



Police and Crime Plan Priority: Responding to National Threats

Title: Strategic Policing Requirement

Presented by: ACC Damian Barratt

Purpose of paper

1. The purpose of the report is to provide the PCC and the Strategic Policing and Crime Board (SPCB) with assurance that the Force is effectively and efficiently engaged in addressing national policing threats as set out in the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR), with a specific focus on:
 - **Violence Against Women and Girls**
 - **Counter Terrorism**
 - **Serious and Organised Crime**
 - **The Response to a National Cyber Event**
 - **Child Sexual Abuse**
 - **Public Disorder**
 - **Civil Emergencies**

Background

2. This paper provides an update to the last briefing to SPCB on 25th April 2023.

3. Introduced in 2012, the SPR established the foundations for a national level policing response to identified threats. The objectives of the SPR are to set out existing and emerging threats, describe the required capabilities to counter them, and to provide a framework for a co-ordinated, aggregated response which are just as, if not more relevant today.
4. The SPR articulates the balance between local level policing and the need for collaboration at a national level in order to tackle identified threats and harms. In response to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) recommendation, the Requirement was reviewed in 2015 to ensure it remained relevant and effective. This review provided an updated threat profile, comprising: Terrorism, Serious and Organised Crime, A National Cyber Security Event, Threats to Public Order or Public Safety (that cannot be managed by a single force), Civil Emergencies (requiring an aggregated response across police force boundaries) and Child Sexual Abuse.
5. The associated policing response to these threats in the 2015 SPR was articulated as the '5C's': Capacity and Contribution; Capability; Consistency; and Connectivity.
6. February 2023 saw the publication of a revised SPR. This was informed by an extensive review and consultation exercise with key stakeholders and partners and also reflected changes to the strategic and operational landscape such as the creation of the National Policing Board in 2019. The resulting revised SPR continues to provide a framework setting out the biggest threats to public safety, ensuring the police have the capabilities to deliver a robust, national response.
7. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats – six of which remain from the 2015 version (as set out above), and with the key addition of Violence against Women and Girls, reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence.
8. The 2023 SPR also builds on and expands the 2015 iteration in other ways, for instance;
 - The Serious and Organised Crime threat response has been expanded to include reference to drugs trafficking, specifically the county lines model, and

fraud which, highlighted during the review as threats that cross police force boundaries.

- Providing strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to critical national threats.
 - Supporting Chief Constables and PCC's by clearly linking the local response to the national threat, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships policing needs to fulfil its responsibilities.
9. Moving forward, the SPR will be clearly referenced in police and crime plans. They will show how it has been considered in setting the strategic direction and objectives within forces and how these will contribute to tackling national priority threats.
10. In summary, the SPR remains a cornerstone of policing, identifying threats and providing a framework for response at both a local force level and from a national perspective. WMP welcomes the revised SPR as a framework for strategic planning and operational delivery; as a force we reflect all seven identified national threats in our service planning and delivery approach.
11. In particular, we highlight our role in tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG); we are one of four pilot forces for Operation Soteria, transforming the way we investigate rape and serious sexual violence and putting victims at the very heart of the work we do, we also play a key role in tackling VAWG as part of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership hand in hand with West Midlands PCC.

Violence against Women and Girls

A summary of how West Midlands Police have ensured compliance with the new requirement to consider Violence Against Women and Girls as a critical national threat.

12. WMP has flexed its governance and delivery plan to respond to the introduction of VAWG into the 2023 SPR. We recognise delivery is in its infancy. January 2024 sees WMP commence development of the new VAWG Strategy 2024-2027, which will respond to the new NFD ratified at Chiefs Council on 5 December 2023 and incorporate all strands of VAWG (as per Home Office and SPR definition). The

new Strategy will reflect the asks contained within the SPR, along with other national requirements such as National Vulnerability Improvement Plan (NVAP), to ensure that the delivery is embedded.

13. WMP adopts the Home Office and SPR definition of 'violence against women and girls' that refers to acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls. Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, so-called honour-based violence and abuse, female genital mutilation, and forced marriage, including offences committed online.
14. The WMP VAWG strategy is set in the context of the recommendations made by HMICFRS and compliments the NPPC national framework for delivery. The strategy does not attempt to encompass the whole VAWG landscape, rather it focuses on those areas that have had limited attention to date, or that require improved coordination. For example, while domestic abuse is not explicitly called out as a strand in its own right in the WMP VAWG strategy, many aspects of the strategy enhance the WMP response to domestic abuse, especially within the criminal justice and offender & suspect management strands.
15. The Executive Lead for VAWG is ACC Crime who chairs both the Vulnerability Improvement Board and the VAWG Board. This facilitates force wide oversight of the VAWG Delivery Plan and compliance against national asks such as the SPR, NFD, NVAP, STRA, Domestic Abuse Strategy and Op Soteria.
16. Local governance is docked into Regional and National developments via:
 - WMP Executive Lead chairs the Regional VAWG Group supported by Force Lead
 - WMP Strategic Lead previous VAWG Taskforce and co-author of NFD
 - Both WMP Strategic and Operational Lead ensure representation at VAWG Practice Sharing Events with purpose to learn and scope adopt, adapt or upscale best practice for WMP
17. Public Protection holds responsibility for the investigation and safeguarding associated with complex cases of RASSO, high risk domestic abuse, FGM, Honour Based Abuse and child abuse cases. This ensures appropriately skilled, experienced and supervised teams are investigating the most complex cases.

