



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 2023



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Foreword by West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster

I was elected as the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2021. Representing the people of the West Midlands is an honour and a privilege. I take the trust and responsibility placed in me, very seriously.

It drives me on to take the constant and unremitting action that is required, to ensure West Midlands Police is the best it can possibly be, in order to prevent, tackle and reduce crime, protect people and help those in need.

My duties and responsibilities as Police and Crime Commissioner are extensive and wide ranging. As you read the report, you will gain an understanding of the breadth and scope of the role, which includes, amongst many other matters:

- Ensuring an effective and efficient police force;
- Holding the Chief Constable and police service to account;
- Responsibility for police main grant and other grants from central and local government;
- Setting the police budget and local policing precept;
- Funding the community safety partnerships;
- Ensuring an effective and efficient criminal justice system;
- Hosting my Violence Reduction Partnership
- Commissioning victim support services; and
- Issuing a Police and Crime Plan.

I launched my Police and Crime Plan ('the Plan') on 1 November 2021. The Plan sets out my key objectives for policing, crime, community safety, criminal justice and the rights and welfare of victims from 2021 to 2025.

It is a comprehensive agenda for change, development and progress in policing, rebuilding community policing, putting the prevention and tackling of crime at the heart of what we do and ultimately delivering justice, safety and security, for all of our people and communities of the West Midlands.

The harsh reality is that the past 13 years has been a challenging time for policing, our essential preventative public services and our criminal justice system. That has been as a consequence of ill-advised, misconceived and poor decision making on the part of central government. That decision making was a big mistake, it was counter-productive and a false economy. Our under-funded and over worked police service has all too often been left to pick up the pieces.





The people of the West Midlands have been paying the price, because this has had, still does have and will continue to have, a serious adverse impact on West Midlands Police presence and visibility, response times, the conduct of investigations and the ability to prevent, tackle and reduce crime, all to the serious detriment of the people of the West Midlands.

The Report outlines the progress that has been achieved over the course of 2022-23, towards meeting the key objectives and outcomes set out in the Plan. This has been achieved by working with the police and through strong partnerships, across the West Midlands. That progress is detailed within the Report. However, it includes amongst many other matters:

- Recruited 1,200 additional police officers, to keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure;
- Established an Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls Alliance, to drive the essential partnership work required to end male violence against women and girls;
- Commissioned specialist victim support services and IDVAs and ISVAs across the region, to ensure victims have access to the right support, at the right time and in the right place;
- Investing £14.5 million in the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership over 3 years, to prevent, tackle and reduce violence;
- Additional local policing in violent crime hot spots to prevent, tackle and reduce violence;
- Secured £2 million of investment in the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence, to prevent and tackle violence by young people, involved in gang related activity;
- Education in schools, youth workers in A and E Departments, custody centres, outreach and rescue workers and on school routes;
- A network of weapon surrender bins, to remove dangerous weapons from the streets of the West Midlands;
- Secured £1 million Safer Streets 4 funding, to invest in education and campaigns to prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, including in the night time economy;
- Appointed a new Chief Constable, following a competitive, extensive and rigorous recruitment process;
- Ensuring vehicle theft is a force tactical priority and the establishment of a dedicated vehicle crime task force;
- Invested in the 7 Community Safety Partnerships across the West Midlands to prevent crime and disorder, including youth offending and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC);
- Supported the roll out of average speed enforcement cameras, to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads;
- Invested in various schemes to prevent, tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour, including car cruising, restorative justice and off-road bikes;
- Continued action to eliminate any and all racism and discrimination from within policing and the wider criminal justice system, including via the Fairness and Belonging Strategy;
- Backed young people with my Youth Commissioners and Police Cadets Schemes;
- Supported local communities, through my Helping Communities Fund and Outstanding Citizens Awards;
- Launched the first West Midlands Police Environmental Strategy, including a commitment to become Net Zero by 2035;
- Campaigned for the return of our 1,000 missing officers and 400 Police Community Support Officers and for a fair funding formula for the West Midlands.

I always said that I would be a People and Communities Police and Crime Commissioner, who engages with, listens to and works with the people of the West Midlands. It has been a pleasure continuing to meet with so many of you, listening to your views, understanding your concerns and hearing what further action is needed, to ensure that we all work together collaboratively to prevent, tackle and reduce crime and deliver justice, safety and security for all of our people and communities of the West Midlands.

I am firmly of the belief, that a democratically elected and directly accountable Police and Crime Commissioner, is the best way to ensure an effective and efficient police service. The laser-like focus it provides is crucial, to holding the police to account and driving the change needed. The top priority of a Police and Crime Commissioner is preventing, tackling and reducing crime.

In view of the breadth and scope of the role, the gravity of the issues involved and the significant level of public concern and interest in policing, crime, community safety and criminal justice, people should be entitled to vote, so that they can decide for themselves, who represents them as their Police and Crime Commissioner.

Thank you to my Assistant Police and Crime Commissioners, my Victims Commissioner, my Board members and the entire team, within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Violence Reduction Partnership, for all of the invaluable experience, knowledge, skills and hard work that they contribute. Thank you to all of the officers and staff of West Midlands Police, for their dedication and hard work, to keep the people and communities of the West Midlands safe and secure.

It truly is a collective and collaborative team effort. I am also grateful to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel, for the support, oversight and scrutiny it has provided throughout 2022 to 2023.

Simon Foster

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner



Funding, Performance & Crime Statistics

Police & Crime Commissioner: Simon Foster
Chief Constable: Craig Guildford QPM VR DL
Deputy Chief Constable: Scott Green

The reality of our position:

£718.4m in 2023/24, (+ £22.8m v 2022/23)
Cuts Required £32m (22/23) £27.5m (23/24)
2nd lowest precept despite use of flexibility
5th worst national settlement 2023-24
2nd highest Indices of Deprivation in E&W
Loser from current National Funding Formula – officers per head lower than Cumbria
800 officers less than 2010
Significant terrorist and organised crime threat
Most 999 and 101 calls per head of population
Birmingham the youngest and most diverse city in Europe
High levels of Immigration Dispersals
Population Est 3.5m including 3 cities

Latest HMICFRS PEEL report date: Nov 2021
Next PEEL report date: TBC, 2023-25 cycle

Outstanding	N/A
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventing Crime Recording data about crime Treatment of the public Disrupting serious organised crime Good use of resources
Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responding to the public Managing offenders Developing a positive workplace
Requires Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating crime Supporting victims Protecting vulnerable people
Inadequate	N/A

Police Workforce

Number of police officers (headcount):
31 March 2023: 8,067 police officers
Baseline at the start of the Police Uplift Programme: 6,691 police officers

Force Achievements

- November: Birmingham Pub Bombings file** submitted to CPS to determine if charges can be brought to help deliver justice for victims of the tragedy.
- 10 December: Courageous officers first on scene** attempt to rescue four young boys who tragically drowned at Babbs Mill Lake.
- 22 March: 120 guns seized during 2022 as discharges also fell** as we continue to crack down on violent crime.
- 5 April: 21 jailed in biggest child sexual abuse case** in WMP history – spanning almost a decade.
- 28 April: Man convicted of terrorism offences** of possessing explosive material and manuals on how to make improvised explosives and firearms.
- 29 April: First SVRO applications made** as part of major national pilot.
- 3 May: Three men convicted in £100,000 conspiracy to murder plot** as part of major operation which smashed global organized crime figures.

Offender to Rehab

The Offender to Rehab programme works with individuals with substance misuse support needs, who are committing crime to fund their drug use, to help them desist from criminal behavior. The project was established in 2017 in the Birmingham East area and, according to WMP estimates, has saved approximately £2 million in retail crime, took £250,000 from the criminal economy, and delivered savings to the wider criminal justice system.

The project is currently co-funded by the PCC, the Probation Service, and various retailers, and it is staffed by WMP officers. Project won a national award from the Howard league for Penal Reform.

Suicide following domestic abuse

The PCC recently led a national conference to develop new measures aimed at preventing deaths and investigating links between domestic abuse and suicide. Speakers included Shadow Domestic Violence Secretary Jess Phillips MP and Louisa Rolfe, assistant commissioner for the Metropolitan Police and the National Police Chiefs' Council DA lead.

The conference was based on commissioned research by the University of Birmingham, with a view to determining the action that needs to be taken to prevent future deaths; identify and investigate cases where domestic abuse is a causal factor of suicide, so that perpetrators of domestic abuse are held to account; and to improve support for the bereaved.

Funding Formula Consultation

The government will soon be consulting on proposed changes to the police funding formula, which determines the share of national funding each force receives. **The existing formula, in place for 15 years, was never properly implemented, meaning that West Midlands lose about £40 million a year. That is, for example, the equivalent of 800 additional police officers today.**

The new formula must both give the West Midlands its fair share and be implemented in full.

Crime Statistics

Offence Type	2019 (Baseline)	Year to Mar 23 (Fiscal Year)	% Change
Homicide	40	37	-7.5%
Serious U25 Violence (NHS)	190	170	-10.5%
Neighbourhood Crime	61,997	67,851	9.4%
Drug Offences	5,942	8,012	34.8%
Sexual Offences	7,737	10,403	34.4%
Total Recorded Crime (excluding fraud)	259,858	367,206	41.3%

Homicide includes murder, manslaughter, and infanticide.

Serious violence is measured by Hospital Admissions for assault with a sharp object for Under 25s (offences rounded to the nearest 5).

Neighbourhood crime includes residential burglary, personal robbery, theft from the person and vehicle crime.

Drug offences includes all drug trafficking and drug possession offences. Police recorded drug offences will largely reflect police enforcement activity rather than actual levels of drug offending.

Sexual offences include sexual assault, rape, and other sexual offences (e.g., sexual exposure, sexual grooming). The ambition is to see an increase in the number of police recorded Violence Against Women and Girls crimes, as these are under-reported hidden crimes.

Data Source: ONS Police Recorded Crime in England and Wales. Released March 2023.

Special Grant Bid for Rape and Other Sexual Offences

The PCC has applied to the Home Office for £9 million in funding to address Rape and Other Sexual Offences. The funding, which would be spent over three-years, would be used to recruit a new team, including extra police officers, forensic staff and specialists in victim care. This additional funding would help reduce the caseloads, so each case can be guaranteed more officer time. This would lead to better outcomes for victims in the courts and support effective and efficient implementation of recommendations arising from Op Soteria.

Police Uplift Achieved - but not levelling up for the West Midlands

After 2010, WMP lost 2,221 police officers – that was 25% of its officers – and many hundreds of essential police staff, including 400 PCSOs. Whilst the recruitment of new police officers is welcome and West Midlands Police have had a successful recruitment, that has met its overall target, there is still much more to be done to rebuild policing. WMP remains much smaller than it was in 2010, despite the population of the West Midlands having increased. Conversely, many police forces, in lower crime areas, are larger than they have ever been.

Protecting democratic choice and preventing hostile takeover

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill includes a clause that would enable the democratically elected role of the PCC to be abolished by the Mayor and replaced by an unelected and appointed 'Deputy Mayor', against the wishes of local elected leaders. Peers recently debated the clause, that is directly aimed at giving the West Midlands Mayor the power to override local preference and abolish the people's right to vote for a democratically elected and directly accountable PCC and remove the people's right to choose who governs West Midlands Police: <https://youtu.be/9GLxcw-K0qE>.



West Midlands Police

Force Performance

One of the primary expectations placed on West Midlands Police, is the prevention, tackling and reduction of crime. The police play a pivotal role, working in collaboration with various stakeholders, to proactively address local issues, share critical information and work towards reducing repeat offences. [The Performance Scorecard](#) for the [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025](#), provides an overview of progress, in achieving the specific measures outlined in the plan.

The assessment of progress towards the key performance indicators outlined in the Police and Crime Plan varies, depending on the specific measure and the availability of data. A number of key performance indicators have predefined targets, which have been established through a comprehensive analysis of historical and current performance and consultation with stakeholders, while others represent ambitious stretch targets.

It also tracks trend data, providing insights into recent patterns and periods of change. Whilst some key performance indicators may not currently align with expectations, the trend data in certain areas reveals a positive trajectory of improvement, providing optimism for continued progress.

Community Policing

People value seeing officers and PCSOs walking the beat in their communities. The Chief Constable and I agree, that it is important to provide a local, accessible, and visible police service. We accelerated recruitment of the 1,376 officers allocated to the West Midlands, as part of the so-called national Police Operation Uplift programme, all of whom are now trained and have started work serving the communities of the West Midlands.

However, West Midlands Police still has 1,000 fewer officers when compared to 2010, in addition to reduced numbers of police staff and PCSOs. I continue to take every available opportunity, to campaign for and to call on government, to return our 1,000 missing officers and 400 PCSOs and to ensure that our region receives a fair share of all funds allocated to policing.

Unfortunately, despite extensive and wide-ranging efforts, our region continues to be significantly underfunded.

Recruitment

At 31 March 2023 the headcount across West Midlands Police was:

Police Officers	Police Staff	Police Community Support Officers	Specials	Total
8,067	3,996	357	253	12,673

Female police officers make up 35.8% of the officers and this position has been improving through the police officer uplift programme.

