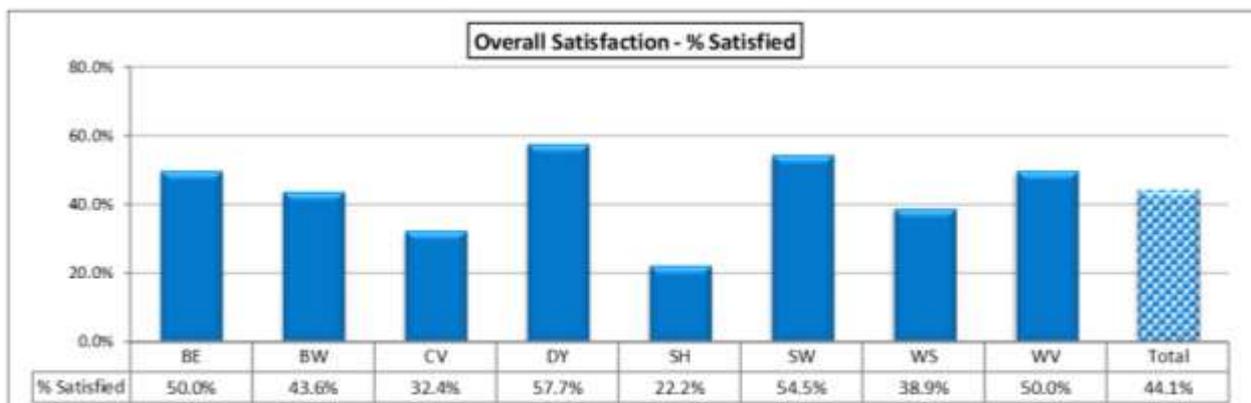
Areas which may be impacting on overall satisfaction, therefore, may relate to: not knowing whether a Police Officer will visit or not; not knowing who to contact for investigation updates; not having discussions around vulnerability, possible support services available, or practical help/advice.

Overall satisfaction rates also varied by the type of offence. Taking a snapshot of results from December 20, cases relating to public order offences saw the highest levels of satisfaction at 66.7% whilst Arson/Criminal Damage saw the lowest at 33%.

Of concern is the 34.8% satisfaction for violence against the person. Violent offences are continuing to see significant increases overall and so a significant amount of survey response will relate to violence.



In terms of location, Dudley saw the highest satisfaction rate at 57.7% whilst Solihull saw the lowest at 22.2%.



**Indicator 9: Fewer complaints against the police and those that are made should be dealt with quicker**

A complaint against police is now defined as: “any expression of dissatisfaction with a police force which is expressed by or on behalf of a member of the public”. This new definition was introduced last year and has significantly widened the scope of what constitutes a “complaint”, thereby making like-for-like comparisons difficult.

The different types of complaints can be broken down into the following:

- Complaint: complaints about the conduct of a person serving with the police, and not relate to the direction and control of the police and also made by a member of the public or someone acting on someone’s behalf
- Conduct: A conduct matter is any matter which is not and has not been the subject of a complaint, where there is an indication that a person serving with the police may have committed a criminal offence or behaved in a manner which would justify disciplinary proceedings
- Miscellaneous: Logs under this heading relate to anything that isn’t a complaint. For example if a complainant or complaint does not meet the criteria to be considered within the process or they may have written to the wrong Force etc.
- Other: When a complaint is recorded, there are number of categories it can be assigned to. The other category would capture those complaints which regard any identified issues that do not fall into any of the recognised categories

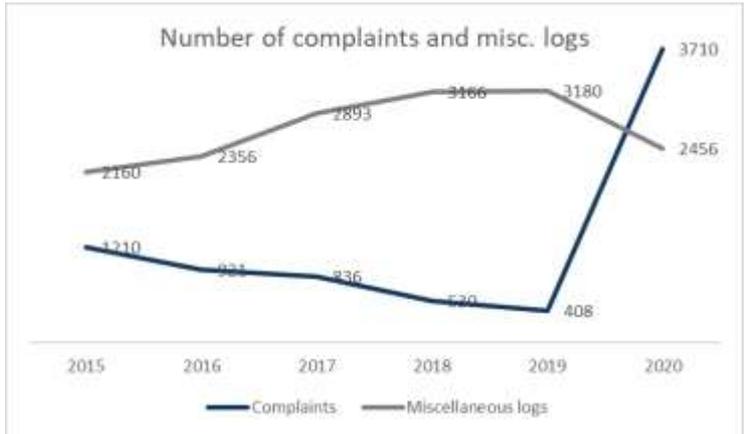
Between 2015 and 2019 West Midlands Police have seen significant reductions in complaints and, to a lesser extent, conduct matters. Conversely, the number of miscellaneous logs (incidents that do not meet the definition of a complaint under the Police Reform Act 2002) have seen increases.

	Complaint	Conduct	Miscellaneous	Other
2015	1210	278	2160	411
2016	921	185	2356	294
2017	836	143	2893	308
2018	530	139	3166	310
2019	408	144	3180	284

2020	3710	174	2456	256
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In February 2020, the definition of a complaint was widened to incorporate any dissatisfaction with policing, making the complaints process more open and accessible.

This widening of the definition of a complaint has been reflected in the figures for 2020 with the number of complaints increased over 800%, from 408 in 2019 to 3,710 in 2020. Coupled with this has been a 23% reduction in the number of miscellaneous issues, as a proportion would now be defined as a complaint.



Of the 3,710, 386 complaints resulted in Schedule 3 classification. This is where the complainant was not happy with the initial outcome and the concerns were then dealt with as a formal complaint. Whilst not directly comparable, as the number of Schedule 3 complaints in 2020 is lower than the 408 complaints recorded in 2019, this could suggest that the downward trend for the numbers of most serious complaints has continued. The average number of days taken to resolve a complaint has also seen some significant reductions. In focusing on complaints resolved within a given year, the average number of days has decreased from a high of 278 in 2016 to 131 in 2020.



The 131 day average for 2020 covers both complaints closed under old regulations and those classified as Schedule 3 under new regulations. For those complaints not classified as Schedule 3 under the new regulations, it took an average of 86 days to resolve.

### Indicator 10: Reductions in the fear of crime

The Office for National Statistics removed the questions on public fear of crime during the term of office, and this data is no longer recorded. We opposed this change as this data provided important information on the public's perceptions. Since then, we have been working with the Force to develop new local surveying methodologies that will be introduced in 2021.

### Indicator 11: Increase in public participation and the development of more active citizens in the West Midlands

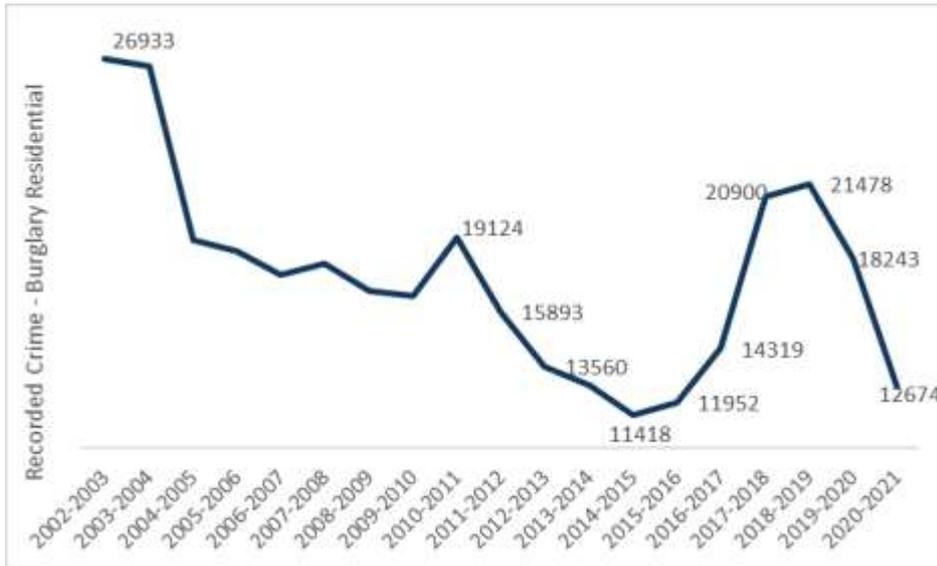
The Neighbourhood Alerts provided by the WMNow email service have seen dramatic increase in public engagement with West Midlands Police. There are currently 110,000 subscribers.

WMNOW Members by NPU, November 2019 and November 2020										
NPU	WMNOW Members		% of Force total		Change since Nov 2019			2019 population aged 16 or over	Sign up rate (per 1000) aged 16 or over	
	Nov-19	Nov-20	Nov-19	Nov-20	Number	Percentage	wmzpc change		Nov-19	Nov-20
Bham East	17,211	22,568	22.1	21.0	5,357	31.1	37.8	423,436	40.6	53.3
Bham West	13,082	17,896	16.8	16.7	4,814	36.8	37.8	459,607	28.5	38.9
Coventry	9,979	13,818	12.8	12.9	3,839	38.5	37.8	299,236	33.3	46.2
Dudley	7,284	12,707	9.3	11.8	5,423	74.5	37.8	259,239	28.1	49.0
Solihull	7,224	10,730	9.3	10.0	3,506	48.5	37.8	173,810	41.6	61.7
Sandwell	8,596	11,078	11.0	10.3	2,482	28.9	37.8	253,944	33.8	43.6
Walsall	7,459	9,076	9.6	8.4	1,617	21.7	37.8	223,437	33.4	40.6
Wolverhampton	7,164	9,605	9.2	8.9	2,441	34.1	37.8	206,854	34.6	46.4
WMP	77,999	107,478	100	100	29,479	37.8	37.8	2,299,563	33.9	46.7

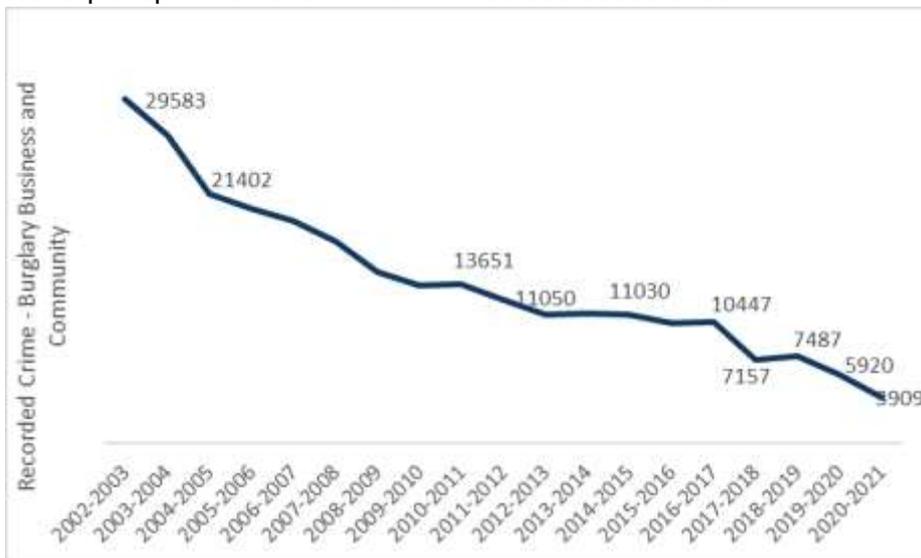
As of January 2021 there were 197 Street Watch groups across the West Midlands Force area, with almost 1,750 volunteers signed up.

### Indicator 12: Reductions in burglary and robbery

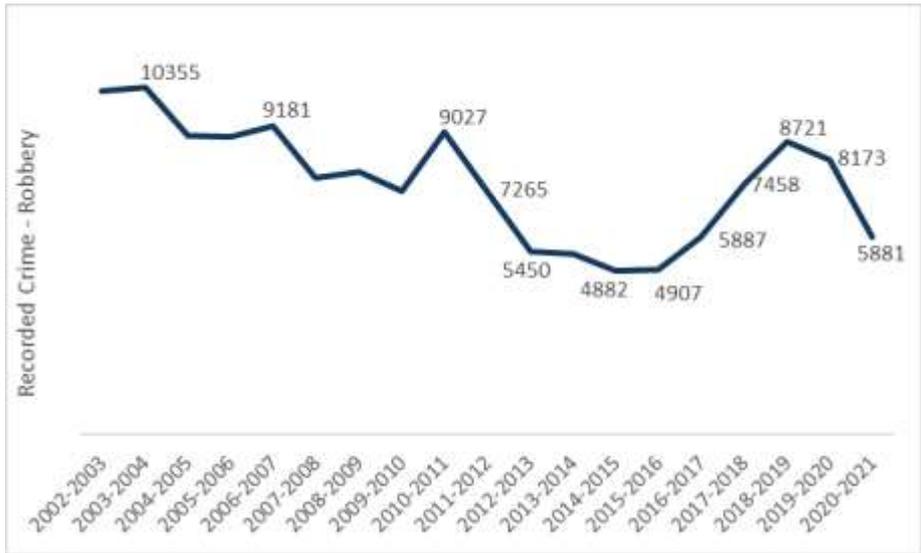
Following initial increase in burglary residential, recorded crime has started to reduce over the past couple of years – although the sharp decrease in 2020/21 is driven by COVID lockdown and social distancing regulations.



Burglary Business and Community has historically seen year on year reductions. There was a sharp drop in 2017/18 with continued decreases since.



Robbery was seeing increases from 2016/17 to 2018/19, in line with wider increases in violent crime. The decrease between 2018/19 and 2019/20 is significant in that it is at odd with the continued increase in total violent crime, which saw an 18% increase over the same period. As with residential burglary, decreases in 2020/21 are driven by COVID.



## Responding to the COVID emergency

The COVID pandemic has taken the lives of at least 125,000 people in the UK. In the wider West Midlands region, the total is over 13,000. The magnitude of this loss is difficult to comprehend, with bereavement and illness close to many of us, coupled to the fear of catching the disease and the wearing separation and isolation we all faced. From March 2020, it was clear that the pandemic would pose an enormous challenge to each of us personally, the police, our communities, and the economy. The duties I felt as Police and Crime Commissioner were:

- To make sure that I did all I could to ensure West Midlands Police and my Office were efficient and effective in their response, providing strategic direction and holding to account. I set out, in an emergency chapter to the Police and Crime Plan published on 2 April 2020, my expectations, and I maintained close oversight of these with monthly reports published on my website and considered at Strategic Policing and Crime Board. In a crisis, good governance becomes more important, not less.
- To speak publicly, locally, regionally, and nationally, on the issues arising from the pandemic both for policing and more widely, so partners, decision makers, stakeholders and the public could understand the issues, the challenges, what was being done, and what needed to be done. PCCs are civic leaders, and it is their duty to speak to, with and on behalf of the public.

My Emergency Chapter covered five broad themes.

First, West Midlands Police had to appropriately support and enforce new public health legislation. This proved a significant challenge; “lockdown” was new to all of us, and the shifting sands of legislative change proved complex to understand, let alone implement. To date, West Midlands Police has issued 36,737 directions to leave affecting about 100,000 people between March 2020 and 25th January 2021. Given that we serve a population of nearly three million, this is a tiny minority who have flouted the regulations and come to police attention. Of this number, only 2,490 people received Fixed Penalty Notices, which speaks even more clearly to the public’s appetite for abiding by these new rules. Just 21 of the so-called “super fines” have been issued. I am satisfied that West Midlands Police has adopted a proportionate and fair approach, balancing Engagement, Explanation, Education with Enforcement, walking a very careful line at times with difficult judgements thoughtfully made. The Force also had to deal with calls for service arising from alleged COVID breaches.

Second, West Midlands Police had to appropriately respond to the changed patterns of criminality that emerged during the pandemic. With the night-time economy stilled and people remaining home, some forms of criminality dramatically reduced for a spell. Conversely, we also saw the effects of the lockdown on the drug economy, with violence erupting between organised crime groups in response to shortages of supply and struggles for territory and markets. The combination of emotional and financial pressures arising from lockdown, plus a changing approach to crime recording, saw recorded cases of domestic abuse surge, and my Office worked with the Force and partners to launch the #NoExcuseForAbuse campaign that signposted victims to services. The threat of online fraud, sexual abuse, and other cyber offences, is also very real, and my Deputy PCC has worked with the Force and partners to improve the collective policing response and approach to prevention. Again, the Force has monitored and responded to these patterns as they have emerged.

Third, West Midlands Police had to absorb the impact of the crisis as an organisation. The Force shifted to remote working with alacrity and energy, speeding up the acquisition and distribution of networked devices and laptops to Officers and staff. It adopted a flexible approach to training and working practices to minimise the loss of productivity arising from remote working, shielding and self-isolation. The Police Uplift Programme transitioned to online assessment centres, which not only ensured we hit our recruitment objective four months early, but as a by-product offered a process which yielded lower levels of disproportionality. The Force moved quickly, with close engagement from my Office, to procure PPE, not just for itself but on behalf of policing nationally. I am genuinely proud of the role we played, and we have seen no shortages protective of equipment. I note also, in particular, the 140 Special Constables who received a special bonus allowance during lockdown. These men and women, many of them furloughed, stepped into near full time roles for weeks and months, giving invaluable service to the West Midlands. I have been massively impressed with how the Force has adapted its estates programme to the crisis; not only have working environments flexed to become COVID secure, but major projects such as the new facilities at Park Lane and Nexus have proceeded almost without interruption. The Force also stepped up its welfare offer for Officers and staff, particularly for those working with the deceased. I provided close oversight of the Force's engagement with partners as part of the various civil contingency structures set up in response to the crisis, receiving regular updates and providing links to elected stakeholders. Finally, I worked closely with my Chief Finance Officer and the Force to manage the financial implications of the crisis. To date, the net cost to West Midlands Police, after the various reimbursements from government, is £5 million for the current financial year. Though I would rather we did not have to carry this unexpected burden, we have absorbed this cost without slowing the change programme, facing cash flow challenges, or affecting business as usual. To those who crow about the level of reserves held by policing, I offer this as a "teachable moment".

Fourth, I recognised that the crisis would affect the "systems" in which a PCC has a role, notably our community safety partnerships, support for victims of crime, the criminal justice system, and the growing network building around violence reduction. The services I commission in all these domains had to adapt, and adapt quickly, to much reduced face-to-face contact. The efforts by OPCC staff in the Policy Team, Victims Commission, Business Support, Finance and Violence Reduction Unit were immense and deserve wide recognition. Key projects such as New Chance – which supports female offenders – actually increased in scope during lockdown, and a new scheme to support prison leavers during lockdown was implemented from scratch in just a few weeks. The Violence Reduction Unit established its place-based approach during lockdown too. Lockdown saw a spike in recorded hate crime, and I'm pleased that we are now commissioning a dedicated service to support victims.

Lockdown has proved particularly challenging for the criminal justice system. The requirements of the courts process, particularly running jury trials in a COVID secure environment, have proved difficult to progress. As a result, backlogs for the most serious cases are growing and trial dates are slipping. This is a national problem unconfined to the West Midlands. "Nightingale Courts" will help, but a thorough and properly funded national plan is required. The national failure to recognise and then resource a system-wide approach to video remand hearings, for example, has been unhelpful. At the local and regional levels, we have used the existing Local Criminal Justice Board, and the newer Regional Criminal Justice Forum – which I chair – to develop a common understanding of the problems, and implement creative local solutions that mitigate the system effects as best we can.

Fifth, the business of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had to continue. Missing only one month, the Strategic Policing and Crime Board transitioned to online meetings, still in public, with public papers, so as to ensure continuity of holding to account and strategic direction. The Office embraced remote working, with complex functions such as commissioning and financial management continuing unimpeded, even though the Office had to manage additional funding streams worth millions of pounds designed to support third sector organisations during the crisis. All our commissioned services were maintained, and supported to transition to remote working where possible. Our doughty Custody Visitors and Appropriate Adults for Vulnerable Adults donned their PPE and continued their vital work, and to them I offer immense thanks. The Active Citizens Fund, which previously used money seized from criminal enterprise to support small community safety and violence reduction projects, morphed into the Community Initiatives Fund, adopting a streamlined process to help local community groups weather the crisis and continue their activity. Internal Audit continued its important work, mixing remote working with site visits. Our liaison and oversight meetings with Neighbourhood Policing Units continued, and the Deputy PCC maintained a programme of COVID secure site visits, including through the Christmas period. Our pension forfeiture duty was fulfilled. Like the Force, the Office stepped up its welfare offer to staff, and put in place plans for training that will make us a trauma-informed and anti-racist organisation. Finally, I'm pleased to report that the Outstanding Citizens Awards – postponed in 2020 – are going ahead shortly, complete with a new category of "COVID Heroes".

The crisis isn't over – though the vaccination programme feels like a weight lifted – and there will doubtless be multiple and extended "lessons learned" processes. I offer no comment on such things. However, the last twelve months have tested civil contingency mechanisms unlike ever before. There is a collective need to ensure these are ready for what comes next. It's not that we weren't warned; a pandemic has been the number one threat in the National Security Risk Assessment for many years. We should all note that number two and three on that list are increased flooding arising from climate change and a major cyber-attack that disrupts critical national infrastructure. What we've seen, I'd argue, is a disconnect between the national and the local structures; while elected representatives are routinely part of the former, their role in the latter is patchy and uncertain. We need to think carefully about ensuring that local elected representatives, with their democratic legitimacy and ability to corral partners and engender collaboration, are as embedded in local structures as Westminster politicians are in the national structures. While I am responsible for ensuring West Midlands Police is effective in its engagement with Local Resilience Forums, Strategic Co-ordination Groups and the like, no one is responsible for ensuring the Civil Contingency Act responders in an area are collectively effective. This gap needs to be filled, and I see Police and Crime Commissioners and Combined Authority Elected Mayors as those who should fill it; not with powers to direct but, as is the case for community safety and criminal justice partners, a power to require collaboration and joint working. I hope government will reflect on this proposal.

## Theme 1: Protecting from Harm

### Reducing crime and harm

1. I have been pleased to see that the crime rates remain lower than in other similar forces and that figures for burglary and robbery have declined.
2. I acknowledged the impact of business crime on the economy and on businesses and have actively engaged with businesses on three fronts. For each of the last four years I have held annual business summits which covered themes ranging from Corporate Social Responsibility to inclusive recruitment practices. I have also held a series of business crime workshops, where we have engaged with the business community on themes such as retail crime, cyber-crime and fraud. In addition to this, I have engaged with businesses on specific issues including working with the Co-op on violence against shopkeepers, and lobbying issues such as vehicle crime and the motor industry.
3. The Force's approach to seizing assets from criminals has improved. Working with the Economic Crime Unit we have used money from the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) to resource a team under Operation Pound. This team proactively investigates serious and organised criminal groups and individuals to increase disruption and the recovery of assets with a specific emphasis on drug dealing and trafficking, thereby supporting my programme to address substance misuse. Early indications show an uplift in external referrals and a clearer intelligence picture around serious and organised crime. The Operation Venetic seizures in our area are providing an additional £3.3 million, which will be divided between supporting the operations of the Regional Organised Crime Unit, and commissioning preventative and harm reducing services. I continue to campaign to see POCA reformed. The share of seizures retained by the Home Office is too high, to the extent that it disincentivises Forces from prioritising targeting criminal cash and assets, which is hugely counter-productive.
4. Recognising the enduring prevalence and patterns of violent crime in the West Midlands, I formed the Commission on Gangs and Violence in March 2016 in order to coordinate a series of interventions by the community and public sector agencies and offer detailed responses to the increase in gun related violence, the rise in youth violence, and the community perceptions that run alongside.
5. The Commission was made up community members who were chosen due to their expert experience in the sector and work within the community. Crucially, they were not self-appointed community representatives, they were specialist providers with community credibility and a track record of working effectively with the issues of concern to the Commission and community. It was of the utmost importance that the work of the Commission was community-led. As I said at the time, "The Commission on Gangs and Violence will be community-led, with the support of statutory agencies, not the other way around".

