



Accountability and Governance Board

Notes of the Last Meeting

Tuesday 25th November 2025

1	<p>Attendees: Aaron Cullen (Strategic Performance Manager, OPCC) ACC Paul Drover (Assistant Chief Constable, WMP) Simon Foster (Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) Deputy Chief Constable Scott Green (Deputy Chief Constable, WMP) Chief Constable Craig Guildford (Chief Constable, WMP) Jane Heppel (Chief Finance Officer, OPCC) Superintendent Simon Inglis (Superintendent, WMP) Natalie Queiroz (Victims Advocate, OPCC)</p> <p>Apologies: Wasim Ali (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) Alethea Fuller (Deputy Chief Executive, OPCC) Jonathan Jardine (Chief Executive, OPCC)</p>
2	<p>Notes of last meeting Tuesday 28th October 2025 The notes of the last meeting were approved, and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) confirmed there were no actions arising.</p>
3	<p>PCC Update</p> <p>The Commissioner provided an update which covered the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. With regard to the recent Government announcement regarding Police and Crime Commissioners, regardless of the outcome in 2028 the PCC will hold the Home Office to account. There is a need for an elected and democratically accountable Police and Crime Commissioner whose only priority is preventing and tackling crime. The Government announced its decision without any prior consultation or engagement. There is no credible data or evidence for the decision and it did not feature in the manifesto or the Kings speech. These concerns are shared by Police and Crime Commissioners cross-party and across the country. II. The PCC has awarded a £1.3 million contract which diverts women from low level offending and gives them a chance to turn their life round. The New Chance scheme will be delivered by Birmingham based charity ANAWIM alongside key partners. This project has been a real success story in the West Midlands and the PCC is pleased to be able to fund it for a further 3 years. III. Stechford police station will undergo a nearly £8 million refurbishment as a consequence of The PCCs investment in the police estate. This will ensure that

	<p>the police station will be able to serve the community for decades to come. It also ensures that officers and staff have improved working conditions.</p> <p>IV. Last week the PCC attended the national annual conference of the association of Police and Crime Commissioners and National Police Chiefs Council. The PCC is the national lead for counter-terrorism and chairs the Counter Terrorism Strategic Board. The PCC spoke about the key role that PCCs can play in convening local partners holding counter-terrorism policing to account and commissioning preventative and intervention services. The prevention of terrorism will always be better than having to deal with its consequences.</p>
4	<p>Chief Constable Update</p> <p>The Chief Constable (CC) provided an update which covered the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. The Aston Villa Vs Maccabi Tel Aviv match has been in the news again over the weekend and yesterday a question was posed in Parliament. The Policing Minister has asked the Chief Constable to provide information regarding the intelligence that the Force received. The way that WMP approach football matches is tried and tested. As part of the planning process WMP liaise with interested parties. On this occasion there was a liaison between WMP and the Dutch police which gave substantial information on the level of threat and helped form the overall assessment. This assessment is then discussed with the Safety Advisory Group. The CC will respond in writing to the Policing Minister. On the night of the match the operation was well led and was observed in the control room by members of communities affected by the fixture. II. Last week WMP attended a Knife Enabled Robbery meeting chaired by the Policing Minister. The Home Office has looked at WMPs overall approach to knife enabled robbery because reductions in the West Midlands are higher than anywhere else in the country, between 25 and 31%. The areas highlighted were clear leadership, good approach to prevention and enforcement. As well as substantial reductions there is also an increase in positive outcomes. III. Since the last AGB the crime statistics have been released and overall crime continues to fall across the West Midlands. The number of arrests and charges has continued to increase. IV. The CC recently attended the opening of the new Dudley police station. This project has saved a considerable amount of time and money and will increase police efficiency and effectiveness. V. The mounted unit will be starting to patrol from next week, this is great for police visibility and neighbourhood policing. VI. The planned refurbishment of Stetchford Police Station which the PCC mentioned in his update is long overdue so this is great news for both the staff working there who will benefit from the improved working conditions and also the local community who will receive an improved and more easily accessible service.

VII. WMP are focusing heavily on Roads Policing at the moment and have increased the amount of resource involved, in order to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on roads across the West Midlands. Good progress has been made with average speed cameras, and roads policing enforcement has nearly trebled.

Questions from AGB members

Question 1: Ghost Plates (asked by Simon Foster, Police and Crime Commissioner)

- West Midlands Police recently trialled technology to detect vehicles displaying illegal 3D and 4D number plates. The aim was to better understand the issue of so called 'ghost plates', including the scale of the issue. The pilot took place over a 6-week period on one Birmingham road. During this 6-week period, in this one location, the cameras captured approximately 8,400 ghost plates, displayed on almost 1,900 vehicles. Would the Chief Constable support the law changes Sarah Coombes MP and I are advocating, including:
 1. The banning of 3D and 4D plates
 2. Increasing the fixed penalty fine from £100 for number plate offences to £1,000
 3. Making number plate offences endorsable, so individuals receive up to 6 points on their driving licence"

Yes, one of the main reasons that these plates are used is not just to avoid a speeding fine but to further criminality. People using these plates will be caught, we understand the level of the problem and the job of the police is to stop those criminals using these plates to further disguise their criminality.

