



Strategic Policing and Crime Board

Date of meeting 20th July 2021

Title: WMP Organisational Health

Presented by: Assistant Chief Constable Chris Todd

Purpose of paper

1. Provide an update on the efficiency and effectiveness of the West Midlands Police (WMP) response to the COVID-19 national emergency.
2. To update regarding the organisational health of WMP response to the COVID-19 national emergency.
3. To provide assurance that WMP has an understanding of crime demand during the COVID-19 recovery period, and plans in place to respond to this.

Background

4. WMP continues to prioritise the response to COVID-19, maintaining a major incident response in partnership with the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG).
5. This paper provides an update on a previous paper presented at the Strategic Policing and Crime Board on 16 February 2021.

COVID-19 RECOVERY – CRIME PATTERNS

Predicted Three-Month Demand Pattern

6. Overall crime levels have continued to increase. March had the highest levels since 2004 and June is likely to be almost as high. This has been predominately due to significant increases around recorded domestic abuse crimes and harassment

offences that now make up one in every five recorded crimes. A number of interventions, to continue ensuring as high a crime data accuracy as possible, have pushed up volumes of low level harm crimes. The relaxation of restrictions and summer weather have seen significant increases in demand especially around more prevalent summer offences such as Public Place Violence and Public Order offences. Large scale events such as the Euro's and increased potential for protests and deployments to other national commitments such as G7 Summit 2021 have an effect on increasing demand.

7. Although WMP are seeing significantly less contacts specifically around COVID-19, the overall number of contacts that WMP receives a day continues to increase. During June currently around 6000 contacts a day are received including both telephony and Live Chat.

Predicted Six-Month Demand Pattern

8. The summer demand plan is fully enacted presently and this will continue until schools return in September. Traditionally the return of students in September and October becomes a contributor to demand and then the return of darker nights will see increased focus on Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC). At the end of the six month period the build up to Christmas and potential return of festive markets and Night Time Economy (NTE) having been cancelled last year will be a key area of focus. The Glasgow COP26 Conference in late October will see significant policing requirements from WMP. However any further tightening or relaxation of restrictions will significantly affect demand patterns as per previous national lockdowns.

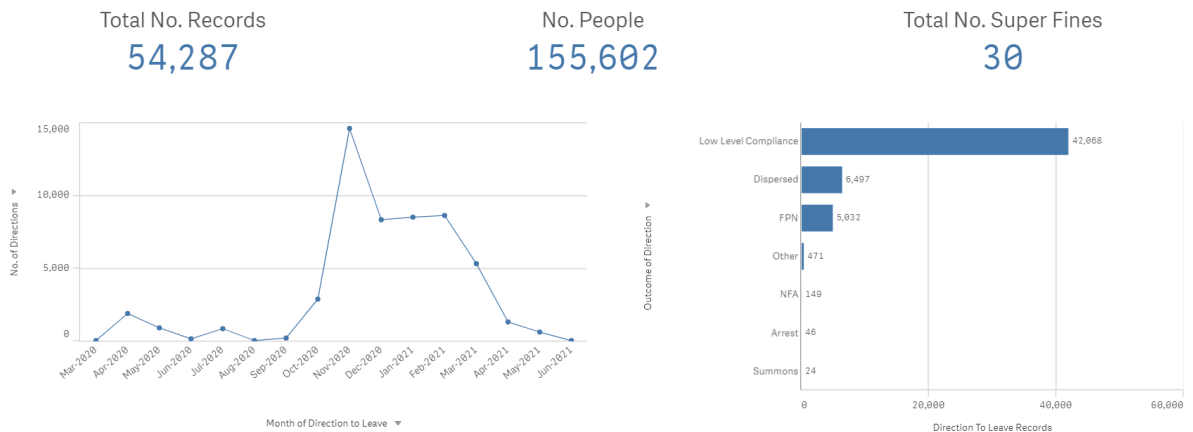
Predicted Twelve-Month Demand Pattern

9. If the assumption remains that restrictions will have lifted then over the next twelve months demand should eventually settle again. However the long term trend has been for recorded crime to rise with increased complexity. There may also remain a longer term requirement to support the Managed Quarantine Services (MQS).

IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 REGULATIONS

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

11. There has been a significant decline in the use of enforcement of COVID-19 powers since restrictions began lifting in March having peaked in February (for fixed penalties), with every step down seeing numbers reduce thereafter.
12. There have been a total of 54,287 Directions to Leave (DTL) forms from March 2020 to 15th June 2021 as can be seen in figure 1 below. Each record reflects one incident rather than the number of people involved, hence the discrepancy in these numbers.



13. Of the 54,287 DTL given 12% were dispersed, 9% were issued fixed penalty notices or summons and 46 resulted in arrest. The introduction of recording of low level compliance has accounted for 42,000 Directions in total.
14. WMP baseline for assessing disproportionality is still the 2011 census. WMP base ratios on the rate of an activity rate against the people the census says make up that ethnic group. Whilst the census has been updated with estimates since it was carried out, it is some years old. It is acknowledged that more recent estimates show that the demographics and population of the West Midlands is far more diverse than in 2011. 2021 census data is not yet available for comparison. The data also shows that 29% of people were aged 18 to 39 years, 27% were aged 40 to 59 years and 22% were aged 60 years and over.
15. 5,032 were given FPN's. Of the recorded proportion 48% of FPN's have been given to white people, 25% to Asian people and 19% to Black people.
16. The data also shows that DTL are disproportionately impacting younger age groups. 25-39 year olds have received 39% of FPN's and 18-24 year olds have received 40% of FPN's. If this is compared to the census data the two age categories would need to be combined showing 18 to 39 years olds have received 79% of FPN's, which is 47% above the 2011 census data.

17. There have been 30 super fines issued since the legislation came into place.

Enforcement of international traveller quarantines

18. The MQS went live at Birmingham Airport on 15th February 2021. Birmingham was one of a limited number of airports across England which were authorised to accept indirect flights from Red List Countries. Three hotels have been used to accommodate individuals from these flights for their respective ten day quarantine period. This process is led by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).
19. On 8th June 2021 legislation was amended to allow direct flights to England from Red List Countries. Birmingham Airport is currently only one of two such airports authorised to accept these direct flights. Passengers started arriving through this process from 14th June 2021 and additional hotels across the wider Midlands area have been secured by DHSC to provide accommodation.
20. For those individuals returning from Amber List countries enforcement is led by UK Border Force (UKBF). In May 2021, nationally UKBF launched a revised service which saw a private contractor being responsible for checking the status of such returning individuals. Police engagement is limited to a visible presence in support of UKBF at airport arrivals, enforcement where passengers are non-compliant and incidents arising during quarantine at MQS facilities. To date the number of such requests into WMP have been very low, circa 2/week, but are beginning to rise as Red List passenger numbers are increasing.

Enforcement of local restrictions

21. Since the start of the COVID-19 restrictions in England in March 2020, officers from all Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPT) have been responsible for completing daily patrols in hot spot areas (Including, Public Open Spaces, Retail, Hospitality, Transport Hubs, Educational Establishments, Testing and Vaccination Centres) and supporting a variety of activities with Local Authority partners. There have been a myriad of changes in those restrictions over the past 15 months, but throughout, the approach has been consistent and has followed the NPCC guidance of 4E's; Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce.
22. This activity has been captured through WMP IT systems; Corvus iPlans and Connect Proactive Management Plans. Due to the volume of interactions over such a long time period it is not possible to provide specific information outside of enforcement.

23. In July 2020 Operation Reliant was initiated as a proactive tactic to tackle the growing number of reports of Unlicensed Music Events (UMEs). A team of uniformed officers and licensing officers, led by an Operational Support Unit (OSU) Inspector, consistently worked each Friday and Saturday evening to enforce the respective COVID-19 restrictions at the scene of such events. This tactic has proved very successful and received much local and national positive media reporting. As the trends in such events has changed over time, Op Reliant has matured and is currently supporting the wider NTE policing. The resources for Op Reliant have been financed from the Home Office COVID-19 Enforcement funds. Three notable examples of enforcement are detailed below:

Illegal Rave- Bordesley Street, Birmingham

24. Large scale UME in a derelict warehouse. Approximately 500-600 persons present at the event. Entry to premises was barricaded and missiles thrown at police. Numerous resources in attendance whereby entry was eventually gained. Large DJ setup and evidence of controlled drugs and large numbers of attendees made off from the scene. A £10K fine issued to DJ/promoter and FPN's were issued to approximately 150 people. Sound equipment seized from the location.

