



West Mercia Safer Communities Plan


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Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia

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A man with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue shirt, and a blue tie, is speaking. He is positioned in front of a blue backdrop that features the West Mercia Police logo and the text "John Crompton Police and Crime Commissioner West Mercia". The backdrop also includes the words "West Mercia POLICE" and "Mercia POLICE".

Foreword

A new term comes with the setting of a new police and crime plan. However, the fundamentals of what I am focused on, and committed to delivering, remain constant. Communities should receive a level of service they expect, crime should be effectively tackled, victims should be supported to cope and recover, and the public's money should be spent efficiently.

Over my time of being PCC, it is pleasing to see that progress has been made in a number of areas. There are record numbers of police officers, recorded crime has reduced and there are greater specialist support services on hand to help victims. However, there is always progress to be made. As we face challenges around demand and rises in inflation, which continues to put financial pressures on policing, it is even more imperative that our efforts are focused on the areas that matter most to our communities.

This is why, ahead of producing the plan that follows, I have ensured that concerns and priorities I have heard from communities, across a range of platforms, are reflected within the commitments I have outlined.

This includes a commitment to support West Mercia Police in continuing the focus of preventing and detecting crime, with ever more resources not just based in the heart of our

communities, but also working alongside them to address the issues. I see this happening in the form of increased engagement with communities, with information being fed into local policing teams and updates provided after. I would also expect the force to continue identifying ways in which solutions can be found together. I want communities to feel involved and aware of what's being done to make them feel safe where they live.

I hear, on a regular basis, that the public want to see their police officers and they want to see them acting on the things that matter most to them. I am therefore committed to supporting the force to deliver on this. I want all communities to receive a level of service they would expect, regardless of where they live.

This is why maximising resources and value for money is vitally important and is a priority within this plan. With financial pressures continuing to be placed on public sector organisations, I am committed to ensuring that resources are spent even more efficiently but remain focused on preventing crime and harm.

My commitment to support victims and witnesses has been an integral part of my commissionership, and this term is no different. Great strides have been made to understand the needs of victims, with services developing to ensure that there is a wide variety of support available to address crime types and personal requirements. This term will see the delivery of a new Victims' Hub that has the voice of the victim at the heart of it as it develops and is focused on ensuring support is given consistently to those that need it.

Within this plan there are overarching themes and principles that will feature within each priority. These priorities also shouldn't be seen in isolation. The successful delivery of one commitment will likely result in the successful delivery of many others due to being intrinsically linked. I have noted the importance of identifying opportunities to work in partnership with others, or when co-production can be done, in order to identify solutions to the concerns that affect communities.

I remain steadfast in my commitment to deliver a police service that is focused on tackling crime, reducing harm and boosting confidence with the communities it serves.

“Working with partners and the public to deliver safer, stronger communities in West Mercia.”



Priorities





Cutting
crime



Policing with the
community



Supporting victims
and witnesses



Maximising resources
and value for money



Overarching principles

I will ensure the following principles feature within all the work I do as PCC.

Public voice: Raising awareness of the role of the PCC as the voice of the public in policing and ensuring that the public voice is paramount in all work. My focus will also be on ensuring that victims and survivors voices are heard within the criminal justice system.

Accountability: Not only holding the Chief Constable to account but holding myself, and the work of my office, accountable to the public we serve.

Prevention: Delivering 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 will be a key focus throughout this plan. This approach will be complemented by evidence-informed commissioning further upstream into primary prevention and taking an active role to ensure partners deliver interventions.

Equality, diversity and inclusion: Ensuring every individual can feel safe and a sense of belonging, both within the workforce and communities of West Mercia. (Full details of my equality and diversity objectives can be found towards the end of this document).

Co-production: Listening to and reflecting all local partners perspectives as well as those of communities, to meaningfully involve the community and partners in solutions. This will include partners such as West Mercia Police, Local Authorities, Integrated Care Boards, Probation Service, Youth Justice Service, Crown Prosecution Service, His Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service amongst others.

Vulnerability: Working in partnership with organisations across West Mercia to recognise and respond to those who are vulnerable in communities, ensuring a focus on bringing offenders to justice and intervening earlier when at risk of harm.



Priorities and objectives

Cutting crime

Whilst recorded crime has fallen across West Mercia, it is clear that the full extent of that reduction is not necessarily felt within communities.

