



## STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday, 26 July 2022

### Report: Youth Commission

**Presented by:** Mary Jacobs, Partnership and Engagement Officer, Youth Commissioner co-presenters Taiyanna Stewart, Rabia Khan and Eniola Adekunle.

#### Purpose of paper

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an account of the 2022 Youth Summit held in March. The report will be co-presented with 3 Youth Commissioners.
2. The report will provide an update on current activity that Youth Commissioners in the current cohort have undertaken and are planning in 2022.
3. The report is for information only.

#### Background

4. The Youth Commission was established in 2014 and is made up of two elected representatives between the ages of 13 and 18 years from each Neighbourhood Policing Area (NPU). Following changes in the number of Birmingham NPU's the current Youth Commission is made up of 16 Youth Commissioners.
5. Youth Commissioners (YCs) serve a term of 2 years. The working meetings of the Youth Commission take place at 6-week intervals (whilst avoiding peak examination periods) and are attended by the Commissioner and Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner Wasim Ali.
6. The Youth Commissioners are supported and connected to Violence Reduction Unit expertise and the activity of other strategic partnerships and Youth Voice organisations by the OPCC Engagement and Partnership Officer. Many external organisations wish to consult our young people; integrity is needed when assessing every request for a genuine intention to be inclusive of youth voice and to demonstrate changes made as a result.
7. West Midlands Police (WMP) are required to work with the Youth Commission when consulting young people on service development, and appoint a senior officer to be the Children and Young People lead officer to facilitate this relationship. At the present time this role is filled by Ch Supt Claire Caddick, NPU Commander in Dudley.
8. Throughout the year the Force lead officer is the strategic and proactive communication link between the Youth Commission and other divisions of the Force, especially neighbourhood policing teams.
9. Contact details for Youth Commissioners are shared with the Force NPU Commanders, WMP Young Persons Officers, Statutory Youth Services and Heads

of Community Safety Partnerships and vice versa. It is to everyone's benefit if the elected Youth Commissioners are actively welcomed and connected to their local community safety organisations and community scrutiny panels.

10. The OPCC webpage about Youth Commissioners can be found here: [Youth Commissioners - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlandspcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlandspcc.gov.uk/youth-commissioners)

11. The present cohort of Youth Commissioners:

<b>Youth Commissioners 2021-2023 AREA</b>	<b>NAME</b> <i>Those in bold are c-presenting today.</i>	<b>STATED GENDER</b>
Birmingham West	Aleesha Sahara Majid	F
Birmingham West	Subhan Shan	M
<b>Birmingham East</b>	<b>Taiyanna Stewart</b>	F
Birmingham East	Wasi Arshad	M
Walsall	Silvia Jaswal	F
Walsall	Renee Samra	F
Sandwell	Rhea Rani Ratti	F
Sandwell	Mohammed Al Hasan	M
Dudley	Anthony Alexander	M
Dudley	Amman Ahmed	M
Wolverhampton	Jaspinder Kaur	F
Wolverhampton	Amelia Beet	F
Coventry	Andre Russell	M
<b>Coventry</b>	<b>Eniola Mary Adekunle</b>	F
Solihull	Zara Dowler	F
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>Rabia Khan</b>	F

12. Renee Samra (Walsall) and Subhan Shan (Birmingham West) joined the Youth Commission in 2020. This was a gap year for elections, caused by the pandemic but they went on to be successful in the next full elections last July. They depart for places at University in September 2022. The intention is to attract candidates from the VRP Youth Assembly membership to the short- term opportunity between September 2022 and the next full elections in the summer of 2023.

13. Youth Commissioners endorsed the consultation feedback from young people on the Police and Crime Plan in the region and used these to shape which themes were included at the 2022 Youth Summit.

## Youth Summit

14. The Youth Summit 2021 was postponed from December 2021 until March 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 due to Omicron infection levels. The event, hosted by the Youth Commissioners showcases youth voice and provides the platform for debate and exchange on police and crime issues affecting young people. This year it attracted 160 delegates; 75% were young people, the remaining 25% comprised of youth workers, Cadets leaders and police officers from the Force.
15. The three themes chosen by the Youth Commissioners, drawn from youth consultation on the Police and Crime Plan were community policing, safer travel and reducing violence and intimidation against women and girls.
16. The event piloted the use of digital maps. This interactive tool to collect data was introduced by the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) for young people to pinpoint locations where they fear crime and have been victims of crime in their neighbourhoods, and the public realm, on foot and on public transport.
17. Key note speeches introduced each of the themes: by the Commissioner on community policing, ACC Bell on the Force's VIAWG strategy, and safer travel and reporting sexual harassment on public transport by the Force's Safer Travel Team. The Chief Constable was unable to attend in person but instead sent a personal video on the role of men in being an Upstander to reduce intimidation and violence towards women and girls.
18. Assistant PCC Wasim Ali opened the evening, after which Youth Commissioners led the event. Before the event they co-designed the agenda and the setting out of information on the tables for delegates. They acted as hosts controlling the agenda, introducing speakers and group work elements. They provided role models as ambassadors for the mentoring in violence prevention programme (MVP), and acted as facilitators on tables about the input of data onto digital maps.
19. The hosts, Renee Samra (Walsall) and Mohammed Al Hassan (Sandwell) also led an 'open mic' session under the violence and intimidation against women and girls theme, asking for youth delegates to express '*What behaviours need to change?*'
20. Each Youth Commissioner that attended took on a leadership role amongst their peers at the event and were a credit to themselves and the Commissioner. A short video was recorded of the event and SPCB members are encouraged to view this here: <https://youtu.be/xloUakB4WsM>

