



Accountability and Governance Board

Notes of the Meeting

Tuesday 27 May 2025

These minutes provide a summary of key points raised during this meeting.

1	<p><u>Attendees:</u></p> <p>Wasim Ali (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) Arron Cullen (Strategic Performance Manager, OPCC) Simon Foster (Police and crime Commissioner, OPCC) Craig Guildford (Chief Constable, WMP) Scott Green (Deputy Chief Constable, WMP) Jane Heppel (Chief Finance Officer, OPCC) Jonathan Jardine (Chief Executive, OPCC) Paul Minor (Superintendent, WMP) Natalie Queiroz (Victims Advocate, OPCC)</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Alethea Fuller (Deputy Chief Executive, OPCC) Mike O'Hara (Assistant Chief Constable, WMP)</p>
2	<p>Notes of last meeting</p> <p>The notes of the last meeting were approved, and the PCC confirmed updates received regarding all actions arising from the meeting on 22 April 2025.</p>
3	<p>PCC Update</p> <p>The Commissioner provided an update which covered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. The citizens of the West Midlands are now sharing more than 2000 video clips of careless, dangerous, and reckless driving to West Midlands Police (WMP), per month. Footage received, within the first 3 months of the year, has led to 6,181 reports of motoring offences. 84% of these reports have resulted in positive action against the offender. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has invested an additional £165,000 for recruitment of officers to Op Snap to process footage received by WMP. II. On 29 April 2025, the OPCC launched the next phase of Operation Fearless. The Op Fearless team are now based in Digbeth and will work alongside partners (Birmingham City Council, Central BID, Transport Police, and others) to positively impact the Southside area. III. The PCC announced his intention to double Weapon Surrender Bins, to 64, in the West Midlands Area. Between January and March 2025 1,705 weapons were surrendered and destroyed. The additional metal containers will provide more safe location for the public to continue to dispose of knives and weapons. IV. The PCC and members of the OPCC attended the Birmingham Pride 2025 celebrations. The PCC re-affirmed his commitment to preventing and tackling all forms of hate crime and eliminating any/all unlawful discrimination. The PCC encourages all victims to report to WMP or third-party reporting services. The PCC has invested £150,000 in the first West Midlands wide service supporting victims of hate crime and ensuring they have access to dedicated hate crime victim services whether they have reported the crime to WMP or not.

	<p>V. The PCC has launched a major campaign regarding WMP compliance with Victims Code and the wider criminal justice system. 12 vital rights have been identified to empower and support the victim. More information can be located on the OPCC website.</p>
4	<p>Chief Constable Update</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Constable provided an update which covered the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. WMP are operationally healthy following the Bank Holiday weekend. II. The CC and WMP colleagues attended the Pride event and explained the event was well-executed operationally. III. WMP emergency response times remain prompt with average call times 9 minutes and attendance time 43 minutes. Within the last 24 hours the average pick-up of 999s totalled 1 second and 101s 6 seconds. WMP identified only 8 abandoned calls in the last 24 hours. IV. As a result of the relocation of Op Fearless WMP has enhanced its footprint in Erdington. This change should limit any negative effects of withdrawing the team from this area and moving to the Southside. V. WMP have published statements regarding the conclusion of the Op Solar inquest. VI. WMP remain engaged in Op Dusker. Officers are present at the bin strikes to prevent any breach of the peace. VII. The end of the football season is a period of change for WMP. Resources usually deployed to these events can be used in other ways and there is a reduction in football related crimes/violence. There is a trend in increased protests following the end of the football season and resources are prepared for this eventuality. VIII. WMP has switched on Outcomes Review Compliance and Assurance Robot (ORCA). ORCA will review all crimes entering closure. ORCA will improve compliance with the Victims Code, accuracy of recording victims wishes, details and the outcomes of crimes.