I am committed to people seeing a greater policing presence in town centres, focused on tackling criminal and anti-social behaviour. I want to support policing working with businesses to ensure that they, and those that visit the town centres, feel safer and more confident to report crime and concerns.

I will support our rural communities to be safe and feel safe. I therefore also want to see enhanced teams supporting those living and working across our rural communities, as everyone has the right to receive a level of service they would expect from their police force.

Too many people are being killed or seriously injured on our roads. This sad fact is not changing fast enough, therefore road safety will continue to be a focus for this term. I also know, from correspondence I receive, that communities are tired of the anti-social behaviour that happens on our roads, as well as the fact roads are used to facilitate criminal activity. I will therefore re-double efforts when it comes to working with partners to ensure that we are joined up on our mission to increase the safety on our roads.



I want communities to feel safer, so I will lead the fight against drugs and the harm they cause in our society and play my part in tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG), which has been classed as a national emergency. I will also invest in specialist resources, and programmes, that aim to identify and challenge the root causes of offenders of domestic abuse, sexual violence and exploitation.

Prevention is at the heart of my approach to cut crime. This will involve working closely with the force and partners to intervene earlier, to ensure a collaborative approach to reducing the harm being caused in society.

However, where a crime is committed, I will ensure that the force conducts timely and high quality investigations to enable a greater proportion of offenders to be brought to justice.



I will:

Deliver safer town centres and businesses

- Ensure policing in our town centres is visible, accessible and effective at fighting crime, in line with my commitment that a greater amount of policing will be visible in communities.
- Dedicated town centre policing teams will be part of multi-agency work to support our town centres to thrive and reduce criminal and anti-social behaviour. The teams will work with businesses to prevent crime and ensure they receive a robust response when reporting crime, ultimately improving their trust and confidence in the police.
- Rural policing teams will work with rural communities and businesses to tackle crime and ensure improved police response.

Deliver safer communities

- Investment will continue to be made in specialist resources to target offenders of domestic abuse, sexual violence and exploitation, ensuring more offenders are brought to justice.

Deliver safer roads

- Greater focus across West Mercia Police, on tackling and reducing the harm and anti-social behaviour on our roads, supported by specialist roads policing teams.
- Ensure a focus on roads policing activity that works to deny criminals use of the roads to carry out their criminal activity.
- Greater collaborative working with partners to ensure there is a shared focus on improving road safety.
- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured through education, enforcement and engineering.
- Use a data/evidence led approach to reducing harm on the roads.

Target illegal drugs

- The fight against drugs, and the harm they cause in our society, will continue by driving the activity of partners through the role I play within the West Mercia Combatting Drugs Partnership.

Tackle organised crime

- Ensure offenders of serious and organised, as well as acquisitive, crime are held to account for their behaviour through investment in greater resources and technology.
- Ensure data sharing is improved amongst partners, with a focus on serious and organised crime to better inform interventions and enable disruption activity.

Support justice through an improved police response

- A strengthened response will be given to, and better targeting of, those in the community who cause the most harm, with a commitment to focus on the effective management of sex offenders.
- Identify opportunities to co-produce with partners and police will be developed around the approach to prevention – ensuring a policing focus on secondary and tertiary prevention, which includes hotspot policing and focused deterrence.
- Ensure prompt responses are given to reports of crime and police conduct thorough, timely and high-quality investigations.

- Ensure a greater proportion of offenders are brought to justice through improved quality of investigations and enhanced digital forensics capability.

Support justice through working with communities

- Work with partners will be developed to consider joint commissioning approaches for services which seek to prevent children and young people from entering the criminal justice system.
- Increase the amount of Out of Court Resolutions, where appropriate, ensuring that eligible offenders are offered the most appropriate interventions to divert them away from the criminal justice system and change their behaviour.





Outcomes

Across all the priority areas above, I commit to supporting and delivering the following:

- A reduction in crime and reoffending.
- An increased number of offenders brought to justice, with improved criminal justice outputs and outcomes.
- Improved feelings of safety amongst communities.
- Improved public confidence and satisfaction.
- Significantly reduced number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

Policing with the community

I continue to hear too often from residents that policing does not feel part of their communities. With regards to engagement, visibility and accessibility, but also tackling crime and issues the community prioritise. I am clear that I want to put policing back into the heart of the community and I will be relentless in my focus over the term of this plan to achieve this. I want to see effective engagement improved with the various community groups we have across West Mercia and for people to have confidence in policing. I too make a commitment to engage effectively with all communities, so I can ensure the public voice is reflected in policing and the decisions I make on their behalf.