Question 2 – White Ribbon (asked by Natalie Queiroz, Victims Advocate)

- In light of the recent tragic events in Birmingham and The Black Country including the shocking murder of Katie Fox, what reassurances can the CC give to the public that action is being taken to ensure the safety of Women and Girls in The West Midlands?

WMP have local strategy and also link in with the national strategy. WMPs approach is led by an assistant chief constable.

WMP have the following groups and strategies in place currently:

- I. Violence against women and girls steering group.
- II. Dedicated neighbourhood officers and a dedicated night-time economy team in Birmingham and other cities across the West Midlands.
- III. The ASK for Angela scheme is well embedded in licensed premises and is currently being extended to hotels.
- IV. OP Leicester which is a spiking campaign.
- V. Dedicated work with the University of Birmingham which includes a dedicated Violence against women and Girls' (VAWG) Officer and this is due to expand to other universities too.
- VI. Dedicated VAWG football officer who works with football clubs to improve safety travelling to and from fixtures as well as at the fixtures.
- VII. Safer Travel VAWG champions.

- VIII. Project Empower which is to encourage victims of unwanted sexual behaviour on the transport network to report this.
- IX. Domestic abuse arrest rate has increased significantly
- X. RASSO approach, improving rape outcomes. Additional training has been rolled out to 400 officers which should improve the victim journey.
- XI. Stalking triage, early awareness stalking intervention approach.
- XII. Enhanced our use of civil orders.

Question 3: Christmas Period (asked by Natalie Queiroz, Victims Advocate)

- What additional activity will WMP undertake over the Christmas period to ensure public safety?

We have had an additional policing operation in place since the beginning of November and the arrival of the Christmas Market, this is in addition to the normal policing structure. There is a mix of plain clothes officers and high visibility officers and a small number of armed police officers.

6 Performance Update (bi-annual)

This item was presented by Arron Cullen (AC), Strategic Performance Manager, OPCC.

The following discussion took place:

- Do the figures in the paper on police officer numbers include the 150 additional officers or the 20 additional PCSO's WMP is currently waiting on?

This is an overall headcount and is not broken down to that level.

- Do we have an update on the recruitment of the additional 150 Police officers and 20 PCSO's following the funding being secured in January?

WMP are on track to deliver the 150 new posts by the end of the financial year. The work done to guarantee the dedicated neighbourhood police officers has already been done. The PCSO cohorts have been done and this is on track also.

- What action and strategies are deployed by WMP to tackle ASB and what impact will the plan have?

The ASB plan, which is to be finalised by April, is dependent on partners putting resources into the plan. WMP have assigned their dedicated resource and also have a Superintendent leading on this.

Service provided to the victim is a priority regardless if the category is crime or none crime.

WMP look at levels of ASB across the entire Force rather than by specific area. The approach is then tailored to the needs of that area.

- There is a consistent downward trend in crime rates across all policing areas. Could you give some examples or some strategies or tactics used across the different local policing areas?

Using vehicle crime as an example. At the Force monthly performance day there is a clear goal to reduce all vehicle crime. However, depending on the community, the type of vehicles and the reasons they are being stolen could be different. The individual superintendents can assess what the issue is in their area and act accordingly.

- Could you summarise what have been the key drivers in the fall in youth violence and in particular the 18.2% reduction in knife crime and gun crime?

The Force has a structured approach to gun crime and is committed to bringing these individuals to justice. There is a close relationship between the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) and WMP.

Regarding Serious Youth Violence the main focus is prevention. Projects such as knife arches, work in schools, and marketing campaigns around knife crime awareness are essential.

- Improving road and travel safety is a top priority for the PCC, there has been a 3.2% reduction in arrests for drink and drug driving. How do you account for that?

Over time drink driving has reduced but drug driving has increased. WMP expect this to increase slightly but would also like to note that a huge amount of work has gone into stopping uninsured drivers, which offsets that slight reduction.

- Regarding operation Hercules which aims to tackle street racing in the West Midlands there has been a 27.9% reduction in incident reports in the last 18 months. 2-3 years ago, this was a matter that was constantly being raised with the PCC by local communities and the media. This appears to be due to the effectiveness of the strategy that WMP have put in place over the last few years. This was a significant challenge for WMP and the PCC commends them for this work.

Other police forces have been observing the work done in this area. WMP also recognise the work done by partners in this area. The positive steps made are working and the focus remains to stop people being killed and seriously injured on roads in the West Midlands.

- OP Snap is a project which has received significant investment recently. Could you update the Board on additional resource to the OP Snap team?

Op Snap has been so successful that more resource is constantly required. We have put both police staff and police officer resource into this area and further recruitment is currently taking place.

- There are a variety of reasons for vehicle seizures listed in the paper including no tax, no insurance and no driving licence. There is also the power via section 59 of the police reform act 2002 to seize vehicles. The threshold for doing this seems low. Is there a potential to make further use of that power to seize vehicles?

