



ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

24th February 2026

An Equal and Fair West Midlands
Presented by: DoCS Peter Gillett

Cover Report

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

1. Police and Crime Plan

West Midlands Police carries a clear and essential responsibility to serve its communities with openness, transparency, and an unwavering commitment to fairness. Its role extends far beyond enforcement, it involves building trust, demonstrating accountability, and ensuring every encounter is free from bias or discrimination. The work presented throughout this report illustrates how WMP embeds these principles into daily practice, through ethical policing, community engagement and continuous scrutiny of its own performance.

2. Achievements and Challenges

Embedded within document.

3. *Actions undertaken*

Embedded within document.

4. *Future Work*

Embedded within document.

5. *Financial Implications*

None highlighted.

6. *Legal Implications*

7. *Equality Implications*

Background

- 1. Ensure that West Midlands Police (“WMP”) takes strategic responsibility to prevent, tackle and eliminate racism, misogyny, homophobia and all forms of unlawful discrimination**

Action ref 206: Understand, address, challenge and regularly scrutinise all areas of disproportionality in policing and criminal justice, to drive improvements and ensure fairness and justice for all.

West Midlands Police (WMP) recognises that understanding, addressing, and challenging disproportionality is fundamental to delivering fair and just policing. This commitment has been reinforced by the HMICFRS recommendations issued to all forces at the end of 2023, which require chief constables to undertake comprehensive analysis of race disparity in police criminal justice decision-making by 30th September 2024. Where disproportionality is identified, forces must either provide a clear explanation or revise their ways of working.

In response, WMP commissioned an extensive piece of analysis to understand racial disparity across a broad range of criminal justice processes. This work examined the full journey—from stop and search and arrests through to Out of Court Disposals, police bail and charging outcomes. The intention was to establish a robust baseline from which the force could determine whether disproportionality exists, and if so, what action is required to address it.

However, the analysis highlighted a critical barrier. Ethnicity data was not routinely or consistently recorded across many policing systems. As a result, the force could not draw reliable conclusions about the presence or extent of racial disparity. Without accurate and complete data, the ability to scrutinise, challenge, or reform policing practices is significantly constrained.

To overcome this barrier, recommendations were made to the Force Executive Team (FET) to mandate the recording of ethnicity across all relevant systems, with particular emphasis on Connect (the force records management system) and ControlWorks. These recommendations were accepted, recognising that high-quality data is essential for meaningful analysis and accountability.

To support this shift, WMP launched Operation Jigsaw on 1 December 2025. This initiative uses COM-B principles—Capability, Opportunity, and Motivation to drive behaviour change and improve compliance with the recording of ethnicity, sex, and gender. The initial focus is on targeted communication and officer engagement, ensuring that staff understand both the requirement and the importance of accurate data capture.

In the longer term, Operation Jigsaw will expand to include other protected characteristics. This will enable the force to build a more complete picture of disproportionality across the criminal justice system and take informed action to address it.

Performance improvements in ethnicity recording are now monitored weekly through the Accountability Report and monthly via Performance Day. Early indicators show progress in the recording of ethnicity for both victims and suspects within Connect.

This strengthened approach to data quality underpins WMP’s ability to:

- Understand where disproportionality exists

- Address the root causes
- Challenge practices that may contribute to unfair outcomes
- Regularly scrutinise decision-making to ensure transparency and accountability

By embedding these principles, WMP is building the foundations necessary to drive sustained improvements and ensure fairness and justice for all communities.

Action ref 349: Hold WMP to account for the fair and effective use of police powers of arrests, and discretionary decisions like out of court resolutions, remands in custody and bail, with a focus on understanding, addressing and challenging disproportionality and improving outcomes.

Holding WMP to account for the fair and effective use of police powers requires reliable data, regular analysis, and transparent scrutiny. The force's recent work to improve the recording of protected characteristics, particularly ethnicity forms the foundation for this accountability.

As outlined in the response to action 206, WMP has recognised that accurate and consistent recording of protected characteristics is essential for meaningful oversight of arrest decisions, Out of Court Disposals, remands in custody, and bail outcomes. Improved data quality enables the force to understand whether disproportionality exists and, where it does, to take informed action to address it.

Custody was an early area of focus for the Criminal Justice function. As a result of targeted work, compliance with ethnicity recording in custody now sits in the high 90% range. This high-quality dataset allows for robust analysis of key discretionary decisions made once an individual enters custody.