5	<p>Questions from AGB members</p> <p>Question 1: The Knife Enabled Robbery Taskforce (Asked by Natalie Queiroz, Victims Advocate)</p> <p>Context: On the 29 October 2024, the Minister for Policing, convened a National Knife Enabled Robbery Taskforce, with the intention of preventing and tackling Knife Enabled Robbery, with a particular focus on 7 key force areas, including the West Midlands. This was because Knife Enabled Robbery, accounted for 43% of all recorded knife crime. The Taskforce met on the 29 October 2024, 15 January 2025 and 24 March 2025.</p> <p>Both the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner were invited to and have attended meetings of the Taskforce. On the 30 April 2025, the Minister for Policing has stated that, there will be no further meetings of the taskforce, although knife enabled robbery will remain a top priority and the taskforce will be reconvened if required. It was stated that, West Midlands Police had seen considerable reductions in offence levels.</p> <p>Question: Can the Chief Constable update the Board on the action taken by West Midlands Police, to deliver the reductions in knife enabled robbery offence levels, how these reductions will be sustained and improved on and reassure the Board, that knife enabled robbery will remain a top priority?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considerable reductions in this area are the result of a 2-year focus on both robbery and knife crimes. • WMP have submitted another funding bid to the Home Office. Any funds received would be used to ensure a more targeted approach on hotspots. • WMP deliver the hotspot policing of targeted guardian patrols using analytical products to guide the deployment of officers. There are currently 50 TGB locations across the

	<p>region, covering only 2% WMP footprint. However, this work has resulted in 16% knife crime reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated teams across WMP tackle serious youth violence and knife enabled robbery. The guardian task force is divided into 4 teams across the east, west, central, and Birmingham. • Guardian taskforces use tactics such as plain clothes officers for detection, uniformed officers to deter, knife arches and project Servator knife sweeps. In the period 2024-25 the Guardian taskforce deployed 923 officers, provided 35,000 patrols in robbery hotspots, conducted 3659 stop and searches, submitted under 2000 intelligence reports, arrested 666 offenders (97 for knife enable robbery), and completed 514 rehabilitation referrals. • In comparison to 2023-24 there was a 36% reduction in knife enable robberies involving under 25's. • Although the period of knife crime intensification has now ended WMP has committed to focus on increase in accuracy of property recording, (June and July) to focus on inputs in schools intervention, (September) an increase in and recording section 18 searches post-arrest, and (November) to focus on the flow of intelligence. • Knife enabled robbery to remain a key priority, and WMP to constantly review resources and operational needs of this issue. <p>Question 2: IOPC Complaints Data (Asked by Wasim Ali, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner)</p> <p>Context: A Police and Crime Commissioner must hold the Chief Constable to account for the exercise of his or her functions, pursuant to Part 2 of the Police Reform Act 2002, in relation to the handling of complaints. According to data from the Independent Office of Police Conduct, relating to West Midlands Police ('WMP'):</p> <p>The average duration to contact complainants has continued to increase between Q3 23/24, when it was 13 days and Q3 24/25, when it was 22 days, which is significantly higher than the average, for its Most Similar Force Group and the National Average.</p> <p>The average number of working days to finalise Outside Schedule 3 allegations has increased between Q3 23/24, when it was under 20 days and Q3 24/25, when it was over 35 days, which is significantly higher than the average for its Most Similar Force Group and the National Average.</p> <p>Under Schedule 3 (not subject to investigation), WMP is taking longer to finalise at 89 days, compared to the same period last year, when it was 73 days.</p> <p>Local investigations are taking longer at 313 working days, than its Most Similar Force Group at 231 working days and the national average at 214 working days, than in the same period last year.</p> <p>Question: What action is being taken to improve the performance of West Midlands Police, in relation of each of these 4 data sets, to bring the Force into line with the performance of its Most Similar Force Group and the national average and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the complaints process, for the benefit of the people of the West Midlands?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP recognise that some complaints contact handling times have increased. WMP explained that satisfaction is more important than speed of contact handling. • WMP to move away from electronic communication. Although slower, direct communication form PSD officers boosts complainant satisfaction levels. • Following a review of the PSD flow of work the investigation team now conduct all complainant referrals to the IOPC and WMP have introduced a priority email system whereby complaints that can be addressed quickly with the sharing of information are actioned quicker. • WMP have noted higher levels of extraction from the PSD team, due to ill health. As a result, some backfilling has been implemented.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WMP website has been moved to single online and home, in alignment with other police websites. The previous site allowed for filtering of complaints. To address this change WMP have allocated staff to filter. As a result of these changes average case time have extended from 73 days to 89 days. WMP are hopeful this can be reverted. • WMP have invested in ensuring thorough investigations, elongating the complaints case timelines, with the aim of receiving less appeals.