18. Since October 2023, all standard risk domestic abuse investigations have been managed by Local Policing Areas (LPAs). Performance across a range of metrics including use of protective orders, CJ outcomes, victim code compliance and victim satisfaction is monitored and scrutinised with robust governance including specialist DA Strategic Board, LPA Strategic Boards and wider PPU SLT and Force Performance Panel. There has been no decline in performance reported during the transition from PPU to LPA.
19. Op VANGUARD; WMP Rapid Improvement Plan for Investigation Standards has been a key driver to improve investigative opportunities and capabilities including digital. VANGUARD has expanded the PPU offer of workforce development to wider commands and continue to drive improvements and provides a central repository for best practice.
20. The force has been identified as an area of best practice by HMICFRS as a pathfinder for Op SOTERIA and for the improvements delivered in RASSO.
21. WMP have implemented the use of a mobile, digital forensic capability to enable the swift gathering of evidence from victim-survivors devices and allow for the rapid return of safety critical devices such as mobile phones, to victim-survivors.
22. To better understand VAWG in the context of a wider pattern of behaviour and its cumulative affect, WMP have implemented both a multi-agency stalking triage clinic as well as a stalking scrutiny panel. This ensures, the best possible understanding of the threat and risk posed by these offence types as well as ensuring maximum opportunity for the implementation of preventative measures such as Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs). In addition, WMP undertake a stalking scrutiny panel with partner agencies to ensure both individual and organisational learning.
23. WMP has secured over £60,000 of funding to improve its capability to digitally triage electronic devices in the possession of managed offenders, allowing for more effective intelligence gathering and better identification of enforcement opportunities.

The capacity and possibility for opportunities for regional collaboration around VAWG now it has been included in the Strategic Policing Requirement.

24. As articulated above, the Regional VAWG Group chaired by WMP and attended by West Mercia, Staffordshire and Warwickshire provides a forum for regional collaboration. This regional meeting provides a docking point with NPCC, VKPP, College of Policing (CoP) and APCC VAWG developments to ensure alignment and the sharing of best practice.
25. The joint communication for Christmas and New Year 2023/4 evidences the mature development in the region with the campaign #ChangeTheStory. Each force has worked in collaboration to maximise its return on investment. These comms were coordinated through social media such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. <https://youtu.be/2ipKZduT1tQ>
26. Further regional collaboration is in progress to improve the safety of women and girls travelling in taxis and private hire vehicles by introducing voluntary additional training and checks for drivers.
27. On 24 November 2023, HMICFRS moved West Midlands Police into an enhanced level of monitoring referred to as 'Engage'.

The decision related to concerns identified about how WMP:

- manages investigations
 - makes sure multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) work effectively to safeguard vulnerable people
 - management of sex offenders and offenders accessing indecent images of children.
28. WMP had a rapid improvement plan in place for each of the three areas above prior to the arrival of HMICFRS. Progress against these plans have continued to be delivered at pace and improvements have been realised. Chief Constable Guildford will attend PPOG in January 2024 to provide a progress update against each area.

Terrorism

An update on activity and performance against the “4Ps” of Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare

29. The 2023 CONTEST Strategy has now been published and continues to hold the four P’s; Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare at the centre of the United Kingdom’s counter terrorism approach.
30. Prevent will continue to play a pivotal role in tackling the ideological causes of terrorism and will ensure a consistent and proportionate threshold across all extremist ideologies and workstreams. Innovative work continues in the West Midlands to evolve the forces approach to prevent individuals being drawn into terrorism or extremism.
31. It also sets out a desire to work more closely with partners and private business preventing attacks and reducing loss of life in the event of an attack; improving security at public venues through Martyn’s Law.
32. CONTEST now places a greater emphasis on disruption and a focus on the use of modern technology to support counter terrorism work, in the face of evolving technology-based attack methodology of offenders. To support this, the operationalisation of the national Counter Terrorism Operations Centre (CTOC), is bringing together teams, data and technology to more efficiently and effectively identify, investigate and disrupt terrorists.
33. In spring 2024, the new National Counter Terrorism Policing Strategy will be launched and will take forward all of the policing priorities described in CONTEST, helping inform the CT approach in the West Midlands.

Independent Review of Prevent

34. The Independent Review of Prevent (IRP) was published in February 2023, and contained 34 recommendations, all of which are now being progressed by Homeland Security Group.
35. West Midlands CTU Prevent are supporting transforming the Prevent delivery model by heavily investing in our regional footprint, through a ‘regional

collaborative approach' involving a number of specified authorities. This approach will look to deliver a more effective and efficient service across the force area and the wider West Midlands region.

36. The review also identified that there is too much non-CT related work in caseloads with a large number of referrals where there is no clear ideology. Work continues with the Intelligence function and with other external leads to look at more effective ways to divert non-Prevent relevant concerns towards other safeguarding practitioners earlier.
37. Prevent will continue to support the evolution of the annual Counter Terrorism Local Profile process, in order to ensure that all are clear what the threat, risk and vulnerability picture looks like in each of the local authority areas, to enable focus on the right people and locations, with the aim of minimising the current and future risks of people becoming susceptible to radicalisation.
38. Through a reset of the CTU Prevent Partnerships Team (PPT), and working with our internal partners, the PPT will improve training and providing clearer guidance and information to frontline policing practitioners, as well as help external partners shape and deliver training within their own organisations.
39. This team will also assist CTU Prevent in encouraging public trust by improving transparency and establishing better oversight of how Prevent is implemented. One way in which the team are achieving this is in the support they are providing to the Counter Terrorism Advisory Group (CTAG), which is an independent body made up of community representatives, looking at how the CTU delivers across a range of interventions and interactions.

Interventions

40. West Midlands CTU are working with CTP Headquarters to embed a regional Clinical Consultancy Service (CCS), which will support an improved understanding of the impact of poor mental wellbeing and neurodiversity on decision making and behaviour, specific to people referred into Prevent and those who may be subject of more formal investigative measures.

