



## STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday 28 November 2023  
1000 – 1300 hrs

### AGENDA

1.	10.00	<b>Apologies and PCC Update</b>  The Commissioner will provide a general update.	Verbal
2.	10:10	<b>Notes of the Last Meeting</b>  The notes of the Board meeting held on 24 October 2023 are attached to this agenda. The notes include actions in bold, with the steps taken to address those actions included in italics. The notes carry forward any outstanding actions from previous Board meetings to ensure that the Board is regularly updated on progress.	
3	10:15	<b>Petition – Save Brierley Hill Police Station</b> <b>To be presented by: Cllr Adam Davies and Cllr Wayne Little</b>  This petition has received over 900 signatures.	
4.	10:25	<b>Questions from Members of the Board</b>  This item is for Board Members to ask particular questions on matters that have arisen between Board meetings and which are not connected with the reports on this agenda. A copy of the questions will be circulated at the meeting and will be made available on the Commissioner's website at <a href="http://www.westmidlandspcc.gov.uk">www.westmidlandspcc.gov.uk</a> .	
<b>Police and Crime Plan</b>			
5.	10:35	<b>Firearms Operations Unit</b> <b>To be presented by: Assistant Chief Constable Mike O'Hara</b>	Written Report
6.	11:15	<b>Environmental Strategy</b> <b>To be presented by: Zain Javed</b>	
7a.	11:35	<b>Increased confidence in WMP: Complaints and Misconduct</b> <b>To be presented by: Deputy Chief Constable Scott Green</b>	

<b>7b.</b>	<b>12:05</b>	<b>Complaint Reviews</b> <b>To be presented by: Andrea Gabbitas</b>	
		<b>Regular Items</b>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>12:15</b>	<b>Performance Update</b> <b>To be presented by: Deputy Chief Constable Scott Green</b>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>12:40</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Constable Update</b>  <b>The Deputy Chief Constable will give a verbal update on operational policing matters which can be discussed in the public domain.</b>	<b>Verbal Update</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>12:55</b>	<b>SPCB Workplan:</b>  <b>a. SPCB workplan for noting</b> <b>b. SPCB Actions and Further Lines of Inquiry</b>	<b>Written Report</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>12:59</b>	<b>Date of the next meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>	<b>For Noting</b>

## STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023

1000 – 1300 hrs

**Attendees:**

Simon Foster	:	Police and Crime Commissioner
Amy Newman	:	Estates Strategy Delivery Manager
Andy Hill	:	Assistant Chief Constable
Andy Kelly	:	Assistant Director - Corporate Asset Management
Bhupinder Gakhal	:	Board Member
Davinder Jagpal	:	Assistant Director - Finance, Contracts and Procurement
Dr Cath Hannon	:	Board Member
Jane Heppel	:	Chief Finance Officer
Jonathan Jardine	:	Chief Executive
Peter Gillett	:	Director of Commercial Services
Sally Holmes	:	Command Team Superintendent
Sam Ridding	:	Chief Superintendent
Scott Green	:	Deputy Chief Constable
Wasim Ali	:	Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner

**Plus, one webcaster, one notetaker and four observers**

**Apologies:**

Craig Guildford	:	Chief Constable
Alethea Fuller	:	Deputy Chief Executive
Tom McNeil	:	Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner

1. The meeting was recorded on Teams, and a recording of the entire discussion can be viewed here:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWq6lcn\\_L5k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWq6lcn_L5k)
2. The reports referred to throughout this meeting can be viewed here:  
<https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/strategic-policing-and-crime-board/agendas-minutes-reports/>
3. Actions arising from the discussion during the meeting are highlighted in bold text.