Firstly, ensuring we are properly recording crimes regarding ASB to ensure that follow-up support is provided.

WMP have developed a risk assessment tool which allows them to rate the risk as high medium or low. This is being built into the approach in each LPA. A problem-solving approach to ASB is essential with WMP working in partnership with local authorities and other partners.

- What are WMP doing on a local level to ensure that victims of fraud are supported?

Action fraud is now being replaced by a new service which gives both information on victims but also local criminality.

When it comes to online fraud, prevention is the best strategy.

Text message scams being sent to individuals is a big problem especially at this time of year. We need to be educating people not to click on the links in these messages and encouraging them to forward the message to 7726.

- Outcome 15 is when the police are satisfied that an offence has taken place but there are evidential difficulties. There has been an increase in outcome 15s can you advise why?

The main issue is 'victim does not support' an example of this could be a shop reporting a theft and saying they have CCTV but then not providing this to WMP. This would be filed as Outcome 15.

- Regarding investigation grading, can you give an update on the progress of improving from inadequate to good.

There is a lot of work being done in this area, WMP currently feel that this has improved based on a self-assessment but are continuing to work in this area ahead of an appeal to ensure a rating of good or adequate.

7 **Rebuilding Community Policing**

To item was presented by ACC Paul Drover and Supt Simon Inglis

The following discussion took place:

- The reliability of the app is dependant on information being entered accurately and regularly by officers. How do you plan to ensure that that is going to happen?

We do not rely on one single measure to determine if WMP neighbourhood teams are doing well or not. Performance will be visible from the outcomes and arrests along with feedback from the community. This data is just another area we can use as part of a wider assessment.

- Could you give some examples of how you can use the information?

One measure which is recorded is how much time a police radio is switched on and outside of the police station. This is management information which allows WMP to look further into the activity of particular officers or teams to enable them to make decisions on resource and strategy.

- What does the abstraction rate for designated neighbourhood officers and police community support officers tell us? How is the abstraction policy being used to reduce time spent away from local communities?

WMP now have a policy which clearly states the expectation for the dedicated neighbourhood officers to remain active in their neighbourhoods in the last 30 days every area is below 15% abstraction. WMP can't say that there will never be abstractions but where this does happen there will be a clear decision which can be rationalised. The core role of the dedicated neighbourhood office will always be to be working in their specific area.

- How much support will be provided by the local action teams in order to assist the dedicated neighbourhood support officer?

The local action teams come under the command of sector inspectors, they are there to pick up on local priorities and support the neighbourhood mission.

- WMP made a commitment to ensuring there is stability within local neighbourhood teams and ensuring that a 2-year period of service is completed in each neighbourhood. What is in place to assure this and what will the handover look like when a dedicated neighbourhood officer does move on?

There is a programme of training which underpins becoming a substantive neighbourhood officer, it takes 12 months to complete the training. On occasions where Neighbourhood officers do inevitably move on there will be formal handovers involving all parties.

- Officers of all ranks will be able to present data to the public on their area. How frequently do you expect members of the community to be able to have these meetings and what level of data will be shared?

This data should be available to members of the public at all times on the WMP website. By typing in a specific area, you can access details of crime reports but also areas of focus for that area. There will also be a list of times and locations where the neighbourhood officer may be holding a meeting.

Where historically members of the public would have needed to attend community meetings to get information, this can now be done online. The meetings will remain regular though, monthly at least.

- Consistency of visibility of police officers is important. In the paper, it states that WMP are committed to delivering this visible and consistent policing. Where are WMP in terms of delivering on this commitment?

The current percentage is 45% in terms of visibility which is a good starting point but WMP are focusing on hotspot policing to focus on key areas where crime, disorder and vulnerability occur. The Christmas market in Birmingham is an example of this, and there is a high visibility of police.

The goal would be for 1/3 of individuals on shift to be outside of the police station and active at any time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powers are available to police officers and PCSO's under the ASB Crime Prevention Act 2014. Do you think WMP are effectible using all the powers available to them and what is being done to ensure that those powers are used more effectively? <p>There is more which can be done, and there is work underway to ensure front-line officers are aware of powers available to them. WMP expect to see more powers used in the months ahead.</p> <p>There also powers available to local authorities, so it is important that we work in partnership with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some key drivers of ASB are mental ill health, drugs, alcohol, homelessness and for young people lack of access to youth services, diversionary activity and being excluded from school. The PCC urges WMP to address these issues when working on the plan which will be put in place in April. <p>WMP are currently drafting the prevention strategy which will support those areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is WMP currently monitoring performance against the 72-hour contact commitment and is there a clear definition of what will be counted as a response within the 72-hour window? <p>WMP is a pilot force in finding a solution to this, at the moment there is not a way of assessing how quickly responses are made across the Force.</p> <p>However, in the meantime there is a buddy system in place where rest days are covered by another team to ensure that there is always someone available to respond.</p>
8	<p>CLOSE</p> <p>Next meeting: Tuesday 16th December 2025</p>