

Prevention strategy

2022-2025



Contents

Joint foreword	3
Moving towards prevention	4
Our aim	6
Priorities	7
Challenges	15
Key deliverables 2022/23	17
Outcomes.....	19
Appendices.....	20

Joint foreword

Crime, and the harmful behaviours which can lead to crime, cause huge amounts of individual and collective suffering in every community. In order to deliver better outcomes for the communities of West Mercia, the preference will always be on preventing crime in the first place.

Prevention is not simple and does not happen overnight. A crime being committed is often the result of a long chain of events, causes and factors in society, which can have a long lasting and traumatic impact upon individuals, not all of which are within our direct control. We are committed to driving change within policing, and with our partners and communities, towards a healthier, more prosperous, and more cohesive society.

We want West Mercia's communities to **be safe and feel safe**. As Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner, we share a clear commitment that prevention must play an ever greater role in achieving this.



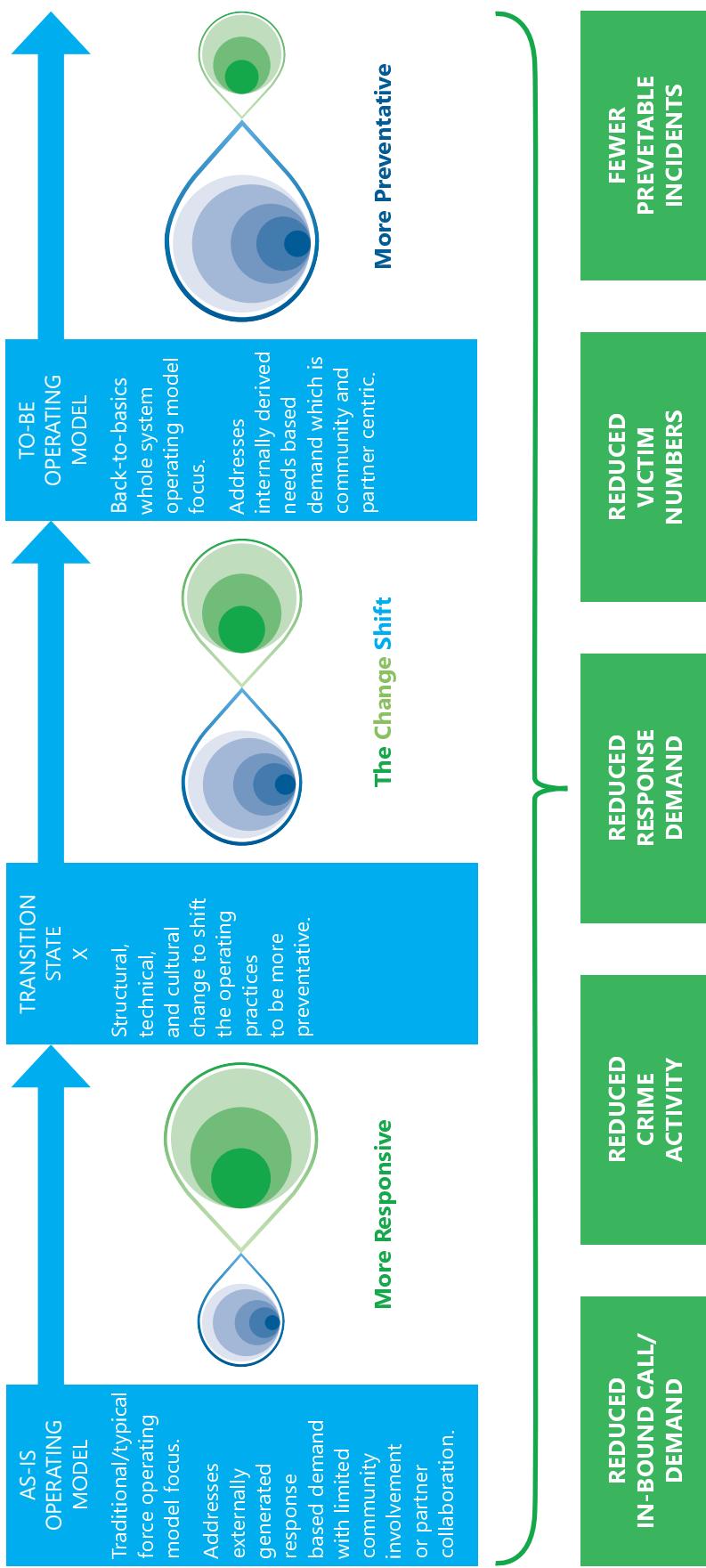
John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner



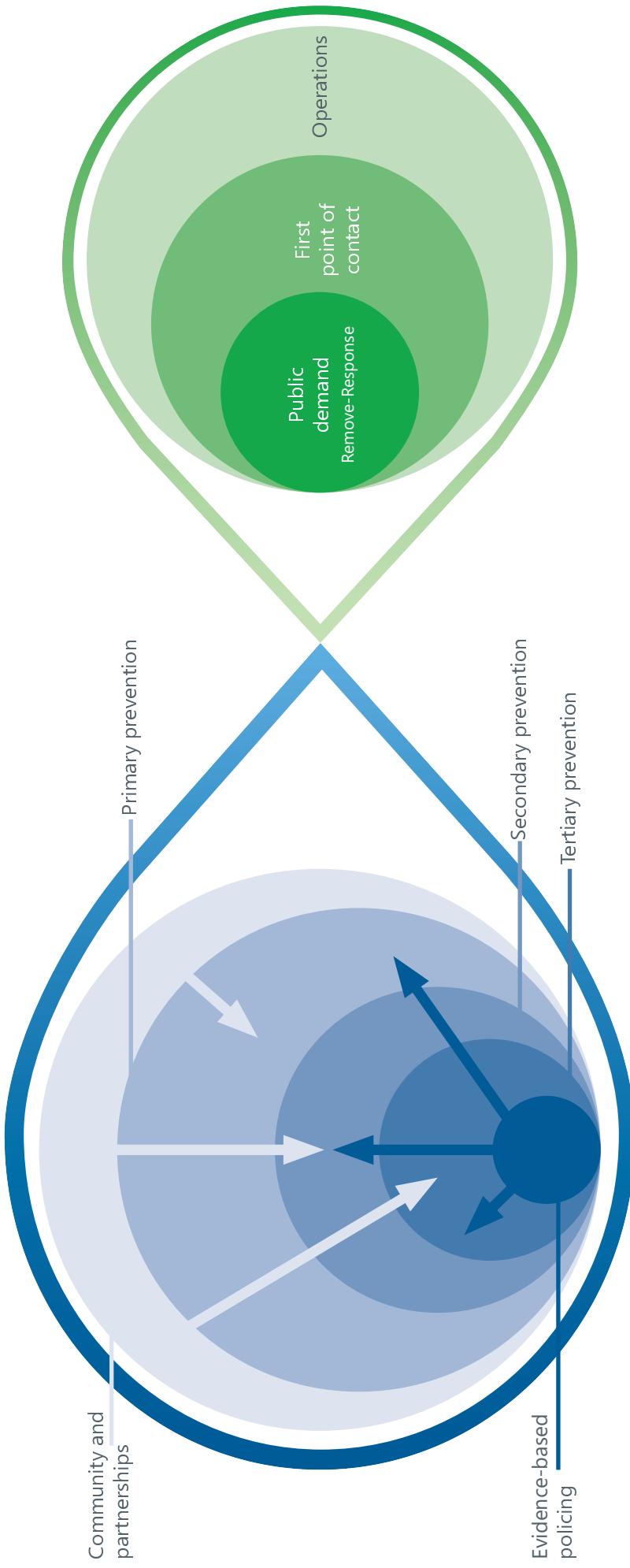
Pippa Mills
Chief Constable

Moving towards prevention

Recognising that a significant amount of policing activity is currently focused on a response-based demand model, a whole-system change is required, collectively with the Police and Crime Commissioner, who represents the voice of the communities that we serve. This will require evolving of the force, OPCC and partner agencies, to prioritise prevention and achieve the best outcomes for communities and individuals.



Moving towards prevention – operating model



Preventative Policing

To **prevent** crime and reduce harm through proactive prevention, early intervention, and problem solving to aim to reduce future problems.

Protective Policing

Protect, **respond**, support, and investigate incidents, disorder, and need that threaten public safety, health, or welfare.

Our aim

The overarching aims of this prevention strategy are **fewer victims, less crime, increased public confidence in policing, and greater public involvement in preventing harm**. By effective focus on prevention we CAN break the cycle of crime to reduce harm, ultimately reducing demand and providing a Safer West Mercia.

Our strategy WILL be ambitious, it WILL be a challenge and it WILL need public and partner commitment. Recognising that our current approach to policing isn't as effective as it could be, we need to take a different route. Our communities WILL be at the heart of this journey.

We want to deliver a whole system, public-health approach to implement and deliver a range of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention measures, working with partners and communities to drive systematic change.

We WILL achieve this by using our collective assets, skills and powers to deliver innovative and effective approaches, intelligent use of data and evidence based practice, and using partnership oriented problem solving to deliver change. **The public voice and community engagement will be at the centre of this.**

We WILL address the underlying causes of offending by incorporating a trauma-informed approach, truly recognising that addressing the widespread impact of trauma within the community and within our own organisation should be at the heart of prevention.

