



Accountability and Governance Board

Annotated Agenda

Tuesday 22nd July 2025

1	<p>Attendees:</p> <p>Ayyatulahi Adigun (Youth Commissioner OPCC) Wasim Ali (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) Paul Drover (Assistant Chief Constable, WMP) Simon Foster (Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) Peter Gillett (Director of Commercial Services, WMP) Jane Heppel (Chief Finance Officer) Jonathan Jardine (Chief Executive, OPCC) Maysa Khandoker (Youth Commissioner OPCC) Kim Madill (Chief Superintendent, WMP) Natalie Queiroz (Victims Advocate, OPCC) Sara Roach (VRP Director, OPCC) Srilaakshmi Sen (Youth Commissioner OPCC) Keith Trivvet (Head of Finance Business Partnering, WMP)</p> <p>Apologies:</p> <p>Alethea Fuller (Deputy Chief Executive, OPCC) Scott Green (Deputy Chief Constable, WMP) Craig Guildford (Chief Constable, WMP) Davinder Jagpal (Service Director, Finance, WMP)</p>
2	<p>Notes of last meeting</p> <p>The notes of the last meeting were approved, and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) confirmed there were no actions arising from the last meeting held on Tuesday 24th June 2025.</p>
3	<p>PCC Update</p> <p>The Commissioner provided an update which covered the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Over the last 12 months WMP and partners have made progress improving road safety. The PCC is committed to reducing the number of people who are tragically killed and seriously injured on our roads. In the first half of 2024, 575 people were killed or seriously injured on West Midlands Roads. The same period in 2025 has witnessed a reduction of 18% to 471. Although positive, the PCC explained that this figure is still too high. The PCC reaffirmed that it is the responsibility of all to continue to promote and uphold road safety in the West Midlands and aim for vision zero by 2040. WMP has tripled the amount of reckless careless and dangerous motorists it is bringing to justice from about 1800 per week to 5000 per week and by April next year that number is due to hit 7000 per week. This is a consequence of the investment made by both the Chief Constable (CC) and The PCC, including extra staff allocated to roads policing and the increased number of mobile police enforcement vans. The PCC commends and thanks the CC and all Roads Policing Staff for their commitment and hard work improving road safety across the West Midlands.

	<p>II. Nominations are now open for this year's Outstanding Citizens Awards which The PCC is hosting in partnership with Birmingham Live. The awards honour people within the West Midlands who have made exceptional contributions to our community through volunteering, acts of bravery, campaigning, dedication to their neighbourhood or working tirelessly to improve community safety. The deadline for nominations is Thursday 7th August and the event will take place on Monday 6th October. The PCC encourages everyone to take a moment to nominate someone who truly deserves recognition. Details of how to nominate can be found on the OPCC website.</p> <p>III. As part of The PCCs commitment to reducing business crime including theft, robbery and violence against shop workers The PCC has joined the recently formed Business Crime Reduction Partnership in Birmingham city centre. The partnership was formed 8 months again by The Birmingham Central Business Improvement District, it sees a joined-up approach between the BID, Birmingham city council, British Transport Police and West Midlands Police to help crack down on crime in our city centre. 330 members from the city's business community including store managers, hoteliers and security staff have signed up to the Business Crime Reduction Partnership to share intelligence including CCTV footage and best practice to help report incidents, reduce crime and improve working conditions for retail staff. The PCC met up with The Birmingham Central Business Crime Reduction Partnership to hear about the work which is ongoing and discuss the action taken to improve reporting and communication and the sharing of intelligence so that together we can prevent and tackle crime. Preventing and tackling retail crime, shop thefts and violence against shop workers is a top priority for The PCC which is one of the reasons he is rebuilding neighbourhood policing, supporting the national retail action plan, the Shop kind campaign and investing in prevention and rehabilitation.</p> <p>IV. The PCC has shared more than £100,000.00 between 7 organisations for the provision of vital support for victims and survivors of hidden and harmful crime such as so-called honour based abuse, female genital mutilation, modern slavery and human trafficking.</p>
4	<p>Chief Constable Update</p> <p>The Assistant Chief Constable Paul Drover provided an update which covered the following:</p> <p>I. Operation Advance This is an initiative WMP have been running for over 18 months where they bring together teams' resources from across the force looking to multiply their impact in a certain area. Last week this was Birmingham and they brought together an additional 300 officers to make an impact in key areas across the city. This resulted in over 40 arrests, over 10 seized vehicles and 9 seized e-bikes. Another area of focus was off-road bikes, targeting in the wider areas of Birmingham. WMP worked with trading standards and recovered multiple cans of nitrous oxide and arrested an individual for possession with intent to supply who was selling them from his store. WMP worked with their gangs and firearms teams with officers targeting those who cause the most serious violence and organised criminality across the city. WMP used drones which were crucial in the identification and arrest of 2 drug deals. And finally, they also used their traffic teams to target dangerous drivers in Northfield. A really impactful 24 hours in Birmingham with a plan for this to continue on a rolling basis going forward.</p> <p>I. Operation Fearless This operation is a team of officers looking at problem solving approaches supporting and working in partnership with clear hub build. This has seen consistent impact</p>

