



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

24th January 2023

Report: Neighbourhood Policing

Police and Crime Plan Priority: Rebuilding Community Policing

Presented by: ACC Matthew Ward

Purpose of paper

1. To provide the Strategic Police and Crime Board with a report on progress towards the objectives in the West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025 relating to “*Rebuilding Community Policing*”.
2. West Midlands Police remain fully committed to neighbourhood policing and ensuring those working within the community are equipped and skilled to deliver the outcomes our public deserves.
3. This paper will set out:
 - The role of neighbourhood policing
 - The current deployment of neighbourhood police officers, police staff and PCSOs across West Midlands Police
 - The recruitment & development of neighbourhood police officers, police staff and PCSOs
 - Examples of crime reduction, community and partnership work being undertaken by neighbourhood police officers, police staff and PCSOs
 - Challenges within neighbourhood policing
 - The future of neighbourhood policing
4. There are two appendices with supplementary questions that were asked to be included within this paper:

- An update on West Midlands Police’s recruitment of under-represented groups
- An assessment of West Midlands Police’s response to people with trauma, mental ill health or who are neuro-diverse

The role of neighbourhood policing

5. In September 2022, the Local Policing Portfolio reviewed and re-established its neighbourhood policing priorities in line with the force’s This Works Matters strategic plan (2020-2023), the Police & Crime Plan (2021-25) and the national Beating Crime Plan (2021).
6. West Midlands Police’s neighbourhood policing teams’ priorities in 2022/23 are:
 - Preventing serious youth violence (including violence involving knives)
 - Reducing neighbourhood crime (domestic burglary, vehicle-related crime, theft from the person & robbery)
 - Tackling criminal anti-social behaviour (including off-road motorbikes and car cruising)
 - Mobilising communities to tackle local problems
 - Identifying & protecting the most vulnerable from harm
 - Managing persistent & prolific offenders
 - Reducing repeat demand

The deployment of neighbourhood police officers, police staff and PCSOs

7. West Midlands Police is divided into 8 Neighbourhood Policing Units (NPU) each led by a Chief Superintendent. Each NPU consists of Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Neighbourhood Task Forces, Neighbourhood SOCEX (Serious and Organised Crime Exploitation hubs) and/or Gangs Teams, Partnerships Teams (including School Intervention & Prevention officers), Local Offender Management Teams and Sex Offender Management Teams.

Department	Police Officer	Police Staff	PCSO	Grand Total
Birmingham East NPU	369	7.00	64	440
Birmingham West NPU	404	0.00	86	490
Coventry NPU	217	4.00	58	279
Dudley NPU	123.5	4.00	46	173.5
Sandwell NPU	172	4.00	54	230

Solihull NPU	109	4.00	38	151
Walsall NPU	134.5	5.00	44	183.5
Wolverhampton NPU	190	5.00	62	257
Birmingham Partnerships	27	21.00	0	48
Integrated Offender Management	10	21.00	0	31
Total	1756	75	452	2283

Table 1: Local Policing Establishment (1st January 2023)

Department	Police Officer	Police Staff	PCSO	Grand Total
Birmingham East NPU	373	6.00	55	434
Birmingham West NPU	410	0	78	488
Coventry NPU	209.5	6	52	267
Dudley NPU	123	3	42	168
Sandwell NPU	192	5	45	242
Solihull NPU	118	4	33	155
Walsall NPU	147	5	38	190
Wolverhampton NPU	211	3	55	269
Birmingham Partnerships	47	20	3	70
Integrated Offender Management	10	13.5	0	23.5
Total	1840.5	68.5	401	2306.5

Table 2: Local Policing Strength (1st January 2023)