Priorities

We will:

- **Engage, inspire and empower communities** – ensure communities understand the need for prevention and work with us to lead and deliver positive change.
- **Embed Prevention** – using a public-health approach, we will embed prevention as a core policing and PCC function to maximise opportunities in preventing public harm and reducing demand through primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. A public-health approach focusses on the needs of the community as a whole, intelligent use of data analysis and sharing, and partnership working to identify and tackle the root-causes of harm, recognising that prevention is always better than cure.
- **Work in partnership** – identify shared priorities, informed by data & evidence, and work collectively with a wide range of statutory and third sector partners to address issues, causes and harms by aligning strategy, leadership, resources and commissioning. Understand partner direction and focus, building a coalition of the willing, and facilitate a whole system approach, which is key to delivering systemic change.
- **Develop our evidence base** – utilise shared data, intelligence and analysis capabilities to ensure prevention provides the most beneficial outcomes to our communities. Record and share best practice, utilising this as the core base of our decision making model. Embed evaluation into all activity, to assess impact and ensure we are trialling new approaches.
- **Be trauma informed** - embed a trauma informed approach to the communities we serve and across the police and PCC commissioned services, recognising the widespread impact of trauma, considering subsequent behaviour and pathways to recovery. This will be embedded from frontline officers right through to the service providers commissioned by the PCC.
- **Utilise legislation** – existing legislation, alongside guidance and strategy such as the NPCC National Prevention Strategy will be supplemented by the Serious Violence Duty under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2021. This strategy will maximise the PCC and policing powers within this legislation to increase the impact and benefits for our communities.

Engage, inspire and empower communities

Community involvement is critical to the delivery of preventative services in order to make our communities safer and reduce harm.

We will:

- Develop a consultation and engagement programme. This will identify a range of methods in which we will seek out public feedback for the development of this strategy.
- Work closely with the voluntary and community sector and utilise their important community links to inform the commissioning of services which are tailored to meet the needs of communities. Collaborate on broad themes and resolve local issues causing the most harm to our communities, utilising local knowledge and resources to support activity.
- Build confidence, trust and understanding of policing and the prevention agenda, enabling and empowering communities to support and lead on effective preventative action to enable them to be and feel safe. Support communities to be safe and feel safe.
- Harness and realise the power of communities and citizenship by increasing public participation in local schemes, both inside policing and outside. Seek to recruit, retain and celebrate the volunteer base to actively aide in prevention within policing, as well as commissioned services.
- Ensure we effectively seek out, listen to, and respond to community voices in our responses to criminality, harm and victimisation - recognising that some crime types disproportionately impact some communities more than others.



- Continuously review feedback from communities to ensure that their priorities are taken into account when identifying where to focus prevention effort and resources.
- Commission holistic needs assessments and tailor approaches and service provision in accordance to local need, and in line with our public-health 3 tiered prevention approach.
- Work with the community to develop and grow understanding of contextual safeguarding, building on a trauma-informed approach to preventing harm to children and young people including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES).
- Build and deliver a clear, effective joint engagement plan to promote prevention advice and support within the community. Deliver joint education and awareness campaigns, empowering and inspiring individuals and communities to take action in preventing crime, ensuring support for those suffering harm.
- Provide high quality training for all frontline officers and staff to provide relevant, timely and useful prevention advice to the community. We will celebrate success of a preventative approach widely, building and communicating progress.

Work in partnership

At a national, regional and local level, we will achieve effective partnership working through the model of collaboration, co-production, co-operation in data, analysis and intelligence sharing, using effective communications, and with community consensus. Working in partnership is critical to the delivery of prevention, emphasising that prevention is everyone's responsibility.

We will:

- Drive a cohesive approach, working to understand and align our partners and partnerships better, including their strategic aims and objectives. Jointly identify areas of overlap and common ground, as well as areas where more development and understanding are required. Build coalitions to improve community outcomes, by building new relationships and reinforce existing ones.
- Utilise and enhance existing partnership frameworks to drive cultural change and seek a whole system, collaborative approach. Identify and facilitate opportunities to intervene earlier, by collectively identifying vulnerable people in our communities.
- Incorporate a public services reform approach, recognising partnerships need to be agile in the early identification of issues which are affecting our communities. Seek partner commitment to align priorities, taking a coalition approach and taking advantage of opportunities to pool resources and budgets to deliver services.
- Build on existing data and information sharing partnerships to improve and enrich intelligence and prevention work across partnerships. Develop shared problem solving platforms and more streamlined means of sharing information between agencies.
- Utilise existing and new legislative powers to bring the police, partners and the community together to more effectively prevent crime and repeat victimisation, magnifying the public voice and holding parties accountable.
- Utilise existing and new legislative powers to bring the police, partners and the community together to more effectively prevent crime and repeat victimisation, magnifying the public voice and holding parties accountable.