Hotel - holding of restricted wedding/birthday events

25. Manager of hotel held various events including weddings and parties at the premises with in excess of 200 people attending- breaching COVID-19 restrictions. Police attended on numerous occasions and lower level FPN issued and advice given re his responsibilities and the COVID-19 restrictions at that time. Approximately seven days later following further calls it was discovered that the manager was still holding events with hundreds of guests in attendance. Event was closed by Police at that time and the manager was issued with £10K fine for continued breaches of COVID-19 restrictions.

Private party- Handsworth

26. Approximately 700-800 persons present at a private party at the location. DJ setup, food and alcohol being sold and served. Full sound and light equipment and no evidence of social distancing or other COVID-19 measures in place. Promoters present at the location organising activity. Access to the garden area was initially barricaded to prevent entry. Numerous resources attended to gain access where sound and DJ equipment seized. Three persons including DJ and two event promoters issued with £10K fine and in excess of 100 FPN's issued to individual attendees.

Vaccination and testing centres

27. Large vaccination and testing sites continue to operate with no issues at any location since the last reporting period. The local sites open and close according to when they have vaccines available and are all managed via the NHT as part of their patrol plans for the response to COVID-19 (Op Colonel)

WORKING AND OPERATING EFFECTIVELY WITH PARTNERS

Are the local resilience forum (LRF), strategic co-ordination group (SCG) and recovery co-ordination group arrangements operating efficiently and effectively from a WMP perspective?

28. The LRF and SCG arrangements are well established and have been functioning well as a multi-agency response throughout the pandemic. Both at a strategic and tactical level, there are positive relationships which allow operational matters and concerns to be quickly addressed, cognisant of all partners' roles and responsibilities. West Midlands Police are represented at senior level within all of these forums. The combination of West Midlands and Warwickshire LRFs into a single SCG and the resultant delivery of services through such arrangements has been widely praised by central government agencies as has this regions specific contributions to the development of an effective MQS regime.
29. The Recovery co-ordination group within the LRF is directed by the Local Government Association (LGA) and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). This is progressing well, but has obviously been impacted by shifting dates for the planned lifting of Coronavirus restrictions.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) PROVISION

30. The revised National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidance stresses the importance of officers and staff using PPE when required to intervene with a member of the public inside their social distance regardless of whether they are displaying symptoms, or whether or not the officer is in uniform.
31. The guidance states that in all scenarios, officers must have PPE readily available and as a minimum this should include a fluid resistant surgical mask (IIR) and gloves (non-latex). Emphasis has been placed on the additional use of goggles and aprons

by operational staff. The guidance also stipulates that staff within all work environments whether operational or not, should wear a fluid resistant surgical mask. Face coverings do remain suitable however for the public at large and officers and staff when off duty or travelling to and from work.

32. The guidance for PPE is published on the WMP PPE portal, along with the responsibilities for line managers and individual officers and staff. Figure 2 shows the operational guidance for PPE.

Figure 2 Personal Protective Equipment Operational Guidance



33. Providing the appropriate level of PPE to all officers and staff is a key priority for WMP. 15 million items of PPE so far have been distributed and there are a further 1.5 million items in stock.

34. WMP began planning and purchasing of PPE at an early stage and have therefore been in a strong position to respond to the changes in Public Health England (PHE) and NPCC guidance.

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

36. Strong supply lines have been developed with existing suppliers and through developing relationships with new suppliers. For the last 8 months WMP has

been able to obtain 98% of its PPE needs from the national PPE policing stock. This means that as a Force WMP are spending very little on PPE.

37. Alongside the standard face masks WMP have also purchased transparent face covers to cater for lip reading and WMP have worked with staff networks to put in place solutions for those officers and staff that have turbans or longer beards.
38. Where staff and officers cannot wear face masks due to medical reasons WMP have secured a lanyard that makes it clear to others that the person wearing it cannot wear a face mask, so as to avoid unnecessary challenge.
39. Lateral flow home testing kits have been rolled out to officers, staff and volunteers that want to use them. So far 2,000 people have requested and received kits.