**Case Study - The Wolverhampton Business Crime Reduction Group** is a great example of how partnership working and partnership funding can result in strong preventative measures to stop high levels of business crime. This is an initiative funded by the PCC and City of Wolverhampton Council, where over 1000 businesses were engaged and signed up to the group. All of the three trial areas saw a reduction in crime by over 50% in the areas in which they operated. In one specific area, on an industrial estate in Bilston, recorded crime dropped by over 77%.

6. In order to be able to tackle the complex challenges, we needed to be able to define the problems, and I commissioned a research project that would gather evidence to allow us to understand and subsequently address the issues raised.
7. The report highlighted a number of key themes which included criminal justice and public health considerations; gang labels; the need for community-involved and community-led partnerships; the voices of young people needed to be heard; the need for faith groups, the statutory and business sector, and specialist providers to be involved; and the need for support and infrastructure for individuals and families, offenders and ex-offenders and education and training needs.
8. The report also showed links between the drugs industry, the illegal use of firearms, knives and serious violence. [Uniting to Improve Safety](#) was launched on 7 December 2017 and adopted a public health approach. The link to the launch video is [here](#). It is powerful. The report was the precursor to my bids for Early Youth Intervention Fund and also the Violence Reduction Unit 2019/20 – the report is evidence of the significant consultation that has taken place to give us an understanding of the community response to violence in the West Midlands and the community view to the response needed. The report has also received [local](#) and [national](#) recognition from Home Office and others.
9. I want to take this opportunity to place on record my thanks to Bishop Derek Webley for chairing the Commission and driving forward this agenda, and Dr Revd Carver for writing the significant report that has led to change.
10. We have made an impact on all of the areas within the report, but as in all areas of work where we are dealing with the need to make systems change, there is still work to do. I have commissioned a review report that sets out where there is still work to do, and on the 20 April, I will officially hand over the mantle of this work to the Violence Reduction Unit. They will ensure that the work we are doing with offender and ex-offenders (both adult and young people), the work underway with our education partners, teachable moments in A&E, Enterprise for Employment, mentoring and mediation, continues. They are making inroads into our communities and are using the Commission work as a blueprint for change across the West Midlands.
11. I committed to delivering a service with intervention and prevention at its heart, and through the Early Youth Intervention Fund (£1.3 million between 2018 and 2020) and other projects commissioned through the Gangs and Violence Commission, I have targeted services at those at risk of entering the criminal justice system as well as supporting those in the system to reduce re-offending. This programme has, so far:
  - delivered targeted diversionary activities with 11,445 young people (target 3400);
  - delivered mentoring activities with 932 (target 600) young people;
  - delivered ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) training to 526 practitioners (target 400) and developed a website offering free online ACEs training. The 'Introduction to ACES' was launched on 31st July 2019 and by the end of Qtr. 3 had over 17,000 unique views. The website will be supported for a further 3 years and is available online at: <https://www.acesonlinelearning.com/>

- The programme has also funded the Fearless Co-ordinator who has delivered 14 train-the-trainer sessions, reaching 225 professionals. 44 Schools were engaged across the West Midlands providing 101 workshops/assemblies to over 5,554 students.
12. The Commission on Gangs and Violence has delivered diversionary activities to over 5000 young people. They range from weekly sports sessions, media projects in schools, community outreach, targeted programmes in schools with young people at risk of gangs and violence, group and 1:1 work with gang affiliated young women, youth leadership courses, and parent training. I also funded two Community Development Workers and a Community Facilitator, who have been able to assist community organisations in their development and give the Office an insight into 'life on the ground'.
  13. The Commission's recommendations led to projects that reduce reoffending among prison leavers, mentoring services and mediation services that de-escalate tensions that can lead to violence. In September of 2020 the PCC's Enterprise for Employment scheme was launched to support ex-offenders with violent convictions into both employment and self-employment. The intensive support service borrows heavily from the health based employment support model and consists of a 30-day rapid job search and a "place then train" approach. The philosophy being that an individual's support should not end once they have found employment but the majority of support should be focused on helping that individual maintain employment. The project has so far supported just under 20 people, aged 18-35, into employment and self-employment.
  14. The Gangs and Violence Commission laid the foundations for the government funded Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), with recommendations and activity carried forward into the VRU programme. For example, I worked via the VRU to develop a Faith Alliance, pulling together senior members across religions, with the aim of pooling their collective assets, expertise and experiences.
  15. I have also supported two further projects to reduce knife crime:
    - Precious Lives aims to reduce the fear of violence and break down barriers and myths that young people believe about knife crime. A team of trainers deliver presentations in schools and colleges to educate young people about the reality of knife crime, with the aim of lowering levels of offending and reducing the number of young people entering the criminal justice system. Since September 2019 the project has delivered 328 workshops reaching 23,340 young people in the region. Delivering a knife crime awareness workshop through the eyes and voices of people with lived experience has proved successful. The project aims to reach every school within the West Midlands, building on relationships with police, communities and education providers.
    - We have been working with communities to ensure that there are weapon surrender bins within each of our seven local authority areas; we have increased the number so that we now have 17 across the West Midlands region. In 2020 over 500 weapons were taken from the bins and destroyed. We have negotiated a new support contract that will see the existing bins renewed and new ones installed.
  16. After many years of reducing vehicle crime, I identified and responded to a reversal in this trend. In 2016-2017 vehicle thefts started to rise across the West Midlands. Some of these vehicles had been stolen using electronic compromise, exploiting security flaws

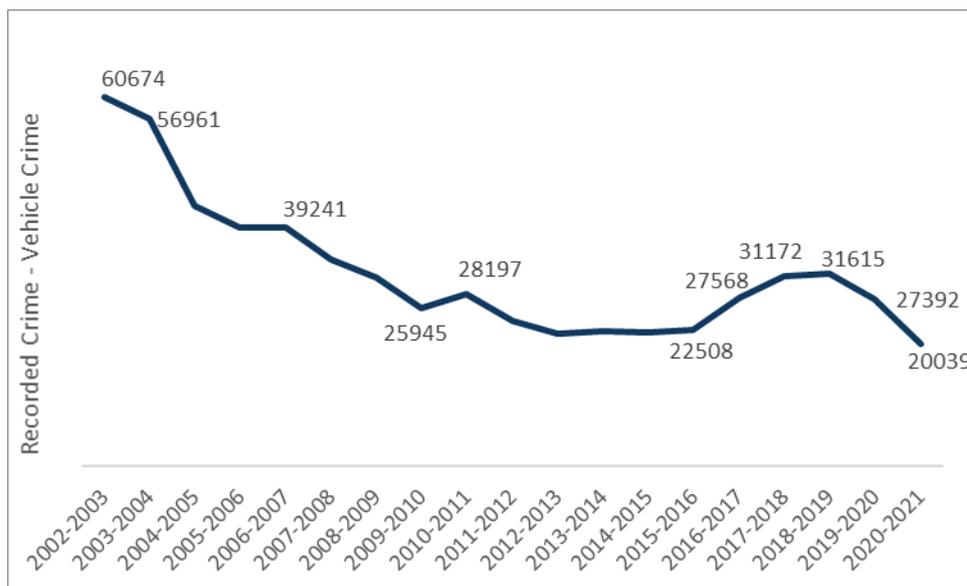
in the technology systems. I called together top manufacturers, security experts, police and other key stakeholders to assess the problem and to look at what could be done to tackle it. As a result I became a national voice in the area of vehicle crime and a member of the Home Office's Vehicle Crime Taskforce – though it is notable that the Home Office has not convened this group for over a year. I have published information on the patterns of vehicle thefts in our area, with the manufacturers most affected.

17. I prioritised the disruption of organised criminals, to make it harder to launder their money and take the profit out of vehicle crime. This work has had a number of successes – Operation Cantil and Operation Monalee have resulted in over 1,500 arrests, 1,000 vehicles recovered, more than £17m seized in assets and over 100 chop shops shut down since September 2018. Work continues to persuade others to take this vital step.
18. This work led to a comprehensive programme of initiatives to address the challenge:
  - Enhanced Vehicle Identity Check for written off vehicles – I propose that every car that has been written off should require a certificate of roadworthiness before it can be put back on the road, and that a new MOT would be required. Currently the MOT remains intact when a car is written off. An enhanced version of the Vehicle Identity Check (which ceased in 2015) could combine identification of the vehicle along with the introduction of safety measures which would be checked before a vehicle is allowed back on the road.
  - Outlaw cash sales at car auctions – The second largest national car auction house has stopped accepting cash at auctions as they recognise the correlation between vehicles being sold as repairable write offs and those being stolen. Each vehicle should have a registered chain of custody, so that organised criminals cannot purchase and deal in vehicles without appearing on official documentation of the vehicle. A revision to the Scrap Metal Dealers' Act would prevent a cash market for salvage vehicles too.
  - Re-visiting the role of National Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service (NaVCIS) - the role of this organisation should be re-visited so that law enforcement be afforded a national, centrally co-ordinated capability that can flex to the changing demands of vehicle crime, and can deal with current issues such as co-ordination of tracking and taking down online vendors through a desk system built onto the current NaVCIS structures. Funding might come from industry and/or the Home Office, but if necessary the industry alone could make the difference if insurers were to fund this in the same manner as funding for NaVCIS.
  - Limiting the sale of tools used to commit crime - there are a range of tools being used by criminals to commit vehicle thefts including the illegal 'relay devices' which are used to boost the signal of a car key to unlock and start keyless vehicles. Key programmers and tools can be purchased online with ease. It should be the case that only those who need these tools for work should be able to own them. However, at present there is an unregulated locksmith industry where anybody, regardless of background and criminal history, can begin working as a locksmith. There are trade bodies, such as the Master Locksmith Association who accredit their members and do a criminal record check for potential members.

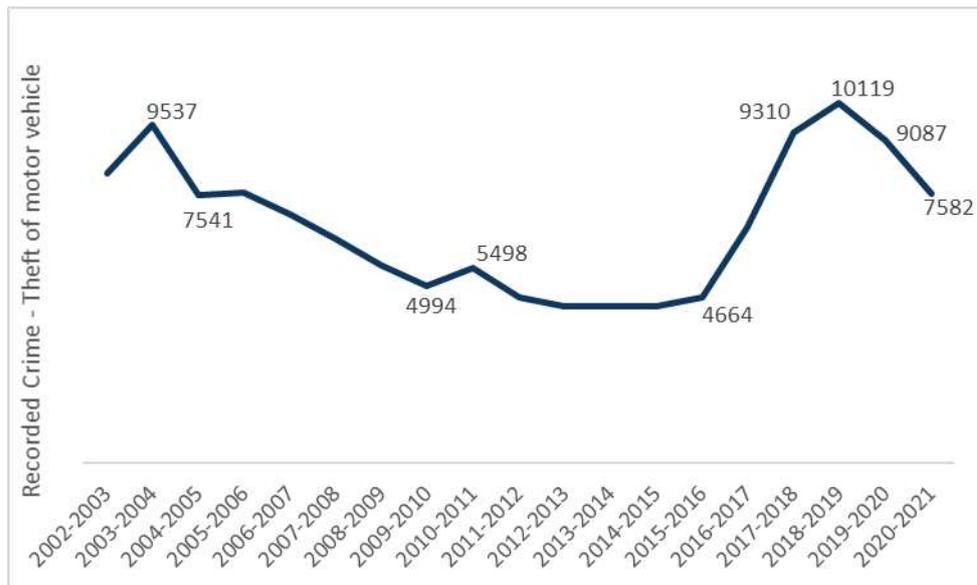
- Mandatory secondary locking systems – for the sake of convenience, vehicle manufacturers have compromised vehicle security and we now see vehicles being electronically compromised and stolen in under 10 seconds. While vehicle theft was at an all-time low in 2014, with the rise in keyless technology, some vehicles have become easier to steal. To ensure vehicles are more difficult to steal, some form of secondary locking should be required. It would be for manufacturers and their highly skilled engineers to formulate the most appropriate technology. Electronic security devices will always be cheaper for manufacturers than the traditional mechanical measures of the past.

19. Vehicle crime is also now falling in the West Midlands as a result. By recognising this issue early, the range of interventions led to reductions from 2018-19, with 2020/21 being one of the lowest seen.

	Vehicle Crime	Theft of motor vehicle
2016-2017	27568	6654
2017-2018	31172	9310
2018-2019	31615	10119
2019-2020	27392	9087
2020-2021	20039	7582



20. Some of the main increases in vehicle crime were driven by theft of motor vehicles, which saw significant increases between 2015/16 and 2018/19. As for vehicle crimes overall through, theft of motor vehicles has been seeing yearly decreases since.



## Reducing offending and re-offending

21. I have worked with partners to improve offender management to reduce criminality and prevent re-offending. I chair and support the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) and its delivery groups. Working alongside partners, these groups were reviewed and renewed to ensure maximum impact to develop a more efficient and effective criminal justice system.
22. The LCJB is supported by a number of delivery groups, including reducing re-offending and victims and witnesses. The focus on substance misuse within the Reducing Re-offending Delivery Group has meant much closer working relationships with partners, working together to increase the use of Alcohol Treatment Requirements and Drug Rehabilitation Requirements. Measures such as working with magistrates to increase sentence confidence, and with treatment providers to ensure capacity, has meant performance has increased.
23. The Victims and Witnesses Delivery Group has most recently been focused on delivery of the victims' code of compliance across the criminal justice system. Due to the work that we have led with WMP, our approach to Victim's code compliance monitoring has been seen as best practice by the Ministry of Justice who are looking to emulate this in other areas.
24. The LCJB has a key cross-cutting priority of equality in the criminal justice system, recognising an over-representation of people from some backgrounds and ethnicities, and people with care experience in the criminal justice system.
25. A Disproportionality Committee was set up to report back to the LCJB and wider regional criminal justice collaboration forum. The committee is chaired by Chief Crown Prosecutor for the West Midlands, Grace Ononiwu. The committee has undertaken work on learning from our organisational history, and assessing the extent to which lessons from previous reviews and inquiries have been learned and implemented. This work will drive forward future activity. The committee will also be undertaking DIP sampling of the

complete end to end process within the criminal justice system and its discretion points, with recommendations taken back to boards. There is also a focus on representation of BAME individuals in the criminal justice agencies, including how agencies support individuals once in post to remain and also develop through the organisation. Further work is prioritised on engagement as a criminal justice system, listening and acting on lived experience and working as a system to increase trust and confidence. This work is part of the wider Fairness and Belonging programme, which is addressing systemic and structural disproportionality.

26. Working with partners in the wider region and PCC colleagues, I have also developed and chaired a Regional Criminal Justice Collaboration Forum to prevent duplication of work with partners and agree priorities. A particular success was my work with other regional PCCs on a criminality in prisons project. The work identified prisons as experiencing high crime levels and increasingly becoming a lucrative market for organised criminals. Organised criminals continue to operate and manage their business from within prison and utilise prisons as a marketplace for drugs and other commodities such as mobile phones. One in five prisoners who reported ever having used heroin said they had tried it for the first time in a prison. We worked together to commission academic research on the scale of the problem and set up a multi-agency taskforce to start to work through recommendations for change. The result was greater intelligence sharing between partners, despite some hurdles remaining with accessing and sharing MoJ systems. Better intelligence sharing means that organised crime can be better disrupted both within the prison walls and outside, including disrupting corrupt prison officers. A greater relationship was built between the police and prisons through crime clinics to ensure that crimes in prison were dealt with appropriately such as assaults on staff. Prevention was key, the team worked hard to identify vulnerable people who were coerced into carrying contraband back into prison on recalls. Through greater awareness, training and a new protocol, teams across the CRCs and probation service were able to disrupt “internal secreters” from going back into the prison estate. The work was a real success in multi-agency and regional working and the basis of our regional criminal justice governance that is now in place.
27. I have also allocated funding to the seven Youth Offending Teams across the West Midlands through the Community Safety Budget during my term of office. Each YOT received an allocation with a focus on intervention and prevention and sharing of best practice. Further work with YOTs is required, ensuring their important contribution to the intervention and prevention agenda. Outcomes included improvements in behaviour for young people supported through the grant, such as young people re-engaging with school. In addition the funding sought:
  - evidence of established partnership arrangements to deliver early intervention and prevention services;
  - evidence of timely and appropriate assessments for children at risk or in the early stages of criminality or entering the Youth Justice system; and
  - evidence of internal monitoring of the quality of the services and outcomes for young people.
28. In addition to this, each YOT was offered funding to run Summer Arts Colleges. This programme, delivered through Unitas, is a structured programme of 5 hours a day for three weeks over the school summer holiday period which has been shown to deliver high levels of attendance and completion. Extensive evaluation has demonstrated

positive outcomes in terms of literacy and numeracy, progression to education, training or employment and reduction in offending rates. Summer Arts Colleges provide a range of experiences working alongside practitioners in a wide range of art forms including for example visual arts, music, drama, dance and photography. Young people who successfully complete the programme will achieve up to 3 Arts Award qualifications. Young people from Solihull, Sandwell and Walsall have taken part in this programme.

29. We also identified opportunities to work with women in the criminal justice system through the “New Chance” programme. This is a specialist project for women who are identified by police as early entrants into the Criminal Justice System to support them away from further offending. The programme recognises the need for a whole-systems approach to meet the needs of these offenders, who are often from a vulnerable section of the population. This year I have rolled this programme out Force-wide and in the first 9 months, 172 women have been referred into this service. The University of Birmingham has completed its evaluation to evidence the effectiveness and impact of the programme. This demonstrated that that reoffending amongst New Chance service users with mental health issues was 35-37% lower and those who had substance misuse issues identified had a 51-55% decrease in reoffending. This has far greater impact on reducing reoffending than short term prison sentences which have been proven to be ineffective. Many of the women supported have been victims of domestic abuse. Recognising this, I widened the programme to support women known to MARAC with offending behaviour in January 2021. The programme has also received a special commendation from the Howard League for Penal Reform in their 2020 Community Awards.
30. In addition to this programme, I have worked with the Force to consistently invest and deliver additional diversionary schemes to reduce re-offending. Examples include the alcohol related violence course which consistently demonstrates savings due to reducing re-offending rates. The cost benefit ratio of this project is 1:16, with a reduction of costs to agencies working across the criminal justice system. At the two year point of the project, 21% of those who had completed the course had re-offended compared with 49% in the control group.
31. As part of the West Midlands drug policy recommendations, a pre-arrest drug diversion scheme was introduced in October 2020. This allows officers to divert individuals into a voluntary education programme which provides harm reduction advice and can refer people to other services, including drug treatment. In the first 3 months of delivery, over 500 individuals were diverted into the programme and engaged either through the education session or one-to-one if they displayed higher needs. In one case study, a man was supported into local services and housing support. This approach will also be shared with schools and colleges to prevent exclusions and engage young people in drugs education.

## **Substance Misuse**

32. Having outlined the impact of substance misuse I developed and delivered a range of strategic inputs in conjunction with partners. I worked with partners and the public to develop [eight recommendations for a changing approach to drugs policy](#). The approach has been nationally and internationally welcomed by experts, the public and government for a pro-active and bold approach. Progress against each of the eight

recommendations can be found in the Substance Misuse report discussed at this Board <https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/180220-SPCB-Agenda-Item-10-Substance-Misuse.pdf?x56534>

33. The work on substance misuse has also broadened beyond the eight recommendations, with support for an “Offender to Rehab” programme, investment in the community sentence treatment requirements and supporting the increased use of out of court disposals for crimes driven by a drug addiction. The West Midlands Approach is outlined below. It is a pragmatic approach to tackling the cost, crime and harm from drugs in the West Midlands and has been praised by criminal justice and health partners, government ministers, experts and the public for tackling the root causes of criminality to help reduce demand on frontline services.
34. Over the course of the last 12 months, I have introduced a pre-arrest drug diversion scheme called ‘Divert’. This is for simple drug possession offences and provides a harm reduction intervention instead of alternatives such as a cannabis warning, fine or other criminal justice outcome. The intervention instead explores reasons behind drug use, an education session about the harms and can also direct individuals into further treatment as required. In the first 3 months of the programme, 547 individuals were referred into the intervention. Police Officers prefer the easy to use referral process, utilising an app on their mobile devices. Magistrates have also praised the programme for tackling the drug use itself which a fine or other criminal justice outcome could not do. This work has been nationally recognised and is being adopted elsewhere across region via with funding from cash seized from criminals by Operation Venetic.
35. Former Board member Ernie Hendricks completed the [‘Out of Harm’s Way’](#) report in February 2020. This completes recommendation number 7 to assess the evidence for safer injection facilities. There is a wealth of evidence across the world on safer injection facilities, including Switzerland and Canada. They are clinical spaces that allow the consumption of drugs and are linked to reducing deaths from drug poisoning. No one has ever died in any safer injection facility across the world. The report demonstrates the value of a safer injection facility in tackling the cost, crime and harm from drugs. I have continued to work with partners and government on this important issue.
36. I have supported the “Offender to Rehab” programme, developed by a Police Officer in North Birmingham. This work identifies and works with prolific shoplifters who commit crime to fund an addiction and helps secure them a place in a rehabilitation centre. This programme has so far supported 33 offenders in total, 60% of whom are no longer offending. Due to the programme’s success I have secured funding to pilot the programme across the whole of Birmingham. This approach has also been supported and partially funded by the business community who have seen a reduction in shoplifting. Retailers will continue to fund the project throughout the project’s pilot period.
37. 14 people (42%) have either completed treatment or are currently in treatment and have not reoffended. 6 people (18%) have been discharged early and are not reoffending. 13 people have been discharged and have reoffended. A further five people have been placed into employment or helped in other ways and are not reoffending. Our evaluation suggests that, since 2018, the project has prevented £2,000,000 in retail and other crime, and reduced income in the illicit drug economy by £800,000 money not given to drug dealers.

