

STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday 25 October 2022 - 1000 – 1300 hrs

Attendees:

Simon Foster	:	Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC
Alethea Fuller	:	Deputy Chief Executive, OPCC
Bhupinder Gakhal	:	Board Member
Cath Hannon	:	Board Member
Charmaine Burton	:	Board Member
Tom McNeil	:	Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
Vanessa Jardine	:	Deputy Chief Constable
Peter Gillett	:	Director of Commercial Services
Nicky Brennan	:	Victims Commissioner
Charlotte Killeen	:	Staff Officer
Jayne Meir	:	Assistant Chief Constable
Rod Rose	:	Chief Inspector, ROCU
Lyndsey Bailey-Smith	:	Head of CDIU and CAB, ROCU

Plus, one webcaster and three observers.

Apologies:

David Thompson	:	Chief Constable
Wasim Ali	:	Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
Jonathan Jardine	:	Chief Executive
Mark Kenyon	:	Chief Finance Officer

1. *The meeting was recorded, and a webcast of the entire discussion can be viewed here:*
2. *The reports referred to throughout this meeting can be viewed here: [SPCB October 2022 - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)*
3. *Actions arising from the discussion during the meeting are highlighted in bold text.*

089/22

Item 1 - Apologies and PCC Update:

Apologies were noted from Chief Constable David Thompson, Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner Wasim Ali, Chief Executive Jonathan Jardine and Chief Finance Officer Mark Kenyon.

The Commissioner made the following comments:

- Being a victim of serious and acquisitive crime can have an effect on how safe a person feels within their own home and communities. The impact can be far reaching and affect neighbourhoods and those that live in them. We must prevent and tackle serious and acquisitive crime. The chair of the National Police Chiefs Council has observed that the number of burglaries is at an all-time low down 51% in the past decade due to increased investment by Police and partners to prevent them happening. In a letter dated September 24th, the former Home Secretary said that the public had a right to expect the Police to get

	<p>the basics right which included knowing an officer would visit them after a crime such as a burglary. The National Police Chiefs Council has now signed up to a commitment to attend all home burglaries excluding outbuildings and garden sheds. This commitment will be more onerous within the West Midlands than elsewhere. The HMICFRS report published in August 2022 sets out a far more credible and meaningful strategy to reduce, prevent and tackle burglary. The Commissioner will hold the force to account to ensure that the recommendations from this report are carried out to keep the people of the West Midlands safe and secure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board are today considering a report on Police finances. The report sets out the challenges in the medium-term financial plan. As a consequence of the chaos and disorder that has enveloped central Government recently there is a risk that policing and the residents of the West Midlands will suffer the consequences. Without adequate funding there is a risk that officers will be asked to backfill roles that do not need a warrant card, taking them off the streets. Funding in the force's fleet and estates may also need to be cut back. Despite the uplift, West Midlands Police will have 1000 less officers than it did in 2010. The Commissioner called for all West Midlands MPs to support his call for support in this current position. • It may be that all force's may not reach their uplift targets by March 2023. If this is the case then the allocation of funding that goes with it should be allocated to others such as West Midlands Police that have met their targets along with longer term funding to maintain officer numbers. West Midlands Police stands ready to increase its recruitment in those circumstances. • On behalf of the people of the West Midlands the Commissioner has three requests for the new administration which require urgent attention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Firstly, it needs to face up to the acute financial challenges faced by West Midlands Police to ensure its uplift is not wasted. ○ Secondly, it needs to level up and reinstate the force's 1000 missing officers. ○ Finally, it needs to implement a fair funding formula; all of which are required to keep the residents of the West Midlands safe.
090/22	<p>Item 2 - Notes of the Last Meeting:</p> <p>The notes of the Board meeting held on 27 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record of proceedings.</p>
091/22	<p>Item 3 - Questions from Members of the Public</p> <p>There were no questions from members of the public.</p>
092/22	<p>Item 4 - Questions from Members of the Board</p> <p>1. The National Chief's Police Council has recently stated that officers will attend all at home burglaries.</p> <p>a) What changes in service can the public expect to see?</p> <p>b) How are resources going to be reallocated to enable the Force to comply with this requirement?</p> <p>c) What will be the effect on other service provision in relation to other crimes?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(To be asked by Cath Hannon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the September Chief's Council, all Chief Constable's agreed to attend all home burglaries. The Force are currently trying to understand their current position as when a 999 call is made, this is then graded and prioritised. • All burglaries are attended by forensic investigators and follow ups are made by Neighbourhood Teams and PCSOs as part of prevention work but these are not always attached to the log. • At the moment the current percentage of attendance is not known

