

ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

25th March 2025

Fairness and Belonging
Presented by: ACC Mike O'Hara

Cover Report

This section of the report is the Cover report and it should be a maximum of five pages

Police and Crime Plan

This report provides an overview of the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan (WMP RAP), in the year 2024-5 and outlines our plans for 2025-6. This work feeds into the Police and Crime Plan by improving both outcomes and relations between police and communities and promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce by improving representation and improving internal culture. WMP RAP is led by ACC O'Hara and governed through the WMP RAP Board that convenes quarterly and is attended by OPCC Deputy Chief Executive Alethea Fuller and reports to the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Board chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.

Achievements and Challenges

Workstream 1: Represented - Achievements

1. Since September 2024, over 1,200 officers and staff have attended a 'Learning From Our Black History' (LFOBH) session. Developed by the training team alongside Black and Black Heritage officers, staff and members of the public, this 3-hour session tells the story of Black Communities' history in the West Midlands and highlights key events that affect their relationship with police. It begins with Windrush, before discussing the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the Birmingham Riots, which many of our new joiners are not aware of. It has been embedded into initial officer training to address this knowledge gap.
2. LFOBH is designed to build cultural awareness and prompt discussions to improve intercultural competency when interacting with colleagues and the public. We anticipate this will help to address issues of discrimination and microaggressions both internally and externally. Feedback from attendees has been positive and will continue to flow through the WMP RAP team to capture useable insights, with more sessions for all departments planned in 2025.

Workstream 1 Challenges

3. Retention and recruitment of Black and Black Heritage officers and staff is a long-standing challenge. Based on a recent dataset of 12 months data, at present there are 25% more Black and Black Heritage colleagues joining than leaving.

Workstream 1 Actions

4. We are working towards a better understanding of why Black and Black Heritage employees leave through exit interviews and 'Say to Stay' an internal listening service, to assist us to target our activities and retain more officers and staff. We now have a dedicated route for Black and Black Heritage colleagues to speak about why they wish to leave and for the feedback to be both captured and acted upon.

Workstream 2: Not over-policed - Achievements

5. The QR code for stop and search has been introduced and work is ongoing to make offering the QR code a mandatory field in 2025. This captures feedback from the person who has been subject of a search, including asking for their ethnicity to increase recording of data, enabling better understanding of the disproportionality of the use of police powers.
6. Storage of BWV has been reviewed and WMP now routinely retain recordings for 12 months instead of the previous 3 month period. There is ongoing work to increase the recording of compliant handcuffing as a use of force. We anticipate that by the end of 2025-6 there will be more consistent ethnicity data available.

Workstream 2 Challenges

7. WMP is facing challenges in its data collection for s163a and Stop and Search due to technological limitations and the associated app that is still in development. Other efforts to improve data collection and quality are ongoing (see the background report for more details).

Workstream 2 Actions

8. A comprehensive review of the Stop and Search policy was carried out in 2024, a working group formed and the proposed new policy is with workstream leads for review with an estimated completion date of April 2025. It includes: The Restorative Justice Pilot for Stop and Search, aligns with PSD process and clarifies the grounds for searching based on the smell of cannabis. The updated guidance for section 60 is already published on Newsbeat and guidance can be found on the WMP RAP Intranet page.
9. To enable the roll out of the new policy and approaches, Training are building a suite of products, including refresher training for all officers and staff, which will feature trauma awareness. Updated guidance will also feature on Op Excellence, our training programme for newly promoted sergeants.

10. A robust scrutiny panel framework is in place and Superintendent Allan Green leads the national working group to review their approach.

Workstream 3: Involved - Achievements

11. A communications strategy has been developed and a number of successful internal and external campaigns have been completed which attracted positive engagement with Black and Black Heritage colleagues and communities. These include: video content about stop and search in Coventry, awareness raising about the new QR code for stop and search and the creation of the WMP RAP Intranet site as a single point of information for WMP.

