

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

15 September 2021

POLICE & CRIME PLAN ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (JULY – AUGUST 2021)

Recommendation

1. Members of the Panel are invited to consider this report.

Background

2. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Police and Crime Panel with an overview of activity undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in support of his Safer West Mercia Plan and provide an update on police performance.

Delivery plan and assurance

3. A delivery plan is used to support monitoring and assurance of progress against individual elements within the plan and is updated on a quarterly basis. The next quarterly update is due at the end of September.
4. As the delivery plan remains unchanged from the extract appended to last the Performance and Activity report submitted for the Panel's July meeting, it has not been included on this occasion. However examples of recent activity in support of the Safer West Mercia Plan's four key objectives, are set out in the following sections.
5. As part of the development work for the new Safer West Mercia Plan a review of the delivery plan's function and format is being undertaken.

Commissioned service provision

6. To date in 21/22, there have been a significant number of developments within the PCC commissioned service provision, which are illustrated below. Of particular note is the increased amount of external funding secured from both the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office. The current total stands at £2,974,333. This is made up of the following:
 - ISVA provision - £763,568
 - IDVA provision - £241,739
 - DA & SV service provision – £649,902
 - DA perpetrator provision - £455,939
 - Safer Streets 2 - £863,185

- The outcome of a further bid for an additional £1,280,027 to the Safer Streets 3 fund is pending

More detailed information on some of the initiatives this money supports have been included within the *Putting victims and survivors first* and *Building a more secure West Mercia* sections of this report. A number were included in the last Panel report.

Putting victims and survivors first

Perpetrator Funding

7. The Home Office announced a Domestic Abuse perpetrator fund for 2021/22. The PCC was successful in being awarded an additional £455,939.37 to commission the following services:
 - Male and Masculinities perpetrator programme for low/medium risk across Worcestershire and Herefordshire for 18 months. This is being jointly funded with Worcestershire Children's First and Herefordshire Children's Services.
 - Richmond Fellowship group work perpetrator programme for Shropshire for 18 months. This is being jointly funded by Shropshire Council.
 - Extension to Richmond Fellowship group work perpetrator programme in Telford for a further 12 months in line with the current contract with Telford Council
 - Independent Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Needs Assessment including looking at the provision for children and young people perpetrator violence towards their parents/carers and within peer relationships.
8. This additional funding now means that there is domestic abuse perpetrator provision in all areas of West Mercia, consisting of all levels of risk in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and standard and medium levels of risk in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire. In addition to the Home Office funding, the PCC and local authority partners will be contributing a further £248,949.70 to the services, making a total investment of over £704,000.

Sexual violence and abuse

9. The PCC has taken part in the re-commissioning of the joint regional provision of Sexual Assault Referral Centre for CYP across West Mercia. The commissioning exercise was hosted by NHS England/Improvement, with match funding being provided from the 4 regional PCC areas. The successful provider is Mountain Healthcare, who are the current provider. The new contract will start in February 2022. The PCC investment is currently just under £130,000, forming part of a regional £2m contract.
10. The PCC has secured an additional £50,000 of funding from NHS England/Improvement to create a Sexual Violence Officer, a strategic role which will focus on a number of areas within the sexual violence field, with overall aim of improving outcomes for victims of sexual assault and abuse. This funding will be used to fund a sexual violence portfolio lead for an initial period of 12 months, who will work with the PCC, West Mercia Police and partners to deliver the objectives set out in the national NHSE/I Sexual Assault and Abuse Strategy. The role will also look at potential development of a multi-agency strategic group and development of a local strategy.

Critical support fund

11. The PCC submitted a bid to the Critical Support Fund in June 2021 and was notified in July that the bid had been partially successful, securing an additional £358,191 of funding for services which support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Some services which have benefited from additional funding include sexual violence counselling services across West Mercia, services working with parents who are experiencing abuse from their children and services working with high risk victims of domestic abuse.

Victim Service Provision

12. The PCC has recently issued a tender for a consultant to produce a victim and offender needs assessment. The aim of the assessment is to identify local need and demand in relation to victim service provision, primarily services which are currently provided by Victim Support and the Victim Advice Line. The first tender round was unsuccessful so it was re-launched with closing date for bids of 27th August. Bids will be evaluated during September and work is expected to commence around October 2021.

Building a more secure West Mercia

Substance misuse

13. As reported in July funding has been received regionally for substance misuse diversionary services via £3.3 million seized through the Proceeds of Crime Act. The resulting DIVERT project has now been implemented across the whole of West Mercia. Offenders of any age above 13 found in simple possession of any controlled drug will be eligible provided they agree to attend a substance misuse intervention (DIVERT). This replaces the use of certain outcomes used by the police:

14. This scheme aims to contribute to a culture change in policing, and to work with partners to divert emerging offenders from court into the most appropriate intervention to reduce reoffending.