41. Investment has also been made into developing a complete understanding of Interventions Provision across the region, to enable a better understanding of what works, as well as exploring opportunities to develop and deliver new intervention capabilities. This should maximise the effectiveness of the work the Unit are doing to minimise the risks of vulnerable people becoming radicalised, through the selection of the right intervention at the right time, in collaboration with the right partners, bespoke to the needs of each individual.
42. The CTU have continued to support a number of local intervention projects running across 2023/24, through the Targeted Intervention Fund. Organisations continue to successfully apply for financial support in delivering activities aimed at 'up stream interventions' which are designed to steer individuals away from the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
43. Funding decisions are made by a panel made up of staff from West Midlands CTU representatives from specified authorities and the chair of CTAG for fairness and transparency. Funded projects are required to deliver update presentations to CTAG as part of the scrutiny process.

Preparedness

44. West Midlands CTU are linked in and work closely with the National Organisational Development Unit (ODU) and continue to play their part in efficiently and effectively implementing recommendations from official inquiries, national and regional tests and exercises. The force's preparedness, working closely with other blue light services and agencies, to deal with spontaneous incidents such as Marauding terrorist attacks (MTA), is mature and well exercised.
45. National guidance is routinely converted into local enhancement and appropriate recommendations docked into existing governance groups for delivery, oversight and assurance. Action plans for delivery are developed in line with the National timelines and progress and improvement are tracked and managed centrally.

Martyn's Law

46. Martyn's Law (formerly known as the Protect Duty) continues to progress through Parliament and was mentioned in the Kings Speech in November. In the near

future there will be a further consultation with interested parties from all sectors before it returns for formal review and royal ascent.

47. West Midlands CTU continues to work alongside Local Authorities (LA's) and Local Policing Areas (LPA's) in order to ensure a robust position of readiness for when the Bill goes live and for when there is an inspectorate body in place. For example, in December 2023 West Midlands CTU held a regional Prepare workshop with LA's and LPA's to encourage the sharing of best practice and understanding. At this workshop Figen Murray, the mother of Martyn Hett who was killed in the Manchester Arena attack in 2017 spoke around her experience and her views on the changes needed that are set out within Martyn's Law. The workshop saw a high level of engagement across the region and was deemed to have been successful in its aim.
48. The Bill places a requirement on those responsible for certain locations to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures. The legislation will ensure parties are prepared, ready to respond and know what to do in the event of an attack. Better protection will be delivered through enhanced security systems, staff training, and clearer processes.
49. The new duty will require venues across the West Midlands to take steps to improve public safety, with measures dependent on the size of the venue and the activity taking place. Proposals for the new legislation have been developed following extensive public consultation and engagement across industry, charities, local authorities, security experts and with survivors.
50. To accompany Martyn's Law, the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NACTSO) are developing the Competent Person Scheme (CPS), to upskill those with a role around protective security within the legislation. It is believed that there will be increased demand for people to develop or gain skills related to assessing CT threats and mitigating actions.

The number of national and regional investigations that are ongoing across West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit compared to the same time frame last year.

51. As described earlier, the threat from terrorism is now more diverse and dynamic. Demand is changing, compounded by a complexity that each unique Counter Terrorism investigations brings. Despite these challenges, during the past twelve months, officers and staff of the West Midlands CTU have continued to protect local communities - putting dangerous people in jail who were planning to do significant harm to others.
52. Some of those dangerous people include;
- Two brothers aged 18 and 21 from Birmingham who were jailed after they admitted engaging in conduct in preparation for terrorism. Each were sentenced to ten years and eight years in prison.
 - A 53-year-old Solihull man who was jailed for three years and ten months after he admitting to posting material online to stir up racial hatred, as well as supporting a far-right banned terrorism group online.
 - A 25-year-old from Leamington Spa who was jailed for seven years after CTU Officers proved he had been making weapons and ammunition, and collecting right wing terrorism material.
 - A 20-year-old Walsall was sentenced to eight years and six months in prison for possessing explosive material, and manuals on how to make improvised explosives and firearms.
 - A 26-year-old Coventry man who was building a drone for Daesh. He was found guilty of engaging in conduct in preparation of terrorist acts to benefit a proscribed terrorist organisation. He will be sentenced in December.
53. In March, the unit also responded after a man was set alight outside a mosque. West Midlands CTU Officers working closely with colleagues from the CT Network, established a link to a similar attack near a mosque in London. Officers from the CTU Borders team were conducting CCTV enquiries the morning after the attack when they spotted the suspect and arrested him on the spot. Although the attack was not declared a CT incident, West Midlands CTU played a significant role in bringing that offender to justice. He was recently found guilty of attempted murder and will be sentenced imminently.

The resilience and capacity of West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit to ensure compliance against the SPR in the face of an uptick in pressure on the counter terrorism service.

54. The West Midlands CTU, supported by the wider CT network and its intelligence partners, retain the capacities and capabilities required to satisfy the Strategic Policing Requirement.
55. Significant work has already begun, primarily to counter the evolving threat picture described earlier but also meeting the necessity to operate within the bounds of existing and projected public sector financial challenges - It is anticipated that the overall Counter Terrorism Policing budget will need to be reduced by £20m - £40m with the provision for 2024/25 being currently agreed.
56. Counter Terrorism Policing has been developing plans to address the budget deficit in a way which is practical, inclusive and strategically aligned; the West Midlands CTU have played a significant role in developing these plans.
57. Plans include enhancing the response to the threat with an investment for 24/25, achieved by repurposing resources from the current financial envelope and ensuring that investment remains focused on delivering the greatest effect. That means the development of a leaner, more agile approach to managing CT risk; finding efficiencies and developing new operating models across intelligence, investigations and interventions.
58. One of the tactics, a reduction in headcount across the whole network, has been proposed to mitigate the impact of the budget reduction. The West Midlands CTU is looking to reduce seven posts from its existing baseline, some prior to 2024/25 with the remainder being reduced in year. These posts will be taken from existing vacancies and will protect current officer/staff numbers and service delivery.
59. Recruiting and retaining officers and staff into Counter Terrorism remains to be challenging. As of the end of October 2023, National Counter Terrorism vacancy rates were at 13.3%, with staff vacancy numbers being higher than that of officers. The West Midlands CTU has around 9% vacancy rate and these are projected to continue to reduce with the current recruitment pipelines the unit has in place. The establishment position within West Midlands CTU is comparative to other regions within the network.
60. As the demand profile changes, difficult decisions are being made in terms of prioritisation of resources. The sustained nature of the vacancy rate means that

there are some cumulative systematic pressures in some areas of WMCTU. Ongoing efforts are being taken to ensure that all opportunities to increase staffing ratios are pursued.