## Outcomes from the Summit.

21. The outcomes of the event included the following:
  - The event provided additional data for the VRP and West Midlands Police on where visible community policing and policing of travel routes would provide most reassurance to young people.
  - A wide range of information about current prevention and interventions available from the VRP and the Safer Travel Team, including local contacts was provided on delegates tables, reaching a new audience. Posters from the joint Force and Victims Commissioner's December 2021 campaign around Safer Streets, highlighting unacceptable male behaviours were shared on delegates tables and on information stands.
  - An explanation, and engagement on three key elements of the Police and Crime Plan reached a wider audience of youth representatives and youth

workers. The face to face presentations, introduced by young leaders and subject matter experts are likely to have been more impactful on this audience.

- There was the opportunity for the Commissioner and West Midlands Police to hear youth voice sentiments on the harms of misogyny and violence against women and girls from all genders.
- The piloted use of the digital maps with a large youth audience produced useful learning; the maps are now more accessible on an app and have been used in since by the VRP with young people in Dudley. Wolverhampton Youth Council have volunteered to be active and critical testers of further revisions of the digital maps from September. Some further revisions will come from discussions with WMP and Safer Travel on the details included on tick boxes to pinpoint categories of crime and ASB. This will enable wider use of the maps as an interactive tool and once a greater amount of data is gathered from a representative sample, to overlay the results with crime data. Overall Youth Commissioners felt they represented a useful and interactive way for young people to impart their experience of where and when they had not felt safe, but access to a greater number of devices at similar events was essential.
- At each Youth Summit, the invitation list includes young people from youth councils, other statutory & community youth led organisations and Police Cadets. This year's summit included a greater number of Cadets, as well as sixth form college students, a group from the region's Youth Organisations in Uniform and some VRP Youth Assembly representatives. Leaders from each organisation have expressed their appreciation for offering this opportunity and experience to the young people in the region, and an agenda that resonated with everyone.
- Many of this year's representatives had never previously been to an event that was a showcase for youth voice, or one that was combined with close up, informal but informed interaction with police officers and the OPCC. We should not under estimate the Youth Summit's role in giving access to information and contacts, enabling debate, challenging negative perceptions and breaking down barriers between young people and the police.
- The themes at the Youth Summit can be seen to have influenced the choice of social action project themes by Youth Commissioners in at least two areas.
- Softer outcomes of individual personal development are evident in Youth Commissioners that played an active role; increased self -confidence, more confidence in volunteering for other facilitator and hosting roles and attending new groups as a Youth Commissioner to represent a youth voice. This can only be beneficial to service providers, including policing and the PCC.

## **Other current and future activity for Youth Commissioners**

22. Since last attendance at SPCB, Youth Commission meetings have received presentations on Big Data in policing and the West Midlands Ethics Committee, career opportunities in WMP, the Helping Communities Fund, volunteering roles with the Force and Serious Violence Reduction Orders.
23. The Youth Commissioners role includes representing the voice of young people from their area at local and regional events. A number of these invitations are at the behest of the OPCC and NPU's, but also include partner organisations or networks that invite youth participation. A standing agenda item at the Youth Commission meetings called 'Local Lowdown' includes feedback on these meetings or events to the group.

24. During 2022, a Sandwell YC has been invited to a national conference to speak about the impact of Covid on the lives of young people, Birmingham YCs to meet with Cllr Cotton from Birmingham City Council, and Coventry YCs to participate in a Canley Ward community engagement project with Warwickshire University - as well as a Coventry Summit, (including MPs, Elected Members, PCC, Police NPU Commander and other leaders). A Birmingham YC took part in the Force's event to mark Stephen Lawrence Day (a former YC, Melvin Riley was a speaker). All YC's received invites to local Stop and Search scrutiny panels, the Stop and Search Commission and Helping Communities Fund (HCF) participatory budgeting voting.
25. Coventry Youth Commissioner Andre Russell has taken part in the Faith Alliance film, A Declaration of Hope, and was a joint host of the Midlands Hope Hack on July 14<sup>th</sup>. Eniola Adekunle, also a Coventry YC facilitated youth voices at the Faith Alliance Summit on July 13<sup>th</sup>. Amman Ahmed, a Dudley YC introduced the Mentoring in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme at the Youth Summit and is a keen ambassador for the MVP programme in Dudley.