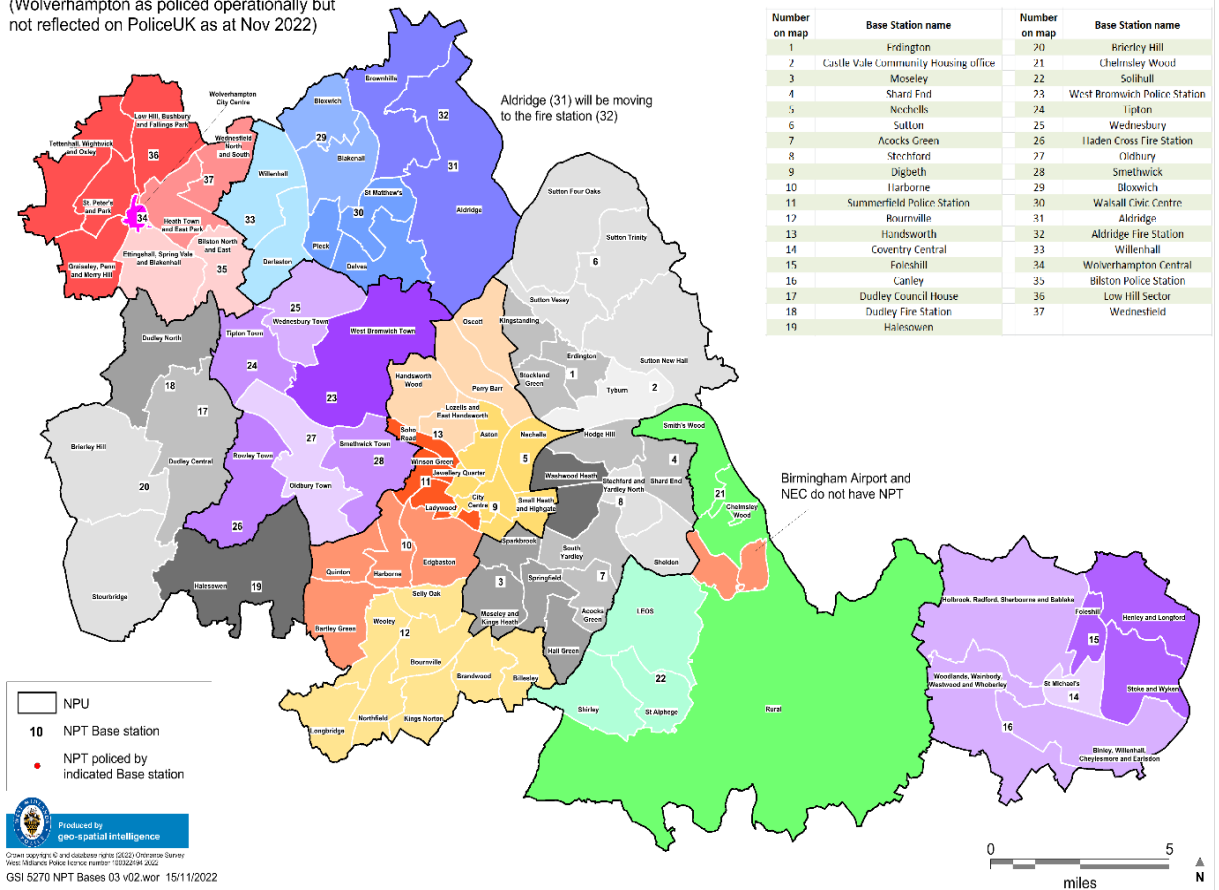
Note:

- *BW and BE NPU share Offender Management resources however posts are recorded under BE NPU*
- *Police officer establishment includes all ranks up to a Chief Superintendent*
- *All numbers have been rounded up or down with the exception of half decimal*

8. There are 192 local authority wards within the West Midlands, policed by 88 Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Each Neighbourhood Policing Team is led by a Sergeant and consists of police officers and police community support officers (PCSO). The teams are based in 36 parade stations within local communities.

Neighbourhood Policing Teams and bases

(Wolverhampton as policed operationally but not reflected on PoliceUK as at Nov 2022)



Full details for each Neighbourhood Policing Team can be found at www.police.uk

The recruitment of neighbourhood police officers, police staff and PCSOs

9. Since the commencement of the uplift programme, 2,531 officers have been recruited by the force through one of six entry routes;

- Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA)
- Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP – also includes DC DHEP)
- Police Now (also includes Police Now DC)
- Professional Policing Degree (PPD).
- Direct Entry Programme
- Transferees
- Re-joiners

10. In 2019, the force used a Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) approach to determine the areas of the force that required an uplift in resource and through this process the Local Policing Portfolio has been uplifted by 271 posts – predominantly focused on the Neighbourhood Task Force, Youth Intervention & Prevention, Impact Areas and more recently Serious

Organised Crime & Exploitation (SOCEX) Hubs. These posts were filled during 2021 and 2022. In addition, to support the uplift, new recruits have provided substantive officers the opportunity to move into the newly developed posts.

11. Over last two years 168 PCSOs left West Midlands Police with 88 becoming Police Constable. In 2022, WMP recruited 61 PCSOs who have been posted to neighbour teams across the West Midlands.

Training & development of neighbourhood police officers, police staff and PCSOs

12. West Midlands Police offer a range of career development and training opportunities which are either classroom based or online. The offer of learning can vary dependant on role, specialism and department. The offer of role specific neighbourhood policing training programme is limited and only provided to student Police Officers and PCSOs upon entry.
13. Initial training for student Police Officers and PCSOs provides the relevant knowledge and skills for their role within neighbourhood policing. A bespoke course provides an overview with aspects of the course including powers and policy related to Anti-Social Behaviour, vulnerability or Crime Prevention.
14. PCSOs are provided inputs around how to connect and build relationships through their local communities by using existing mechanisms such as Early Help, crime prevention, and the Prince's Trust. They are also shown how to set up and run a World Café and taught the benefits that these events bring in helping teams engage with local communities. The key benefits of a World Café are provided, namely the chance for the local police to build relationships in understanding public sentiment and supporting open dialogue. These events can be used to establish a relationship and commence engagement in an area where it is needed.
15. Furthermore, in an effort to ensure West Midlands Police are working with communities and listening to their concerns relating to the service provided, training has been designed to raise awareness of communities and their history. In line with the Fairness & Belonging Strategy a new package has now been produced for all officers "*Learning from our History*". It will be introduced for the first cohorts of students in January 2023. This lesson focuses on black history and issues linked to policing. This is one example where West Midlands Police employees will be mandated to complete online learning relating how the

organisation improves its response to all communities increasing public trust and confidence.