61. The organisational governance framework and the financial reporting framework for West Midlands CTU will remain unchanged. Financial data is monitored quarterly and sent to CTP Head Quarters in the form of Financial Reporting and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Monitoring Statements supporting Revenue, Capital and FTE allocations. This data will be collated into quarterly Financial Management Information Packs (FMIPs), which are used to inform the financial management of the Grant.

Maintenance of the CT armed capability beyond March 2024

62. The Firearms Operations Unit (FOU) has an establishment of 258 Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs). WMP provide a service level agreement of 10 Armed Response Vehicles (ARVs) on a 24/7 basis, along with the Tactical Firearms Team (TFT) of Counter Terrorism Specialist Firearms Officers (CTSFOs). CTSFOs provide the force's response to planned deployments and on-call response to both internal force requirements and any national Intervention Response Team (IRT) requirements from the CT Network on a 24/7 basis.
63. FOU also have a full-time training team to support the initial and continuous training for all firearms officers, ARV and TFT. CTSFO's are also required to attend national training courses provided by the National Training Team.
64. The FOU has a base line establishment for ARV officers at 190 for training and ARV officers with 56 CTSFO role profiles and 8 SFO that support training and in force MASTS capability. From March 2023, the FOU have been on a pathway to uplift Armed Response Vehicle (ARV) officers to over establishment with a view to increasing the number of CTSFO's.
65. WMP have developed an internal pathway from initial firearms courses, transferee's and current ARV officers to identify talent and those with aspirations to upskill, there are currently 14 officers on that journey. Our time scales to upskill these officers is predicted to be 24 months due to the availability of nationally run courses.

66. The CTSFO numbers in force currently sit at 42, against an establishment of 56. This number has remained stable over the past 12 months, however the process to gain CTSFO role profile is slow. The force has held a number of recruitment drives both internally and externally with transferee officers that are already ARV/SFO/CTSFO role profiles, and are also working with the National Armed Policing Coordination Office regarding CTSFO pathway course availability.
67. There are currently ten Specialist Firearms Officers (SFOs) qualified in force, who are capable of providing all in-force responses, but are not qualified to provide national (CT) responses.
68. All of the FOU SLA requirements, both internal and external, are maintained through business as usual. The staffing picture means that the strength of the FOU will increase over the next 12 months, and the number of CTSFOs will also increase (depending on people being successful on their pathway courses). Confidence is high that the maintenance of the armed uplift will not diminish beyond March 2024.

Serious and Organised Crime

The working relationship with the National Crime Agency, including day-to-day tasking and requests from the Director General to perform a task under Section 5(1)(a) Crime and Courts Act 2013.

69. The relationship with the National Crime Agency (NCA) continues to be well established via the embedded Regional Organised Crime Coordinator (ROCC) who has regular formalised contact with the SLT. This includes daily contact with operational teams and contact with partners via attendance at the Regional Intelligence Group (RIG) and Regional Tasking meetings (RTTCG).
70. ROCUWM continues to be able to access National Crime Agency resources when necessary, to support the challenges in tackling Serious Organised Crime (SOC). The NCA support as a partner in the Strategic Governance Groups which are aligned to Commodities, Vulnerabilities and Prosperity priorities. These groups were reinstated in 2022 and produce, own and implement strategic action plans

through de-confliction and rationalisation of national plans, whilst being cognisant of local priorities.

71. The requests for support (only tasking takes place under s.5(1)(a) Crime and Courts Act 2013) are assessed and taken to the ROCUWM weekly tasking process for agreement in terms of support or otherwise.

The impact of the NCA tilt and how this is affecting regional capacity/tasking. What level of activity previously undertaken by NCA is WMROCU now delivering?

72. The tilt towards upstreaming by the National Crime Agency (NCA) has a degree of impact on ROCU resources, largely through intelligence dissemination and the subsequent requirement for investigation which includes the management of risk.

73. Some examples of this are;

- Increases in referrals of 'Fast Parcel' intelligence for action. Currently 5500 YTD against a previous figure of 2000 at this point for 2022. Following triage, packages are either retained by ROCU for enhanced investigation or disseminated to forces for action depending on size/severity/threat.
- The Regional Economic Crime Unit (RECU) are seeing increases in Defence in Money Laundering Notifications (DAML's) with 27 referrals in last 12 months which require a seven-day response and often result in civil investigation and Asset Freezing Orders.
- Cyber - Tasking via TICAT and Dark Web who are both NCA entities are reported into RTTCG for formalisation. There was an anticipated increase demand in this area from the NCA however to date tasking has remained consistent with minimal impact in past 12 months.

The resilience of the capacity and capabilities required for SPR compliance, including reference to vacancy rates

74. ROCUWM establishment has stabilised for 23/24 after having realigned 37 officer posts back into Force in the first quarter of 23/24. 21 Police staff posts also removed for 23/24 as part of a Priority Based Budgeting exercise.

