



2021
2022
ANNUAL REPORT



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

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Foreword by Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Foster

I was elected as the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner ('PCC') in May 2021. Representing the people of the West Midlands is an honour and a privilege. I take the trust and responsibility placed in me, very seriously. It drives me on to take the constant and unremitting action that is required, to ensure West Midlands Police is the best it can possibly be, in order to prevent and tackle crime, protect people and help those in need.

My duties and responsibilities as Police and Crime Commissioner are extensive and wide ranging. As you read the report, you will gain an understanding of the breadth and scope of the role, which includes, amongst many other matters; ensuring an effective and efficient police force; holding the Chief Constable and police service to account; having responsibility for the police main grant and other grants from central and local government; setting the police budget and the local policing precept; funding the community safety partnerships; ensuring an effective and efficient criminal justice system; commissioning victim support services; and issuing a Police and Crime Plan.

I launched my **Police and Crime Plan** ('the Plan') on 1 November 2021. The Plan sets out my key objectives for policing, community safety, criminal justice and the rights and welfare of victims through to 2025. It is a comprehensive agenda for change, development and progress in policing, rebuilding community policing, putting prevention and the tackling of crime at the heart of what we do and ultimately delivering justice, safety and security for all of our people and communities of the West Midlands.

The Report outlines the progress that has been made over the course of 2021-22, following my election and the launch of the Plan, towards meeting the key objectives and outcomes set out in the Plan. That progress is all detailed within the Report. However, it includes amongst many other matters:

- Compliance with recruitment targets, to deliver the Police Uplift Programme;
- The allocation of 211 additional police officers, to community policing;
- Appointing the region's first ever Victims Commissioner, to ensure the rights and welfare of victims. are at the forefront of the criminal justice system;
- Increasing the number of Independent Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Advocates from 31 to 82;
- Investing in Safer Streets, to prevent Violence Against Women and Girls and Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Launching the No Excuse for Abuse and Here and Now campaigns to prevent and tackle Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse.
- Securing investment of £3.4 million towards the operational policing response to prevent and tackle violence;
- Securing investment of £7 million towards the prevention, early intervention and addressing the underlying causes of violence.



This has been achieved by working with the police and through strong partnerships, including with the people and communities of the West Midlands.

I always said that I would be a People and Communities Police and Crime Commissioner, who engages with, listens to and works with the people of the West Midlands. It has been a pleasure meeting so many of you, listening to your views, understanding your concerns and hearing what further action is needed, to ensure West Midlands Police is the best it can possibly be, in order to prevent and tackle crime, protect people, help those in need and deliver justice, safety and security for all of our people and communities of the West Midlands.

The harsh reality is that the past 12 years has been a challenging time for policing, our essential preventative public services and our criminal justice system. That has been as a consequence of ill-advised, misconceived and poor decision making on the part of central government. That decision making was a big mistake, it was counter-productive and a false economy. Our under-funded and over worked police service has all too often been left to pick up the pieces. The people of the West Midlands have been paying the price, because this has had, still does have and will continue to have, a serious adverse impact on West Midlands Police presence and visibility, response times, the conduct of investigations and the ability to prevent and tackle crime, all to the serious detriment of the people of the West Midlands.



I am firmly of the belief, that a democratically elected and directly accountable Police and Crime Commissioner is the appropriate way to ensure an effective and efficient police service. The laser-like focus it gives is crucial to holding the police to account and driving the change needed. In view of the breadth and scope of the role, the gravity of the issues involved and the significant level of public concern and interest in policing, crime and criminal justice, people should be entitled to vote, in order to decide who represents them as their Police and Crime Commissioner.

Finally, I am grateful for and want to record my thanks to my Assistant Police and Crime Commissioners, my Victims Commissioner, my Board members and the entire team within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Violence Reduction Partnership for all of the invaluable experience, knowledge, skills and hard work that they contribute. It truly is a collective and collaborative team effort. I am also grateful to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel, for the support and scrutiny it has provided throughout 2021 to 2022.

Simon Foster
Police and Crime Commissioner



Force Performance

One of the expectations of West Midlands Police, is that they will prevent and reduce crime. The police have a key role, in partnership with others, to prevent crime, through proactive local problem solving, information sharing and reducing reoffending. They are therefore key in the detection and investigation of crime and importantly in bringing those responsible to justice. **The Police and Crime Plan performance dashboard** gives an overview of performance, against the measures that are detailed within my Plan.

Progress against the Police and Crime Plan outcomes is assessed against differing baselines, depending on the measure and the type of data which is available. Given the unique nature of 2020/21 and the impacts which lockdown had on recorded crime rates, outcomes relating to crime typically focus upon 2019/20 or the year ending June 2019 baseline, used by the National Priorities for policing. Some outcomes have set targets, such as those relating to outcomes, targets have been developed through analysis of historical and current performance, through consultation, through existing agreements, for example, the Citizens Charter, and others are stretch targets.

Trend data is monitored through the Police and Crime Plan performance dashboard. Trend data, supplements the year performance snapshots, with a view of recent trajectory/periods of change. Whilst some measures might not be where they are expected to be, recent trend data may show a positive picture of improvement.

Community Policing

Since May 2021, we have recruited an extra 211 neighbourhood police officers. This is following several extensive public consultation exercises, which have indicated that there is a strong desire across the West Midlands for an increase in neighbourhood police officers and a rebuilding of community policing. Visible police officers are critical to public confidence. I have committed to recruiting 450 additional neighbourhood police officers before the end of my term and we are currently on track to achieve this goal.

Another key strand to community policing is our cadet programme. Cadets are all aged under 18 and take part in activities outside of school, which are designed to help them grow in confidence and develop their skills. They have had drill training, which teaches discipline and teamwork, as well as helping to provide crime prevention within their communities. Mostly based in schools, the cadets are located across all seven local authorities across the West Midlands and we currently have 553. I have pledged 750 Cadets over my term of office, and we also have 175 community leaders working with them.

I have also pledged to increase the number of Special Constables and Junior Police Community Support Officers and WMP are working on increasing the numbers of both of these schemes of work.

Recruitment

In 2021/22, WMP achieved the police officer uplift target of 368 extra officers and is well placed to achieve the 2022/23 target of 378 extra officers by March 2023. This will mean the number of extra officers across the West Midlands will be 1,200, over the 3-year uplift programme. However, there will still be 1,000 less police officers across the West Midlands, when compared to 2010.

I am committed to increasing the number of police officers from under-represented groups and have set a target, that by 2025, the number will increase by 1,000. At March 2022, a total of 329 extra officers have been recruited from under-represented groups, which is 13.35% of the workforce, compared to 8% in April 2010.

At 31 March 2022, the headcount across West Midlands Police was:

Police Officers	Police Staff	Police Community Support Officers	Specials	Total
7,642	4,129	448	304	12,523

The gender breakdown for police officers across the Force is 35% and this position is improving through the police officer uplift programme.

West Midlands Police are continuing the recruitment of new Special Constables, as well as continuing to focus on their development and deployment. During 2021/22, the Force have recruited 105 new Special Constables, who were 27.6% female and 21.9% from under-represented groups.

Recruitment Performance

Key Performance Indicator	2021/22 Performance	Baseline Target
Meet or exceed the Police Officer Uplift target of 1,200 new Police Officers	March 22: 1,017	Y1 & Y2 allocation: 730
Utilising the Police Officer Uplift target, we will increase the number of neighbourhood Police Officers by 450	April 22: 211	-
Support and maintain the 464 PCSOs within the West Midlands	April 22: 477	April 21: 464
Increase the number of Special Constables	April 22: 304	April 21: 283
Utilising the Police Officer Uplift target, we will increase the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Police Officers by 1,000	March 22: 330	



Fairness and Belonging

The Fairness and Belonging Plan is a programme of work to ensure that West Midlands Police is as fair, diverse and inclusive an organisation as possible. Work has taken place since July 2020 to ensure that the strategy is an overarching one, that covers disproportionality across a wide range of areas. It covers the work of WMP, but also the work of the OPCC and partners. I have prioritised the work taking place, committing to continuing the robust efforts already being made to implement the Plan.

I am working with West Midlands Police and other partners, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, so that everyone can be treated lawfully, fairly and respectfully. I have also introduced the systematic use of Equality Impact Assessments by West Midlands Police and the OPCC, to inform decision-making. It is important to me that we comply with the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the public sector equality duty, whilst I also ensure that the police and other public bodies performing public functions, that I have dealings with, also have regard to and comply with their legal obligations in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

At the time of the launch of the Plan, a significant worldwide movement was developing in response to the murder of George Floyd on 25 May 2020 in Minnesota, USA. This was a stark reminder that racism, discrimination and racial inequality are a reality, both in the UK and abroad.

A report was taken to the Strategic Police and Crime Board on June 16 2020, entitled **Stop and Search and Use of Force**, which showed



that police powers were used disproportionately against black and Asian communities and it also set out the work that is being done to address this. There were mass protests taking place across the country and the world in response to the killing of George Floyd. The Chief Constable gave an **apology to the black community for historic wrongs** as well as recognising the overwhelming need to build greater trust and confidence within the policing of underrepresented groups. A commitment was made to recruit 1,000 police officers from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, out of 2,800 new police officers by 2023, in order that the force look more like the people and communities it serves.

The focus of the Fairness and Belonging work is about increasing trust and confidence within the Black community. It is essential that we listen and respond to the frustrations voiced by Black communities and this includes many new initiatives, such as involving communities in police training and working with people with lived experience. We continue to work in partnership to deliver this work with the intended outcome of building stronger links with black communities and the police, as well as with other statutory partners.

I also meet regularly with West Midlands Police's staff support networks to understand the issues facing employees across the organisation. The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Race Action Plan is due to be released in 2022 and I will use this important plan to monitor the force's work in further reducing disproportionality.