16. The longer-term development of local policing is supported by the accessibility to resources via the online career portal e.g. options relating to coaching and mentoring but also, additional CPD opportunities via multiple methods including webcasts, online guides, newsletters, training events all focused on subjects relating to Policing, career and personal development.
17. There is also mandatory training which all local policing staff are required to attend as part of their ongoing development. The types of training offered can range from the 'Voice of the Child' public protection training that allows officers to identify vulnerability and risk when attending reports of domestic abuse, JESIP joint operational response to major / terrorist incident training that develops officers on how to dynamically respond to critical incidents, through to more localised training that allows staff to understand local opportunities to engage with key partner agencies who they can jointly work with to address community needs.
18. In addition to this there is a formal People Development Board established on each Neighbourhood Policing Unit that is chaired by a Local Command Team member which meets regularly to discuss the training needs and development opportunities for all staff. This board also invites suggestions and ideas from the staff, so it is also a bottom up approach that ensures the local policing teams are able to develop in line with new legislation, societal trends and any changes in partner agency procedures or protocols – all of which helps them deliver a greater service to the local community.
19. West Midlands Police are in the early stages of exploring how to expand the Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) in line with College of Policing guidance to help train and develop future PCSOs.
20. As part of its Professionalising Local Policing strategy, West Midlands Police are working with the Higher Education sector currently responsible for delivery of PCDA, DHEP and dedicated Investigation entry courses, to discuss opportunities to design, create and deliver bespoke training packages specifically for Local Policing. This is part of the second strand of the PLP strategy that is looking at accredited/non-accredited bespoke training packages for all Local Policing staff at level 2,3 and 4.

Neighbourhood policing and Impact Areas

21. Impact Areas are 19 geographical areas within the Neighbourhood Policing Units where there is disproportionate amount of crime, demand, deprivation and harm. The Impact Areas are identified based on demand and need mapping from various data sources across agencies. These areas have been prioritised to reduce crime, demand and harm to improve the quality of life and protect the most vulnerable through coordinated activity and interventions by the Force, partners and communities.

22. The Impact Area teams recognise that root causes of crime and harm across Impact Areas are beyond the control of West Midlands Police alone and there is extensive partnership working with external organisations e.g. local authorities, as well as those in the education, housing and the health sector. Community Safety Partnerships are the main vehicle for this, but it can feature elsewhere too (Safeguarding Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Boards, CONTEST Boards, etc.). Partnership working has included joint initiatives and participating in various partnership meetings. Impact Area teams also work closely with the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) in an attempt to make the areas safer and help reduce crime and harm. All teams have also undertaken extensive community engagement to promote Impact Area work and help build confidence and trust in policing.

23. Regular performance monitoring reports have been presented through the Local Policing Governance Board and Force Performance Panel in relation to crime and harm levels within Impact Areas:

NPU	Impact Areas	Sep-21 to Aug-22			Oct-21 to Sep-22		Nov-21 to Oct-22		Dec-21 to Nov-22		Status
		Crime Harm	Crime Harm	% Dif.	Crime Harm	% Dif.	Crime Harm	% Dif.	Crime Harm	% Dif.	
BE	Bordesley Green	533951	518832	-2.83%	511992.5	-1.32%	498532.5	-2.63%	↑		
	Erdington	582346.5	589159	1.17%	587427.5	-0.29%	584366	-0.52%	↓		
	Sparkbrook and Sparkhill	757484	742281.5	-2.01%	763281	2.83%	755214.5	-1.06%	↑		
BW	Birmingham City Centre	2655679	2592193	-2.39%	2576668.5	-0.60%	2580001.5	0.13%	↓		
	Lozells	617542	617946	0.07%	614950.5	-0.48%	623289.5	1.36%	↓		
	Three Estates	200451.5	207410.5	3.47%	193361.5	-6.77%	201894.5	4.41%	↓		
CV	Hillfields	456828	469347.5	2.74%	469454.5	0.02%	471793.5	0.50%	↓		
	Wood End and Bell Green	148751	152592	2.58%	148387.5	-2.76%	152626	2.86%	↓		
DY	Brierley Hill	246857.5	247732.5	0.35%	244706	-1.22%	244936.5	0.09%	↓		
	Dudley Central	496557.5	492536	-0.81%	491005.5	-0.31%	464298.5	-5.44%	↑		
SW	Princes End	199450	205693.5	3.13%	203393	-1.12%	204071	0.33%	↓		
	Smethwick Soho and Victoria	203164	208917	2.83%	214284	2.57%	227712	6.27%	↓		
	West Bromwich Central	210047	195846.5	-6.76%	189932	-3.02%	192939.5	1.58%	↓		
SH	Chelmsley Town	381274.5	375001.5	-1.65%	370230.5	-1.27%	377215	1.89%	↓		
	Smiths Wood	153884	156674	1.81%	156961	0.18%	156509	-0.29%	↑		
WS	St Matthews Caldmore	415834.5	412819	-0.73%	406952.5	-1.42%	399605	-1.81%	↑		
	Willenhall	43068	45183	4.91%	44635.5	-1.21%	43939.5	-1.56%	↓		
WV	Bilston	79640	84698	6.35%	88955	5.03%	89339	0.43%	↓		
	Whitmore Reans	327710	333866.5	1.88%	341525	2.29%	331849.5	-2.83%	↑		

OUTSTANDING	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	POOR
Reducing 3 months	Reducing 1-2 months	Increasing 1-2 months	Increasing 3 months

Table 3: Change in Crime harm in each Impact Area – Sept 2021 to November 2022

Neighbourhood policing and tackling Serious Youth Violence

24. Serious youth violence (the focus nationally is worded “under 25 Violence with Injury”) is a wide-ranging challenge which affects individuals, families and communities. It comes in multiple forms, takes place within different contexts and situations and cuts across culture, race and socio-economic status.