75. ROCUWM are currently carrying a 9% vacancy rate across all functions. 23/24 headcount Dec 23 (Core and externally funded roles)

	West Mids.	Warks.	West Mercia	Staffs	Total
Police Officer Establishment	311	20.5	69	68.5	469
Police Officer Headcount	296	18	50	60	424
Police Officer Vacancies	15	2.5	19	8.5	45
Police Staff Establishment	120.66	5	6	7	138.66
Police Staff Headcount	104.2	5	10	7	126.2
Police Staff Vacancies	16.46	0	-4	0	12.46
Total Establishment	431.66	25.5	75	68.5	607.66

How is Clear, Hold, Build being used to tackle SOC across the region

76. Clear, Hold, Build [CHB] is a whole system approach to tackling Serious and Organised Crime. The ROCU WM SOC Coordinator is working with each region to ensure the clear phase has commenced by Home Office deadline of 31 March 2024.
77. CHB is a unique opportunity to use a national 'brand' to revitalise the local approach to SOC and get greater buy-in from both force depts, communities, third sector and partners.
78. WMP & Birmingham City Council has identified an area of Washwood Heath, Birmingham that will be subject to CHB. Meetings have taken place with key stakeholders to galvanise support to address the threat of SOC but also address other local issues that are important to partner agencies and the local community.
79. Staffordshire Police & Partners have identified two sites for CHB. The CHB project is known as 'Making Great Places'. The first clear phase will commence in the 2024 focussing on the Fenton and Mount Pleasant area of Staffordshire. In June 2024 CHB will commence in Hanley Park and Shelton area.

80. West Mercia & key partners are working together to remove and prosecute an illegal encampment that impacts on police/partners resources and the local community. The clear phase has been ongoing for many months. Partners re progressing applications through courts to remove the individuals and buildings from illegal encampment.
81. Warwickshire Police have used the partnership Serious Violence Data, along with the Vulnerability Locations Index (VLI) data, in order to pilot CHB methodology in the Croft Pool area of Bedworth. This is an area with a SOC footprint which is supported by Morile scoring.

National Cyber Event

Information on the planning expectations within the force to response to a major cyber incident

82. WMP has a bespoke Cyber response plan, Force Cyber Business Continuity Plan and Disaster Recovery planning within Information Technology and Digital (IT&D).
83. These arrangements collectively allow WMP to acknowledge the unique impacts that a cyber incident would pose to both force resilience and the public. Large scale high impact cyber incidents require a unique command structure and differs to those implemented for traditional civil emergency command incidents.
84. Awareness of roles and how to respond to the initial cyber incident are outlined within the planning arrangements so that commanders can draw upon the expertise quickly during the initial stages. Cyber resilience planning takes into consideration the potential for an internal (Business Continuity disruption) and external (Civil Emergency) command structure which could be established and co-exist at the same time and therefore are mutually recognised.
85. Cyber dependent crimes are managed through a Local to National 'tiered' system, and relate to crimes where the offending relies upon the use of the cyber space to commit offending, this includes attacks on organisations'

cyber security systems, and often leads to the damage or loss of data as a result of the offender's actions.

86. All cyber dependent crimes are reported via the National Action Fraud line and assessed, being placed into a category system and allocated accordingly. The WMP Cyber Team are allocated and manage the lower risk and lower complexity investigations (Category 5&6), with the ROCU's Regional Cyber Crime Unit (RCCU) taking responsibility for the investigation and response into all WMP based category 3&4 cases on behalf of the Force. The highest risk and complexity cases, and those that have a national impact are allocated to and managed by the National Crime Agency. The RCCU also contain a Dark Web team that proactively scan the dark web for WMP related threats and supporting both WMP and ROCU investigators.
87. Throughout 2023 both WMP's Cyber team and the RCCU have continued to work together to ensure there are established response plans in place to effectively coordinate the force's response to a cyber-attack in collaboration with the NCA, and local stakeholders. The threat from a significant Cyber incident continues to be monitored. Whilst there have been no such incidents within WMP during 2023, the consequence management processes for them have been assured through the occasional non-malicious loss of systems.
88. There is a national and co-ordinated system for the response to all Cyber incidents contained within the National Categorisation System. The National Categorisation System determines which organisation(s) will respond dependent upon the size and scale of the cyber-attack.

The work of the Cyber Resilience Centre within WMROCU

Background

89. The West Midlands Cyber Resilience Centre, set up in July 2020, is a ground-breaking partnership between Policing, Academia and Businesses. The aim of the WMCRC is to prevent businesses and charities from suffering cyber-attacks. The business is Police led, part Home Office funded and not for profit.

90. The WMCRC has registered over 800 Free Core Members to date. These are businesses signed up for our help and guidance. The WMCRC will continue growing towards 2% of businesses across the region and further.
91. The support includes:
- Tools, templates and practical help for businesses
 - A free half hour consultation with the WMCRC deputy to discuss cyber concerns
 - A Board tool kit
 - 10 easy steps to improve your cyber security
 - Exercise in a box
 - Fortnightly email updates
 - 2 networking events per year
 - Monthly blogs
92. The WMCRC also provides paid for services. These improve the cyber security of businesses and more details can be found on the WMCRC website. Cyber PATH – Police Academia Talent Horizons, are heavily subsidised by the Home Office and use Cyber Degree students to complete the service delivery. The upskilling of students means they have relevant, high standard work experience when they complete their degree, and therefore employable immediately. This assists in plugging the cyber resilience talent gap in the private sector – a talent pipeline for the nation.
93. The WMCRC is part funded by the Home Office to the sum of £170,000 per annum to March 2025, employing a Superintendent and Inspector. It is anticipated that funding will continue thereafter. As part of the funding structure, the WMCRC works with approx. 30 – 40 businesses through a range of paid for memberships. The sale of these packages has maintained the financial sustainability of the centre in the last 2 years.
94. A pilot was recently carried out by the WMCRC in company with local policing resources. This pilot has taken place in Bilston, Tettenhall and Leamington and continuing on to Lichfield in January. The completed pilots resulted in having had very positive WMCRC engagement with businesses, improved relations between Policing and the business sector and growth in numbers of Free Core Members. It

is the desire of the WMCRC to increase the number of outreach visits conducted alongside Police resources on a neighbourhood level.