Workstream 3 Challenges

12. Coordinating, capturing and measuring the many activities across workstreams and departments can be challenging, such as the LPA IAGs, scrutiny panels and the Afro-Caribbean Reference Groups as well as force led and local LPA communication and engagement.

Workstream 3 Actions

13. To improve data capture around impact, an impact matrix is in development and will be trialled later in 2025.
14. The Black History Working Group was formed following feedback from Black and Black Heritage officers and staff during Black History Month, with the objective of creating permanent exhibitions and inclusive engagement with Black Communities that reflect the diverse contributions to local policing and marking occasions of significance for those communities.

Workstream 4: Not under protected – Achievements & Actions

15. As a previously identified 'icebreaker force', WMP has provided circa 1.4 million lines of data via our Data Analytics Lab (DAL) to the NPCC to advance their work on disproportionality. We await the re-start of this workstream nationally to progress this further.

Workstream 4 Challenges

16. NPCC data collection and analysis of disproportionality is paused at present, with no updates to the WMP RAP Board since autumn 2024. The NPCC is working separately on data collection and standardisation relating to ethnicity reporting (relating to external interactions) across IT systems and police forces.

Our Black Workforce Survey

17. More explanation of the feedback from the report, both nationally and for West Midlands Police is contained in the background report. Below are our actions as a

result of the feedback received from the second wave survey which was carried out in April 2023 and published in November 2023, progress against them are tracked through Force governance:

31a	WMP	Improve training for line managers (including action to take) around microaggression, harassment and bullying	<p>D&I are working with Training and Leadership Development Team to develop the content on Op Excellence and build more cultural competence-based knowledge builders and guides.</p> <p>LFOBH includes discussions on racism and microaggressions delivered in an empathetic and powerful way, though not specifically targeted at line managers, they are among the attendees.</p>
31b	WMP	Increase cultural competence across the force	D&I & WMP RAP Coordinator are reviewing the options for 2025-6 including maximising cultural calendar events and partnering with PSD Learning and Intervention Team. LFOBH also contributes to cultural competence and awareness.
31c	WMP	Improve the transparency of promotions processes	Quality Assessors from BAPA and other staff networks attend promotions boards. Work is also ongoing to develop support for colleagues interested in promotion via the Staff Networks.
31d	WMP & National	Consistent and meaningful engagement with Black Communities to encourage recruitment	WMP RAP workstream 3 has begun a number of digital and in person engagement events. The police museum is building a network of local community influencers and partnership contacts, efforts to have meaningful dialogue with them will continue.
31e	WMP & National	Increase knowledge on Positive Action and its benefits	To be developed in 2025
31f	WMP & National	Provide senior leader mentorship	Op Synergy has been launched which directly addressed this action.

31g	National	Improve feedback processes and aim to build trust, inclusivity and promote healthy challenge	The grievance process was redesigned in 2024, entitled Dispute Resolution to drive local and timely ownership of concerns, with local HR supporting to drive individual resolution whilst understanding themes and trends. Improved reporting to our Staff Networks and increased involvement of D&I and the WMP RAP co-ordinator are in development.
31h	National	Have training delivered by internal trainers rather than external providers	LFOBH in workstream 1 has been built around this principle and received positive feedback

Future Work

18. We have a variety of projects planned for 2025 including The Belgrave Theatre Project - an interactive theatre product addressing inter-cultural competence and the Women in Shade group coaching sessions for a cohort of 20 female officers and staff, recognising the intersectional challenges faced by colleagues. (See background report for full details).5. *Financial Implications*

Legal Implications

19. None anticipated.

Equality Implications

20. The WMP Race Action Plan seeks to address existing disparities that exist in force for its Black and Black Heritage officers and staff, and disproportionality in relation to the use of police powers in Black communities. In addressing these, some aspects of the workstreams could attract criticism, though they can be justified in respect of the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

Background Report

21. Please see separate document

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