25. West Midlands Police is currently in receipt of Home Office Serious Youth Violence Funding to specifically target under 25 violence with injury and knife crime. These funds support the work of the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) and ‘GRIP’ which provides additional and enhanced policing activity in violence hotspots including Project Guardian resources.

26. Targeted Guardian Patrols (TGP) commenced on 1st October 2022, a new way of patrolling to help reduce youth violence. Working with the data lab, the Project Guardian team had identified small geographical areas across the force where most serious youth violence is most likely to happen. Analysis had shown these areas to be 1.4 per cent of the force’s geography but 19 per cent of serious youth violence and 18.4 per cent of harm.

27. The team has been asking local neighbourhood teams to run short hotspot patrols, of no longer than an hour, in these areas at times most likely to cause disruption to violent crime.

This new hot spot policing method is funded by Home Office 'GRIP' funding, available to officers on Project Guardian overtime. An independent evaluation of the Targeted Guardian Patrols is expected in Spring 2023.

28. A Serious Youth Violence Reduction Plan is in place on every Neighbourhood Policing Unit, owned by the NPU Commander and led by the NPU Superintendent. West Midlands Police's Internal Audit Team have been commissioned to review these plans with their report due to be published by February 2023.

Neighbourhood policing and protecting the Vulnerable

29. All NPU Commanders undertake key roles to support vulnerable people through statutory safeguarding boards (Child and Adult) along with Community Safety Partnerships. Locally, operational officers undertake joint training with partner agencies in support of safeguarding boards. This is particularly the case in response to joint learning and lessons learned from cases of note. Local policing staff have undertaken training under Project Sentinel, which is the force programme to tackle vulnerability. An example of the work undertaken through Sentinel includes the delivery of trauma informed training to all local policing staff.
30. Each NPU has a central referral system for cases involving vulnerability which is supported by a dedicated Partnerships team Vulnerability Officer. This role involves signposting to relevant partners and third-party agencies and monitoring any emerging trends or issues.
31. Through the national uplift programme Serious Organised Crime and Exploitation (SOCEX) Hubs have been introduced across Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Coventry to coordinate intelligence, investigation and intervention activity with partners. Working proactively, they seek to identify early signs of vulnerability focusing on the victim but also the offender and location, taking more of a contextual safeguarding approach. In Birmingham, the SOCEX hub are linked with the Empower U hub owned by the Birmingham Children's Trust and involved at a multi-agency level to help intervene and safeguard those most in need.
32. All NPU areas have mature partnership exploitation reduction strategies, tactical and operational groups which look at broader interventions. NPUs also support National County Lines weeks of intensification where focus is brought to key strands such as County Lines, Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking. Most NPUs have Organised Crime Group

(OCG) Teams who specifically target those involved in the exploitation of others, drug supply and serious youth violence.

33. With children at risk and vulnerable to radicalisation, the need to ensure local policing understand the risks and are aware of how to safeguard is paramount.

Case Study – PREVENT Ambassadors & Youth Café

PCSOs and frontline local policing teams are being trained as PREVENT ambassadors to represent and work with the Counter Terrorism Policing Unit in identifying and responding to those being exploited and most vulnerable to radicalisation.

In recent months, PCSOs and School Intervention & Prevention Officers, who are signed up as PREVENT Ambassadors, have attended a 'train-the-trainer' and other sessions to deliver a Youth Café workshop session to children and young people in secondary school. The two-hour workshops are focused on three key areas; knife crime, drugs (including County Lines) and radicalisation. The intention is that these areas, which present the most significant risk to young people, are discussed with a selection of 30 children. Youth Café type workshops have received widespread recognition from schools. Delivery by both neighbourhood policing teams and PREVENT officers, will open up this learning to a significant number of children and young people.

Neighbourhood policing and reducing Neighbourhood Crime

34. Neighbourhood Policing Units (NPU) undertake a significant role in co-ordinating prevention and enforcement activity in relation to Neighbourhood Crimes namely domestic burglary, robbery, theft from the person, vehicle-related crime, criminal anti-social behaviour as well serious youth violence (included the involvement of knives).
35. NPU senior leadership team's co-ordinate key operational activity through local governance arrangements (TRM, LTDB, Priority Crime Meetings). Bids for support from across West Midlands Police including Traffic / CMPG, OSU, Dogs, FSU, Drones & ROCU are co-ordinated in this way. NPUs ensure that these wider teams are properly briefed with relevant intelligence, targets and patrol strategies and that outcomes are accurately recorded on CONNECT.

36. Each NPU has a dedicated senior lead for each offence type who ensures that local activity takes place to tackle burglary (Operation TURNHAND), robbery and vehicle crime (Operation SECLUSION). NPU staff undertake targeted patrol activity in hotspot areas in both uniform and plain clothes. Prolific offenders are subject to close monitoring and visits to manage offending behaviour. Outstanding suspects are prioritised for arrests by Neighbourhood Task Force teams and prison recalls and warrants are executed in a timely way. All teams undertake pro-active, intelligence led operations including search warrants at 'chop shops', handlers of criminal property and key suspects. Victims of crime are offered follow up visits to provide reassurance, prevent repeat victimisation and to 'super-cocoon' the immediate neighbouring area.