I want to ensure that everyone feels like they are receiving a level of service they expect from their police force, regardless of where they live.

I am clear that confidence in policing needs to improve, and this will involve greater oversight and scrutiny around areas such as professional standards and vetting. I will ensure that there is a continued focus on making sure that the police officers and staff in West Mercia are recruited to the highest standards, and that these standards continue throughout their careers.



I want to see response times improve, and, although there is a drive to utilise technology to support the service, it is clear from the public that their preferred method of contact is the telephone as well as having the option to speak to someone in person.

It is also, therefore, important that 101 response times are improved and that the public are able to access their police service as and when they need it.

Recognising that the police force provides so much more, this also needs to be regardless of whether they have been a victim of crime.

I will:

Deliver responsive policing

- Ensure sufficient resources and accountability are implemented to provide a timely response to calls from the public.
- Ensure a focus on improving police response times, such as 101 and 999, to ensure the public get a more effective and consistent response from their police service.
- Provide an enhanced, and consistent, service to the public through investment in public contact areas.



- Ensure that victims of high-volume crimes such as burglary are given appropriate support to prevent re-victimisation, with initiatives such as SmartWater and We Don't Buy Crime.

Deliver visible policing

- Ensure that any additional resources are focused on community policing to improve visibility and provide reassurance amongst communities.
- Maximise the effectiveness of the local policing teams to continue successfully tackling high visibility crimes in communities.

- Ensure all communities have a named local police officer who can be contacted directly and that they see them in their community more often to increase visibility, trust and confidence.
- Ensure intelligent, targeted deployment of resources to address risk, to ultimately build relationships and increase the confidence in policing.

Provide an accessible police service

- Improve 101 call response times, and online crime reporting, to ensure the public can access their police force swiftly.
- Have a greater level of engagement with the most vulnerable in society, and those without a strong voice, as well as delivery of a child-centred approach to policing.
- Ensure the public receive a service from the police which is visible, accessible and fair for all groups in society whether that is a response to crime or to access a service provided by the force.
- Ensure that the police, as a major public sector partner, is working to manage and support residents with additional needs.
- Support, and develop, the relationship between communities and their police service. Ensuring the police hear the concerns of the public, and the public

understand the work their police service is doing to address these concerns whilst keeping them safe.

- Work with West Mercia Police to review the Local Policing Charter, ensuring that the needs of the community are constantly reviewed and are met.

Deliver a fit for purpose estate

- Ensure the police estate is community focused, visible and accessible, and enables police officers and staff to carry out their roles effectively.
- Reduce the environmental impact, and social sustainability, of the police estate.





Outcomes

Across all the priority areas above, I commit to supporting and delivering the following:

- A reduction in crime and reoffending.
- Improved public confidence and satisfaction.
- Increased visibility and accessibility across all areas of policing.
- Improved communication and engagement channels, resulting in communities hearing from their police service, and police hearing from communities.
- Communities receive the right service from the police which is proportionate and reasonable.

Supporting victims and witnesses

Supporting victims and witnesses has been an integral part of my commissionership, with this term being no different. It saddens and concerns me to see that many victims face challenges within the criminal justice system, resulting in further trauma following the crime. This highlights just how important it is to ensure that the post crime support, whether that includes the criminal justice journey or not, is what a victim or witness would expect.

I will continue to ensure that the voice of the victim is heard by those that need to hear it and progress is made. This is especially important for children and young people. It is vital that we recognise the impact that crimes have on children and young people. I will therefore ensure that they get the access to the support they need, and that their voices are reflected in the work I do along with partners.

Equally important is the care that witnesses receive, and I will continue to ensure that they are supported throughout their involvement with not only the police, but the wider criminal justice system.





I will ensure that the services I provide are cohesive, accessible, supportive and meet the needs of victims and witnesses. I will also ensure that West Mercia Police provide the best possible service for victims, providing timely updates, and I will hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure delivery.

I will focus on developing evidence-based interventions and evaluating the effectiveness of commissioned services to better inform future commissioning activity. I will ensure that services are delivered to a high-quality standard, and deliver a trauma informed approach. Services will be available to victims, whether they have reported to the police or not, and they will take a range of approaches to ensure that they engage with all communities and anyone that may need support.