	<p>around targeting drug dealer's enforcement and charges and recently they are seeing more and more focus on slavery and forced labour.</p> <p>II. Arrest Rates WMP have seen an increase in their custody provision over recent months and they are now seeing over 200 arrests per day and are on course for July to have nearly 5400 arrests within the month. Focus on offenders and bringing them to justice remains.</p> <p>III. Roads Policing The PCC covered most of the points in his update but the Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) did want to reinforce the CCs commitment that by April 2026 WMP will have 7500 enforcements around traffic, in support of the reduction of the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads of The West Midlands.</p> <p>IV. Recruitment: WMP have just welcomed 20 new Police Graduates to take on their roles within counter terrorism and a further 30 starting roles in wider investigations. This is just part of the recruitment that is happening and they are on track with increasing the numbers within the force.</p>
5	<p>Questions from AGB members</p> <p>Question 1: Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (To be asked by Natalie Queiroz, Victims Advocate) The Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, both from government and in my Police and Crime Plan, provides that there will be a dedicated, named, contactable officer in every neighbourhood, who will respond to members of the public within 72 hours. What steps has West Midlands Police taken, to ensure that this information is available to members of the public and where can they access this information?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is now live, WMP have a named officer for every single neighbourhood and are just uploading the last of the photographs so there is a face as well as a name. To find the information go to West Midlands Police website, put in your area and you will see who your team is, you can also see future meetings which are available, and there is an option to ask a question, and you will get a response within 72 hours. Every area will have a coordinator who can keep track of rest days etc and ensure a seamless service. <p>Question 2: Safer Streets Summer Initiative (To be asked by Wasim Ali, Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner) The PCC and the CC, submitted our plans for the Safer Streets Summer Initiative to the Home Office on how, together with local partners, we intend to keep town centres safe across the West Midlands Police Force Area. The aim of this summer's initiative, is to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour in town centres and ensure visible, meaningful consequences for those responsible. The focus of the Safer Streets summer town centre initiative is visibility, prevention and enforcement. It is also about what can be delivered in partnership with councils, schools, health services, business, transport and community organisations. What action will West Midlands Police be taking, together with partners, to deliver on the Safer Streets Summer Initiative?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a joint approach between WMP, OPCC and the local authority. Towns and city centres are a key focus for WMP. A dedicated Chief Superintendent has been appointed by WMP to work alongside the OPCC and representatives from CSPs to coordinate that approach. The initiative will run from 30th June to 30th September, it covers 27 towns and high streets. WMP have brought together representatives from the council, schooling and education, healthcare services, BIDS also their commissioned services. There will be a focus on retail crime, street crime and