95. The WMCRC delivers free and trustworthy help and guidance for smaller businesses and the charity sector. Support is also given to smaller public sector organisations. We prioritise micro and sole trader businesses, as they lack the finance, capacity and knowledge to protect themselves from cyber-attacks.
96. The WMCRC has been held as one of the best within the network for its financial management, cost per client acquisition and growing reputation within the cyber sector. The deputy for the centre has been a finalist in the Midlands Women in Tech awards for two years in a row. The Managing Director won a Nachural Award for impact upon the business community across the region and attended the House of Lords to speak on a Roundtable debate about AI.
97. The current cost of living crisis is causing businesses nationally to struggle. This is resulting in less time and resources for something they perceive to be a “nice to have” standard of cyber resilience. Reduced prioritisation by businesses and charities on cyber security will likely result in increased rates of cybercrimes. Cyber attackers often target the “low hanging fruit” businesses, i.e. the more vulnerable organisations. The WMCRC wishes to make the West Midlands region a harder target for cyber attackers, no matter where in the world they are attacking us from.
98. The centres have just adopted a new Customer Relationship Manager system. This will enable improved data analysis to demonstrate the relationship between joining the free core membership and then purchasing Cyber PATH services. The goal is for businesses to ultimately becoming Cyber Essentials accredited – a Government backed accreditation scheme that demonstrates an organisations commitment to effective data management in an on-line world.
99. The centre continues its support of charities. A domestic abuse related charity based in West Bromwich recently successfully decreased its risk of a cyber-attack using services from the WMCRC. They have publicly praised the WMCRC for the pivotal change in cyber awareness within its staff, who

are now on the lookout for Phishing attacks, much more careful when managing data and less likely to fall for such an attack vector.

100. Increases in the number of businesses registered with the WMCRC occur after key events such as Cyber Security events at locations such as at the NEC, and similar venues. Membership numbers also increase when social media engagement peaks, such as the recent posts about presenting to the House of Lords, presenting to the Deaf Community and many more. Membership also increases with Community Outreach work, as detailed within this report.

Child Sexual Abuse

Detail of the response to the concerns of HMICFRS in respect of MARAC, management of registered sex offenders and online child abuse

101. WMP have embedded officers within partnership exploitation hubs across the force area to ensure there is a multi-agency approach to reducing risk and threat to victims, effectively managing locations where offending may take place, and in disrupting and prosecuting offenders.
102. This capability has been increased and enhanced with the investment of Serious Organised Crime and Exploitation (SOCEX) officers within intelligence, local policing areas (LPAs), and the Public Protection Unit (PPU), specifically to identify and deal with organised exploitation of children, including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Each LPA is aligned to a local authority equivalent and ensures that there is a senior officer at the rank of Chief Superintendent who represents WMP at the various safeguarding children partnerships under the statutory Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA). They are supported by a senior leader from PPU Child Abuse, to ensure there is a robust contribution to the child safeguarding partnership.
103. There is a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) function in each local authority area and WMP have staff embedded in each of these to ensure that new safeguarding referrals are recorded, researched and allocated swiftly and with multi-agency input. Strategy discussions are attended by a WMP representative from the appropriate department to contribute towards child safety planning.

104. WMP has a dedicated Online Child Sexual Exploitation Team (OCSET) which investigates child abuse imagery offences and associated offenders who pose a risk to children. This team works closely with the WMP Digital Forensics Unit to convert intelligence into evidence to support prosecutions. Referral demand has increased year on year, which results in more enforcement activity and identification of offending.
105. The Sex Offender Manager (SOM) function was re-aligned to PPU in April 2023 which will result in closer working between the investigation and offender management functions. There are opportunities to ensure that investigators consider a wider range of diversion and intervention tactics when implementing out of court disposals, such as conditional cautions, which can be more effectively managed by SOMs officers.
106. Under the victims code WMP must ensure that all victims of child sexual abuse are appropriately supported. WMP utilise NCA approved intermediaries to assess victims' needs to maximise evidential disclosures, as well as specialist Child Sexual Violence Advocates (CHISVA) to ensure support from a variety of agencies across the region to assist victims through the criminal justice journey.
107. The PPU has a dedicated Superintendent for Child Abuse investigations and safeguarding. The Central, Eastern and Western areas each have a dedicated Child Abuse Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) lead who manages the Child Abuse Investigation and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) functions for their respective geographies. All child abuse investigators are required to be on the path to becoming a detective and then receiving Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Portfolio (SCAIDP) training in line with national guidance. Each geography also has a Complex Child Abuse Investigation Team with skilled and experienced officers who investigate the most serious or complex crimes.
108. The SOCEX team gather and evaluate intelligence relating to high harm offenders, high risk victims, linking offending patterns and allocate investigations and enforcement opportunities to the appropriate teams. The PPU Child Abuse Investigation Teams also benefit from the support of the Priorities Team (now embedded within the LPAs) and the Major Crime Team.

109. AWARE (appearance, words, activity, relationships and environment) training is delivered to all front-line officers and provides a model to capture the voice of the child and any safeguarding concerns when attending an incident with children who are present and at risk. This may lead to a referral to the MASH and/or an investigation being allocated to the Child Abuse department. All referrals undergo multi-agency research and strategy discussion if the threshold is met under the Children Act 1989. All safeguarding concerns, including those connected children such as siblings, are considered and where intervention is required by more than one agency a Joint Investigation may be commenced within the guidelines of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018). The MASH ensures that Child Social Services and Health, alongside WMP, are key to multi-agency decision making and responses.
110. The OCSET team use the Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool (KIRAT), with additional criteria added, and have recently trained an increased number of officers in the use of the Child Abuse Image Database (CAID), as well as the Review Tool for presenting images evidentially in court.
111. SOMs officers use technology to triage devices of Registered Sex Offenders during managed visits in order to detect offences relating to child abuse or breaches of Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs). SOMs officers have the capability to then deal with offences and prosecute identified offenders.