38. I have worked with businesses and other partners in the night time economy to deliver a 'safe space' in the Arcadian, a night-time hotspot in central Birmingham. The multi-agency safe space is operated by St John's Ambulance and supported by local businesses. The outcomes have demonstrated reductions in policing demand, A&E admissions and a reduction in ambulance callouts. The success of the pilot has meant that the safe space is now beginning to service the wider city centre. There have also been a significant number of reports of sexual violence identified through the safe space; this has led to training for security and bar staff on the "good night out" campaign and also links to be established with RSVP to provide support to victims.
39. Over 800 people, with vast majority aged between 18-25, attended the facility and been helped in some capacity. In doing so, all of these potentially vulnerable people have been taken away from the possibility of harm. During its time in operation:
- Immediate lifesaving treatment has been given to 7 people experiencing drug poisoning
  - More than 500 ambulance call outs have been prevented.
  - At least 80 crimes have been prevented.
40. In addition to the individual benefits, the 500 prevented ambulance call outs saved at least £121,000. Furthermore, preventing more than 500 people attending A&E has saved a further £83,000. The project, which costs just £45,000 a year to run, saved at least £60,000 in police time. With the re-opening of the Night Time Economy likely soon, this project deserves to continue.
41. Family Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDACs) are a problem solving approach to child care proceedings. A multi-agency team work with needs such as mental health and drugs and alcohol, with consistent judicial monitoring. I have funded a Domestic Violence worker to sit within the multi-agency team in the FDAC in Birmingham and Solihull and the FDAC in the Black Country. The outcomes from FDACs have a higher percentage of children remaining with the parents and where decisions are made to remove children, there are less contested cases.
42. Alcohol abuse causes harms individuals, families and society. It creates demand for policing. I fund two significant diversionary programmes to prevent reoffending, address harm and reduce demand. The Alcohol Related Violence Early Intervention for Conditional Cautions aims to reduce reoffending and escalation by early intervention. The focus is on alcohol related crime, predominantly night-time economy related offences and therefore this also reduces the number of future victims. The outcomes have demonstrated that 21% of those who had completed the course had reoffended, compared with 49% of the comparable control group and those that did offend after attending see less serious offending behaviour. Cost savings for the criminal justice system and health based on the 700 offenders that have been through the course is estimated at £2.4m for an investment of just £100 per person for the course (equivalent to £70,000 in total).
43. Alcohol can also be a driver or trigger to Domestic Abuse. The Alcohol Related Domestic Abuse Early Intervention for Conditional Causes programme aims to prevent reoffending and escalation of offending by early intervention. For victims, this programme is used when the offender would have otherwise received a police caution

because the victim would not engage or did not support a prosecution. The programme has demonstrated a significant reduction in reoffending for all those referred, whether they completed the course or not. Overall, a reduction of 70% in reoffending rates, 66% reduction in completers of the course who committed a further DA offence and a cost saving of around £1450 to the system and taxpayer. Therefore, the total cost saving to the criminal justice system is estimated at around £589,000.

44. In my 2016 Plan I said I would work with the criminal justice system to ensure consistency and effectiveness in this area of the Drug Intervention Programme (DIP). In the West Midlands I used to allocate funding for drug treatment through Local Policing and Crime Boards. Through an extensive review of the Drug Intervention Programme, in line with the drug policy recommendations, there was a recognition that this programme had become fragmented and inconsistent across the Force area. A 'postcode lottery' had developed.
45. Through the review, recommendations and close working relationship with partners including public health teams and WMP, it was agreed to commission a new Force-wide "arrest referral service" which would become an enhanced version of DIP. The new service was commissioned in summer 2019, and went live date on 1st January 2020. The new service has dramatically increased the numbers of Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATRs) and Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs) which target the root causes of an individual's criminality and help to prevent further re-offending, reducing cost across the system. These also reduce the use of short custodial sentences, which often have limited efficacy for offenders with drug and alcohol dependencies. In 2020, the first year of delivery, service provider Cranstoun delivered 9017 total contacts, assessments and interventions, 2411 total assessments including court assessments and 166 Drug Rehabilitation Requirements granted at court and 101 Alcohol Treatment Requirements granted at court. This service has reversed the trend on these court orders and is a significant aspect of the Community Sentence Treatment Requirements sites across the West Midlands, tackling the causes of criminality including mental health and addiction. The service has been recognised as best practice at a national level, with other forces and OPCCs keen to learn and implement a similar service.
46. My report on drug harm reduction found that we lose another West Midlands resident to drug poisoning every three days. Across England, it's every four hours. These figures have been rising since 2010 and have reached their highest ever level. Mainstream treatment and harm-reduction services have faced significant funding cuts, and the knock on effect is clear. This appalling death toll can be reduced, and good policing can play its part. Provision of Naloxone – a drug that counters the immediate effects of opioid poisoning – is a key action in my drug harm reduction report, echoing the government's 2017 Drug Strategy and Public Health England's guidance that Naloxone provision should be as wide as possible.
47. With my support, West Midlands Police launched a 12 month Nasal Naloxone pilot, starting in July 2019. Police Officers from Birmingham City Centre volunteered to undertake the training with intranasal Naloxone. The key aim of the pilot is to improve the evidence base for Naloxone usage by Police Officers and staff as well as reducing drug related deaths in Birmingham. Overall, 52 officers attended the training sessions provided. Of the cohort of officers trained, 51 Naloxone kits were issued directly to police staff and a further 4 kits were handed out to be stored in vehicles - a total of 55

kits. Officers have continued to carry Naloxone within Birmingham and more recently we have rolled this out to a cohort of officers within Walsall as part of our wider ambition of widening the use of Naloxone. Our next steps also include introducing Take Home Naloxone for those leaving police custody. As part of the Drug Policy Summit 2020: Two Years On, over 75 people were trained in naloxone reinforcing our commitment to reduce drug related deaths and widening our harm reduction approach.

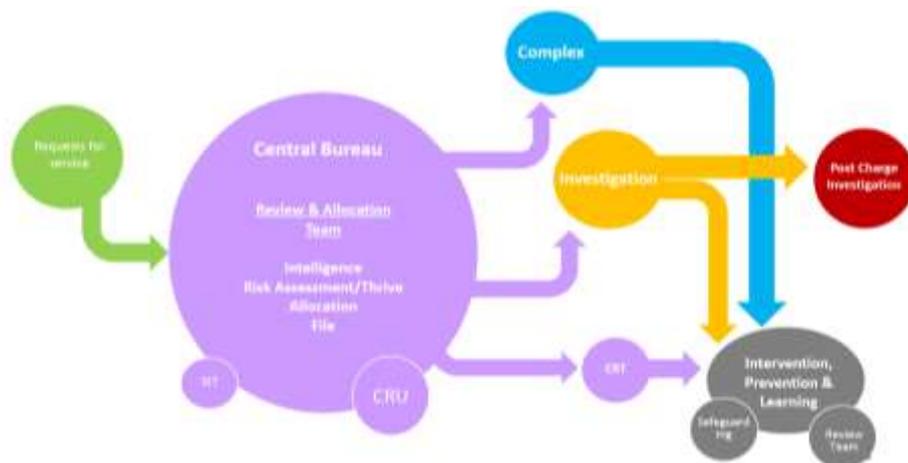
### Preventing and detecting “hidden crimes”

48. West Midlands Police is making an effective response to crimes such as domestic abuse, child abuse, hate crimes, vulnerable adult abuse, forced marriage, honour based violence, modern slavery, human trafficking, and female genital mutilation.

#### *Public Protection Unit*

49. The Public Protection Unit (PPU) deals with the investigation of hidden crimes. Since I came into office, it has continued to grow from about 300 Officers to about 800. In 2018-2019 short term external staff helped manage the seasonal spike in domestic abuse. In 2020 40 Police Staff Investigators were recruited. In addition I have contributed to funding the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference team (£272,594 in 19/20 and £313,765 in 20/21) to deliver a regional service supporting victims of domestic abuse regionally. I have also contributed to the Paediatric Sexual Assault Referral Centre for the last two years to support the force’s contributions to this important service.

50. PPU went through a transformation and restructuring in February 2019 with nearly 300 officers and staff moving to new locations and roles. There were several benefits to flexibility, effective working and engaging officers with technology within the move. This was implemented to increase the protection offered to vulnerable victims, continue to improve “justices” and alternative (to justice) routes on offer, work more preventatively, place greater focus on offenders taking responsibility and improve the resilience of the force to manage vulnerability with increasing demand. The structured model now implemented is below:




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*Working with perpetrators to prevent harm*

51. The Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 includes reference to perpetrators programmes in order to prevent offender’s abusive behaviour and protect victims. As a signatory to the national call to action for a perpetrator strategy, I welcome this and the recognition of this in the House of Lords. Prior to this acknowledgment, I commissioned the first DVPP across the West Midlands in January 2017, which was an acknowledgment of the need to work with offenders in order to protect victims. The programme incorporated a programme for working with perpetrators and an integrated support service for victims (ISS) and offered community-based interventions for perpetrators of domestic abuse whose victims are assessed as being at a high risk of significant harm. It was and remains an ambitious, innovative, multi-agency, multi-site programme seeking to work with statutory and voluntary sector partners to improve outcomes for perpetrators, partners, children and young people across seven local authority areas.

52. The aims of the programme include increasing the safety of victims of domestic violence, and children in families, through practical, individual interventions with perpetrators of high risk domestic violence and abuse.

53. I am committed to ensuring that the perpetrators of domestic violence are held to account, alongside ensuring that victims are supported, never blamed. As such, the management of domestic violence perpetrators requires commitment and coordinated input across partners, and requires a range of activities. Our programme is a voluntary programme for fathers aged 18 and over whose children have been assessed and are on a Child Protection Order, or Child in Need Plan. During 2019, the criteria was expanded to Early Help.

54. The table below shows data from March 2017-April 2020.

Output	Number
Number of referrals to My Time for assessment	1,161
Number of individuals referred to My Time	1,022
Number of assessments of individuals undertaken by My Time, and the outcome of these assessments	636
Number of referrals accepted onto My Time	292
Number of men who attended at least one session	219
Number of My Time sessions delivered	2,750
Number of perpetrators who attended sessions between them	2,750
Number of (ex)partners referred to the ISS	458
Number of (ex)partners who received support from the ISS	414

Local authority area	Number of referrals
Birmingham	341
Coventry	48
Dudley	169
Sandwell	296
Solihull	70
Walsall	81
Wolverhampton	156

<b>Total</b>	<b>1,161</b>
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55. In addition, the DRIVE programme was introduced into Birmingham and Sandwell in February 2019, which is an intensive intervention that works with high-harm and serial perpetrators to challenge behaviour and prevent abuse, while seeking to change the narrative around domestic abuse by focussing on perpetrators. In the first instance it was jointly funded by the Home Office and I, with a budget of £1.4m for 21 months. Birmingham and Sandwell were chosen due to the significant numbers of domestic abuse cases in the boroughs.

56. At the time of commissioning Drive the intention was to work with 175 perpetrators of domestic abuse in Birmingham and Sandwell over the period, with a support service also provided as part of the programme. It was a new response to domestic abuse with the intention of reducing the number of child and adult victims of domestic abuse by disrupting and changing perpetrator behaviour. It implements a whole-system approach through an intensive individual case management intervention alongside a co-ordinated multi-agency response to drive perpetrators to change their behaviour. The Drive Project focuses on increasing victim safety alongside the crucial protective work of victims' services. The service has been developed to knit together existing services, complementing and enhancing existing interventions.

57. Data below from October 2018 to December 2020: extract from the returns submitted which is tracking the impact of the services: *"the data reflects a 77% reduction in high risk physical abuse, a 80% reduction in high risk sexual abuse, a 62% reduction in high risk stalking and harassment, and a 56% reduction in high risk jealousy and coercive controlling behaviours."*

Number of accepted referrals of perpetrators	395
Number of victims associated with DRIVE service users	459
Number of children/young people associated with DRIVE service users	908

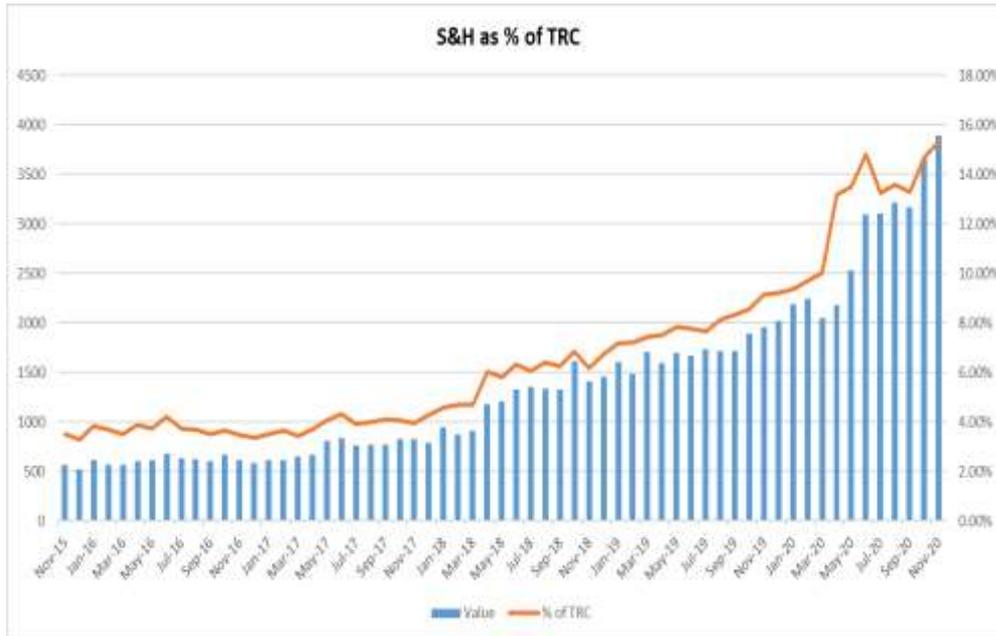
58. In order to continue the work, I applied for and have been successful in securing further Home Office funding to enhance the current offer of both programmes until October 2021. Through the DRIVE fund we have been able to secure three specialist posts: substance misuse, mental health and an under-represented Groups specialist case manager. These case managers will take on cases where the needs of individuals fit with the specialism.

59. Within the enhancements, the DVPP will remain regional, accepting referrals region wide and delivering groups in Birmingham, Sandwell, Dudley and Wolverhampton, with perpetrators from across the localities being able to attend these groups. As part of the enhancement, the referral pathway will be opening to include Social Care, West Midlands Police and NPS. There have been alterations made to the model to reflect the findings and suggestions from Cordis Bright's evaluation of the DVPP. One of these changes is the addition of a 6 week motivation intervention upon the recognition of the need for early intervention work for those not quite ready or suitable for the behaviour change programme and the reduction in the programme from 30 weeks to 18 weeks.

60. For both Drive and the regional DVPP, there will be a new family support offer from the victim support services in cases where this is appropriate based on risk, need, capacity and ability to safely access children.
61. Another element of the successful bid is a pilot of a new intervention tackling child to parent abuse in Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall. This intervention, 'YUVA', will be delivered by Richmond Fellowship with the referral pathway opening in early 2021. YUVA stands for young people using violence and abuse. This is an intervention for 11-18 year olds perpetrating against parents/carers and referrals will come directly from children's social care.
62. I have also successfully bid into the Home Office 'Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Research Fund' for just over £83,000 to enable Cordis Bright to conduct research into 'What works to prevent domestic violence perpetrators from offending/re-offending?' which will develop and improve the evidence base to support future commissioning. The Home Office was seeking to award up to a total of £500,000 nationally to support short term research projects into domestic abuse perpetrators, in order to inform future policy making. The primary aim of this fund is to develop our understanding of the perpetrators of domestic abuse, and to strengthen the evidence base for 'what works' in addressing their behaviour and reducing (re)offending.
63. Alongside the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit's domestic abuse systems mapping exercise, this funding would allow us to commission research adding to the evidence base for the most effective way(s) to address perpetrator behaviour and keep victims safe in the West Midlands, understand the most effective commissioning of DA perpetrator interventions once the delivery of current services concludes in 2021, and act as a blueprint for a West Midlands perpetrator strategy in the future. This research is due to be concluded by the end of May 2021.

#### *Increased reporting of hidden crimes*

64. Reporting rates for hidden crimes have generally increased, particularly for domestic abuse, which shows a 41% increase in the year to date. This is a product of a greater willingness on the part of victims to come forward and improved recording practice. Domestic Abuse reporting now makes up 21% of all crimes reported to WMP. Violent offences are up 31%. In the main, this is being driven by increases in stalking & harassment offences (+90%) and in addition violence without injury is up 28%, notably "Common assault and battery." There has also been a significant increase in reporting of stalking and harassment crimes which have increased 62% in the last year and one in seven crimes now being stalking and harassment (with a strong proportion of these domestic related).



65. The COVID pandemic created a set of circumstances which escalated the levels of interpersonal abuse and also created risks of further escalation of such crimes given the restrictive nature of lockdown and pressures of the pandemic more widely. Whilst child abuse and sexual offences initially dropped, after the first lockdown they returned to normal reporting levels. The concern is that reporting within hidden crimes is so often historic that the effect of the lockdowns and COVID impact will be felt for years to come.
66. Through the creation of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Board in June 2020, I supported partners to come together and work together to look at Domestic Abuse demand as a force and partnership issue and have focused on the issue at my Strategic Police and Crime Board in the last year.
67. In April 2021 I supported multi-agency partners to develop the #NoExcuseForAbuse campaign aimed at providing those who are victims of domestic abuse with the right information on how to get help and re-iterating that this kind of abuse is never acceptable and help and support is available to those who are suffering. In supporting the knowledge and confidence in the public, more victims came forward and we also received more referrals from third parties keen to support when they heard or noticed something wasn't right.
68. I supported the distribution of funding nationally from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) COVID contingency funding and Home Office funding to provide services with further finances to enable them to support those coming forward throughout the COVID pandemic and help them enable their services to move towards online and remote working. As a region, we need to continue to support all victim's services to deliver support to victims of crime

### **A safe, secure and efficient road network**

69. I have supported improvements in joint working between the police, Highways England and other partners in the management of the motorway network. Following a critical incident, I hosted a public hearing in 2016, which led to a series of recommendations for

improved collaboration. Since then, we have seen revised practices that mean the motorways open more quickly following a closure.

70. The Central Motorway Police Group, a bilateral collaboration with Staffordshire Police, remains a national exemplar, singled out for praise in a recent HMICFRS report. In this light, the decision by the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner to withdraw in 2018 looks even more short-sighted. The collaboration remains an example of best practice nationally and has played a major part in piloting and delivering national roads policing changes. This has included piloting the NAS (National ANPR System) which is due to be rolled out across the country in 2020 and the Control Hub to work in partnership with Highways England to ensure a joined-up approach to incidents on the strategic network. I have chaired bi-annual strategic governance meetings with CMPG to ensure that roads policing is sufficiently delivering against the key issues across the two Force areas.
71. As set out in my Plan, Digital Road Safety Cameras are returning to every borough in the West Midlands. The government's insistence on denying local areas the fines imposed means that this rollout has been much slower than it should have been, but I am grateful to the local authorities that have found the capital funding for their return. I'm pleased to report that Coventry City Council has decided to increase its number of schemes. In each case, the reintroduction of road safety cameras has reduced speeds.
72. I have also continued to support activity to reduce the number of deaths caused by the "fatal 4" (speeding, drink and drug driving, mobile device use and failure to wear seatbelts). Over 70,000 speeding offences were reported to the Central Ticket Office in 2019-20 alone. I supported Operation Close Pass to make roads safer for cyclists. This project, led by the WMP Road Harm Prevention Team, undertook 16 operations in the last. The Force is working to support the submission of dash cam footage from cyclists and motorists to support prosecutions.
73. WMP has seized between 600 and 1000 uninsured vehicles a month since 2016, and operations to target car cruising and off-road motorcycles continue. Roads policing continues to play a key role in disrupting serious and organised crime.

#### **West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance and Violence Reduction Unit**

74. The West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance was launched in 2015. The work of the Alliance was highlighted nationally and this public health based approach has now been adopted by the Home Office as best practice, with central government making funding available to scale up this approach via their 18 Violence Reduction Units. In the West Midlands this work has now been merged into the West Midlands VRU.
75. The Violence Reduction Unit was developed by consolidating existing blueprints of the Violence Prevention Alliance, the Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People Programme, the Gangs and Violence Commission and an extensive piece of work on childhood adversity and vulnerability. My Office is leading the work with the Force, Public Health England, West Midlands Combined Authority, Local Authorities, the Crown Prosecution Service, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Groups, and Youth Offending Services.

76. In its first operational year, the Unit has developed a stronger understanding of the nature of violence and the prevalence of risk factors across the region and published a Strategic Needs Assessment <https://westmidlands-vru.org/app/uploads/2020/07/Strategic-Needs-Assessment-WM-VRU-April-2020.pdf>. This has informed the development of nine place-pilots, where communities and local stakeholders come together to work on issues underlying the prevalence of violence in their area. Through this work, communities have been able to access awareness raising and training activity; to deliver focused youth projects and provide extra youth services; to access peer mentoring for young people who have become involved in violence, and to work together to problem solve other issues.
77. The VRU has also continued to deliver a range of interventions, many of which were first established through the VPA.
78. The budget for 20/21 was £3,307,000 and 70% of this funding has been spent on activities to directly prevent and reduce violence, vulnerability and exploitation. Below are some highlights of activity to date.
- *Reachable moments*: There are youth workers based in many of the region's hospitals (particularly A&E departments) and engaged in mediation with young people who might be caught up in a life of violence. The following hospitals now have the reachable moments programme based in them:
    - Coventry
    - Wolverhampton
    - Birmingham Children's Hospital.
    - Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital
    - Heartland Hospitals

We are also delivering a reachable moments intervention through custody, which has seen a significant decrease in reoffending rates for those engaged within the programme.

- *Sports Activities*: Our nationally leading Sports Development Impact Programme has evolved over the past two years. Initially our sports diversionary work reached a broad audience, with over 10,000 young people reached during the summer holidays 19/20. In response to COVID but also as the programme has evolved to support young people with more complex needs, the 20/21 programme provided year around support to help the transitions between schools and supported 1,283 incredibly vulnerable young people through a mixture of specialist support, peer mentoring, and sport.
- *Education Intervention Advisers*: The VRU has worked with partners to embed education intervention advisers in each of the local authorities' inclusion teams. The EIAs are working within the education system to better target and support violence reduction activity, and to help promote inclusion and find ways to keep young people in school. They are also supporting the force and schools to work together more effectively. A series of interventions have been funded in schools across all seven local authorities, providing context based support and peer mentoring for vulnerable young people.

- *Resettlement project:* Four services will be operating across the West Midlands; Coventry, Birmingham x 2 and Wolverhampton. The resettlement programme will provide a support service for young people and young adults who are about to be released from prison or who have recently resettled in the community. Focusing on the key rehabilitative pathways, service users will receive support to enable them to find employment, accommodation and build positive relationships.