Anti-Racist Training

I am committed to leading by example, by making the OPCC an anti-racist organisation. This includes continuing an organisation-wide anti-racist training programme, that addresses how to deal with issues relating to racism and how to develop and promote anti-racist practice. In addition to that, all staff within the OPCC have undergone training around trauma informed practice and becoming a trauma informed organisation. I am also pleased to say that in December 2021, the OPCC received the **Karl George Race Code** accreditation which evidences the work that we have been doing to create transformational, sustainable and lasting change, in order to achieve a competitive and truly diverse board and organisational senior leadership team.

The work taking place is challenging and I have provided a snapshot of some of the work taking place. Oversight and analysis of stop and search and use of force powers, is a key priority for West Midlands Police, due to the impact such powers can have on local communities and the effect on public trust. The aim is to be a minimal use of force organisation and I am committed to ensuring that these powers are utilised in a lawful, proportionate, consistent and reasonable way.

A new regional Disproportionality Committee has been set up, working across the West Midlands region, also including our regional OPCC partners West Mercia, Staffordshire and Warwickshire. The Committee is currently chaired by my Deputy Chief Executive, Alethea Fuller. There is an ambition to pick up cultural awareness training, but to go further and look at opportunities to do work experience, especially within the Criminal Justice System (CJS), to better understand the system. All recommendations for improvements are fed back to the Regional Criminal Justice Collaboration Board.

Out of Court Disposals is a joint WMP and OPCC priority, as an alternative to prosecution in court. A range of disposals are available to the police and the CPS. They offer low-risk, low level and mostly first-time offenders, the chance to get help and/or to make reparation without the stigma of a court appearance and criminal conviction. We will assess fairness of use, disparity and disproportionality in the offer and use.



I am responsible for ensuring there is an Independent Custody Visiting ('ICV') scheme in place across the West Midlands, through which volunteer members of the public attend police custody centres, unannounced to inspect conditions and ensure that detainees are being treated in accordance with their rights. We are working with ICVs to increase their role and influence within the process.

I know that engagement is key to the success of the work taking place. Engaging the black Community and securing their involvement in the structures we are developing is critical and I will continue to ensure that engagement is part of this process.

It is also important that I ensure that recruitment within the OPCC, appointment of Board members and recruitment of volunteers and other contractors, is designed to attract and leads to the appointment of a diverse range of people reflecting the West Midlands.

In March 2022 the OPCC had 81 employees, of whom 51 were White/White British and 25 were from an Ethnic minority group. There were 5 members of staff who choose not to disclose their ethnicity. 33% of staff within the OPCC are from an Ethnic minority group.

Analysis of my Strategic Police and Crime Board is that 4 members are White/White British and 3 members are other ethnic groups. Meaning that 43% of members of the Strategic Police and Crime Board are from an ethnic minority group.

There were 11 internal promotions within the OPCC between April 2021 and March 2022. 7 were White/White British and 4 were from an Ethnic minority group, meaning that 36% of staff promoted internally, were from an Ethnic minority group.

Trust and Confidence

West Midlands Police's Citizen's Charter pledges to treat the public with dignity, respect, kindness, care, honesty and fairness. I expect West Midlands Police to comply with the Charter's requirements and for it to be evaluated. I continue to scrutinise the Force to ensure that they are giving the best customer service experience to members of the public that contact them.

The WMP Digital Engagement Strategy, has influenced the corporate communications social media style and led a programme of training for all PCSO's to be responsible for smarter, more targeted and engaging communications at a neighbourhood level. I will continue to hold the Force to account on achieving a process that delivers feedback to the public on the intelligence and concerns that they raise through WMNow and surveys. WMNow is a free community messaging system that delivers up to date information from police and partners direct to your inbox. From updates on crime, to local news, appeals and safety advice, information is accessible to you.

The Force Citizens Charter and Service Standards public launch has been delayed, demands for service have presented significant challenges. I want to see significant improvements in Force Contact and other Service Standards as a priority, to enhance the public's access to West Midlands Police.

Citizen satisfaction SMS surveys are triggered when the public contact the police, and it continues to show reasonable levels of satisfaction (between 67%-85%). However, dissatisfaction is still evident due to repeat calls, and we do not know the outcome if the caller is signposted to other service providers, for example a Local Authority, due to the issue not being a policing matter.

SMS surveys in our Impact Areas is currently under review, as a way of surveying citizens satisfaction and customer journeys. I will work collaboratively with the Force to ensure a credible replacement provides a representative sample, to gauge citizens satisfaction and trust and confidence in WMP.

During 2022 a backlog in police complaints has been identified. New information on the WMP website is now a better guide for the public about who to contact in resolving the dissatisfaction and should help to remove the need for a formal complaint.



Complaints

Over the year I monitored the work of West Midlands Police and the Professional Standards Department, to ensure that the public continues to receive the highest standards from police officers. A new Whistleblowing Policy has been introduced, which means that policing colleagues are able to raise serious concerns anonymously and I am a named body for whistleblowing reports.

I completed one pension forfeiture for an ex-police officer who abused their position for sexual gain and we also began the process to forfeit the pension from another officer who had also abused their position for sexual gain.

The timeliness of police complaints has improved significantly over the period. At the beginning of the year there was a large backlog of complaints waiting to be assessed. This peaked at over 1000 complaints, waiting to be actioned in December/January. However, this reduced to 760 by April 2022 with a trajectory for further reduction over the next months. By end of year, the average number of days to finalise a complaint was 54 days, which was a significant improvement from 136 days at the beginning of the year.

Whether it is a complaint or a misconduct allegation, the investigation should be carried out thoroughly but also in a timely manner. During the year, I was informed of 24 investigations that exceeded 12 months. In each case I have looked carefully at the causes of the delay and monitored the progress of the investigation. In most cases the delay

was caused by ongoing legal proceedings, which meant that the misconduct or complaint investigation had to be put on hold. In all cases, I have regular discussions with PSD to discuss the reason for the lengthy investigation.

During the year, my team undertook two dip sample exercises to examine completed complaints. In December 2021 we examined 40 complaints that had been service recovered, and in July 2022, we examined 50 complaints with a focus on the quality of the investigations. The results of the dip sample indicated that in most cases the complaint had been properly understood and police were able to provide an outcome that was reasonable and proportionate. Some dip-samplers felt that communication could have been more empathetic and we have fed this information back to the Professional Standards Department.

Police officers wear body-worn cameras and when complaints have been made it can be helpful for the complainant to see the footage from these cameras. I have arranged access for two complainants to view body-worn footage this year and a protocol is being developed to allow more complainants access to body-worn camera footage.

In February 2022, the Force successfully completed the Vetting Aftercare project ensuring that every employee holds in-date vetting relevant to their role. In March 2022, PSD and Vetting went through the Priority Based Budgeting process (PBB), chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.

Vetting's staffing levels were confirmed appropriate to manage future demand, including Vetting Aftercare. Some additional vetting officers were added to the team to ensure that risks including corruption and other harmful behaviours are identified. WMP vetting complies with the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP).

I am the appropriate authority to undertake reviews, following complaints against police officers. During the year there were 127 reviews. Seven reviews were upheld. This number might increase, as there are still some reviews under consideration at the time of writing.

I am also responsible for maintaining a list of legally qualified chairs and independent members to sit on police misconduct hearings. Following a rigorous recruitment exercise in 2021, a new list of 12 LQCs were introduced. Training was provided to them in January and February 2022.



Contact 999/101

Nationally, there has been an increase in calls for service since the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) stated in July that the volume of 999 emergency calls was regularly reaching an exceedingly elevated level, a demand that is usually limited to certain days of the year, such as New Year's Eve².

Regionally, West Midlands Police saw a sharp increase in calls during Summer 2021 and call volumes have remained consistently higher than previously seen. In total, there were 786,236 999 calls made to the force in 2021, which is an increase of 10% from the 2020 volume.

The recent publication of BT call data for 999 calls shows that West Midlands police has the highest rate per population demand across all police forces. Local analysis shows that there is a strong relationship between 999 call demand and total crime severity. As noted in the HMICFRS Inspection Report, West Midlands Police are tackling higher levels of serious crime than that of other force areas.

This increase in demand is putting enormous pressure on call handlers and impacting upon service levels. Non-emergency service is also impacted, due to advisors being set up to answer both 999 and 101 calls, with 999 calls being prioritised. This has led to wait times for non-emergency calls increasing. The risk

that a rising number of calls are being abandoned, creates additional demand and service recovery requirements.

A Force Contact improvement plan has been implemented recently which includes the creation of a new specialist support desk to improve the service offered to the public and make the best use of our resources. The support desk will include a team of trained officers and staff who will deal with the more complex and time-consuming calls, freeing up other call handlers to answer 999 and 101 calls faster.

It is important to note that not all 999 calls are emergencies. The NPCC estimate that around 20-25% of calls nationally, require an immediate emergency response³. Local assessments support this statistic, as around 20-25% of 999 calls received by West Midlands Police also require an immediate emergency response. West Midlands Police are now receiving more 999 calls than 101 calls. However, following the lifting of restrictions last summer, assessments suggest that a considerable proportion of the additional calls being received are not crime related.⁴ We are supporting West Midlands Police to understand and help manage the increases in call demand.

Stop and Search

We have seen increases in Body-Worn Video compliance during both Stop and Searches and Use of Force. For stop and searches, compliance has increased from 42% in 2018/19, to 89% in 2020/21 and to 95.1% in 2021/22. Compliance for Use of Force is now at 82%.

We have also now started to see increases in Positive Outcome rates, which is the rate at which an illicit item is found during a stop and search. This rate is now 27.2%, having previously been 26.5% in 2020/21.