<b>091/2</b> <b>3</b>	<p><b>Apologies and PCC Update:</b></p> <p>Before the meeting commenced, the Commissioner acknowledged the recent tragic events taking place in Israel and Palestine. The Commissioner deeply profoundly regrets the devastating, heart rending and tragic loss of all life that has taken place and is continuing to take place and thoughts are with everyone who has been affected, including families, friends and communities in the West Midlands.</p> <p>Within the past week, the Commissioner has met with members of the Jewish and Muslim communities in the West Midlands and it's deeply important that everyone within our Jewish and Muslim communities are safe and secure within the West Midlands.</p> <p><i>There was a period of silence before the meeting commenced, to show empathy and solidarity with all the victims and everyone that has been affected.</i></p> <p>The Commissioner provided a general update:</p>
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- On 13 October 2023, the Commissioner attended and spoke at the West Midlands Combined Authority Board and expressed disappointment that the government's deeper devolution deal has failed to deliver for the people in the West Midlands on crime, community safety and criminal justice.
- On 23 October 2023, the government and the Mayor of the West Midlands supported the abolition of the right of people to vote for their Police and Crime Commissioner. The Commissioner has challenged the Mayor to let the people vote for their Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2024.
- On 29 September 2023, the Commissioner wrote a detailed open letter to the Home Secretary to explain that the West Midlands have been leading the way on the need to rebuild community policing, and the Commissioner is pleased that the government is belatedly catching up. The Commissioner also took the opportunity to remind the Home Secretary of the requests set out in a letter dated 01 November 2022, including the need to return 800 police officers and enable fair funding for the West Midlands.
- On 26 April 2023, the Commissioner made a Special Grant application to the Home Office with the intention of improving and investing in the ability of West Midlands Police (WMP) to prevent, tackle and reduce rape and other sexual offences. It's a matter of significant disappointment that the Home Office refused the application on 04 September 2023. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are continuing to work with the Home Office on the basis that a positive outcome might be achieved.
- Safer Business week commenced on 16 October 2023. Abuse, threats and violence to retail workers will not be tolerated. The Commissioner encourages businesses to report any incidents of abuse and violence towards shop workers and retail crime to the police.
- Hate Crime Awareness week took place 14-21 October 2023. The Commissioner thanked all those who contributed. The Commissioner commissions a West Midlands Hate Crime Victim Support Service so victims of hate crime are able to access appropriate support.
- The continuing improvement in the service provided by WMP in connection with 999 and 101 calls is recognised. The Commissioner expects WMP to continue to drive improvement in relation to Force Contact and Force Response to ensure these comply to service-level agreements.
- October is Cyber Security Awareness month and the Commissioner promoted the work of the Cyber Resilience Centre for the West Midlands – a police led, not-for-profit partnership aimed at improving cyber resilience in businesses throughout the West Midlands.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Commissioner has convened a Fairness and Belonging Conference on 27 October 2023 to build on the commitment to delivering a WMP service that is representative of the people and communities it serves.</li> </ul>
092/2 3	<p><b>Notes of the Last Meeting</b></p> <p>The notes of the Board meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>
093/2 3	<p><b>Questions from Members of the Public</b></p> <p>There were no questions received from members of the public.</p>
094/2 3	<p><b>Questions from Members of the Board</b></p> <p>1) <i>The HMICFRS 2022 national inspection report about digital forensics identified 9 recommendations. Can the Chief Constable provide an update on recommendation 2: "By December 2023 each force in England and Wales should develop a governance and oversight framework to better understand the local demand for forensic services?"</i> (Asked by Dr Cath Hannon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendation 2 was not issued to WMP due to assurance and evidence presented during the inspection.</li> <li>Monthly overall performance on digital forensics is analysed as part of the 'forensic services improvement' meeting. WMP are satisfied with the data and this is a strong area of business.</li> </ul> <p>2) <i>The Forensic Science Regulator Code of Practice came into force on 2 October 2023. Can the Chief Constable explain what steps the Force has taken to ensure compliance with the 34 forensic activities now subject of statutory regulation, including those deferred until October 2025 related to the Sexual Assault Referral Centres and Cell Site Analysis?</i> (asked by Dr Cath Hannon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WMP have been preparing for this for a decade which is a direct consequence of the Assistant Director of Forensic Services being a member of the NPCC Forensic Quality Board and therefore WMP level of compliance is strong.</li> <li>On 23 September 2023 UCAS and the Forensic Science Regulator confirmed WMP has successfully transitioned and held accreditation across the new code.</li> <li>Cell site analysis in WMP is provided by an external provider and therefore not something WMP need to be compliant with. Mapping cell site analysis is undertaken by WMP Intelligent Analysts and this requires compliance by 2025.</li> <li>In order to prepare for this, WMP have ongoing development relationships between intelligence and forensics and the intel team are engaged.</li> <li>In relation to SARC, providers should be the legal entity for the accreditation.</li> </ul>

*If police have gone to third party providers for cell site analysis, what is the assurance level that the third party has achieved these requirements?*

- WMP would only commission an accredited service and perform checks to ensure this.

*What's the likelihood of third parties being involved in testing or unplanned checks?*

- When mock results are tested, third parties must form part of this so WMP can be certain to meet compliance regulations in two years' time.