### Animal cruelty and crimes involving animals

79. I remain committed to ensuring appropriate standards for animal welfare and supporting enforcement where necessary. I have ensured improvements in the approach to investigating crimes involving dangerous dogs, which has increased consistency of approach and reduced costs of kennelling, due to investigations being completed more quickly.

	Number of dogs seized	Average number of days kennelled
2014/2015	192	87
2018/2019	48	51

80. As a result, costs to the Force associated with dangerous dogs has dropped across the period:

Financial Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 (forecast)
<b>Cost rounded to nearest £100</b>	385,500	339,000	310,500	288,900

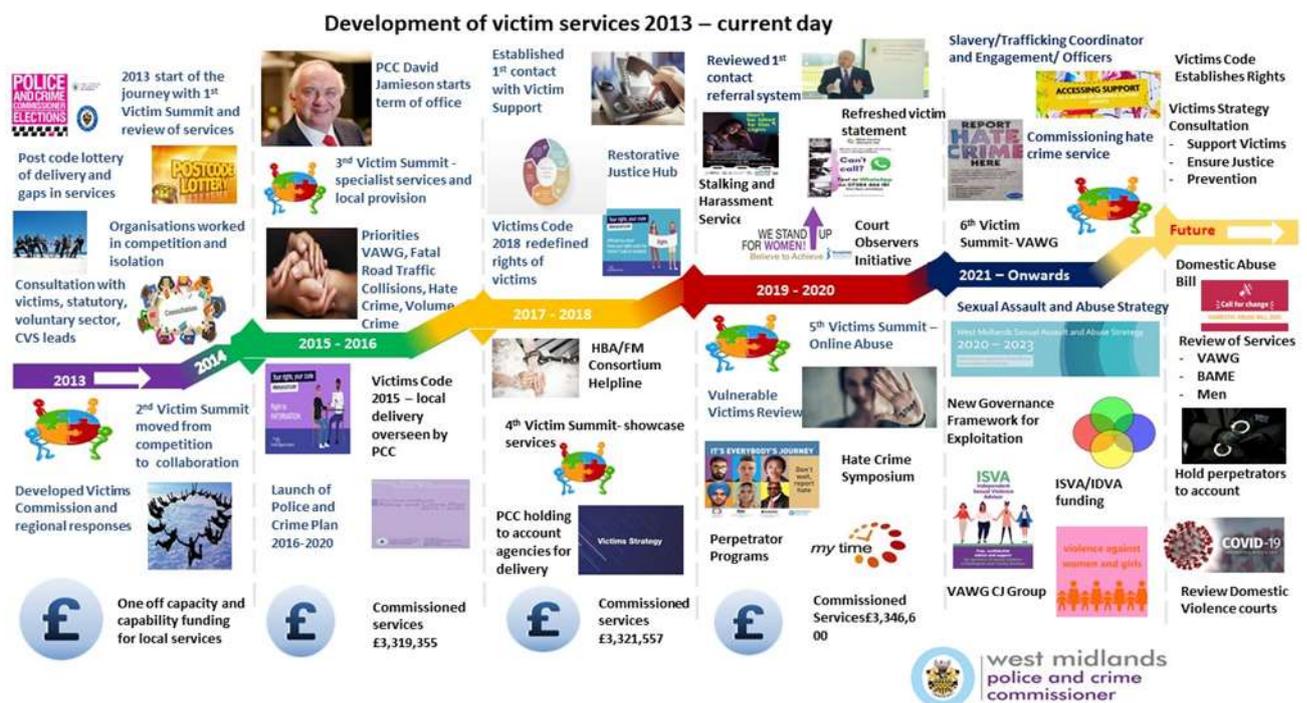
81. I have supported the Force to work with partners to create a “Responsible Dog Ownership Course” for owners whose dogs have been dealt with by the Dangerous Dogs’ Unit.
82. While it remains the case that relatively few domestic abuse refuges allow pets, there are charities that will look after the pets of fleeing domestic abuse victims.

## Theme 2: Supporting Victims of Crime

83. Provision of services to victims of crime is a statutory responsibility of Police and Crime Commissioner. I have worked in partnership to ensure efficient and effective commissioning and improve the experience of victims, thereby supporting them to recover. A total of 183,851 people have received support since 2016, with expenditure on services over that period totalling £17,803,129.

84. My final Victims Summit, attended by Victims Commissioner Vera Baird, took place in February 2021. I took the opportunity to consult with partners on how victim services should be shaped in the future. I consulted on new priorities and on the impact of COVID on victims and the wider voluntary sector. My findings show that the impacts of COVID have been profound and we will need to ensure as we move out of lockdown restrictions we are prepared to support recovery.

85. The illustration below shows the breadth of work I have undertaken in recent years, and demonstrates the complexities of the victim services landscape.



**Table 1 – Victims supported**

Financial year	Number of victims supported
20/21 (full year not yet available; this is a midterm figure)	30,000
19/20	36,641
18/19	38,244
17/18	28,522
16/17 (at this time the MOJ had not yet published its outcomes framework which	50,444

distinguished between number of referrals and number of victims supported. We were only collating number of referrals during this year and so the numbers are higher)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>183,851</b>

**Table 2 – Expenditure**

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>£</b>
20-21	4,485,802
19-20	3,346,608
18-19	3,329,807
17-18	3,321,557
16-17	3,319,355
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17,803,129.64</b>

### **COVID Extraordinary funding**

86. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) made available extraordinary funding for domestic abuse (DA) and sexual violence and abuse (SVA) services.
87. COVID has had a huge impact on victim service and we have worked at pace since the onset of the pandemic to ensure our service providers can continue to meet demand. Reported domestic abuse (DA) has risen significantly. I have worked closely with the Victims Commission and the West Midlands Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Consortia to ensure there is an awareness of the challenges facing providers, and through them an awareness of the challenges facing victims living in our region.
88. We have worked with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the National Victims Commissioner; Vera Baird in highlighting the challenges we face.
89. During the first lock down, after an initial dip in referrals, we saw an increase in the number of victims reaching out for support; as time has gone on we have seen the complexities of cases deepen and victims coming forward with increasing mental health needs. Court backlogs have meant that victims are staying in service for longer. This has resulted in an increase in emotional support calls from victims struggling with a lack of face-to-face contact, which in turn increases the demand on services as staff take more time to deal with each call they receive.
90. The impact of COVID on the Criminal Justice System has seen virtual court systems unable to cope and an unprecedented court back log on an already stretched system. This has had a negative impact on victims and witnesses and has undoubtedly increased rates of attrition and is likely to continue to do so. In response I coordinated a response

and offer to the Crown Prosecution Service indicating support which could be offered by my regional commissioned services in facilitating remote evidence sites for victims.

91. During the most recent lockdown there remains an ongoing concern about the anticipated surge in demand on services once lockdown ends. I have responded to this crisis by making available an additional £911,065.64 of extraordinary funding to both commissioned and non-commissioned organisations offering support to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence and abuse.
92. This funding is in place to cover the period from 24 March 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 to meet the additional costs incurred by the voluntary sector. This funding has covered the cost providers have incurred or will incur whilst adapting their services during the pandemic, and to cope with demand increases resulting from it. This funding has been used to:
- address short term income disruption
  - meet essential costs of sustaining current activities, such the purchasing of assets to support the move to remote and digital working, and additional staff to cover those unable to work for reasons related to the pandemic
  - address increased demand
  - In line with guidance from the MoJ, I have ensured the process for allocating funding was open and transparent and that all relevant support organisations in the West Midlands region especially smaller specialist organisations have been able to access the funding.

### **Remote Provision**

93. Since the onset of the pandemic, I have ensured my commissioned services are able to respond to the lockdown measures as efficiently as possible taking into account the resources available. I have received reports from some of my commissioned providers that the provision of remote services is in fact favoured by some victims. Being able to speak to support workers from home, at times which suits them has been welcomed and will be something which will become part of the 'new normal' as we move into the next year. A blended approach of remote and in person interaction whilst necessary at this point has benefited the accessibility of many to services across the region.
94. Some of the measure I have taken have to ensure service delivery continues include:
- Grant variations to all providers enabling them to work flexibly and innovatively responding to the emerging needs.
  - Payments to support services were issued earlier than usual to help organisations respond promptly to COVID related costs.
  - In an aim to sustain service delivery, providers were offered keyworker status letters which enabled front line workers to travel to and from work freely
  - Held regular update meetings with domestic abuse, sexual violence & abuse and volume crime providers to understand the nature of the issues being experienced on the ground.
95. All issues were and continue to be addressed collectively and collaboratively with partners from across the region including the VRU, Public Health, Local Authorities and Community Safety Partnerships.

96. In addition to the Domestic Abuse campaign #NoExcuseForAbuse, which was launched in April 2020, local response to domestic abuse has developed towards a joint communications strategy (Local Authorities, service providers, Community Safety Partnerships and the Violence Reduction Unit) to reach out to victims, alongside continued monitoring of the capacity at local refuges, and exploring suitable alternative accommodation should it be needed.
97. We continue to have regular contact with the APCC Victims and Witnesses Portfolio Group and the Ministry of Justice feeding into national discussions and sharing regional learning.
98. Overall, commissioned services are managing demand, but as time has gone on there are new concerns for staff welfare. The risk remains that staff will catch COVID despite working remotely, and there is emerging concern that staff well-being is harder to protect when distressing events are disclosed to them in their home environments. Staff resource may decrease for these reasons, leaving the potential for demand to become unmanageable.
99. PCCs have been given reassurance by the MoJ that the DA and SVA uplift from April 2021 will be in place for twelve months to support the 'COVID and beyond' period, which was a concern flagged previously by my office.
100. I have also submit an expression of interest to the MoJ requesting a further £6,666,892.99 be made available to the DA and SVA sectors over the coming two years (2021-2023) to ensure that as a region we can cope with the challenges as we move into a period of 'COVID and beyond'.

### **Hearing the voice of victims**

101. Shaping service delivery through the voice of victims is a key priority and an essential part of my statutory responsibility. In October 2020 I [published a "Vulnerable Victims Review"](#) which took first hand evidence from victims of Stalking and Harassment, Domestic Abuse, Sexual Assault and Abuse. These lived experiences exposed the frailties of the criminal justice system bring to light a number of ways in which the current services could be improved. A recent Court Observers initiative delivered by members of the Soroptimist movement saw over 58 volunteers observe 193 domestic violence cases across the region. Their findings will create change in the criminal justice system by improving access to Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors and enhancing arrangements to protect victims in Courts.

### **Hate Crime Service**

102. Recorded hate crime rose by about 40% in 2020. Following a Hate Crime Symposium in June 2020, I agreed to allocate £200,000 from the 2021-22 £3.4 million Victims Fund to create a new service for victims of these crimes. A competitive tendering process was launched in January 2021, with the new service to become available later this year.

### **Victim-focused Restorative Justice**

103. Restorative Justice gives those who have been affected by anti-social behaviour (ASB) or crime the opportunity to explain how they have been affected to the person who has caused the harm, and have a voice in deciding on how that harm may be repaired. As part of my commitment to Restorative Justice I commissioned a scoping report in 2017/2018.

104. The report established that there is genuine enthusiasm amongst practitioners in the West Midlands for the benefits of Restorative Justice and a willingness to collaborate to achieve this. The scoping identified that despite considerable investment, particularly in training, provision was patchy with considerable gaps and programmes lacked coherence and consistency. It also identified that we needed a response that covered the whole of the Force area, so that it didn't matter where you lived in the West Midlands, you would have access to a good quality Restorative Justice service.

105. In response to this, I developed the [West Midlands Restorative Justice Hub](#), in partnership with West Midlands Police and the Hub responds to both crime and ASB. It is a single point of contact for all cases and ensures that a victim will only need to make contact with the service once, and the correct person will be the single point of contact.

106. I commissioned Remedi in 2018 to deliver a regional restorative justice service with an annual allocation of £450,000. The service provider acts as a single point of contact to ensure the service is effectively and efficiently delivered to victims of crime. Since being commissioned, Remedi has been building awareness and understanding of restorative justice and its potential benefits amongst our partner agencies and the communities that we serve. They have also completed a significant number of successful interventions both with offenders and victims. I also commissioned the Pioneer Group to deliver a response to victims of ASB; they are working in partnership with the Force to recruit, train and supervise Ambassadors and Volunteers who support the Hub, offering members of the community to support communities, increase harmony and resolve conflict. Uniquely, our approach to restorative justice can be either victim or offender led.

107. The total number of referrals for 2019/20: Victims – 528, Offender – 875. The total referrals for 2020/21 (to 9th March): Victims – 539, Offender – 73. The significant drop in offender referrals is due to not having any prison referrals (thanks to COVID) and a drop in referrals from the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and the National Probation Service, which were the main sources of referrals in year 1. Remedi have recently received 495 offender referrals from the CRC, which will be processed shortly.

Restorative justice brings together people harmed by crime or conflict with those responsible for the harm, to find a positive way forward. It gives victims the choice and the chance to tell offenders the real impact of their crime, get answers to their questions and ultimately get an apology. Restorative justice holds offenders to account for what they have done. It helps them understand the real impact, take responsibility, and make amends, which in turn helps the victim to cope and recover from the crime.

### Theme 3: Building Trust and Confidence

108. A key focus of mine over my term of office has been to ensure that West Midlands Police is a Force that has the confidence of the public. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), in their 2018/2019 inspection of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy, found the Force to be "good" in each category. I continue to hold the Force to account on the recommendations in the inspection report, to see year-on-year improvements.

#### Safer Custody

109. The public needs to have trust that police custody is a safe place. I have worked towards safer custody, monitoring progress made against the HMICFRS inspection of WMP custody in February 2017. That inspection resulted in five main areas of concern and 33 recommendations. I am pleased to say that these areas have now been addressed. I deliver two volunteer programmes both aimed at safer custody and improving public confidence in policing. I have improved the Custody Visitors and Appropriate Adults programmes over the last 5 years. There are currently 58 Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) in the West Midlands, giving up their free time to ensure those held in police cells are treated appropriately. There is a team in each Neighbourhood Policing Unit and the volunteers independently review custody safeguarding for both detainees and staff.

110. Custody visitors made 1,298 visits from April 2016 – Jan 2021 across the Force's custody sites and during that period spoke to 9,574 detainees.

Year	Detainees present	Visits offered	Accepted	% of detainees present who accepted visit
<b>2016/2017</b>	3,817	2,955	2,535	66
<b>2017/2018</b>	3,243	2,555	2,243	69
<b>2018/2019</b>	3,746	2,601	2,188	58
<b>2019/2020</b>	4,038	2,421	1,933	47
<b>*2020/2021</b>	1,300	816	675	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,144</b>	<b>11,348</b>	<b>9,574</b>	<b>59</b>

\*2020/2021 statistics up to January 2021

111. Custody Visitors have concentrated on the issues raised by HMICFRS, primarily the care offered to vulnerable detainees, healthcare and mental health provision. Some issues highlighted by volunteers have included:

- Maintenance issues in relation to the two super blocks (Perry Barr & Oldbury) which opened in 2016. At the time, the period of warranty with the building contractor for the

two sites had expired. These issues eventually dissipated after the Force appointed their own contractor to help address the problems.

- Bourneville custody (closed 2018) had issues with inadequate stock of suicide prevention blankets. In response, new stock was ordered and received in the last remaining months before its closure.
- Healthcare provision (pre 2017) was a concern for custody visitors; this was also reflected in an HMIC report carried out at the time. In September 2017, the Force changed the Healthcare provider in custody and since then there have been no further concerns raised.
- Staffing issues has been a recurring concern for custody visitors which continue to be raised. At times, there have been concerns that staffing issues have impacted on the opportunity for detainees to take showers/receive wash kits or allow custody visitors to gain access to custody within a reasonable time. The issue is monitored closely and work continues with the Force on how to alleviate this concern.

112. In addition to the Custody Visiting service, I have put in place a programme to provide vulnerable adults with an appropriate adult to accompany them whilst in custody. There is a clear need for such a service and I have filled the gap in the region. In the period from August 2017 to January 2021, we have arranged more than 2,820 AA visits for vulnerable adults in police custody.

#### **What is an appropriate adult?**

Appropriate Adults (AAs) are members of the public who volunteer to ensure people with mental ill-health, learning difficulties or other vulnerability are treated fairly in police custody. The principal intention is to help safeguard the best interests of the person in custody, and to reduce the risk of miscarriages of justice as a result of evidence being obtained from vulnerable suspects which lead to unjust convictions.

#### **Responding to COVID**

113. During the Coronavirus pandemic both the Custody Visiting and Appropriate Adult schemes have managed to continue to operate. In some cases like for example at Wolverhampton which became a designated COVID site, custody visitors have been able carry out telephone visits to the custody block and speak to detainees. In other cases, a small group of custody visitors and appropriate adults have been able to continue physical visits to custody sites, especially custody visits to Perry Barr and Oldbury, reporting back their findings on a weekly basis.

#### **Body Worn Video**

114. Body Worn Video has become a standard part of the police's equipment during my term of office. 3424 cameras are in routine use (figures based on uploads since 1 January 2021). Already this year, 189175 videos were uploaded (equating to 39598.63 hours of footage). The average number of videos uploaded per day is 2781.99 (equating to 582.33 hours of footage). As a result, more offenders are being brought to justice thanks to irrefutable evidence, including assaults on Officers. Early guilty pleas have gone up. Complaints and investigations against police are being dealt with more quickly thanks to the footage. Body Worn Video footage is also supporting our oversight of Stop and Search and Use of Force.

#### **Satisfaction with services**

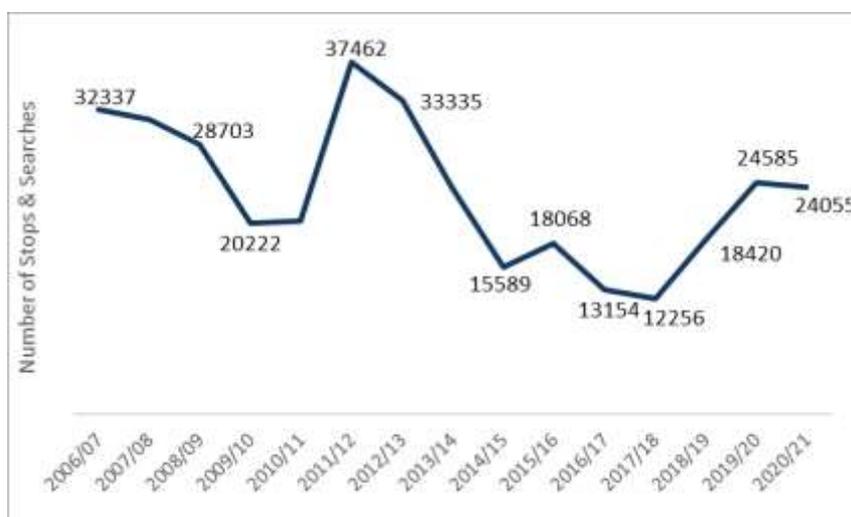
115. I have continued to scrutinise the Force to ensure that they are acting to give the best customer service experience to members of the public that contact them. The force have led on a number of new initiatives in this area including a customer strategy and a digital engagement strategy as well as introducing WM Now to inform and request information from members of the public. There are also surveys and consultations, some specifically targeted at those who have been victims of crimes such as domestic violence. Following a satisfactory Citizen Satisfaction Pilot involving SMS surveys and face to face snap surveys, this method of gaining citizens views will be rolled out across the force. Service Standards for all police departments have been agreed and a new Citizens Charter sets out the quality of service I expect WMP to uphold. A governance framework for citizen satisfaction, and community engagement will in future require reports on performance.

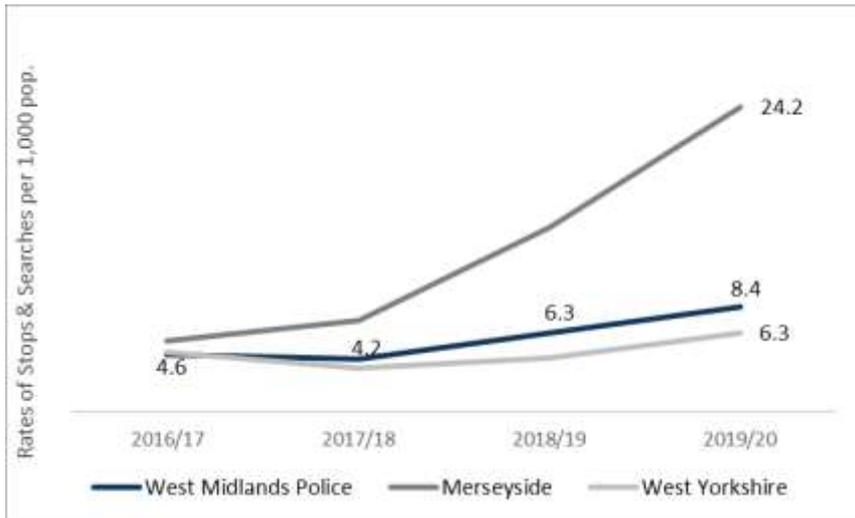
116. All organisations have needed to adapt to how they communicate with citizens during the pandemic. I have commissioned specific types of communication to target young people during this time and required neighbourhood policing to adapt during the pandemic to reach out digitally within Facebook and Whats App groups to arrive at a digital Key Individuals Network (KIN); vital to reach those under represented and vulnerable in communities to reassure and inform them when face to face contact is restricted.

### Stop and Search

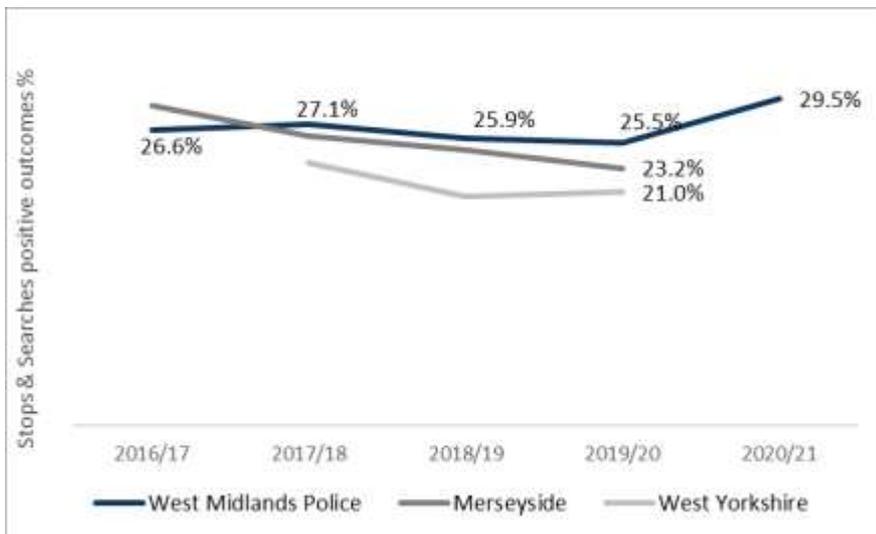
117. I have continued to challenge and scrutinise the Force’s approach to stop and search. My Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner currently chairs the Stop and Search Commission (established in July 2014), a forum which brings together those engaged in ensuring best practice in stop and search to maintain our high performance in this area.