In an effort to drive increases in Positive Outcome rates, we are also specifically looking at how effective particular searches are in terms of their "find rates". This is where the outcome directly relates to the object of the search, for example where the objective of the search is for drugs and drugs were found.

- Drugs find rate: 34.4% 2021/22; 32.3% 2020/21
- Knife find rate: 13.5% 2021/22; 16.8% 2020/21
- Firearm find rate: 9.5% 2021/22; 7.7% 2020/21

Disproportionality continues to be a focus when scrutinising the use of stop and search powers. Across the WMP force area, the Asian search ratio is 2.7 and the Black search ratio is 4.4. The search ratios show how many times more likely an ethnic group is to be stopped and searched compared to the white population. These search ratios do show an increase from the previous year, which saw an Asian search ratio of 2.6 and a Black search ratio of 3.9. There is clearly more work to be done and this will remain a focus moving forward. We also expect to see the new census data being used in the coming months, which will reflect the true ethnic diversity we have across the region and will impact the search ratios we see.

¹ Police officer uplift, quarterly update to March 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

² <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/public-urged-to-use-999-system-responsibly>

³ ibid

⁴ Police struggle to deal with record demand levels as 999 calls surpass non-emergency calls | Express & Star (expressandstar.com)



Scrutiny

Robust scrutiny and governance around stop and search is essential. The bi-annual Stop and Search Commission has continued to hold the force to account and scrutinise their use of stop and search and use of force power. The Commission is now chaired by Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner, Tom McNeil. The Commission is something WMP are heavily engaged in and are extremely eager to provide nuanced data and have really open and honest discussions around how they use their powers. Each Commission has the substantive agenda items of stop and search performance update, and use of force performance update. Each delves into considerable detail around topics such as: juvenile strip searches; the rate of handcuffing during stop and search (and any disproportionality within this); and use of force on children. Requests are made to WMP prior to the commission to ensure topics that are of greatest concern to me and the public are discussed.

West Midlands Police's use of these powers are also scrutinised at the local level, with a community-led scrutiny panel in each of the Neighbourhood Policing Units, apart from Birmingham West NPU and Birmingham East NPU which both have two panels, resulting in a total of 10 scrutiny panels. Each panel meets every two months, to scrutinise randomly selected stop and search,

and use of force, records that have occurred within their NPU in the last two months. WMP also present each panel with the data (including positive outcomes, disproportionality rates, and rate of handcuffing) for the local area, allowing the panel to raise any concerns and ask questions.

A series of youth scrutiny panels in the Black Country are being piloted, to offer a space for young people to come together at a neutral location, with their peers to scrutinise use of stop and search. The panels have been piloted to address the lack of young people on our existing panels and to remove one of the obstacles to young people joining our panels, which was having to enter a police station.

This year a Custody Scrutiny Panel has also been piloted, where the objectives include: scrutinising the use of force powers in custody; the use of strip search powers and ensuring best practice; as well as reducing the disproportionality of use of force and strip search powers in custody. This pilot will be reviewed at the end of this year, with proposals made for what the next steps for the panel are.



Finally, as an action from the most recent Stop and Search Commission, we have held our first Scrutiny Panel Chairs Meeting. This is a meeting between the Chairs of each scrutiny panel, bar the pilot panels, stop and search policy officers from the OPCC, and the lead for Stop and Search in WMP. The objectives of the meeting are to allow the chairs to share learning and best practice from each other, drive regional consistency across the panels, but to also scrutinise West Midlands Police's use of Section 60 Stop and Search powers.

I am also represented at WMP's internal governance boards, including their quarterly Gold Fair and Effective Use of Police Powers board and bi-monthly Silver Stop and Search and Use of Force meetings. Due to the influence of my office and the commitments in the Police and Crime Plan, it is now routinely emphasised at each Silver meeting that the focus of stop and search needs to be on reducing harm and removing knives and other weapons from the streets.

Concerns have consistently been raised by my office and by our stop and search/use of force scrutiny panels around disproportionality rates. In March 2021 WMP decided that, as part of their commitment to transparency and accountability, supervisors would need to conduct a "Supervisor Review" whenever force is used against a black male, aged 18- 34 or whenever a black male aged 18-34 is stopped and searched.

In 2021, my office developed a Use of Force escalation form to capture concerns around disproportionate use of force and ensuring appropriate action had been taken based on scrutiny panel feedback.

Youth trainers

I have continued to fund ~9 trainers to attend schools, to raise young people's awareness around stop and search and why police use this power, but most importantly to educate young people on their rights and responsibilities, regarding stop and search.

Stop and Search Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	2021/22 Performance	Baseline/Target
Increase positive outcome rates for Stops and Searches to 50%	27.2%	Target: 50% 2020/21: 26.5% 2019/20: 26.5%
Monitor the use of Stops and Searches under Section 60, ensuring that they are used only when absolutely necessary	535 searches under Section 60 orders	2020/21: 95 2019/20: 334
Ensure that the use of body-worn video during Stops and Searches and Use of Force remains at the same level or higher	Stop and Search: 95% Use of Force: 82%	Stop and Search: 92-95% Use of Force: 78-80%
Reduce the disproportionality of who is stopped as part of Stops and Searches and for individuals being subjected to Use of Force	Search ratios* Asian: 2.7 Black: 4.4	2020/21 Search Ratios Asian: 2.6 Black: 3.9
Monitor where injuries occur as part of Use of Force, ensuring that cases where serious injury occur are reviewed and action taken where necessary	26	2020/21: 42 2019/20: 59





West Midlands Community Safety Partnership

Community Safety Partnerships have a statutory responsibility to respond to crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their local authority areas, and West Midlands Community Safety Partnership (WMCSP) is the place where I, statutory bodies and representatives from the seven Local Authority areas come together, to agree a coordinated approach to crime reduction, local policing and community safety for the West Midlands.

The Community Safety priorities have been agreed for 2021 - 2024, through consultation with partners and communities and are informed by West Midlands Police's Strategic Assessment, which are: preventing crime and anti-social behaviour; serious and organised crime; supporting victims and witnesses; violence and intimidation against women and girls; cyber-crime and fraud; serious violence; offending and reoffending; and substance misuse.

Community Safety Fund Budget 2021-2022

Activity	(£)
Funding	
2020_21 Allocation	£3,863,303
Force Wide Commissioning Allocations	
Youth Offending	£652,108
Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Structure	£354,000
Allocations for Victims of Crime - Victims Fund top up	£271,410
CSP Analysts	£210,000
Arrest Referral (Drug Interventions Programme)	£500,000
New Chance	£270,000
Restorative Justice West Midlands - ASB	£63,785
Op Hercules - Force wide Injunctions	£42,000
Sub-Total	£2,091,893
Local Commissioning Allocations	
Birmingham	£660,000
Coventry	£165,000
Dudley	£135,000
Sandwell	£165,000
Solihull	£ 90,000
Walsall	£135,000
Wolverhampton	£150,000
7 local CSPs	£1,500,000
Total Allocated Budget	£3,591,893

The OPCC has supported applications from CSPs into the national Safer Streets Fund, including Wolverhampton, securing £365,567 for activity to address youth ASB and violence in the City Centre, and issues of safety within the NTE; and Sandwell's bid of over £227,000 to address ASB, through additional CCTV and enhanced detached youth work.

Local Criminal Justice Board

I have worked with partners to improve offender management, to reduce criminality and prevent re-offending. One of the key forums I use to advance this, is the Local Criminal Justice Board ('LCJB'). I chair and support the LCJB and its delivery groups. The LCJB is supported by several delivery groups, including reducing re-offending, victims and witnesses and the women and girls' delivery group.

The LCJB has responded to and supported on a number of key emerging issues over the past year. A substantial but not exhaustive list includes, the Government's new 10-year drugs strategy 'From Harm to Hope', the probation's reunification, the OPCC's new strategy concerning domestic abuse perpetrators, the piloting of a new youth improvement sub-group and the court backlogs we have experienced over the past few years.

Further, the LCJB has fed directly into the Crime, Community Safety and Resilience Strand of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal ('TDD'), through an extraordinary LCJB. West Midlands Combined Authority ('WMCA') have been invited, by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities ('DLUHC'), to engage with them on a TDD process, where they will be given the opportunity to negotiate with central government on achieving tailored devolved powers and devolved funding. I have particularly been working with the WMCA on the Crime, Community Safety and Resilience Strand and the LCJB held an extraordinary meeting to feed directly into the ideas which are being proposed under this strand of the deal.



Victims

As part of my commitment to supporting victims of crime, I appointed the first ever West Midlands Victims Commissioner in May 2021, Councillor Nicky Brennan. To support my priority around Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), the office has made significant strides forward in supporting an attitudinal and cultural shift across the region. This included carrying out a regional consultation on the development of an Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls (EMVAWG) Alliance which concluded on the 16th May 2022. The consultation confirmed the strategic need for a joint approach to ending male violence, as well as an acknowledgement that work in this area must start at an early age. The alliance, led by the Victim's Commissioner, will be instrumental in creating a whole systems approach to tackling this issue.

We were successful in both of our bids to Safer Streets Fund 3 ('SSF3') which bought £655,372 into the region, predominantly, but not exclusively, to improve responses to ending male violence against women and girls, through place based work, education, training and communications campaigns including the successful **Here and Now campaign**, which focuses on men having conversations with their peers about violence against women.

The Safer Streets 3 Fund, enabled us to fund a number of programmes with a focus on prevention. Work included the Safer Together project, that involved workshops, working with boys exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours in schools and Turnaround CIC, which led on the production of a lived experience video, aimed at training professionals on how to

engage with sex workers. We also expanded our Mentors in Violence programme, delivered by the Violence Reduction Partnership to include a VAWG syllabus and lesson plans delivered in schools.