Case Study – Operation SECLUSION Tackling Vehicle Crime

Vehicle Crime Task Force

In order to tackle this crime, a Vehicle Crime Task Force has been set up, looking at offending across the force area, with a targeted approach to disrupt activity and bring offenders to justice.

In September (the first month of the Task Force) charges for recorded offences of vehicle crime, were the highest for over two years. This has continued, month on month, as the Task Force continues to tackle this offending.

During November, the Task Force arrested and charged two men who are believed responsible for 62 offences of vehicle theft. In the same month a large scale 'chop shop' in the Birmingham area was the subject of a court warrant, six people were arrested and charged with handling stolen goods, a premises closure order has been authorised by the court following a police application. Further work by the team on the back of this, resulted in the execution of a warrant in East of Birmingham where another linked chop shop was located and several stolen vehicles were recovered. This demonstrates the Task Force's agility to react to intelligence, recover stolen property and arrest then charge those responsible.

Crime Reduction Team

The Crime Reduction Team are currently supporting improvements in security at key locations across the West Midlands, which have been highlighted as hot spots for vehicle crime. This also involved the development of partnership working with people, such as hotel chains and large retail outlet in order try and design out crime. This also extends to manufactures, in order to build strong relations to tackle the offending issues.

The Team has looked at innovative ways to help owners to safeguard their vehicles, this involved the use of targeted messaging via Instagram by 'geo fencing' dealerships of a vehicle type which was known to be vulnerable. This messaging provided key crime prevention messaging to those who were taking their vehicles in for servicing etc. This resulted in the messaging being read by over 46,000 people and following this, we could actively see reductions in offending in relation to that vehicle type. A further pilot is taking place in January, where registered keepers of a vulnerable vehicle type will be visited by local officers to provide bespoke crime prevention advice in the Harborne and Edgbaston areas, this is being done in partnership with 'disklok' who will provide those keepers with a discount code to allow them to acquire a steering wheel lock at a discount price.

Thereby providing a local service to those potential victims, who have been identified through the review of crime recording data.

37. In December, recorded offences relating to theft of motor vehicle, dropped by 11% (offence classification search) when compared with November. The Task Force continues to focus on those offenders who are causing us most harm, with the outcomes for theft of motor vehicles in January set to exceed those of December.
38. In January 2023, NPUs will roll out a new Vehicle Task Force which will be dedicated to the Western side of the force area, in order to provide a focus within that area, together with building strong links with neighbouring forces to tackle cross-border offending. This will allow the current Task Force to focus on the Central and Eastern areas of the force.
39. In October 2022, West Midlands Police adopted burglary as a force priority. The operation has seen cross departmental collaboration with the aim to working together sharing best practice and a joint approach when tackling increases in burglary demand. The focus included a robust strategic oversight, attendance at burglaries and improved investigative outcomes.

40. West Midlands Police committed to the burglary pledge to attend all burglary dwelling offences as soon as possible unless specifically requested not to by the victim and always to attend when the victim is vulnerable. This commitment would seek to; improve the solvability and outcomes, increase victim satisfaction and ensure the most appropriate resource is deployed. WMP are attending burglaries as stated however work is underway to ensure the data can provide accurate analysis and evidence of this.
41. As of December 2022, year-to-date Theft from the Person increased by 29.6% when compared to the same period in 2021/2022 and 54.7% when compared to 2019/2020. Birmingham City Centre was the overall driver for this offence.

Case Study – Operation EQUATE

Birmingham West has seen a significant increase in the number of thefts from the person criminal offences, particularly related to mobile phones in the City Centre during the day and evening.

In response, local policing neighbourhood teams in collaboration with British Transport Police, Central Bid, and Security/loss prevention teams are employing a wide range of tactics to reduce crime at key locations and deter prolific offenders from committing offences in Birmingham City Centre.

Tactics employed include the use of police Airwave technology, the Events Application, Sentrysis and Citysafe digital radio system for communication and intelligence sharing; daily review of Theft from the Person crime to enable effective targeting of patrols around locations and offenders; joint patrols with security partners; Security/Loss Prevention Teams to be used as spotting teams to identify high risk offenders; tenancy condition breaches if our offenders are housed in local authority housing; and positive action with an emphasis on arrest (if appropriate) where offences are committed by targeted offenders.

42. NPUs represent West Midlands Police within each of the seven Community Safety Partnerships (CSP). The CSPs are able to bring strategic analysis of the threat and lever in partnership support and funding to key issues. This may include CSP-led media campaigns, engagement with local businesses and use of partnership regulation to tackle problem locations e.g. Trading Standards or West Midland Fire Service. NPUs have also

worked with partners to host crime prevention events where e.g. MotorservUK where crime prevention advice is given in addition to product demonstrations and distribution of crime prevention signs and other material.

43. Each NPU has active StreetWatch and SpeedWatch schemes. They are briefed by local officers and PCSOs as well as via the WM NOW platform. Active citizens volunteer in key neighbourhood crime hotspot areas undertaking patrols, identifying potential stolen vehicles and reporting suspicious activity and behaviour. Key crime prevention messages are passed via local channels and to communities direct. PCSOs host community meetings where they are able to engage with local residents to understand community concerns, gather intelligence and reassure the public regarding policing activity.