118. The numbers of stop and searches conducted have seen yearly increases since 2017/18. Expressed as a rate per 1,000, West Midlands sits just above West Yorkshire with Merseyside significantly higher following big jumps there in terms of usage. Comparator data are only available between 2016/17 and 2018/19, Greater Manchester data is unavailable.

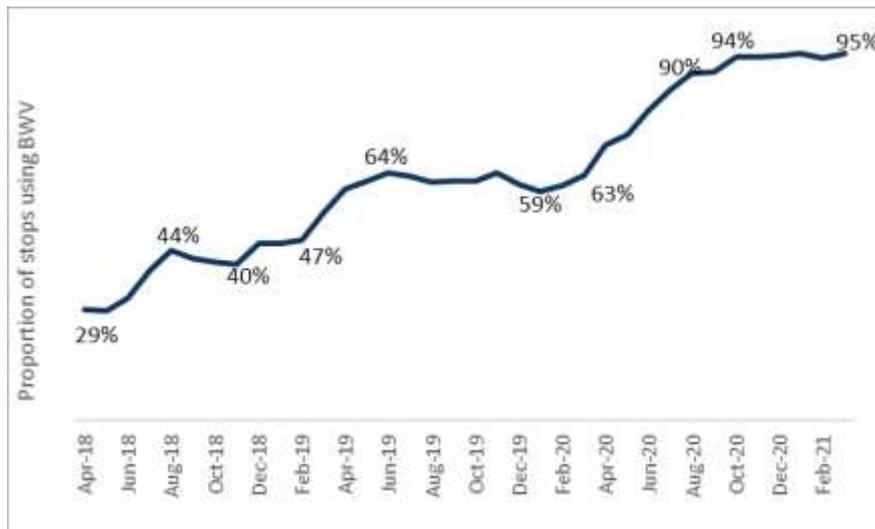




119. In terms of outcomes, a higher proportion of stops and searches in the West Midlands result in some form of action being taken than that of similar forces. Looking at provisional data for 2020/21, it appears that West Midlands Police will see the positive outcome rate increase to 29.5%. Work continues to drive this number up yet further in order to make the use of stop and search powers in the West Midlands as effective (as well as fair) as possible.



120. Following a concerted effort to increase the use of Body Worn Video (BWV) as part of Stops & Searches, the proportion of stops where BWV has been used has increased from 42% in 2018/19 to 89% in 2020/21.



121. Disproportionality continues to be a factor in the use of stop and search powers.

Across the WMP force area, the Asian search ratio is 2.6 and the Black search ratio is 3.9 (2020/21). This represents an improvement on the 2019/20 figures – which were 2.6 for Asian subjects and 4.5 for Black subjects – but there is clearly more work to be done

122. I have established with WMP ten Stop and Search Scrutiny Panels, with at least one in each Neighbourhood Policing Unit. These panels enable the members of the public to understand the Stop and Search and Police Use of Force in their area and to discuss key issues emerging. Agendas and minutes are published on my [website](#). They review the Force’s use of stop and search, including examination of individual anonymised stop and search records, and more recently use of force, and they also review footage from body worn cameras.

123. I have commissioned 9 youth trainers to offer Stop and Search workshops to 13-19 year olds in schools and colleges. To date the programme has delivered over 400 workshops, reaching in excess of 15,000 people. The youth trainers support the understanding of young people around why and how the police use stop and search. Trainers are represented at scrutiny panel meetings and are active in recruiting young people to join the panels.

124. In the summer of 2018, West Midlands Police piloted recording s163 Road Traffic Act stops using the e-search recording system (as used for Stop and Search records). The pilot scheme included CMPG, and recorded 1,920 stops. The pilot examined whether s163 stops disproportionately impacted particular drivers and provided baseline data. The pilot reported disproportionality similar to that of wider Stop and Search powers, but also identified significant recording issues. A new project was launched in October 2020 and is running until March 2021. West Midlands Police is the first force in the country to trial recording this data. Recording s163 data is challenging for many reasons, not least because the power is a general one to direct traffic rather than specifically for the purpose of reducing criminality generally.

### **Accurate recording and increased reporting of crime**

125. Crime recording remains a complex and challenging issue. Changes in recording and assessment practice saw the Force’s HMICFRS rating vary significantly across my term of office. Accurate crime recording – or “crime data integrity” as it is called – is key to

obtaining justice, supporting victims and understanding crime trends. At the same time, complex rules require significant administrative support and it is not always clear that these rules necessarily ensure that offenders are more likely to be identified, that victims get a better service, or lead to useful strategic insights. My Strategic Policing and Crime Board and the Joint Audit Committee have considered crime data integrity on many occasions, and there has been a significant investment in new business processes. A further HMICFRS inspection is expected shortly.

## **Complaints, Reviews and Misconduct**

126. Despite the restrictions placed on my staff as a result of the pandemic, our activities and oversight functions into Professional Standards has greatly improved. I want the public to be confident that staff and officers work to the highest standards of behaviour, where openness and transparency comes to fore. This extends into the world of counter-corruption where regular confidential briefings have become a staple and any learning is fed back into operational practice and improving matters of conduct.
127. Due to changed regulations, the number of complaints has risen (from about 400 to over 3700). The definition of a complaint has been widened to incorporate any dissatisfaction with policing, making the complaints process more open and accessible. My renewed focus in this area has enabled me to extend my oversight of Professional Standards Department.
128. I am working with the Force to introduce a Diversity Dashboard for complaints. It will help us understand the pattern of complaints and any disproportionality issues, and allow real time oversight. We are also reviewing the processes for vetting of new Police Officers and staff, as well as aftercare,<sup>1</sup> so as to ensure the cultural and family dynamics associated with BAME Officers and staff are understood. We are developing an online Complaints Hub to give the public information on the complaints process.
129. My office has become responsible for cases where the public remain unhappy with how their complaints have been managed by the Police. The new service has seen appeals completed in a timely manner and has provided citizens with more confidence and transparency. The complaints review function is provided jointly with Warwickshire OPCC. We have received and managed 81 complaints reviews so far. I have asked the Office to review the successes and improvements we have made to the review functions, and what has been achieved by other PCCs using different models, with a view to having a full assessment ready for the incoming Commissioner.
130. I have also revisited how we manage complaints against the Chief Constable. Again, this was as a result of the changes brought about in the new Complaints Regulations 2020. This has afforded better connectivity with the general public as my officers need to understand the reasons behind the complaint and identify exactly what needs to be addressed. Last year there were 15 complaints against the Chief Constable; 2 were referred to the IOPC but were not subject to further investigation.

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<sup>1</sup> As vetting procedures are based on a 'snapshot in time', individuals' personal circumstances can change over time. These changes could affect an individual's suitability to retain a vetting clearance. It is therefore vital that officers' suitability is assessed through a comprehensive aftercare regime.

131. My office supports the administration of the police misconduct process. Misconduct hearings are generally held in public, and my office recruits and supports Legally Qualified Chairs to manage proceedings for the four forces in the region. We currently have 9 chairs but will recruit more in 2021. Working alongside the chairs are the Independent Panel Members. Their role is to assist Misconduct Panels in coming to a fair and evidence based judgement about a particular officer's conduct and deciding on appropriate sanction. We successfully recruited 15 new members in 2020. Since 2016 we have had the following:

2016/17	- 19 Misconduct Hearings (5 in Warwickshire)
2017/18	- 22 Misconduct Hearings (11 in Warwickshire and 1 in Staffordshire)
2018/19	- 10 Misconduct Hearings (1 in Warwickshire and 1 in West Mercia)
2019/20	- 19 Misconduct Hearings (5 in Warwickshire, and 3 in West-Mercia)

132. There have also been 10 misconduct appeals tribunals.

133. In the cases where Police Officers commit crimes connected with their service, I have a statutory responsibility to consider whether part of their police pension should be forfeited. I have done so for seven Officers who have brought the police service into disrepute and damaged public confidence. There are two more potential forfeitures underway.

### **Access to public services**

134. I have continued to focus on ensuring that the public are able to access the Force when they need them. Members of the public are now able to report crimes online, which has driven up crime reporting, specifically for hidden crimes. Online live chat and online reporting is now the favoured approach for almost half of those who want to contact us, with approaching 1,500 contacts a day. As part of the New Ways of Public Contact programme, we have introduced a new WMP website (which offers greater functionality than most police websites), "omni-competent" call handlers able to manage 101, 999, and Live Chat contacts, and a "chat bot" called "Bob-e" that efficiently triages live chat contacts to give the public the information they need (about 30% of contacts are managed via this route). On average, 8% of non-emergency contacts are managed via online website reporting, about 40% via Live Chat and half via 101.

135. I have maintained 10 public contact offices across the Force – a greater investment than in many comparable forces, as reflected in the recent HMICFRS Value for Money profiles. The future estates plan continues this commitment to publicly assessable front offices across the force, in a combination of police and partner buildings.

### **Effective accountability and governance**

136. The Strategic Policing and Crime Board (SPCB) has supported my holding to account and strategic direction functions. It has met 53 times in public during the term, with its agendas, minutes and reports published, and its meetings webcast. SPCB's workplan has been based on the commitments in the Police and Crime Plan. Its members have thematic and geographic portfolios, and participate in partnership boards and in internal Force meetings. I remain of the view that this is an effective way to fulfil the holding to account and strategic direction statutory functions.

137. Separately to SPCB, the Joint Audit Committee has provided assurance to me and the Chief Constable that the governance, control, risk management and audit systems which underpin the work of the PCC and Force are sound, reliable, robust and secure. Committee membership includes an independent chair, an independent member and three members of SPCB. The Committee has scrutinised a wide range of services and topics including progress made in addressing areas for improvement recommended by HMICFRS. Increased scrutiny of risk registers has also enabled the committee to contribute to developments within the risk management arrangements of the PCC and WMP. Regular assessments are undertaken of the Joint Audit Committee's performance against that of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) recommended guidance to ensure their terms of reference remains appropriate and members received training in appropriate areas.
138. During 2017, the Internal Audit service was re-focused to concentrate on the significant risks to the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Internal Audit now provide assurance on a wide range of services and themes from core financial systems to more wide-ranging strategic reviews of cross-cutting themes, such as IT access controls of intelligence systems, Mental Health, Sex Offender Management or how Missing Persons cases are managed.
139. Every piece of work completed by Internal Audit is essential in providing assurance to the Chief Constable, the Commissioner, senior management and members that systems and processes are operating robustly. This includes ensuring risks are being managed effectively and every recommendation made, regardless of how significant or minor, once implemented, contributes to improving the organisation's control environment. A vigorous follow-up regime ensures that management addresses the weaknesses reported by Internal Audit. Oversight around the implementation of the recommendations continues to be monitored by Joint Audit Committee at its quarterly meetings. The Internal Audit team also investigate the high risk data matches from the National Fraud Initiative exercise. The customer satisfaction rates for the Internal Audit service continue to be high with over 95% of respondents over the past three years scoring the service as good or very good.
140. I am a statutory consultee in West Midlands Police chief officer appointments, and have supported recruitment processes with 11 community stakeholder panels since 2014. I have also extended the contract of Chief Constable Sir David Thompson, reflecting both his performance in role and to give continuity of policing through the Commonwealth Games.
141. I have worked with my Chief Executive and his management team to ensure the OPCC is an effective, welcoming, equal opportunities employer. Diversity in the Office has significantly increased, with a workforce profile that more closely matches the gender, age and ethnicity profile of the West Midlands. There is no pay differential in the Office for women or employees from under-represented groups, and all staff are supported with learning and development plans. Training in trauma informed and anti-racist practice is currently underway. The Office has moved to remote working during the COVID pandemic, building on the flexible working policies already in place.
142. I am committed to working in an open, transparent and accessible way. West Midlands OPCC is the only PCC's office to have received the annual CoPaCC

Transparency Mark every year it has been awarded. I have worked with local, regional and national media to ensure information about our work is disseminated widely.

143. I have worked closely with the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel, supporting in depth reviews on a number of topics, and supporting their police finances sub-group in the years it has operated. It is notable that the thorough and detailed reports published for SPCB have routinely provided the information needed to support the Panel's work. I engage with partners across the region in local authorities and have been an active observer member of West Midlands Combined Authority.
144. Working with West Midlands Police, I have established the UK's first Data Ethics Committee for policing, which has played a major role in the transparent ethical development of artificial intelligence in policing at a regional, national and international level. This work was led by Tom McNeil, my Strategic Adviser. The key distinguishing factors have been its multi-disciplinary and specialist make-up of committee members and extensive transparency over projects. Vitally, it also has a strong culture and focus on providing tangible and pragmatic advice while ensuring the committee has teeth and can advise on data science projects from concept to the evaluation of their deployment.
145. Wanting to build on our success, we are now in the process of pitching to provide the national ethics advice function for the benefit of UK law enforcement agencies. We have already received positive endorsement from a number of law enforcement and key civil society stakeholders with discussions around how to make this a reality progressing at pace.
146. Over the last three and a half years, the work of the Committee has gone from strength to strength. It is hard to articulate the amount of engagement required between the OPCC, WMP and multiple civil society stakeholders in order to handle the fast-paced developments in predictive analytics, facial recognition and other controversial emerging technology. In short, the committee we have established continues to be recognised as pioneering nationally, as leading in the development of national policy, and is also receiving international attention.
147. As well as providing the ethics advice on the Home Office funded National Data Analytics Solution, we have also been approached repeatedly for our expertise from UK and EU government bodies, major universities, think tanks and civil society organisations including: the EU Agency on Fundamental Rights, the Council of Europe, the Government's Office for Artificial Intelligence, the All Parliamentary Group on Data Analytics, the UK Government's Centre for Data Ethics & Innovation, Royal United Services Institute, Amnesty International, Partnership on AI, Data Justice Lab of Cardiff University, the Ade Lovelace Institute, TechUK and others.
148. Having already started with focus groups in the community, our ethics work will now also look to establish a more thorough programme of public engagement work. This is out of a recognition that society will continue to develop these technologies and the involvement of the public and public trust will be central.
149. I have also engaged Aspire4U to run a lived experience and community engagement project on the Force's proposed predictive offender management model. This exercise will involve seeking the views of a diverse range of participants across two carefully run focus groups to understand perceptions, public trust, risks, concerns and suggestions

from some of the communities within the West Midlands. This kind of engagement is just the beginning of our wider republic participation on these complex and emerging technological issues.

### **Evidence based policing**

150. I have maintained a focus on ensuring that research is used wisely when making decisions about programmes and activity. Examples of projects using such an evidence based model include Body Worn Cameras, stop and search and the Ethics Committee – both outlined elsewhere in this report. The Violence Reduction Unit is accredited by Public Health England, and has strong links to evidence based research. All services commissioned by the OPCC have to include evaluation.
151. With support from funding obtained from assets seized from criminals, I funded research and training into the role that acquired brain injuries play in behaviour and reducing reoffending. This work, some of the earliest of its kind in the country, will help support greater awareness of acquired brain injuries and the development of appropriate preventative and offender management tools.
152. I have established an academic advisory group with representatives from across the area. I hope this new body will continue to develop with a mutual exchange of thinking concerning the research the sector wishes to present to policing, and the research areas that policing identifies. The OPCC maintain a strong approach to research, with several members of staff completing higher degrees with a research component.

## Theme 4: Strengthening Communities and Growing the Economy

### Local Policing and Crime Boards

153. Local Policing and Crime Boards, also known as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), have a statutory responsibility to respond to crime and anti-social behaviour in their local authority areas. I have continued to work with the seven partnerships, and to fund their community safety activities, through the Community Safety Budget allocation, which I continue to allocate from Police Main Grant. I have kept the budget for community safety activities at the same level reflecting the importance that I put on local activity and response to local and emerging problems. In addition to this I have encouraged collaboration between the seven partnerships to look at force-wide commissioning of services that are delivered across all local authority areas and where efficiencies can be made, and services more effective, through the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership.

<b>Local Authority Area</b>	<b>Total Allocation 2016-22 (£)</b>
<b>Birmingham</b>	<b>8,493,511</b>
<b>Coventry</b>	<b>1,907,040</b>
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>1,525,316</b>
<b>Sandwell</b>	<b>1,746,569</b>
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>964,372</b>
<b>Walsall</b>	<b>1,722,072</b>
<b>Wolverhampton</b>	<b>1,748,576</b>
<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>18,107,456</b>

154. There are a number of areas where improvements have been made, including the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences which respond to the needs of victims of high risk domestic abuse, arrest referral services in courts and custody, a regional response to the learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews, New Chance, which is support service for women offenders in custody, and youth offending.

155. The OPCC has supported applications from CSPs into the national Safer Streets Fund. Coventry secured £550,000 in the first round to reduce acquisitive crime, and the OPCC is supporting bids from three local authority areas in round two, aiming to secure in excess of £1.4 million.

### Better support for people with mental health needs

156. In my plan I committed to a range of activities related to mental health which I have followed up through a dedicated work stream, most recently with support from Board Member Dr Sarah Marwick. I hosted an Offender Health and Mental Wellbeing event in 2016, which saw a step-change in our work with partners across the criminal justice system and health sector, encouraging them to develop joint recommendations, including:
- individual plans for offenders with mental health needs;
  - more work with looked-after children as 45 per cent have mental health issues;
  - more, and better promotion of, mentoring schemes in the West Midlands; and
  - early intervention and prevention with vulnerable people.
157. I have worked with the Force to make sure mental health is a priority. An important part of this is Mental Health Triage, which is run by a response team made up from police, paramedics and a mental health nurse, in operation since 2014. Triage has a significant impact on the prevention of unnecessary use of s136 Mental Health Act 1983 (which gives police powers to move or detain people to a safe place), thereby reducing demand on custody blocks, A&E and Mental Health Trusts, as well as providing a better quality of service for the people involved. The number of face-to-face interventions made by Triage averages around 400-450 each quarter and the teams also provide telephone advice to ambulance crews around 600-675 times each quarter. A review of the service is underway to learn lessons and adapt it to future needs.
158. I have also supported the development of the Liaison and Diversion service in custody, which now takes more than 7,000 referrals each year. Assessments are made, and as a result, thousands of adults are referred on to other agencies for treatment (1,279 in the 12 months up to 31 August 2019, for example). Proper treatment gives people a better chance of integrating into society, and helps prevent re-offending.
159. I was signatory to the Mental Health Commission Thrive Action Plan launched in January 2017 and I have directly supported a number of mental health projects all aimed at reducing re-offending by addressing mental health need. These include:
- I provided initial funding for a senior Police Officer to be seconded to the programme
  - In 2017 the *Roots for Life* project run by mental health charity Better Pathways. Over a 12 month period the project worked with more than 100 people with mental ill health and who were at heightened risk of entering the criminal justice system, assisting them towards employment or gainful activity. By the end of the year, the majority of the participants were in gainful activity – either training, voluntary work, education or work placements.
  - I provided £20k towards the first wave of the Birmingham Mental Health Treatment Requirement pilot (one of five national Test Bed sites). The programme has now been running since December 2017 giving courts a sentencing option of a Mental Health Treatment Requirement. There is evidence that treating mental health, alongside other problems such as homelessness and substance misuse, can significantly reduce re-offending.

- I also provided £100k for the next wave of the pilot, introducing MHTRs to Walsall Magistrates court.
- In 2019 I committed £80k to a programme at Birmingham Prison to provide intensive monitoring and support for people leaving prison after short sentences, who had mental health problems. Using lived-experience practitioners to get people through the weeks before release and the first few days after release, this project can stop people going straight back to their old lifestyles and committing more crime.

### **Supporting local policing and public engagement**

160. Neighbourhood policing lies at the heart of keeping communities safe. I remain committed to neighbourhood policing units participating in communities and supporting the public to live in safety. As well as the PSCOs and Special Constables, neighbourhood teams work with communities, organisations and schools to engage and communicate with the public. I have continued to support the prevalence of Neighbourhood Watch and Street Watch, as well as Independent Advisory Groups. In an increasingly digital world the technological developments the Force has made supports this activity through new ways of working, giving added capacity to the front line. The Force has improved the training available to Neighbourhood Officers and PCSOs to equip them with the problem solving skills they need.
161. Austerity and the subsequent budget constraints have brought significant challenges in this area. Despite this West Midlands Police has seen the value of neighbourhood policing and has maintained a firm commitment to this area. Neighbourhood policing is crucial for intelligence, problem solving and general community safety. Every area has still got a named local officer and the force has one of the highest proportions of spend on local policing in the country. I was also pleased to play an important role in maintaining PCSOs when budget cuts threatened their existence in the West Midlands. A robust change programme and a near constant efficiency drive has allowed neighbourhood policing to be protected more than any other urban force. There are still more demands on neighbourhoods to support other areas of policing, but the integrity of the units remains. There are currently 1546 Police Officers and 455 PCSOs in neighbourhood policing.
162. To meet the demands of a modern police force and to deliver £5million of revenue savings to the police budget there has been an extensive estates strategy. This has meant that substandard police buildings have been sold or re-purposed. To keep officers near to the communities they serve a programme of co-location with partner agencies has been undertaken. Notable examples are officers and staff now parading from the council building in Walsall and from fire stations including Sedgley and Haden Cross. It is hoped this will continue after the pandemic and substantial work may be possible with other partners too.
163. Underpinning local policing is the support of the public. A key component of public support is the work of volunteers and groups in their local communities. In a drive to increase the number of active citizens across the force area local policing units have worked to establish and sustain Street Watch groups. Street Watch groups patrol their local areas, report issues and help to build-up a sense of community pride. As of January 2021 there were 197 Street Watch groups across the West Midlands Force area, with almost 1,750 volunteers signed up to help make our streets a better and safer place to

be. Work is ongoing to increase this number, particularly in the areas of highest demand. The OPCC funds high visibility jackets and other equipment for the schemes, and provides insurance.

164. To involve and reassure even more of the public West Midlands Police has pioneered the community messaging platform Neighbourhood Alerts to boost our digital presence and keep local communities informed of what is going on, as well as providing safety advice. This has been hugely successful and since its launch. 110,000 people have signed up to receive alerts on their local area from the police. To further support the public the OPCC and West Midlands Police have invested in their websites, with online recording, live chat and an interactive 'your options' functionality now available. The force's web offer began conservatively and is now expanding as the public has shown a clear demand to do much of their interaction digitally.

### **Supporting economic development**

165. In May of 2017 I introduced the National Living Wage across the West Midlands Police workforce. 185 members of staff saw a pay rise as a result of this introduction, with a yearly pay rise of up to £900 per annum for full time members of staff. Following this I have implemented a clause in all procurement contracts which stipulates that providers we contract with must pay staff at least the National Living Wage. I was the first PCC to be recognised by the Living Wage Foundation as a Living Wage Funder. I have spoken with many partners and stakeholders to encourage all employers in the region to sign up to the National Living Wage.