Serious violence

15. The PCC has previously funded a pilot programme in Telford & Wrekin, Steer Clear. Steer Clear is a partnership project developed between a number of agencies including West Mercia Police, The Children's Society and Telford & Wrekin Council. The scheme works with young people aged under 18 who are believed to be on the periphery of knife - related crime. The PCC's contribution is £10,000 with contributions from the Youth Justice Service (YJS) and Telford and Wrekin council making a total investment of £40,000. The PCC is now in discussions with the Force and other areas about rolling out the project more widely across West Mercia.

16. The PCC is currently working with the force's Serious Violence Sgt to scope the feasibility of rolling the Steer Clear 1-2-1 support out across West Mercia in line with Police roll out of Steer Clear. The YJS have been approached to match fund this. There are also discussions about potentially approaching Community Safety

Partnerships for contributions. This is being factored into budget planning discussions which are taking place at present.

Safer Streets round 3 VAWG funding

17. The Home Office recently launched a third £25m Safer Street funding round for PCC's, specifically designed to improve the safety of public places for all, with a particular focus on reducing Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) crimes. The PCC has worked with West Mercia Police and partners to submit 3 bids, for South Worcestershire, Herefordshire and North Worcestershire. Closing date for these bids was 15th July, and the bid amount is over £1.2m. Notification of the outcome of these bids is due shortly.

Water safety

18. As part of the PCC's ongoing Home and Dry campaign, to reduce water deaths £40,000 has been awarded to the Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK). In a partnership with RLSS UK, a dedicated Water Safety Education Manager will work closely with the PCC and his team to develop resources for young people. The ultimate aim is to create a cross-curricular pilot which could be delivered across the whole of West Mercia and help to shape education nationally.

CCTV

The PCC originally agreed to continue funding to all 5 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) until the end of October 2021 for either capital expenditure or monitoring expenses pending the outcome of an internal CCTV review. This seven month period was pro-rated at £65k giving each area a fund of £37,916. Following the completion of the CCTV review the PCC has now agreed an additional spend of £27,084 per area taking the total to £65K for each CSP (£325K in total). However, from 1 November onward the funding can only be utilised for Capital purchases and can no longer be used for CCTV monitoring. The CSPs affected by this change have been notified.

Criminal justice

19. The end of social distancing has allowed the Courts to fully reopen, which will restore and improve the capacity to process criminal cases. As a result there has been reduction in both the Magistrates' and Crown Courts backlog. The Crown Court backlog is now around 45% higher than pre pandemic levels and reducing further every week. The backlog in the Magistrates' Court is actually 5% below pre-pandemic levels and is also decreasing. While the reduction in the backlog is welcome news concerns remain that cases are taking longer to be heard. It now takes an additional two weeks for a case to be dealt with in the Magistrates' Court and an additional 8 weeks in the Crown Court.

20. To improve transparency, the Government has pledged to publish Criminal Justice System (CJS) scorecards. The first national scorecards will be available in autumn 2021, with regional scorecards available by spring 2022. To further improve local transparency the PCC has recently commissioned CREST Analytics to produce an end to end CJS performance pack for West Mercia. This will be published on the PCC's website when available.

Reforming West Mercia

Alliance Update

21. Warwickshire has indicated that continued ICT support will be required from West Mercia in order to ensure delivery of key policing services and functions beyond the end of the current collaboration agreement on 30th September 2021. Discussions regarding the scope and delivery of any necessary residual ICT services are ongoing. Any ICT services delivered by West Mercia beyond the end of the current collaboration will be on a hosted, not shared basis, as per the recommendation of the independent report at the close of the Alliance.

Officer diversity

22. West Mercia Police now has the highest levels of diversity amongst officers and staff than at any point in its history. 3% of officers come from ethnic minority backgrounds, and 34% are female. Across the workforce as a whole, 2.9% are from ethnic minority backgrounds, while 46% are female. This reflects an increase of new officers recruited being female, up from 30% in 2019/20 to 43% in 2020/21. The amount of new officers from ethnic minority backgrounds also rose, from 2.1% to 7.5%, over the same period.

23. The latest recruitment round for police officer opened in June 2021 and West Mercia Police's "Be the Change" campaign was successful in attracting 5.6% of applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds and 40.3% from females.

Financial management

24. Since the update in June the PCC's office has been working on a review of budgets in preparation for the 2022/23 annual budget setting. A series of workshops are being held which aim to review, challenge and explore potential development of budgets. The PCC will lead on the development of these budget proposals during the autumn to ensure that they are fit for purpose to deliver his priorities as presented in the proposed police and crime plan.