I will:

Develop a Victims' Hub

- Ensure victims and witnesses of crime get the support they need, when they need it, with the development of a Victims' Hub.
- Collaborate with police and partners on the design of any new victim services, ensuring a victim focus is at the centre of any work.

Invest in specialist training

- Police officer training will be invested in to focus on supporting victims and witnesses, to ensure that the response provided by the West Mercia Police is of a high-quality standards and tailored to their needs.

Ensure victims are informed

- Timely and meaningful updates will be provided for victims and witnesses of crime to ensure they feel communicated with throughout their contact with the police.
- Advances in technology will be utilised to ensure that victims are provided with regular updates including automation and self-serve options.

Ensure high quality service provision

- Greater investment in victim support services that can be accessed by anyone and anywhere, and are tailored to the changing needs of victims and crime types.
- Victim support services will proactively ensure anyone can access support, regardless of whether they have reported it to the police.
- The quality of service offered to victims and witnesses from West Mercia Police will be improved, with a focus on the quality of police investigations.
- Technology will be used to increase the accessibility of police services via 101 and 999, including new facilities such as call back and online chat.

Improve standards of service

- A core set of quality standards will be developed, which outline what victims and witnesses can expect from commissioned support services.
- The quality of services provided by the two sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) in West Mercia will be improved, ensuring that they reach accreditation standards issued by the Forensic Science Regulator.

- Building of strong partnerships across policing, and the wider criminal justice system, with a focus on reducing court backlogs and improving timeliness.
- Oversee compliance with the Victims' Code and that the rights of victims are at the forefront of criminal justice agencies' work.

Victims' Code

All victims of crime in England and Wales have rights:

1 To be able to understand and to be understood.

2 To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay.

3 To be provided with information when reporting the crime.

4 To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs.

5 To be provided with information about compensation.

6 To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution.

7 To make a Victim Personal Statement.

8 To be given information about the trial, trial process and your role as a witness.

9 To be given information about the outcome of the case and any appeals.

10 To be paid expenses and have property returned.

11 To be given information about the offender following a conviction.

12 To make a complaint about your rights not being met.



Outcomes

Across all the priority areas above, I commit to supporting and delivering the following:

- Victims and survivors feel their voice is heard in the criminal justice system.
- Improved or sustained criminal justice experience and outcomes.
- Increased confidence and trust in the criminal justice system.
- Improved police response to victims.
- Victims and survivors receive high quality care to support them to cope and recover, as much as possible, from the harm they have suffered.

Maximising resources and value for money

It's vital that, in order for police officers and staff to carry out their roles effectively, they need the appropriate resources. The need for police forces to make and deliver savings will undoubtedly continue at a national level. My commitment locally is that West Mercia will be set up to succeed, delivering the best possible value, service and sustainability for local communities with the resources available, whilst keeping communities safe.

My expectation is that choices will need to be made on how policing services will be delivered, as the available funding will not meet all the demand. I will therefore expect the force to deliver productivity savings and efficiencies to ensure that we can meet the challenge and focus on delivering those required services to our communities.

My challenge to the Chief Constable will be to:

- Maximise effectiveness and productivity of police officers and staff through digital tools that reduce bureaucracy.
- Maintain the allocation of policing against the identified need, managing the deployment and demand management to minimise abstractions or the need for increased overtime spend.



- Maximise the opportunities for collaboration, with public service partners, to manage demand and costs and recognising that we all have a role to play in improving economic, social and environmental conditions for the public we serve, which will play an important role in the future demand on policing.
- Continue to focus on process improvements and removing inefficiencies where possible.
- I will also seek to expand the current evidence base for commissioned services and invest further funding into evaluating the effectiveness and impact of these services. This will include an increased level of partnership working to understand and demonstrate the value of services which I commission, where partners benefit from the outcomes of these services.

I will:

Deliver digital transformation

- Support and develop digital transformation, ensuring West Mercia Police is a technology enabled force able to respond effectively to enhanced criminal behaviour.
- Use established and, where appropriate, emerging technology to enhance staff efficiency.
- Ensure an increased focus on development of analytical capability and capacity.

- Ensure a robust benefit realisation plan is in place for any investment with a focus on ongoing modernisation and continuous improvement.