	<p>ASB. The initiative calls out some specific requirements around increases in arrests and positive outcomes as well as diversion, partnership working and problem solving. WMP have a fixed requirement in terms of Home Office updates which allow them to monitor the progress over the course of the summer and assess the impact. Some of the work is already underway such as joint operations with trading standards focusing on the illegal selling of vapes, nitrous oxide and other prohibited items. One of the main areas of focus during this is youths so there are partners looking at diversion as well as doing crime awareness sessions for young people. There is outreach support in the town centres which looks at addiction services as well as diversion work. Another area being targeted is the anti-social use of E-bikes. WMP maintain their focus on the night-time economy in towns and city centres ensuring that they are rigorously looking at their licensing plans and patrol approach as well as supporting their violence against women and girls strategy. One part of the initiative which has passed now is end of term safety plans which ensure a coordinated approach across the towns for the last day of term when we can often see antisocial behaviour. WMP continue to deliver high visibility patrols, and the safe space scheme which provides identified areas with trained individuals to provide a safe space for children and young people. WMP have also done walkabouts and problems solving with their local elected officials. Finally, there has been a focus on stop and search, arrests for shoplifting, knife possession and robbery. The initiative compliments the work WMP already do but also helps align some of the broader partners to this work and a positive impact is expected.</p> <p>Question 3: County Lines Intensification Week (To be asked by Wasim Ali, Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner)</p> <p>County Lines Intensification week is a week-long crackdown on County Lines drug networks and it ran from 23 June to 29 June.</p> <p>Can the CC outline the action taken by West Midlands Police, during the course of the week and summarise what was achieved, in terms of: lines shut down, weapons recovered, Class A drugs seized, cash or assets seized, the number of people arrested and the number of people charged and how many young and vulnerable people were safeguarded?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the county lines week at the end of June 113 individuals were arrested (this was a 30% increase on the previous week) the breakdown of this is 72 adult males 6 adult females and 8 children. 25 weapons were seized including 19 bladed weapons, a spear, a baseball ball, a knuckleduster and an axe. 9 firearms were recovered, the breakdown being 3 imitation firearms, 1 section 5 and the remainder section 1. Over 100 adults and children were safeguarded and a number of referrals were made to the national referral mechanism in terms of trafficking. In terms of drug seizures, WMP seized just under a kilo of cocaine, just under a kilo of heroin and over a kilo of cannabis plants. Overall a productive week of activity.
6	<p>Annual Report from Youth Commissioners (Online Use of Powers)</p> <p>The item was presented by Youth Commissioners Srilakshmi Sen, Ayyatulahi Adigun and Maysa Khandoker. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>How many reports of online harm from young people do the Force receive and how many positive prosecution outcomes are there from these? Do you feel these reporting numbers reflect the anecdotal experience from officers on the ground? Are reports of online harm proportional for young people compared to over 18s?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WMP could not provide specific details at Board. ACC to review data and provide answers to the OPCC. <p>ACTION – Paul Drover to provide information in response to the following questions. How many reports of online harm from young people do the force receive and how many positive prosecution outcomes are there from these? Does WMP feel these reporting</p>

numbers reflect the anecdotal experience from officers on the ground? And are reports of online harm proportional for young people compared to over 18s?

As a Force, what mechanisms or procedures do you have in place to respond to reports of harm involving young people on social media platforms?

- There are a number of mechanisms in place, first you can report any crime by calling 101. Then there is the work WMP do with schools and youth groups which is focused more around the awareness. WMP also have dedicated officers across all areas of the West Midlands to be in person officers and work with schools and colleges in terms of engagement. Any report which comes through will receive a follow-on investigation. One of the most important things is the prevention and raising awareness. There are school policing panels across all authorities' areas which work alongside members of the local council working towards identifying specific challenges and issues and then looking at what kind of campaigns are required.

