

STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday 26th March 2024
1000 – 1300 hrs

AGENDA

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| 1. | 10:00 | <p>Apologies and PCC Update</p> <p>The Commissioner will provide a general update.</p> | Verbal |
| 2. | 10:10 | <p>Notes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>The notes of the Board meeting held on 27 February 2024 are attached to this agenda. The notes include actions in bold, with the steps taken to address those actions included in italics. The notes carry forward any outstanding actions from previous Board meetings to ensure that the Board is regularly updated on progress.</p> | |
| 3. | 10:10 | <p>Questions from Members of the Public</p> <p>The Commissioner will consider questions from members of the public (other than police officers and staff) who live, work or study in the West Midlands relating to the duties and responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Any questions have to be submitted in writing to the Commissioner at least seven working days before the meeting. Members of the public may submit one question per meeting. Members of the public are reminded that it is also possible to ask questions of West Midlands Police and Crime Panel whose role is to support and review the work of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner. For further information go to the Panel's website http://westmidlandspcp.co.uk</p> | |
| 4. | 10:25 | <p>Questions from Members of the Board</p> <p>This item is for Board Members to ask particular questions on matters that have arisen between Board meetings and which are not connected with the reports on this agenda. A copy of the questions will be circulated at the meeting and will be made available on the Commissioner's website at www.westmidlandspcc.gov.uk.</p> | |
| 5. | 10:45 | <p>Chief Constable Update</p> | Verbal Update |

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| | | The Chief Constable will give a verbal update on operational policing matters which can be discussed in the public domain. | |
| | | Police and Crime Plan | |
| 6. | 10:55 | Preventing and Reducing Crime - Burglary, robbery, vehicle crime, business crime, fraud. To be presented by: Deputy Chief Constable Scott Green | Written Report |
| 7. | 11:20 | Preventing and Reducing Crime - VAWG To be presented by: Detective Superintendent Michelle Davies | Written Report |
| | | Regular Items | |
| 8. | 11:45 | Engage Update To be presented by: Deputy Chief Constable Scott Green | Written Report |
| | | Emerging Items | |
| 9. | 11:55 | End of Term Report To be presented by: Wasim Ali | Verbal Update |
| 10. | 12:55 | SPCB Actions and Further Lines of Inquiry | Written Report |
| 11. | 12:56 | Reports Circulated for noting only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. OPCC Grant Making b. Fees and Charges plus WMP Fees Charges Booklet c. Supporting the workforce; organisational change d. Environmental Strategy Update | For Noting |
| 12. | 12:59 | Meeting Close | |

STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday 27th February 2024

1000 – 1300 hrs

Attendees:

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| Alethea Fuller | : | Deputy Chief Executive |
| Andy Parsons | : | Chief Superintendent |
| Bhupinder Gakhal | : | Board Member |
| Dr. Cath Hannon | : | Board Member |
| Charmaine Burton | : | Board Member |
| Craig Guildford | : | Chief Constable |
| Damian Barratt | : | Assistant Chief Constable |
| Jane Heppel | : | Chief Finance Officer |
| Jonathan Jardine | : | Chief Executive |
| Scott Green | : | Deputy Chief Constable |
| Simon Foster | : | Chair, Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Tom McNeil | : | Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner |

Plus, one webcaster, one notetaker and five observers

Apologies

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| Wasim Ali | : | Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner |
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- The meeting was recorded, and a webcast of the entire discussion can be viewed here:
https://westmidspcc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/845148
- The reports referred to throughout this meeting can be viewed here:
<https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/strategic-policing-and-crime-board/agendas-minutes-reports/>
- Actions arising from the discussion during the meeting are highlighted in bold text.