West Midlands Police are continuing the recruitment of new Special Constables, as well as continuing to focus on their development and deployment.

A total of 153 Special Constables have been recruited since May 2021 to March 2023 - 32 (20.9%) are from an ethnic minority background and 49 (32%) are female.

Fairness and Belonging

Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded throughout my Police and Crime Plan. We are focussed on delivering this work within my own office. I continue to scrutinise West Midlands Police on their progress. This includes monitoring the action taken to implement the Race Action Plan on issues including, recruitment and disproportionality.

My Deputy Chief Executive, attends WMP's quarterly Diversity and Inclusion Governance Board, to ensure oversight of progress being made in relation to this strand of work. In addition, I am represented on the Stop and Search Scrutiny Panels and with an overview of this area of business, have been tracking improvements in practices. I regularly meet with and continue to support the force's staff networks. I have spoken at several of their events and highlighted the value of these networks, in striving to make West Midlands Police an inclusive employer.

Training as part of the Fairness and Belonging work, has been designed to equip all officers and staff with a better understanding of racism, Black history and the local landscape between the Black community and the police. It explores the impact of systemic racism in modern UK society, identifies blockers to anti-racist practice and includes the important aspect of dealing with real people through lived experience.

In my own office, I continue to deliver anti-racist practice training. This includes an organisation-wide anti-racist training programme, that addresses how to deal with issues relating to racism and how to develop and promote anti-racist practice. In addition to that, all staff within the OPCC have undergone training around trauma informed practice and becoming a trauma informed organisation.

I am also pleased to say that we continue to implement the work needed to maintain the accreditation of the [Karl George Race Code](#). The Code evidences the work that we have been doing to create transformational, sustainable and lasting change, in order to achieve a competitive and truly diverse board and organisational senior leadership team.

A breakdown of my own team shows that in March 2023, the OPCC had 86 employees, of whom 56 were White/White British and 29 were from an Ethnic minority group. There was 1 member of staff who choose not to disclose their ethnicity. There are 34% of staff within the OPCC, from an ethnic minority group.

Analysis of my Strategic Police and Crime Board (SPCB) shows that 2 members are White/White British and 4 members are other ethnic groups. There are 67% of members of the Strategic Police and Crime Board, who are from an ethnic minority group.



Listening to the Public

Over the year, I have monitored the work of West Midlands Police and the Professional Standards Department, to ensure that the public continues to receive the highest standards from police officers. The timeliness of police complaints has continued to be strong, building on improvements started in 2021-22.

By end of year, the average number of days to finalise a complaint was 63 days, which was a significant improvement from 136 days, at the beginning of the previous year. During the year, I was informed of 23 investigations that exceeded 12 months, compared to 24 in the previous year. In most cases, the delay was caused by ongoing legal proceedings, which meant that the misconduct or complaint investigation had to be placed on hold.

I have regular meetings with PSD, to monitor complaints and conduct related matters. During the year, my team undertook two dip sample exercises to examine completed complaints. In July 2022, we examined 49 complaints related to police investigations. In January 2023, we examined 49 complaints about incivility. The results of the dip sample indicated that in most cases, the complaint had been properly understood and police were able to provide an outcome that was reasonable and proportionate.

The Vetting Team's staffing levels were confirmed appropriate to manage future demand, including Vetting Aftercare. WMP vetting complies with the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP).

I am the appropriate authority to undertake reviews, following complaints against police officers. During the year, there were 174 reviews. There were 30 reviews upheld. I am also responsible for maintaining a panel of legally qualified chairs and independent members to sit on police misconduct hearings. During the year there were 9 hearings, and my office also arranged one Police Appeal Tribunal.

Contact with the Public

On average, in the United Kingdom, police forces receive a 999 call every three seconds. During 2022/23, West Midlands Police witnessed a notable dip in their emergency call performance on both 999 and 101 calls. From April 2022 to March 2023, there was a substantial demand for 999 calls, totalling 679,387. Overall, only 71% of these calls were answered within the 10-second service level agreement. From April 2022 to March 2023, demand was also high for 101 with 561,344 calls received, with only 30% being answered within the 3-minute service level agreement.

I have worked with the Chief Constable to review Force Contact and their operating model and during the first half of 2023/24, there has been a considerable improvement, with 91% of 999 calls being answered within 10 seconds and 67% of 101 calls being answered within 3 minutes. There remains scope for improvement in 999 and particularly 101 services. I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account, to drive continuous improvement in relation to the 999 and 101 service provided, to ensure the public receives the service it is entitled to.

Stop and Search and Use of Force

We have seen increases in Body-Worn Video compliance during both Stop and Search and Use of Force. For stop and search, compliance has increased from 42% in 2018/19, to 89% in 2020/21, to 95.1% in 2021/22, and is now at 97% in 2022/23. Compliance for Use of Force is now at 83%, up from 81.6% in 2021/22.

Positive Outcome rates, which is the rate at which an illegal item is found during a stop and search have also increased. The rate for the year 2022/23 is 30%, having previously been 27.2% in 2021/22 and 26.5% in 2020/21.

Search ratios show how many times more likely an ethnic group is to be stopped and searched compared to the white population. Across the WMP force area, the Asian search ratio is 1.9 and the Black search ratio is 2.9. As of March 2023, WMP are now using the 2021 Census data to calculate disproportionality rates, which has made the disproportionality rates much more accurate and a truer reflection of the ethnic diversity of the West Mids. Disproportionality figures for use of force are 0.7 for Asian and 2.2 for Black.

West Midlands Police had piloted a QR code pilot, in which they were trialling officers having a QR code sticker on their phone that people who had been stopped and searched could scan to give their feedback on matters such as, how fairly they felt they were treated by the officer and whether or not they understood why they were stopped. This has now been rolled out force-wide. It has also been developed so that a unique QR code is generated, as opposed to the sticker, so that the feedback is linked to the record.





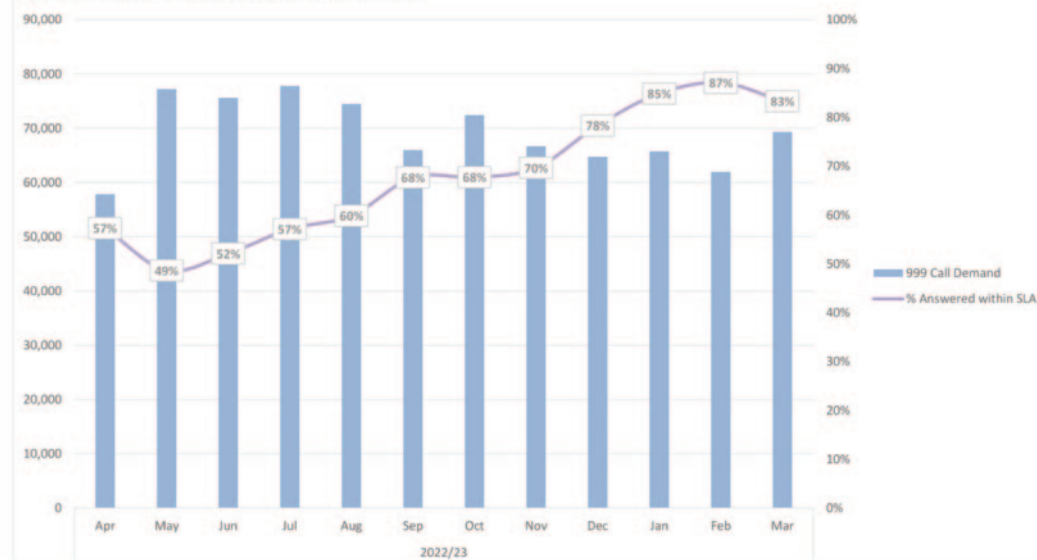
Annex 1: Draft version for Dissemination to the Police and Crime Panel.

Force Contact 999

Year: 2022/23

Total 999 Demand: 829,891

999 Call Demand and % Answered within SLA



Annex 1: Draft version for Dissemination to the Police and Crime Panel.

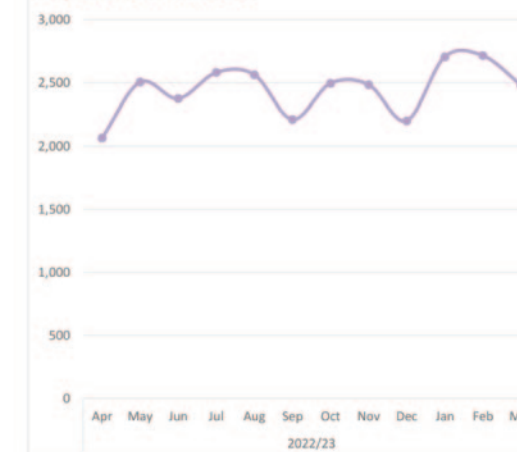
Stop and Search

Year: 2022/23

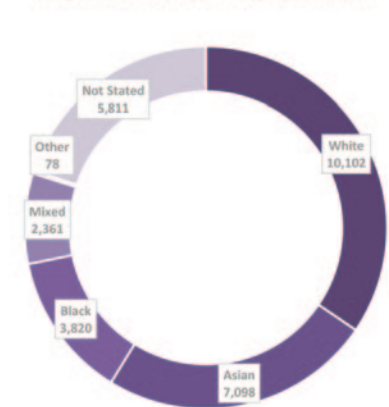
Stop and Search Records: 29,270

Positive Outcome Rate	Drug Find Rate	Knife Find Rate	Firearm Find Rate	% BWV Recorded
30%	37%	15%	10%	97%

Stop and Search Records



Stop and Search Ethnicity Breakdown



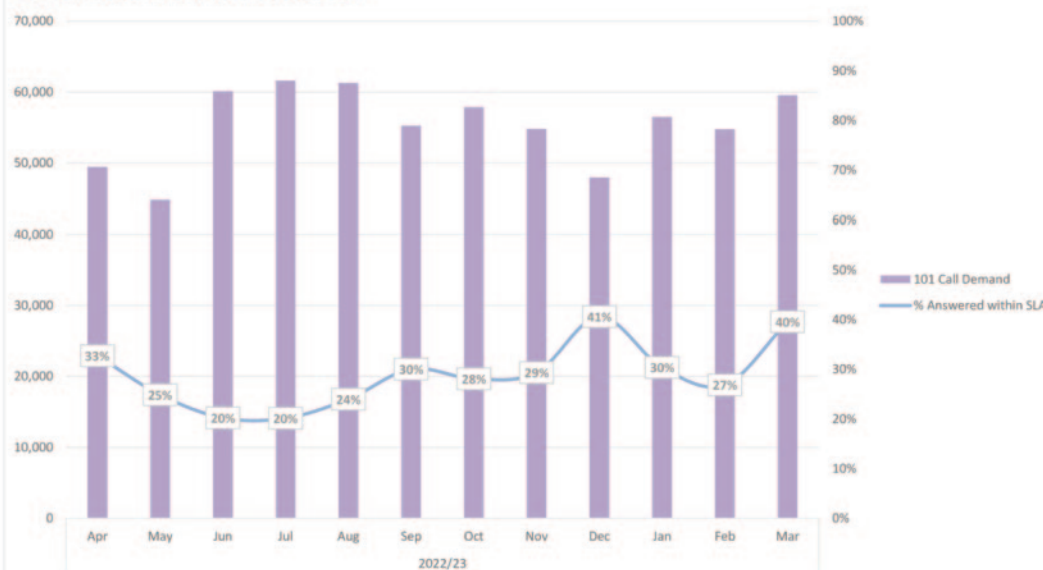
Annex 1: Draft version for Dissemination to the Police and Crime Panel.

Force Contact 101

Year: 2022/23

Total 101 Demand: 664,110

101 Call Demand and % Answered SLA



Annex 1: Draft version for Dissemination to the Police and Crime Panel.

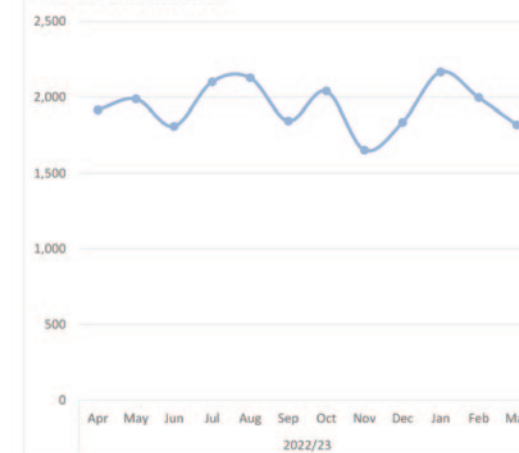
Use of Force

Year: 2022/23

Use of Force Records: 23,297

Distinct Incidents	Taser Tactics	Taser Fired	Taser Fired Rate	% BWV Recorded
12,673	1,878	232	12%	83%

Use of Force Records





Working in Partnership Locally

West Midlands Community Safety Partnership

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

As part of my ongoing commitment to work with community safety partners to jointly tackle crime and disorder, I provide a Crime and Disorder Reduction Grant to each of the seven local authorities, as well as too third sector organisations. This vital funding is used to reduce crime, the risk of reoffending and for initiatives tackling the issues which have the biggest impact upon our communities, including anti-social behaviour. The funding is also used to help victims of crime to cope and recover from their experience, such as domestic abuse and sexual violence and to support the diversion of children and young people away from crime through positive initiatives and allows local CSP's to respond to emerging issues.