With reliable data now available, WMP conducts quarterly analysis of custody-related decision-making. This work is formally reviewed through the Criminal Justice Services Quarterly Performance Review (CJS QPR) meeting, ensuring that findings are visible, discussed, and acted upon at a senior level.

The most recent analysis, completed in August 2025, found no evidence of disproportionality in decisions made within custody. This includes:

- Pre-charge bail decisions
- Charging outcomes
- Use of force
- Strip searches

These findings demonstrate that, where high-quality data exists, WMP can evidence fair and consistent decision-making.

As the wider programme to improve protected characteristic recording progresses across all systems, WMP will be increasingly able to:

- Analyse arrest patterns
- Scrutinise Out of Court Disposals
- Examine remand and bail decisions
- Identify and challenge any disproportionality
- Drive improvements in outcomes for all communities

Action ref: 211: Work with WMP to address racial disparities in misconduct and professional standards processes, improving support for Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff.

WMP continues to strengthen its approach to identifying, understanding, and addressing racial disparities within misconduct, complaints, and professional standards processes. This work is essential to ensuring that Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff are treated fairly and receive appropriate support throughout these procedures.

Although the overall number of grievances submitted in 2025 was relatively small (85 cases), the data shows that colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to submit a grievance than those identifying as White British. Importantly, this disproportionality appears only within the *aggrieved* group; it is not reflected in the subjects of grievances, nor does race emerge as a theme within the submissions or outcomes.

To ensure consistency and early identification of any conduct issues, cases involving bullying, harassment, or discrimination are reviewed by the Dignity at Work Triage Panel. This panel brings together Employee Relations, Diversity & Inclusion, and the Professional Standards Department (PSD), ensuring that each case is directed into the correct process and handled appropriately from the outset.

Grievance data is routinely shared with key internal stakeholders, including the Police Federation, Trade Unions, and Staff Networks, through the Stakeholder Engagement Group. It is also reviewed within the DEI Progress Boards, where further work can be commissioned as required.

In late 2025, People Services established a Learning the Lessons Board to examine themes, trends, and insights emerging from grievance cases. This provides a structured mechanism for organisational learning, enabling actions such as targeted training, policy revision, or deeper analysis of emerging issues.

Ethnicity data is monitored at every stage of PSD processes, from initial referral to final outcome. Current data shows:

- **No disproportionality in public complaints**, with Black and Asian officers and staff represented proportionately.
- **Disproportionality in internal referrals**, where Black and Asian colleagues are more likely to be reported into PSD by internal sources.

To understand this disparity, PSD's Prevention and Intervention Team commissioned an academic research study with Staffordshire University. The findings indicated that Black and Asian officers and staff were less likely to receive local, lower-level interventions. Instead, supervisors appeared more inclined to escalate matters to PSD, potentially due to a lack of confidence in managing issues directly.

The academic findings have directly shaped WMP's response. Key actions include:

- Enhanced training and support for first- and second-line supervisors to build confidence in local intervention.
- Development of a network of 158 Standards Ambassadors—trained colleagues outside PSD who provide peer support and help resolve issues locally before escalation.

- Strengthened PSD training that explicitly highlights disproportionality and equips supervisors to intervene fairly and consistently.

The Head of PSD chairs a Regional Scrutiny Panel across the West Midlands forces, enabling shared learning, consistency in decision-making, and identification of good practice.

Internally, the composition of the Misconduct Cadre is reviewed annually to ensure appropriate representation. Regular training supports consistent, transparent outcomes in misconduct hearings.

Officers and staff involved in misconduct or grievance processes receive support from:

- Federation or Trade Union representatives
- Staff Association Networks, including BAPA, the Sikh Police Association, and AMP

PSD also holds dedicated engagement meetings with these networks, sharing anonymised case studies, discussing disproportionality data, and seeking feedback to improve processes. The Head of PSD attends network AGMs to maintain open dialogue and ensure racially minoritised colleagues have direct access to senior leadership.

Action ref 205: WMP to make their services and interactions accessible to all communities.

WMP continues to strengthen the accessibility of its services by ensuring officers and staff are equipped to recognise, understand, and respond to the diverse needs of the communities they serve. A significant part of this work focuses on improving how the organisation engages with children and young people, who often require a tailored approach to communication, safeguarding, and support.