6	<p>Airport Policing Presented by: Superintendent, Paul Minor</p> <p>The item was presented by Superintendent Paul Minor. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>Clarify if officers within the Airport Policing Unit (APU) require certain skillsets and training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The airport is a unique and vulnerable location that demands highly trained, high calibre officers, diversely skilled individuals. • WMP offer a range of training to all APU staff. Specific training subjects include major incident plans and bi-laws awareness. • WMP have set up forums to discuss learning with WMP colleagues and other forces. <p>How would you assess the threat/ risk from environment related protests currently?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The views/ belief of environmental protestors is longstanding and remain consistent in the aviation field. WMP is constantly conscious of new demonstrations/ incidents. • WMP explained that the significant threat from organisations such as Just Stop Oil have reduced. 12 months ago, Just Stop Oil posed serious risk to Birmingham airport which incited WMP to obtain an injunction preventing protestors attending the Airport. • WMP assured the PCC that the Airport security measures are in place to intervene if any protestors enter the airport. <p>How is the civil injunction contributing to preventing and tackling environment related protest and has any action been used to enforce the injunction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The injunction was sought 12 months ago by WMP, alongside other British airports. • WMP confirmed the injunction has not been used to date and are confident that the presence of the injunction is a successful deterrent. <p>Is the continued increase in passenger numbers, risk of crowded spaces, and ongoing improvement of airport terminal infrastructure factored into the service agreement between airport and WMP?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP confirmed both factors are included in the service agreement. • WMP and the APU have a good working relationship with consistent communication and negotiations. • WMP highlighted the legal requirement for WMP to operate in the airport to enable Birmingham an international status. • WMP noted the ongoing challenge to provide an effective service without impacting cost of policing. <p>Identify the greatest challenges when policing organised crime groups (OCGs) at the airport, and any effective tactics and strategies utilised by WMP to address this threat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trafficking of individuals in the West Midlands is a critical concern and monitored through Operation Limelight. • Additional challenges include the transport of illegal substances through airports, the potential involvement of airport staff, and the use of scouts to report back potential smuggling routes to organised crime groups. • WMP confirmed intelligence combined with effective policing and partnership working are the best strategies to deter and tackle OCGs. • WMP have a number of active operations addressing OCG at the airport including operations Servitude and Toscana, and Operation Limelight. • Although WMP are not successful 100% of the time WMP are confident their policing approach is robust and impactful.

<p>Explain the factors driving an increase in border activations, the purpose of other police forces attending arrests at Birmingham airport, and the increase in activations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP clarified that e-borders are an extension of national policing, therefore collaboration and communication between forces is necessary. • Sergeants check through wanted lists and place graded markers on individuals allowing criminals to be tracked and arrested upon entering an airport in the UK. • WMP consider this policing method the most effective and safe method of arresting and disrupting criminality at airports. • Open communication between forces enables the appropriate authority to attend any airport in the country to apprehend criminals wanted under their jurisdiction. • WMP confirmed that the increase in activations is the result of increased passenger numbers. <p>Explain any difficulties emerging as a result of the new A45 road layout and the opening of a fast-food restaurant opposite Birmingham airport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP identify both factors as items that may attract criminal behaviour. • WMP Local Policing Area (LPA) and the APU are work collaboratively to ensure both items are policed, utilising Operation Hercules patrols to reduce patrol and deter criminality in the area. • Although there have been a small number of issues in this area WMP will continue to evaluate the factors as the road become more widely used and embedded in the area. <p>What safeguards are in place to ensure new AI technology developments are subject to operational oversight, privacy control, and ethical review?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The airport only adopts technology trialed and vetted by WMP; therefore, all equipment is aligned to the safeguarding and ethical policy of WMP. <p>What systems are in place to proactively identify and mitigate insider threats posed by airport employees, and how often are these systems reviewed/ tested for effectiveness?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP utilises high levels of vetting at the airport. • 2 years ago, WMP engaged in operation Siren/Sira opening systems to review insider threats and checks. <p>ACTION – Additional information to be sourced on the current vetting system and process for Birmingham airport staff. And how often vetting is reviewed?</p> <p>How is WMP ensuring internal compliance with code of practice when employing powers of examination, including detention without suspicion for up to 6 hours. And how are any internal/external audits reviewing the proportionality of this detention?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent could not provide answer to questions on counterterrorism. <p>ACTION – Question to be posed to counter-terrorism colleagues.</p> <p>How are WMP working with the APU to reduce risk of drone incursions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP has a well-established drone unit with capacity to both police West Midlands and aid other areas alongside other bodies, for example airfield in the East of England. <p>To what extent are concerns about trafficking effectively communicated with WMP and the Airport?