IMPACT OF SICKNESS AND SELF-ISOLATION ON THE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF WMP

40. The impact on operational effectiveness has been minimal and sporadic dependent upon location and team however WMP has been able to maintain operational effectiveness by flexing resources.
41. WMP have had a small number of isolated issues that have had limited impact on operational delivery, for example in custody blocks, departments or specialist teams. Where this has occurred, business continuity plans have been implemented to minimise operational impact and appropriate measures implemented to control spread, such as deep cleaning, wider testing and staff isolation.
42. These isolated incidents have been effectively managed by local leaders, WMP Gold, the resilience cell and support from teams in enabling functions. However, attention is now to be closely paid to the impact of recent increased rates of community infection related to the prevalence of the Delta variant and the potential increase in workforce isolations that may result.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE TO OFFICERS AND STAFF

43. WMP has invested significantly in its wellbeing and welfare offering during the period of the pandemic, developing, scaling up and adapting the existing offer for the current context.

44. The wellbeing offer provided has included;

- Support from our health and wellbeing partner, Vivup
- Support around working remotely
- Mental and physical health advice, materials, signposting, etc.
- Podcasts
- Training and development for colleagues to support the current context
- Policy advice and guidance for managers and colleagues
- A bespoke trauma offering for colleagues in roles with a higher exposure to COVID-19 risk
- Colleague helplines and contact plans
- A simplified trauma response
- Ongoing support through occupational health and WMP 's employee assistance programme
- Bespoke support provision for colleagues with long COVID-19.

45. In terms of the specific counselling support, the WMP's provision through Occupational Health and through the Employee Assistance Programme is, and continues to be, available. This provision can be scalable where there is a need and is available to all colleagues.

46. Assessment of the offering has been through regular feedback opportunities from colleagues. Feedback has been positive about the wellbeing support offered by the WMP. The on-going provision is monitored through regular engagement with colleagues, Trade Unions and the Police Federation and ensure the support provided is relevant and timely to the current context.

47. WMP have recently engaged staff and officers in a survey in respect of both their experience during the pandemic and also in respect of anxieties re the return to work. As a result of the feedback from the survey, workshops have been put in place to address the common issues raised. The workshops have received excellent feedback and where survey responses were anonymous, WMP have used the feedback to inform our approach and ongoing support to all things COVID-19 related.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COVID-19 TESTING REGIME FOR OFFICERS AND STAFF

48. The internal test and trace team has been an invaluable resource in WMP's response to the pandemic it has proactively managed incidents on many occasions making key decisions before the national model.
49. The team have established positive and trusting relationships with PHE due to the reliability and quality of this service. This has enabled more effective decision making with PHE in relation to the local issues or notifications from the NHS app. The issue of home test kits via shared services has been well received and have provided reassurance to colleagues, rather than identify large numbers of cases.

IMPACT OF FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS ON THE ORGANISATION AND HOW WILL THIS BE INCORPORATED INTO NEW WAYS OF WORKING

50. WMP negotiated a COVID-19 Flexible Ways of Working Local Agreement with the recognised Trade Unions Unite the Union and Unison. This enabled staff and managers to talk about and agree working patterns and arrangements that prior to the pandemic would not have been considered or possible due to the Police Staff Handbook. This agreement has supported fluidity of working days and patterns of work e.g. later starts to stagger numbers in office and allow for travel on public transport at quieter times. This agreement currently remains live until the end of 2021 when it will be reviewed.
51. The pandemic has highlighted the opportunities for agile working across the range of roles in the workforce. This has been particularly obvious in enabling functions, however there have been examples of creativity in relation to alternative approaches to working operational teams. For example, colleagues in response who have not been able to physically attend work have been effectively deployed to address demand over the phone or via email.
52. Estates and information technology changes are now being restored to pre-pandemic standards in preparation for potential lifting of restrictions at Step 4 of the Government's Roadmap. WMP's agile working arrangements and estates configuration are revisited on a case by case basis. This will ensure a range of options are open to individuals and teams to ensure the right balance of safety and productivity; embracing positive changes developed through the pandemic where

evident whilst enabling increased levels of engagement and direct interaction where of benefit too.

OPERATIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

53. WMP continue to capture learning and have planned to have a force wide debrief in September 2021.

FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021-22 budget

54. The finance department has identified and reported actual and future planned costs associated with COVID-19 across WMP since March 2020.