WMP has invested in a comprehensive training programme designed to ensure that officers and staff can interact effectively with children and young people, prioritising their safety, wellbeing, and ability to participate in policing processes. This includes:

- **“Aware: Voice of the Child” e-learning**, rolled out across all frontline teams and specialist units, ensuring the child’s voice is heard, understood, and recorded in decision-making.
 - *6,601 officers and staff trained (90% coverage).*
- **Integration into new recruit training**, ensuring accessibility and child-centred practice are embedded from the start of an officer’s career.
 - Day 40 of Uniform Training includes AWARE principles within the Vulnerability module, covering safeguarding, referrals, legislation, and key topics such as domestic abuse, CSE, child abuse, and sexual offences.

To ensure that interactions remain accessible for children and young people with additional needs, trauma histories, or communication barriers, WMP provides a range of specialist courses:

- **Achieving Best Evidence (ABE)** – a four-day course on assessing and interviewing under-18s, incorporating AWARE principles and subject-matter expertise.
- **PIPPA** – a focused session on vulnerability and pre-interview needs assessments.
- **Specialist Witness Interviewing** – an 11-day advanced programme covering trauma, neurodiversity, child development, and practical interviews with children with special educational needs.

- **SCAIDP** – a 12-day course for child abuse investigators, covering multi-agency working, cultural awareness (FGM, HBA), trauma-informed practice, and learning from Serious Case Reviews.
- **DDP Module D** – training on serious and complex witness interviewing, including special measures, trauma, ACES, and victim-blaming language.
- **PSI/PSIO Core Programme** – covering child abuse, domestic abuse, legislation, and interviewing vulnerable or intimidated witnesses.

This layered training approach ensures that officers and staff:

- Understand the diverse needs of children and young people
- Communicate in ways that are developmentally appropriate and trauma-informed
- Recognise cultural, neurodiverse, and safeguarding considerations
- Adapt their approach to ensure every child can participate meaningfully
- Record and reflect the child's voice in policing decisions

By equipping both frontline and specialist teams with these skills, WMP is actively improving the accessibility of its services and ensuring that interactions are fair, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all communities.

Action ref: 217: WMP to regularly review the impact of local, regional, national, and international conflicts on community tensions and understand how these tensions can manifest locally

WMP has established a comprehensive and proactive approach to monitoring, understanding, and responding to community tensions arising from local, regional, national, and international events. This work ensures that emerging issues are identified early, shared across the organisation, and addressed in partnership with communities.

The Strategic Protest and Public Order Team (SPPOT) plays a central role in this work. As IPP-accredited intelligence professionals, the team has deep expertise in protest dynamics and community tension indicators across the West Midlands. Their responsibilities include:

- Leading the regional intelligence sharing group, meeting bi-weekly to assess tensions and protest activity.
- Monitoring and reporting on protests and events thematically, aligned to nationally recognised categories.
 - *In the last 12 months, WMP tracked 539 protests and 370 events.*
- Conducting daily reviews of local, regional, national, and international developments, supported by continuous community intelligence submissions.
- Producing a daily assessment of protest and tension, feeding into LPA, Intelligence, and Force Tactical Risk Meetings (TRMs).
- Working closely with Operations and on-call Silver commanders to provide timely assessments when required.

The SPPOT Team maintains strong links with national policing bodies, ensuring WMP remains aligned with national threat assessments and emerging issues:

- Weekly contact with NPoCC SIB and CTPHQ (NCTT).
- Daily briefings provided to NPoCC SIB and the local WMCTU Prevent function.
- Contribution to national intelligence requirements and rapid response to national developments in the protest and tension landscape.

To ensure visibility and coordinated action across the organisation, WMP uses several structured reporting mechanisms:

- Weekly Community Tensions Summary (CTS) circulated to all Chief Inspectors and above, using the nationally recognised *Evidenced / Experienced / Potential* matrix.
- Monthly presentation of CTS and Horizon Scanning at the Force Tactical Tasking and Coordination Group (FTTCG), ensuring all LPAs and departments understand the current and emerging tension picture.
- Situational Reports (Sit Reps) produced for ongoing protests or significant tension events, consolidating intelligence from all sources to support operational decision-making.
- Community Impact Assessments (CIAs) completed at LPA level following specific incidents, ensuring local engagement, monitoring, and reassurance activity is aligned to community needs.

WMP recognises that international conflicts can rapidly influence local sentiment and protest activity. Online signals, early protest mobilisation, and community feedback often provide the first indicators of emerging tensions. These are discussed through TRMs to determine potential impacts and required responses.