Towards the end of last year, we successfully relaunched our **#NoExcuseForAbuse** campaign, which engaged people across the West Midlands around VAWG in public spaces, focusing on upstander/bystander activity. Over the Christmas period, we launched our digital billboards across the region, which shared a message of zero-tolerance for abuse. These were advertised on billboards and on social media.

To broaden the reach of this campaign, we also produced three audio adverts to accompany the billboards, which were played on regional radio stations across the West Midlands, called 'It's A Man Thing'. We also commissioned a poll of 2,000 people in the West Midlands through YouGov, which has informed the work we are doing on this agenda.

CASE STUDY:

Sara was referred to Victim Support by West Midlands Police as she had been groomed by online offenders, who were believed to be part of an organised crime group. She had been targeted through romance fraud and had lost over £100,000 over a period of 3 months. The offenders created a complex background story for the romance fraud, investing a great deal of time and effort to eventually convince Ria to part with large sums of money. During the grooming, the offenders emotionally blackmailed her, used fake documents and photographs to back up the claims that they needed financial support to ward off loan sharks who were making threats. It wasn't until she was approached by Border Force officials that it dawned on her that the person she had cared for and tried to help was not who they appeared to be.

She has been sharing details on various media platforms to warn other people who may be targeted by the same offender or type of crime and has had contact with her two banks, to ask for support under the terms of the Contingent Reimbursement Model (CRM). This is an agreement which most banks signed up to in May 2019 offering to reimburse victims of fraud. However, both have denied her claims. Sara has asked for an impartial review by the financial ombudsman and Financial Conduct Authority. She insists she should never have been allowed to loan so much money in the first place and believes that banks and loan companies should have spotted the red flags and therefore more protection should be in place to protect people from falling victim to scams. She is still fighting to get her money back and continues to receive support from Victim Support around the crime through ongoing emotional support, providing advocacy and putting online safety planning in place. During the support process, she has opened up about past experiences with domestic abuse, the trauma of which was re-triggered by the romance fraud, which has led to additional support from our specialist domestic abuse services.



Commissioning of Support Services

I have continued to fulfil my statutory responsibility of commissioning high quality care and support services for victims of crime. This includes free, accessible, high quality support available, to enable every victim to cope and recover from their experiences, regardless of whether they reported their crime. The majority of funding for victim services comes directly to the OPCC from the MOJ and for 2021-2022, the total amount of funding for 2021-2022 was £5,337,437.11.

Table 1. Victims budget summary 2021/22

Victims Core Budget 2021-2022	£3,937,129
National IDVA/ISVA Fund 2021-2022	£1,400,307
Total	£5,337,436

Victims Commission

The Victims Commission, continues to serve as an advisory body and representatives are the voice of the victim and survivors. They bring innovation and best practice to service delivery and ensure that we deliver improved co-ordination and consistency to victims. They also ensure that the response to victims, at a both strategic and local level, is tailored to and reactive to their needs.

Number of Victims supported

The table below shows the number of victims supported by our services over the course of the year.

Crime Type					
Restorative Justice	Sexual Violence	Domestic Abuse	Road Crime	Other services for victims of crime	Child Sexual Abuse/Child Sexual Exploitation
Total number of supported victims in the time period					
536	3,582	14,708	155	39,731	1,672

CASE STUDY:

A police officer made a referral into the Public Protection Unit advising that a service user who had been known to services for several years had reached out requesting some help and support. She advised that she'd had enough and was ready to leave. An Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) made contact within an hour and set up a face to face meeting with the service user. She had been together with the perpetrator for 8 years, and had been discussed at the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference meetings several times over the years after being subjected to

coercive control, physical violence and ongoing emotional abuse. She was referred to Sanctuary for additional security to be provided in her home, and the IDVA discussed options, such as a non-molestation order. The main priority was a housing move so the IDVA contacted the housing association where she was living, and they were able to disable the perpetrator's fob as he had been using it to gain access to the building. The local authority and the IDVA is working with her to move out of the area, and the service user is being supported through this process.





Violence Reduction Partnership

I am the joint Serious Violence lead for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. We are the advocates for this significant area of responsibility on behalf of all PCC's, in relation to the Home Office.

I am also the Chairperson of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (WMVRP), which is one of twenty VRPs across the country, that was established in 2019. They are funded by the Home Office, to build capacity in local places and systems and to

tackle the root causes of violence. The partnership is made up of a range of specialists, who work regionally and locally, to facilitate and

encourage the development of system wide responses to preventing and reducing violence, as well as directly delivering and commissioning a range of services and interventions. It is a partnership consisting of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations across the region, bringing efforts together to tackle the root causes of violence, such as poverty and inequalities.

During 2021/22, we secured a total core VRP budget of £3,370,000, to continue its vital work tackling the root causes of serious violence. To work effectively, the partnership needs sustainable, multi-year funding. This is something the Government has previously failed to provide. I have raised this issue repeatedly with Ministers during the last year. I therefore welcomed

the announcement, confirming that we will continue to receive funding of £14,607,258, over the next three years to deliver this critical agenda.

It is important that I highlight the excellent partnership work taking place. We actively work with our local violence reduction partnerships, to support their local violence prevention/reduction systems, enabling everyone from frontline workers to senior leaders, to access data and information about the nature of violence in the region.



WEST MIDLANDS
VIOLENCE
REDUCTION
PARTNERSHIP

The partnership will support local partnerships to prepare for the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty and lead on developing

and sharing a robust evidence base, to understand the impact of interventions.

The VRP adopts a public health approach to preventing violence. That means focusing on understanding the root causes of the problem and testing, evaluating and upscaling interventions. Developing stronger data, analysis and evaluation is key to working in this way. West Midlands Police plays an integral role in the VRP, providing support and bringing policing knowledge and expertise into the different thematic areas. They ensure that the whole force understand the role of the VRP and play an active role, working in partnership locally and regionally to prevent and reduce violence.

Working in Local Places

By March 2022, the VRP had established 9 place-based pilots, testing different approaches to violence prevention and reduction. The pilots were all co-designed with key stakeholders and bespoke to the needs of the areas they were based in. The learning from the pilots was adopted and used to inform the development of a regional delivery model in 2021. The VRP delivery model aims to:

- Deliver primary prevention, entire population approaches to violence prevention and reduction, including training, capacity building and awareness raising.
- Fund targeted work in areas we know are impacted more by violence.
- Respond effectively as a partnership to incidents when they occur to limit the onward transmission of violence and address the trauma that serious incidents cause to individuals and communities.



CASE STUDY:

Barak is 25 years old who moved from Kenya to the UK with his mum and sister when he was 15 years old. He was studying at university when his mum died and came back to try look after his younger sister. They were going to lose the family home as they were in private rented accommodation and Barak was concerned as to how he was going to take care of all the bills. In his time of desperation, he made connections with people in his local area who he thought were friends and they encouraged him to earn some money quickly by selling drugs for them. He had never committed a crime in his life but three months after his mum's death he found himself in prison charged with possession with intent to supply.

He then got released and lived with his new girlfriend, but the relationship didn't work out and Barak ended up going back to what he knew to keep a roof over his head – selling drugs. This resulted in him being admitted to hospital with stab wounds (following him being attacked in a 'trap house') where we went to see him at the hospital bed to speak with him. He said that he realized he had gone on a serious downhill spiral after his mum's death and wanted help to change this.

Barak no longer wanted to return to the town he lived in because he feared for his life as he had given evidence to the Police on those who attacked him. We managed to talk to multiple agencies such as the Adult Safeguarding Team who advised us of the legal stance local councils must house a person whose life is at serious risk. We also talked to the Police from the Town he was originally from to offer our support during the investigation, and we talked extensively with the local housing department to advocate on behalf of Barak. As we are part of the Trauma Service, we were able to negotiate an extended stay in hospital until the local council was able to house him in supported accommodation.

Barak had no clothes (they were damaged following the attack) so we provided him with some from the clothes bank in the hospital. We then contacted the St Giles Pantry and went with him to get him some food. As a result of him going there he is now helping a volunteer learn how to cook and has enrolled on the NVQ level 3 Information, Advice and Guidance course run by St Giles. Barak is now settled in another city away from the negative influences and his sister is studying at Cambridge University.



CASE STUDY:

Young Person was referred to us with the following concerns regarding her and her family:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Behaviour concern
- Lack of guidance/supervision over child
- Lack of confidence in parenting

Due to the overwhelming behaviour of her grandson and the concern for his wellbeing, this parent lacked self-confidence, low self-esteem, and confidence that she can manage her grandson's behaviour. She appreciated at the opportunity to engage with the service to learn new strategies to manage his behaviour and expressed that she would like to meet with other parents in the same situation.

This parent has utilised the service to its fullest capacity attending every forum in her area engaging with other parents being open to advice, guidance, and information. She engages with practitioners by calling and texting on her own volition seeking immediate support when a situation arises regarding grandson. She felt that she was not able to reach out to her case workers but felt relaxed talking with us as she feels she could express herself freely and not feel as if she is being judged by KTT team. So, calling became easy for her whenever she just needs to talk to someone we were always at the end of the phone with a reassuring word. She also uses the safe space provided for parents to open and express her emotions, how she's feeling at the time expressing how they are not coping very well and is always looking forward to meeting with the team of KTT and the other parent. This parent has never been outside of her area (Coventry) and always upon our meeting says 'I don't know what I would do without you guys, thank you so much'. We have been supporting this parent who has since made a huge turn around in managing her grandchild's behaviour although his behaviour has continued to escalate, she has been able to stand her ground and not give in to his demands and accept help from other agencies. Despite her own personal challenges, she has grown in confidence, building self-esteem and continues to grow and managed to take the necessary steps to making the changes that was needed. She is now able to give support to other parents and is always the first to sing our praises encouraging the other parents how valuable and effective the support from KTT is.