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| 012/24 | Apologies and Notes of the Last Meeting |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The notes of the Board meeting held on 23rd January 2024 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. |

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| 013/24 | <p>Questions from Members of the Board</p> <p>1. A number of police forces are reviewing cases associated with the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme also referred to as Claire’s Law. Is West Midlands Police reviewing their cases and what is the criteria for the review.</p> <p>Can the Chief Constable provide reassurance that the West Midlands process is accessible, timely, accurate and there is an equitable response from each of the LPA’s? (asked by Dr. Cath Hannon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force are not conducting a review of the scheme though there are governance and accountability measures in place. • Qualitative and Quantitative reviews of all applications take place to ensure management, particularly around the Right To Ask request. At present, the time taken to reply is 23 days which is within the Home Office’s guidance of 28 days. • The Force push proactive opportunities around the Right To Know to ensure disclosures are made where there may be intelligence of a perpetrator. • There is internal Governance at Superintendent level but it does also form a part of the monthly Domestic Abuse meeting and goes to the Quarterly Performance Meeting chaired by the ACC. • The Force PPU team deal with all the Central requests irrespective of the LPA to ensure consistency. • The important part is the Right To Know where the Force and partners proactively take the steps to disclose as this is the system as a whole taking steps to protect and keep someone safe. • West Midlands Police to provide case studies of the work taking place around Right To Know and Right to Ask. |
| 014/24 | <p>Chief Constable Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process has recently been undertaken to appoint new Superintendents. 5 people have been appointed. • The Force bid for 400 additional officers and recently found out that they have been given a total of 7. • Entry routes into policing are now fully open to all. • The Force has received sign off that they are now an Employer Provider for apprentices which is up and running across departments. HR have been spoken with in relation to further funding around digital forensics to push this forward. • The Force have made inroads in terms of firearm recoveries with 3 recovered over the weekend. • Performance in terms of handling calls has improved. DCC Green will be helping the Wiltshire Force who are in Engage status due to West Midlands Police’s success. • Following the recent Police Performance and Oversight Group meeting, the Force have been invited to meet with the Home Office about positive outcomes due to the positive trajectory as a result of recent hard work. • With regards to Average Response Time, P1 calls are now averaging 13 minutes and P2 are well under the threshold. • The Force have continued with a number of Serious and Organised Crime investigations, some of which have come to fruition with lengthy court sentences handed out. • On a national basis, the Force have been working on the Armed Policing Portfolio which the Deputy Chief Constable is involved in. Hopefully this will bring more of the national training capability into the West Midlands. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Women’s Police Football competition was held at Tally Ho. Some officers from the Force play for the national team and an inspector has just been recruited who is the manager of the national team. • Refreshed gym facilities are now available across the Force for staff to use. |
| 015/24 | <p>Performance Update</p> <p>The report was presented by DCC Scott Green and the following points were discussed:</p> <p>Would it be possible for a breakdown of hotspots indicated within the report to be shared?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This information can be provided to the Board within a Private document as some of the incidents contained within may still be live. • West Midlands Police to provide further information on the performance hotspots identified in the report. <p>It is highlighted in the report that P4 no longer exists and has been moved into P3. How can we be reassured that nothing will fall through the gaps?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is part of a broader piece of work. • There are currently 9 incident categories which the Force are looking to move away from and condense to 4 - P1 priority; P2 responded to within an hour; 2 types of P3, those that can be dealt with over the phone or DA desk using facetime technology and then an appointment system, to arrange to see victims of crime at a time that works for them • There will be a crime desk and crimes will be allocated to be investigated. • The decisions are being made for the right reasons, to move to a more straightforward system. <p>With regards to the National Victim Experience survey, 9 months into the work the funding has been removed. The plan was to design and test a pilot survey, is the survey still of value to West Midlands Police or nationally, if so what can be done with it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Midlands Police to advise whether the data received to date from the National Victim Experience Survey can be broken down at Force Levels. • In terms of satisfaction, the Force do not measure satisfaction in the way that Police Forces used to as this is a bespoke service. • There are still live discussions taking place with regards to this work. It is expensive to reintroduce, but gives a true picture of the services being provided to victims. <p>An internal survey has been done with staff and officers and volunteers who have been victims of crime, what value is that survey and how has that been applied to support those victims of crime?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a recent Force Performance Day, a deep dive took place around assaults on officers and the service that they received. • Overall the response is very good within the first 24 hours. • There are 2 areas where the Force can improve – the assaults are not always logged as assaults on an emergency worker and separated from other offences; the second is not updating officers as well as possible. There are bespoke actions that have been set for commanders to improve on this. <p>How is the County Lines Taskforce operating model being adapted to address the exploitation of children and vulnerable adults, and what successes have been achieved in this area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The task force has been reviewing the totality of the link of exploitation of Young People, urban street gangs and criminality. • Force to provide the Board with case studies relating to the success of the work of County Lines Taskforce. |