Case Study – 2022 StreetWatch Awards

In October 2022, a special force awards ceremony recognised the unique contributions Streetwatch Groups have made to community safety within the West Midlands. The awards included:

In October 2021, five groups based in Sutton Coldfield worked with the incident room to provide much needed additional reassurance patrols and hand out witness appeal leaflets.

During the Commonwealth Games two volunteers from the Sheldon Country Park and Chelmsley Wood Group spent 42 hours walking and walked 80 miles patrolling the NEC venue sites

In Halesowen town, a new StreetWatch Group was formed from local, small business owners who patrolled the town centre during their lunch breaks in order to promote a safer community and encourage more visitors into the town.

Neighbourhood policing and engaging with Schools

44. In June 2022, a review was conducted of West Midlands Police's approach to Schools' Link Officers. The intention was to use uplift posts to deliver a more effective & consistent to approach to role profiles, deployment principles, governance, delivery toolkits and performance frameworks. The review agreed two new roles and commenced an implementation plan for completion by July 2023.

45. The role of a School Intervention and Prevention (SIP) Officer is to work in partnership with key stakeholders within their locality to operationalise co-ordinated early intervention and embed our trauma informed policing as part of a holistic and structured intervention plan for children and young people. A critical aspect of this role will be the understanding of the

vulnerabilities of children missing from school, and understand how to progress safeguarding mechanisms. The role of the SIP will be to support neighbourhood teams, education settings and other relevant partners with referrals to appropriate provisions and recommending Early Help Assessments, CASS and exploitation screening tool submissions.

46. The role of an Early Help & Intervention (EH) Officer is to work with partners (both internally and externally) to provide a coordinated approach to Early Help and Intervention & Prevention work across the NPU

NPU	SIP Uplift Establishment	EH Uplift Establishment
BW	16	5
BE	12	
SH	6	5
CV	6	8
WS	5	4
WV	5	4
SW	7	5
DY	4	5
Total	61 (included 2 x SGTS)	36 (including 2 x SGTS)

Table 4: Number of SIP/EH establishment

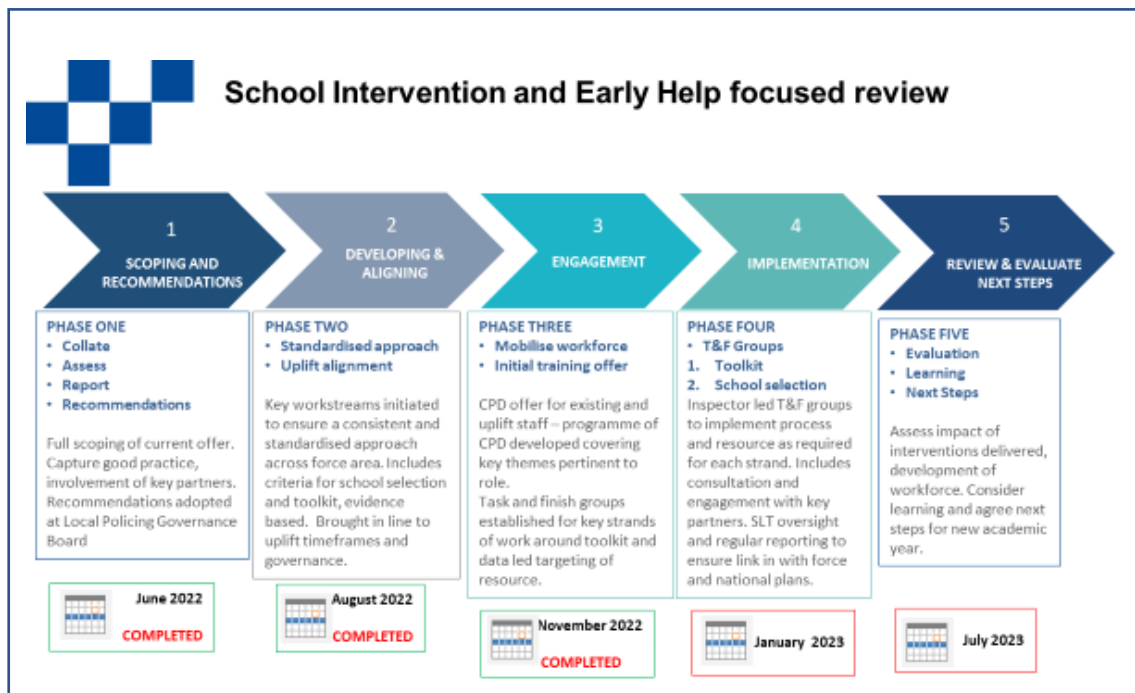


Table 5: Implementation plan

Neighbourhood policing and Community Engagement & Cohesion

47. Local Policing is the ‘front door’ to the police and the professionalism, fairness, procedural justice and respect that they demonstrate towards the community and their presence in a positive, supportive manner is helping to breakdown the negative perception on policing that is present in some communities and affecting present and future representation. As an example, local policing officers chair community meetings such as the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) etc. Being open and transparent about policing in community forums, specifically those aimed at young people is helping to ‘open up’ policing to future generations and build the trust and legitimacy needed to see if they are going to perceive it as a career of choice in the future.