CASE STUDY:

Young Person was referred to us in June 2022 after moving to a number of areas within Coventry. As a newcomer, he had been targeted by older, exploitative males and was at risk of being groomed into criminality. His was a familiar story of a teenage lad simply trying to fit in and make new friends in a new neighbourhood. There were several missing episodes on record and evidence of 'county lines' activity with possession of an imitation firearm and class 'A' drugs prepared for sale.

He had been re-located to his father's house by Social Services and it became apparent his home life was chaotic. There were several siblings and half siblings at the address and his stepmother/father's (now ex) partner was also due to give birth to a fifth child. Along with two excitable large dogs for good measure the YP felt side-lined from day one. We began seeing him at home to build rapport and trust but it was proving difficult to hold his attention in such a busy household

Sessions continued at his new school where he was on probation. He always presented well, communicated well, was eager to work and had a genuine desire to do well at school and in later life. This positive attitude seemed to contradict the person his father was describing. He liked his new school and wants to stay there permanently. As a consequence his performance metrics are fantastic, feedback from staff was positive and his social circles at school are healthy. Then the summer holidays hit. At home he was regularly running away to a coppice across the road frequented by homeless class 'A' drug users. It became apparent was merely escaping the chaos of home life and a month or so later he went missing altogether, and he was impossible to reach and the Police were looking for him and we all had our eyes open. We received a call from his Social Worker at 8:00 on a Friday night. She had spotted him in the town centre and bought him a cheap phone. This meant we could talk to him about his missing episodes, find out the triggers and causes, reassure him and plan for a solution. As he was prone to disappearing we managed to persuade him to agree to a G.P.S. tag being fitted. He wanted to stay out of trouble, was only running away to escape home life and did not welcome the attention he was receiving from local elders. The tag enabled police to track him should he run off but more importantly it would discourage the criminal element from targeting him. The G.P.S. tag is a genius idea on many levels. Not only does it track a wearers location, but it also removes the responsibility of 'walking away' from trouble or an unsafe peer group. It makes the wearer a 'social pariah' to shady groups involved in criminality all without it appearing to be the wearers choice.

His Social Worker found him, kept him safe, supplying a phone, assessing a temporary home for the night with his sister, and arranging for an official relocation as soon as. He chose to move in with his mother and two siblings and has been happy and stable since. He has his own bedroom, is forging a bond with mum and his brothers and his school reports remain outstanding. He will be assessed shortly and is likely to be offered a permanent place at the school he has been placed in. The specialist behavioural department have fed back his progress well and genuinely look out for his welfare.

Outside of school his life continues to improve. The YP is attending weekly boxing sessions at a local gym, as well as attending Coventry Boys & Girls Club and he is enjoying both immensely, socialising well and wants to pursue boxing passionately.



Delivery Teams

A team made up of Community Navigators and Education Intervention Advisors has been working across the region, in each local authority area to provide a physical interface for the VRU at a local level. This team has directly provided universal, primary preventative approaches, like training, and has supported the integration of key targeted approaches based on evidence. The team have also strengthened partnership responses to incidents of violence across the region, attending partnership meetings on a daily basis to connect responses and provide access to a range of interventions from the delivery model. The delivery team are well embedded locally, with most co-located in Community Safety Partnerships, Police Stations and a variety of other community locations. They are accessible and provide consistent representation of the VRU in a local area, supporting partnerships to prevent and reduce violence.

Throughout the region in 2021/22, all areas have also been able to access the following interventions and support through the delivery team:

- Access to lived experience mentors.
- Access to clinical psychologists.
- Trauma Informed practice support for education settings.
- Step Together Chaperone Scheme on 19 school routes.
- Teachable moments in A & E departments.

- St Giles County Lines Support Service.
- St Giles County Lines Rescue and Response Service.
- Heal Hub Online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.
- Resettlement Support following custody.

As well as these regional services, funding has been made available to local areas to support violence prevention and reduction partnerships, to deliver services that are bespoke to their area. Across the West Midlands, the total number of young people aged 24 and under helped in 21/22 was 48,920; and the total number of young people aged 25 and over helped in 21/22 was 403. This work is significant and makes an impact.

The type of interventions provided as part of partnership responses have included: individual and group mentoring; therapeutic work; family support; youth work; diversionary activity; specialist violence prevention workshops for schools; youth work around schools; coordinated support through Step Together; training/awareness raising for local organisations or the community; additional community or youth engagement work to address potential community tension as a result of the incident. The team have worked within partnerships to respond to around 70 incidents of violence per quarter.



Children and Young People

I have a duty to hold the Chief Constable to account, for the duty that WMP have, in relation to the safeguarding and protection of children and this has manifested in a number of high-profile cases, namely the tragic cases of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Kaylee Jayde Priest. It was my responsibility to scrutinise the role of the Force and ensure that they had fulfilled their responsibilities, as part of the Children's Local Safeguarding Board.

Upon my election, I committed to maintaining the Youth Commission and peer elections and a new cohort of Youth Commissioners followed swiftly in July 2021. Sixteen young leaders were inducted in August 2021 and have reported their progress to my Strategic Policing and Crime Board twice during the past year.

Outreach youth consultation on my draft Police and Crime Plan, provided an insight into the issues that most concerned young people, based on a representative sample interviewed and videoed across the region. Youth Commissioners endorsed the findings of the research and used three priority issues to be showcased at the annual Youth Summit. These were community policing, safer travel and reducing violence and intimidation against women and girls.

The Youth Summit in March 2022, attracted 160 young people and police officers hosted by Youth Commissioners. They co-designed and delivered the event and provided outstanding role models for

the audience. I was invited, alongside the Chief Constable, ACC Bell, and the Safer Travel Team to present against the themes. This was interspersed with delegates using VRP digital mapping tools to pin locations and incidents of crime or safety fears in their neighbourhoods, on their travel to school and work and in the public realm of town and city centres.

The event shared information on violence reduction programmes by the VRP with local contacts, our #NoExcuseForAbuse campaign messaging, our Upstander campaign and actively encouraged reporting of sexual harassment on public transport. An open mic session on what behaviours needed to change to reduce violence against women and girls had active participation from all genders. This will have ensured the information has reached and will influence a wider and younger audience.

The event included young people from Police Cadets, Youth Councils, youth organisations in uniform alliance, some sixth form colleges, the VRP Youth Assembly and youth-led organisations from around the force area, that I work in partnership with our commission. The event offers an opportunity for the young people of the West Midlands to meet and engage with me, with neighbourhood and senior officers from WMP, whilst providing a platform for youth voice around policing and crime.



Youth Commissioners are now being supported to be active on social action, on subjects that affect the young people they represent, using my stakeholder networks and that of their NPU's as well as collaborating with other regional youth structures. With the agreement of the Active Citizens Board, Youth Commissioners will be supported to apply for Helping Communities funding where appropriate for their activity. Youth Commissioners already represent the voice of young people at local authority meetings, community grant panels and stop and search community scrutiny panels.

Youth Commissioners have hosted and acted as facilitators for the VRP at regional faith and youth voice events this year, as well as engaging with academics and political leaders. Such experiences and skill development in the role help develop future leaders. I am proud to say there are now 3 former Youth Commissioners employed in my Office. Their departments are Business Support, the Communications team and as an Assistant PCC. Elsewhere, former Youth Commissioners have roles on the Combined Authority Race Equality Task Force, have been Queen's baton carriers for the Commonwealth Games and as UK British Council youth representatives to the Commonwealth.

A youth stakeholder panel assisted me in recruiting a new Chief Constable this summer. Questions posed had been researched amongst their peers and were discerning and challenging, whilst their feedback to me on each candidates' strengths and weaknesses was immensely useful to me in selecting the successful officer. It is important that each Chief Constable can gain the trust and confidence of youth leaders that carry influence with those they represent.



Criminal Justice

Along with partners across the region and with PCC colleagues, I continue to chair a Regional Criminal Justice Collaboration Forum, to coordinate work around the criminal justice system. In order to ensure that this collaboration does not duplicate the vital work undertaken at Local Criminal Justice Boards, I have instigated a review of how the Forum can operate more effectively, tackle blockages within the wider system and drive improvements.

I have continued to support the work that has examined the issues relating to crime in prisons. Along with a wide range of partners and all of the regional PCCs, I attended an inquiry session that considered how the work established in the region can be developed, shared across all forces and prisons in the region and how collectively, we can influence government policy in this area. There is still too much crime occurring in prisons and some of this is undertaken by organised criminals who continue to operate, causing harm in our communities. I will continue to seek improvements to how we collectively tackle these issues.

Disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System

The Disproportionality Committee reports to the wider Regional Criminal Justice Collaboration Forum and undertakes work to understand and tackle the disproportionality that exists within the West Midlands Criminal Justice System. The position of chair was taken over by WMPCC Deputy Chief Executive, Alethea Fuller in February 2022.

The group focuses on 4 key strands of work; learning from our history, which aims to assess the extent to which lessons from previous inquiries have been learned and implemented, the end to end system, which specifically looks at disproportionality in relation to stop and searches, offending, enforcement and out of court disposals.

Representation primarily focuses on the representation of black and minority ethnic individuals in the criminal justice system, including in the youth justice service and finally, engagement is prioritised and a lived experience panel is looking to be trialled so that lived experience can penetrate into practice and affect delivery.