- This is a complex area of policing and society as often young people are both suspects and victims.
- National funding is being sought as it is not guaranteed for the future.
- Reassurance is being sought as part of the Force's Medium-Term Financial Plan around what would be done if funding to the team were cut.

How effective have awareness campaigns and partnership initiatives been in educating the public about cybercrime risks, particularly among vulnerable populations?

- Somewhat effective. The complexity of cyber-crime is that it is forever changing and increasing.
- The public are advised to forward any potentially suspicious text messages to the National Crime Agency via 7726
- Responsibility falls on all of us to keep educating one another, especially the vulnerable.

With reference to theft of motor vehicles and the work done around the prevalence of thefts in the West Midlands. Is there an opportunity to broaden out this work to work with the motor trade, DVSA and perhaps academia to assess the economics of the criminality?

- The National lead for this work is ACC Jenny Sims from Merseyside Police.
- There has recently been confirmation of funding secured following work with the motor industry on some of the aspects. The Force will be at forefront of this bid.
- As a part of Op Advance, in Birmingham a number of chop shops were targeted with partners and a good return of vehicles can be reported.
- At the recent Advance in Wolverhampton, there was a large scale Multi Agency Road Safety Operation and all the aforementioned agencies were present to carry out enforcement on unlawful vehicles and gather work to feed into central intelligence work.

In relation to the data for 101, 999, P1 & P2, what assurances do you have around the accuracy of clock start and finish data given the National focus?

- With P1 the Force are not pushing any harder. These incidents are attended to in between 12-14 mins which is within the national target
- With P2 the Force are attending within an hour which is remarkable considering the numbers of calls received.
- 101 calls are easy to measure, these are detailed via a telephony-based system. The average speed of answering is just over a minute.
- 999 call data is received from BT. There is a slight difference nationally that BT add onto the call depending on where you are. 2 months ago, the Force were 3rd nationally and last month placed 12th. However, last month there was 90.7% compliance of calls answered, last month 3 seconds was the median time taken to answer a call.
- The Force are satisfied that the data is accurate.

In connection with Paragraph 13 and data from the Homicide Index which indicates significant factors were domestic and alcohol related and a high proportion of victims under the age of 25, can you outline the work taking place in order to identify and work with those factors within that homicide index?