Capacity Requirements

112. An uplift has increased the Child Abuse constable establishment by 36 officers in 2024 in order to manage the predicted increases in demand. Nationally there are challenges in recruiting sufficient numbers of detectives, which is a training requirement for child abuse investigators, however, WMP have a robust plan to increase numbers this year through the detective academy.
113. WMP follow the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on child sexual abuse and CSE from the College of Policing (CoP), including the approved definitions. This has directly influenced the draft WMP Child Abuse policy.

114. The ROCU Tackling Organised Exploitation (TOEX) team have supported WMP CSE investigations across the region and assisted in providing intelligence products which pull together patterns of offending, vulnerable victims and identify potential organised crime networks to disrupt. 19 Collaboration & Connectivity with Partners
115. WMP are active in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) at both strategic and operational levels. Each of the 7 MASAs have identified priorities, which will typically include sexual exploitation, along with several sub groups to drive activity in regards to multi-agency learning, statutory learning reviews such as Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), multi-agency audit of operational activity and tackling child exploitation. WMP are represented on all of these sub groups and contribute to setting safeguarding priorities and providing assurance that our systems and processes are protecting children from harm. WMP has a dedicated Review Team which supports statutory safeguarding reviews, conducting single agency assessments following serious harm to a child, and ensures that learning is embedded following such reviews.
116. PPU have a dedicated lead for pre-charge review of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO), including offences against children, to ensure that files meet the evidential standard before submission to CPS. PPU also have a senior leader nominated to engage with the CPS at a monthly meeting to discuss strategic issues along with file quality. Senior Investigating Officers (SIOs) utilise the Early Investigative Advice (EIA) process with CPS, especially for complex or serious cases.

An explanation as to how the work of the Under Cover Online team in WMROCU coordinated with force led investigations

117. This activity operates under our *Op Atari* Authority.
118. There are a number of avenues where support of ROCU WM and UCOL assets are accessed and provided to force led investigations;
- Threat / opportunity identified at force tasking and escalated to ROCU WM through RTTCG for sanctioning

- Threat / opportunity identified, at force tasking, covert support requested via Covert Resource Request (CRR) leading to a Covert Tasking Advisory Group (CTAG) meeting (all CRR's are assessed through WMPs own internal tasking meeting)
 - Threat / opportunity identified where SIO/OIC specifically requires the support of an Under Cover Online (UCOL) asset and an online tasking form is submitted by the SIO/OIC
119. In support of the above, ROCU WM operates a Gateway function as a means of accessing resources and support in line with national ROCU standard operating procedures. A Covert Support Team (CST) sit within the Gateway function as part of the Regional Intelligence Unit (RIU) and is the single point of entry for all force requests. This enables a standard and consistent approach to the region when requesting support for covert capabilities. This single point of entry provides a means of tracking requests across the specialist departments including access to Under Cover Online (UCOL) assets within.
120. To access covert assets within ROCU WM a covert resource request (CRR) should be submitted by the requesting force into the Gateway having been subject to their own internal tasking process. Should it be required, based on the specifics of the individual request a Covert Tactical Advisory Group (CTAG) will be held where representatives from a range of capabilities, including the Regional Covert Investigation Unit and Regional Undercover Unit are present offering advice and support leading to the use and deployment of UCOL assets.
121. A bespoke tasking request for UCOL assets is available where the requesting SIO/OIC has a specific tasking which requires the deployment of UCOL assets, again submitted and recorded in the gateway as the single point of entry.
122. The tasking and support process is detailed on the commissioning document, held on the ROCU WM intranet site accessible to the regional forces via their internal intranet. The tasking of assets provides both support to pre-planned investigations and spontaneous incidents through the “hot task” process.

Public Disorder

The capacity and capability of West Midlands Police to meet and sustain the commitment in the National Policing Requirement for public order policing and the current status within WMP of suitably trained officers

123. WMP, as part of the Central policing region, fulfils a requirement to support up to 32 Police Support Units (PSU's) towards the Strategic Policing Requirement. WMP's contribution to the region's totality is approximately 55%, based on our establishment, with a total deployment total of just under 18 PSU's.
124. This requires us, based on a recommended model of training 3 times the minimum required numbers, to train 1113 PC's, 159 Sgts & 54 Inspectors in Public order tactics and be available to mobilise. At the time of writing we are just under 90% of our recommended targets for PC and Sgt numbers but have a full training schedule completed through the MRTTC to ensure that we train and refresh sufficient numbers.
125. We have some ongoing fluctuations in total numbers due to minimum standards of requiring to have completed first aid, officer safety training and the job-related fitness test. Should an officer expire in one of these categories then they are not shown as deployable.
126. One area of concern remains around trained Inspector ranks in public order but work is ongoing through Operations to ensure newly promoted Inspectors into 24/7 uniform-based roles are prioritised for the training and an uplift in these numbers is expected by mid-2024.
127. The numbers of public order, public safety commanders from Gold, Silver and Bronze remain very positive and we actively support the region with development and accreditation opportunities.
128. To further maintain our command capabilities and resilience we operate a number of 24/7 rotas to ensure WMP's ability to stand up an appropriate and resilient command structure at all times, both in support of Public Order Public Safety operations but also to support our wider major incident response.