Recent examples include:

- Israel–Palestine–Gaza conflict:
 - Internal and external listening events were established to understand community concerns.
 - Quarterly external meetings are now jointly hosted with the local authority and council leadership, providing a trusted forum to navigate sensitive issues.
 - These structures proved vital during anti-immigration protests, rising concerns around women’s safety, and responses to racially aggravated offences.

WMP’s ability to understand and respond to tensions is strengthened by long-term relationship-building with key communities:

- A two-year strategic partnership with the Sikh community via the Council for Gurdwaras, supported by neighbourhood-level engagement with all 10 Gurdwaras.
- Establishment of the Black Voices Council in Sandwell, co-chaired by community members and working collaboratively on the Police Race Action Plan.
- Ongoing development of a strategic relationship with the Muslim community, mirroring the successful approach used with Sikh and Black heritage communities. This includes increased engagement and work to enhance representation within the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) or develop a dedicated strategic forum.

These relationships ensure that WMP can access trusted community insight, respond sensitively to emerging issues, and maintain open dialogue during periods of heightened tension

Action ref: 218: WMP will remain a trusted source of information, proactively addressing tensions and combating disinformation and misinformation that could escalate them.

WMP recognises that maintaining public trust increasingly depends on the ability to identify, challenge, and prevent the spread of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation—particularly during periods of heightened tension. Significant work has been undertaken to

strengthen WMP's communications capability, ensuring the force remains a reliable and authoritative source of information for communities.

WMP has reviewed its Social Media Policy and is incorporating new guidance specifically addressing information disorder. This work is aligned to the forthcoming College of Policing Media and Communications Authorised Professional Practice (APP), expected in early 2026. Once published, WMP will update its internal policy and guidance to reflect national standards and best practice.

In addition, the force has refreshed its social media hate crime trigger plan, adopting a more proactive and preventative approach. This includes guidance on responding to misinformation targeting members of the workforce.

A 2025 audit of force social media channels provided further assurance and generated recommendations that are now monitored monthly through the Corporate Communications Governance Board.

WMP is developing a new Social Media Delivery Plan for 2026–27, aligned to the wider Force Communications Strategy. This will support the growth of corporate channels and enhance the quality and reach of public-facing content.

To meet the increasing scale and speed of online information flows, WMP is also progressing an innovative project with its social media management platform provider. This work will introduce automated tools capable of:

- Scanning and prioritising high-risk public posts
- Categorising content (e.g., actionable, offensive, hate crime, misinformation, intelligence)
- Reducing manual triage volumes
- Providing automated insights and forecasting emerging concerns

These developments directly support recommendations from the HMICFRS inspection into the 2024 public disorder, recognising the link between online information disorder and real-world harm.

WMP currently monitors an average of 25,000–30,000 messages per month across corporate channels, with the ability to respond rapidly when volumes spike during major incidents. This monitoring is essential to identifying harmful narratives early and preventing escalation.

Recent examples of proactive intervention include:

- Correcting false imagery relating to alleged hospital disorder, using the Community Notes tool on X to challenge misinformation
- Addressing inaccurate claims circulating during protests at the AV v MTA football match
- Responding to incorrect information shared about two officers, mitigating reputational harm and public confusion

These actions demonstrate WMP's commitment to factual, timely communication that counters harmful narratives before they spread.

Corporate Communications works closely with the Force Digital Desk and 'Triple I' teams to ensure staff are trained to recognise and respond to information disorder. Training is regularly updated with new case studies and learning.

WMP also recognises the personal impact misinformation can have on officers and staff. Welfare measures have been put in place for individuals who have been targeted or affected by false online narratives.

The force maintains a dedicated risk on the Force Risk Register relating to the spread of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation. This acknowledges the potential impact on public trust and confidence if harmful narratives are not addressed quickly and effectively. Mitigations are overseen through the Corporate Communications Governance Board.

2. Ensure that individual WMP officers and staff receive relevant training and take personal responsibility to prevent, tackle and eliminate racism, misogyny, homophobia and all forms of unlawful discrimination

Action ref 200: WMP develops an understanding of the historical discriminatory relationship between law enforcement and the LGBTQ+ community to build trust and confidence and improve engagement.

WMP recognises that trust and confidence among LGBTQ+ communities cannot be strengthened without acknowledging the historical discriminatory relationship between law enforcement and LGBTQ+ people. This context continues to shape how LGBTQ+ communities experience policing today, and WMP is taking steps internally and through training and support to build a more informed, empathetic, and inclusive organisation.