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



Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)

I am chair of the West Midlands Local Criminal Justice Board. I am committed to working closely with key partners to provide a fair, efficient and effective criminal justice system, with a focus on preventing and reducing crime and reoffending, as well as supporting victims and witnesses, who are often the most vulnerable in society.

I continue to closely monitor and scrutinise the time taken for victims to have their case heard at court, particularly for people who have been subject to serious crimes and those offences that continue to have a disproportionate impact on communities, such as violence against women and girls and domestic abuse. I have worked with partners to improve offender management to prevent and reduce crime and re-offending.

The LCJB has responded to a number of key emerging issues over the past year. A substantial, but not exhaustive list includes supporting the development of a local problem-solving court for female offenders in Birmingham, being implemented in 2023/24; the expansion of use of out of court disposals; expanding the use of community sentence treatment requirements; and advancing the diversion delivery plan, being launched in 2023/24.

The LCJB and my office continued to work with the WMCA to advance the Crime, Community Safety and Resilience strand of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal. This offered the opportunity to secure funding and advancements that would have enabled the criminal justice system to work better for policing and victims of crime, improved the prospects of turning around the lives of young people and increased retention of average speed enforcement fines and proceeds of crime that would enable them to be invested back into the West Midlands.

The LCJB, my office and I committed significant effort and time and negotiated with the government in good faith. However, the government did not accept any of our proposals and therefore the deal will not deliver on the government's own pledge, that cutting crime is central to the mission of levelling up the country and to reduce homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime, within the worst affected areas by 2030.



Victims' Services

Throughout 2022-2023, I have delivered on the priorities laid out in my Police and Crime Plan. Being the victim of a crime can have devastating consequences, not only for the individual involved, but also for their families and communities and for wider society.

I pledged to provide quality assured support services to victims, whether or not they reported their crimes to the police, to ensure victims were able to access justice should they wish to and to ensure that perpetrators of crimes are held to account. To achieve my priorities, I have worked closely and collaboratively with the specialist victims' sector and criminal justice agencies, whilst listening to the voices and experiences of victims.

This has been a difficult year for us all. We have continued to see the impact of both the government's failure to invest adequately in judicial sitting days and the Covid-19 pandemic on criminal justice, with court backlogs continuing to remain at an all-time high. We have also seen the cost-of-living crisis impact not only victims, but also the services tasked with supporting victims.

Trust and confidence in the criminal justice system has been undermined, particularly in relation to sexual offences. Against this backdrop, my office has worked tirelessly to do all it can to ensure victims are listened to, protected, safeguarded and supported, whilst perpetrators are targeted and brought to justice.

Violence Against Women and Girls

I was elected on a manifesto which prioritised the need to prevent, tackle and reduce Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and as such the commitment within my Police and Crime Plan to establish and lead on an Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls (EMVAWG) Alliance have continued throughout this year.

I improved prevention and early intervention approaches to VAWG through Safer Streets funding, continuing to address the needs of women and girls through consultations and public accountability forums. As per the Government's position, I also include men and boys impacted by VAWG crimes when discussing VAWG.

I secured funding for several rounds of Safer Streets in which VAWG has been a prioritised thematic and worked with my Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) to develop several large regional campaigns, including the establishment of a stand-alone website for [#NoExcuseForAbuse](#) which is a hub for those impacted by VAWG. I have also worked to improve accessibility through commissioning ReciteMe and other tools for the website.

I held a VAWG conference in May 2022 which was a showcase of innovation and pilot projects throughout my first year in office that led to the launch of the EMVAWG Alliance in September 2022. The EMVAWG Alliance has external oversight from academics in the VAWG sector. The ongoing VAWG workstream has ownership of four key priorities; further hidden harms in VAWG, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), So-called Honour Based Abuse (HBA), Forced Marriage (FM), Stalking and other crimes, governance, communications and data improvement.

The inclusion of VAWG in the Strategic Policing Requirement and the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership's Serious Violence Duty has improved oversight across partnerships for VAWG, but there is a long way to go for prioritisation within the criminal justice system (CJS). I therefore continue to use the avenues available to ensure that policing and the wider CJS are utilising the improvement tools and plans available through Operation Soteria and other change programmes.

Although significant strides forward have been made in the fight against VAWG, a continued focus is imperative. These crimes result in life-changing trauma for those impacted. As crimes which are least reported and are the most hidden from criminal justice, it is critical that I continue to support and increase the knowledge and understanding of these crimes, utilising the partnerships available to me, to increase public trust and confidence in accessing support and seeking justice.



operation soteria

We listen - We believe - We care

Operation Soteria

The Government's End to End Rape Review in 2021 saw a commitment to roll out Operation Soteria. This is a Home Office funded, academically led change programme, for adult Rape and other Sexual Offences (RAOSO).

I supported WMP in their piloting of the academic pathfinder by investing £200,000 in pilot programmes following the findings of the academic deep dive in June 2022. I have worked with local MP's, the Chief Constable and others to highlight to central Government the discrepancies between funding and sustainable specialism within both West Midlands Police and wider police forces that are in jeopardy, due to the existing funding formula and previous policing cuts.

I am aiming to introduce a legal advocacy pilot for victims of RAOSO to enable access to advice and legal representation on their section 8 disclosure rights, which I set out in my response to the Law Commission's consultation on Evidence in Sexual Offences in 2023-24.

Regional winner NPCC VAWG awards

The innovative work from West Midlands Police, my office and the Violence Reduction Partnership was recognised by winning of two national awards and one regional award at the National Police Chief's Council inaugural VAWG awards held in September 2023.

This was for work which commenced during 2022-2023. My office supported all the winning categories. The Force was awarded an innovation award for Operation Sandstar and its approach to tackling sexual exploitation and slavery/trafficking in brothels. The #TimetoTalk programme, which I commissioned through the Safer Streets 3 and 4 funding, in collaboration with the VRP, also received an award. In addition, one of my Policy Officers also won a regional award for work in the VAWG space.



Winner CEO Nikki Holmes, Safer Together receiving her award from DCC Maggie Blyth.

Domestic Abuse - Cost of Living Survey

My office launched two cost-of-living surveys to assess the impact the economic crisis is having on both victims of domestic abuse and on service providers. Findings from the survey showed that the biggest concern for providers was around victims not being able to leave violent or abusive situations, or returning to abusers, due to the cost-of-living crisis.

Survey results further showed that victims may choose to remain in abusive relationships, rather than face the prospects of having to struggle with food or bills, especially where children are involved.

Leaving secure employment, finding a new home and moving to a new area were all described as significant barriers to accessing support or leaving abusive partners. The survey found these barriers increased in significance during the cost-of-living crisis, with increasing rental costs and decreases in earnings through employment.

Visit from the Domestic Abuse and Children's Commissioners

On 14th March 2023, I hosted the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs and Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel De Souza. We discussed both our successes and the challenges facing the West Midlands. The day illustrated the importance of partnership working and further opportunities to work with each of the Commissioners' offices.



Domestic Abuse and Suicide

Since coming into office I have highlighted the links between domestic abuse and suicide, by commissioning the University of Birmingham to conduct research into **'Domestic Abuse links to Suicide'** and holding the first ever national **Suicide following Domestic Abuse Conference**.

The conference saw subject matter experts presenting to 200 delegates, which ranged from Home Office and HMICFRS colleagues to operational police officers on this subject. The conference focused on how to identify and investigate unlawful act manslaughter, critical issues pertaining to supporting bereaved families of those who have lost their lives as a result of domestic abuse and the importance of suicide prevention in this context.

My work with the University of Birmingham, which has helped develop an understanding of the undeniable link between being subjected to domestic abuse and suicidality nationally, has now won the University's award for 'Outstanding Impact in Practice'.

I continue to work with local and national partners to progress this work and respond to the recommendations set out in the research. For example, developing and testing an assessment tool which aims to identify the predictors of suicide by gathering information from the survivor and working with the LCJB. This improves awareness of links between domestic abuse and suicide, to both prevent future suicides and increase prosecutions of unlawful act manslaughter where this has not previously been possible.

Domestic Homicide Reviews

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) are multi-agency reviews, commissioned by community safety partnerships, into the deaths of adults which may have resulted from violence, abuse, or neglect by a person to whom they were related; or with whom they had an intimate relationship; or where they were a member of the same household.

I have commissioned the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership, to deliver a region wide DHR project to upskill frontline workers on their knowledge and understanding of DHRs, as well as to create opportunities to share themes and learnings in a consistent way across the West Midlands. Birmingham has been working to create a centrally located repository for all published DHRs to be placed into that can be easily accessed by all agencies.





Harnessing the Expertise of the 'by and for' Sector

A key national aim of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, is to improve the way in which 'by and for' services are commissioned throughout the country.

Recognising and harnessing the expertise of community organisations has been a key commitment for me locally and I have been commissioning the first ever 24-hour multi-lingual helpline for victims of Forced Marriage (FM) and Honour Based Abuse (HBA) for some time.

I am pleased to report that my office was selected as an area of best practice and was asked to deliver a workshop at the DA Commissioner's 'Festival of Practice' conference on the 28th and 29th March 2023. The conference brought together professionals from across the domestic abuse sector to encourage sharing best practice, collaboration, innovation and ensure survivors remain at the heart of policy and practice.

The workshop outlined the journey that my office has taken, in relation to commissioning 'by and for' services. It highlighted ways in which 'by and for' organisations have been given equal opportunity in competitive funding streams and how they are included within consultation and policy development, by being represented as subject matter experts at my Victims Commission.

This was also an opportunity to provide practical and creative solutions to other areas across England and Wales, who might be having difficulties establishing commissioning relationships with 'by and for' services in their areas.

Public Health Approach

I have worked to promote and adopt the use of a Public Health Approach to exploitation and abuse throughout my strategic boards. The four boards covering this area include;

- The Regional Domestic Abuse Board
- The Regional Sexual Assault and Abuse Board
- The Regional Exploitation and Missing Board
- The Regional Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Board

Public health approaches have been applied to crimes such as serious violence and have laid the foundations for rethinking other issues that have traditionally been approached as criminal justice problems. A public health approach has offered the opportunity to think of exploitation and abuse not only as issues of law, order and policing, but as problems that affect the whole of society and its wellbeing. The three core principles of a public health approach include;

- **Prevention:** Prevention is a core principle of the public health approach. It involves addressing the root causes of exploitation and abuse, such as poverty, inequality, social exclusion and lack of access to education and opportunities.
- **Multi-agency:** Collaboration and coordination amongst various sectors and stakeholders are essential in the public health approach and akin to the duty to collaborate, being introduced as part of the Victims and Prisoners Bill. This collaboration enhances information sharing, resource allocation and the development of comprehensive support systems.
- **Data driven:** The public health approach emphasises the collection, analysis and utilisation of data, to inform decision-making and measure the impact of interventions.





Restorative Justice

I commissioned the University of Gloucestershire to conduct an academic review on the West Midlands Restorative Justice (RJ) service currently being delivered by Remedi. This research will aid the understanding of whether RJ services available in the region are effective, evaluating whether they improve victim satisfaction and reduce reoffending for offenders.

This research is intended to add to the evidence base of the effectiveness of RJ interventions and principles. A range of partners contributed to the evaluation; including Remedi, Pioneer, WMP, the OPCC and Youth Offending Teams (YOTS).

This is an ambitious piece of work tracking information and data back to 2018 when the service delivery by Remedi first began regionally. The findings from the report have not yet been published. However, they will be made available as soon as they are

Case Studies

Please note a pseudonym has been given to protect anonymity for all case studies below.

FGM case study

The service user met the FGM practitioner at a mother and baby drop-in session when attending to get her youngest child weighed and checked by a health practitioner. The FGM practitioner explained her role and that they worked for Coventry Haven Women's Aid.

The service user said she moved from Nigeria to the UK in 2019, to apply for asylum, because she was experiencing domestic abuse. She disclosed that her husband had previously abused her physically, emotionally, verbally, and sexually. She said that her husband, who is living in Nigeria, was pressuring her to allow FGM to be performed on their daughters, but she had always said no. Her four children moved to the UK in 2019, at the same time as the service user.

She explained to the FGM practitioner that she has been feeling isolated from family and friends since moving to Coventry. She said her lack of social networks has heightened her stress and worries about the risk of FGM for her daughters. She was encouraged to speak to her GP who prescribed Sertraline for her anxiety, which she has found beneficial.

Since then, the FGM practitioner has been in contact with Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the social worker that has been involved with the service user and her children. The FGM practitioner has also provided practical and emotional support, alongside empowering her to gain access to further education. The client is now taking English and Maths at college.

Sophie's Story

Sophie reported rape to the police, after support from her ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advisor) in March 2023. The service had supported Sophie over the last five years and through periods of significant loss and trauma in her life and the relationship allowed Sophie to feel supported to report the incident.