*5 Cs model from Public Health England – a multi-agency approach to serious violence prevention

- Embed informed, evidence led prevention activity as a core commissioning function to maximise opportunities to prevent public harm and reduce demand on service provision.
- Find opportunities to work thematically and address the root causes of issues causing the most harm to our communities, recognising that although such issues will never have a singular cause, it can be productive for partners to identify areas of commonality in strategic aims within a thematic approach.
- Work with our partners to identify opportunities for rapid impact activities and actions, whilst focusing on the longer term outcomes in parallel.
- Recognise the economic cost to late or inefficient prevention and ensure this is shared with partners with a view to offering a further catalyst for co-production around funding and commissioning commitments, including the combining of resources to break away from a chronic responsive model, and moving to the efficiencies of prevention.

'A young person who starts showing behavioural problems at age five and is dealt with through the criminal justice will cost the taxpayer around £207,000 by the age of 16 (Audit Commission Report, 2009). Alternative interventions to support changes in behaviour would cost about £47,000. Over £113 million a year would be saved if just one in ten young offenders was diverted towards effective support', which subject to developing evidence could include trauma informed care.'

Develop our evidence base

Evidence, data and intelligence are key to enabling preventative, predictive, and proactive actions and activities, resulting in positive outcomes for our communities. Evaluation and assessment are essential to ensuring sustained success.

We will:

- Issue a call for evidence – to scope the existing landscape for innovative and effective practice, from policing, partners, academia and the community themselves. Share knowledge on what works, what doesn't and utilise our needs assessments to inform commissioning of prevention services, to implement effective practice and a facilitate a system that employs scale-able prototypes rather than lengthy pilots that can hamper change.
- Develop evidence based approaches, standards and evaluation internally and with partners for policing and commissioning activity. Implement tangible delivery plans at strategic, tactical and operational levels, using stringent performance management processes to drive and embed prevention. Reality test delivery, carrying out assessment and evaluation of preventative activity, working with academic partners to provide rigorous analysis and testing, to make sure that interventions are effective in reducing crime and harm in our communities.
- Establish a repository to ensure products are accessible from one place, e.g. prevention guidance and toolkits, both internally for our officers and staff to use as best practice, and externally for individuals, partners and the community to use as a resource.
- Use evidence and intelligence data from a wide range of sources to inform and drive delivery of preventative policing and preventative commissioning, ensuring that that sharing agreements with partners agencies are bold and active, and that PCC/police powers are utilised where needed.
- Align our effort and assets to ensure the budgets for policing and commissioning of services are targeted to the priorities of the community, are the most effective, and can be delivered within budget. An evidence base will allow these informed decisions to be made.

Be trauma informed

To be successful in preventing crime, harm, and demand, we must seek cultural change, both in terms of how we approach individuals and community and how we interact with each other within our organisation. Key to this is adopting a trauma informed approach.

Trauma can be defined as: 'Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual wellbeing.' (SAMSHA 2019 definition).

We will:

- Recognise that an individual may have suffered trauma during their lifetime, the signs and symptoms of this, be cognisant of the impact that this may have had, and treat them accordingly, including with a view to recovery and avoiding re-traumatisation, inclusive of those who have been a victim, and who may have perpetrated.
- Hold partners to account for ensuring a trauma informed, victim focused approach to harm prevention within our communities. This also includes trauma that has been caused during childhood, called Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). When considering the 'causes of the causes', ACEs become a significant factor. Identifying and responding to ACEs will form an essential component of primary prevention, reaching beyond the statutory duties of agencies, recognising these formative experiences can be causal for victimisation and offending behaviour in later life.
- Adopt a commissioning approach which focuses on early intervention and prevention services for victims, and those who are displaying perpetrator behaviour.
- Ensure that our internal approach, and that of our partners, is trauma-informed, recognising that the work carried out by officers, staff, partners and service providers is by its very nature traumatic, and often repeatedly so.
- Support our staff and commissioned service providers, to access adequate training and professional support, to effectively deliver trauma informed interventions.
- Provide continuous professional development to ensure that our workforce, and that of our partners, operate in a trauma-informed manner.

Methodology

To be successful in preventing crime, harm, and reducing demand, we will use the following methods with our resources and through our work with our partners and communities.