The Supreme Court judgment of April 2025 on the meaning of sex in the Equality Act 2010 had a significant impact on many LGBTQ+ colleagues. WMP responded by:

- Providing clear internal guidance through the Force Executive Team and relevant leads
- Offering support through the LGBTQ+ Network
- Creating safe spaces for colleagues, including one-to-one conversations and closed listening circles
- Communicating widely to ensure staff understood the implications and next steps

This approach reflects an understanding that organisational culture and internal trust directly influence how effectively WMP can engage with LGBTQ+ communities externally.

While diversity, inclusion, and cultural competence are woven throughout Foundation Level Training, there is no dedicated curriculum focused on LGBTQ+ history or the historical relationship between policing and LGBTQ+ communities. The topic is only lightly touched upon within the *Policing with Fairness, Equality and Effective Communication* module, which covers protected characteristics and force values.

WMP does provide access to optional resources via College Learn, including:

- LGBTQ+ Discussion Panel with Stonewall (135 completions)
- Allyship video (6 completions)

However, these resources are not mandatory and do not address the historical discriminatory relationship between policing and LGBTQ+ communities.

At present, WMP does not have specific training that explores:

- The history of policing and LGBTQ+ communities
- The legacy of discriminatory laws and enforcement practices
- The impact of historical trauma on present-day trust and engagement
- How these experiences shape contemporary community expectations and concerns

Acknowledging this gap is an important step toward building the cultural understanding required to improve engagement and rebuild trust.

Action ref 204: Police Officers receive training on victim blaming language and behaviours.

WMP has embedded a comprehensive, force-wide approach to challenging victim-blaming language and behaviours, ensuring officers and staff communicate with victims in a respectful, trauma-informed, and supportive way. This work spans mandatory e-learning, recruit training, specialist investigative development, and the integration of lived experience into learning.

WMP delivers a mandatory e-learning package, Language Matters, designed to challenge victim-blaming attitudes and ensure appropriate language is used when interacting with victims of crime. The package covers interactions with:

- Child victims
- Domestic abuse survivors
- Victims of sexual offences
- Missing persons
- Vulnerable individuals across all crime types

Completion:

- 9,848 officers, staff, PCSOs, and Specials trained
- 86% completion across the target audience
- Delivered across all LPAs and specialist departments, including Public Protection, Major Crime, Counter Terrorism, Operations, Criminal Justice, Intelligence, and Corporate teams

The training encourages all ranks and roles to reflect on how language shapes perceptions, influences victim engagement, and affects investigative outcomes.

Victim-blaming awareness is embedded early in an officer's career through the Foundation Training Programme:

- Vulnerability Module: Includes Calico VR input on VAWG, highlighting victim-blaming behaviours.
- Uniform Training Day 36: Dedicated victim-blaming e-learning and Domestic Abuse Part 2 lesson, focusing on communication barriers and victim experiences.
- Sexual Offences Training: Explicit focus on avoiding victim-blaming language during first response and investigative stages.

Victim-blaming awareness is reinforced across all specialist interview and investigative courses, ensuring consistency from first response to complex investigations:

- Introduction to Achieving Best Evidence (ABE)
- DDP Module D – Serious and Complex Witness Interviews
- Specialist Witness Interviewing Course
- PSI/PSIO Witness Interview Course
- SCAIDP (Child Abuse Investigators): Includes victim-blaming in the context of CSE
- SOLO & SSAIDP: College of Policing programmes incorporating Soteria principles

This ensures investigators understand trauma, communication needs, and the impact of language on victim confidence and case progression.

WMP evaluates the effectiveness of the Language Matters package using Kirkpatrick Levels 1 and 2, assessing reaction and knowledge gained.

Key findings include:

- 100% agreed the content was appropriate and clearly delivered
- 92% agreed the learning objectives were achieved and the package was engaging
- 85% felt the training was relevant to their role

While learning transfer and business impact evaluation have not yet been commissioned, the current data demonstrates strong engagement and positive learning outcomes.

WMP actively incorporates lived experience into training to deepen understanding and challenge unconscious bias. Examples include:

- Sexual Offences Training: Video on trauma impact for child victims
- FGM Training: Survivor testimony from an FGM campaigner
- Domestic Abuse & Coercive Control: Survivor video case studies
- Specialist Witness Interview Course: Four-day engagement with schools and older adult communities, plus survivor input from an Asian woman sharing her experience of sexual offences
- Black History Learning: Personal testimony from Nigel Best and community voices on stop and search

This approach ensures officers hear directly from victims and communities, building empathy and cultural competence.