Throughout the investigation and criminal justice process, Sophie struggled with trauma triggers from the incident and had support and some counselling through the ISVA service. Sophie received a letter in the post stating the court date and felt very anxious, as she felt that she was not going to be believed in court. Her ISVA told her that she would support her throughout the trial.

On the day of the trial, the case was adjourned to the next day and Sophie found that very difficult. Her ISVA struggled to get in touch but was able to contact Sophie on outreach later. Sophie was able through great personal strength to give evidence in court behind a curtain and stated that the Police Officer who had been supporting her was lovely and they had built a good relationship with each other.

The perpetrator was found guilty of robbery, however not guilty of raping her. Sophie was upset, but the ISVA kept telling her that they believed her, and the Police believed her. Sophie is proud that through all the difficulties and hurdles. She gave evidence in court and her voice was heard.

Commissioned services

Between April 2022 to March 2023, I commissioned 60 support services that supported a total of 89,911 victims across different thematic areas. The budget for Core Victim Services for 2022-23, provided by the MOJ, was £3.400m.

This was uplifted following our successful application to the National Independent Sexual Violence Advocate and Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Fund in 2021/22, where we were awarded a further £3.287m over 2 years; the funding for 2022/23 was confirmed at £1.669m. This took the total West Midlands budget for Victims Services (MOJ) in 2022/23 to £5.070m.

Throughout 2022-23, I also secured £0.459m through the Safer Streets Fund 4 (SSF4), which enabled me to build on work across the VAWG agenda. As part of SSF4, my office and I supported City of Wolverhampton Council and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council to secure £0.366m and £0.227m respectively. for their VAWG related projects. This took the total value of that funding in the West Midlands to £1.051m.



Victims Supported

The table below shows the number of victims supported through the MOJ Victims Fund by crime category:

Crime Category	Total number of supported victims	% of total
All other crimes	54,850	61.0%
Sexual Violence	13,940	15.5%
Domestic Abuse	12,452	13.8%
Child Sexual Abuse/Exploitation	6,929	7.7%
Stalking and harassment	1,084	1.2%
Hate Crime	479	0.5%
Road Crime	90	0.1%
Modern Slavery	87	0.1%

61,471 or 69% of the victims had reported the crime to the police prior to engaging with the support service. A further 1,502 reported the crime to the police throughout/after engaging with the support service.

5,098 or 5.7% of the victims were referred to other services for additional support, such as financial help and housing.

1,445 or 1.6% of the victims were referred for mental health support because of the crime, including self-referrals and referrals by others.

West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (WMVRP)

I am the joint Serious Violence lead for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, alongside the PCC for Cleveland. On behalf of all PCCs, we are the advocates to the Home Office for this significant area of responsibility.

I am also Chairperson of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Strategic Board, which is one of 21 Violence Reduction Partnerships (VRPs) across the country. Established in 2019, they are funded by the Home Office to build capacity in local places and systems to prevent, tackle and reduce violence, by addressing the root causes of violence.

The WMVRP is made up of a range of specialists, who work locally and regionally, to facilitate and encourage the development of system wide responses to preventing and reducing violence, directly delivering and

commissioning a wide range of services and interventions. WMVRP is a regional partnership consisting of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations, bringing efforts together to tackle the root causes of violence, such as poverty and inequalities.

The WMVRP adopts a public health approach to preventing violence. This means focusing on understanding the root causes of the problem and testing, evaluating and upscaling interventions. Developing stronger data, analysis and evaluation is key to working in this way.

West Midlands Police plays an integral role in the WMVRP, providing support and bringing policing knowledge and expertise into the different thematic areas. They ensure that the whole force play an active role in the WMVRP, working in partnership locally and regionally, to prevent and reduce violence.

Working in Local Places

The WMVRP delivery team work with local agencies and communities to support the delivery of local activity in an effort to reduce violence and to raise awareness of the role everybody can play in violence prevention and reduction."

During 2022/23, VRP funded interventions reached 59,873 children and young people aged 24 and under, and 523 over 24 across the West Midlands. The training and awareness raising provision the WMVRP delivered benefitted 7,053 professionals including teachers, social workers, youth workers and others.

The WMVRP delivery model aims to:

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

Delivery Teams

A team made up of Community and Education Navigators, together with a pool of facilitators, work across the region to provide a physical interface for the WMVRP at a local level. This team has directly provided and supported universal and primary preventative approaches, including training to young people and professionals and the development of local stakeholder networks.

The team have also strengthened partnership responses to incidents of violence, attending partnership meetings to ensure individuals, communities and schools affected by the incidents, are provided with the support and access to services that they need, in order to prevent the onward transmission of violence. The delivery team are well embedded locally, with most co-located in Community Safety Partnerships, police stations and/or a variety of other community locations. They are an accessible resource, providing consistent representation of the WMVRP in a local area, supporting partnerships to prevent and reduce violence.





Services and Support

The WMVRP delivery model seeks to embed training around violence prevention and reduction, to raise awareness that everyone has a role to play in reducing violence in the community. The stakeholder networks galvanise this further, by bringing together a range of stakeholders within a locality to work together to reduce violence. The delivery team supports the networks and localities with securing funding for projects, providing training and promoting the activities and support services that are available in each of the local areas.

Throughout the region in 2022/23, all areas have been able to access the following interventions and support through the delivery team:

- Access to lived experience mentors
- Access to clinical psychologists
- Trauma Informed practice support for education settings.
- Step Together on 25 school routes across all the seven local authorities
- Teachable moments in A and E departments and two of our custody blocks
- Resettlement Support following custody
- Extensive training programme, including virtual reality programmes and harmful sexual behaviour training
- Access to a range of support including mentoring, cognitive behavioural therapy, counselling and clinical psychology
- Workforce development training, including trauma informed approaches and practice
- Prevention programmes in schools and other youth settings
- Navigator schemes in hospitals and custody blocks

As well as these regional services, funding has been available to local areas to support violence prevention and reduction partnerships to deliver services that are bespoke to their area. The delivery team have supported local partnerships across the region to maximise this funding and to integrate new services effectively into the local system.

Education

Training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) and Trauma in Early Years training, continues to be rolled out to staff in schools to increase the awareness of the impact of ACEs and childhood trauma on an individual's life course. Across the region, education institutions and community-based organisations are taking advantage of this fully funded training.

There has also been good uptake from schools and community-based organisations on our other programmes for professionals, including training on:

- Exploitation
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)
- Round Midnight – Virtual Decisions (gangs and knives)
- The Real – Exploitation workshop and resources
- Precious Lives workshop
- Stop and Search workshop

Assessment of evidence has shown that these offers have assisted schools in identifying some previously unknown needs in their children and young people and often as a result, disclosures have been made. School based interventions can also raise awareness for not only the children and young people, but also the staff too. School based interventions can create a better ethos in the school, if a whole school approach to delivering the interventions.

Responding to Serious Violence

Our guiding principle is to prevent, tackle and reduce serious violence across the West Midlands region. The WMVRP delivery team work alongside key partners to provide coordinated responses to serious violence across the region with the aim of preventing further incidents and address the trauma experienced by communities when incidents occur.

The types of interventions provided, as part of partnership responses, have included:

- Individual and group mentoring
- Therapeutic work
- Family support
- Youth work
- Diversionary activity
- Specialist violence prevention workshops for schools;
- Youth work around schools
- Coordinated support through Step Together
- Training/awareness raising for local organisations or the community;
- Additional community or youth engagement work, to address potential community tension as a result of the incident

The team have worked within partnerships to respond to around 240 incidents of violence over the last 12 months.

The VRP will be leading on the development of a regional violence prevention strategy which will be informed by seven local area violence needs assessments. The strategy will set the ambition for the West Midlands and clearly demonstrate how we will work together in our efforts to improve outcomes for our young people.



Barnardo's' Case Study

This case study from our partner Barnardo's illustrates how WMP are positively engaged with the VRP. It shows how this training is helping our colleagues in the police to further develop their knowledge around some of the triggers related to crime and engage with our communities that have experienced trauma.

"It has been a very productive working relationship with the Barnardo's team. Their knowledge has been pivotal in developing an excellent training programme for West Midlands Police in relation to a trauma informed approach. They have been very open to developing this in the context of the audience, recognising that to get maximum impact the training needs to be reflective of the roles the staff/officers are performing e.g. custody bespoke training being different to that provided to investigators.

The team have been supportive of me as a senior leader responsible for embedding not only the training, but the change in practice required across WMP as a result of the upskilling we have provided the teams and senior colleagues. We have jointly worked on terms of reference for the Governance Structure and a how the delivery plan should develop.

The team have been an excellent source of information in our first two Trauma Informed Governance Boards assisting colleagues across WMP with next steps ideas and regularly feedback information following training sessions on how the training had been received and ensuring there is an appropriate wellbeing plan in place for colleagues where required. The team have also supported the champions networks across the force.

The focus of Barnardo's has been excellent and two-fold by focussing not only on the training, but displaying passion and commitment to ensure a positive impact of the training and enhanced Trauma Informed Practice across the whole of WMP from senior leaders to junior colleagues."

Chief Superintendent Kim Madill Strategic Lead for Violence Reduction and Demand Management West Midlands Police

"About 500 Front Line Police Officers and staff have been trained in Trauma Informed Practices across the West Midlands. The Barnardo's staff have been very flexible in delivering the training and this has allowed to maximise the number of officers and staff attending sessions. Their sessions have been very informative and engaging for the learners. Positive comments have been received by learners including increasing their knowledge and understanding of ACE/Early Trauma and Trauma Informed Practice approach. We are now working with Barnardo's to embed this learning, and the following activities are in progress:

- 1. Create an Online Resource Bank which can be accessed by all front-line staff via their mobility devices.*
- 2. Trauma Informed Practice Champions spread across different elements of front-line policing. Over 35 officers/staff have shown interest."*

Chief Inspector Mohammed Hanif West Midlands Police

"I consider the trauma informed practice an essential part of modern-day policing. The trauma training delivered, and on-going support offered to staff through the champions network and online resource bank, has enabled staff to become more aware of recognising, understanding and properly responding to the effects of trauma. This has assisted custody staff in the daily functions of detainee welfare management and supporting each other through recognising signs of trauma.

This is particularly important when dealing with children in custody and by recognising signs at an early stage custody staff are able to apply coping methods to support the detainees in their duty of care.

Recently I escorted Dame De Souza, Children's Commissioner for England on a tour around Perry Barr Custody. Dame De Souza was able to see the support measures that had been implemented in custody, that is to say, Murals, distraction packs, (which Barnardo's also provided guidance on) and was able to see and experience first-hand how staff treated young persons.

A child in custody commented on feeling reassured in the way that custody staff had treated and supported her. When asked how things could be improved, I made a personal recommendation that all recruits/staff should be trauma trained. Lucy who has been my main contact from Barnardo's has worked tirelessly delivering trauma training and has gone above and beyond and along with another staff member was nominated and received a partnership award from the West Midlands Police."

Inspector Manj Ahir Custody Site Manager West Midlands Police



VRP and Sports Case Study

Walsall Foundation continue to deliver high quality community sport sessions supporting vulnerable children and young people from the local community, providing more sport in high priority places. The VRP investment in to Walsall has allowed the foundation to deliver an additional 3 weekly football and basketball sessions at Wolverhampton University Walsall Campus. Whilst the campus is in the St Matthews ward, children and young people are referred in to the sessions from the surrounding wards of Palfrey and Pleck.

Since December 2022, 69 new children and young people who were not previously accessing their services have become engaged with this provision. The Foundation have been working closely with Youth Connect, a local Youth and Community provision, who have also received investment from the VRP to deliver additional centre based and detached youth work sessions. The two organisations have worked together to deliver informal education sessions on knife crime, self-confidence and resilience, as well as street-based first aid alongside the Street Doctors utilising their violence prevention programmes.

Along with other community sport providers funded by the VRP, Walsall FC Foundation staff have received a series of workforce development inputs including ACES awareness and exploitation awareness workshops. Below is an excerpt from a recent quarterly report:

Thanks to support from the VRP and Premier League we have been able to able to run 3 additional Premier League Kicks sessions during the week! These free sessions are inclusive and take place in safe environments for young people to enjoy sport in. One of our Kicks Participants, 'Jackson', has become a regular attendee on these brand-new sessions and has become a shining example of how Kicks can benefit local communities. VRP funding and support, has allowed us to offer opportunities to children and young people like Jackson that they previously did not have access to. PL Kicks provides a major solution to lack of facilities, cost issues and more.

Jackson mentioned that "before coming here I would just be bored at home, there's not really a lot else I can do after school". These sessions have allowed local children and young people to socialise with others and make new friends, in a safe space supervised and facilitated by our qualified coaches. Jackson told us that "coming here helps me keep away from bad crowds and getting into trouble, the Walsall coaches are really nice and make me feel comfortable to ask for guidance".

Expect Respect (St Giles) - Brief Description of Project: A Community based service supporting young females under 18 years old at risk, on the periphery, or entrenched within Exploitation (Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Gangs, county lines)

Expect Respect Case Study

As CCE and CSE caseworkers at Expect Respect, we work with different organisations and professionals as part of a team to safeguard children and provide the best possible outcomes.

It is important to understand the needs of each individual child or young person we work with as they can and are very diverse. It is also important that the team understand fully the needs of the children or young persons to ensure they get the best possible help they can.