166. I have maintained my commitment to reducing the Force's carbon footprint through refreshing the fleet of electric vehicles and retrofitting buildings with solar electricity generation.

167. An updated Joint Procurement Strategy for procurement for the Force and my office, was agreed in September 2017. The scheme of delegation gives responsibility for commercial procurement to the Force, which is monitored through governance arrangements. The strategy has the following strategic procurement objectives and priorities:

- obtaining value for money;
- supporting economic development in the West Midlands including through social value;
- delivering against our priorities; and
- having an effective strategic commercial and procurement function.

168. One of the key objectives in my Economic Strategy is to ensure that services procured by the Force are being sourced locally. The Force has spent approximately £72m over the last financial year on works, goods and services and of this, approximately £47m was spent in the region; an increase of £8m from the previous year. In addition to this, over the last financial year 145 apprenticeships were created by suppliers to the Force compared with 81 the year before and 1,087 local jobs were created as a result of the Force expenditure with local suppliers, compared with 982 the previous year. There are several reasons for these increases including increased Force spend, better recording of social value and of the types of services supplied. I have introduced a

requirement that for all contracts above £100,000 the supplier's bids and proposals will be assessed against them providing social value. This is currently 10% of the evaluation criteria. I have invested in a social value portal to assist with this evaluation and to capture social value.

169. As part of the continued estate programme where there will be significant investment in the modernisation of the police estate. There is a requirement for suppliers as part of their contracts to deliver social value. In this programme, 35 apprenticeships will be created and there will be 52 work experience placements.

170. The Active Citizens' Fund has been in operation since April 2016 and uses money seized from criminals to enable communities to improve their areas in order to make them safer places to live and work. To date 589 projects have been supported at a total value of £2.7m. These have covered a wide range of projects, bringing benefits to the community and helping to prevent crime.

**Money seized from criminals used to help clean Solihull's streets**

£5,000 was given to a community project to help clean the streets of Solihull as well as reducing anti-social behaviour. The initiative aims to keep the streets of Solihull clean and make the community better for everyone. The project has been running for three years and has over 300 members. Across the borough there is at least one group out picking litter every week. Although the scheme was set up initially to improve the environment there have been the added benefits of reducing anti-social behaviour and bringing communities closer together. As well as receiving funding from the PCC Talking Rubbish is also working in conjunction with the Love Solihull team from Solihull Council.

**Football project receives over £8,000 from the West Midlands PCC in bid to reduce violence**

Eidgah Stars Football Club has received a grant of over £8,000 from West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner's Active Citizens Fund. The project mentors young people aged between 5 and 16 years of age in playing and learning the skills of football. The weekly training sessions act to steer young people away from violence, knife crime and anti-social behaviour. Many of those involved live in and around Perry Barr, where access to extra-curricular activities is limited. For some young people there is a lack of adult role models. However, working with parents or guardians, the project mentors overcome difficulties by highlighting to parents the benefits of exercise and physical activity for their young children. Some parents are unable to pay the nominal fee due to their financial circumstances. Funding from the Active Citizens Fund has helped cover the cost of footballs, training kits, equipment, venue hire, as well as project coordinators and mentor costs.

171. I launched the Community Initiative Fund (CIF) in May 2020 to help organisations who offer support to the community during the COVID crisis, for example vulnerable, homeless and elderly people who have become extremely isolated and in need of support and help following the lockdown. Again funded from items seized from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act, CIF targets organisations offering support to people whose lives have been made harder by COVID. In total 146 organisations have been supported through the fund at a total value of £466,584.

**Deputy PCC backs a project to feed & provide support to the elderly, vulnerable & homeless during the COVID pandemic**

The Sikh Soup Kitchen feed up to 600 vulnerable, elderly and homeless people every week in this current COVID pandemic, including providing daily living essentials such as milk, bread, tea, coffee, sandwiches and snacks to them. The project also provides social support to the vulnerable and elderly. By offering friend to talk to, so that they do not feel alone or distressed at this difficult time. The project supports the local community in this difficult time and helps to ensure that those who are vulnerable are able to care for themselves and not having to rely on others who may take advantage of their situation. As well as providing food the Sikh Soup Kitchen also offers to pick up prescriptions for the elderly and key workers. Currently, the picking up of prescriptions is supporting the elderly, isolated, vulnerable, homeless, low income families, Under Represented Groups and those with underlying health issues.

172. Another economic development issue is that of uninsured vehicles, which I have made a priority. In January 2018, I convened a meeting of key individuals from across the Motor Insurance Industry. These stakeholders included: Motor Insurers' Bureau ("MIB"), Aviva, Direct Line Group, Zurich, the RAC and the Insurance Fraud Bureau. Out of this meeting came a series of recommendations.

173. One of the recommendations is to issue "nudge letters" to uninsured drivers who are highlighted as driving without insurance on ANPR cameras. Following a pilot by Thames Valley Police, I have sought agreement that the Motor Insurers Bureau will issue such letters nationwide as a further pilot, as evidence suggests that a letter from the local police Force is effective in reducing the numbers of uninsured drivers by approximately 80%. I want to ensure that significant funding is reserved for the West Midlands because of our disproportionately higher rates of uninsured drivers. We are speaking with the main car insurers, to see how we can further advance our recommendations in this area.

174. In anticipation of the upcoming Commonwealth Games, I have engaged heavily with the Force to ensure it is putting a comprehensive plan in place, working with partners, to manage the Games securely, including working with other police forces, establishing a games control suite and working with the military for detailed mitigation plans. We are working with the Force to try and ensure:

- social value (such as the real living wage and good local jobs) are captured in Games related procurement;
- that there is a comprehensive plan for how WMP volunteers can contribute to the Games, while also using the Games to recruit a talented and diverse number of volunteers for the future as a lasting legacy; and
- that we work with third sector and local authority partners to build on community cohesion programmes to create a Games legacy that sees stronger neighbourhoods, reduced hate crime and new opportunities for youth engagement.

**Safer travel**

175. The Safer Travel Partnership renewed their Safer Travel Plan in August 2020. This plan included a pledge to put four extra special constables on the public transport beat. The Partnership, which includes West Midlands Police, British Transport Police, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and public transport operators is focussed on

reducing crime and anti-social behaviour on the bus, train and tram networks across the region. This partnership has been guided by a Safer Travel Plan since 2013, jointly developed by myself and other members of the Partnership. The 2020-21 plan outlines how the Partnership will continue to deliver the services the public expect, protect public transport passengers from harm and address issues which cause them the most concern.

176. To date, the Partnership has helped reduce crime significantly on all modes of public transport. In the year 2019-20, the Partnership saw reductions in crime on buses of 11%. Together the partners have achieved an increase in the presence of front-line Police Officers over the last three years, with plans to add an additional four special constables to the existing thirty-two officer team. Since October 2020 the Partnership has enforced wearing of face coverings across our transport network. The team have advised over 5,500 passengers to wear a face covering correctly (covering both the nose and mouth) and have given out approximately 1,300 masks which have been donated by Transport for West Midlands.
177. In 2019 I identified ongoing issues with public safety on the trains in the West Midlands, and in January 2020 I launched a call for evidence asking the public for their views. Over 1,450 members of the public responded with the majority stating that the overcrowded trains are having a direct impact on their personal safety and comfort. In February 2020 I held a public hearing into the rail service and it was clear that the public do not feel they have a voice and there is no one single body which is responsible for holding the train operators to account. The recommendations from the hearing have been delivered to the Department for Transport as well as partners across the region. Having a safe, reliable and effective rail service is key to economic development in the region and I am determined to work with partners to ensure the people of the West Midlands receive the service they require.

### **Effective partnerships to tackle crime and reduce harm**

178. I remain strongly committed to partnership working and have developed partnerships locally, regionally and nationally in all my priority areas where I have been able to identify joint agenda of mutual benefit. One example is in response to the increase in unauthorised encampments in 2015 and 2016, I, jointly with the Force, embarked on an improvement plan to introduce a transparent and fair approach to dealing with this issue, and to identify a sustainable long term approach. My work with the Force and Local Authorities has resulted in the continued reduction of unauthorised encampments in the West Midlands measured by a decrease in police attendances at unauthorised encampments – from 519 in 2016 to 232 in 2019. Each neighbourhood policing unit has identified an officer who will work with a local authority named lead officer; and new processes of ‘Tolerated Stopping’ have been put in place, alongside training to encourage inclusivity, fairness, and cultural awareness. I have led two summits to bring partners together to identify solutions to issues raised by unauthorised encampments.
179. Nationally I continue to engage in proposals around legislative changes, supporting increased police powers and considering the impacts of policy and legislation on both settled and travelling communities. I have been successful in persuading the government to amend legislation to permit the police to direct trespassers to suitable authorised sites in neighbouring local authority areas and am now influencing to

extend the period of time a trespasser is prohibited from returning to that area of land from three months to twelve months. I am now working with partners to develop a regional protocol for unauthorised encampments.

## **Collaboration**

180. I have explored a number of collaboration projects in my time in office and have arrangements across policing and the wider public sector.

### *Early Help*

181. One of my passions is to play my part in supporting communities to tackle the triggers of crime early on, through investing in long term relationships that engender trust and compassion to help individuals and families through crisis. This can work to prevent many social and economic problems including serious crime.

182. One of my best investments during my term as Commissioner has been in the 'Pathfinders project', a multi-agency school and place-based programme aimed at developing long-term and sustainable relationships with struggling families. This provides intensive support (including around domestic violence, unemployment, debt, substance misuse and mental health problems) in the trusting and supportive school environment, with a long term vision to empower parents, give them a voice and help enable them to be the architects of their future.

183. I invested over £350k in this innovative project, represented by Strategic Adviser Tom McNeil and I am delighted to see that as a result the project has gone on to attract significantly more investment from Birmingham Children's Trust to extend across dozens of schools across South Birmingham, with a broad collation of partners developing including with organisations like Northfield Community Partnership, Lankelly Chase (which spotted the uniqueness of this programme), Barnardo's, Department for Work and Pensions, Forward Thinking Birmingham and various other public and third sector organisations and funders.

184. I am proud to have supported this innovation and see the investment pay off in its growth and development with the potential to reduce a great variety of crimes for generations to come, while improving the opportunity, mobility and life prospects of people living in very challenging circumstances.

### *Safe Centre update*

185. I have recognised that some of the young people in our region who get caught up in crime, are being sent to custody in institutions that are not fit for purpose – a number of Young Offender Institutions and Secure Training Centres have terrible mental health and rehabilitation outcomes, with many young people being victimised themselves during their time there. I also want to see an end to the practice of children being detained in police custody unnecessarily. I have therefore sought to help lead the way in the debate around reforming what secure environments for young people should look like. In doing so, working closely with partners, I have made real progress regarding the design of a new children's secure estate for the West Midlands, so that children who commit serious crime are given a better chance of being rehabilitated than if sent to one of the UK's failing facilities.

186. Specifically, I have been represented on the regional strategic board for a new children's secure centre Chaired by the Association of Directors of Children's Services and members from the WMCA and other key stakeholders including the NHS. The project was tasked with designing a new therapeutic secure centre in the region as a basis for radical reform of the youth justice system. The key principles have focussed on compassionate support, addressing childhood trauma, enabling the improved circumstances of struggling families all within a multi-agency facility that has a long-term approach to community resettlement and high aspiration. As well as contributing £10k myself along with a contribution from the WMCA, the Department for Education provided £100k to develop a feasibility study. Following extensive work from my team and colleagues on the Board, the DfE confirmed that they are strongly considering the proposal for further seed funding to develop a detailed bid for development.

### **Other collaborations**

187. I recently agreed a collaboration programme with Warwickshire Police to provide forensic services, computer servers, and dog kennelling. This is one among many continuing police collaborations in which I participate such as several bilateral collaborations with Staffordshire Police (Legal Services, Firearms Licensing and Motorway Policing), regional collaborations (Police Education Qualifications Framework, Regional Organised Crime Unit, Regional Criminal Justice Collaboration Forum, public order and Taser training), jointly hosted national collaborations (National Ballistics Intelligence Service) and national collaborations (counter-terrorism, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, etc).

188. I have been an Observer member of West Midlands Combined Authority since 2016, and have been closely involved in many joint areas of work, including their abortive project concerning the merger of police governance into the Mayoralty.

189. I have ongoing collaborations with public sector partners such as the co-location of Police Officers in fire stations, youth employment with Birmingham and Solihull Councils, joint working with criminal justice partners, and mental health triage with the NHS.

## Theme 5: Building a Modern Police Service

### Budget

190. In my plan I committed to delivering an effective police service in spite of decreasing resources. I have maintained Police Officer numbers at around 6,500 and through efficiencies I recruited an additional 200 by March 2021. In addition to this the uplift programme, promising an additional 20,000 officers nationally, will see at least a further 1,200 Police Officers and 400 police staff in the West Midlands over the next 3 years. On the announcement of Project Uplift I said:

*“Since 2010 West Midlands Police have lost over 2,100 officers and faced real terms cuts of £175 million in government funding. Today’s announcement does not come close to unravelling a decade of under-investment in police forces. Out of the government’s planned 20,000 uplift in officer numbers – based on today’s figures – West Midlands Police can expect around 1,200 officers, despite having lost nearly double that number”*

191. Even though the Force has been subject to significant reductions in funding it has still maintained either an ‘outstanding’ or ‘good’ rating in the efficiency inspection undertaken by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, with the latest inspection rating the Force as outstanding for planning future demand. This has been delivered by effective financial planning through the medium term financial plan and annual budget setting process.

192. I have continued to make the case to government for increased resources for policing the West Midlands. This includes both the level of resources received and how funding is distributed to Forces. The police precept, the share of Council Tax that goes to West Midlands Police, remains the second lowest in the country by a significant margin.

193. I have used reserves over the last 5 years on programmes that have increased the efficiency and productivity of WMP. This is to ensure the Force is able to operate with significantly fewer resources since 2010. Overall reserves have reduced from £118m in March 2016 to £50m in March 2020.

### Medium Term Financial Plan

194. Through the medium term financial plan, the reserves strategy has enabled investment to be made in the WMP2020 change programme to ensure the Force operates efficiently and effectively with significantly less resources. These changes will benefit the Force well into the future, allowing Police Officers to spend more time tackling and reducing crime.

195. In addition, money from reserves has been used to commission innovative preventative services helping to reduce crime now and in the future. This has been done through effective commissioning strategies and working with appropriate organisations. I have explored ways of attracting extra funding to support the Force -

including local authority financial contributions to policing in specific areas, contributions from businesses and other institutions.

196. I have contributed towards a social investment fund as a structured way of providing loans to small businesses in the West Midlands. These organisations, typically find it difficult to raise money from other sources and employ people who have been involved in crime or are at risk of getting involved in crime.

### **Developing a modern workforce and supporting our staff**

197. I have maintained a focus on ensuring that the Force develops the capacity and capability to support a modern workforce. Due to my focus on recruitment, and increasing Police Officer numbers, supplemented by the Police Officer uplift programme, the number of Police Officers nationally, the Force has reviewed all the processes and functions within the People and Organisational Development directorate.
198. The Force has developed a significant programme of leadership development, which has been accessed by more than 1,000 officers and staff, with particular focus on groups who can be disadvantaged by recruitment and promotion processes.
199. The Force remains committed to being a “learning organisation”, and are developing their strategy alongside principles such as inclusivity and fairness. A review of operational learning is currently underway to ensure that the mandatory and discretionary training offer is appropriate for today’s workforce and is of high quality and makes good use of resources. In collaboration with Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia the Force is now delivering degree-level training for new recruits through the Police Education Qualification Framework, in collaboration with Staffordshire University. This innovative approach sees recruits complete a 15 week initial training course based at the University and the Force, and then move into a professional development unit until they gain independent patrol status. In this way recruits are able to experience all elements of the policing role and submit evidence to gain their degree apprenticeship. Over 800 student officers have now enrolled in the programme and recruitment continues. By March 2022 West Midlands Police will have 1,900 student Police Officers at various stages of training.
200. All non-essential development programmes were suspended at the onset of COVID. The team responsible for delivery were re-directed to support other areas of the business or work on specific projects/initiatives. A series of webinars were developed and delivered to support people to be able to work remotely, lead remote teams effectively and also supporting team in relation to mental health. Over the last few months the Force has begun to adapt some of the offer so that it can be delivered virtually using Skype for Business, this has included sessions to support underrepresented groups. Now that a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) has been procured a plan is in place to redevelop the offer to enable all programmes to be delivered in a blended way (face to face elements will not be reinstated until restrictions are lifted).
201. The Force has also engaged in both Direct Entry and Police Now programmes, with the hope that these recruitment routes will bring graduates with different ways of thinking and innovative problem solving skills.

202. Through the People Strategy the Force have reviewed its approach to wellbeing and have now aligned their approach to the 4 key priorities as set out by the National Wellbeing Service, the aim of which is to deliver evidence based approaches that Promote, Prevent, Detect and Treat workplace health issues known to impact upon wellbeing including physical, psychological and societal elements. This strategy has been rolled out into departments and some real benefits can be seen by officers and staff.
203. A significant priority of mine during my time in office has been to increase the diversity of the Force so that the workforce represents the community it serves. This commitment has been unwavering and I am pleased that it is shared by the Chief Constable. The Force has driven a focus from the Diversity and Inclusion Teams to all teams in the organisation. This work is not yet complete and there is further to go to ensure that all individuals feel truly included but efforts are ongoing and the impact is tangible. In terms of recruitment the opportunities afforded by the Operation Uplift are being exploited to the full with evidence that targeted recruitment is reaching the right audiences. The Force are continuing to meet the Police Officer uplift target as part of the net increase from the 2019 baseline of 1,200 officers by 2023, having met the interim March 2021 milestone of a net increase of 366 several months early in October 2020.
204. In 2020 I launched with the Chief Constable the “Fairness and Belonging Plan” to ensure that West Midlands Police is as inclusive, diverse and as fair an organisation as possible. It has developed into a programme to address specific issues pertaining to Black residents, and is part of a wider Diversity and Inclusion Plan that is co-chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner. The announcement follows on from a commitment to ensure that 1,000 new Police Officers from under-represented groups are recruited over the next three years to accelerate plans to make the Force look more like the communities it serves. A thorough examination of recruitment practices has taken place to ensure that candidates from under-represented groups are not being disproportionately disadvantaged by the process.
205. A plan of work has been put in place to increase the confidence of all the communities of the West Midlands. This work they will examine how the fairness of recruitment can be improved, retention and promotion of officers and staff, as well as ensuring that police powers are used fairly towards everyone in the West Midlands, as part of a wider review of practices.
206. In January 2019 the Fairness in Policing team joined the Diversity and Inclusion Team, with the view that effectiveness in delivering inclusive services is essentially Fairness in Policing. Initially, the Fairness in Policing project was focussed on building internal capability and adapting internal processes. Now efforts are more focussed on building an understanding of perceptions of fairness within different communities and understanding the community impact of key interactions such as Stop and Search on perceptions of fairness. The Force reports on key projects to ensure procedural justice principles are integral.
207. Work continues on the Force’s employee engagement strategy; and in a recent survey 75% of colleagues said that they continue to be engaged in the WMP vision; understanding what they need to do and how it supports their team, the Force and the wider community. The Force is aiming to develop a listening culture, with a number of

key initiatives, and to improve processes around performance reviews, including giving of feedback and recognition.

208. The Force continues to review the recommendations that arose from the Winsor report and consider the approach to implementing the proposals. In addition to this they have embarked on a Pay and Conditions Review for staff roles, which is currently taking place; the job evaluation scheme and grading structures are now being considered.
209. Police Community Support Officers continue to play a vital part in keeping the public of the West Midlands safe through the work they undertake in the community and therefore remain an integral part of the Force's workforce planning and recruitment activity. The recruitment plan for 2019 included the recruitment of in excess of 170 PCSOs to increase a visible presence on our streets and address Police Officer gaps in the short term. There is also an ambitious plan to increase the number of Special Constables across the Force, with more than 750 recruited over the next 3 years.
210. I have maintained my commitment to engaging communities in policing through the volunteers' scheme. There are currently over 400 volunteers in the Force working in roles as varied as Puppy Walkers, Chaplains, Cadet Leaders and Special Constables. Volunteering opportunities are also being explored within the Public Protection Unit and Intelligence.
211. In my own office I have also demonstrated a commitment to employees as individuals. The office represents the breadth of diversity and I am pleased that our Gender Pay Gap is negligible. I have supported development of staff in all teams and functions, and have a programme of internships and apprenticeships in place to give opportunities to those starting out in their careers.

## **WMP2020**

212. The WMP2020 Change Programme commenced in 2014 and set out a clear plan to deliver a more responsive, preventative, sustainable, efficient and affordable operating model, able to adapt to the challenges of policing in 2020. A "new ways of working" operating model was introduced which allowed the Force to deliver a better service to the public. Board member Brendan Connor and Deputy PCC Waheed Saleem have provided support in scrutinising key projects that have been implemented include:
- Mobility - which allows Police Officers to work more efficiently with more time in the community.
  - New ways of public contact - which has enabled the public to access police services more easily through the Force's website and improved how calls for service are handled.
  - New ways of responding - set up to focus on improving day-to-day operational processes in tandem with mobility, providing additional technology, to allow officers to work smarter while they are out and about. This includes mobile identification, mobile office, digital witness statements and the introduction of body worn video.
  - Data programmes including data driven insights, which allow searches of police systems to be completed quickly to assist in the investigation of crimes, and predictive modelling to reduce crime in the future. Investment has been made in operational systems to allow the Force to operate more efficiently and effectively.

- A comprehensive estates strategy continues to be developed which focusses on modernising and rationalising the police estate, where appropriate, to ensure the estate supports a modern police service. Key elements of the programme have included:
  - the redevelopment of Park Lane to become a new events control suite for the Commonwealth Games. The site will also house other operational services.
  - The development of a new logistics centre with facilities for fleet, detained property amongst other services;
  - new custody facilities in Perry Barr, Oldbury and a planned facility on the eastern side of the region. This has enabled the Force to close out of date custody provision and achieve efficiencies.
  - Co-location with other public sector bodies; releasing savings and improving partnership working.

214. It is forecast that the overall benefits of the programme will deliver efficiency savings equivalent to 1,000 officers when all projects have been fully implemented. In addition to this, the programme will deliver a total of £121 million in cashable and non-cashable savings.