- As one of the larger Metropolitan Force, West Midlands Police are one of the drivers for Homicide data.
- The Force are actively involved with the Home Office on a work stream identifying the 9 cohorts of people who are the victims of homicide.
- There is often an overlap between the groups so many of those that are alcohol related will also be domestic related.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force now have a homicide prevention plan and irrespective of any statutory reviews that result from a Homicide, the Force conduct immediate lesson learning reviews for every homicide that has taken place. • As part of the national homicide work, the Force are working with the Home Office to do a deep dive based in Birmingham around Night Time Economies in particular where there are homicides. <p>Concerning the increasing prevalence of converted blank firers, can you explain the work taking place to address this issue?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This work links to the broader work taking place around the recovery of all firearms. • Every firearm recovered is examined by NABIS. • All intelligence is fed back to contribute to the national prevalence of firearms • In terms of the strategic assessment, the 2 main threats are in relation to Lethal Purpose weapons and converted blank firers. • Most conversion firearms are imported after being converted. • NABIS are undertaking work to further examine where the conversions are taking place. |
| 016/24 | <p>Engage Update</p> <p>The report was presented by DCC Scott Green and the following points were discussed:</p> <p>Paragraph 47 indicates there has been a massive focus on arrests and seizures as well as work around the intelligence packages. Can you explain how this is being managed and whether there is now a backlog regarding the digital media?</p> <p>Paragraph 49 talks about engagement with partners and infers that there might be concerns about whether sharing information with partners might cause some difficulties in the security of the operation or investigation, what has changed to build trust and confidence in the partnership work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chief Constable has been on warrants with officers to fully understand the process. • It is managed by clear leadership, Detective Sergeant led with a Detective Inspector overseeing. • The courts have been spoken to with regards to ensuring there are enough slots for warrant activity. • As part of looking at this, the Forensics Team has doubled in size. This impact has been reported back to HMIC. There are Digi vans which go out to scenes triaging. The Team could present to the Board at a future date to provide further information. • Even though all this work has taken place, the backlogs are coming down. • The Force are very good at being able to do things in real time which has had a positive effect on charge rates. • One criticism from HMIC, the Force had been asked to assess the time taken to supply the address information the warrant was at before breaking the door rather than just beforehand as per National best practice. This is now shared with partners in advance. • Based on the figures from other Forces, and the resources compared to other forces, West Midlands Police are performing effectively. • Wellbeing has been reviewed for officers within PPU to provide a level of support and supervisory oversight. <p>In paragraph 26e – there is a reference to the need for dedicated Connect Training, is this in process and being rolled out and if not, when will it be taking place?</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is in relation to investigating crime skills and capability and links to the learning from the QATT reviews around the Force’s ability to investigate which increased dramatically after the change in model. • One of the learning points from this is when Connect first came in, not everyone was trained to the same level in the Force New and so some people need a lot more training than others, particularly supervisors. • In addition, for Probation Training, the approach has been refreshed. • Overall, the opinion is that mid-term officers need to be targeted next. <p>Paragraph 28 mentions a template that has been created for investigation plans, but in paragraph 28e there is reference to the Investigations Policy which is under review. Could you offer any further information on how this is being reviewed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is as a result of learning from looking at the model. • The Chief Constable wants to increase both capability and capacity to investigate more, so that the threshold when the Force do THRIVE assessments allows more chances to investigate than previously. • Now there are more people investigating crime there are more positive outputs. • The Force will take another look at the policy to determine where the threshold is compared to how many investigators there are to take on these demands. • The Board can be briefed accordingly at a later date when the work is in a place to be able to be presented. <p>Looking at paragraphs 30a and b, it has been identified that there is a need to roll out training to staff in order to update and refresh the recording of outcomes accurately at all times. Can more information be provided on this around what needs to be done here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This links in with improving the overall performance of the Force and transparency with the Public. • It is fair to say that there hasn’t been a focus on performance management in years gone by, and this is the same in other Forces. • From West Midlands Police’s perspective, the Force want to explain the results based on the demand that has come in. These achievements need to be registered on behalf of the public. • Some of the ways in which outcomes were listed meant that they were not listed as a positive outcome. • Details provided by HMIC showed that in December 2022 the Force were around 2.8% on outcomes. For the last few months though, this has improved to 10 or 12% this is as a result of a lot of hard work. • It remains important that the Force get the administration side correct so the public can compare and contrast with other areas. |
| <p>017/24</p> | <p>PCC Update</p> <p>The Commissioner raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 new Weapon Surrender Bins have been installed in the region. This takes the total across the region to 30 which means that there will be less dangerous weapons on the streets of the West Midlands. • The Commissioner is working with West Midlands Police to ensure robust action is taken against dangerous drivers who endanger the lives of other road users as a result of their recklessness. This is being done through supporting increased enforcement through the use of average speed cameras, police operations to prevent drink and drug driving, investing in mobile speed camera vans, speed guns for Community Speedwatch and improved third party Dashboard Cam reporting. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner has launched his Public Health approach to Fraud. Fraud now accounts for 39% of all reported crime and so is one that needs to be brought under control. Partners were brought together for the Launch and the new partnership aims to empower the public and make the West Midlands one of the most difficult places to commit Fraud. • The Commissioner welcomes the launch of a Ministry of Justice campaign to raise awareness of the rights that all victims of crime are entitled to. In September 2023 West Midlands Police launched a new Victims Strategy to improve the service it provides to victims of crime and ensure compliance with the Victims Code. • In his position as the Association of Police & Crime Commissioners National Joint Serious Violence Lead, the Commissioner will be hosting an in-person Parliamentary drop-in event on March 5th to highlight that PCCs have been meeting to form partnerships and work together to understand unique drivers behind violence. MPs and Peers will be invited to attend to hear about the work being done within their constituencies to fight serious violence. |
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| Police and Crime Plan | |
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| 018/24 | <p>Strategic Policing Requirement</p> <p>The report was presented by ACC Damian Barratt and the following points were discussed:</p> <p>In the most recent statistics the number of spiking reports has gone down though concerns remain. Can the Force offer some assurance about how they can continue to be involved in national conversations on this area of work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Force to provide update on West Midlands Police approach to Spiking and links with national initiatives against spiking. • It is a complex area that has been highlighted where there may or not be offending taking place. The best approach is to give an individual the confidence to report their concerns. • Work is taking place with the night time economy to target perpetrator activity. Good approach work has been seen on this front. <p>Do you have any ideas about how we could create greater transparency and accountability for the partnership relating to preparedness to dealing with incidents such as the Manchester Arena Bombing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force have structures across the region through the Contest Strategy approach which Protect and Prepare is a part of. • Across the Force Area there are Protect and Prepare Boards in each Local Authority Area • A Protect and Prepare regional workshop was held in Birmingham in December. Each Local Authorities responsibilities were mapped and there were very few that weren't involved. • For further assurances, you could engage with each Local Authority to check the activity within that Board. <p>What Prevent interventions do you think are effective and working well and what do they look like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prevent approach has nationally been under review and the Force are working through the 34 recommendations. • What works is very varied, there may be too much casework in the region that doesn't have a clear ideology. There is a need to understand the ideology and what |
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is driving the individual to have the views they are having which is resulting in criminal activity.