3) *Can the Chief Constable describe the strategic plan to reduce the number of outstanding domestic abuse offenders across the force which is currently 1,900?*  
(asked by Dr Cath Hannon)

- The 1900 figure is not fixed, this is rolling and is currently about 1700 today.
- 6 months ago, WMP had under 11,000 outstanding suspects and today the totality is around 9000.
- WMP have moved to a dual approach to domestic abuse. The Public Protection team now focus on those with the greatest risk associated with them. Lower risks are dealt with by the local policing team. All high-risk domestic abuse offenders form part of daily meeting in each policing area, so that they are tracked.
- WMP monitor compliance with risk assessments and the number of events where the victim doesn't comply with answering questions, to ensure WMP are not making it too difficult for victims.
- Dip samples in each policing area of body worn video at domestic abuse incidents are being completed, to test and understand circumstances at the scene. There is some learning from this and training will be rolled out.

*What kind of training package and support is provided to local officers who may not have much exposure to domestic abuse?*

- Preparation for this has been ongoing for some time and the Public Protection team are being utilised to roll this out, highlighting the importance of Domestic Violence Protection Notices.
- The totality of WMP's domestic abuse data sweep comes to the Deputy's Performance Board every month to be monitored.

4) *Over a 6 month period the Force recorded that fraud cybercrime activities were responsible 30 million pounds worth of losses.*

- *How is the force responding to these types of issues?*
- *Part of the response is the recruitment of volunteers. What sort of skills are required and how will these volunteers be deployed?*

(asked by Dr Cath Hannon)

- WMP operate a '4P plan' approach to cyber-crime.
- There is currently one full time member of staff educated to supporting victims of cybercrime and delivers educational events. WMP are currently recruiting to expand the team around this. The ability to engage with people and ask them to pause and think is crucial.

- Important that referrals from National Fraud Forum are picked up and victims are supported.

## Police and Crime Plan

095/23

### Estates Strategy

**Peter Gillett and Andy Kelly presented this paper and the following points were discussed:**

*WMP have received the 5<sup>th</sup> worst financial settlement compared to other forces. How are we going to produce everything stated in the report?*

- The investment required is possible through capital receipts.
- A plan has been crafted which realises the value of existing assets, such as buildings, that are no longer required, which can be reinvested into new assets that fit the requirement of operational policing.

*Could you provide further detail in connection with capital receipts in terms of the impact on backlog maintenance, the capital investment programme and reduction on revenue expenditure as well? How do these interact on each other and impact on the plan?*

- This strategy will deliver capital receipts over the period of sum £65m from the disposal programme. This enables the ability to remove the backlog maintenance associated with the sites that get disposed, which is circa £90m.
- Expect to see a one-off reduction of £30m in revenue costs.
- Backlog of maintenance is currently estimated to be around £3m for remaining sites.

*Please can you provide an overview of what the public contact offices will look like in the new model?*

- The new strategy has stuck to the commitment that there will be 10 public contact offices throughout the force area: one in each local authority area and four in Birmingham.
- There will be some changes to the locations due to disposal of buildings and use of capital investment to relocate.

*What challenges will there be with moving the Digbeth property store site?*



- Property store was moved out of Digbeth and moved to a centralised logistic centre. Digbeth is not used as a property store currently.

*Is there a plan on how the centralised training hub will be developed?*

- Looking at revenue exposure and assessing whether public order training can be moved to TallyHo – these plans have not been finalised yet.
- WMP lease TallyHo, but the plan is for Tallyho to potentially become a centralised training hub.

*There is reference about movement from Ladywood and Oldbury which is linked to Ridgepoint House, can there be some more explanation about this?*

- Looking to move the FSI's in Ladywood back to Ridgepoint House as part of the aim to maximise on capital receipts where sites such as Ladywood and Oldbury are not fit for purpose. There is a refurbished site in Edgbaston.

*The paper talks about increasing the number of response locations up to 19. Can you provide further detail in connection with this and how it will work in practise?*

- The new operating model breaks the structure of response being the separate department, on occasion, sitting in a small number of locations where there might be some neighbourhood teams. Having neighbourhood policing and response policing co-located creates a synergy.

*Please can you provide some more information about the proposed flexible and agile working practises and how it's envisaged that that will work with the estate strategy and improve the service to people and communities in the West Midlands?*

- A much larger estate would be required if WMP operated on a one desk per head basis. Providing response officers with better laptops means desks can be utilised for other members of staff.
- Currently in the middle of a roll out programme of laptops to operational officers by LPA. Pleased with how this is progressing.
- There is a strong approach to utilising mobile technology/ smartphones for officers and staff to enable business in a more-agile way.

