



# west midlands police and crime commissioner

## DATA ETHICS COMMITTEE – Formal Group Meeting

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 10:00 – 13:00 hrs**

(Meeting held virtually via Teams)

**Present:**

Marion Oswald	Chair of Ethics Committee
Jamie Grace	Vice Chair of Ethics Committee
Thomas McNeil	Assistant Police & Crime Commissioner
Jack Tracey	Criminal Justice Policy Lead (OPCC)
Jennifer Housego	Ethics Committee
Derek Dempsey	Ethics Committee
Simon Rogerson	Ethics Committee
Sian Thomas	Ethics Committee
Tom Sorrell	Ethics Committee
Kerry Reid	Ethics Committee
Claire Paterson-Young	Ethics Committee
Anindya Banerjee	Ethics Committee
Malcolm Fowler	Ethics Committee
Nathan Hodson	Ethics Committee
Pete Fussey	Ethics Committee
DCC Jayne Meir	WMP
ACC Andy Hill	WMP
CS Richard Fisher	WMP
Supt. Tony Hopkins	WMP
Sergeant Mitchell Darby	Vehicle Crime Taskforce (WMP)
Insp. Kym Jones	Project Guardian (WMP)
Insp. Alex Tarr	Central IOM (WMP)
Davin Parrott	Data Lab (WMP)
Sam Todd	Data Lab (WMP)
James Spooner	Data Scientist (WMP)
Florence Galliers	Data Scientist (WMP)
Steve Clark	Data Scientist (WMP)

<b>1</b>	<b>10:00</b>	<b>Welcome</b>  Vice Chair opens the meeting and welcomes members. The Vice Chair stood-in as chair for this meeting due to personal leave taken by the regular Chair (who nonetheless attended).	<b>Jamie Grace</b>
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2	10:05	<p><b>Update on actions</b></p> <p>3 outstanding updates from the last meeting (some of which were covered during the substantive items to be raised for discussion during the meeting):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The prediction of theft of motor vehicles – the Committee had previously requested an explanation of how vehicle theft is linked to wider issues around criminal exploitation. The Data Lab is presently undertaking this analysis (some of which is to be included in agenda item 4).</li><li>2. The IOM RFSDi score – the Committee expressed concern at the extension of the model to include suspect data. The paper provided to the Committee for this meeting is intended to clarify questions raised at the previous meeting around these issues.</li><li>3. The 4 weekly predictions for knife crime – this will be discussed in agenda item 7.</li></ol>	Jack Tracey
3	10:10	<p><b>Theft of Motor Vehicle Predictions (final technical report – last presented in principle in Nov 2022)</b></p> <p>Previous recommendations from the Committee (proceed with minor amendments):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Useful discussion around linking vehicle theft to wider issues around crime and criminal exploitation and over-policing.</li><li>- Overall aim of the project is to predict locations of vehicles crime and vulnerable vehicle types (both of which have become Force priorities given rise of vehicle crimes).</li><li>- It is apparent that different vehicle thefts have different spatial patterns. Current findings have been displayed in a dashboard which officers can access. Officer have found the tool useful with regard to tasking and the types of vehicles being stolen (which has been helpful for prevention activities).</li></ul> <p>Committee questions/ comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Member asked why there was such variation in the types of vehicles stolen and whether the focus of this project was on the top 5 vulnerable ‘makes’ of vehicles.</li></ul>	Lab



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presenter clarified that the project focuses on all vehicle types and the variation of vehicles stolen was aligned with commonality of vehicle types.</li> <li>- Member asked why 'vehicles used in the pursuit of crime' are excluded from the analysis given the potential to understand further crime webs. Member also asked why premises type data is not included given the potential to inform tasking. Raised ethical issue around the potential for this model to focus too heavily on raw numbers and not on focussing policing efforts on areas of greatest deprivation.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presented noted that a vehicle used in the pursuit of crime was originally a stolen vehicle it would be used in this data set. Absence of premises date relates to this data not being widely available for analysis (when this data becomes available this is something which it would be interesting and valuable to look at). In terms of the allocation of resources, this tool will not be the only tool to influence on tasking decisions (all aspects of intelligence gathering will be included on this).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
4	10:30	<p><b>Finance Predictions (in principle briefing)</b></p> <p>Presenter noted the public sector funding constraints which have arisen in recent months that will impact service going forward (particularly for WMP who labour under a disadvantageous police precept formula compared to other Forces).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lab was approached by the finance department to see if they could aid with medium term financial planning by identifying link between demand and what this means for police requirements/ service level agreements for various departments.</li> </ul> <p>Committee questions/ comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member noted the use of the phrase "best value for money" in the submission paper and requested a definition of what this means clearly stated in the final report stage.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presenter noted that this will likely be around simply how much money is required. The definition of 'best value' will likely be defined by WMP Executive Team.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Lab