- The Prevent approach is the approach that West Midlands Police are supportive of but it depends on the type of ideology.

With regards to the VAWG strategy there appears to be a disconnect between that and the delivery. For example, those DA victims that don't support Police investigation prosecutions and also within Custody Blocks and the pathways in diverting female offenders into alternative initiatives other than Courts and potentially Custody. What changes can be bought to deal with this disconnect?

- The refreshed strategy incorporates both policing and national requirements.
- It was established immediately after the awful events involving Sara Everard. The first-year focus was on policing and being able to demonstrate and maintain standards.
- It is a continual challenge for the Force to support victims and ensure that they respect the wishes of the victim as this can impact the approach to a prosecution. This is a continual issue for both Domestic Abuse and RASSO.
- **Force to provide an update on the work within police custody to effectively use pathways to divert female offenders into alternative initiatives.**

In Paragraph 72 there is mention of a tilt toward upstreaming by the NCA and Fast Parcelling. Can you tell us more about what Fast Parcel means?

- Fast Parcel is about a changing nature of Serious and Organised Crime threats and how individuals involved are accessing commodity such as through the open or dark web and the transporting of these through the transport systems.
- There has been an increase of these incidents but this is not as a result of the NCA approach but more in the way people engaging in procuring commodity.
- The volumes do present an issue as each is potentially an investigation.
- The Force are looking at recognising the increase, what the processes are for dealing with across the Forces and what can be learnt to support at regional level.

Will the financial issues facing Birmingham City Council negatively impact on the intentions around Clear, Hold, Build?