How do you plan to involve parents and carers in a multi-agency approach to tackle online harm against young people, so they're better trained and equipped to support young people experiencing online harm?

- There is a plan in place to use social media for the good, signposting parents to lots of really great guidance that is already available online often supplied by charities on things such as social media guides for parents, and lists of things to look out for. This could also be practical guidance for parents such as how to use the settings to minimise risk of online harm.

Recent media, such as films like Adolescence, have highlighted the digital literacy gaps between adults and young people, leading to adults misreading young people's online experiences. What training takes place within the police service to recognise subtle online harms like microaggressions or appearance pressure?

- WMPs relationship with the VRP is a really useful resource for this, along with the My Tomorrow campaign and the focus around a child centred approach. There is a focus on bringing the voices of young people closer to the decision makers. The best training so far has been having conversations with young people and drawing from their lived experience.

How do you ensure reporting systems are accessible and comfortable for young people to use, especially for younger teens who may not feel confident approaching police or staff?

- Most young people are online savvy and prefer to do things online. You can now contact WMP online, make reports and get advice online. This covers the ease of reporting but we do need to work on making sure young people have the confidence to report. One thing WMP have been working on with the VRP is safe spaces and there have been multiple media campaigns around this and also working with key providers such as leisure centres and McDonald's to provide safe places where young people can go and have these conversations.

We have some great specialist units in WMP already such as PPU. Do you foresee at some point in the future that there could be a specialist online harms team?

- As policing evolves we will need specialist investigators however part of being an investigator in modern day policing would already require an understanding of the online space and the way in which we use digital media and digital forensics. We could use the data from the research done by the youth commissioners to look into where the focus should be and discuss ways of raising awareness and also training options. One area WMP have started looking at is a digital PCSO.

The research stated that young women are more likely to report online harm than young men, what can youth commissioners do to change this?

- There seems to be a stigma around reporting as well as uncertainty on what actually constitutes online harm. If we can provide more clarity on this for men so they are able to recognise online harm as it happens they may feel more confident in reporting it. Also raising awareness of the benefits of reporting to prevent further online harm for both themselves and their community.

One thing that came up repeatedly during the research was that young people are using online spaces as a replacement for physical safe spaces. How does WMP plan on protecting existing safe spaces and also creating new safe spaces in areas where they currently don't have one.

- WMP try and look at spaces where youths already go and then work to put the support in place to make it a designated safe space. Regarding the existing spaces there isn't a need to protect them as such however one area we could improve on is making young people more aware of them and this is the kind of thing that the VRP are a big help with.

What strategies are in place to build trust and a functional working relationship between WMP and young people?

- WMP have recently developed a children and young person's strategy, bringing in a child centred policing approach. Some of the key principles of the strategy are being effective, continuing to reduce crime and bring offenders to justice but also being evidence based and looking at where the biggest harms are so they can engage, safeguard and target the offenders. This also allows WMP to problem solve in the most affected areas which is normally bus stations, town centres outside schools etc. Another focus is being aware of the legal protections when dealing with under 18s and being fair with policing powers. Within that is the question of how we bring in the voice of young people when looking at how we are using these powers and also how WMP is held accountable. In previous years plans for keeping young people safe would be made by WMP alone however now they speak to young people to gain more information before setting plans in motion. The results can sometimes not be that different but involving the young people can really help in terms of building trust.

There are specific laws around social media use and online harms. Do you think that these laws are being used effectively?

- Yes, there are a lot of requirements around this which WMP follow in addition to working with partners. There are provisions in place which involve experts, in addition to a whole team within the criminal justice department focusing on this area.

You mentioned that there are a number of websites with resources for parents on how to protect their children from online harms, how do you plan on advertising the websites so parents know they exist and do you plan on using community and religious centres to offer face to face training and workshops on this topic?