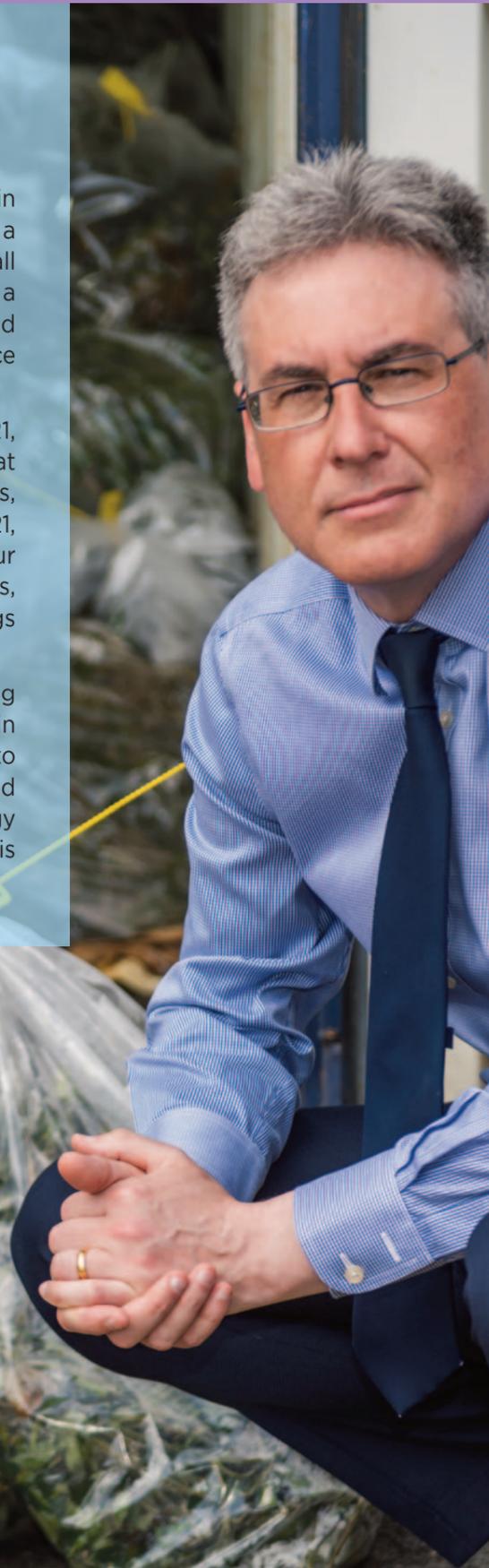


The Drugs Strategy

I continue to support the Home Office funded, Heroin and Crack Acton Area (HACAA) project. This was a region-wide initiative working with partners from all four police force areas to develop responses to a variety of public health issues, particularly around heroin and crack markets, the links to serious violence and the increase in drug-related deaths.

A report was published by my office in May 2021, which included a series of recommendations aimed at reducing the harm drugs cause to our communities, as well as the people who use them. In October 2021, I was pleased to appoint a dedicated officer to our Regional Team to progress these recommendations, as well as supporting the overall response to drugs across the region.

With the publication of the new government drug strategy, From Harm to Hope, being published in December 2021, the HACAA project has allowed us to work collaboratively with partners in the region and beyond, to identify the opportunities the new strategy brings and ensure information and good practice is shared far and wide.



CASE STUDY:

John became dependent on drugs and alcohol at the age of 25. He had been suffering from seizures due to his drug habits and offending daily to fund those habits. John admitted to committing burglaries and assaults, and to carrying and using a weapon whilst committing those offences. Successive prison sentences did nothing to break the cycle of offending. It was only when he was offered a residential rehabilitation place as part of the O2R programme 10 years later at the age of 35 that he finally stopped using drugs and desisted from crime, reuniting with his family, and attending the gym whilst seeking employment.

I was drinking every day and using cocaine and smoking cannabis. First thing every morning and last thing every night. For 10 years... In those 10 years I spent 5 years in prison. In and out, getting older, you know. I was doing AA in prison, but I got out of prison right before Covid hit. And I just got back on it straight away. It took over me again although I had every intention of getting clean. But Covid hit and I was stuck in my flat on my own. When you're alone and you're bored... I just went back to doing what I do best. I started having seizures and blackouts and coughing up blood, and my stomach problems flared up again. I wasn't well, it was clear that drugs and alcohol were affecting my health.

Why did I want to attend rehab? Because I saw no other way of getting clean. This was an opportunity to get my life back and change. I was committing opportunist shop lifting to fund my ways, checking car doors for change to buy drugs. I had been to prison for house burglaries, fraud, money laundering...I had also dealt Class A drugs. Although I had not come to the attention of the police since 2019, I was on probation and on licence for a burglary. I didn't want to continue a life of crime and saw rehab as an opportunity. Also because of the health issues I had encountered, my mental and emotional wellbeing was at rock bottom, and I had suicidal and self-harm thoughts. I had overdosed in the past. The pain and suffering I had caused my family... I

knew I needed to change or else I would be dead soon. I was determined to succeed which is why I was willing to change all my character defects and change my way of thinking. Rehab would enable me to do this. The choices were either jail, death or rehab.

When I met Officer 1 he was easy to talk to. He answered all my questions and I was happy because I was getting the help I needed. I had a wobble a few weeks into rehab because of a girl. I left rehab and had a drink. I told O2R staff right away. Then the rehab manager said I could go back. Sometimes you need to fail to succeed. Before I would have carried on using, but as soon as the drink touched my lips I, for the first time - and that's because of O2R -, I knew how it was going to end up. I've had thoughts about relapsing, but I haven't acted on them. They're only thoughts. It's only when you act on them that you're in trouble. I just think about where it will lead to, I think about the consequences. I can just ring up one of the O2R lads and talk it through. Once you talk it through, by the time you finish the conversation, the thought has gone.

I learned a lot about addiction with O2R; how it affects you, how it affects others. I'm still learning about it but I'm in a better place than I was 4 months ago. I got my head down and did it. I learnt to express myself, I never used to do any of that before rehab. I realised it works. I'm eating properly, I'm healthy. I feel like I'm myself again. Now I think positively. And I just try to get on with life. I go to the gym, and I am going to start an adult social care course. Everyone tells me how good I look now compared to before O2R. I'm staying clean for me but I'm also doing it for them. My family is now supporting me; we've reconnected. I've got my sister-in-law, I've got my niece and nephew, and my brother-in-law. I've got a good support network around me now that they can see I'm trying to become a better person. O2R is a good programme, and it should be available to more people because it works. It's much more effective than prison, and that's coming from someone that has been to prison many times. That doesn't work; O2R does



CASE STUDY:

Stacy was a 'usual suspect' for police, often seen begging and stealing on Birmingham high street. Stacy had been diagnosed as bipolar and had overdosed on heroin over three times in the past. She felt her life was unmanageable, and that she was powerless over her addiction to the point of being suicidal. Stacy says she had not been offered any counselling or support until participating in the O2R programme. She managed to complete the full recovery programme upon her first attempt.

I had deliberately overdosed on tablets last year. My brother found me unconscious. I was 1-2 hours away from being put in an induced coma, but I woke up. This is when I started to realise that I had a serious problem, but it still took me a year to get help. This was my rock bottom start - when I took the overdose. A year later it just got worse, and I realised that it was time to sort my life out and save myself.

I was begging and stealing to fund my drug habit. I met Officer 2 on the streets. She told me about O2R and I grabbed the opportunity with both hands. I grasped my chance and ran with it - I was going to embrace the opportunity for recovery this time. I didn't know what detox even was at the time. It helped that all of the staff were also in recovery and not reading out of a textbook. The groups gave me all the knowledge about what recovery is. The structure and routine in rehab was a good thing because my life before had none. I was a very isolated person. You must get up at a set time, have breakfast at a set time, participate in groups at a set time, dinner, meds, bedtime, you see, it's all at set times. It's really good. There were things in place to prevent relapse from happening. I would have definitely used if I wasn't in a safe place like that. I had no issues at all, I was doing really well. I'm quite surprised myself at how well I did. I even became house leader.

Following O2R, having completed my treatment at Seasons, I have now been clean and sober for 6 months. I cannot believe I am clean now. I am very proud of myself. I now feel a lot of shame and guilt for what I put everyone through. I'm volunteering at Seasons, trying to give back what I was given. O2R staff will tell you that I had no issues throughout my time at Seasons. I guess sometimes rehab can be straight forward as much as it can be chaotic. It was the best experience for me.



DIVERT CASE STUDY:

On 15th July 2022 a Male service user was referred to DIVERT via West Midlands Police as a result of cannabis possession. An assessment took place and meanwhile it was taking place, the individual in question had said 'the interaction with the police gave me the wake-up call I needed to make the changes.'

The young person was smoking cannabis daily, 1 - 2 spliffs of an evening. It was helping him manage the day to day stresses of his life. However this DIVERT intervention has been a wakeup call and he has already made some changes. He was provided with the relevant information needed to assist in making the changes he wanted and is currently on holiday and spending the time to make his change and is currently drug free. He said that he feels embarrassed and upon returning home he will be moving back in with his parents as he is struggling financially and will be building some more stability into his lifestyle choices.



CASE STUDY:

Michelle was introduced to drugs and crime by her boyfriend. She became a prolific offender and heroin user. Successive prison sentences and community orders did nothing to break the cycle of offending. It was only when she was offered a residential rehabilitation place 16 years later at the age of 38 that she finally stopped using heroin and desisted from crime. Had she been diverted into treatment and rehabilitation earlier, this would have potentially reduced police, court, and prison time and, most likely, reduced reoffending.

I didn't commit my first offence until I was 22. I was working full time up until that point. I'd got in with the wrong crowd that I'd met through my ex-boyfriend who was a well-known shoplifter. He'd been to jail numerous times and I suppose in a way that sort of excited me. I'd probably shoplifted about ten times before getting caught for the first time. The police were called, and I got caution, but that didn't deter me. I thought, oh, a little slap on the wrist is nothing really. And then my offences escalated because I'd developed a habit to feed. I was still committing shop theft, but it became more regular. It was probably about six, seven times a day.