- The work is nationally supported.
- The work is a pilot being delivered locally in Washwood Heath. The work has gone live with activity and at the moment there are no concerns.
- There has been no impact on being able to work with partners.

Can you advise the success rate the Force has in regards to young women advising they are being taken away for Honour Based Violence?

- **Force to provide figures relating to the numbers of women successfully removed from the risk of HBV and Forced Marriage.**

Has there been an interaction between the CTU and the programme associated with Right Care, Right Person?

- There is engagement around Right Care, Right Person at both national level in development to the approach and agreement across the NPCC and then delivered on a force basis across the region.
- CTU are engaged with each of these. Chief Superintendent Kim Madill coordinates the regional approach.
- The work ensuring the right type of service is dependent on the approach across the NHS in response to their long-term strategies and an understanding of the development of approaches.
- The Force are satisfied with the engagement in terms of CT engagements.

At paragraph 133 there is reference to additional training for a wider range of officers on baton rounds for using in Public Order situations? Can you provide an update on what the process would be for authorisation and the circumstances required for this capability to be used?

- At the moment AEP (baton gunners) is exclusively for Armed Police Officers and would be subject to Strategic Firearms Commander authorisation.
- Upon authorisation, AEP is considered a less lethal option.
- **West Midlands Police to provide further details on the deployment of AEP within a Public Order environment.**

At paragraph 138 there is a section that references the Force's role in preparedness for civil contingencies and emergencies. Policing is but one part of that capability, how does that partnership obtain assurance that the network as a whole is working well?

- **West Midlands Police to provide an update on the evidence and offer assurance that the partnership network is working well regarding Civil Contingencies.**

West Midlands Police have provided the first of the two datasets sought to identify work against the Manchester arena inquires, The report mentions that the second report is due in February 2024. Could more information be provided on this dataset?

- **West Midlands Police to provide details of the second data set which identifies progress against the Manchester Arena Inquiry.**

Paragraph 142 talks about a Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program (JESIP), in connection with Self-Assessment. This identified issues for further action and refers to the need to close the skills gap, can you provide reassurance that this is taking place or been completed?

- As a result of the work, training has been mandated across all command levels of the joint operability work.
- There are two packages which are monitored in terms of compliance delivery at the Deputy Chief Constable's performance board.
- The exact time timeframe is not known though the approach is being monitored.

It is a statutory duty on behalf of a Chief Constable to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, AWARE is about capturing the voice of the child and any safeguarding concerns. Could you outline how that principle is being embedded as business as usual by West Midlands Police, to make sure that West Midlands Police takes every opportunity to safeguard the wellbeing of Children and Young people?

- AWARE (appearance, words, activity, relationships and environment) is a mnemonic which needs to be brought to life in terms of understanding. There has been evidence of Officers setting out AWARE the mnemonic with regards to a child in cases such as a DA case.
- In terms of gaining an understanding about how consistent this is in terms of its delivery and application, this is something ACC Mattinson would be able to update further on.
- **West Midlands Police to provide further information on the consistency of delivery and application of the AWARE Mnemonic.**

The report talks about the request for support from the NCA. When is a request in reality a tasking and when is a tasking potentially a request?