215. WMP2020 has been the lynchpin of my commitment to making West Midlands Police an efficient and effective Force, not least by giving the organisation to capacity and capability to change rapidly and manage complex projects. The Force inherited a legacy of inefficient, expensive, standalone, multi layered, in-house developed and maintained systems. These inhibited mobility and required officers and staff to spend too much time in police stations rather than on patrol. New capabilities include statements taken by officers at scene, for example, an end to double and triple keying into parallel systems, and a “single version of the truth” for people, objects, locations and events. The programme allowed a rationalisation of the police estate. Put simply, without this long-term investment in technology and business process change, our ability to respond to the demand level and the increasing complexity would have been seriously damaged. Progress has been routinely reported to SPCB, with the latest report, which also sets out future steps, here: <https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/20102020-SPCB-Agenda-Item-5b-WMP2020.pdf?x39505>

## Theme 6: Standing Up for Young People

216. Throughout the term of my office I have maintained my focus on ensuring that I stand up for young people in all that I do. Birmingham continues to be a young city, situated within a young region, and it is imperative that we build upon the creativity and talent of the next generation.

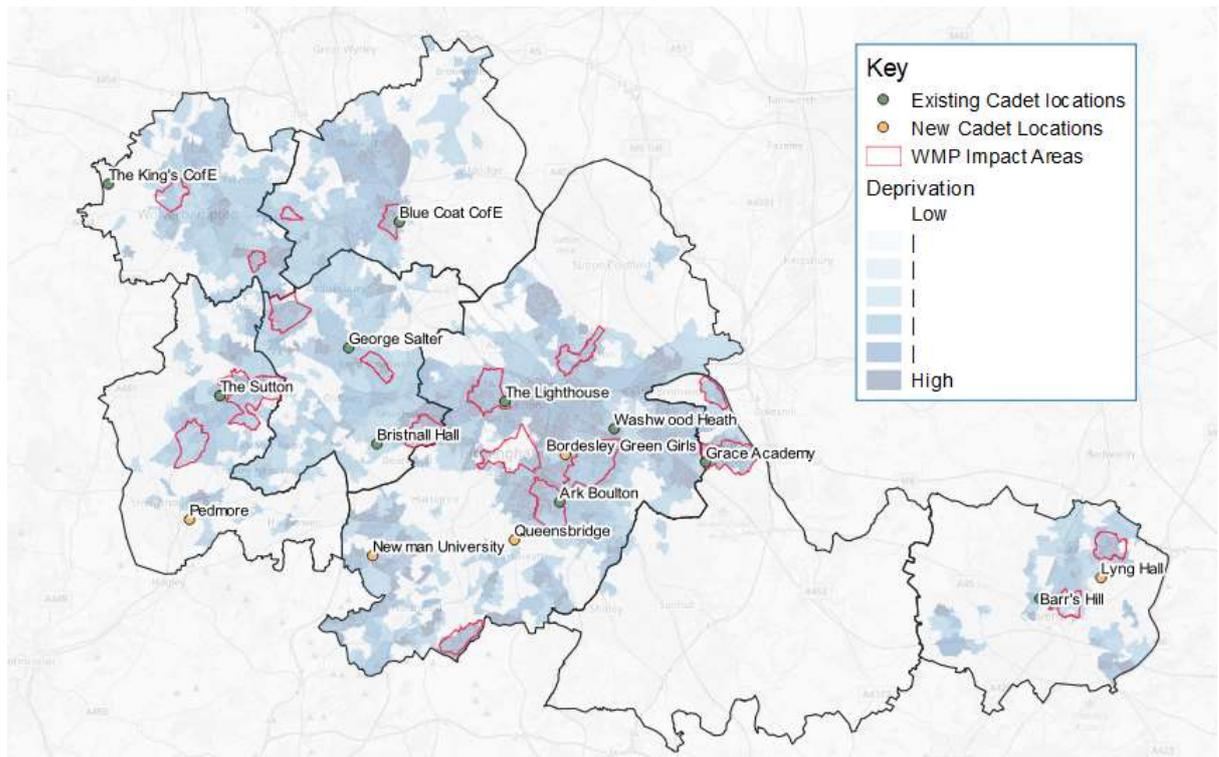
### Opportunities for the future

217. I am very proud that West Midlands Police Cadets have been running since 2017 and numbers are now approaching 370 Cadets, a quarter of whom are from challenging backgrounds as reported by police or teachers. There are currently another 39 applicants going through the process to join. There are currently 15 units open across the breadth of the West Midlands; with a further 10 in the pipeline, and numbers of Cadets are increasing exponentially to hit my target of 500. This year, ten of the Cadets reaching 18 wish to continue as Cadet Leaders. The programme has engaged with both Police Officers and external volunteers to lead units. Units follow the Volunteer Police Cadets' curriculum, delivered in an interactive style, with inputs from Police Officers, Force staff and other partners and local organisations. Cadets have a strong sense of social conscience and participate in community activities in their local areas, including knife sweeps, litter picks, and offering crime prevention advice. I am particularly proud that the Cadets' scheme has attracted young people who would not traditionally be interested in the police, to the policing family.
218. The "Building Blocks" charity, which is administered by the OPCC, has focused its fundraising and grant making activity on supporting West midlands Police Cadets.
219. The location of Cadet units:

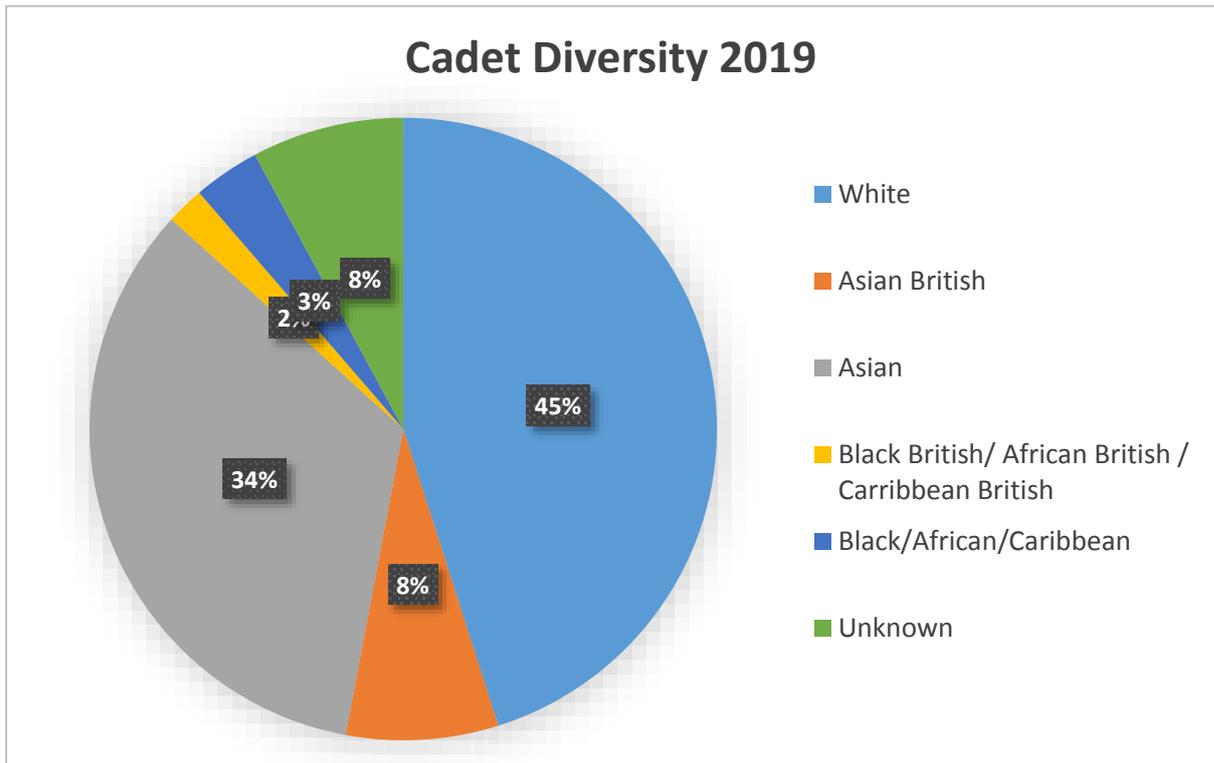
Unit	NPU
Washwood Heath	Birmingham East
Ark Boulton	Birmingham East
Queensbridge School	Birmingham East
The Lighthouse	Birmingham West
Bordesley Green Girls School	Birmingham West
Bartley Green School	Birmingham West
Barrs Hill	Coventry
Lyng Hall	Coventry
Pedmore High School	Dudley
Sutton	Dudley
Bristnall Hall	Sandwell
George Salter	Sandwell
Grace Academy	Solihull
Bluecoats Academy	Walsall
Kings CoE	Wolverhampton

220. During the pandemic restrictions, Cadets have gone digital; there are online meetings on a Monday with a guest speaker that regularly attracts 120 Cadets. Each Unit also delivers a weekly session to just the Cadets from that Unit to allow them to engage and to have contact that supports their mental health with their regular Cadet Leaders. A West Midlands Cadets also panel has been created to enable Cadets to have more of a voice and influence in the direction of their Cadet scheme.

221. This map shows the location of Cadet Units across the breadth of the force area.



222. I am delighted that the Cadets' programme is one of the most diverse in the Force and recognises that the West Midlands is a young and diverse region.



223. The 2019 – 2020 vision has the following priorities, with progress noted as follows:

- **To have recruited a stable, productive and engaged cohort of 100 Cadet leaders that reflect the diversity and experience of our internal workforce and represent the communities we serve (this will include Cadets aged 18 who progress to becoming Cadet leaders)** – There are now 65 Cadet Leaders many of whom are operational officers and approximately 35 Cadet Leaders attend the units on a regular basis. The Force has worked hard to create a stronger sense of unity and Cadet Leaders will often support other units when there is a shortage of leaders. Cadet units in similar geographical NPU have also started partnering to undertake trips and social action projects. E.g. a visit to Stechford Custody Block or WMP Sign Ups. Cadet Leaders come from a range of departments including Force Response, NPUs, Forensics, POD and FCID and the increase of external volunteers since March provides further resilience and diversity to the scheme. The Force is producing new promotional material and content to engage Cadet Leaders.
- **To have strong and supportive Cadet unit commanders who are clear about their responsibilities and drive the development of the scheme, who retain and support leaders, and ensure Cadet capacity is increased and maintained**
  - Unit Commanders and their Deputies meet with the Citizens in Policing team and Chief Supt O'Hara on a Cadet termly basis. A Unit Commander and Cadet Leader role profile has been designed setting out the clear expectations of each role. The role profile will be reviewed every year as part of the policies and procedure review.

- **To have at least 250 regularly attending, active Cadets attending the units, delivering regular high impact community volunteering activity** – There are now more than 250 Cadets, who have undertaken a variety of high impact community volunteering activities within the community equating to 45 hours volunteered from March-August 2019, including
  - NEC Security Expo demonstrators
  - Stephen Lawrence Day community engagement
  - Knife Sweeps
  - Race for Life Event Stewards
  - Litter Pick
  - Memorial Clean
  - Care Home
  - Knife Arch
  - Litter Pick
  - WM Now Signups
  - Youth Voice Microsoft
  - Supporting Remembrance Sunday services and other civic events
  
- **To maintain and build on a high level of policy compliance and safeguarding, with a focus on becoming a beacon of best practice nationally** - The scheme is over seen by the Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC) a national body, with whom the Citizens in Policing team have established a strong working relationship. The force has appointed Chief Supt O'Hara as the force lead for Cadets, who oversees the governance of the scheme through the Cadets Subgroup. All policies relating to audit, compliance and safeguarding were reviewed and revised in August 2018 in line with VPC recommendations.
  
- **To have a performance dashboard which provides accurate and up to date information on all elements of WMP Cadets accessible** – This information is now available on a monthly basis and it includes the breakdown of Cadets and Leaders per NPU, and the department each leader belongs to. The number of Cadets, volunteers, special constables and junior PCSOs is part of the force's improvement plan.
  
- **To have an impactful internal and external facing communications strategy which supports WMP vision** – The Force are developing an impactful internal and external facing communications strategy. Here is a link to the promotional video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBAqM79P7CU>
  
- **To have (and have delivered) a range of activities during school holiday periods to ensure continued engagement and increased volunteering by Cadets** In July 157 Cadets attended the Cadet Excellence Awards sponsored by Building Blocks, the PCC's Charity with Cadet Leaders nominating their Cadets and fellow leaders for awards. The evening was a great success and the first time in that academic year all eight units were brought together. Our Force leads the way in bringing all of our Cadets units together and they built upon our success in August. Thanks to generosity of Building Blocks all of the Cadets were invited to the Bear Grylls Adventure Centre at the NEC to take part in team building exercises.

- **To have Cadets leading social action volunteering within their local community on a termly basis** - NPU Commanders have strengthened the relationship they have with units in their NPU's. This was particularly evident during Volunteers Week 2019, where each unit took part in a social action project within their local area. Activities included litter picking, knife arches and sweeps, memorial and gravestone cleaning and tree and flower planting. Across the week NPU Commanders visited the units and surprised them by presenting them with boxes of Heroes chocolates #HeroesforHeroes to recognise their hard work. The feedback from the Cadets and the Leaders was incredibly positive, many felt touched that the force had recognised their contribution. Cadet units are now taking a more active role in planning social action projects within their community supported by their neighbourhood teams.

224. I have championed young people in both the Force and my office by ensuring that work experience and apprenticeship programmes are in place. The Force has now run 17 Insight Days with more than 250 young people participating, and more than 30 young people have had the opportunity to carry out work experience in my office. This experience offers a full programme of activity with opportunities to shadow key personnel, and a short project or presentation.

225. West Midlands were one of the early Forces in the country to move to the new approach for training for Police Officers – the Police Education Qualification Framework. Since the contract went live in the autumn, over 100 students have commenced training using the new and up to date approach, which is delivered through a regional contract with Staffordshire University. Police Officers are being prepared for the modern challenges of the role, and will also benefit from degree level training, delivered both in the classroom and out in the field.

226. In addition to this there are also 25 other apprenticeships in operation:

<b>Apprenticeship</b>	<b>Number of People studying towards qualification</b>
Laboratory Technician	3
Human Resources	1
Custodial Care	21

227. I have used my position to encourage employers across the region to employ an open recruitment process to employing ex-offenders. I lead by example; my office is the first OPCC in the country to sign up to Business in the Community's 'Ban the Box' campaign. This is a campaign which encourages employers to remove the box from the bottom of their recruitment forms asking applicants to state whether they have any criminal convictions. This campaign will open up a dialogue across the region on the culture around recruiting ex-offenders.

228. My office has partnered with the Longford Trust to deliver work placements through the Longford Scholarships programme. The Longford Trust finds work placements for individuals who have served prison sentences and places them into places of work for a fixed period. Like 'Ban the Box', this initiative forms part of my initiative to lead by example and encourage a healthier discourse and around recruiting ex-offenders amongst employers.

229. I have also invested £291k into the European Social Fund youth employment initiative. The project will support at least 9,212 young people aged 15-24 years old, who are not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET) to support their skills development to enable them to progress into sustainable jobs. The total programme will cost £14.4m, which includes an estimated £7.2m of European Funding and at programme end we anticipate nearly 4,000 young people will move into employment or training. My support is for a project to support those at risk of offending, or those who are ex-offenders. This project follows an initial successful project which saw over 2,200 young people who are at the risk of offending or ex-offenders either entering training or employment.

230. I invested £229k into Black Country Talent Match. This model aimed to bring out the best in young people by supporting them through a combination of peer support and also mentoring. This model ultimately allows young adults to contribute, rather than be a cost, to the public purse. Even more importantly, it supports young adults to channel their aspirations into positive outcomes and realise their full potential. We know, that with the right support young adults are gaining in confidence and optimism, they are developing new skills and are entering training, education and gaining employment.

231. In 2017 the PCC published a report into addressing the increasing levels of gang crime which were being felt across Birmingham. This report consisted of a series of 24 recommendations to turn things around. This report was called the Gangs and Violence Commission report. (see paragraph 6) Recommendation 23 was to create an inter-disciplinary business hub.

### **Youth Commissioners and engagement**

232. In my plan I committed to maintaining the Youth Commission, and since 2016 I have worked with 3 cohorts of Youth Commissioners; 45 young people in total. The Youth Commissioners have been able to represent the views of young people in their area to the most senior decision makers in the Force, and to me directly. Youth Commissioners are not appointees; they are elected by their peers and have the legitimacy to speak on issues affecting young people.

233. Progress on the work of the Youth Commission is reported to SPCB annually, and the February 2020 report detailed the impact of the Commission since its inception. The role includes consultation and conducting research on specified topics, legislation, or service provision, and representing young people's views. This enables officers to be able to better understand barriers to accessing services, how to build trust and confidence and respond to perceptions of a service from a young person's viewpoint. The inclusion of Youth Commissioners to deliver insights to influence statutory providers has always been impactful. To date, Youth Commissioners have been tasked with a number of research projects and have influenced service development; from mental health services for young people, domestic violence legislation, access to and the quality of victims' support services and pre-arrest diversions.

234. We have engaged Youth Commissioners in my office's communications' strategy through press releases, media interviews, and social media reports of activity undertaken. Youth Commissioners have accessed social media and press

interview training, and have been able to put their new skills to good use, including in the national press. Youth Commissioners have been able to use their raised profile to impact in other issues – such as presenting to the European Youth Commission, representing the region on a project in David Cameron’s Press Office, films with ITN Fixers on CSE and knife crime, and participants in a multi-agency public health approach to youth violence.

235. In 2016, Youth Commissioners participated in a leadership course, which enabled them to create and deliver a social action campaign, increasing their skills and experience of identifying an issue that they can have an impact on. These campaigns have raised young people’s awareness on safer travel, sexting and addiction to pornography, CSE, resisting peer pressure and drugs, and mental health and substance misuse, to name a few. The existence of the Youth Commissioners has therefore played an additional and essential way to create and deliver messages to prevent young people becoming victims of crime.

236. It is notable that the diminishing level of statutory youth provision has affected the level of support that local authorities have been able to offer as partners. This impacted upon the identification and peer election of Youth Commissioners to represent their local areas. In 2018 the Commissioner funded an external youth organisation to support the election process, harnessing the reach of social media to attract a wider number of young people to the opportunity of the role. Five thousand young people voted in the election of 16 Youth Commissioners from 35 prospective candidates. The election also resulted in closer working arrangements with a number of youth organisations in the region. The pandemic has affected the usual election process that was due in October 2020. As a temporary solution until 2021, I extended the term of 5 young people able to remain in the role and recruited another eleven new Youth Commissioners through an advertised application process. We will hold full elections in 2021.

237. In 2019, Youth Commissioners were each tasked with visiting a service provision funded by the Early Intervention Youth Fund and talking about it on social media. In November 2019, the Youth Commission held its own ‘Question Time’ with the most asked questions by young people in each area posed to the Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

238. I committed to continuing to develop policy on youth engagement the involvement of young people in crime reduction, ensuring that young people have trust and confidence in policing, victim support services for young victims of crime, and maximising the ways in which they can become active citizens. At the outset of their two year term of office, Youth Commissioners identify which areas of policy and operational policing they wish to be better informed on, and information is then given by the Force or my office. Subject areas requested reflect the areas where there is the greatest fear of being a victim – for example knife crime, CSE, Hate Crime and County Lines. Other sessions have included:

- An OPCC led session on the Ethics Committee and the use of Big Data in evidence based policing.
- A dip sample of the existing victim support services for young people, providing feedback on service providers’ accessibility and relevance to young people.

Commissioners provided suggestions for service development in relation to young people and families who were victims of crime.

- An annual update to the Youth Commission on the development of their digital platform for reporting crime and citizen engagement.

239. The Force and my office engage the Youth Commission on operations, Independent Advisory Groups and community scrutiny panels on policing services. To date Youth Commissioners have been invited to participate in Force senior officer recruitment stakeholder panels, scrutiny panels for NPU Active Citizens Fund allocation, all Force Independent Advisory Groups including counter-terrorism and mental health and Stop and Search Scrutiny Panels. In the past twelve months the Youth Commission have been part of several roundtable consultations on Project Guardian activity (to reduce youth violence and knife crime). In the same time frame, my office has presented a regional report into crime in prisons, Stop and Search schools programme and Hate Crime on public transport.

240. In 2016 I committed to identifying the existing resources and challenges to engagement with young people and monitor the effectiveness of the Force's strategy for children and young people. The Force now splits this work into a number of different areas: including performance for early intervention and diversion, referrals into pre-arrest work by partner organisations, and offender management. This is a positive reflection of the huge increase in activity by the Force and my office, and the commissioning of community organisations to prevent young people being at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

241. I support youth led funding streams such as the Guardian Youth Opportunity Fund to empower young people to directly apply for project funding and make positive changes in their communities. In 2019/20 this will amount to £80,000. The 2019 Youth Summit raised awareness of this across the Force area. I have been successful in attracting external funding streams such as the Early Youth Intervention Fund to provide positive activity and harness the potential of those with leadership qualities. I also fund School Engagement Officers to work with schools to increase opportunities for those at risk of exclusion to become more confident, active citizens. The development of the Police Cadets has increase the opportunity for the referral of young people at risk into an environment offering positive role models and a safe place to personally develop.

## Theme 7: Tackling National and International Threats

### Strategic Policing Requirement

242. The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) requires me to ensure that the Force has the capacity and capability to respond to national policing threats. This means joint working with other Forces and agencies as part of a national response, requiring standardisation and co-ordination of equipment and processes. I have taken annual reports to SPCB as part of this “have regard” duty. While the reports have highlighted how reductions in police numbers have stretched the capacity and capability to respond to a major public order incident, I am satisfied that West Midlands Police remains ready to meet the SPR. I have contributed to the current SPR review.
243. Collaboration between police forces and PCCs requires investment in the mechanisms for joint working. My Office has hosted two Regional Policy Officers to work across the four OPCCs in the region on areas of joint working and collaboration, the first roles of their kind in the country. As a result, we have increased scrutiny of areas such as counter-terrorism policing, serious and organised crime, and the National Police Air Service. The forum was important when West Mercia Police unilaterally withdrew from the Central Motorway Policing Group. Our scrutiny of counter-terrorism policing led to an invite to an international conference in the United States.
244. We have played a key role in the shaping and development of national programmes, providing scrutiny to developing work such as the Specialist Capabilities Programme and scrutinising NPAS. We have worked as a region to improve the strategic direction and governance of NPAS, despite significant challenges.
245. These regional collaborative work-streams are overseen by the four Police and Crime Commissioners through a Regional Governance Group which meets quarterly with the four Chief Constables and Chief Executives to scrutinise collaborative activity. Heads of the West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit and Regional Organised Crime Unit also attend to provide performance, management and financial information. All four PCCs in the region also have local briefings with the Counter-Terrorism and ROCU leads to ensure effectiveness at the local level. The structure of these briefings has been developed collaboratively with the other three PCCs to ensure proportionate local scrutiny arrangements. This is crucial because it informs the joint scrutiny by PCCs at a regional level. The regional meeting also receives reports on other collaborative activity, such as the Police Education Qualifications Framework.
246. I have been assured during my time in office that the Force is confident in managing public order issues. I have received regular updates from Chief Officers relating to issues of public order in the West Midlands and have utilised the SPCB as a forum to scrutinise issues of public order. Regular updates are also provided, both at a local and regional level, through the Joint Operations Programme Board and quarterly CBRN and Public Order meetings with regional Force colleagues. The

Regional Policy Officers have regularly attended these meetings to ensure PCC representation. In cases of particularly high profile or sensitive operations, OPCC staff have observed both planning meetings and operational activity. It is notable that in the recent HMICFRS inspection of public order, West Midlands Police was one of few Forces that did not seek additional powers to manage public order incidents.