129. As a Force and region, we have supported the national policing effort and requirement to send Mutual Aid for a number of large-scale events this past year including Op Golden Orb (Kings Coronation), Op Paladin (National AI conference at Bletchley Park) and regular deployments into London due to ongoing strategic protest requirements.
130. As a Force we continue to develop and maintain a number of specialist roles within public order including large cohorts of Police Liaison Teams, Evidence gatherers, Public Order Medics and Protest Removal teams.
131. The numbers of these officers are continually reviewed within Operations to ensure we maintain the ability to adequately support internal operations but retain the flexibility to support nationally should this be required.
132. The Force is currently developing its Protest Removal team's capability to work within complex environments, including at height following the release of a more stringent skills matrix from the College of Policing for us to maintain our national deployable status. During the past 6 months has also seen the re-introduction of using Mounted sections within WMP for particular high-risk football fixtures and this tactic has received positive commentary from the public, football clubs and officers alike whilst greatly enhancing our tactical capabilities.
133. In early 2024 we will be conducting training within our Operational Support Unit for AEP (baton gunners) following a national review around this tactic's capability outside of traditional firearms units. This will provide us with the capability to deploy this tactic into situations of significant disorder where the environment may not be permissive for our AFO's who would not be equipped with the appropriate level of PPE.
134. Overall demand within the Public Order, Public Safety space continues to be high both nationally and within our force area. Football continues to provide a regular area of demand due to the volume of football clubs within the West Midlands. Aston Villa being in European competitions have presented some unique challenges due to the teams they play and of note was the exceptional levels of disorder we saw at the Legia Warsaw fixture. This fixture saw some of the worst disorder seen at football for over 20 years and utilised officers from WMP and across the region in full protected dress codes along with high end tactics

including mounted and dog units. Despite the significant and sustained disorder, the risk to wider public safety was contained and relatively minor injuries suffered by officers was a testimony to the professionalism, experience and skills of those involved and rightly has received positive praise from the public, football club and within policing.

135. Strategic protest is also a regular feature of the POPS landscape, particularly with the ongoing conflict in Gaza and Israel. Nationally this is co-ordinated under Op Tarlac with a WMP Force response under Op Biotas with a bespoke command structure under Operations leadership to coordinate our own response and ensure a consistent approach is taken and one that engages and involves the communities affected. A number of large-scale protests have taken place and predominantly have been peaceful but clearly tensions remain and some isolated incidents of criminality have been recorded and dealt with. It is anticipated this area of demand will remain for some time.
136. Environmental based protests continue to take place but over the past 12 months have not seen the same level of disruptive tactics as previously witnessed although lone actors committing incidents of criminal damage continue to be a favoured tactic which are a challenge to prevent as often without any notice or intelligence to indicate.
137. Preparations are underway to plan and police the Conservative Party Conference, Op Pelkin, in late 2024 along with having a planned force response to any called General Election, Euro 2024 and a large number of scheduled events including music concerts and festivals where public safety may be a concern are also being considered.

Civil Emergencies

A summary of the learning from the past year of civil emergencies in the Force area and how this is being implemented, any gaps or challenges.

138. Over the last 12 months, the West Midlands area has experienced two significant events which met the legal definition of a civil emergency within the scope of the National Security and Risk Assessment:

- *“An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare or the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK.”*
139. The first was a fuel pipeline incident in Sandwell at the beginning of April 2023 and the second was Operation Mabble, which was the multi-agency response to the increase in fatalities from illicit use of contaminated Opioids during July 2023.
140. There have been structured multi-agency debriefs for these incidents to capture learning, which West Midlands Police has participated in. The Organisational Learning lead within the Strategy, Delivery and Assurance department ensures that there is a process for tracking and progressing identified recommendations/learning objectives, for delivery through the appropriate force governance boards and major incident readiness board.
141. These are then reported into the Organisational Learning Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable. The outcomes are also shared with the Learning and Assurance sub-group of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to enable wider monitoring of recommendations that require action amongst the Category 1 Responders that comprise the LRF.
142. A Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program (JESIP) self-assessment was undertaken in August 2023. Areas identified for focused action were; the training of Control Room Supervisors and Commanders and continuous professional development. There is a plan in place to maximise the police attendance at the tri service JESIP commander courses planned for 2024, to close the skills gap.
143. The Operational Resilience Unit are working with Strategy, Delivery and Assurance to capture and utilise the Joint Operational Learning, (JOL) and ensure that we share organisational learning from multi agency and single agency, structured debriefs. Update reports are submitted to the Major Incident Readiness Board, chaired by the Head of Operations, Chief Superintendent Sarah Burton and the Operations Governance Board, Chaired by ACC Mike O’Hara.

144. There is a National Manchester Arena Inquiry Board, led by the College of Policing, that feeds into the National Emergency Services Board and Ministerial workstreams. West Midlands Police have provided the first of two data sets sought, to identify how work against the MAI recommendations was progressing. The second progress report is due in February 2024.
145. A Silver and Bronze commander course for major incident response is imminently awaiting sign off by the College of Policing. It is anticipated that this will be available to force in 2024.
146. A new JESIP assurance visit is being tested across the South East forces of the country, to prove concept and assess scalability. This is likely to form part of future HMICFRS inspections for implementation in late 2024/25.

Cross Cutting Capabilities

Details of force response to the identified cross cutting capabilities identified in the SPR23

147. Whilst the SPR treats the national threats separately, many of the threats and the capability to respond overlap. The capabilities within this report are not considered in isolation or considered as the only capabilities required to respond to the national threats, there are other capabilities including intelligence, investigation and contact managements capabilities that would be utilised to tackle and respond to national threats.
148. WMP have considered these capabilities as part of a continual thread throughout this report and is satisfied that there is sufficient capacity within the below force capabilities to respond to national threats:
- Armed Policing
 - Digital Forensics
 - Roads Policing
 - JESIP
149. The board is asked to note the contents of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike O'Hara', written in a cursive style.

Author(s): ACC Mike O'Hara

Job Title: ACC - Operations