- At a recent Performance Panel, all Neighbourhood Teams were set an action to attach themselves so that a clearer picture can be gained.
- There is no expectation that this will have any effect on other victims of crime.
- As October hits and clocks change, there is an increase in burglaries as the nights get darker. There is an Operation taking place this year with regards to burglary which will have no negative impact on the current level of service.

2. What improvements have been made to the facilities and accessibility of interview suites for adult and child victims and witnesses.

(To be asked by Cath Hannon)

- All sites that have AV facilities that haven't yet been modernised have now been redecorated with a review of furniture taking place and items being replaced where necessary.
- Funding has been secured to upgrade the suites with the New Ways of Working review of all buildings continuing.

3. What has been the response of West Midlands Police to the interim findings of Operation Soteria, a joint police and CPS programme of work to transform the way that rape investigations and prosecutions are handled?

(To be asked by Cath Hannon)

- This work is being led on by Claire Caddick within the PPU.
- There are 58 recommendations from the national work and further points from local action plans which are being consolidated into one single plan.
- There are 22 short term work packages across the 6 pillars of the operating model.
- There was a visit to the Avon and Somerset force to learn further from their implementation and to seek improvements.

4. As theft from Motor vehicles is rising and, on some occasions, officers are not able to attend due to staffing issues. What is the Chief Constable doing to reassure the public that WMP is doing everything it can to combat this situation?

(To be asked by Bhupinder Gakhal)

- Tackling vehicle crime has been a force priority throughout 2022 and a task force was created to focus on this particular level of criminality featuring dedicated officers.
- It is important to understand the context, there is a lack of availability within the international supply chain, this has resulted in a shortage of computer chips, copper and aluminium and a fewer number of vehicles being made.
- The economic climate has also not helped with Covid and the war in Ukraine affecting the supply chains. Global supply and demand for second hand vehicles has become a larger crime. Ford's have been identified as the most stolen vehicle type.
- The team has received the highest rate of positive disposals for recorded offences for 2 years and look to exceed that in October.
- The recording of offences was down in August though not as high as would have been wished.
- The Crime Reduction Team have been supporting in key locations, identifying hot spots of vehicle crime, developing partnership work with hotel teams and retail outlets and also engaging with manufacturers.
- Key crime prevention messaging has been shared which has been seen by over 46,000 people with the key message being for owners to protect their vehicles.
- A full review of wanted offenders for vehicle crimes has taken place.

5. Victims of theft are ringing the Police with CCTV footage but sadly on many occasions no one is attending. The public are losing faith in our police force we must tackle this problem immediately.

Can the Chief Constable reassure the public that WMP is doing everything it can to combat this situation?

(To be asked by Bhupinder Gakhal)

- This is timely because of an initiative which is being piloted across the force. A digital evidence store allows a victim of crime to upload evidence directly to the force via a link provided by an investigating officer.
- This means that the information can be uploaded directly by the victim and there is no delay waiting for an officer. This allows the officer to review the evidence quicker.
- This is being rolled out next week across the force now that the successful pilot is completed. This will be monitored and managed through the Investigations Board.
- It is important to point out that this is an added option and does not mean that any previous forms of submitting evidence are being removed.

Police and Crime Plan

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Item 5 - PCC Statement on the National Policing Priorities:

This paper was presented by Deputy Chief Constable Vanessa Jardine & Ashley Banks

Do you think we have done enough work collectively to properly analyse the level of preventative action need to get through the rise in crime?