Case Study – Operation CAMPANA - Muslim/Hindu Tensions

Neighbourhood policing teams in Birmingham East and Sandwell supported the community policing response to the significant disorder that took place in Leicester and subsequent escalating tensions and protest/some disorder outside a Hindu temple on Smethwick in September 2022.

In Birmingham East, early engagement with the community, colleagues and friends helped identify the reason for the disorders and the potential community impact it had on the local area. The information gathered within from the community assisted and informed the force

intelligence assessment. Senior management met with key individuals from both the Hindu and Muslim community to understand their concerns and held a joint meeting. A meeting which had led to a working partnership allowing WMP to better understand information within the community, share community concerns, negate any rumours and fundamentally keep the communities free from disorder. This meeting was shared via social media alongside a strong communication plan, policing and local engagement plan.

In Sandwell, the NPU Commander and team were, with the help of the multi faith leaders' group Faithful Friends at Sandwell, able to convene a strategic faith leaders/ IAG/ community face-to-face meeting. This empowered the faith community leaders to agree a joint position statement as well as appealing for calm to promote cohesion and respect for one another.

There has been excellent feedback about West Midlands Police's responsiveness during this challenging time and the force has been able to build new relationships.

48. To showcase and demonstrate work of Neighbourhood Policing, a "National Week of Action" will take place between 23rd January and 27th January 2023. There will be activities in the West Midlands focused of four key areas namely those listed below:

- Early intervention to reduce crime and ASB
- Problem Solving to prevent crime and ASB
- Improving Trust and Confidence with our communities
- Staff and Officer Wellbeing

Challenges within neighbourhood policing

49. Whilst neighbourhood policing continues to successfully deliver safer and better engaged communities for all those living and working within the West Midlands there remain some unique challenges.

50. NPUs are working closely with colleagues in Force Response, the Force Support Unit and Roads Policing to provide a 24/7 capability to police both the night-time economy and tackle overnight acquisitive crime such as burglary. However, such duties inevitably abstract neighbourhood officers from their daytime intervention & prevent work including meetings, community engagement and partnership working.

51. NPUs are working closely with Roads Policing to identify national best practice in tackling criminal anti-social behaviour related to off-road motorbikes. Existing police powers and tactics have a limited effect and efforts are ongoing to find new methods of addressing this kind of behaviour which can cause immense disruption and concern within local communities.
52. Neighbourhood Task Forces have been effective in targeting local drug suppliers who, in turn, can be the cause of localised criminality and exploitation of the vulnerable. As local drug suppliers become more sophisticated it is important that neighbourhood officers get access to the necessary specialist training and equipment.
53. The cost of living crisis has been increasingly affecting more and more people and households since inflation started rising in late 2021. This has been exacerbated by higher energy prices following the war in Ukraine and leading to a real-terms sharp fall in disposable income for many in the West Midlands, pushing the poorest communities into further poverty. Whilst the Government has announced some measures to respond to high energy prices, poorer households – on average – are experiencing higher inflation than better off households as reported by the Institute of Fiscal Studies.
54. In the West Midlands, Local authorities are already reporting an increase in the numbers of individuals accessing services such as food banks, substance misuse services, reporting themselves as homeless and seeking additional support. It is anticipated that there may be a correlated increase in crime including fraud (targeting the vulnerable), acquisitive crime and specific offences such as abstracting electricity. There will likely be an increase in calls for police service from those in crisis including missing persons and individuals experiencing mental health episodes. Police and partnership funding are likely to face demands over the forthcoming months and has led to closer collaboration and exploration of partnership working.

Future vision for neighbourhood policing

55. The Chief Constable has set out a new vision for West Midlands Police – *‘Big enough to cope, small enough to care’* - which, at its heart, includes a new neighbourhood-based policing model that respects people, places and partners.
56. The new neighbourhood-based policing model will re-affirm the need for clear ownership, affinity and pride in local teams to keep the public safe and pool the force’s collective impact upon local criminality.

57. The Local Policing portfolio is working with the programme design team to develop this new blueprint for neighbourhood policing within the West Midlands.

58. At a national level, the National Police Chiefs' Council has proposed a new '*Neighbourhood Policing Outcome and Performance Framework*' which will support the drive to professionalise neighbourhood policing across the UK.

59. The framework, if approved, will assist all police forces to develop consistent and effective local policing frameworks with a particular focus on measures assessing performance, increased visibility, public confidence, legitimacy and building engaged communities. The proposed framework is currently out for consultation.

Conclusion

60. This report has, hopefully, demonstrated that, within the West Midlands, neighbourhood policing remains the cornerstone of our policing mission. Over the past twelve months, neighbourhood officers and PCSOs have demonstrated incredible commitment, flexibility and ingenuity. 2023 will continue to be an opportunity to build on these successes.