- All training undergoes an Equality Assessment
- An internal volunteer network reviews e-learning for accessibility
- Work is underway to establish a Training Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to embed community perspectives into curriculum design

3. Ensure that WMP is more representative of the people and communities it serves by increasing the percentage of Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers and police staff from under-represented groups, including women and racially minoritised people

Action ref 195: WMP will recruit, retain, progress and support Black officers, building a diverse and representative workforce.

Action ref 202: Work to recruit, retain, and support officers from diverse communities, ensuring WMP reflects the people and communities it serves, creating a more inclusive and representative workforce.

WMP continues to strengthen its commitment to building a workforce that reflects the communities it serves. This includes focused action to recruit, retain, progress, and support Black officers and staff, as well as colleagues from all underrepresented groups.

In 2025, WMP launched the Say and Stay Scheme, a confidential listening service for colleagues who may be considering leaving the organisation. This approach enables early intervention, allowing the force to understand concerns, identify trends, and take action to improve retention.

The scheme is complemented by the exit interview process, which provides further insight into workforce experiences. In line with Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) commitments, Black and Black heritage colleagues are offered the option for their Say and Stay or exit interview to be conducted by the PRAP Coordinator or a Force Executive Team lead. This ensures culturally competent support and creates a safe space for honest feedback.

To provide strategic oversight, WMP has also established an Attrition and Retention Board, chaired by People Services. This board monitors workforce stability, identifies risks, and ensures the force maintains a sustainable, skilled, and motivated workforce.

WMP recognises that recruitment alone does not create a representative workforce, retention and progression are equally critical. To complement external positive action activity, the force has developed an internal positive action plan focused on empowering colleagues from underrepresented groups to thrive and progress into leadership roles.

This work aims to turn recruitment gains into long-term representation by:

- Increasing access to development opportunities
- Supporting career pathways
- Building confidence and capability among aspiring leaders
- Addressing barriers that disproportionately affect Black officers and other minority groups

The diversity and representation of the workforce is regularly reviewed through several governance forums, ensuring transparency and accountability:

- People Services Governance Board
- Police Race Action Plan Board
- DEI Progress Boards
- DEI Governance Board

These structures ensure that workforce data, trends, and outcomes are scrutinised at senior levels, enabling targeted action where disparities are identified.

4. Understand, address and challenge disproportionality in stop and search and wider use of force

Action ref 207: Hold WMP to account for the fair and effective use of police powers, including stop and search, strip search, use of force with a focus on understanding, addressing and challenging disproportionality and improving outcomes.

WMP has established a comprehensive framework to ensure the fair, proportionate, and accountable use of police powers. Including stop and search, strip search, and use of force, with a clear focus on identifying, understanding, and addressing disproportionality.

Ethnicity data is routinely recorded whenever stop and search or use of force powers are exercised. This is captured through established recording apps and forms a core part of WMP's analytical processes. The availability of this data enables the force to:

- Monitor disproportionality
- Identify emerging trends
- Understand the impact of police powers on different communities
- Inform scrutiny, training, and operational decision-making

WMP has multiple layers of internal oversight to ensure these powers are used lawfully, ethically, and proportionately:

- Supervisory Review: Local supervisors review all recorded stop and search and use of force incidents which meet "trigger" criteria to ensure compliance and quality.
- Silver Leads: Both Stop and Search and Use of Force have dedicated Silver leads who hold monthly performance meetings with LPAs and departments. These meetings scrutinise disproportionality data and hold leaders accountable for local performance.
- Fair and Effective Use of Police Powers (FEUPP) Board:
 - Brings together Silver leads, force departments, and OPCC representatives
 - Reviews strategic trends, areas of concern, and best practice
 - Identifies barriers to improvement and commissions action
 - Conducts a Reasonable Grounds Panel, reviewing BWV to assess how policy and leadership influence frontline behaviour

The FEUPP Chair reports into the HMIC PEEL Q3 Board, chaired by ACC O'Hara, ensuring senior oversight and alignment with national inspection requirements.

The OPCC leads regular community-led scrutiny panels, supported by WMP. These panels:

- Review stop and search and use of force data
- Examine BWV footage
- Provide independent challenge
- Identify recurring themes and concerns

A new feedback loop ensures officers receive panel feedback directly, can respond to it, and that the panel is updated on resulting actions. Insights from these panels feed back into the FEUPP Board and Silver meetings, informing training updates and operational improvements.