- A public health approach (Appendix 1) – by focussing on the needs of populations, or groups of people, making intelligent use of data and evidence, working closely with partnership agencies particularly in achieving common aims and objectives, and by seeking out the ‘causes of the causes’ we can truly start to recognise and prevent harm and keep people safe.
- Problem solving and SARA (Appendix 2) – a problem is defined as a recurring pattern of incidents that are causing harm to the community and for which routine policing is unlikely to control or prevent. Problem-solving, and use of the SARA model, is embedded in our approach, but needs consistent application through all of our teams and with greater emphasis on partnership working.
- Trauma-informed practice (Appendix 3) – by recognising that an individual may have suffered trauma during their lifetime, the signs and symptoms of this trauma, and being cognisant of the impact that this may have on their behaviour and life choices, we seek to prevent harm and promote recovery.
- The Commissioning Cycle (Appendix 4) - commissioning is the way we plan, buy, deliver and evaluate services for the communities of West Mercia. There are four key interlinking stages to our commissioning cycle; Understand, Plan, Do and Review.
- NPCC National Crime Prevention Strategy (Appendix 5) – our strategy seeks to support and compliment the national strategy towards prevention.

Challenges

- **Buy-in from partners** – operating across the partnership landscape can be difficult, exacerbated by factors such as limited budgets and competing priorities through to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Seeking collaborative support and commonality to tackle shared goals, and developing coalitions, is likely to achieve greater success than using duties and legislative processes, ultimately delivering better outcomes for communities.

- **Buy-in from communities** – prevention is reliant on the public supporting the model and seeks to fundamentally shift culture across all of society. Communities must understand the reasons behind prevention, the focus going into it, the harm caused by crime, and (where necessary) modify their behaviours. They can also help to exert pressure and influence on other partners.

- **Whole system change** – the whole-system Operating Model, encompassing both preventative and protective working practices, needs to shift and evolve to enable the force and PCC's office to operate in a more proactive preventative way. This whole system change can be slow and unwieldy, with few 'quick wins'. Effective leadership, increased communication and commitment to new ways of working will be key to delivering change.

- **Digital** – digital solutions for prevention and problem solving need to be innovative, swift and cross-sector; ensuring technology is able to support partnership working and complex problem solving is essential.



- **Police organisational culture** – police (and other emergency services) are trained and conditioned to respond to emergency situations. Preventative policing requires an entirely different approach, which will not come naturally or fit as comfortably for many people. Policing has also been through significant change over a prolonged period. To deliver further change effectively, the rationale needs to be understood, sustainable and delivered through consent and co-operation.
- **Trauma-informed cultural change** – this will require considerable training, development and leadership to become fully embedded, not only with the police and PCC's office, but across the partnership landscape.
- **Funding** – preventative policing and commissioning are likely to need an initial outlay of funding before any long term savings are realised. Further funding streams from central government will continue to be considered as well any additionality delivered by the voluntary sector and collaborative commissioning arrangements with partners. Utilising evaluation and best practice models will assist with making best use of public funds and budget setting. The PCC will champion central government, whilst building the economic case, to propose longer term funding commitments for both victim and preventative services.

Key deliverables 2022/23

- **Strategic needs assessment** – use an evidence-based approach to gather, analyse and develop wide ranging police, partnership and community data to inform prevention activity across West Mercia force area.
- **Budget** – utilise the strategic needs assessment as an evidence base to allocate the PCC's £1m prevention budget for 22/23, alongside consideration within future policing and PCC budgets to ensure that prevention activity is prioritised, and sustained, to achieve the systemic change needed.
- **Establish governance and oversight** – identify and implement governance and accountability measures for delivery of the objectives within this strategy.
- **Prevention network** – build on best practice from other forces, partners and alliances, develop and implement a multi-disciplinary West Mercia Prevention Network to co-ordinate, instigate and deliver primary and secondary prevention.
- **Problem Solving Hub** - review and realign Problem Solving Hub resources to the prevention strategy, providing a hub and spoke model to service each local policing area.
- **Remodel commissioned services** – review all existing commissioned service provision, to ensure alignment to the aims and objectives within this strategy, undertaking new or de-commissioning activity where appropriate.
- **Review local policing teams** – review and realign response teams, to identify opportunities where increased prevention activity can be delivered, achieving better value from the policing budget.
- **We Don't Buy Crime** – review, refresh and reinvigorate WDBC to ensure continued effectiveness, sustainability and impact on preventing serious acquisitive crime. Ensure seamless integration with neighbourhood policing to strengthen and support Local Policing Community Charter.
- **Citizens in Policing** – scale up the involvement and scale of citizens in policing across the force, actively involving communities in preventative policing such as Watch Schemes, Street Watch and Special Constabulary.