A caseworker has been working with a young girl who has been a victim of CSE; L appeared to have little understanding of the consequences of her behaviour, and would often not adhere to rules and boundaries

L had a diagnosis of ADHD and was considered at risk of sexual exploitation due to historic grooming. She had recently been on the periphery of crime and been arrested by British Transport Police (BTP) for suspected involvement in offence at a local train station. A warning was issued, and their parents informed.

Following this incident, over an initial period of 5 months, an Expect Respect caseworker worked with L. During this period, a huge improvement in L's general presentation was observed. L had presented with low self-esteem and at the first few sessions, wouldn't make eye contact. L was also reserved and would not engage fully.

The caseworker started off by meeting her for a relaxed session, on neutral grounds and just listened to her, giving L space to talk. This helped to develop a rapport, and as a result, L's level of engagement increased each session. L would speak about how she had thrived on getting into trouble and told the caseworker stories of things she had done.

The caseworker spoke to L about anger management and shared techniques to help her

manage her emotions more effectively, giving advice on different communication styles and guidance on emotional regulation. Together they looked at L's hobbies and interests and helped her find positive things to do in her area, which included going to fire fighters' cadets; a course which L attends every week and is thoroughly enjoying. This in turn has increased her motivation in other areas of her life, with L now attending the gym to improve her health and well-being further.

As well as 1:1 work, the Expect Respect caseworker facilitated family mediation; this really helped the family to better communicate and engage with each other. In addition to this, the caseworker also spoke with L's teachers; they explored further options for her, and together looked at her Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and organised a work place at a farm which L enjoyed and excelled in.

The caseworker further supplemented this work with sessions that focused on Education, Training and Employment (ETE) and the importance of education. L was able to complete her exams, and achieved excellent grades. Together L and the caseworker explored different colleges and educational routes. L applied for a college course in public service and due to her determination and attitude, she got accepted

L now understands the impact of her earlier behaviour and how it effects people around her. She has much better relationships with her family, and they are enjoying doing things together. L's mental health has improved significantly and is making good and positive choices.

Accessing Expect Respect has helped L to realise her potential and take positive steps. She has a good idea of what she wants out of life and what she needs to do to achieve her goals. She has put in action where needed and has shown great initiative and determination.

Faith and Communities Case Study

The report by the Good Faith Partnership showcasing the role of faith communities in reducing crime, and particularly the work of the Faith Alliance, has been a significant encouragement, providing a further evidence base for encouraging other Violence Reduction Units to increase their faith engagement. Launched in the Houses of Parliament in November 2022, the report underlines how the West Midlands VRP has been pioneering in engaging faith communities and has best practice to share with other parts of the UK, with a call to action for PCCs nationally to be replicating this work

Children and Young People

A cohort of 16 Youth Commissioners recently ended their elected term of two years. They have reported on their progress and the outcomes of two Youth Summits to my SPCB during 2022 and 2023. A Youth Summit in December 2022, hosted by Youth Commissioners, tackled the challenging subjects of racial justice and disproportionality in policing and the criminal justice system.

During 2023, there has been consultation in person and online with regional statutory and community youth workers; Youth Commissioners; WMP young people officers and engagement officers, to review the style of the annual Youth Summit and the whole 'offer' that a Youth Commissioner role incorporates. The feedback from young delegates at the last Youth Summit illustrated that we should ensure Youth Commissioners have a stronger say in the style, language, format and delivery of this event.

A series of recommendations from this series of consultations were agreed by my SPCB in July and will be actioned this autumn. They will impact on how Youth Commissioners seek the collaboration of other youth representatives to showcase Youth Voice and a higher social media profile for all Youth Commissioners.

I am proud to say three Youth Commissioners representing Coventry, Dudley and Sandwell, and one former Youth Commissioner from Wolverhampton, were award winners in April 2023 at the first Inspiring Youth Awards for the Midlands. A Youth Commissioner for Sandwell later received my Young Outstanding Citizen Award for 2023, so this reflects the activism of these individuals within the opportunities of this role and what a positive value their peers and communities place on these outstanding individuals.

A process to attract and elect a diverse and active new set of Youth Commissioners began in the summer. The voting online will take place in November 2023. A new cohort of young people, aged between 13 and 18, will be inducted by the end of November and will embark upon an exciting programme of activity, alongside WMP and the VRP over their term. This year we will introduce new engagement, with the work of the VRP Sports Partnership and scrutiny of WMP Complaints process.

This will provide them with a range of experiences of front-line operational policing, in order that they can experience and scrutinise policing and the youth justice system using a youthful leader's perspective.

The Drugs Strategy

It has been estimated that half of all homicides and acquisitive crimes are drug related. Accordingly, preventing and reducing substance misuse might be the single most important action that we can take to tackle crime and make our communities safer. Policing alone cannot resolve the issue of drugs in our community. I am committed to the innovative work being done by my office, to work with a wide range of partners and to deliver a whole-system approach and to cut drug-related crime and harm.

Ensuring a joined-up local system is vital and the publication of the Government's Drug Strategy, From Harm to Hope, has resulted in the development of partnerships across the country to steer how progress against the aims of the strategy are delivered. I am pleased to have been asked to chair the West Midlands Combating Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (CDAP) as Senior Responsible Owner. In this role, I have been able to represent the partnership at a national level and support progress against the national outcomes that are being sought.

The partnership was established in August 2022. It has undertaken a range of activity to support an improved response by all partners across enforcement, treatment and prevention, to the harms caused by drugs. My office helped coordinate the publication of a needs assessment to increase the collective understanding of the impact drugs have on people who use them and the communities they are used within. For the first time this covered the seven local authorities of the West Midlands and has enabled the development of a regional delivery plan to take forward a series of tasks, actions and deep dives and to improve the outcomes for our communities over the next three years.

Arrest Referral

My Arrest Referral service provided by Cranstoun allows those in custody who have either committed prescribed trigger offences (such as acquisitive crime), or who otherwise voluntarily engage, to have a drugs and alcohol assessment undertaken by a trained specialist. They are then able to both provide initial advice and to refer onto specialist treatment providers (commissioned by local authorities) or (where possible) gain a court order requiring the individual's engagement with such services (Alcohol Treatment Requirement or Drug Rehabilitation Order).

Figures 1-3 below show what my Arrest Referral service has achieved over the course of the year.

Figure 1.

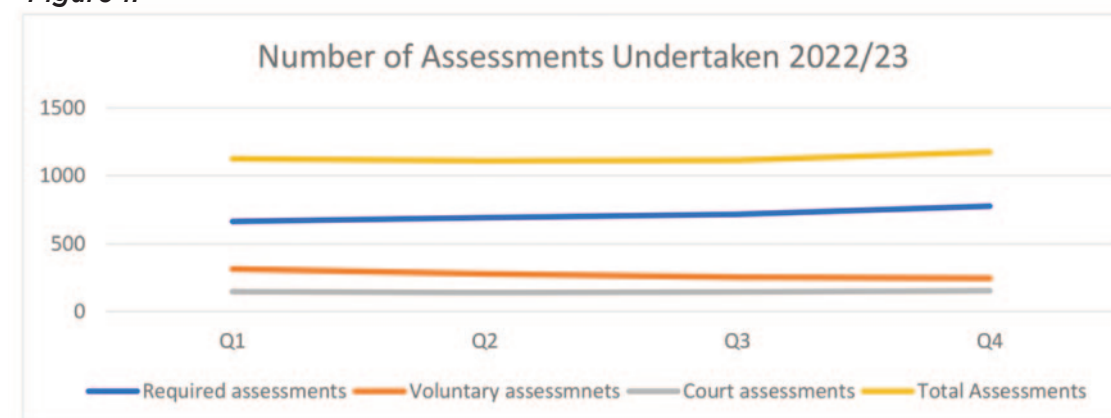




Figure 2.

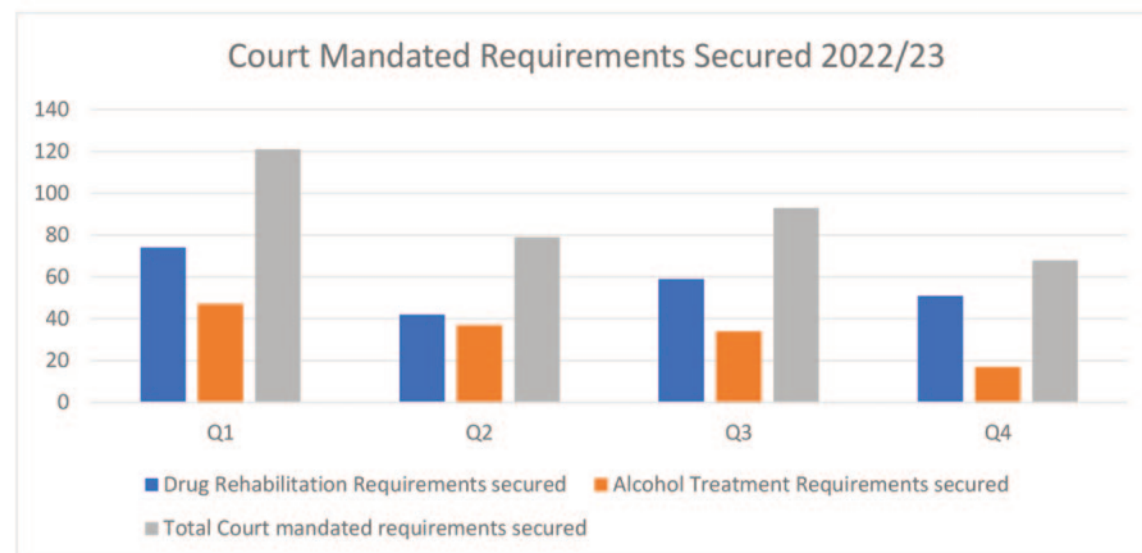
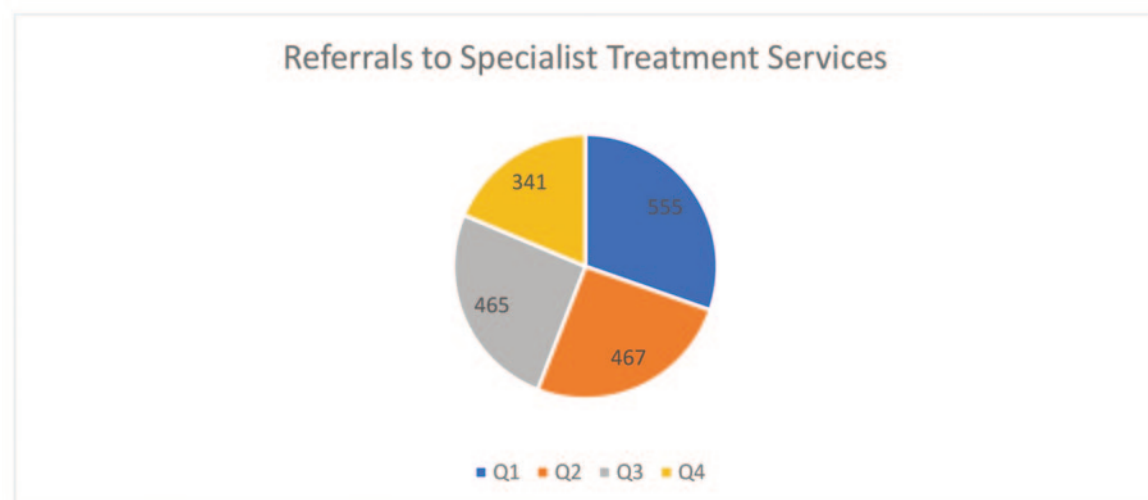


Figure 3.



Divert

My Divert service aims to contribute to a culture change in policing. WMP strategy is to work with partners and divert emerging offenders from court into the most appropriate intervention to reduce reoffending.

Divert is an education programme that aims to divert drug users from longer term drug use and is available to anyone found in possession of any illicit substance including (but not limited to):

- Heroin
- Cocaine
- Cannabis
- Amphetamines
- New psychoactive substances

The content of the programme includes:

- Drug Specific Harm Reduction Advice
- Naloxone Advice & Dispensing
- Economic & Lifestyle Impact of Drug Use
- Tailored Individual Advice & Support
- Onward Referrals to Specialist Treatment

Figures 4-6 show the work undertaken by the service.

Figure 4.