To strengthen public trust and demonstrate accountability, WMP publishes a wide range of stop and search and use of force data, including disproportionality metrics on a quarterly basis on the force website. This ensures communities have access to clear, up-to-date information about how police powers are being used.

5. Ensure WMP implements the National and West Midlands Police Race Action Plans

Action ref 194 and 352: Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the National Police Race Action Plan, and the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan.

WMP continues to make meaningful progress in delivering both the National Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) and the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan (WMPRAP). The force has focused on building strong foundations, improving data quality, strengthening governance, and embedding community scrutiny to drive long-term cultural change.

Key Areas of Progress are:

1. Maturity Matrix – Early Adoption and National Influence.

WMP has worked closely with the national PRAP team as an early adopter of the Maturity Matrix, a research-based performance framework that supports:

- Self-assessment against anti-racism standards
- Community scrutiny and external assessment
- Clear benchmarking of progress

This positions WMP as a leading force in shaping national tools for measuring anti-racism.

2. Operation Jigsaw – Improving Data Quality.

Operation Jigsaw is a force-wide behaviour change campaign designed to improve the recording of ethnicity, sex, and gender. This directly addresses a major national barrier: poor data quality in PRAP workstreams, particularly those focused on policing powers and internal workforce outcomes.

Better data enables:

- Evidence-based problem solving
- Accurate disproportionality analysis
- Stronger accountability

3. Comprehensive Training and Cultural Education.

WMP has invested heavily in training that builds understanding of Black history, lived experience, and structural racism:

- Learning From Our Black History – delivered to all officers and staff, with overwhelmingly positive feedback
- Nigel Best's "A Lived Experience" – mandatory for new joiners and response officers
- Project Seshat (University of Warwick) – creative training methods delivered to 34 operational colleagues in 2025

These programmes deepen cultural competence and support the force's ambition to become an anti-racist organisation.

4. Positive Action, Recruitment and Workforce Representation.

Workstream 1 of WMPRAP provides quarterly updates to the Gold Board on:

- Recruitment
- Progression
- Retention of Black and Black heritage colleagues

This has led to refinements in:

- Joining processes
- Promotion pathways
- Say and Stay / exit interview options tailored for Black colleagues

These changes ensure that recruitment gains translate into long-term representation.

WMP has established a strong governance structure to ensure senior leaders and frontline officers are accountable for implementing PRAP and WMPRAP actions:

- Each workstream is led by a Chief Superintendent or Superintendent
- Leads report quarterly to the Executive Lead, ACC O'Hara, via the WMPRAP Gold Board
- A funded WMPRAP Coordinator provides continuous oversight, monitoring progress and linking workstreams with the Executive Lead
- Annual WMPRAP Roadshows (initiated in 2025) require departmental senior leaders to present evidence of local delivery
- The WMPRAP SPOC network has been reinvigorated, with SPOCs reporting into Workstream 3 on local activity

This structure ensures accountability from frontline teams through to the most senior levels of the organisation.

Engagement and Scrutiny by Black Communities

WMP engages Black communities through multiple layers of scrutiny and partnership:

1. African Caribbean Reference Group (ACRG)

- Bi-monthly meetings
- WMPRAP updates presented at each session
- Community members act as “critical friends”
- Senior leaders attend to seek feedback and insight

2. Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board (ISOB)

- Recruited jointly with the OPCC in September 2025
- Paid community experts
- Will scrutinise Gold Board packs, progress reports, and Maturity Matrix updates
- First full operation expected by March 2026

3. Local Black and Black Heritage Independent Advisory Groups

- Each LPA tasked with establishing a local group
- Supports local delivery of WMPRAP objectives

- Provides feedback loops into central governance via local WMPRAP leads and SPOCs

4. Improved Public Reporting

- WMP's Single Online Home has been updated to report more effectively on WMPRAP-related performance measures, including:
 - Use of Force
 - Stop and Search
 - Crime data

5. Internal Community Relations

- Strong partnership between WMPRAP and BAPA
- Joint delivery of Black Inclusion Week, Black History Month, Windrush celebrations
- Shared communications and access to external networks

These mechanisms ensure Black communities can influence, scrutinise, and shape the force's anti-racism work.