- There is content periodically put out across WMP social media. This is alongside initiatives such as online safety week and other work being done. For face to face meetings there isn't much take up so the reach is a lot less than online. Therefore, WMP don't put much focus in this area, however there is a need for a physical presence as some parents will not have access to online.

The PCC welcomes the opportunity to work with WMP and other partners, to consider what further work can be done collectively to build on and develop the work of the youth

	<p>commissioners. The OPCC will work with WMP to ensure continuous improvement in the way that we prevent and tackle online crime in the West Midlands and the way that we safeguard young people.</p> <p>The Online Safety Act 2023 has been in force since 26 Oct 2023 but it is being implemented in phases and while the Act received royal assent in October 2023 its various provisions are coming into effect over time with full implementation expected in 2026. The primary aim of the Act is to make internet services safer for individuals in the UK particularly children by placing new duties on online platforms. Ofcom is responsible for implementing the provisions, including establishing codes of practice, monitoring compliance and enforcing penalties. As the regulator, Ofcom has finalised protection of children codes specifically aimed at child safety and protecting children online which will be implemented for social media and gaming platforms taking effect from 25th July.. These measures include filtering out harmful content such as cyber bullying, grooming and exposure to inappropriate content from children's feeds, stricter age verification, quicker removal of harmful content and support for children exposed to harmful content. The Act seeks to create a safer online environment by requiring platforms to be proactive in identifying and mitigating risks of harm, giving users more control over their online experience, holding platforms accountable for the content of their site and ensuring that online services are designed with safety in mind.</p>
7	<p>Serious Youth Violence / Keeping Children and Young People safe</p> <p>The item was presented by Sara Roach & T/ACC Paul Drover. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>On page 1 of the report there is reference to the West Midlands Police serious youth violence strategy 2022-2025 but also the fact that that has been refreshed and has now become the WMP children and young person's strategy. What's the reason for a broader approach being taken in terms of the focus and how is that going to be more effective in preventing and reducing youth violence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a sustained reduction in serious youth violence but the team have also pushed a broader understanding and a broader knowledge, for example trauma informed approach training for all officers and essentially trying to mature both our policing and partnership response towards youth crime and youth violence. As we now move into this financial year WMP looked at where we are now and what we are looking to achieve it led to a review of our strategy. The strategy was based on 3 core principles. The objectives and principles of serious youth violence still remain and WMP will continue to be held accountable by the Home Office for delivering sustained reductions. The strategy also ensures that we are looking at evidence-based approaches such as engagement, prevention and reduction. It looks into use of police powers and ensuring officers are trained in the right way. The 3 main parts of the strategy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your trust, this is about gaining the trust of children and young people every time we have an interaction with them. ○ Your voice, making sure we have engagement opportunities in place across the West Midlands and ○ Your future, is about the safety of the whole community and allowing children and young people to maximise their potential. <p>You reference there being 84 hotspots across the force area, Project guardian consists of 42 officers so on what basis are police resources allocated across those hotspots?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the identified areas there is a requirement for the hourly patrols, overseen by an operational group to ensure that that's in place and provides performance. Guardian is just one facet of our neighbourhood policing approach. The targeted guardian patrol areas are covered by neighbourhood policing, the task force sits above that and they are tasked through our monthly tasking process. WMP are constantly assessing which of those areas is the most critical and looking for any

emerging threats. Initially these emerging threats are where the guardian taskforce will be asked to go, if there aren't any emerging threats then they will start engaging in those areas where there is a long-term problem.

There's a suggestion of a welcome uplift to the Operation Guardian task force team that consists of potentially, 1 sergeant and 9 constables to give wider coverage, do we have a timescale for that proposed coverage?

- This uplift will supplement the western side so that we will have 2 taskforces covering The Black Country 2 for Birmingham and 1 for Coventry and Solihull. The expectation would be that this would be in place by the autumn.

There's also mention in the report of GPS tracking of officers who check in and out of patrol, to ensure that patrol is compliant. Are there any issues in terms of compliance with those patrols?