*In Stourbridge, the efforts to obtain a suitable alternative police base for the local neighbourhood policing team has been ongoing for some time. Why is there a delay in locating and identifying new spaces?*

- Stourbridge is well-policed but currently officers may start and finish their shift in a different building.
- Currently continuing to look for a base. Many opportunities but have proven to be unsuitable in terms of fully maintaining lease on a Heritage building which would expose financial burden.
- **WMP to submit a recommended proposal regarding relocation of Stourbridge Police Station to the PCC in the near future.**

*Please can you elaborate on the plans for Chelmsley Wood Police Station?*

- Solihull Council have proposed the redevelopment of Chelmsley Wood, of which the WMP building would need to be given up to allow this.
- WMP are in discussions with Solihull Council about providing a police base in Chelmsley Wood.

*Please can you outline plans in relation to Coventry Central Police Station?*

- Coventry Central needs huge investment. Current operating revenue drain is nearly £780,000 per annum.
- Proposing to move response amongst three sites in Coventry to enable the site to be disposed, to gain a large capital receipt which can be reinvested in the rest of the programme.

*A key theme in the paper is the need to deliver a greener estate. Could you provide further information on what is planned and the action that is being taken to deliver on this since WMP launched an environmental strategy last year?*

- **Update on the environmental and sustainability strategy to take place at November meeting.**
- Where it's affordable, WMP are investing in greener technologies.
- Continue to look at the payback period for energy.

The Commissioner is pleased to announce a range of new retained and refurbished police buildings as part of the estate's strategy. This investment will ensure a police estate that is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the plan places significant importance on community policing and police officers working in local communities. Police stations provide a reassuring visible presence for communities and the plan will ensure the region retains as many as possible whilst prioritising maintaining police officer numbers and managing a budget that remains under severe pressure. Ten public contact offices will be kept in place across the region and the new police estate will strive to be greener and more sustainable than ever.

## Regular Items

096/2  
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### Medium Term Financial Plan

**Jane Heppel presented this paper and the following points were discussed:**

*The report refers to government wanting 100 million cashable efficiency savings from police. What proportion of the national figure would be from WMP?*

- The £100m is a national figure and part of the comprehensive spending review settlement which is almost 3 years old. The government was clear that the expected efficiency savings are to be reported back to them.
- Blue Light Commercial collate this information on behalf of police forces. Our percentage of that would be equivalent with our net revenue expenditure, so would roughly be about 15%.

*The report refers to savings across non-pay expenditure and a review of vacant posts across police staff. What does 'non-pay expenditure' refer to? In that review, if vacant posts aren't going to be filled, who will do the work associated with these posts?*

- Estate costs would be defined as non-pay costs, such as contracts with third party suppliers, which is particularly relevant for a number of IT costs.
- This approach is very much to protect frontline services.

*Referring to 'April 21 - IT infrastructure', there appears to be a rollercoaster of expenditure, what does this mean?*

- This is a genuine reflection of different pinch points where WMP need to invest some replacement kit and implementation of the synergy IT strategy.

*Is the information that Blue Light Commercial collate on savings publicly available?*

- Blue Light Commercial collates savings information from all 43 forces and issue individual statements, but these are also available for all forces to view.

*Follow up - How is this fair?*

- There is visibility of how each force is delivering against their targets. If there is a procurement saving or efficiency that can be made, then this should be made.

*Assumptions relating to inflation and pay pressure – what are they based on and how reasonable are they?*

- Use intel from conversations with the Home Office and national bodies to understand WMP’s position.
- The biggest drive of increase in costs has been general inflation and pay award inflation.
- There is continuous monitoring of market information on inflation.
- With regards to utilities, WMP work closely with Crime Commercial Services who run regular sessions on what is happening in the utilities market.

*What risks come as a result of grant-based approaches to funding police officer numbers?*

*Follow up: Is there assessment on the extent to which the MTFP has risk in it as a result of police officer numbers being fixed. What pressures is that creating elsewhere?*

- WMP have delivered successfully and exceeded requirements of the police officer uplift. This is a currently ring-fenced level of funding to maintain those numbers.
- When reviewing the £21 million worth of savings, the police officer numbers must be ring-fenced and then WMP must look at where savings can be made within the organisation.
- In the current budget report and next year’s budget report, this will be flagged as a remaining issue.

WMP’s budget remains under severe pressure, and there continues to be a police funding formula that costs WMP £40m a year, equivalent to 800 police officers. The government’s formula funding is universally acknowledged to be unfit for purpose.

In 2023/24, WMP received the fifth worst percentage financial settlement in the country and face £28m of costs in 2024/25. The Commissioner expressed commitment to continue to call on the government to provide fair funding for WMP.