Ensure West Mercia is equipped for national and emerging trends

- A focus will be placed on the provision of required resources, leadership and culture to detect and tackle national threats effectively. *More about tackling national threats can be found later in this plan under Strategic Policing Requirement.*

Deliver sustainability

- Continue to take all available steps to reduce the carbon footprint of the resources deployed in West Mercia particularly the further rollout of the fleet decarbonisation project.
- Continue the focus on both financial and environmental sustainability, ensuring that the force delivers services within the financial resources available to them whilst not adversely contributing to the climate challenge that we face.

Improve systems and ways of working

- Ensure that a skilled and competent police officer and staff workforce is developed, underpinned by effective police leadership.

- Deliver a truly efficient service, that identifies how to maximise the use of the resources to deliver for the communities of West Mercia.

Improve culture and behaviours

- Continue to focus on ensuring the West Mercia workforce is inclusive and reflects the community it serves.
- Require that high standards across the organisation are maintained, which support the vision and values and code of ethics.
- Develop the vetting and Professional Standards teams, to ensure that communities can have confidence and trust in the police.

Commission services to support victims and reduce crime

Commission a range of interventions which focus on the public health approach to prevention (see glossary of terms).

I will also seek to expand the current evidence base for commissioned services and invest further funding into evaluating the effectiveness and impact of these services. This will include an increased level of partnership working to understand and demonstrate the value of services which I commission, where partners benefit from the outcomes of these services.

Ensure robust governance arrangements are in place and that all commissioned activity:

- Supports the effective delivery of the Police and Crime objectives or section 143 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act.
- Responds to local need and is informed by local assessments of risk and threat.
- Supports or complements activities and services provided by local partners.
- Takes account of the views of the public and service users.
- Provides sufficient value for money.
- Considers how social value and other community outcomes could be maximised.
- Is achievable and realistic within the resources available.
- Has clear and transparent accountability arrangements in place and is effectively monitored and performance managed.

Outcomes

Across all the priority areas above, I commit to supporting and delivering the following:

- Ensure effective medium term financial planning is in place which sets the annual allocation of policing resources within the budget available.
- A police force which delivers efficient and effective services to the public.
- An understanding of how the organisation uses its resources and an increase in the economic potential of them.
- A policing services model which is sustainable, utilising local business and public partners who can be best placed to deliver services that meet the needs of the public.





Partnership working

West Mercia is served by one police force, three unitary authorities (Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin) as well as the two-tier county of Worcestershire with its six district/borough councils. There are two fire and rescue services, two Integrated Care Boards, and two Probation Delivery Units cover the area. There are three prisons and one approved secure premises in the area. There are five Community Safety and Partnership Boards that operate across West Mercia. Partnership working features within all priorities set out in my plan and underpins most activities and commitments that have been made.

The vast size of West Mercia presents complexities around partnership working. It therefore highlights how important it is that I, and West Mercia Police, are working with all these partners, through various forums, to ensure that they are focused on tackling crime, reducing harm, and making communities safer. This is particularly important following the HMICFRS inspection of the force's approach to tackling serious and organised crime, where partnership working was raised as an area for development.

The work that I have been doing with local authorities, to deliver the Safer Communities programme across West Mercia, has seen many successes and I will continue to broaden the scope of this work to include other partners.

To date, I have been heavily involved in the oversight of the responsible authorities' implementation of the Serious Violence Duty. In addition, I, along with other PCCs, have been given responsibility to administer Home Office Serious Violence Duty funding. This work will continue throughout the duration of this plan.

I will:

Improve partnership working

- Collaborate with partners such as the Integrated Care Board and the Probation Service, as well as others at a local, regional and national level.
- Ensure that West Mercia Police has a strong focus on building relationships, trust and confidence within partners and communities.
- Develop cross-organisational and cross-boundary relationships to maximise investments and impacts into communities in West Mercia.
- Use my powers to strengthen relationships with criminal justice agencies, identifying opportunities to drive improvements for my communities.

Drive systems leadership

- Influence partners towards shared objectives for the benefit of the communities of West Mercia.
- Utilise my influence to progress conversations around funding across a range of partners to determine how we maximise the impact of funding.
- Work with local partners to explore both further joint commissioning opportunities, as well as opportunities to collaborate on funding bids, building on successes that I have delivered throughout my previous terms. There will be a greater focus particularly for the youth diversionary services, as demand continues to rise.
- Seek partner input into a range of PCC areas of work, to avoid siloed working.
- Regularly engage, listen to, and collaborate with others across a range of forums (including the public sector, academics, and the third sector) through communications and engagement activities, facilitated discussion, workshops, and informal dialogue.