- The answer is probably no. The data provided by Action Fraud only gives a force level data which is now in the process of being broken down.
- It is such a significant worldwide phenomenon that it is difficult to tackle the criminal side. The focus is around prevention to educate the public and businesses.
- The full scale is not properly understood as yet but the force is doing what it can to learn to prevent scams from taking place
- National operations have taken place and facilitated on an international level where it is difficult for a force to handle. There needs to be a full focus on this, not just from a policing aspect.

The report is welcome and it emphasises how difficult it is being a police officer nowadays. In the report it references a new unit that works in county lines and the major disruptions it has caused. Are there any figures that can be shared?

- **There was a county lines intensification week recently, the figures that were shared at that time can be shared after the meeting.**

In Paragraph 6 of the report in relation to knife crime, it would be helpful to unpick as it wasn't clear if knife crime had increased, if it was how it was now being recorded.

- A serious piece of work was undertaken around serious crime reporting integrity and as a result are now recording the correct number of offences.
- With the introduction of a team to improve crime recording and the Connect system being able to incorporate these reports, this will explain why crime recording appears as more crimes being recorded.
- Due to the way crime is being recorded in such a way, it is not believed that this is an increase of offending just increased reporting.

Paragraph 14 references GRIP and match funding, could we get some idea about where that can come from and who provides the match funding?

- **The Force offered to come back with further information relating to this post-meeting.**

In paragraph 13 of the performance appendix, referrals for officers to get support. Although the improvement talks of a 10-day referral rate, this still sounds like a long time

- **This is a measure monitored based on data provided. Ashley Banks offered to defer the question and respond with an update outside the meeting.**

The performance indicators for how many families have been supported don't seem to have been articulated yet, what time scale is there for this?

- The intention was to develop an overall victims' profile of victims of crime. A quicker way may be to link in with commissioned services. Ashley Banks will work with the OPCCs Victims' team to see what can be pulled together there.

When speaking of tackling cyber-crime there is a lot of talk of young people. How are the force supporting the elderly in our communities?

- If those in our communities are not digitally aware and don't have this option available to them then a lot is being done to ensure that they are contacted in person. They may receive visits from PCSOs, there are community events where information is shared and there are also leaflets distributed to share the message.
- If these people in our communities are victims then Victim Support can help support them.

There is great work being done on county lines. At a visit to a commissioned service recently, there was a conversation relating to the cost of living crisis and how it is impacting them with groomers using food to exploit children into County Lines or CSE. Will the Cost of Living affect how the Force are policing CSE and C Lines?

- The force will defer to those experts. It is awful for a young person to be in those positions.
- There are increased numbers in the County Lines teams and this will continue to be the case as the force relentlessly pursue these people.

There are issues around compliance with the citizens charter in relation to force response times and Contact. Could you give a brief summary of the work taking place in relation to Contact to improve performance?

- The force is acutely aware of the issues around the ability to answer both 999 and 101 calls. There is a significant programme of work taking place in support of this.
- There has started to be some improvement month on month. There has been support from Accenture.
- There has been development of a support desk focussed on Domestic Abuse so that the appropriate time can be spent with these victims.
- The force is looking at partners and other forces for potential technical improvements that can be made.
- There is a Gold group which meets on a fortnightly basis to look at everything that can be done to progress this.
- There needs to be education shared with the public to advised what is or isn't a 999 call.

Could you provide an overview of what Project Guardian is and what it does in hotspot areas and how It engages with those communities?

- Project Guardian is a dedicated team of officers, that have had specific training solely focused on tackling violence. The team has been existence for a number of years.
- One of their main roles is to go into these hotspots, being a visible policing presence.
- Work has been done around prevention in schools and through dedicated operations which has included knife arches in transport hubs.
- The team's whole remit is around preventing violence. The team work closely with the Violence Reduction Partnership and the causation factors around violence.