The board is asked to note the contents of this report



Author: Matt Ward

Job Title: Assistant Chief Constable (Local Policing)

Appendix A: West Midlands Police Recruitment of Under-Represented Groups

61. The Recruitment Team are continuously reviewing new and innovative ways to increase representation for the force, some of the current developments are;
62. Rebranding our positive action team as Recruitment Outreach. Positive Action is term used internally but isn't well understood externally nor does it showcase all the inclusive recruitment the team offer.
63. New recruitment films showcasing the importance of diversity within the police, the benefits of joining and providing a deeper understanding to the student officer entry routes
64. Relaunching the WMP ambassador scheme internally, actively seeking those who are passionate about recruitment and understand the importance of hiring individuals from underrepresented groups. The recruitment will be visiting all NPU's in the new year to provide officer with additional information, discuss the expression of interest app and how they could make a real difference in us achieving our uplift and representation target
65. The recruitment team work very closely with colleagues in D&I and our legal team to ensure all activity is fair and compliant.

Appendix B: How do WMP address the needs of people in the community that the police come into contact with who are suffering from trauma, mental ill health or who are neuro-diverse?

66. The issue of how the police generally deal with people with mental health is one that permeates across the whole of policing from contact, response and neighbourhood policing, to the ways in which investigations teams and custody staff for example then deal with them.
67. WMP are currently developing a more comprehensive and informed strategy in relation to how the organisation deals with people who are arrested for criminal offences and then assessed as being mentally unwell and in need of psychiatric care/assessment when in custody, and those people detained in public under s136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 who need psychiatric assessment at a place of safety. WMP are currently seeking extensive legal advice from the Legal Services team and external counsel to develop the most legally and professionally appropriate way to deal with mentally unwell people under our care.
68. The most significant issues at present are in relation to s136 concern a shortage of psychiatric intensive care unit beds for those suffering from acute episodes of being unwell and at times an apparent shortage of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs). These matters fall under the responsibility of the various Mental Health Trusts covering the WMP (lack of beds) and Birmingham City Council (AMHPs). The most problematic issue in relation to lack of beds concerns under 25's in Birmingham who fall under the medical jurisdiction of Forward-Thinking Birmingham, part of the Birmingham Women's and Children's Trust. Provision of these services is not something WMP has any direct control over as they have arisen as a result of financial and human resource shortages within these partner organisations
69. WMP are however currently working closely with partners to agree an effective escalation processes when no bed or AMHP is available, to ensure that mentally unwell people in our care who really need to be in these partners' care, are transferred to their custody at the earliest possible opportunity. Addressing and resolving these issues will help WMP better protect and look after vulnerable people suffering from episodes of mental ill health
70. These issues are particularly pressing at the moment as mental health a huge driver for demand in WMP as it is nationally in policing. WMP are working to improve systems to see whether they can be adapted or enhanced to provide the data required to better understand the mental health related demand, which in turn will allow WMP to target resources in a more bespoke fashion at those people and places who disproportionately need help.

71. WMP are also seeking to undertake a review of the mental health triage function to see if it delivering the scale and quality of service for which it was designed. If it isn't WMP will seek to identify and implement alternatives that help protect vulnerable communities more effectively.

WMP recognise the needs of neurodivergent individuals and the response has been to develop new processes that ensure ND conditions (and other protected characteristics) are considered in all aspects our work. WMP do however acknowledge more work is needed in neuro diversity given the rapid growth in awareness & diagnosis. WMP have made some excellent progress with its people and has a clear plan to advance equality of access for our communities during any interaction with us.

72. WMP employee focus has seen the below changes;

- A large investment in Dyslexia screening
- A dedicated reasonable adjustments coordinator working within shared services
- Ready access to a number of reasonable adjustments such as gel screens, software, larger screens, noise cancelling headphones
- Staff networks and associations for disability and more specific networks including Autism.
- Staff networks are also a point of contact for internal department and have assisted; D&I, IOM, L&D, Citizens in policing, Custody, FCID, PSD and ROCU to name a few
- The staff network has developed a training package that is available via College Learn via Skill boosters (an external training company) that is for managers and colleagues to better understand ND conditions in the work place
- A conference is planned for March 2023 to help raise awareness for WMP staff around ND in the work place and for meeting the needs of the communities we serve (Information and promotion of this is planned for early 2023)
- WMP have been in consultation with external companies to provide some training for frontline staff in meeting the needs of ND individuals (which in turn could help with managing risk)

WMP approach for our communities

73. Our Fairness & Belonging Strategy is made up of three strategic boards. One is 'Our Partners' chaired by T/ACC Andy Hill where he has set a number of priorities, one being to develop a culture of using Equality Analysis to ensure WMP are identifying any negative impacts on a particular protected characteristic attempt to mitigate or eliminate them.

74. Our Communities board reviews the approach to diversity and inclusion focusing on the workstreams such as the use of force, and the force approach to ND and diversity more generally. There is work with members of the public with ND conditions to provide solutions and conduct assessments of departments where community contact occurs.

National Autistic Society guide for police officers has been circulated for all staff to support their interactions with ND people. Staff networks support professional standards departments with complaints by autistic members of the community which involves reviewing body worn footage where ND people have been encountered and searched and they offer a view and learning points for officers.

75. Staff networks are extending their work to pupil referral units to assist school officers who interact with excluded young ND people through vulnerability forums, school panels and as part of a multi-agency joint safeguarding investigation.

National Links

76. WMP also have very strong links into the national policing work through one of our Inspectors who is the Chair of the WMP Dyslexia support group, a member of the national executive committee and sits on the Neurodiversity Tasking Action Group (NTAG). They aim to develop training for both police managers and colleagues to improve ND for individuals.