25. The Treasurer and her team are working closely with central government and local authority partners to understand the potential funding scenario's over the medium term which will directly impact on the financial viability of the PCC's plans. At the same time the Force is continuing with its Priority Based Budget (PBB) review, which aims to identify the service priorities and its costs. The PBB will form the detail for presenting the 2022/23 budget proposals for review to the PCC. The Treasurer and her team will provide advice and support to the PCC to ensure that the Force budget proposals reflect the priorities police and crime plan and that they are providing value for money.

26. The Treasurer is continuing to work closely with the Head of Estates in the development of the Estates Strategy and a review of the capital programme and estates rationalisation plan. The capital programme must be financially viable and there is an expectation that the rationalisation plan will need to deliver revenue savings, which will offset borrowing costs to deliver new capital projects.

Reassuring West Mercia's communities

Neighbourhood Matters

27. As reported in July, the replacement for the force Community Messaging System (CMS), Neighbourhood Matters went live on 1 July. West Mercia Neighbourhood Watch Association (NHW) have signed up to the system. This will open messages up to a much larger audience and as NHW is the largest voluntary group in England and Wales, it will enable them to tap into a vital support network for receiving and providing information to and from the public. It will also vastly improve their communication with members of the public living and residing outside of our force area, thus improving the sharing of information where "cross border" crime is occurring.

West Mercia Local Policing Community Charter

28. The PCC has secured commitments from the police force around levels of service to the community via its new Local Policing Community Charter.

29. The Charter was formally launched in May and covers six key areas for improved service delivery: visibility & accessibility, responding to communities, prevention, vulnerability, relationships and partnerships. The Charter outlines how the force will ensure it provides a visible policing presence to local communities and how, using local engagement, social media and new digital channels, it will create further opportunities for dialogue so the public can raise concerns, provide feedback, be involved and help shape policing in their area. The charter also sets out how the force will work with its partners and the public, to listen, understand and respond to community issues. It will focus on persistent problems and concerns to find long-term and sustainable solutions; prioritising the most vulnerable victims, problem locations and repeat offenders with the aim of preventing crime.

30. The Commissioner and his team have contributed to the metrics associated with the Charter to track its success and delivery for local communities. The PCC also maintains an active oversight role in monitoring activity against the Charter's commitments.

31. Since the launch in May, a range of activity has been delivered against the Charter. This has included local priorities being agreed with 67% of West Mercia's parish councils, improvements around accessibility at police stations with new 'A Boards' delivered to each police station, the launch of the Neighbourhood Matters community messaging system and new toolkits for resolving road safety issues with partners.

Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner

32. Engaging with communities and making sure their voice is heard within policing and crime is a key element of the PCC's function. Previously the PCC was supported in this area by a team of five part-time Community Ambassadors. For his second term in office the PCC has chosen to replace that scheme with a new Assistant PCC role, which will work closely and directly with the Commissioner whilst maintaining a focus on the community, and help deliver a financial efficiency within the Commissioner's

team. The role was advertised over the summer and interviews will be taking place in September following a shortlisting process.

Town and Parish Council survey

33. The consultation period for the PCC's fourth annual Town and Parish Council Survey launched in May, has now ended. The results will be analysed and the PCC will publish a report of the findings later in the year.

PCC's media and communications

34. The new Safer West Mercia Plan is now out for consultation. During this consultation period, the survey will be shared with the public and partners to encourage feedback. However, the PCC, DPCC, and their team will also go out to speak to the public in person. This will include a series of late summer events and 'on the street' community engagements. A separate report has been submitted to the Panel on the draft Safer West Mercia Plan.

35. The death of a serving West Mercia police officer and his young child in August attracted significant national media attention. A statement from the Commissioner was issued in the hours following the news becoming public, stating:

"Incredibly sad to hear this terrible news today. My thoughts are with the family affected and West Mercia Police officers and staff who are having to come to terms with this awful news."

36. The PCC and his staff have engaged with the force post the incident seeking appropriate reassurances around the issue.

37. The PCC is promoting important messages around issues/crime that continue to affect the public. This includes the Home & Dry campaign, which will be present at Fresher's events to share messages with young people. A new campaign about domestic abuse will also be launched in the coming months. Road safety continues to be an issue at the top of the PCC's agenda, with partnership work continuing to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

38. The PCC continues to speak up for victims by commenting publically on reports or findings, as well as allocating considerable amounts of funding towards prevention and support.

39. As lockdown restrictions continue the PCC's communications and engagement function has maintained as much community engagement as possible. With restrictions allowing for socially distanced engagements, the PCC and DPCC have been able to visit local policing teams and community groups with the hope this will continue and increase further into the year.

40. A start of a new PCC term has allowed the team to re-focus on the type of campaigns and engagement the PCC is involved in. A revised Communications and Engagement Strategy will support this.

41. The PCC continues to speak up for victims by commenting publically on reports or findings, as well as allocating considerable amounts of funding towards prevention and support.