What benefits are there from the redeployment of the County Lines Taskforce from ROCU to WMP? Will there be an impact on performance?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was felt that that this work would be better placed under Force CID leadership than the ROCU. ROCU is working with the NCA who are changing their remit which is pushing up the ROCU into high parts of criminality, so it is a better use of resource to sit within WMP. • In uplift, it would be easier to put further officers into the team if under West Midlands Police and therefore benefit the region better. <p>ONS reported an 11% reduction of fraud offences reported to Action Fraud, though there is a prediction that these offences will increase. Do you have any idea of what is behind this reduction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The confidence of people to report falling could be behind these figures, the number of incidents involving Cyber Crime seem to be increasing so this may be behind the reductions.
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Regular Items	
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094/22	<p>Item 6 - Medium Term Financial Plan</p> <p>This paper was presented by Peter Gillett, Director of Commercial Services</p> <p>to make these savings, could you provide a view of risks posed by this exercise?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is something that has been given thought and consideration. • £29m required in 1 year is the single biggest for one year. It is important that this is not seen as a knee jerk response. • There needs to be a considered approach to have the recurring saving for future years. It is important to adopt tactical, shorter term measures while putting longer term plans in place. • We need to be aware of these impacts on workforce and services we provide to our communities. • The force is continually looking at ways to deliver a legally balance budget but not to destabilise projects we support moving forward. <p>Are you engaged with any partners with regards to the impact of these cut's and how this may impact on the courts backlog? Are we doing enough to communicate this upwards?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The force has been working with the Home Office and recently met with the Head of Police Funding. The headlines that sit within the report were discussed in full. • The meeting was positive and it is intended to continue the dialogue moving forward. • Also, from a wider national perspective, through the NPCC Finance Co-Ordinating Committee, the force is ensuring that any issues are being flagged. <p>What is the plan to articulate these plans to the workforce and how can they contribute?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leader communications and front-line leaders have been asked to do a clear amount of cascading to staff. There are also a number of financial blogs for teams to work on. • This approach will be important as these are the people involved and therefore the best people to advise. • Ideas from staff are welcomed through a recent Comms roll out. Work is also taking place with Staff Associations, the Federation and Unions to ensure an inclusive approach. <p>Have we realised all the benefits from the WMP2020 programme? Would they be included in these savings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits which are cashable have been built into plans so wouldn't represent additional savings. • The force is ensuring that where possible any other benefits are being factored in to anticipate anything significant additionally that could come in for current savings that would support further.
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As a consequence of needing to deliver the Police uplift and protect officer numbers, which represents around 60% of the budget, the savings need to be found from 40% of the budget. Is this right?

- This is correct. There is also an annual budget for overtime too which is kept under review. With the increase in officer numbers through uplift it is hoped that the need and demand for overtime is reduced.
- Police officers are excluded from number budgets as this is ring fenced and protected so the savings need to come from third party contracts and suppliers.

Could you clarify where West Midlands Police sits as far as the Social Care Levy is concerned?

- A budgetary provision has been made in the current and next financial year within the baseline.
- The removal of the levy as announced by chancellor but this will be a reduced financial contribution than previously. At just over £4.5m for a full year, this reduction will reduce pressures by about £1.9m.
- Treasury are in conversations with all spending departments around the impact next year.
- On a local level there may be some benefit this year as a result of the cancellation but more uncertainty for next year.

We have discussed this morning many of the challenges we face as a consequence of the contents of the plan and also addressed some solutions, but in Paragraph 10.1 of the report there are a set of bullet points outlined which could reduce some financial pressures, could a little more information be provided on each?

- Cyclical Priority Based Budgeting
 - This is well known to the organisation and has helped deliver some efficiencies and cashable savings. The intention is to continue to have this priority-based budgeting to challenge areas of spend and how they link to the organisation's priorities. To simplify the process, the intention is for the process to become top down to take the admin and bureaucracy away.
- Review and challenge all non-pay budgets including current overtime, agency and consultancy budgets
 - There is not a huge spend on consultants but there are a number of agency placements to help fill gaps. This remains under constant review. It is important moving forward that these appointments are as cost effective as possible.
- Consider re profiling delivery timelines and /or costs committed as part of the Estates Strategy / Change Programme.
 - The intention is to do a line by line review of each of the force's assets and planned works to look at any maintenance required and the current market value. Some of the buildings may already be earmarked for sale, others for refurbishment and renovation. The force wishes to look at things from an affordability perspective to see how they align with the current Estates Strategy and operating model moving forwards.
- Consider partnership and collaboration options
 - The force is very open to co-location with other partners, with the size of the force though this may reflect in partners joining them rather than the other way around.