- Tasking in this respect is Section 5 tasking mandate on behalf of National Tasking Interforces. The Force have had these in respect to Modern Slavery and Trafficking so are very clear with expectations and obligations in relation to approaches.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In essence, every Law enforcement uses a consistent system to identify, access and score threats. This results in lists being provided, within this there are obvious taskings which fall out, P1 would mostly sit with ownership at NCA level, P2 there is some debate around, sitting at regional and P3-4 at a Force Level. • Regional Tasking should be a difficult process with Forces bidding in for support and capability and potentially ownership of the threats. There should always be a debate about the support needed. • At regional level, clarity is sought around what delivery is available to a Force to understand concerns. |
| 019/24 | <p>Safer Custody</p> <p>The report was presented by Chief Superintendent Andy Parsons and the following points were discussed:</p> <p>Do you think that West Midlands Police are doing enough to identify vulnerability in custody, for signposting to prevent further offending and addiction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It depends on the nature of the vulnerability, Alcohol and Substance Misuse issues are discussed in relation to pathways outside of custody. There is a good history here though more can be done. The focus first and foremost should be to make sure the right pathways are in place. • Gambling addiction is something the Force could be better on. • It is clear that when people are released from custody they need to understand their vulnerability and where to be referred to. • Some of those that arrive at Custody have a reluctance to share so there is a need to make the process more accessible so that gambling addiction is spoken about as much as more common addictions. • This is a focus in the HMIC plan and will continue to be so. • Ultimately, Custody is an opportunity to deter individuals during the time they are present and to signpost to treatment. <p>West Midlands Police have already engaged in an exercise looking at repeat 999 calls for vulnerabilities to see if some support can be provided to stop them coming to West Midlands Police. Likewise, is there any work that can be done post analysing cases to see if there are any practical referrals that can be made? Could this be linked to the Data Analytics Lab or intelligence function?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force are open to anything that is likely to improve the wellbeing of an individual. The priority has to be the safety wellbeing of the individual when with Custody. • The Force remain open to opportunities to use the data gathered to offer more support. <p>The Risk assessment document features over 50 questions. Who does the asking and are they trained to do so?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Midlands Police have added additional questions on the basis of what a good, competent Custody Suite would already be asking. This shouldn't elongate the process but bring up to a higher standard. • This is the first point of contact and the information is used to ensure that the individual is safe with custody. • Those with a substance misuse vulnerability are automatically referred to a Cranstoun worker. • This is still the right thing to do, without this information the Force cannot provide the right level of care. |

Could you offer reassurance around the referrals to the New Chance programme?

- Amendments have been made to the Connect System which mean that New Chance now shows as a referral option for Officers. As a result, figures are increasing.
- More work is ongoing in the Custody arena and the Force are satisfied that now this change has been made that more referrals will be made.

Para 61 about PACE beds requested and provided for Young People. The report details that 11 were requested and one provided. Could you advise what happened to the 10 that couldn't be accommodated and what does this mean for the welfare of those young people and their entry into the Criminal Justice System?

- Unfortunately, the PACE bed issue is not a new problem.
- Where someone is charged, the Force are duty bound to seek a bed outside of a Custody arena. Unfortunately, often when the request is made the resource is not available or is available in an area away from the current Custody site. In this instance the person would remain in Custody.
- To make the Custody Experience less traumatic for young people, the Force are working on improving their distraction packs and including digital clocks within the space.
- PACE beds are something that sits with Local Commanders and they are in conversations Health and Wellbeing Boards and Authorities whose responsibilities it is to provide the resource.

With regards to CT detention, can you offer reassurance around the detention standards there and that welfare is in place with ICV visitors visiting?

- The TACT block opened recently and has dedicated custody staff at the site. There is medical provision for detainees and daily checks conducted and reports are received.
- Based on the last few reports, the Force are satisfied that the CT block is being managed efficiently.

As a consequence of the opening of the new Custody sites, to what extent are the Force ensuring at Perry Barr and Oldbury that the special E Wing and distraction adaptations installed are being put to maximum use for young people?

- E Wing is a specially adapted wing in use for Young People.
- One of the things discussed in terms of the HMICFRS inspection is that the facilities were not being used as often as they should have been.
- This has now changed, during a recent internal audit spot inspection E Wing was operational.
- As part of the implementation of the new operating model it does require a different way of thinking which the Custody Staff are being moved to.

Can you offer reassurance that Young People and Adults are being kept separate at all times throughout the entirety of the Custody process?

- Absolutely, There will be occasions where the volume of individuals in the Block will make this difficult but the core position is that they are kept separate and secure at all times.
- This also involves the booking on process to reduce the trauma caused by the whole experience.