- Systematically no, this has been in place for a while now as has the ability to be able to track them. there may be the occasional problem in terms of adherence but its not one that is sustained of problematic.

There is reference to there being 26 guardian patrols with problem-oriented plans in place, we have 84 hotspots but only 26 problems orientated plans, what's the reason for this discrepancy?

- Where visibility is having an impact and reducing that's great but there are some areas where visibility alone isn't having an impact. These are more complex and challenging problems where we need to bring partners round the table to discuss a course of action. These plans are the original selection and they are still live but now that work has taken place these are being reviewed and refreshed. We have now ranked all the hotspots in terms of threat and for the areas causing the most problems we are refreshing new problem-solving plans which will be going out imminently. That means that the local areas can then bid for our problem-solving fund that is held separately to the patrol funding.

The report highlights significant the reductions in serious youth violence and knife crime in recent times. What are the reasons behind those significant reductions and what do we need to keep doing to ensure continuous improvement in this area?

- Focusing on those that we know are more likely to come to harm, or more likely to cause harm is proven to have a big impact and that sustained approach has definitely worked. However, that isn't the only route and we also need to maintain the focus around prevention awareness and problem solving. This is the direction we want to take neighbourhood policing supported by The Guardian team, VRP, and The My Tomorrow campaign. Focusing resource where it can make the biggest impact against the biggest issues and challenges. The first step is understanding the problem and then from there we need to consider all of the different ways of resolving it. We have a very robust knife crime policy in the West Midlands so we will continue to follow this. Also keeping a focus on rehabilitation, through offender management teams looking at how are we working with offenders to ensure that they don't reoffend, this has to be done through a joint partnership approach with an awareness that we can't solve this alone.

The report identifies 3 intractable issues: Educational Premises, cities and town centres and the night-time economy. These issues are clearly a driver of serious youth violence. What work is being done in each of these areas to try and address them?

- These have always been and remain areas where we are seeing problems however they are also areas where we are seeing the biggest reductions. Coordination with education is key and the work that the VRP and My Tomorrow are doing is essential. We have the strategy in place already and the relationships

with schools are established, we also now have a revised approach to working with schools, previously it was done on an adhoc basis which was quite often a one-off interaction. This year we are working with the heads of education for each local area to identify a primary and a secondary school and working with those schools to really understand the experiences of the children in that school and the specific safeguarding issues. We are working on the plans now and hope to have those finalised in September to run through to the following September.

What high-level conversations are being held to address Fast food outlets as hotspots for serious youth violence?

- WMP have met the franchise lead for McDonalds in both Birmingham and Coventry, the commitment from them is positive and they see the value of what WMP are doing and are keen to work together to make an impact. McDonalds in Coventry already has 'safe spaces' which were mentioned earlier. There is a longstanding approach where policing has worked with fast food restaurants in terms of patrols and a physical presence in these areas. We are seeing reductions in these areas already but there is more that we can do and there is a willingness from the fast food outlets to work with WMP to achieve this.

In the VRP what efforts are in place to engage parents and carers as part of the community response particularly in the summer holidays?

- We are working with partners to co-produce some support for parents and carers. We will look at different ways of engaging to try and make the most impact. Last year we did something called 'kitchen table talks' which was pack of cards which could be used to encourage important conversations between parents and children. VRP is looking at adding a QR code to knife bins which when scanned offers support and information for parents and carers. Conversations are ongoing and VRP are always looking for new ways to engage with parents and carers.

Are there plans to embed young people with lived experiences in VRP projects?

- Yes, there are a number of groups with lived experience or an interest for other reasons. We've got 30 young leaders, Youth commissioners, The Peer Action Collective which is funded by The Youth Endowment fund. There are many groups and we want to focus on looking to bring those groups together to maximise the impact.

With several funding streams due to end in 2026 what is the long-term plan to sustain VRP interventions and community lead initiatives?