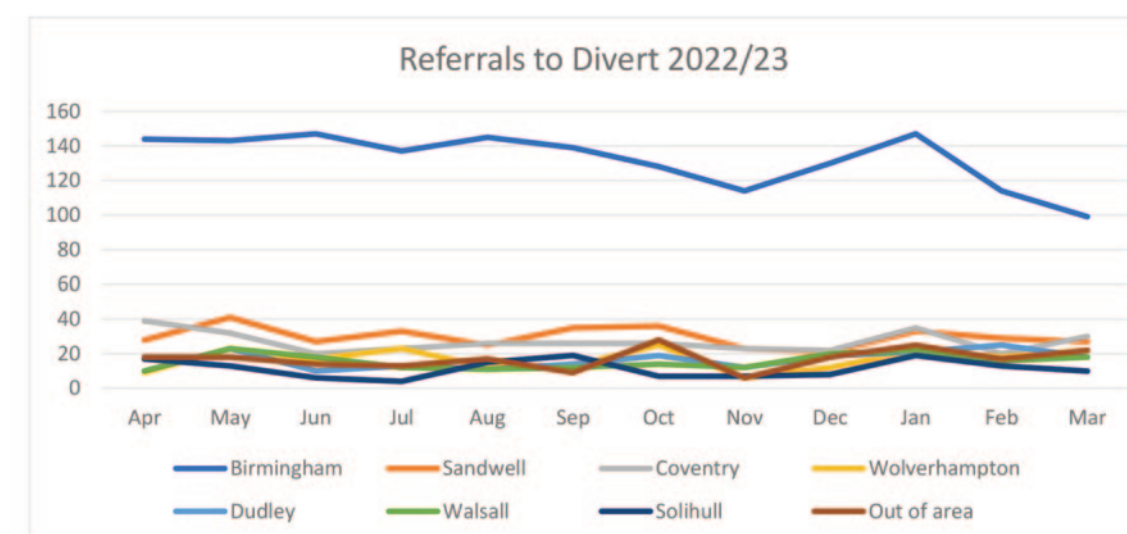


Figure 5.

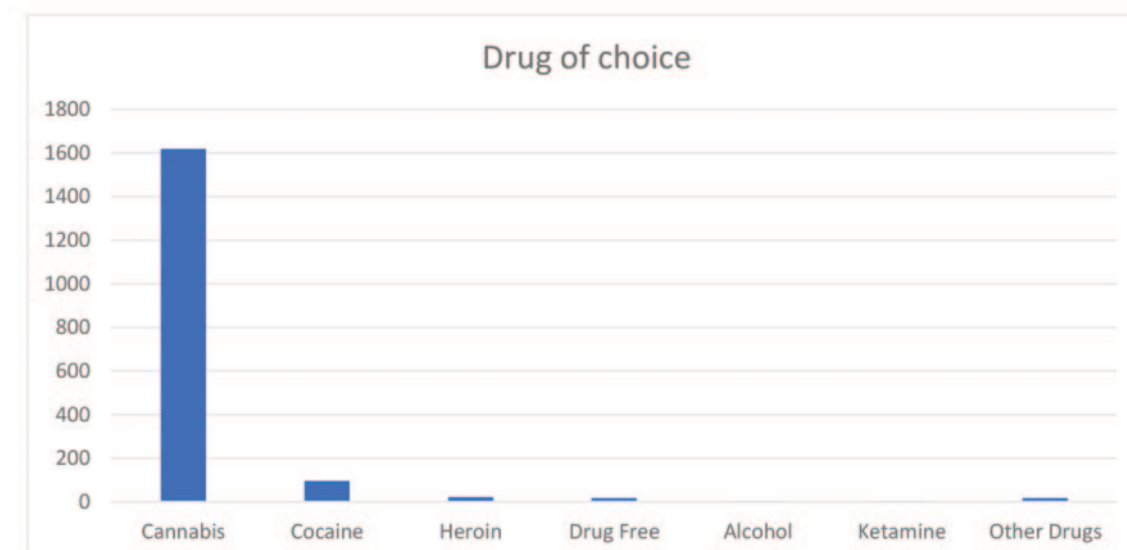
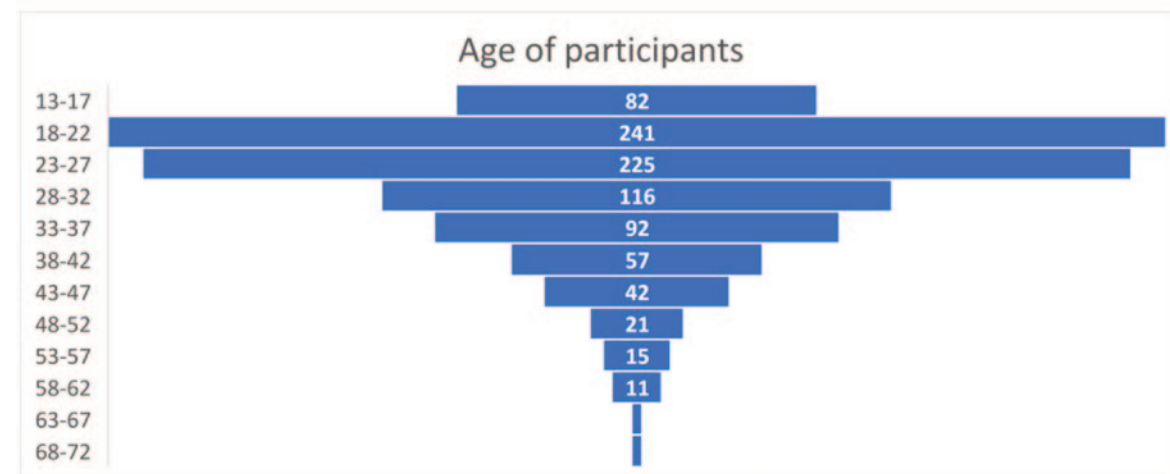




Figure 6.



Offending to Recovery

My Offending to Recovery (O2R) programme has been in existence since 2018, initially implemented locally within the Erdington neighbourhood policing team. During this time, it proved effective in successfully rehabilitating prolific offenders with prolonged and very high levels of drug addiction who were committing crime to fund their habit. The effectiveness of the programme has resulted in the reduction of retail crime. It is estimated that, compared to the three years pre-pilot phase, approximately £2,000,000 in retail crime in the Birmingham East area has been saved and a further £850,000 has been prevented from enabling the drugs economy.

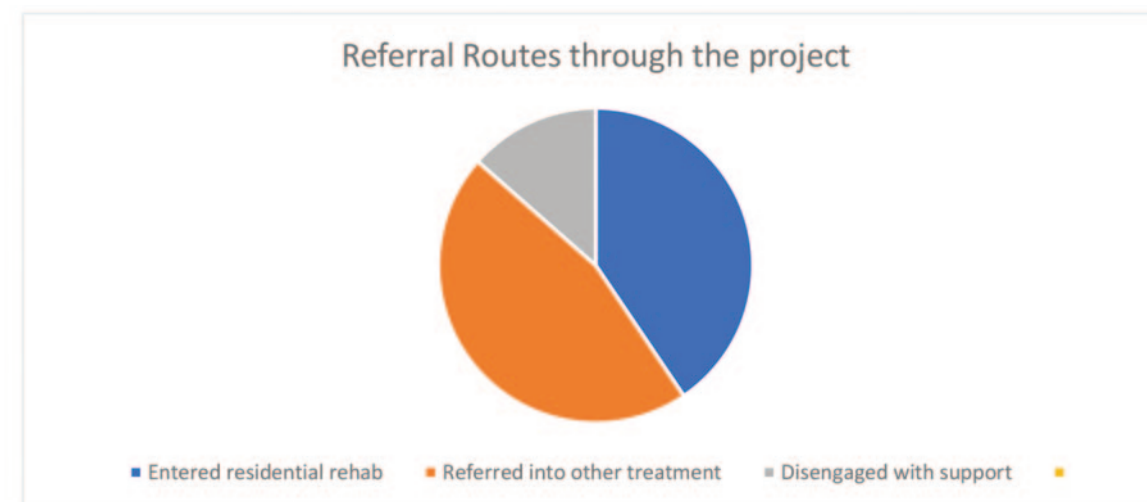
The programme has shown to be effective in reducing crime and positively impacting the lives of offenders. I therefore widened its reach to ensure sustainability and resilience by bringing more facilitators on board and widening the scope to cover Birmingham East and Birmingham West Neighbourhood Policing Units (NPU's). The intention is to use Offending to Recovery as part of a wider violence to business staff solution, and to address the specific issue of drug addiction in prolific business crime offenders. The project underwent an independently evaluated pilot from July 2021 to July 2022, which proved the effectiveness of the concept.

The nature of the programme also allows for management and re-engagement of offenders who may relapse, giving a better chance for long term change. Due to the nature of addiction and a complicated background and lifestyle, relapse can occur. However, if a person does relapse then it is more likely that, having begun the programme, they will re-engage with support, ensuring that the work and time already invested is not meaningless or fruitless. The programme provides the option to get them back into drug treatment.

For the 2022/23 period the project was in a crucial maintenance period between exiting from funding provided through the pilot, to taking advantage of funding which has been provided by Birmingham City Council through their Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG). Therefore, over this financial year West Midlands Police abstracted three officers from the project to support with the Commonwealth Games, before boosting the project by a further four members of staff before the end of the financial year with funding from the OPCC and Birmingham City Council. Despite this, the project has continued to support vulnerable people caught in the cycle of offending and has supported 37 people over the course of the financial year.

Figure 7 shows how those very vulnerable 37 people were supported by the programme over the year:

Figure 7.



Case Studies: Please note a pseudonym has been given to protect anonymity for all case studies below.

Philip was approached by PC Manboard in October 2022, just as he was about to commit theft in Sutton Coldfield. His commitment to engaging in the programme led him to residential rehab in December 2022, where he completed his 12-week programme. Philip has made a fresh start away from Birmingham. He is currently in aftercare in Derby. The O2R team were pivotal in helping him settle into his new environment. He now volunteers as a peer mentor for the Clean Slate Programme in Nottingham. Philip is exploring a career path in addiction recovery services with a view to work full time. He is a great ambassador to the programme with the work he is doing. He says he is forever grateful to the team for his new-found happiness.

Mat was brought to our attention by the Loss Prevention Manager at Central England Coop. He was a daily offender in Kings Heath, causing many shopworkers to feel intimidated. His behaviour escalated to the point he used a weapon during a shop theft. Mat was a prolific retail offender for 20 years; he was in and out of prison. Mat engaged with the O2R team and was admitted to residential rehab, however he self-discharged after a week. He re-offended and went back to prison. The team engaged with him again whilst he was in prison, they told him about the new Buvidal treatment. Mat was very interested in this treatment option and upon release from prison he had an assessment with the Buvidal team at CGL. To our knowledge, there have been no further offences committed since he started this treatment. He is still engaging with the O2R team for support, he has a desire to work and continue with this new chapter.



Road Safety

I have taken on the role of chair of the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group (RRSG) which is the regional forum in which all strategic partners convene and direct road safety across the region. I have been holding the partnership to account for their publishing and then their delivery of the Regional Road Safety Strategy which was published in September 2023.

I have been working to support Local Authorities with their drawing down of Moving Traffic Contravention powers. These are powers which allow for Local Authorities to enforce against contraventions which were previously only enforceable by the Police. Local Authorities across London and in Cardiff have had these powers since 2004. It's only through the Government's white paper on active travel that these have been activated for the rest of England and Wales.

Three local authorities in the region have successfully applied for these powers and these are Birmingham, Coventry and Walsall. The other four in the region will be applying for these powers later this year.

Police Collaboration

Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. The SPR supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables, to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local and national responses, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs, to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023, which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level, to the critical national threats and sets out seven identified national threats: Serious and Organised Crime (SOC); Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder; Civil Emergencies and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

This requires me to ensure, that the Force has the capacity and capability to respond to national policing threats. This means joint working with other Forces and agencies, as part of a national response, requiring standardisation and co-ordination of equipment and processes. I have taken annual reports to SPCB, as part of this "have regard" duty. Whilst the reports have highlighted how reductions in police numbers have stretched the capacity and capability to respond to a major public order incident, I am satisfied that West Midlands Police remains ready to meet the SPR. I have contributed to the current SPR review.

Collaboration between police forces and PCCs requires investment in the mechanisms for joint working. My Office continues to host two Regional Policy Officers, to work across the four OPCCs in the region, on areas of joint working and collaboration. As a result, we have increased scrutiny of areas such as counter-terrorism policing, serious and organised crime, and the National Police Air Service (NPAS).

The role that NPAS brings to police is changing, as the advancing drone technology gives police forces different options. However, it remains imperative and it is indeed mandated by the Home Secretary, that forces should collaborate on the provision of a national police air capability. I therefore support the transformation work that NPAS will undertake, as it develops the new technologies that are available.

These regional collaborative workstreams are overseen by the four Police and Crime Commissioners through a Regional

Governance Group, which meets quarterly with the four Chief Constables and Chief Executives, to scrutinise collaborative activity. Heads of the West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit and Regional Organised Crime Unit also attend to provide performance, management and financial information.

All four PCCs in the region also have local briefings with the Counter-Terrorism and ROCU leads, to ensure effectiveness at the local level. The structure of these briefings has been developed collaboratively with the other three PCCs, to ensure proportionate local scrutiny arrangements. This is crucial because it informs the joint scrutiny by PCCs at a regional level.

I have been assured during my time in office, that the Force is confident in managing public order issues. I have received regular updates from Chief Officers, relating to issues of public order in the West Midlands and have utilised the SPCB as a forum to scrutinise these. The Regional Policy Officers attend quarterly Regional Ops meetings, to ensure PCC representation and engagement across these specialist areas of policing.

I have also ensured engagement and appropriate oversight of national projects, such as the Emergency Service Mobile Communication Programme, a national programme tasked to introduce a replacement for the Airwave system. The delays in this national programme and the uncertain local implementation costs, are a significant future risk to West Midlands Police and other Forces.



COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING

WEST MIDLANDS CTU

West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit

The threat of terrorism to the UK remains and is fast changing. This year has seen a significant amount of national reviews into the government's counter terrorism strategy and the '4 P's' of Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare. I am the counter terrorism lead, on behalf of PCCs nationally. In addition, as Chair of the National Counter Terrorism Collaboration Agreement Strategic Board, I have ensured PCCs have a strategic understanding of national threat and risk.

I seek to ensure national strategy and policy is implemented consistently and effectively. The importance of this Board is considerable. As such, in December 2022, I wrote to all national PCCs and Deputy Mayors, to raise awareness of the key pieces of work in the counter terrorism space and to encourage local conversations regarding their implementation.

Regionally, PCCs scrutinise the performance of West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit and oversee strategic trends, budget planning and management information. Working with my regional colleagues, we convened a deep dive session into the oversight of the use of 'Schedule 7' and other related detention powers.

This was a key commitment in my Police and Crime Plan. In March 2022, we held our annual counter terrorism 'deep dive', which covered the progress made to improve the system approach to nominal management, the benefits that have been realised from Project Amplify and we discussed a number of the new and upcoming national strategies, such as Independent Review of Prevent, Manchester Arena Inquiry, Martyn's Law and the refresh to the CONTEST strategy.

Through national and regional initiatives, I have ensured PCCs have assurance that improvements are consistently being made to the counter terrorism network and agencies are working better to stop terrorist attacks from happening, protect the public, prepare for the impact of an attack and prevent people from being drawn into or supporting terrorism.



Major Incidents

PCCs have a key responsibility in the event of a major incident, such as a terrorist attack. We provide community reassurance, consider our response to victims and their families and hold the force to account for their response and recovery.

Following a regional exercise in March 2022, I have developed our OPCC critical incident plan, which sets out the responsibilities and actions required by myself and my office, in the event of an incident. Although everything cannot be prepared for, the document outlines roles, responsibilities and considerations needed at every stage of an incident, activation process, pre-incident, incident in progress and post-incident.

West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU)

Strategic oversight of the ROCU continues to be a shared responsibility, with PCC colleagues from across the region. At our quarterly Regional Governance Group meeting, the regional PCCs and Chief Constables receive a detailed report in respect of the ROCU. The report covers all aspects relating to the operation of the ROCU, a performance summary, details of the range of capabilities deployed and staffing levels. Along with my PCC colleagues, we scrutinise the operation of the ROCU closely, to ensure that they are effectively tackling those serious criminals who pose the most harm to communities across the region.

As a result of a review of its operating framework, the ROCU has been remodelled. Therefore, some services, which West Midlands Police provided, in addition to our agreed regional contribution, have been returned to force. I attended a 'deep dive' at the ROCU in October 2022, where officers from the unit demonstrated the range of the capabilities that they have to tackle organised crime.

The ROCU, is the bridge between the West Midlands force and the National Crime Agency. It is imperative, the work of the three agencies is coordinated and synchronised, in order that the most dangerous criminals, operating in our area, are brought to justice. I receive regular briefings relating to the work of the ROCU and the impact it has in the West Midlands.



REGIONAL
ORGANISED
CRIME UNIT



Civic Leadership and Campaigning for Change

When I was elected in May 2021, I pledged to keep the views of local residents at the heart of my plans for policing. Equally important, is ensuring that I can engage effectively with communities of all kinds across the West Midlands.

I have prioritised community engagement through attendance at meetings with community groups, residents, Ward Forums, stakeholder networks, civic events, projects, faith groups and the voluntary sector. This is all in an effort to engage with, listen to and work with the local people and communities of the West Midlands to enable them to participate and have a say in how their region is policed.

Communication Campaigns

My political team and I have launched major communications campaigns that aim to make the West Midlands safer, including focusing on my priorities of violence, sexual violence, domestic abuse, violence against women and girls, hate crime and fraud. There is much more in development. Here is a summary of some of the last year of campaigns:

Tackling youth violence: A major on-going campaign, throughout my term in office, has been to show the work being carried out to prevent, tackle and reduce serious youth violence. Including: £2m of Community Initiative to Reduce Violence funding for Coventry and Wolverhampton, the Step Together project and steering 10,000 young people away from anti-social behaviour in Summer 2022.

Knife crime: I have consistently campaigned against knife crime, including the installation of a network of 26 weapons surrender bins across the region; and calling on government to better regulate the sale of so-called zombie knives and machetes.

Car safety: A major on-going campaign throughout my term in office. I called for steering wheel locks to be given away for free by car manufactures, a road safety campaign warning of insurance danger, and publication of a car theft index.

Safer Streets 4: Multiple campaigns, including Don't Cross the Line World Cup campaign, urging men to be upstanders and allow women to enjoy the World Cup in pubs across region, domestic abuse awareness around the World Cup, major Christmas Party out of home billboard campaign and, I'm Tired of This film.

Retail Crime: I have regularly backed retail workers after a shocking rise in abuse since the Covid-19 pandemic. I have also held roundtables and meetings with the British Retail Consortium and rolled out the award-winning Offender to Rehab scheme, which sees drug users committing acquisitive crime supported into rehabilitation.

Domestic Abuse Cost of Living Survey: We handed heart breaking accounts from victims of domestic abuse to the government as the cost-of-living crisis had a major impact on them and support services. The Victims Commissioner also appeared on ITV News and visited Shadow Domestic Abuse Minister Jess Phillips in Westminster.

Off Road Bikes: I have campaigned for the purchase of off-road bikes so that WMP can better tackle anti-social behaviour and related criminal activity.



Outstanding Citizen Awards: I launched a region-wide search for the West Midlands unsung heroes and have crowned a new raft of winners of my Outstanding Citizen Awards. August – October 2022 and March-April 2023.

Money Mules: Parents were warned that thousands of people in the West Midlands, including many children, are being criminally exploited to transfer money through bank accounts for the benefit of criminals.

Second Chances Charter: Organisations across the West Midlands sign up to my Second Chances Charter to promote rehabilitation and provide people with criminal records the chance to find gainful employment.



Fraud

In the West Midlands, we have decided to take a proactive approach and attempt to address national poor collaboration around fraud. We are in the process of launching the first ever Police Force wide public health approach to fraud. This is off the back of research which has been funded by ourselves, the Midlands Fraud Forum and the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit. The research has been delivered by Professors Michael Levi, Alan Doig and Jonathan Shepherd at Cardiff University, the institution which launched the first ever public health approach to violence: a now commonly accepted mark of best practice, for how we reduce levels of violence within society.

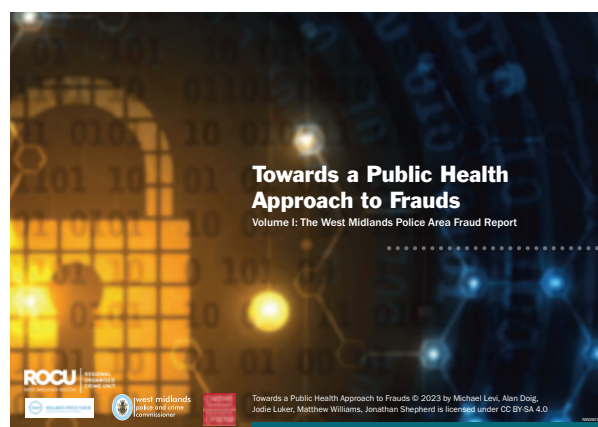
The core components of a public health approach have particular benefit for the fraud arena. These key benefits can be categorised as fitting under the following headings: data driven; preventative focused; collaboration centred and; co-resourced. This is a new and fresh approach to tackling a problem that all partners recognise requires reform.

Over the past year, we have established a steering group to implement the eight recommendations contained within the Recommendations Report published by Cardiff University. We are working towards delivering a launch conference in which partners will be tasked with delivering these eight recommendations.

I have continued to lobby for an improvement to the way in which fraud is governed nationally, both through

engagement with the Home Office, speaking to the APCC's General Meeting on our work in the West Midlands and, in response to several open consultations on the subject.

We have also specifically focused on the increasing presence of loan sharks which have emerged over the past year in the wake of the cost-of-living crisis. I have commissioned a number of leaflet deliveries across the Force area, in partnership with our cadet teams, to raise awareness of the dangers of being manipulated by loan sharks. This is to ensure that my constituents in high harm areas are better able to protect themselves.



I have also hosted a roundtable with partners involved in stopping loan sharks. The roundtable event was held to look at the West Midlands' response to the

issue of loan sharks operating within our local communities. It looked at how organisations could work in partnership to raise awareness of the issue amongst their service users/staff and investigate ways to help increase prosecutions and reduce the use of loan sharks as a source of credit.

Participants with expertise and experience in the voluntary, local government, policing, housing and credit sectors were all invited, with a view to creating recommendations and setting a timeline to review progress against such recommendations.

Meeting, listening and working with you

Building safer and stronger communities is at the forefront of my work, with a wealth of initiatives taking place across our region that are focused on achieving that. This section provides a snapshot of the extensive work that is taking place.

I have attended 137 community events and meetings and engaged with hundreds of members of the public and community safety partners at formal meetings, community and stakeholder meetings and forums, local resident events, conferences, workshops and business meetings. Highlights from the meetings have been working with my fantastic Youth Commissioners who represent young people from across the force area. My inspiring Police Cadets and I have been out and about, participating at events. It has been a pleasure to meet some of the recipients of my Helping Communities Fund as they showcase the best of the work that people in our communities are doing every day.

I am regularly out at residents and community meetings, listening and talking to residents and businesses, to discuss local issues and solutions, encouraging people to report any concerns, and, crucially, providing reassurance on the action being taken to prevent, tackle and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. My office links in closely with our local policing teams and partners to identify issues and support wide ranging action that supports our communities.

My office has received nearly 1,500 pieces of correspondence, from people and organisations from across the West Midlands that raise a variety of different concerns, issues and matters.





Outstanding Citizens Awards

The outstanding citizens awards took place on the 8th October 2022. This event shines a light on people who go above and beyond within their communities. Two nine-year-old twin boys, who have been picking up litter on the streets of Smethwick since they were two years of age, won my Outstanding Young Citizen Award.

Haaris and Mustafa Ali have been going out every weekend to clean the streets in their area to make it a better place for people to live and work. The pair can be seen wearing hi-vis jackets and holding bin bags and litter pickers on Sunday mornings between 10 am – 11am as they take to the streets with their dad to rid it of rubbish.

Anwar Khattak, who runs sports, mentoring and educational classes for children at the Small Heath and Saltley leisure centres, picked up the Outstanding Community Project award. Anwar, 40, established the Birmingham Youth Sports Academy in 2002 and runs classes up to five times a week for children from Small Heath, Alum Rock, Sparkbrook, Saltley and Sparkhill. Around 400 children, including 60 girls, regularly attend the sessions, often receiving life skills from guest mentors including accountants and lawyers. The aim is to raise aspirations and help the young people reach their potential.

The Outstanding Citizen Award also went to Stu Bratt from Dudley. After losing two friends to suicide, Stu decided to set up a mental health charity to help men in the emergency services, military and grass roots sports clubs cope with mental health pressures. His charity, Tough Enough To Care, focuses on male dominated environments.



Winning Awards

I am pleased to report that two of our projects- The Offender to Rehab Programme and our Restorative Justice project, which are designed to prevent crime, were recognised with national awards. The Offender to Rehab programme ensures shoplifters, who are stealing to fund a drug habit, are supported into treatment for their addiction. Our Restorative Justice project provides an opportunity for victims of crime to meet the offender responsible, explain to them the harm that has been caused, hold them to account and, gain closure.

The Offender to Rehab initiative is run by WMP and aims to get prolific shoplifters into residential rehab, if they are stealing to buy drugs. The programme is predominantly funded using money seized from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2022. In addition, Retailers and the Probation Service have also contributed to rehab places. It is estimated the programme has saved well over £1 million for retailers due to a reduction in shoplifting and prevented around £750,000 being spent on illegal drugs. Moreover, it has saved and changed the lives of a number of people living in the West Midlands. The Programme won first place in the Howard League for Penal Reform Policing and Adults Category.

The Restorative Justice scheme, won in the Restorative Approaches category. Run by Remedi, the Restorative Justice programme offers victims the chance to meet with their offender to obtain closure. Victims sometimes take up the offer despite having been seriously assaulted and their attacker now being in prison. Offenders often report that meeting their victims changes their behaviour and puts a stop to their law breaking.

Lisa was robbed after being hit over the head by a glass bottle as she withdrew cash from a cashpoint in Darlaston. Despite attempting to fight off her attacker, the incident left her scared and frightened. That was until Lisa was offered the chance to go into a local prison and confront the man who assaulted and robbed her.

I funded the initiative, and it was arranged by Remedi who provide the Restorative Justice service in our region. They brought the pair together in an attempt to help the victim move on with her life and to ensure the offender changed his ways. The Offender to Rehab and Restorative Justice work is making a real difference to people's lives. They are stopping people offending, reducing crime and protecting victims.