Could it be the case that Perry Barr is not seeing the benefit of waiting times that other parts of the Custody estate might? What might be done to bring it in line with the others? May this be influenced by the opening of the 2 Custody sites at Bloxwich and Stechford?

- The Force do not believe that Perry Barr has been influenced by the opening of the other sites, in fact Stechford has taken some demand from Perry Barr.
- It was recognised that when the Force went from 4 to 6 sites that a number of partner agencies were co-locating at Perry Barr. It was agreed that all Young Persons and Juveniles arrested would be taken to Perry Barr. This would automatically impact on travel times.
- With regards to Perry Barr's waiting times, it is correct to say that Perry Barr is the current focus for the Criminal Justice Senior Leadership team. This is not a criticism of the Perry Barr staff but a reflection of some of the challenges faced.
- The level of vulnerabilities and challenges with regards to prisoners is different at this site than in other areas of the Force.
- On the back of a visit by the College of Policing, the Force are looking at deploying Perry Barr staff in a different way to better manage the Custody environment.

Paragraph 24 of the report states that at the time of inspection the Custody Workforce were unable to meet the demands of detained persons and the custody environment. Is this something you are satisfied has now been addressed or is this still being worked through?

- The inspection took place on May 2nd 2023 which was the first day of the new operating model so the problems outlined would have been under the previous model.
- Following the inspection, a huge amount of work has taken place to address those staffing challenges such as the over-recruitment of the Detention Escort Officer Role.
- Work is taking place with POD to identify a clear workforce strategy planning to project who is going to come into Custody and when.
- The Force are confident that they are now in a better position. There are a number of sergeants on the Custody course, 45 were identified during the last PC to Sergeant process.

Regular Item

020/24 Finance Budget Monitoring

The report was presented by Jane Heppel and the following points were discussed:

A member of the public may ask why the Force is operating with an underspend when perhaps this may be better spent on policing. Could you explain the rationale for this?

- The picture in relation to the medium-term financial plan is that there continues to be a stretch of resourcing for policing in the West Midlands.
- The Force needs to reduce its running and overhead costs in order to get down to the lower level of forecast income in the medium-term financial plan. If there was an overspend this year then this would be a concern for future years next year.
- This underspend will prevent the Force having to make further inroads
- Were the Force to have the same budget next year, this would already be £4m reduced.
- In terms of the size of the underspend, a lot of this is driven by staffing which makes up the largest element of a police force's budget.
- The Force will receive £24,000 per head for new officers in both September and March. These officers were not employed for the entirety of this time and so this drove an underspend.
- These underspends would not be expected to occur again.

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| | <p>There is mention of a spend of about 0.7m on temporary staff. Are the Force happy with the balance between spending this on temporary staff as opposed to permanent staff and whether this is value for money?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force uses temporary contracts for staff and are very happy to pay appropriate rates as there is a need for these staff members. • These contracts may be based on investigative demands where there may be a short term need with a budget put aside to cover it and as such it would be more sensible to recruit staff on a fixed term contract rather than permanently. <p>There is reference made to the cost and maintenance of buildings and reactive maintenance. Are there any examples that can be provided in relation to expenditure around reactive maintenance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactive Maintenance tends to be about fails, the Force's Corporate Asset Management will be able to provide further details in relation to this. • There are examples given in the paper around legislation with regards to Nitrous Oxide which may have had to come out of the reactive maintenance budget. • Jane Heppel to speak with West Midlands Police to confirm examples of expenditure around Reactive Maintenance. |
| | Emerging Items |
| 021/24 | <p>Policing Governance</p> <p>The Chief Executive delivered a verbal update regarding the governance of West Midlands Police.</p> |
| 022/24 | <p>SPCB Workplan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. SPCB workplan for noting b. SPCB Actions and Further Lines of Inquiry <p>There are currently 2 actions outstanding that will remain open.</p> |
| 023/24 | Date of the next meeting: 26th March 2024. |