Do you have any thoughts on whether there are helpful shared service arrangements with other emergency services?

- The force is very alive to the possibility of working with a variety of different partners where there may be benefits. This is absolutely on the agenda to develop further.

When the Estates Strategy is reappraised, still aware that the extent some of those sites need to be sold?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The force is very passionate about delivering the best social value. This would not have any effect on the cashable value of sale of an asset. A policy already exists to maximise social value where possible and will continue to do so moving forward.
095/22	<p>Item 7 – West Midlands Community Safety Update:</p> <p>This paper was presented by Alethea Fuller, Deputy Chief Executive</p> <p>In the report you speak about multi-agency risk assessment conferences and that there had been an attempt to develop a model with new ways of working. One of the options is a model similar to MASH, can you explain what this would be and how it would be different to a current option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As each Local Authority is approaching this differently, a full update would need to be prepared and bought back. Some Local Authorities feel that MASH is better for their areas whereas others may incorporate MASH into MARAC. <p>In relation to behaviour change, is there a suggestion that the victims services take more engagement with offenders or suggesting there should be offender facilitators that act as the bridge between parties?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intention is more towards the second option. One of the major issues that has been found is trying to come up with an overriding strategy around DA perpetrator work across the 7 local authorities as there is no one size fits all intervention. There are different needs in each of the areas, some want to focus on low risk offenders while some want to look at high risk. There have been attempts through the West Midlands Perpetrator Programme and the DRIVE models but we do not currently have an approach that works for all parties. A strategy is being worked on that may involve 7 separate interventions. A definite way forward is with Reachable Moments as a possible intervention. The organisations that provide support to victims are part of the discussions taking place. The work is trying to come to an intervention guided by what works with information from providers. <p>Are any of the locally led perpetrator programmes being held out as effective? Where Local Authorities may say that a cohort were pleased with how the work was taking place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Coventry there is a programme delivered by Mentoring CIC who work with high risk offenders. The work is very intense 1-2-1 sessions that we are told works very well. The evaluations that have been done say that it is a very good intervention. Walsall have also now commissioned the organisation to do work for them. This is definitely a model that we can look at for medium to high risk offenders. <p>It's great news that the Time to Talk programme has now been rolled out to 60 schools, could you add a tiny bit of detail about what this programme involves?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme is a piece of work around workshop sessions in schools with boys around their attitudes to women and how they talk to women. The sessions look at the boy's own experiences and unpick stereotypes they may have and challenge them. The intention is to roll this out further as part of the VAWG agenda. <p>It is not always well understood what is meant by a Force wide allocation which may benefit the wider region too. Could you provide some information to explain how these 7 areas may benefit from force wide allocations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By force wide allocations we mean that a service is delivered across each of the 7 Local Authorities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The money doesn't go to all the 7 Community Safety Partnerships, now we ensure there is an allocation that sits centrally and depends on the size of the Local Authority. This funding allows the OPCC to centralise the funding in a much more efficient way.
096/22	<p>Item 8 – Chief Constable Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Deputy Chief Constable provided the update on behalf of the Chief Constable.
097/22	<p>Item 9 - SPCB Workplan:</p> <p>There are currently 7 matters that remain outstanding.</p>
098/22	<p>Item 10 – Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>The next Strategic Policing and Crime Board will take place on Tuesday 22nd November 2022.</p>
	Private Item
099/22	<p>Item 11 – Use of Covert Surveillance Powers</p> <p>This paper was presented by Assistant Chief Constable Jayne Meir, Chief Inspector Rod Rose and Lyndsey Bailey-Smith, Head of CDIU and CAB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PCC provided background to the report. An update on the Private item was given by ACC Meir around Governance provided. Questions were taken from Board Members relating to points within the Report. It was suggested that a potential Case Scenario example may be useful for Board Members to better understand such situations. The Commissioner thanked those who attended to present the Private Agenda Item.