

STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday, 28 June 2022

Police and Crime Plan Priority: A greener West Midlands Police
Title: Environmental Strategy
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Purpose of paper

1. This paper provides details of the Environmental Strategy 2022-2027 for the board's consideration. The strategy has been jointly sponsored and developed by West Midlands Police (WMP) in consultation with West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (WMPCC). The strategy document is provided in Appendix A.

Background

2. WMP's three-year This Work Matters strategy (2020-23) outlines a continued commitment to modernise and ensure a sustainable police service and identifies a requirement for an environmental strategy which will support WMP to reduce its carbon footprint.
3. The Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 sets a commitment to make WMP a greener and more environmentally sustainable force. It highlights the need to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the renewal of the police estate and the development of further initiatives to reduce energy consumption, incorporate low carbon and renewable technologies and transition the fleet to electric vehicles.
4. The environmental strategy encompasses these ambitions by setting out priority areas and activities which will guide delivery plans over the next five years to improve environmental sustainability, promote efficiency in the use of energy and resources and demonstrate leadership within the sector.

Key points

5. This is WMP's first environmental strategy. In line with other UK police forces and the Government's *Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener*, the environmental strategy sets out the vision for WMP and a goal for carbon emissions reduction.
6. Net Zero 2035 represents a long-term ambition for carbon reduction and a stretching goal to focus activity over the next five-years. This goal requires the validation of a Net Zero road map which is the next step to define a cost effective and credible pathway and carbon reduction targets against which progress can be tracked.

7. To support the vision of becoming an environmentally sustainable police service, the strategy sets a series of overarching aims which are addressed by the priority themes and activity plans. These aims are to:
 - Reduce carbon emissions from the estate
 - Reduce carbon emissions from the fleet and travel
 - Reduce the overall amount of waste generated and manage resource use sustainably
 - Embed sustainability in the organisation
 - Adopt sustainable procurement practices and maximise social value

Progress measures for each area have been included in the strategy and key performance indicators for carbon and waste have been included within the force's quarterly performance review. An annual summary of activity and performance will be reported to FET and WMPCC.

8. Governance arrangements to ensure ongoing progress against the strategy and the allocation of resources across departments and teams will be critical to its success. It is proposed initially to use the existing Buildings Portfolio Board to oversee delivery, which has representation from key stakeholders. The role of Senior Environmental Champion will provide additional challenge and scrutiny and help to unblock barriers to implementation.

Strategy development

9. Benchmarking was undertaken to inform development of the environmental strategy. Members of the emergency services environment and sustainability group and Blue Light Commercial provided expertise and insight into current best practice within the emergency services sector. This was used to scope the environmental strategy and set out a delivery plan which was agreed by the force executive team (FET) in December 2021.
10. To support strategy development, internal workshops were held between January and March to enable teams and representatives from a diverse range of departments and operations to feed in their ideas. This was complemented by a force-wide survey which attracted 700 responses. The output of this engagement formed the basis for the strategy priorities and activity plans.
11. Key stakeholders within Corporate Asset Management, IT&D and Procurement have been consulted on the draft strategy as well as FET and the SPCB group in April.

Priorities

12. The priority themes identified for the environmental strategy are:
 - **A low carbon and sustainable estate** - an efficient, resilient and future-proofed estate transitioning to low carbon energy solutions
 - **Sustainable in our operations** - acting to ensure our police operations are sustainable; minimising environmental impacts and reducing carbon
 - **A responsible organisation** - working in partnership to embed environmental best practice and deliver social value

For each priority area the strategy identifies aims, objectives, activities and measures which can be used to track progress and performance.

13. The activities identified are grouped into three strands of activity:
- **Foundations** - these activities will help to quantify WMP's impacts through monitoring and measurement across key areas such as energy, carbon, transport and waste. Improving data is the building block for identifying areas for improvement, setting targets and tracking progress.
 - **Improvement** - a range of initiatives identified through strategy development as high priority or quick wins which will help the force to meet its environmental objectives. Some activities may already be in progress and others will be incorporated into annual delivery plans over the course of the five-year strategy.
 - **Accelerating progress** – these projects were identified through strategy development as those which would enable a step change in progress to reach the force's environmental goals. They will need to be phased to follow the relevant improvement activity and may require further development of business cases to support implementation.

The **foundations** activities form the priority deliverables for 2022/23, with a particular focus on establishing a carbon emissions baseline and targets, utilities audit and management, estates waste review and employee engagement.

Delivery

14. The strategy provides direction and sets a framework for a five-year environmental sustainability programme with wide-ranging activities. This will be translated into an annual delivery plan to prioritise activities for implementation. An annual plan will allow the flexibility to align deliverables with organisational priorities and external opportunities for collaboration and funding.
15. Some of the activities will be defined as business as usual with potential to deliver within existing resources. Other initiatives and projects will require further scoping and business case development to support implementation. This will be assessed as part of the annual delivery planning process.

Financial Implications

16. Targeted improvements in environmental performance and carbon emissions goes hand in hand with operational efficiency and cost savings. The environmental strategy is an opportunity to identify invest to save initiatives as well as understanding the costs and benefits of investment required to reach carbon reduction goals.
17. The UK government has committed to halve direct emissions from public sector buildings by 2032 (from 2017 levels) and further reduce emissions by 75 per cent by 2037. To help achieve this, £1.425 billion will be provided for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme over 2022/23 to 2024/25. Further funding rounds are anticipated to open in late 2022.

Legal Implications

18. The UK government has stated its expectation that all public sector bodies should be monitoring their energy use and have targets to reduce emissions. Where insufficient progress is made on reducing and reporting public sector emissions the government will legislate to make this mandatory.

Equality Implications

19. Where appropriate equality impact assessments will be built into the planning stages of individual projects and initiatives.

Next Steps

20. The board is asked to consider the Environmental Strategy 2022-27.

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