### **Stop and Search**

26. Youth Commissioners are actively encouraged to attend their local adult Stop & Search community scrutiny panel. A number have done so, but there is greater enthusiasm to take part in a youth equivalent.
27. These currently exist in Wolverhampton and Dudley, with a forward plan this autumn for their recruitment in Sandwell and Walsall, as well as Solihull, Birmingham and Coventry in the medium term. Youth Commissioners in Dudley are leading on a social action project to raise awareness of the youth scrutiny panels and assist in a recruitment drive with the OPCC and the relevant NPU partnership teams.
28. Youth Commissioners have been invited to take part in Stop and Search patrols with Operation Guardian on agreed dates in July, August and October. They will also be accompanied by a Stop and Search Co-ordinator from the OPCC to provide safeguarding. Parents will be required to sign an indemnity consent form for this activity. This live experience of front-line policing will provide a valuable insight to the Youth Commissioners and will aim to increase their motivation to take part in scrutiny panels themselves, and encourage others to do so.

### **Social action.**

29. This spring, all Youth Commissioners have identified a theme of social action they wish to pursue during the last year of their term. Having identified the theme, they have been supported with contact details for subject matter experts in the Force, OPCC, regional partner organisations or national advocates. End of year and external examinations have been a priority for the majority of Youth Commissioners since May however, so it is expected more substantial progress will occur now those exams are completed.
30. Themes identified are:

Birmingham East and West	Anti-knife crime, resisting pressure to carry a knife.
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Coventry	Anti knife crime focused on the young Black community
Dudley	Awareness/recruitment to youth S & S scrutiny panels
Sandwell	Mental Health, raising awareness of how to support others, services available and removing stigma
Solihull	Personal safety pack into schools
Walsall	Bespoke VAWG video/ workshop for schools
Wolverhampton	Awareness/recruitment to youth S & S scrutiny panels

31. During this period, the Youth Assembly (YA) that is commissioned by the Violence Reduction Partnership has reported back on the issues that their membership has identified as priorities. There is some alignment between the Youth Assembly priorities and the social action themes of the Youth Commissioners, namely Mental Health (Sandwell), and safe spaces. In Sandwell it is the intention to combine the efforts of the YC's and local YA members, together with access and scrutiny of commissioned interventions around emotional well-being in the borough.
32. Creating more collaborations between the region's youth representatives, to enable more spaces for young voices to influence each other and decision making in local areas is an intent held in common with the VRP. An existing regional network of youth voice coordinators also shares best practice.

### **Youth stakeholder panel to recruit a new Chief Constable.**

33. A youth panel was one of three stakeholder panels that were invited by the PCC to interview candidates applying to be the next Chief Constable of West Midlands Police. Participants were invited from Youth Commissioners, Police Cadets, Young Outstanding Citizens winners, VRP Youth Assembly, previous OPCC work experience candidates and youth stop and search scrutiny chairpersons.
34. The youth panel consisted of 9 young people, (including 3 YCs) and was chaired by Assistant PCC Wasim Ali and supported by Mary Jacobs and Lucy Naylor from the OPCC. Interview questions had been researched by the panellists amongst their peers, with a final six questions shortlisted by those taking part. Everyone had the opportunity by turn of asking questions about the candidate's initial presentation, or asking one of the prepared questions.
35. Both the questions posed, and the considered opinions offered during feedback on each candidate's strengths and weaknesses were insightful and challenging. Their questioning drew out the substance of the candidates experience and desire to engage with young people's concerns in relation to policing and crime, as well inviting them to offer some insights to the person behind the uniform.
36. The OPCC will provide a written thank you to the young people who took part, in order that this leadership experience can be evidenced to employers or within personal statements.
37. **Financial Implications**

None apparent.

38. **Legal Implications**

None apparent

39. **Equality Implications**

Youth Commissioners are elected to represent the views of young people to the PCC and his Strategic Police and Crime Board

40. The board is asked to note the contents of this report.

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## Appendix 1

### Terms of Reference for Youth Commissioners.

#### YOUTH COMMISSIONERS

Elected Youth Commissioners will represent young people in your city or town and sit on a Youth Commission. They will serve a term of 2 years.

The Youth Commission will:

- Lead on the Commissioners consultation with young people on the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, monitoring of priorities and police responses to young people
- Engage and consult with other young people in their local communities and listen to their views to make sure they represent the views of young people in their area.
- Be the voice of young people. Commission members will have the opportunity to speak directly with the Police and Crime Commissioner, police officers and decision makers.
- Be able to question, challenge and inform policy.