- A priority for VRP is building capacity and expertise within the system, there are 100s of thousands of people working across the system, from prevention in schools and early years right through into the criminal justice system, so we do a lot of work on webinars and training to try and ensure that those working within the system know how to identify a vulnerability and understand their role in responding. Previously VRP would deliver training directly to young people in schools, now they deliver to professionals in schools who then go on to deliver it to their pupils. The aim is to leave the skills and expertise in the system. If the resources reduce, disappear or get redirected, some of the valuable programmes VRP commission into hospitals, custody and communities are at risk. VRP are working with Ernst young to develop a social business model, which could provide access to a pool of resources from the private sector, not just financial but also being able to tap into their expertise around IT, governance, data, evaluation, analysis etc. VRP will be putting together a business case for our strategic board members to take back to their organisations to try and get them to realise the value of the work that is commissioned and the need to continue with it.

CIRV is coming to an end soon after a 2-year period, a lot of time money and expertise went into this. What are the early learnings from this project and what do we see as long-term gains from this?

- As this is a multisite project across the country we do need to wait for the data on this. It was significantly invested in by both police and partners and we do need to consider the value of that. It needs to have an end point in order to properly understand the impact and once this has finished we can start looking at early takeaways. There's been no other evidence in the UK on focused deterrents so it needed to be done despite it being expensive. The final results are expected in 2027 however officers on the ground have seen positive changes and multiple success stories.

One of the characteristics of this policy area is the number of initiatives and things that get tried. There are so many different projects. How well is that working?

- The Youth Endowment Fund toolkit lists the top set of interventions however they only look at them in isolation rather than looking at the whole experience for young people. It does feel like there could be too much going on however we do try to join up the different services working on the same goals. It is a crowded space but that does reflect that there is such a need to get reductions of serious youth violence. We are seeing a reduction in knife crime and serious youth violence which show that something is working. However, it is hard to understand what 1 thing is making the difference because there is so much going on.

Regarding the problem-oriented plans and the hotspot areas, how are the plans developed? Are the multi-agency or policing focused?

- The process starts with a scanning approach looking at data to analyse where the hotspots are this is done with partners from The Guardian team and the VRP, the analysis then draws out key themes and then from there we can look at a partnership orientated response which will be developed by a partnership board to ensure that all available resource is considered to achieve the correct response. Finally, there will be an assessment of what we have done and how and look at the impact measured. In most cases partners are part of the development of the plans and the implementation and this is something that we need to continue.

You talked about a focus on enforcement, what do we know about reoffending rates?

- General reoffending rates sit at 7% so we have a 93% desistance rate across the force area. We don't have the figures for serious youth violence specifically but we would be happy to go away and get this information.

In Sandwell specifically, the majority of those who commit serious youth violence have SEND needs. Are WMP offering support and prevention specifically for those with Send needs? How are you helping manage young people with SEND needs who have not yet received a diagnosis?

- 20% of the general population have SEND needs but 80% of the offending population do, so the understanding in this area and the training of officers is an area that WMP are really keen to get better at. There has been bespoke training on this but we continue to work with our offender management teams to improve.

With summer holidays approaching could we look into getting more activity such as community groups in Solihull specifically as there is not much there at the moment?

- The neighbourhood team would be happy to signpost to what work is going on. VRP provide £35,000 to each area so Solihull do get £35,000 and they have a navigator working with the data to figure out where this is best used

ACTION – Sara Roach to advise Youth Commissioner Khandoker what activities are happening in Solihull over the summer holidays supported by the VRP.