		<p>The Member noted that, whoever is responsible for this, a definition should be included.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member asked if it could be made clear what the Service Level Agreements cover and prioritise in the final report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Presenter noted that priorities were re-examined on a rolling basis to always ensure resources were going to where they were needed most. This was welcomed by the Committee.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Member expressed concern around inclusion of individual data in relation to members of staff and questioned what kinds of data were going to be used in the final project paper. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Presenter noted that data would be drawn from as many available places as possible/ available. It was also noted that differences between activities for different types of police staff (i.e. overtime) would be considered.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
5	10:45	<p><b>New West Midlands Police Chief Constable – update from the Assistant PCC</b></p> <p>Member noted that he had met with the new Chief Constable and emphasised the benefits of integrating WMP’s agenda with the Committee’s work. Noted that the House of Lords Justice Committee had highlighted the West Midlands as an area of best practice.</p> <p>Member noted that the national ethics agenda appears to be lacking leadership from central government presently. Work has been undertaken to bring together a paper outlining what a national model would look like alongside the Association of PCC’s and the College of Policing, but this has not been received enthusiastically by the Home Office. In light of this, the Member proposed that the energy of the Committee should be predominantly focussed on improving practices locally given the lack of national momentum.</p> <p>Member noted that conversations were ongoing with BFEG to consider broadening its remit to include wider data ethics scrutiny work. Member noted that conversations around bringing together models of high-quality scrutiny of data ethics should continue in order to demonstrate to national leaders and bodies why they are necessary. A member proposed the formation of a sub-committee to</p>	Tom McNeil



		consider how the West Midlands Committee can expand its work, operationally and strategically.	
6	11:05	<p><b>Frequent Service Users (in principle briefing)</b></p> <p>Presenter outlined the aims of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- To identify the areas and means by which frequent service users engage with WMP.</li><li>- To enable the best allocation of resources within local police teams engaging with frequent service users.</li></ul> <p>Committee questions/ comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Member welcomed this project given the volume coming into Force Contact and the amount of vulnerabilities which are known to exist which this tool may help identify. In order to make this project successful, a plan is required outlining how partners will be brought to the table in order to map-out how agencies co-ordinate a response to the needs identified. This would provide assurances from an ethics perspective but also help the project practically.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Presenter noted that what this project seeks to do is gain an enhanced view of individuals who are drawing on public resources as a consequence of vulnerabilities which are not being handled adequately. These individuals need a co-ordinated response by agencies aided by a holistic view of their challenges and vulnerabilities (which is inhibited presently by siloed ways of working). This is not about enforcement action as opposed to ensuring the correct multiagency response to prevent harm occurring.</li></ul></li><li>- Member noted the importance of distinguishing between victim and offender profiling in order to ensure individuals gets the correct agency response (i.e. that the response was not based on offences if overwhelming service time was spent on an individual who was a victim of abuse).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Presenter noted that it would always be possible for CPS to present a case to court which prioritised treatment around vulnerabilities. The wider point around proportionality and taking the right actions to tackle the issues individuals face was accepted.</li></ul></li></ul>	Lab



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member questions whether frequency was the correct way to prioritise police resources as oppose to severity of cases.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Presenter noted that this was just one data piece which informed the prioritisation of police resources with other data sources (particularly around high-risk users) overlaying any decisions taken. It was also noted that this project was conceived primarily to gain a holistic picture around what support needs to be in place for both victims and offenders with vulnerabilities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<b>11:35</b>	<b>Break</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>11:50</b>	<p><b>4 weekly predictions of Knife Crime &amp; Serious Violence (update as requested in the advice provided after the meetings in July 2022 &amp; November 2022)</b></p> <p>Previous recommendations from the Committee (proceed with minor amendments):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Beta testing stage was undertaken.</li> <li>- The Committee’s primary concern previously revolved around how the dashboard would be incorporated into decision making and whether the accuracy of the dashboard impacted decision making.</li> <li>- The tool is playing a critical part in decision making around tasking and deployment. It has been particularly so in the context of squeezed capacities and rising incidents of serious youth violence.</li> </ul> <p>Committee questions/ comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member noted how positive it is to hear this tool is proving useful for policing. Member also questioned whether the use of Section 60 searches was being informed by the predictive data this tool was supplying.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Presenter noted that the predictive tool was just one data source which informed decision making around deployment and the use of orders such as Section 60s. A member noted that WMP were one of the only Forces where Section 60 sign-off took place at ACC level (rather than Inspector level). It was also noted that, notwithstanding that the use of Section</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Lab</b>