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The all-ports warning system is utilised to both share intelligence and incite action at the airport. • Operation Limelight works with PPU and UK Border Force to identify individuals at risk of being trafficked resulting in the recovery of individuals and prevention of this crime. <p>Provide additional detail on the education of potential victims through Operation Limelight and how safeguarding of individuals is enforced.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education work is conducted by PPU in both schools and colleges to identify individuals and raise awareness of signs. • Once individuals are identified WMPs key priority is retaining the victim in the airport/ country. WMP review individual instances to add to intelligence pictures and prevent others from being trafficked in similar ways. <p>How do WMP and the APU prevent theft from and theft of vehicles at airport parking and drop off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a low number of issues with mishandling of vehicles. • Solihull LPA works to address theft of any vehicles. WMP recently arrested individuals attempting to steal high powered vehicles from airport. • WMP note this is an on-going challenge and key priority of the APU. <p>Is there comparative statistics and communication with other forces that host international airports?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport commander in Birmingham has strong communication channels between international airports to report issues and share best practice. <p>What assessment has been made of the HS2 construction site and then impact of HS2 operating opposite an airport?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC confirmed minimal risk in this area and demand for additional policing in the area is low. • The planned work with HS2 is longstanding and WMP are aware that HS2 has a good security set-up that has proved successful elsewhere. • The APU and LPA have been in discussions to ensure effective policing of the HS2 site. • WMP plan to develop future working relationships once the new terminus becomes more substantial and WMP commit to holding HS2 to account with regards to staffing and security. <p>What liaison and joint working is taking place between British Transport Police, Birmingham Airport and Birmingham International Railway Station?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All bodies attend regular meetings and joint working. • WMP highlighted that this joint working has a history of effectiveness with regards to football events. <p>To what extent has Birmingham airport engaged with local resilience and civil contingency planning and exercising arrangement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham airport is a major source of exercising and training. • Every exercise engages with WMP and relevant managers and is extensive and well tested. <p>Provide clarification on the definition of disruptive passenger forums.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These forums involve joint work with members of staff to identify intolerable behaviours and encourage compassion to mitigate altercations and dissatisfaction at the airport. • WMP are empowering staff members at airlines to know their rights and stir compassion. <p>Confirm the reasons for an increased use of project servator deployment and if data is collected on disproportionality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP confirmed project servator as an effective tactic to keep individuals safe and reassure members of the public. • WMP record disproportionality in all incidents resulting in a stop and search would record disproportionality, however, could not confirm if all other standard data is reviewed for disproportionality. <p>ACTION – Additional information to be shared with OPCC regarding the recording of disproportionality in project servator.</p>
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	<p>To what extent is AI technology deployed and are there plans to expand it to keep people safe?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI technology is not widely used at the airport, but WMP will utilise it where appropriate. • All AI technology would have to be used sensibly, ethically, and effectively. <p>Provide an overview of the Airport security planning framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This framework uses checks and balances mechanism through representatives attending various meetings to ensure awareness of international issues to keep West Midlands safe. • Inspectors attend at a number of tiered meetings assessing potential risk, actual risk, and concerns. • The framework maps and mirrors policing response to challenges arising in both the country and international space. • Superintendent attends the ESEG quarterly meeting to review airport challenges, risks, and threats.
7	<p>Performance Update Presented by: Arron Cullen, Strategic Performance Manager</p> <p>This item was presented by Arron Cullen. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>What is the reason for the reduction in headcount of Police Officer and PCSO detailed in the paper?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CC confirmed that figures for the end of the financial year. <p>Provide an update on the recruitment of 150 additional Neighbourhood Officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recruitment pipeline has the flexibility to incorporate an increase of 150 officers. • The current response to all recruitment pathways is strong and should result in meeting the target by the end of the financial year. <p>Provide estimate timings for local ward areas to witness the impact/ benefit of additional officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP identified June 2025 and August/ Sept 2025 as key dates of impact. <p>Identify what existing and further action will be conducted by WMP to ensure reduction in fatalities at roads accidents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chief Constable reaffirmed a keen interest in providing positive impact in this area. • Prevention and intervention work has resulted in a reduction of street racing, and investment in operation snap has significantly impacted the number of arrests and prosecutions. • Operation Hercules has received significance support in high court injunctions and partnership working. • WMP are in perpetual discussion at gold group around retaining funding from fines to invest into policing. <p>Identify the causes of the significant reductions in Neighbourhood Crime and if they are sustainable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reductions to Neighbourhood crime relate directly to the confidence members of the public have in WMP and its ability to promptly attend crime scenes and obtain vital evidence. • WMP attribute successes in this area to effective structure and leadership. • The Cs confident that the structure and leadership will ensure reduction in neighbourhood crime are sustainable. <p>What are WMP doing to improve the quality of investigations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high quality investigations require effective leadership and robust structures. • WMP utilise operation vanguard to review quality of investigations, evidence, files, information relayed to the victim, and quality of review.