I was given community orders which didn't work. I'd turn up to my appointment and tell them I was fine and I'd go. There was no help. There was no talking to me about why I was doing it. It was just a tick on the piece of paper to say that I'd turned up. I had a drug worker that I'd go and see once a week and be drug tested. She'd ask me how I am and I'd say "fine". Then she'd tell me to keep up the good work. And I'd be thinking, keep up what good work? I'm still using and I'm still stealing. I used to blag the drug tests by taking someone else with me who wasn't using. And that's how it continued. The drug workers that I had been using didn't have a clue. They'd never been in my situation. They never used, so in my eyes how could they help me if they didn't know what I was going through or how I was feeling?

Then in 2002 I got sent to custody and that was scary. I'd never been to prison before and it was really tough. There was no methadone so I had to do basically a bareback withdrawal. All they'd give you was Paracetamol. I didn't sleep for three weeks. In a way that first time was a deterrent but I came out with the same problems so nothing changed.

About four months after I was released I was on heroin again and I started committing more offences. I was sent to Foston Hall women's prison three times in one year. It was just little sentences like two months or three months. I'd come straight back out and start using again. It just didn't stop me. I had three meals a day, a bed, a duvet, free view, and of course all my mates were there, so I'd say it was like a little respite from the outside. In 2012, I got arrested again for another shop theft. This time the magistrate gave me a 12-month prison sentence - straight back to the same jail. Straight back to the same faces. I couldn't find a way out of what I was doing so it was easier to carry on and do it. I think I probably got about 60 odd offences for shop theft. The custodial sentences that I've had were just a little breakaway from my reality of being homeless and reliant on crime to get through the day. Prison didn't deter me in any way and it definitely didn't stop me committing more crimes.

The thing that helped me in the end was going into residential rehab. I did a 12-step Narcotics Anonymous programme. I learned about my behaviours, and I learned about why I did what I did. It was a lot of work, but I think it actually saved my life. Sending addicts to rehab instead of custody would benefit that person more than any custodial sentences or community sentences would.

Looking back, I'm embarrassed that I've wasted so many years of my life doing nothing. I wasn't living life like I should have been, I was just a sorry existence. That's how I feel, looking back now on over twenty years of using, a life wasted. It's horrendous.

Strategic Policing Requirement

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.

Collaboration between police forces and PCCs requires investment in the mechanisms for joint working. My Office hosts 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 (NPAS).

We have played a key role in the shaping and development of NPAS. I have engaged in consultations regarding the future of this important national service and supported changes to enhance its governance. I supported the Force with engaging in conversations around potentially hosting NPAS, but based on the challenges involved, I did not feel it was in the best interests of West Midlands communities to take this any further. I wrote to the Home Secretary on this matter on 2 occasions, stating that financial stability needed to be guaranteed for me to participate in any further conversations. The assurances that I required from the Home Office, were not forthcoming.

These regional collaborative workstreams 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.

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 these. The Regional Policy Officers attend quarterly Regional Ops meetings, to ensure PCC representation and engagement across these specialist areas of policing.

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

I am the Chairperson of the National Counter-Terrorism Strategic Board. The Strategic Board oversees the collaboration agreement between the 11 Counter-Terrorism Units, which work together daily to confront the threat from terrorism. By default, as chair of the Strategic Board, I am also the national lead for PCCs on counter terrorism. As part of my role, I have led the engagement of PCCs, in the national review of police Special Branch services, which culminated their lift and shift into Counter Terrorism Units in April 2022.

As a Strategic Board, we have also scrutinised the financing of Counter Terrorism Policing and written to the Home Secretary requesting more flexibility around the use of resources. As chair, I have ensured we have a strategic understanding of threat and risk at the national level and I seek to ensure we have an effective structure, through which to ensure national strategy and policy is implemented consistently, efficiently and effectively across all police forces.

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. Working with my PCC colleagues across the region, we have also convened “deep dive” sessions held at the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit, the most recent looking into the local implementation of the Special Branch changes and also covering the introduction of a new approach to nominal management.

Following the Fishmonger’s Hall attack in 2019, this topic has been of particular importance for the region as the offender was a Stoke resident and had been managed by Staffordshire Police and West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit prior to the attack. Through our scrutiny, we have sought assurance that improvements have been made and agencies are working better together, in the management of terrorist offenders.

Major Incidents

In March 2022, I attended an exercise for regional PCCs, testing how we would respond to a major incident such as a terrorist attack. PCCs have a key role to play in a major incident: we have a responsibility as civic leaders to provide community reassurance, to provide support to victims and families of a major incident and to hold to account the Force, for their role in the policing response and recovery. This was the first session of its kind for PCCs in the region and we took away an action plan, for how we can strengthen the role we play and ensure there are effective plans in place should an attack happen.

West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit



REGIONAL ORGANISED CRIME UNIT

Strategic oversight of the ROCU continues to be a shared responsibility with PCC colleagues from across the region. We receive a comprehensive quarterly performance report at our Regional Governance Group meetings, that are attended by regional PCCs and their Chief Executives and Chief Constables. Along with this performance report, additional detailed reports on different aspects of the services delivered by the ROCU are delivered and their work is scrutinised.

The ROCU is undertaking a complete organisational review and I have fed into this process and will continue to do so as this progress.

Our regional policy officers continue to support ROCU, to ensure that there is an effective response to shared threats across the region and nationally. The relationship between the Force, ROCU and National Crime Agency (‘NCA’) is vital and I am keen to ensure that all agencies work effectively and efficiently together.

I continue to ensure that the ROCU is adequately funded to meet and tackle the regional threat and harm caused by organised criminals. The policing uplift programme has been applied to the ROCU and it now delivers around 25 specialist services and capabilities on behalf of the whole region. Many of these services would not be able to be delivered at a force level.



When I was elected in May 2021, I pledged to keep the views of local residents at the heart of my plans for policing. Equally important, is effective engagement with communities of all kinds across the West Midlands and I have prioritised community engagement and contact with communities.

I have personally attended over 70 community meetings and visits to community projects. Over the last year, I've been out and about in our communities to hear your views and concerns and through ongoing work, my office I am giving residents even more opportunities to have their say in how the region is policed. I have also attended engagements with stakeholder networks and forums, residents' meetings and community forums, in order to ensure that the people of West Midlands are represented by me, and that your voice is heard in all the work that we do. I was pleased that, with the relaxing of Covid-19 restrictions over the course of the year, I was able once more to get out and about, meeting people face-to-face and hearing your concerns and suggestions.

My Police and Crime Plan was published on 1 November 2021 and I ensured that it was informed by an extensive and wide-ranging consultation. This was to ensure that your voice was truly at the heart of the priorities. The consultation period spanned from my first day in office on Thursday 13th May, right up until Friday 1st October 2021. I ensured that the consultation process was as inclusive as possible. I wanted it to be a truly accountable, participative and transparent process and a reflection of the diverse nature of our region.

My political team and I, have also launched major campaigns to make the West Midlands safer, particularly focusing on my priorities of sexual violence, domestic abuse, violence against women and girls, hate crime and fraud, and there is much more in development.



COVID Recovery

The COVID pandemic impacted the lives of all people in the UK. 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. Over the past 18 months, the Covid-19 pandemic has presented yet further unprecedented challenges to policing and the criminal justice system.

As Police and Crime Commissioner, I felt it was imperative 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.

The Police and Crime Plan positions my expectations on how recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic will be incorporated for services and the public sector, which I maintained close oversight of with monthly reports published on my website and considered at Strategic Policing and Crime Board.

It was important 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.

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. The threat of online fraud, sexual abuse, and other cyber offences, is also very real, and my office 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.

During the pandemic, 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.



It 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, too much reduced face-to-face contact.

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 Partnership 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.

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 and like the Force, the Office stepped up its welfare offer to all staff.

Fraud

It is estimated, that in the year ending March 2022, there were 4.5 million fraud offences in England and Wales, this is an increase of 25% on the year ending March 2020. There has been an increase in the proportion of fraud incidents which were cyber-related from 51% to 63%, suggesting that a lot of the increase in fraud has been driven by fraud committed digitally.

This continuing increase and developing complexity in fraud is of great concern due to both the lack of capacity within police forces to investigate crimes, as noted by several HMICFRS reports, and a continued lack of a focus on how to improve the approach to fraud nationally. In addition, there is not currently a full understanding of why estimations of fraud are increasing but reports to Action Fraud are decreasing.

Locally, the threat from and approach to fraud is assessed through the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Fraud Board. Cash for Crash has been identified as a serious issue within the West Midlands, by an insurance fraud board, and I am working with partners to understand the full picture and to develop a coordinated approach to tackling this type of fraud.

Through the Board, research has been commissioned to look into what a public health approach to Fraud looks like in the West Midlands. We now have two reports; one covering the public health approach and how it can be applied to addressing fraud and one articulating how to roll the approach out in the West Midlands. There are 8 recommendations in the report. We are convening a steering group over the next month or so to get partners involved in the local fraud response, to co-own this area of work. Over the next year, we will be working towards implementing these recommendations with our partners.

A rise in money-muling has been raised by partners through the board as well. I am therefore supporting the role out of the 'money mules' educational programme. It provides young people, in particular vulnerable young people, with the information they need to be aware of this activity and the serious consequences it can have. This programme consists of classroom workshops, which are being delivered by WMP Cyber Police and Community Support Officers, alongside an overarching targeted social media campaign, funded by HSBC. The workshops have reached 4,000 young people so far and the online campaign will be launching later in the year.





Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

PCCs are required to publish certain information to allow the public to hold them to account and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2021, requires that they publish responses to HMICFRS PEEL inspection reports of their police force and also to publish a summary infographic showing how each aspect of a force’s performance has been graded, under the PEEL inspection framework (inadequate; requires improvement; adequate; good; or outstanding). In addition, if HMICFRS publishes an inspection report which relates to police forces, section 55 of the Police Act 1996, requires the PCC to prepare comments on the report and to publish them (section 55(5)).

Since taking up post in May 2021 I have responded to 14 inspections of West Midlands Police and all my responses can be found here: [HMICFRS Reports - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)

HMICFRS graded West Midlands Police’s performance across 11 areas of policing and found the force was ‘good’ in five areas, ‘adequate’ in three areas and ‘requires improvement’ in three areas. HMICFRS said the areas requiring improvement included how the force investigates crime, how it supports victims and how it protects vulnerable people.

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Preventing crime	Responding to the public	Investigating crime	
	Recording data about crime	Managing offenders	Supporting victims	
	Treatment of the public	Developing a positive workplace	Protecting vulnerable people	
	Disrupting serious organised crime			
	Good use of resources			

The PEEL inspection 2021/2022, shows that the police funding model is failing to allocate resources appropriately to address threat, risk and demand. West Midlands Police is an efficient police force yet, as the Inspector’s commentary notes, lacks the capacity and resources to cope with the demand it faces. The national failure to fully implement the existing police funding formula, coupled with the historic legacy of a failure by the former Police Authority to raise precept in line with other areas, has left West Midlands Police structurally underfunded. The Inspectorate’s acknowledgement of the Force’s position is long overdue but still welcome.

The performance in context section, highlights the level of demand faced within the West Midlands and the challenges faced by West Midlands Police. For the 2020/21 financial year, West Midlands Police recorded 29.8 domestic abuse related incidents per 1,000. HMICFRS note that this is much higher than other forces, although it is in line with other similar force areas, such as West Yorkshire and Merseyside.

West Midlands Police are also tackling higher levels of serious crime, such as firearms and knife crime offences, than that of other force areas. Some forms of violence have been rising in the West Midlands for several years, driven in no small part by poverty, deprivation

and inequality. Local authorities in more deprived, urban areas, have seen much greater cuts to funding than those serving more affluent areas. It is no surprise then, that forces like West Midlands Police were faced with a more challenging environment than forces in less disadvantaged areas.

I welcome acknowledgement of the concerted work that has been done to improve crime recording. West Midlands Police has improved the speed within which crime is recorded and the accuracy of its recording. As noted by HMICFRS, this is positive for victims, as it demonstrates that West Midlands Police take their reports of crimes seriously. However, Chief Constable Sir David Thompson has reported that the crime recording standards can contribute to perverse outcomes, notably regarding the ability to “de-crime” an incident.

The consequences of moving to a model whereby incidents are recorded as crimes as a prelude to investigation – rather than the reverse – need to be fully understood. It appears, for example, that when comparing like-for-like crimes, police now record more crimes than the public self-reports, via the Crime Survey for England and Wales. This development is unprecedented and is in part linked to the falling criminal justice outcome rates.



The Strategic Police and Crime Board

The Strategic Police and Crime Board, supports me in holding West Midlands Police to account and setting the strategic direction for the force. It meets on a monthly basis, in public and is an opportunity for the public to submit questions and petitions relating to my duties and responsibilities.

Following my election as Police and Crime Commissioner, I appointed my top team to support me in holding West Midlands Police to account and setting the strategic direction for England's second largest force. I ensured that we held a competitive and transparent process during recruitment and have appointed each successful Board member for the next 12 months.

I selected my Board in June 2021, and they are:

- Two Assistant Police and Crime Commissioners: Tom McNeil and Cllr Wasim Ali
- Victims Commissioner: Cllr Nicky Brennan
- Board members: Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal, Dr Cath Hannon and Charmaine Burton.

My board is 50% female and is representative of the West Midlands. They are helping me to deliver the priorities that the people of the West Midlands elected me to deliver. We have many challenges over the coming years and the Board brings a wealth of experience, that will help me to deliver upon the public's priorities, to make the region safer and reduce crime.

Internal Audit

I am responsible for ensuring, that my functions are conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. This includes the maintenance of a sound system of internal control, and that arrangements are in place for the management of risk.



Governance and Accountability

The Joint Annual Governance Statement, reflects the established governance framework, and it is published alongside the annual accounts of the PCC. A joint corporate governance framework, also sets out how governance operates for both the Chief Constable and the PCC. In addition, I continued with the established arrangements for holding the force to account, adhering to the detail set out in the Policing Protocol 2011.

I met with the Chief Constable and senior officers and staff on a weekly basis, for the duration of the year, returning to face-to-face meetings as soon as possible, in order to maintain the strong working relationships in place. The meetings covered wide ranging topics, relating to current strategic and operational matters. I have scrutinised force performance data, 101/999 and Contact with the Public, Police recruitment and the national programme of uplift of police officers.

I also requested a **Review of the Estates Strategy 2021** when I took up office, as I was aware of the significant impact this was having. This was presented at my November 2021 Board meeting. I ensure I have a good understanding of the challenges and successes the force faces across the range of policing, to understand how the force's work has regard to the requirements of the Police and Crime Plan and to enable effective oversight and scrutiny of West Midlands Police.

The Joint Audit Committee provides independent assurance on the governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, through its oversight and scrutiny of the work of Internal Audit, External Audit, inspectorate reports and risk registers. It provides this service both to me and the Chief Constable. Further assurances are obtained, via the Annual Governance Statement, the Statement of Accounts and review of the Scheme of Governance. Joint Audit Committee meets in public and the Chair of the Joint Audit Committee also attends my Strategic Policing and Crime Board annually.



Grants, both large and small, are one of the key ways in which I make a direct contribution to making the West Midlands a safer place. Projects, initiatives and groups tackle a range of issues, responding to domestic abuse, sexual violence, victims of crime, cybercrime, county lines, serious youth violence, mental health, sports diversion and youth justice, mentoring, rehabilitation, offending and out of court disposals, among others.

The information below sets out how grant funding has been spent across a number of different funding streams. [The full Budget report for 2021/22 is available here.](#) It sets out expenditure for capital and revenue, across all areas of policing and the OPCC.

Community Initiative and Active Citizens Funding 2021-22

£400,000 of money, seized from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 ('POCA') was again made available in 2021-22, to fund community projects which reflect my aims as PCC, and the priorities of the West Midlands Police. The funding is shared between the Neighbourhood Policing Unit's ('NPU') and is open to community organisations to apply for grants of up to £5,000, to support and fund projects, which contribute to crime prevention and reduction, and community safety in the local areas.

The first round was launched as the Community Initiative Fund ('CIF') in April 2021. CIF core aims were to help and support those organisations who had been running community projects, throughout the pandemic and lockdowns.

Community Initiative Fund allocations 2021/22

Neighbourhood Policing Unit	CIF Funding Allocated	Number of projects
Birmingham East	£11,800	3
Birmingham West	£18,673	4
Pan Birmingham (East & West)	£14,860	3
Coventry	£14,969	3
Dudley	£4,058	2
Sandwell	£15,741	5
Solihull	£18,405	6
Walsall	£15,260	7
Wolverhampton	£30,108	8

With Covid-19 restrictions lifting, the Active Citizens Fund ('ACF') was then relaunched in September 2021, encouraging innovative projects, which promote active public citizenship and a closer working relationship between local communities and West Midlands Police. A third and final round of ACF was opened in January 2022.

The funding was allocated to projects, as per the tables above ('CIF') and below ('ACF') and also to a number of start-up and 'world café' initiatives. The funding was allocated to projects as per the tables above ('CIF') and below ('ACF') and to a number of start-up and 'world café' initiatives.

Active Citizens Fund allocations 2021/22

Neighbourhood Policing Unit	ACF Funding Allocated	Number of projects
Birmingham East	£42,899	14
Birmingham West	£36,989	10
Coventry	£24,462	7
Dudley	£29,923	8
Sandwell	£24,377	8
Solihull	£9,420	2
Walsall	£16,853	6
Wolverhampton	£9,010	2

External Commissioning

The External Commissioning budgets are allocated in line with the priorities within my Police and Crime Plan and the projects that we funded, during the financial year are set out below.

External Commissioning budget allocations 2021/22

Project / Area	Funding 2021/22
Youth Promise Plus	£97,000
Domestic Violence Perpetrator Interventions & Drive	£862,452
Cranstoun Arrest Referral Service	£298,127
Enterprise to Employment	£113,216
Reducing offending through employment - Black Country	£176,000
Stop and Search education/Precious Lives	£20,000
Weapons Surrender Bins	£40,000
West Midlands Combined Authority Membership	£25,000
Substance Misuse	£60,000
Protect Co-ordinator	£36,000
Safe Space	£10,000
Regional OOCd for Anger and Anxiety	£42,000
Contribution to Social Value Portal	£27,000
Birmingham Anchor Network	£5,000
Youth Commissioners	£8,000
Dr Chard Work - "Punishing Abuse"	£20,000
Family Drug and Alcohol Courts	£40,000
CARA	£50,000
Total Allocated to Projects	£2,012,576





west midlands police and crime commissioner

Simon Foster
West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Keep in touch

This report is important as it gives you the opportunity to review my progress and I welcome your feedback.

There are lots of ways to keep in touch.

You can:

Write to us:

Police & Crime Commissioner's Office,
Lloyd House, Colmore Circus Queensway, Birmingham,
B4 6NQ

Tel: 0121 626 6060 Fax: 0121 626 5003

www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk

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@WestMidsPCC

If you require any part of this document in Braille, larger print or another language, please contact my office.