55. The table below shows expenditure on COVID-19 from April to 31 May 2021 and includes a forecast of expenditure to 31 July 2021 when the Government has communicated that remaining restrictions are expected to be lifted:

Category	2020-21 actuals (Apr-March) (£'000s)	2021-22 actuals (Apr-May) (£000's)	2021-22 est. for June-July 2021 (£000's)	Total 2021-22 expenditure inc. estimates (£000's)	Comments
PPE equipment	6,089	0	60	60	Most PPE continues to be supplied from national order. The estimate for this year is for products not supplied by this order.

Officer and Staff pay costs	717	10	25	35	Staff costs for Occupational Health staff supporting long term COVID-19 impacts.
Overtime pressures and enforcement work	3,031	341	1,100	1,441	Actual costs are for April only. Estimates are for enforcement work for May to July inclusive.
Temporary staff	596	0	0	0	Temporary staff used last year to support Criminal Justice (CJ) and Public Protection Unit (PPU). Work being done to support outstanding cases in CJ and PPU is now being done in duty time and overtime.
Other non-pay	1,566	105	200	305	Costs include decontamination, clinical waste, enhanced cleaning regimes vehicle hire and continued costs

					to police buildings to make them COVID-19 secure.
Home working (laptops and devices)	338	1	100	101	Cost includes mobile devices and SIM cards for mobile data in laptops.
Total	12,337	457	1,485	1,942	

Key points to note:

56. The overall cost of COVID-19 to WMP was £12.34m in 2020-21. Income was received during the year to reimburse WMP for PPE, lost income and enforcement patrols. WMP carried forward £1.5m of this income to 2021-22 to continue to support enforcement patrols until the summer. Therefore of the £1.94m expected costs for this year to July funding of £1.5m is available to support these costs.
57. Expenditure on non-pay costs includes enhanced cleaning, decontamination costs and additional clinical waste provision. The budgets for these items within the facilities department have been increased for the first half of 2021-22 as it was anticipated that these costs would continue into this year. WMP will continue to review these costs during the year and address any budget pressures as they arise.
58. COVID-19 had a significant impact on WMP income in 2020-21 with total losses of £3.25m recorded. The Home Office provided a mechanism for police services to receive up to 75% of their income losses subject to an overall 5% deductible for budgeted income. As a result WMP successfully claimed £2.29m lost income for the last financial year. The loss of income for 2020-21 principally related to Birmingham Airport, roads policing and vehicle recovery, events policing (football) and from Criminal Justice processes. Some losses of income have continued into 2021-22 particularly in relation to the Airport and events policing and WMP continue to report these losses in monthly returns to the Home Office. It has not yet been determined if police services will receive any support for income losses in 2021-22. Negotiations are ongoing with central government in relation to additional funding require to support MQS requirements.

59. WMP identified areas where the service made savings as a result of reduced demand in some areas. Overall in 2020-21 WMP made savings of £1.38m on fuel, business travel and accommodation compared to the prior year. It is anticipated that some of these savings will continue in 2021-22 as the demand and supply of some services changes. WMP will review these savings as part of regular budget monitoring across portfolios.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Information concerning payments of FPN's by WMP

60. Total number of FPN's to date is 3,829. Of the 3,829 total FPN's issued, 275 have proceeded for court disposal and there are currently approximately 609 to be inputted through to court.

61. Of the 275 that have gone to court, they were disposed of as follows:

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)		Single Justice Procedure (SJP)	
Guilty Pleas:	39	Guilty Pleas:	12
Discontinued/Dismissed by the courts:	47	Discontinued/Dismissed by the courts:	0
Withdrawn :	21	Withdrawn : (to be re-issued)	78
Pending an outcome :	16	Pending an outcome :	60
Part heard and warrants issued:	2	Part heard and warrants issued:	0
Superfine (£10K Fines) <i>(Incorporated in the figures above)</i>	8		

62. Of the 51 cases that have been dealt with at court, approximately £32,512 in fines has been issued by the courts and WMP have been awarded appx. £1000 in costs thus far. This is for the cases processed through SJP.

63. Please note WMP only started to list COVID-19 offences into SJP courts on 9th June 2021. The expectation is that there will be a rise in the costs awarded to WMP as WMP continue to successfully process the cases through prosecution.

NEXT STEPS

The board is asked to consider this paper.

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