Risks and Safeguards Amid National PRAP Changes

The restructuring of the national PRAP team presents challenges, including:

- Loss of national projects such as the "Our Black Workforce" survey
- Reduced national oversight of the Maturity Matrix
- Potential reputational impact on local PRAP teams
- Increased need for WMP to self-fund future initiatives

Despite this, WMP has maintained momentum due to:

- A strong internal culture supportive of anti-racism
- Stable leadership committed to WMPRAP
- Clear governance structures

Safeguarding Progress

To prevent loss of momentum, WMP must:

- Maintain the Executive Lead, Coordinator, and Workstream Lead roles
- Embed WMPRAP into corporate performance monitoring
- Ensure governance boards retain oversight
- Continue building internal ownership so that WMPRAP becomes part of routine business

Success will be demonstrated when WMPRAP processes become self-sustaining, with accountability embedded across the organisation rather than reliant on a central project team.

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Table 1. Showing the individual commitments from the Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029 An Equal and Fair West Midlands chapter that are the responsibility of West Midlands Police to deliver. RAG ratings as assigned through internal OPCC processes

Individual Commitment <i>(in the order listed above)</i>	Q2 25/26 Deliverable Rating
Action ref 192: Build on the Fairness and Belonging programme to strengthen relationships between the police and the Black community	Green
Action ref 193: WMP and my Office will continue to be committed to being anti-racist, with a focus on eliminating all forms of racism.	Green
Action ref 194: Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the National Police Race Action Plan.	Amber
Action ref 195: WMP will recruit, retain, progress and support Black officers, building a diverse and representative workforce.	Amber
Action ref 196: WMP will deepen its understanding of the historical discriminatory relationship between the police and the Black community, using this insight to support the building of trust and confidence.	Green
Action ref 198: WMP to comply with the public sector equality duty, embedding equality at all levels of the force, including the use of equality impact assessments to evaluate policies, procedures, practices and decisions.	Green
Action ref 199: Hold WMP officers and staff to the highest standards of conduct, ethics, integrity, and professionalism, with a commitment to challenging and eliminating all forms of unlawful discrimination, including those based on racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, disability and religion or belief.	Green
Action ref 200: WMP develops an understanding of the historical discriminatory relationship between law enforcement and the LGBTQ+ community to build trust and confidence and improve engagement.	Amber
Action ref 201: WMP build positive relationships with other communities where trust is lowest, such as young people.	Green
Action ref 202: Work to recruit, retain, and support officers from diverse communities, ensuring WMP reflects the people and communities it serves, creating a more inclusive and representative workforce.	Amber
Action ref 204: Police Officers receive training on victim blaming language and behaviours.	Amber
Action ref 205: WMP to make their services and interactions accessible to all communities.	Amber
Action ref 206: Understand, address, challenge and regularly scrutinise all areas of disproportionality in policing and criminal justice, to drive improvements and ensure fairness and justice for all.	Green
Action ref 207: Hold WMP to account for the fair and effective use of police powers, including stop and search, strip search, use of force with a focus on understanding, addressing and challenging disproportionality and improving outcomes.	Green

Individual Commitment <i>(in the order listed above)</i>	Q2 25/26 Deliverable Rating
Action ref 210: Officers receive introductory and ongoing training on equality, disproportionality, neurodivergence and race including personal biases	Green
Action ref 211: Work with WMP to address racial disparities in misconduct and professional standards processes, improving support for Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff.	Amber
Action ref 212: Work with WMP to address racial disparities in misconduct and professional standards processes, improving support for Black, Asian, and other racially minoritised officers and staff.	Green
Action ref 213: Ensure all hate crime reports are taken seriously by WMP, with thorough investigations and perpetrators held to account.	Green
Action ref 215: Work with WMP and local authorities to prevent and tackle all forms of hate crime, protect individuals and engage with communities and schools to raise awareness.	Green
Action ref 217: WMP to regularly review the impact of local, regional, national, and international conflicts on community tensions and understand how these tensions can manifest locally.	Amber
Action ref 218: WMP will remain a trusted source of information, proactively addressing tensions and combating disinformation and misinformation that could escalate them.	Amber
Action ref 349: Hold WMP to account for the fair and effective use of police powers of arrests, and discretionary decisions like out of court resolutions, remands in custody and bail, with a focus on understanding, addressing and challenging disproportionality and improving outcomes.	Green
Action ref 352: Ensure WMP implements the recommendations from the West Midlands Police Race Action Plan.	Green

Table 2. Showing the RAG rating definitions used in table 1 above

RAG Rating Key
On track – can be delivered by lead
Not on track – requires support from SMT lead to resolve
Not on track – requires support from wider SMT to resolve