		<p>60s were still of concern, WMP were improving their data sharing and openness to public scrutiny which were improving practices and outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member noted how informative the report was and how reassuring it was to see that this tool appears to be providing an additional layer of accuracy on top of hotspot analysis.</li> </ul>	
8	12:05	<p><b>RFSDi/ IOM predictive model (update on issues raised at Nov 2022 meeting)</b></p> <p>Presenter outlined the aims/ objectives of the project (which was previously presented to the Committee in November 2022):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The IOM predictive model is being used primarily at Inspector level.</li> <li>- The Committee previously had raised questions around the RFSDi score and the inclusion of suspect data. In response to those concerns, the report outlines further information around defining a 'suspect' and mitigations around inclusion in data sets.</li> </ul> <p>Committee questions/ comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member noted remaining concerns around the inclusion of suspect data and stated that it needed to be made clearer how/ in what way suspect data would be included in the model. Member stated that simply including suspect data would not resolve issues relating to low charge rates in particular. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Presenter stated that the information would be held within Offender Management teams. Presenter noted that suspect information was particularly useful in DA cases (where perpetrators are typically multiple offenders).</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Member noted the helpfulness of the report and the explanations offered around the use of suspect data. Member requested further clarification around the type of data which would be fed into the model and asked whether there would be clear guidance around how suspect data should be used/ the type of interventions it should inform developed in parallel to the model. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Presenter stated that the type of suspect data used would be the same as the crime data which is</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Lab



		<p>entered into the model (although suspect data is, by definition, less certain than charge data but this should be considered by Offender Managers before they reach any decision around activity or risk management). Regarding the development of guidance, this would prove difficult as policies/guidance are set nationally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Member questioned the extent to which how much this model is improved with the inclusion of suspect data (much of which could be simply 'noisy' data which has the potential to distort intelligence).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Presenter stated that there is a distinction between the harm score and the model (so including suspect data would not impact the model itself as opposed to just using the harm score). Presenter also noted that Offender Managers would not be in contact with individuals simply because they were a suspect and will have been charged with an offence (suspect data would provide additional data to form a more complete picture).</li></ul></li></ul>	
9	12:30	<p><b>Protected Characteristic Data</b></p> <p>Presenter outlined the aims/ objectives of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- WMP always working to improve understanding of disproportionality in use of police powers and service delivery.</li><li>- WMP asked Lab to establish what the data landscape looked like across a whole range of protected characteristics and how/ where that data is captured. From that exercise it was clear that the capture of protected characteristics data is not consistent.</li><li>- 2 questions of particular importance: 1) should protected characteristics data be collected in core systems and what protections should be in place in order to do this, 2) once this data is collected what analysis should be conducted in relation to the use of police powers and the maintenance of public trust.</li><li>- The aim of collecting this data from a policing perspective would be to identify disproportionality in the service offered</li></ul>	<b>ACC Hill</b>





		<p>(i.e. do victims get a variable service where ethnicity is a discernible difference).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The case against collecting this data rests on the possibility that members of the public might be discouraged from contacting police services if it is assumed that their answers to questions around protected characteristics (in the process of data collection) would impact the level of service they receive.</li> </ul> <p>Committee questions/ comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member noted that a key step to tackling disproportionality is the development of diversionary services which tackling the underlying causes of crime (which are known to have a disproportionate impact on underrepresented communities). A key problem with that though is that it appears that diversionary services are being applied in a disproportionate way in favour of white cohorts. The analysis proposed by the Presenter would appear to part of the answer to that issue.</li> <li>- Member noted that it is important to have a clear rationale for the collection of data around particularly categories of personal data (this could be predicated on a policing purpose to establish necessity/ rationale).</li> <li>- Committee agreed that they would like to be engaged. There was also an offer to assist with engagement with community organisations.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>12:45</b></p>	<p><b>Committee discussion</b></p> <p>Theft of motor vehicle predictions (Outcome A – proceed).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committee agreed that this was a good use of a fairly uncontroversial tool – clarifications around vehicle types were noted as particularly helpful.</li> </ul> <p>Financial predictions in principle paper (Outcome E – more information needed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committed noted that they didn’t have a good enough understanding around the best value for money predictions.</li> <li>- Committee also requested more information around how individuals would be impacted by the collection of granular individual level data (around protected characteristics and health etc).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Jamie Grace</b></p>



	<p>Top service users in principle paper (Outcome B – proceed with minor amendments)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Committee noted the difficulties of multiagency collaboration in practice. There were also concerns about the enforcement strand of the work.</li><li>- Committee also noted the need to develop parallel processes regarding the handling of the outcome and clarity needed around how predictions would be acted upon.</li></ul> <p>Knife crime predictions (Outcome A – proceed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Committee noted the reassurances received from colleagues working in collaboration with Project Guardian that this tool is useful and better than previous hotspot analysis approaches.</li><li>- Committee noted the value in case studies presented as part of the paper and commended WMP on doing that. Suggested that this would be an example project to share with the policing community and return to the committee in the next 6 months to revisit how it is being used</li></ul> <p>RSFDi (Outcome E – more information needed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Committee noted that the project will change significantly in terms of the data used and the Lab felt it would be suitable to proceed with suspect data added back into the data picture. More clarity required around how this data would be used and what outputs in police work this would inform.</li><li>- The Committee requested a case study around how useful the tool could be made with further consideration of the potential downsides to the use of this data and how this could be managed.</li><li>- The Committee requested also that the Lab report on progress made against other recommendations from the Babuta report (especially around training).</li></ul>	
<b>13:00</b>	<b>Meeting Close</b>	<b>CLOSE</b>