247. I have also ensured engagement and appropriate oversight of national projects such as the Emergency Service Mobile Communication Programme, a national programme tasked to introduce a replacement for the Airwave system. I, along with my regional counterparts, have funded a regional programme team until the end of 2022, who are working to facilitate the roll out across each Force. The delays in this national programme, and the uncertain local implementation costs, are a significant future risk to West Midlands Police and other Forces.

### **West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit**

248. I have chaired the National Counter-Terrorism Strategic Board since its inception in 2016. The Strategic Board oversees the collaboration agreement between the 11 Counter-Terrorism Units which work together daily to confront the threat from terrorism. At the regional level, PCCs receive and scrutinise reports with their Chief Constables and Chief Executives on the threat assessment, performance information, management information, budgetary planning and strategic trends.

249. West Midlands Police hosts a dedicated facility for individuals detained under counter-terrorism legislation. Bespoke arrangements are in place for assuring the welfare of individuals detained under counter-terrorism legislation, as their period of detention can be longer than is normal. Custody Visitors make daily visits to check detainee welfare and their reports are passed to me and the Independent Reviewer of Counter Terrorism Legislation. These arrangements have proved invaluable for public confidence in cases of high-profile or otherwise sensitive cases.

250. Since 2016, under my leadership, the strategic understanding of threat and risk at the national level has been strengthened and the Police and Crime Commissioners now have an effective structure through which to ensure national strategy and policy is implemented consistently, efficiently and effectively across all police forces. The Board has also received briefings from MI5 on their role in the counter-terrorism policing space and now have a clearer relationship with this crucial national organisation.

251. Through the Strategic Board we have put in place improved oversight arrangements of HMICFRS counter- terrorism inspections. PCCs now have fuller access to these reports and can more effectively hold forces to account on the findings. PCC access was difficult prior to my intervention at the National Counter-Terrorism Strategic Board.

252. I have been able to use local and regional issues to shape discussions with national counter-terrorism leads, including the head of the CT Network. I arranged for the Stoke Prevent Co-ordinator to present to the Board, where he was able to provide details about an initiative that Stoke-on-Trent City Council were developing to improve relationships between residents, law enforcement and the local authority.

The discussion was useful in helping Board members understand what interventions are being delivered by the Prevent programme and how these differed nationally.

253. In 2018/19, working together with the other Police and Crime Commissioners within the wider West Midlands region, I reviewed how threat, risk and harm was being assessed in our area with a view to making improvements. A series of recommendations were made and as a result, assessments now take a broader view covering all strands of the national counter-terrorism strategy: Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue. These assessments are now also developed more closely with key partners in the local authorities, education, health and other public sector organisations. Recommendations have also been made to the Home Office for further improving community level engagement in these processes.
254. In 2017/18, I scrutinised the Armed Uplift Programme. Following the terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015 the government uplifted armed policing capabilities nationally. I, along with the other PCCs in the region, commissioned a piece of work which looked at the implications of this policy. The findings were shared with the Home Office, Counter-Terrorism leads and other PCCs at the National Counter-Terrorism Strategic Board in order to help shape the programme going forwards.
255. In 2018, a West Midlands independent advisory group for counter-terrorism was established – the first of its kind nationally. The group is made up of community, voluntary and academic representatives who provide advice to the West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit and the delivery of its services across Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue. I am pleased to support this group. It is a really valuable resource for engaging with the public on controversial subjects and helping CTU understand local impact.
256. I have worked to improve the local of oversight counter terrorism policing. PCCs have a vital role in local holding to account and conveying how national trends and issues impact locally. In 2020, I tabled an amendment in the House of Lords to the Counter Terrorism and Sentencing Bill which would give PCCs an oversight role in Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (these are control orders which allow restrictions to be placed on individuals of concern without any offence having been committed). The amendment sought to give reassurance to the public and the Home Secretary that these measures were being applied fairly and that the full impact had been considered.

### **West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit**

257. Working with PCC colleagues across the region, the strategic oversight of the ROCU has continually developed, assisted through an ever maturing performance document. Our engagement with the Regional Organised Crime Unit has helped develop a thorough understanding of the known threat and risk posed by organised criminals in the region. The introduction and development of in-depth thematic 'deep dives' for specific areas of ROCU has assisted PCCs in assuring effective performance, management and accountability. The regional PCC / Chief Constable / Chief Executive meetings provide ongoing oversight of ROCU performance, management information, threat assessments, budget matters, and future planning.

258. Our Regional Policy Officers have had a positive impact on collaboration in the region and supported a joined up approach to tackling common threats. The governance capability the officers provide has allowed continual dialogue between the ROCU and regional colleagues and ensures that the PCC is sufficiently advised on developments and opportunities across the region, in order to ensure effective performance.
259. With a backdrop of uncertainty around funding for ROCUs, I have also been instrumental in maintaining capabilities within the ROCU which are vital to tackling serious and organised crime in the region. Through collaboration with regional colleagues, I have provided funding to maintain capabilities which would not have been possible due to lack of certainty around Police Transformation Funding, and also contributed to a significant uplift in the intelligence capability to ensure management, co-ordination and understanding of the threat of serious and organisation crime in the region is effectively resourced.
260. I have worked both locally and nationally to improve the oversight of police use of covert surveillance powers.
261. The recent HMICFRS report on ROCUs further exposed the recognised issues around funding, tasking and governance. I share these concerns. I made a full response to the report, recommending, for example, reform of funding that moved closer to that used for counter-terrorism policing.

## **Cyber crime**

262. In September 2018 I, jointly with Experian, commissioned Outreach Solutions to deliver Fraud and Cyber Protect messaging in Birmingham to people over the age of 55. The project worked with Age UK and Age Concern to ensure the target area was reached. The total number of people reached through the campaign was 3,737. Research undertaken on previous Tackling Fraud programmes, both independently and by Outreach Solution's supplementary research, shows that a programme of this type provides a significant reduction of losses to fraud and scams once individuals have the information they need to self-protect. Estimates point to an 8:1 return on investment ratio. By the time the programme had completed in May 2019, Outreach Solutions stated that they estimated the programme had saved people over age of 55 circa £380,000. It is stated that this saving will further grow over the next 12 months as messaging material is further circulated amongst the Birmingham population.
263. I have established governance arrangements for fraud, and in January 2020 the West Midlands Fraud Board met for the first time. The Board's role is to understand the threat from fraud in the West Midlands and to identify opportunities to strengthen the resilience of communities, support enhancements in the support of victims of fraud and identify opportunities to influence Government, businesses and other law enforcement partners both locally, regionally and nationally. The second ambition of the board is to provide a forum to discuss wider fraud Protect and Prevent programmes which can be developed across the West Midlands.
264. It is my view that not enough focus has been given to ensuring that there is sufficient democratic oversight for this growing area. Responsibility sits with the City of London Police Authority, and the mechanisms to communicate with other PCCs,

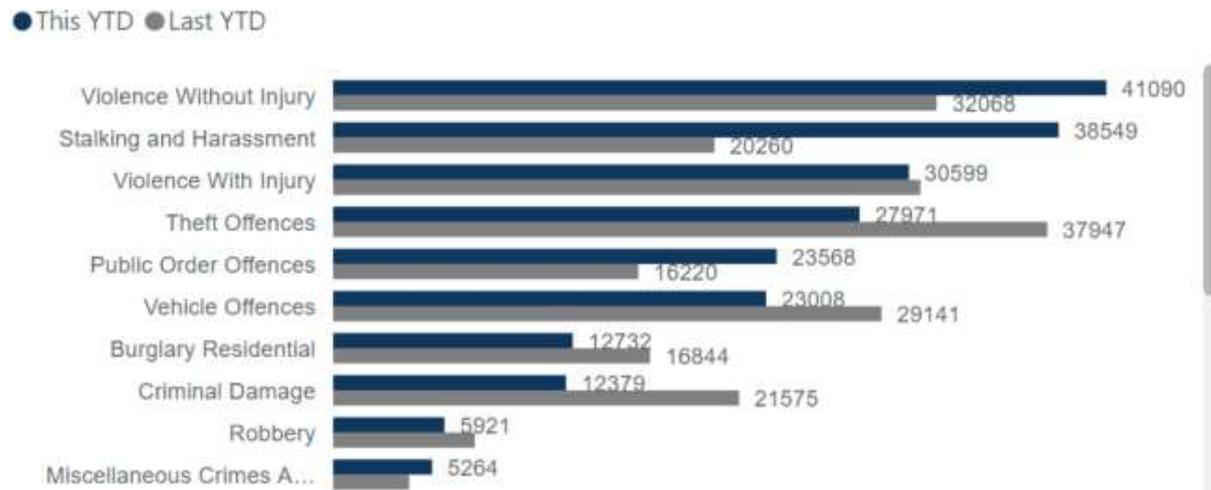
so that they can better hold their police forces to account alongside the national strategy providers, are weak. I have raised awareness of this issue. Most significantly, I hosted a national summit in partnership with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. At this summit I hosted focus groups, which were facilitated by Birmingham City University, to establish what else needs to be done to improve the UK's response to this national threat. I have now published a report, [Tackling Fraud in the UK](#), with the findings of these focus groups. The recommendations will be taken forward by the Home Office, the APCC, the City of London Police and the City of London Police Authority.

## Appendix 1

### Analysis – what are the patterns of recorded violence offences?

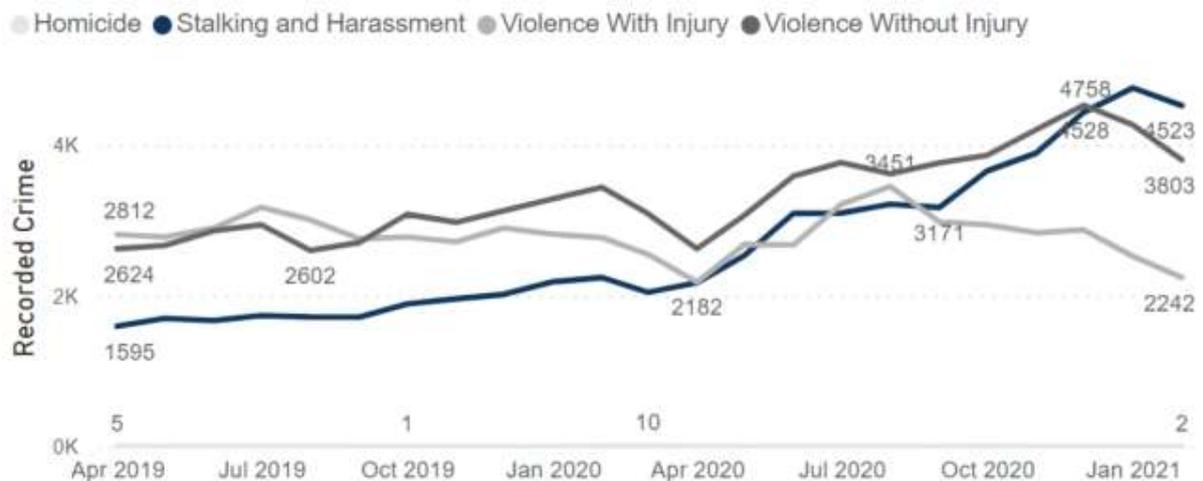
#### Violence against the person

“Violence without injury” and “stalking and harassment” have seen the biggest percentage increases over the past year and, given the reductions in theft offences due to COVID regulations and lockdown, are now two of the highest volume crime types for 2020/21.



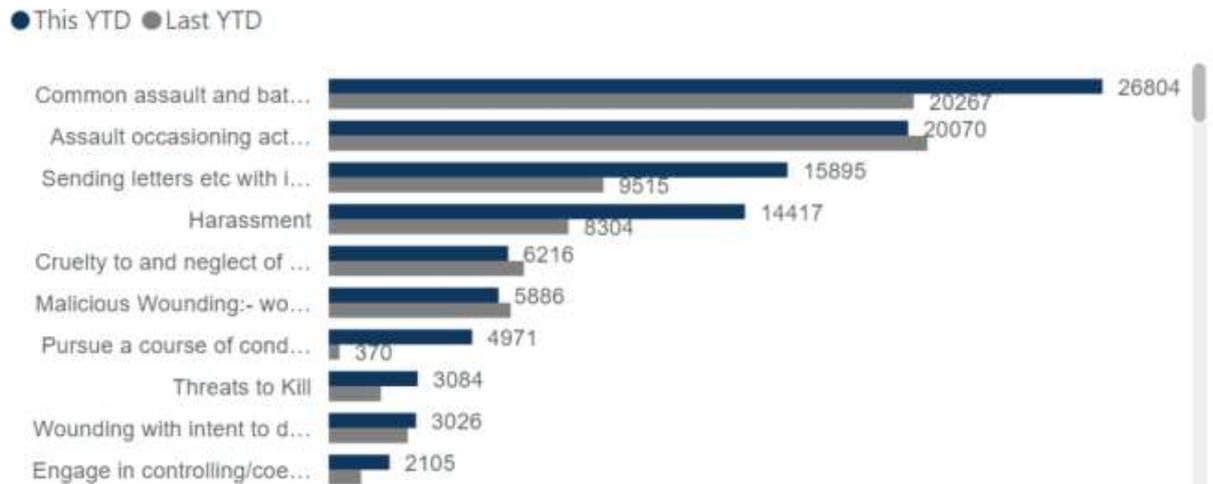
Looking at the monthly breakdown, “stalking and harassment” has been seeing some significant monthly increases since September 2020 and over the past few months has been higher than “violence without injury”.

Conversely, the more serious violence with injury offences have seen monthly decreases since August 20 and the total for 2020/21 to date is now 2% lower than the same period in 2019/20.



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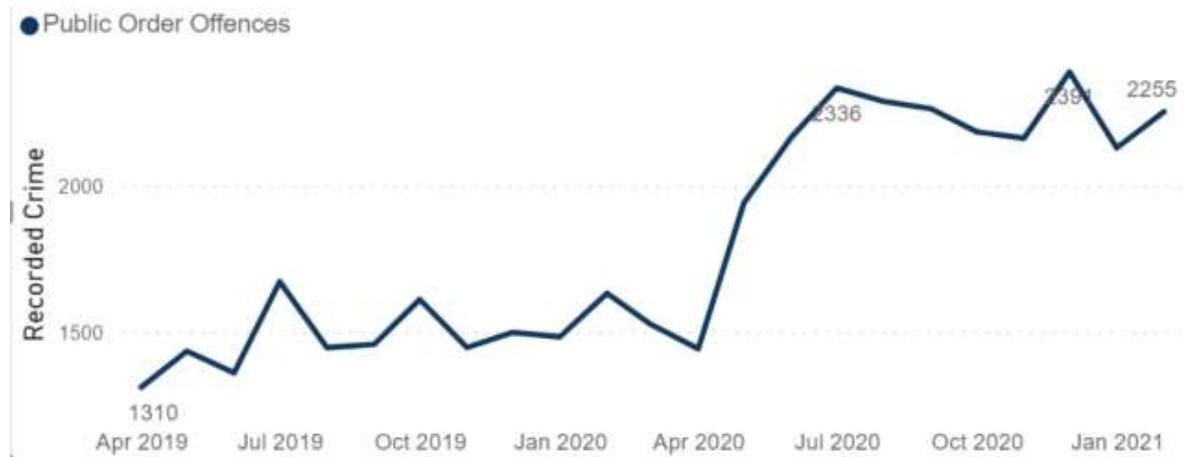
In terms of the specific offences behind these offence grouping, “common assault and battery”, “sending letters etc. with intent to cause distress or anxiety”, “harassment” and “pursue a course of conduct in breach of S1 (1) which amounts to stalking”.



It is important to note that a continued drive to improve Crime Data Integrity (CDI) and crime recording practices within WMP are contributing to these increase, as WMP become better/more consistent in recording certain crime types (e.g. those relating to stalking/harassment) and historically ‘hidden crimes’ such as domestic violence.

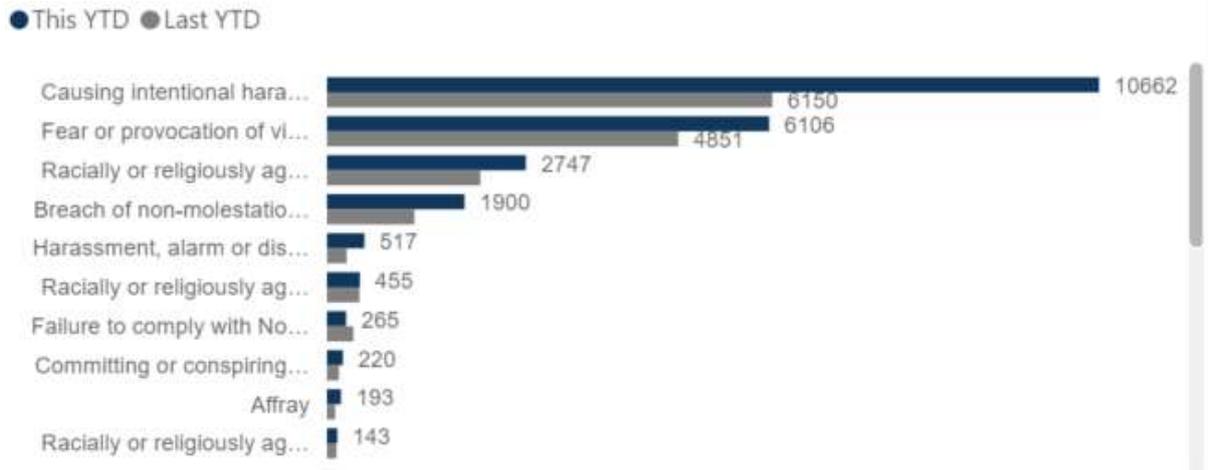
### Public order offences

In addition to the increases in violent offences, the past year has also seen some significant increases in public order offences.



The main driver behind this has been increases in offences of “causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress”.

Again it is important to note the improvements in crime recording, the wider increases in violence, and the impacts of the COVID pandemic on the changing crime landscape within the West Midlands.

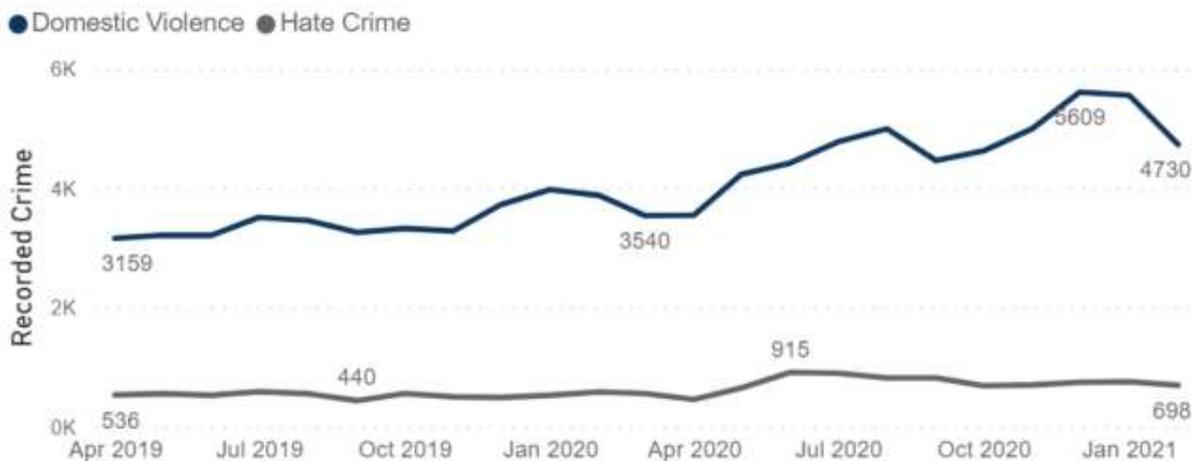


### 'Hidden Crimes'

As well as the type of offence, crime records are also marked with an offence type such as domestic violence.

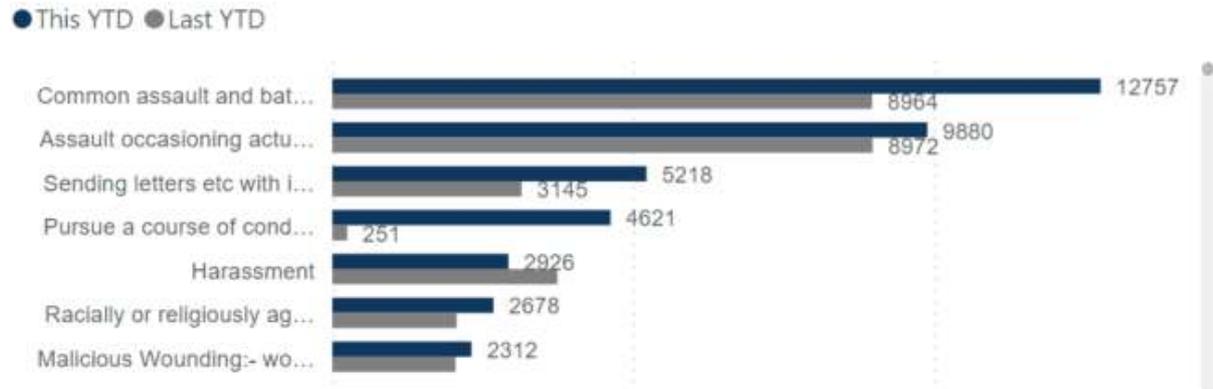
Offences marked as “domestic violence” or “hate crime” saw significant increases during initial period of the pandemic (April-June 20), whilst hate crime has seen monthly decreases since the increases in domestic violence continued with the first significant monthly decrease being seen in February 2021.

Overall, Domestic Violence for 2020/21 to date is up 38% on the same period last year and Hate Crime is up 40%.



The specific offence types which have seen increases match those for violence without injury and stalking and harassment (“common assault and battery”, “sending letters etc. with intent to cause distress or anxiety” and “pursue a course of conduct in breach of S1 (1) which amounts to stalking”) with the exception of “harassment”.

This exception could point towards the wider tensions in society around the Covid-19 pandemic and political issues such as Brexit, the increasingly divisive use of social media, and ongoing disputes between individuals.



As noted above, improvements in Crime Data Integrity and recording practices within WMP will have contributed to increases in the recording of domestic violence and hate crime incidents.