Performance and accountability

Holding to account

42. The Commissioner holds a regular scrutiny meeting with the Chief Constable (CC) as part of his role in holding the force to account. Notes from thematic meetings are available to view on the PCC's website. Since the last Panel report no formal meetings have been held, however a number of *virtual* holding to account challenges have been submitted to the force on anti-social behaviour and local performance data.

43. The PCC has finalised his holding to account programme for the remainder of 2021/22. The new programme reflects his commitment to bring more of a focus on tackling crime and disorder and performance into the new Police and Crime Plan. Additional performance meetings have been added to the programme which will allow for scrutiny of the new national priorities for policing and a suite of metrics being developed in support of the Police and Crime Plan outcomes. A copy of the programme is attached at appendix 1.

44. The Facebook Live event planned for the end of July focusing on the policing priorities in the draft Police and Crime Plan, will now be held in October, when the new Chief Constable will be in post.

HMICFRS inspection reports

45. HMICFRS have continued their insight work as part of their continuous assessment process for the new PEEL inspection regime. The onsite inspection of the force commences in September and runs for three weeks. Following this stage, the inspectorate will provide a hot debrief on their findings in early October, with the final inspection report due to be published in January 2022.

46. HMICFRS has published a number of inspection reports since the last report to Panel. These have addressed domestic abuse in the pandemic, a violence against women and girls interim report, a fraud re-inspection report and a summary of how law enforcement agencies use sensitive intelligence. Work is ongoing to review the recommendations within these reports. The Deputy Chief Constable retains oversight of the force's progress against any recommendations or any areas for improvement through the Service Improvement Board, attended by one of the PCC's staff.

West Mercia perception survey

47. As part of the Commissioner's commitment to ensure both he and the force are acting on community concerns locally, and that the service provided by the force leads to increased confidence in local policing, the PCC commissioned a confidence survey which has been running for over two years. The survey results are published on the

PCC's website. Headline findings from the latest results, quarter one 2021/22, are set out below:

- 85% of consultees tended to agree or strongly agreed they have confidence with West Mercia Police – up 1% on last quarter
- 75% tended to agree or strongly agreed that West Mercia Police understands issues in their community – down 4% on last quarter but an improvement on the same quarter in the previous 2 years
- 93% said they were confident they could access the police in an emergency and 66% in a non-emergency
- 30% said they see an officer or PCSO at least once per week – up 2% on last quarter
- 60% say they are satisfied with the level of policing in their local area – unchanged from the last quarter

Force performance reports

48. A number of internal performance products are produced by the force to enable senior officers and the PCC to maintain strategic oversight of force performance. In particular the PCC scrutinises a weekly dashboard of performance along with monthly summary reports.

49. The latest, quarter one performance report for the period April to June 2021, is attached at appendix 2. The report sets out a force wide picture of performance particularly in relation to force priorities and key practises. The performance framework uses a reporting hierarchy to monitor performance across the whole organisation at gold (strategic), silver (service) and (bronze) operational levels. The report focusses on gold level key performance indicators (KPI), however there are some measures at a silver level included to create a comprehensive picture across the force.

50. As part of the development of the new Police and Crime Plan the PCC is working with the force to develop a performance framework which not only shows how the force is contributing to achieving the national priorities for policing but also the outcomes set out in the Police and Crime Plan. This framework will not be included in the final version of the plan, but will instead be reported on the PCC's website.

Risk Management Implications

None.

Financial Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None

Equality Implications

None.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Holding to account programme 2021/22

Appendix 2 – West Mercia Police Performance Report April to June 2021

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

Worcestershire County Council 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Specific Contact Points for this report

Andy Champness, Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Executive

HOLDING TO ACCOUNT PROGRAMME 2021/22

Month	Type	Subject area*	Meeting date
August	No meeting		
October	Thematic	Protecting Vulnerable People	Monday 4 th October
October	Public	Safer West Mercia Plan priorities	TBC
October	Performance	Quarterly Performance Review	Thursday 21 st October
November	Thematic	Impact of Budget Investment	Wednesday 24 th November
December	Thematic	Force Operations	Monday 20 th December
January	Public	Budget Proposals	TBC
January	Performance	Quarterly Performance Review	Monday 31 st January
February	Thematic	PEEL 2021	Monday 28 th February
March	Thematic	Economic, Fraud and Cyber Crime	Tuesday 29 th March
April	Thematic	Review of 21/22 scrutiny areas	Friday 29 th April
May	Performance	Yearly Performance Review	Thursday 26 th May

Notes:

***Subject area** The PCC reserves the right to alter, add or change any agenda item up until the date of the meeting.

Virtual challenge In addition to the scheduled meetings listed above, the PCC will submit written *virtual* holding to accounts requests throughout the year