- **Training** – create a training schedule and products to embed a trauma-informed and problem solving approach across all departments and within partnership settings.
- **Communications and engagement campaign (community and internal)** – essential engagement with the public, and internally, to increase understanding of the prevention agenda and start setting conditions for societal success.
- **Partnership engagement** – commence engagement with key, identified partners and to build and reinforce relationships, set out the policing prevention agenda, identify shared strategic goals, and establish conditions for success.
- **Provider engagement** – engage with service providers as part of the commissioning cycle, to identify the status of the market in relation to delivery of commissioned prevention services.
- **Community Charter** – review the Community Charter, to ensure alignment to the aims and objectives of this Prevention Strategy.

Outcomes

We will:

- **Reduce harm** – reduce the number of victims of crime and harm caused across West Mercia. Tackle the drivers and vulnerabilities associated with victimisation in both the physical and virtual environment.
- **Reduce offending** – reduce the number of offenders across West Mercia, by tackling the root causes – including the ‘causes of the causes’ - and opportunities that facilitate offending.
- **Reduce demand through Problem Solving Approaches** – reduce public harm and internal demand on police and partner agencies through a systematic, cost effective, problem solving approach.
- **Improve trust and confidence in West Mercia Police** – drive improvements in these levels, identified through existing methods of engagement and community involvement.
- **Deliver cultural change** – drive cultural change across our communities and organisation, to embed prevention as the core policing and PCC/community response, maximising opportunities to prevent and reduce harm.
- **Enable safer communities** – magnify the voice of the public across policing and partners, ensuring that they are placed at the centre of all decision making and activities.
- **Deliver best value** – deliver the best possible value for public money in respect of personal and community safety, ultimately providing an efficient and effective service to the public.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – A public health approach

The public health approach will be a core part of our delivery model within this strategy.

We will adopt the following principles:

- Seek to prevent an issue for our communities as a **whole**, and intervene early with at-risk groups to reduce the harm caused by the issue, including by promoting recovery and increasing resilience.
- Develop a detailed understanding of the **nature, extent, and impact** of an issue
 - including the evidence of what is likely to cause or prevent it in the short, medium and long term – using shared data and intelligence.
- Understand that the police, PCC and their partners and communities can work together to address the causes and impact of an issue by taking a **whole system approach**.
- Assess how well interventions are implemented, and how effective they are at preventing the issue for our communities and/or reducing the harm to relevant groups.
- Learn from the implementation and effectiveness of actions, and making any changes that are necessary at an individual, organisation or system wide level.
- **Building leadership** across public services and communities to work together to address an issue, its causes and harms, by aligning strategy, leadership and resources.

(College of Policing; DCC Julian Moss)



We will work collaboratively, to deliver a range of prevention activities, utilising the PCC's budget setting and commissioning powers to enhance delivery of policing activity. Below are some examples of these activities:

PRIMARY PREVENTION	SECONDARY PREVENTION	TERTIARY PREVENTION
<i>Preventing a problem from occurring in the first place</i>	<i>Intervening early when a problem starts to emerge to prevent it becoming established</i>	<i>Making sure an ongoing problem is well managed to avoid crises and reduce its harmful consequences</i>
Early years family-based intervention	Hot-spots policing	'Pulling levers' focused deterrence strategies
Early years school-based interventions	Commissioning of targeted education & awareness	Victim/offender mediation
Training in social and emotional skills, problem solving and anger management for at-risk children	Problem-oriented policing	Restorative justice
Alcohol pricing	Commissioning of Custody referral services e.g. DIPs	Motivational interviewing
Firearms laws	Mentoring	Cognitive behavioural therapy
Neighbourhood watch	Training in social and emotional skills, problem solving and anger management for children with early signs of struggling	Trauma informed workforce & service providers
Exploitation and Vulnerability training packages	Police-led diversion of low risk young offenders	Commissioning of Repeat Offender Programmes – e.g. DRIVE, LINC
Commissioning virtual reality prevention packages	Commissioning of diversionary programmes e.g. DIVERT, CLIMB, Steer Clear, MORSE	Procedural Justice Policing
Communications campaigns	Designing out crime	Broken Windows Policing
Support into employment	Commissioning of We Don't Buy Crime	M.A.S.H.
Commissioning awareness raising services/activities	Street Watch	Integrated Offender Management
After-school recreational activities	Discourage imitation	Commissioning of Prison IOM officer
Access to community resources (e.g. youth clubs, libraries)	Early Intervention	Utilising OCD disposals, Commissioning OOCD programmes
Awareness raising and anti-violence education	CCTV investment from PCC	A&E Navigators
Mental resilience support in school	Community Orientated Policing (Neighbourhood Policing)	Nudge psychology
Crime prevention through environmental design	Disruptive Policing	Commissioning of Youth Justice diversionary programmes
Urban renewal	Commissioning focussed deterrent programmes	Physical security, e.g. alarms
	Stop and Search	Custody
		Probation