	<p>Regarding the VRP you mentioned peer to peer training have you found this is effective?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Changemakers programme is about providing the confidence to be an upstander. The content they are providing is a much more general programme providing softer skills rather than telling young people what to do which could come across as patronising.
8	<p>Finance outturn reports</p> <p>The item was presented Pete Gillett & Keith Trivett. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>How have the estimated costs of replacing systems like the Operational Policing Solution, decarbonisation plans and the continued delivery of the estates programme changed during 2024/25?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The estimated costs for the records management system and the decarbonation plans haven't changed significantly through the 24-25 period. Regarding the estate strategy there was a variance of underspend in last financial year which will be carried forward into this financial year and into next financial year as well. We did more work on cell blocks than was originally budgeted for to support requirements at Coventry and have also been looking at the broader reopening of the custody block at Bournville. <p>How much was spent in 2024/25 on the cost of organisational change or redundancies, and how long will it take to payback that cost? In other words, how many years will it be before the reduced running costs in those service areas pays off those additional costs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In total the overall cost of change for last year was 1.25 – 1.3 million pounds. The savings significantly exceeds the costs. So, the payback period will be less than 1 year. <p>How much was spent on refurbishing custody blocks in 2024/25?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spend on custody capital works in 2024-2025 was 1.985 million pounds, this included works to ensure that all cells were compliant with HMIC reviews. £859,000 of that total was the refurbishment of the Bournville custody block. <p>You note that the welcome underspends were offset by forensics costs; doctors statements; interpreters; specialist operational costs; dangerous dogs and professional services. How much, in total, have those items added to the current year's budget in 2025/26?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each of those areas has resulted in us increasing the budgets for those services in the current year by 1.8 million but we would expect some reimbursement from central government over the course of the year so that may reduce that figure down from 1.8 million to 1.2 million. <p>The increase in revised budget from the original budget is considerable, although the results in this area speak for themselves. Where have these budgets been moved from? What have we spent less on in order to spend more on this area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service reviews which have taken places have identified savings, plus wherever we can identify additional income both one off and ongoing that will be used to support investments. <p>With the increase in calls being answered by our Amazon technology, has the productivity per call handler fallen?</p> <p>Will we continue to need the bank approach into the future, or could more calls be pushed down that AI route?</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are using the AI to bring additional resilience to the team. It has improved productivity overall but we don't have a requirement to reduce the numbers due to this and currently will maintain the bank approach and current staffing levels. Overall levels of resource will remain under review as technology develops. <p>Notwithstanding the £18.1 million underspend, what are the medium to long term continuing financial pressures that WMP will continue to face? What have been the further opportunities to invest in force priorities and resilience that that underspend has provided us with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst WMP has spoken positively about the way that resources were used in the last financial year, it is clear that much more could be done with a greater level of resources. The aim is to do the best with the level of resources available. There are always pressures, not just in the current financial year but going into the medium and long term, the single biggest thing is how we are funded in terms of pay awards. Funding is reliant on a combination of government grant and funding from the PCC through council tax funding. WMP are subject to national pay settlement schemes so will need to look at the funding overall, particularly from the home office and government grants as far as that level of ongoing employee cost is concerned. It's by far the biggest area of spend so any percentage increase in pay that's not matched by funding represents and ongoing issue. WMP will need to look for alternative sources of income generation. Looking at the med plan from October the number that WMP need to find for next year is somewhere between 20 and 28 million. <p>Regarding the comprehensive spending review, what would you assess as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of that announcement? Although the force level allocations will not be announced until December can you give your provisional thoughts on how this will look in the medium to long term?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will be challenging, there is some growth within the period of the spending review that's been allocated to policing but a lot of that will depend on underlying costs, at the heart of that will be pay, so if pay exceeds the assumed level of funding that will bring immediately an additional pressure. WMP will need to look at how those individual force allocations that are due to arrive in November or December are laid out. As always, WMP will look to get the best out of the resources they have but also acknowledge that there will be continued challenges. In terms of the broader national picture it's going to be important that policing is able to look at some of the reform agenda because with a force of this size and scale there may be opportunities from reform, however the settlements need to reflect what the cost of reform may be as well as the benefits.
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