Good governance, transparency, equality and public engagement

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

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

The condensed infographic above summaries how each aspect of WMP performance has been evaluated within the PEEL inspection framework, which includes categories such as inadequate, requires improvement, adequate, good, or outstanding.

The most recent inspection was in 2021/22 and HMICFRS graded WMP's performance across 11 areas of policing and found the force was 'good' in five areas, 'adequate' in three areas and 'requires improvement' in three areas. HMICFRS said the areas requiring improvement included how the force investigates crime, how it supports victims and how it protects vulnerable people.

The inspection noted that WMP are confronted with elevated levels of serious crimes, notably, firearm and knife offences which surpass the statistics observed in many other police force regions. The West Midlands has experienced a persistent increase in various forms of violence over the past few years with economic disparities, poverty, and inequality playing significant roles in this trend.

Local authorities situated in economically disadvantaged, urban regions have experienced considerably larger reductions in funding when compared to their counterparts in more affluent areas. Consequently, it is unsurprising that forces such as WMP must operate in a more demanding environment when compared to forces in less disadvantaged regions.

PCCs are obliged to publish their responses to HMICFRS PEEL inspection reports of their respective police forces. Following my appointment to office in May 2021, I have provided formal responses to 25 West Midlands Police inspections, which can be accessed here: [HMICFRS Responses - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/hmicfrs-responses)

The Strategic Police and Crime Board

The Strategic Police and Crime Board

supports me in holding WMP to account and setting the strategic direction for the force. It meets on a monthly basis in public and is an opportunity for the public to submit questions and petitions relating to my duties and responsibilities. The role of the Board is to help me to deliver the priorities that the people of the West Midlands elected me to deliver. We have many challenges over the coming years and the Board brings a wealth of experience that will help me to deliver upon the public's priorities, to prevent, tackle and reduce crime.

Internal Audit

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

Governance and Accountability

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

I met with the Chief Constable and senior officers and staff on a weekly basis for the duration of the year, returning to face-to-face meetings as soon as possible in order

to maintain the strong working relationships in place. The meetings covered wide ranging topics relating to current strategic and operational matters. I have scrutinised force performance data, 101/999 and Contact with the public, police recruitment and the national police officer uplift programme.

The Joint Audit Committee provides independent assurance on the governance, risk management and internal control frameworks through its oversight and scrutiny of the work of Internal Audit, External Audit, inspectorate reports and risk registers. It provides this service to both the Chief Constable and myself.

Further assurances are obtained via the Annual Governance Statement, the Statement of Accounts and review of the Scheme of Governance. The Joint Audit Committee meets in public and the Chair of the Joint Audit Committee also attends my Strategic Policing and Crime Board annually.

Ethics Committee

My Ethics Committee has helped to focus attention and foster innovation, at the national level, around the ethical consideration of new technologies in policing. In the report "Technology Rules?" (2022), the House of Lords Justice and Home Affairs Committee singled-out the Committee as an example of national best practice. The report highlighted the independence of committee members; the commitment to transparency; the Committee's remit to consider technological solutions throughout their lifecycle; and the influence it has had on thinking around the development of a national model.



The Committee has also received high praise in other UK leading publications – including two government CDEI reports, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), The Law Society, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), Ada Lovelace Institute, Liberty, The Police Foundation, The Alan Turing Institute, and The Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL).

For an illustrative example of this best practice, consider the following. One tool, still in testing stage, seeks to predict which offenders under police management are more likely to go on to commit more serious crimes, based on historic data trends. While the committee recognised the potential advantages of such a model, for example, focussing resources on people at highest risk of committing harm, it raised major ethical issues that subsequently helped to shape the design of the project.

For example, any coercive type of intervention such as surveillance based on a 'prediction', could result in serious injustices. Concerns were raised over whether Stop and Search data was being factored in and whether this might present racial bias. Redesigns subsequently made much clearer references to public health and supportive interventions that might follow to mitigate the risk of inaccurate predictions and, any measures that could be used as a proxy for ethnicity were assessed and discounted.

Other projects considered by the committee have looked at organisational efficiency. An analysis of domestic abuse cases, for example, found that ensuring consistency of investigating officers was integral to victims remaining with the prosecution process and for a successful prosecution outcome.

The committee highlighted the importance of managing the use of these insights. If the data is used to improve domestic abuse investigations, the outcomes could be welcome. However, if these findings were used to deprioritise cases with multiple investigator handovers, this would be a major ethical problem. Strong assurances were therefore required and delivered by WMP moving forward.

The work of our voluntary Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) During 2022/23

Our dedicated ICVs conducted 227 visits to police custody suites across the West Midlands offering to check on the welfare of 1535 detainees received a welfare check by the ICVs. The scheme has 30 dedicated volunteers who who conduct one face-to-face visit per week. Over the course of the year, the scheme has seen many measures to improve detainee dignity. The scheme operates an effective scrutiny mechanism, including panel meetings to ensure any issues can be raised directly with us and the force.

Appropriate Adults

The provision of Appropriate Adults (AA) for vulnerable adults remains extremely important to me. Our 20 AA volunteers supported 858 vulnerable adult detainees and I continue to support the National Appropriate Adult Network's campaign to lobby the Government to change the law, so as to introduce a statutory provision for vulnerable adult detainees, levelling up the statutory requirements for adults and children. In the absence of dedicated Government funding, I have continued to lead on the delivery of this service.

Financial Planning, Resources and Grant Giving

Financial Planning

I review and agree a medium-term financial plan with WMP each year. The plan builds in the cost of refreshing the fleet, the estates strategy, known investments and the cost of increments for officers and staff. This assumes that the policing strategic assessment does not change and does not take account any unknown features of change in the nature of crime or policing.

The year 2022/23 showed that over the lifetime of that plan, a further £102.8M of savings would be required to balance the budgets of both the OPCC and WMP, even after raising council tax by £10 per annum, per Band D property, across that period.

The current government has promised a review of the funding formula since 2015 and despite reports from the National Audit Office, the promised review has still not taken place. Notably, the 2021/22 PEEL inspection identified that the police funding model is not effectively allocating resources to address the level of threat, risk, and demand.

WMP was recognised as an efficient force. However, as the Inspector's commentary highlights, it lacks the capacity and resources required to manage the substantial demand it encounters.

Furthermore, the historical shortfall in precept raised by the former Police Authority compared to other regions, has left WMP structurally underfunded. While the Inspectorate's acknowledgment of the Force's predicament is long overdue, it is still a welcome development.

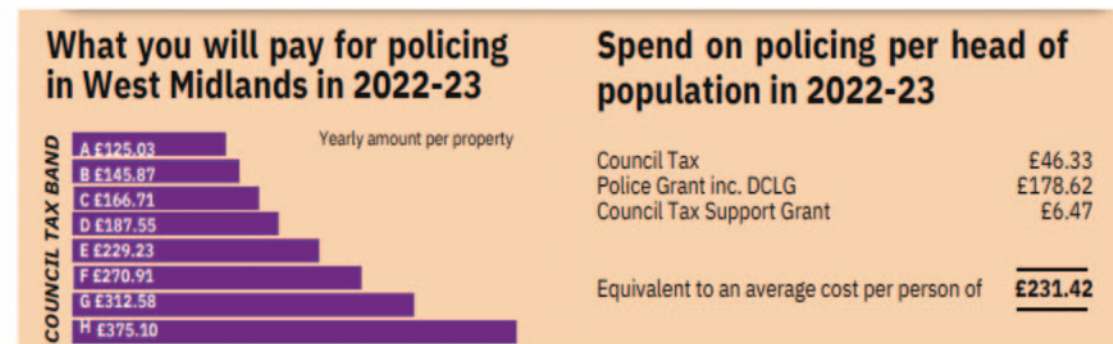
Financial Resources

I am responsible for setting the budget of WMP and the OPCC. The majority of the funding for this expenditure comes from central government grant, be that the main Policing grant, or smaller and more specific grants such as the VRP funding.

The total grant settlement for the West Midlands in 2022/23 is £559.4 million, which was an increase of £30.7 million on the previous year. This grant enabled WMP to maintain police officer numbers during 2022/23, as part of the so-called national uplift programme target of 1,200 officers by March 2023 and also to fund the 2022/23 police officer pay award.

About 20% of the funding comes through a precept on council tax. The West Midlands Police budget will still remain under significant financial pressure and the force is still projected to have about 1,000 fewer police officers by 2023 than we did in 2010. I set the level of council tax for Policing. The settlement for 2022/23 allowed PCCs to raise council tax by up to £10 per year per Band D property. This generated an additional income of £8.39 million.

PCCs are expected to pay for the Police Staff pay awards and meet rising costs and inflation on all other costs, such as energy prices and fuel, from the funding settlement and council tax. A breakdown of the police precept cost, per council tax property band, is set out overleaf:



The full budget report for 2022/2023 is available [here](#). It sets out expenditure for capital and revenue expenditure across all areas of policing and the OPCC.

Grant Giving

Grants, both large and small, are one of the key ways that I make a direct contribution to making the West Midlands a safer place. Projects, initiatives and groups tackle a range of issues such as domestic abuse; sexual violence; victims of crime; cybercrime; county lines; serious youth violence; mental health; sports diversion; youth justice, mentoring; rehabilitation; offending; and out of court disposals. The information below sets out how grant funding has been spent across a number of different funding streams.

Helping Communities Fund 2022-23

The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) enables money which has been seized from criminals to be used and re-purposed.

In 2022/23, this provided the opportunity to fund up to £400,000 of community projects which aligned closely to my Police and Crime Plan and the priorities of West Midlands Police. The funding is shared out between the NPU's, with the aim of supporting communities to invest in their neighbourhoods, helping them get actively involved in projects, which would make a positive difference and contribute to crime prevention and reduction and community safety in the local area.

Helping Communities Fund Allocations 2022/23

Neighbourhood Policing Unit	Allocation	Number of projects
Birmingham East	£82,587	23
Birmingham West	£86,566	26
Pan Birmingham (East & West)	£41,395	9
Coventry	£31,743	8
Dudley	£48,590	10
Sandwell	£29,806	6
Solihull	£35,155	9
Walsall	£37,480	8
Wolverhampton	£82,587	23
Helping Communities Fund Total	£475,909	122

Prevention and Intervention Fund 2022/23

The Prevention and Intervention budgets (previously known as External Commissioning) are allocated in line with the priorities within my Police and Crime Plan. The projects that we funded during the financial year are set out below.

Project / Area	2022/23
Cranstoun Arrest & Referral Service	£503,000
Diamorphine Assisted Treatment	£447,300
Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme	£300,000
Crime Prevention Activities Operation Soteria	£200,000
Enterprising for Employment	£100,000
Weapons Surrender Bins	£100,000
Commonwealth Games Legacy	£100,000
14 Projects under £100k including Peer Court, Drug and Alcohol Courts, Youth Commissioners,	£534,050
Prevention & Intervention Fund Total	£2,284,350



Community Safety Fund Budget 2022-23

These funds allow community safety partners to invest in meeting their responsibilities and support multi-agency responses to delivering community safety initiatives.

Activity	2022/23
Force Wide Commissioning Allocations	
Youth Offending	£652,108
Arrest Referral (Drug Interventions Programme)	£500,000
Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Structure	£354,000
Allocations for Victims of Crime – Victims Fund top up	£271,410
New Chance	£270,000
CSP Analysts	£210,000
Restorative Justice West Midlands – ASB	£68,785
Op Hercules – Force wide Injunctions	£42,000
Sub-Total	£2,368,303
Local Commissioning Allocations	
Birmingham	£660,000
Coventry	£165,000
Dudley	£135,000
Sandwell	£165,000
Solihull	£90,000
Walsall	£135,000
Wolverhampton	£150,000
7 Local CSP's	£1,500,000
Total Community Safety Funding	£3,868,303

Victims Fund Budget 2022/23

The grants from the Ministry of Justice, which support this expenditure, have not increased in line with inflation- £271,410 of community safety funding was therefore used in 2022/23 to top up the victims' support expenditure.

Priority	2022/23
Contact, Assessment and Referral Service	£992,732
Domestic Abuse	£775,047
Sexual Violence	£268,851
Child Sexual Abuse	£236,633
Restorative Justice	£225,000
Hate Crime Support Service	£150,000
Stalking and Harassment Support Service	£147,980
Modern Slavery	£137,563
Road Traffic Collisions	£76,517
Sexual Advice Referral Centre – SARC	£59,000
Forced Marriage Helpline	£47,207
Female Genital Mutilation	£36,455
Victims Fund 8: Open commissioning process	£150,000
Associated Costs of commissioning	£368,735
Total Victim's Funding	£3,671,720

Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) Funding 2022/23

The services to support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence are spent with specialist providers who develop expertise in supporting groups with different protected characteristics: the spend is on male victims as well as female victims and across a wide age range.

Priority	2022/23
ISVAs	£455,714
IDVAs	£1,213,612
Total National IDVA and ISVA Funding	£1,669,330



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

Simon Foster
West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner
Keep in touch

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

There are lots of ways to keep in touch.

You can:

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

Tel: 0121 626 6060 Fax: 0121 626 5003

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 WestMidsPCC

 @WestMidsPCC

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