**Emerging Items**

097/2  
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**Update on Operation Fairstay – Data Wash**

**Sam Ridding presented this paper and the following points were discussed:**

*Is there something in place for a yearly check in regards to Recommendation 60?*

- If the Police National Database can overcome technical issues, WMP should get data automatically checked and gain access to this data. In the interim, there are daily checks using WMP's own data which flags information.
- Recommendation from inspection last year was that recruitment vetting should be checked every 5 years.
- If anyone is subject to a misconduct investigation or outcome, their vetting status will be automatically reviewed.
- Information that may cause concern is subject to scrutiny in the service confidence meeting and a risk management plan.

*Are we satisfied that current recruitment and vetting processes are sufficient to identify undesirable candidates?*

- There are processes in place to refuse unsuitable applicants.
- No concerns about the current vetting position.
- Change in the department - a new Chief Inspector and Inspector are reviewing everything in place.

*Could you explain the issues in relation to victim data and compromise for individual's right to privacy?*

- Police National Database hold information relating to crimes, this may include where individuals have been victims of crime.
- WMP are able to filter the level of victims and exclude certain crimes to ensure individual rights to privacy are not intruded.
- Victims of domestic assault or serious sexual allegations will have a criminal investigation with an officer in charge attached.
- Victim support provided third-party is an offer available to all staff.

*What is being done internally to manage the issue of disproportionality?*

- All disproportionality data collated across Professional Standards is examined in detail to understand issues that need exploring. There is a disproportionality focus group where internal stakeholders examine the data and discuss solutions.

*Follow up – Do you think the issue in putting that information in Professional Standards is an issue about confidence for officers?*

- It's a confidence issue for line managers and officers which is nationally recognised. This is something being worked on with L&D.

*What reassurance can be given to WMP staff and the public, that issues raised in the HMICFRS 2022 inspection are being dealt with and the recommendations made are going to be implemented and are going to make a significant difference?*

- Of the 42 actions, 28 of those were for all Forces. WMP immediately had five actions signed off due to work already completed.
- Welcome reminder of vetting APP – this is a very light and useful document and presented the opportunity to review processes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WMP have submitted all of the recommendations for sign off, except those due at the end of October and December. HMIC are reviewing those and agreeing which can be signed off.</li> <li>• Looking to introduce more dip sampling across Professional Standards to try to ensure consistency.</li> </ul> <p>The Commissioner will continue to hold WMP to account to ensure that the recommendations set out in the national report of HMICFRS on vetting, misconduct and misogyny are implemented in full.</p>
<p><b>098/2</b> <b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Deputy Chief Constable Update:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the period of warmer weather in September 2023, WMP saw an increased demand on calls for service which saw a slip in performance to 8<sup>th</sup> place nationally. Confident that 999 and 101 performance is back at top tier performance in October 2023.</li> <li>• In the last month, WMP have seen an uptake in neighbourhood crimes (burglary and robbery). ACC Hill chairs the force tasking process and these two thematic areas have been identified as tactical priorities for the upcoming months.</li> <li>• Operation Biotas is WMP’s response to the events in Israel and Palestine, the impact on the communities and the associated protests. This is a bespoke operation and ACC Claire Bell is the dedicated Gold Commander for this. The main aspect of this is engagement with all affected communities. It is WMP’s role to provide reassurance to communities, to be sensitive, but also to police and enforce the law.</li> <li>• Seen a large number of protests on a variety scale – the weekend saw a large protest in Birmingham of over 2000 people. This had a dedicated command structure in place. The policing of the totality of the protest was 3 Protest Liaison Officers and no other resources were deployed.</li> <li>• Since the events in Israel and subsequent events in Gaza, WMP have identified 25 offences associated with the protest and reaction by communities. WMP are listening to and following the national directions and expectations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>099/2</b> <b>3</b></p>	<p><b>SPCB Workplan:</b></p> <p><b>c. SPCB workplan for noting</b> <b>d. SPCB actions and future lines of inquiry</b></p>
<p><b>100/2</b> <b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Date of the next meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b></p>
<p><b>Private Items</b></p>	

<b>101/2 3</b>	<b>Update on Operation Fairstay – Data Wash</b>  <b>There was a further private discussion on Operation Fairstay – Data Wash</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Commissioner opened the private aspect of the meeting.</li><li>• Further questions were taken from Board members on Operation Fairstay – Data Wash</li><li>• <b>There will be a misconduct report brought to November SPCB.</b></li></ul>
<b>102/2 3</b>	<b>Use of Covert Surveillance Powers</b>  <b>This paper was presented by Assistant Chief Constable Andrew Hill.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The PCC provided background to the report.</li><li>• Questions were taken from Board Members relating to points within the report.</li><li>• The Commissioner thanked Andrew Hill for presenting the Private Agenda item and the meeting was closed.</li></ul>