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to collect the right evidence at the earliest stage and a commitment to ensuring all staff are trained sufficiently. • The Chief Constable said that he is proud of the outcome rate achieved by WMP and commended all staff for maintaining this remarkable figure and will aspire to work towards 20% rate. <p>Does the current number of WMP casefiles successfully upheld by the CPS need improvement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of cases upheld by CPS has increased over the last 2 years. • WMP are actively working to improve the number of successful casefiles, and challenge the CPS on decisions, as many cases are pulled/ flagged over minor details. <p>How can WMP support individuals gaining drug treatment services and increase OOD?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noted the importance of maintaining partnerships treatment service providers. • WMP consistently complete referrals to support services for individuals caught in possession of drugs. <p>What targeted initiatives have been used to address Business Crime and shoplifting, especially in Walsall?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP prioritise call response times, providing response officers to the scene swiftly. • committed to increasing prosecution of retail crime resulting in assaults/ physical offences and prioritise police attendance to these offences. • Work in Walsall and Wolverhampton regarding shoplifting and ASB citizens of the area has led to increasingly reporting crimes. <p>Provide specific actions or tactics that have resulted in the 22.8% increase positive outcome rates for shoplifting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive outcome rates are driven through the DCCs performance board. • WMP uses the combination of effective call handling, monitoring dispatches, and holding areas to account for the delivery of performance. • the nearest resource is the best resource for catching shoplifting. <p>Identify the timeframes for full rollout of the ethics training modules and how these will be tracked and enforced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP take the police race action plan for the west midlands plan seriously. • Online training to continue under staggered release that aligns with College of Policing plan and feedback from staff. • Staggered release ensures the training system is not overwhelmed and training is distributed to staff. <p>Provide assurances that the 46% rise in positive outcomes is due to investigation improvements and not shift in outcome classifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Board ensures that outcome rates are monitored in detail. • WMP have focussed on streamlining items relating to domestic abuse, business crime and shoplifting, and robbery. <p>What has been done to improve investigation quality and victim engagement to reduce non-progression outcomes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CC acknowledged the static status of certain outcome codes and WMP commitment to reviewing and addressing the issue. • As a result of the HMIC inspection WMP have worked on a number of outcome codes. • WMP work to seek prosecution for all cases, in some instances the victims do not support this. <p>How are WMP measuring compliance with victims' code?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Officers within WMP actively undertake quality assurance reviews to ensure compliance with victims code. • WMP noted the impact of lack of consistent communication with victims from investigating officers. This area is known to WMP, and they are actively working to address this.
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	<p>What work will be conducted to provide interim insight/assurances until the victims insight platform is completed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surveys and the WMP Board, chaired by ACC Welsted, are dedicated to reviewing victim data. <p>Provide clarity on WMP flagging system for Domestic Abuse Crimes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All domestic abuse crimes are initially flagged in the control room. Once crime finalised another checking mechanism reviews the flagging type. <p>What key factors have resulted in the positive outcome rates regarding VAWG and how can we continue this positive trajectory?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP attribute positive outcome rates to an increase in confidence. WMP to perpetuate confidence by marketing the increase in confidence through figures, call response times, and positive outcome rates. • Support from the OPCC funding prevention services such as IDVAs and ISVAs behind the scenes, supporting victims. • Leadership, structure, and good investigations. <p>How can WMP further support its commitment to increasing the proportion of workforce from underrepresented groups is achieved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aspirations to improve proportion of representation in WMP and within the hierarchy of staff positions. • Good progress made in current round of sergeants, inspector, chief inspectors, superintendents boards. • support mechanisms are in place with all staff associations to empower individuals to seek promotion. • target recruitment and roadshows to specific areas to ensure representation and boost community involvement in recruitment. <p>Explain WMPs position on utilising evidence led prosecutions and the development of this KPI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP confirmed possession of figures to inform KPI and their ability to immediately create a figure. • There are ongoing conversations with the CPS to link-in with the DA deskwork already in place. There can be difficulty in persuading CPS, however WMP determined and have positively conveyed info to CPS in the past. • update to be shared to AGB in November 2025.
	<p>CLOSE</p> <p>Next meeting: Tuesday 24 June 2025</p>