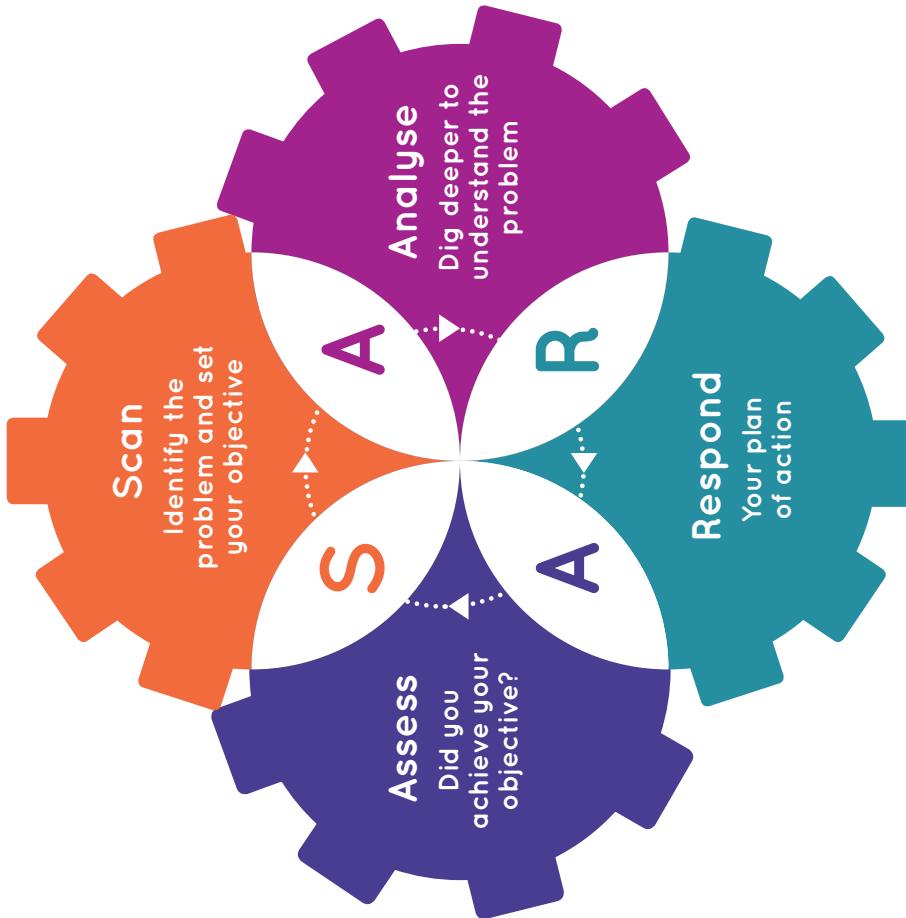
Appendix 2 – Problem solving

To be successful in preventing crime, harm, and demand, we must use a sustainable problem-orientated methodology with our partners.

We will continue to embed the use of SARA problem solving model (Scan, Analyse, Respond, Assess), the PAT (Problem Analysis Triangle), and the Commissioning Cycle (Analyze, Plan, Do, Review) as tools and ways of working to deliver effective and evidenced-based problem solving interventions and commissioning of services. This will be internally, across all policing and PCC functions and with our partners and commissioned service providers.

We will also develop and improve recording methods to capture problem solving plans to enable the effective evaluation and sharing of learning, including using academic partners to ensure rigour and impartiality in evaluation as well as enabling effective performance management and governance of activity.

The problem solving approach will incorporate evidence-based situational crime prevention techniques, whilst encouraging innovation and creativity in seeking solutions, which are aligned to outcomes for the public.