Deliver co-production

- Ensure services that are accessed by communities in West Mercia are designed in collaboration with them.

- Set up a lived experience group, where victims and survivors can contribute directly to how the services are delivered.
- Drive co-production with partners to identify opportunities to share resources and provide better services and outcomes for communities.
- Consider how projects such as Safer Communities can be expanded to work with other partners, such as Integrated Care Boards.



Tackle cross-border issues

- Continue to work with regional partners on threats and areas of policing that go beyond the boundaries of West Mercia.
- Govern cross border work through a Regional Governance Group, which is a meeting held with the three other regional PCCs.
- Ensure that regionally I engage and oversee the work being delivered by the Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU).
- Encourage, where appropriate, regional commissioning approaches, where shared outcomes exist to provide value for money. This will build upon existing approaches such as the Regional Pre-Arrest Diversionary Scheme.

Govern serious violence duty implementation

- Provide leadership and support to partners to tackle serious violence, reducing violent crime and keeping vulnerable people safe in line with the requirements under the Serious Violence Duty.
- Provide oversight and governance of the delivery of the Serious Violence Partnership Strategy.

- Develop an understanding of the impact of services, that have been commissioned with the Home Office Sexual Violence Duty funding, in order to inform future commissioning intentions.
- Challenge central government around the sustainability of funding and services, as current funding comes to an end in March 2025.

Outcomes

Across all the priority areas above, I commit to supporting and delivering the following:

- More sustainable services delivered for the public.
- Services are better aligned to the needs of communities and partners.
- Increased confidence and satisfaction.
- Increased shared investment into communities.
- A policing services model which is sustainable, utilising local business and public partners who can be best placed to deliver services that meet the needs of the public.
- A reduction in crime and reoffending.

Crime Reduction Board

The key purpose of the board is to reduce crime and reoffending. Specific objectives for partners are outlined below:



Reduce the harms of domestic abuse



Reduce homicide



Reduce serious violence



Reduce serious organised crime



Reduce neighbourhood crime

Local Criminal Justice Board

The role of this board is to deliver an efficient and effective criminal justice system across West Mercia. Specific objectives identified are below:



Preventing offending and reoffending



Improving quality of justice



Improving timeliness



Reduction in those who are over-represented in the CJS



Improving the victim experience

Combatting Drugs Partnership

The key purpose of the partnership is to provide oversight, governance and delivery of the Combating Drugs Partnership objectives amongst partners. These objectives are set out below:



Reduce drug use



Reduce drug supply



Reduce drug related crime



Increasing engagement in drug treatment



Reduce drug related deaths and harm



Improving drug recovery outcomes

Victims' Board

The role of the board is to improve outcomes and services for victims of crime. Specific objectives are below:



Improving the experience of vulnerable victims



Preventing offending and reoffending



Increasing victim engagement and to raise awareness of the victims' voice within the CJS



Improving access and provision of support to victims of crime



Victims Code of Practice Compliance (VCOP)



Governance and scrutiny

A key part of my role is holding the Chief Constable to account. This is done via my Assurance & Accountability process. This process is underpinned by a set of principles, an annual programme of work, a variety of methods and frequency (dependent on issues that need to be raised) and a process map.

As part of my governance role, I convene a monthly meeting, the West Mercia Governance Board, which is attended by representatives from the Senior Leadership Team from both the OPCC and force. The aim of this board is to ensure that the right vision, mission, objectives, culture and strategies are in place. The board also aims to ensure that there are robust and effective processes embedded, that strategies are implemented and monitored, that both organisations have the right resources in the right places to deliver the strategies and that there are appropriate systems of good governance to direct and control the organisations.

I have recently developed a set of guiding principles for my assurance and accountability process, which are aligned to the national PCC and Chief Constable Accountability Guidance.

These principles are intended to support the Chief Constable and I to further embed the cultures, behaviours and effective working relationships required to successfully deliver my programme of meetings and ad hoc requests. These principles are intended to stand alongside and complement the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Policing Protocol Order 2023, and the full national PCC and Chief Constable Accountability Guidance.



Assurance and accountability principles



Demonstrate behaviours of mutual respect, trust and confidence, in line with the Code of Ethics, the Nolan Principles and the Policing Protocol.



Establish and agree clear lines of responsibility and accountability.



Talk regularly and develop ways of working together effectively - both formally and informally.



Share information openly and transparently.



Recognise and address issues and problems early, particularly those that require clarity of perspective or position.