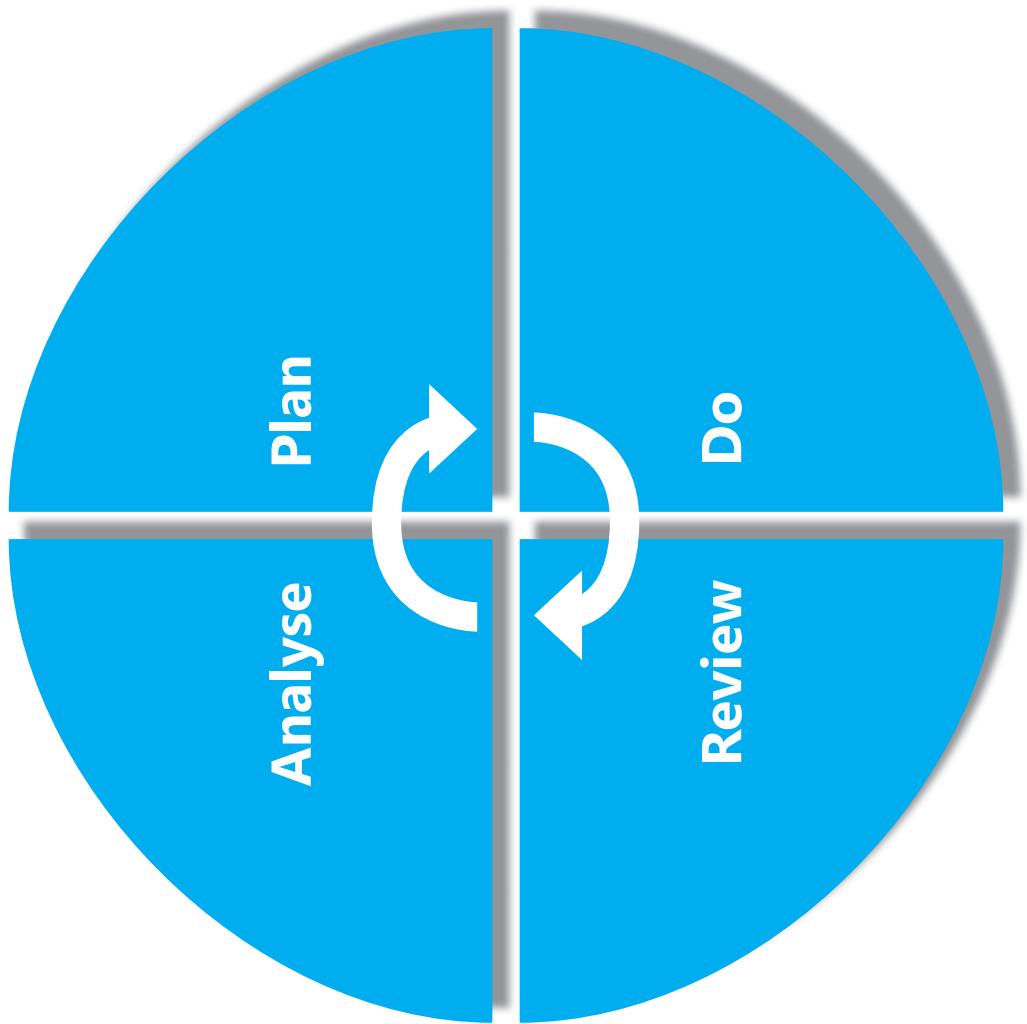
Appendix 3 – Trauma informed practice

A useful model for ensuring that our organisations and partner agencies take a trauma informed approach.

- **Realisation:** In a trauma-informed approach, all people at all levels of the organisation or system have a basic realisation about trauma and understand how trauma can affect families, groups, organisations, and communities as well as individuals. People's experience and behaviour are understood in the context of coping strategies designed to survive adversity and overwhelming circumstances, whether these occurred in the past, whether they are currently manifesting, or whether they are related to the emotional distress that results in hearing about the first-hand experiences of another.
- **Respond:** The programme, organisation, or system responds by applying the principles of a trauma-informed approach to all areas of functioning. The programme, organisation, or system integrates an understanding that the experience of traumatic events impacts all people involved, whether directly or indirectly. Staff in every part of the organisation, from the person who greets clients at the door to the executives and the governance board, have changed their language, behaviours and policies to take into consideration the experiences of trauma among children and adult users of the services and among staff providing the services. This is accomplished through staff training, a budget that supports this ongoing training, and leadership that realises the role of trauma in the lives of their staff and the people they serve.
- **Recognition:** People in the organisation or system are also able to recognise the signs of trauma. These signs may be gender, age, or setting-specific and may be manifest by individuals seeking or providing services in these settings. Trauma screening and assessment assist in the recognition of trauma, as do workforce development, employee assistance, and supervision practices.
- **Resist re-traumatisation:** A trauma-informed approach seeks to resist re-traumatisation of clients as well as staff. Organisations often inadvertently create stressful or toxic environments that interfere with the recovery of clients, the well-being of staff and the fulfilment of the organisational mission. Staff who work within a trauma-informed environment are taught to recognise how organisational practices may trigger painful memories and re-traumatise individuals with trauma histories.

Source: SAMHSA (2020)

Appendix 4 – Commissioning cycle



NPCC National Crime Prevention strategy



THE AIM OF PREVENTATIVE POLICING: Fewer victims, fewer offences, and less demand on policing achieved by addressing underlying causes and using partnership problem solving.

