

ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

24th February 2026

Building Trust and Confidence
Presented by: T/Deputy Chief Constable Mattinson

Cover Report

1. Police and Crime Plan

The Police and Crime Plan 2025 to 2029 sets out how the PCC will seek to maintain trust and confidence:

- Ensure 999 calls are answered within 10 seconds and 101 calls within 3 minutes (“the service level agreement”)
- Ensure emergency incidents are responded to within 15 minutes and priority incidents within 1 hour (“the service level agreement”)
- Improve investigations so that West Midlands Police (WMP) is graded at least Good by the police inspectorate (His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services – (HMICFRS))
- Reduce complaint investigation times

2. Achievements and Challenges

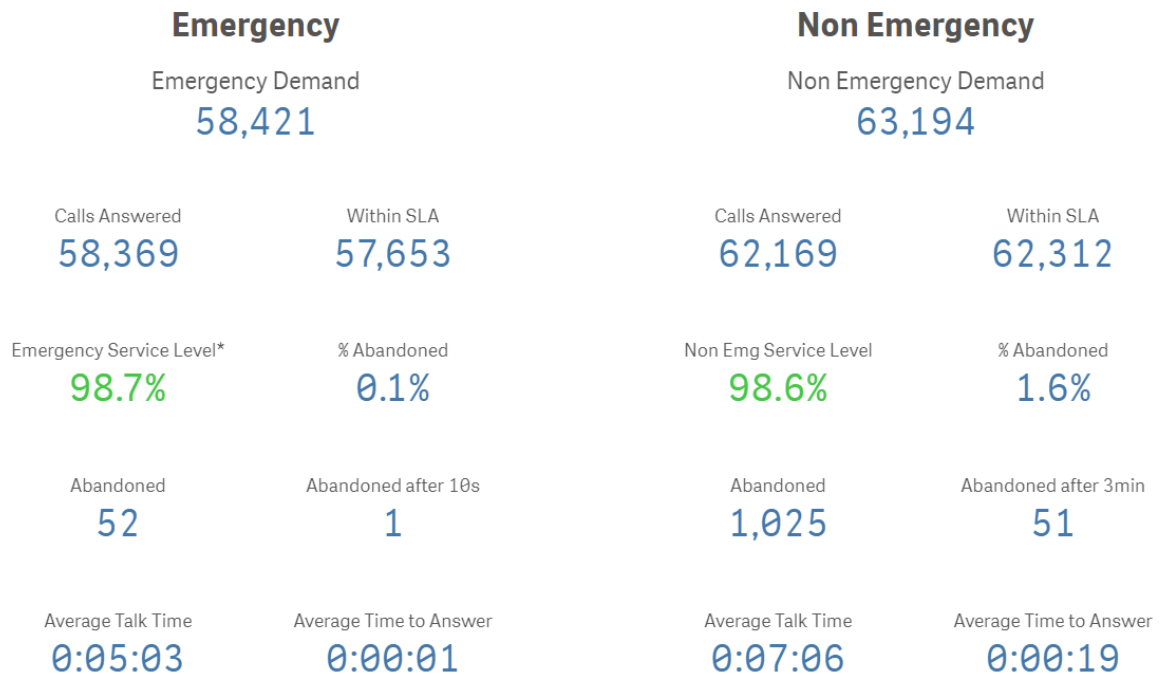
Achievements:

Answering 999 and 101 calls

2.1 West Midlands Police has transformed its performance around answering 999 calls and 101 calls and is now one of the best performing forces in the United Kingdom and the highest performing Metropolitan Force in the country.

2.2 The force consistently answers more than 95% of all Emergency and Non-Emergency calls within the stated service level agreement and last month on average, took 1 second to answer an emergency call and 19 secs for a non-emergency call.

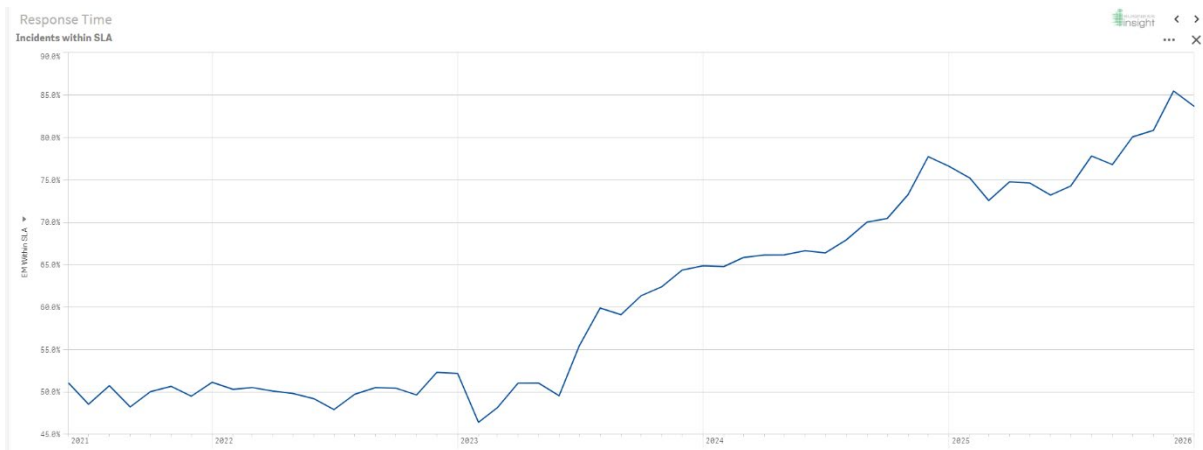
01/12/2025 - 31/12/2025



Responding to emergency incidents

2.3 Over the last 12 months West Midlands Police has shown continuous improvement in its response times to emergency incidents. In recent months this has resulted in over 80% of calls being attended within 15 minutes. This is a vast improvement on historical levels of performance.

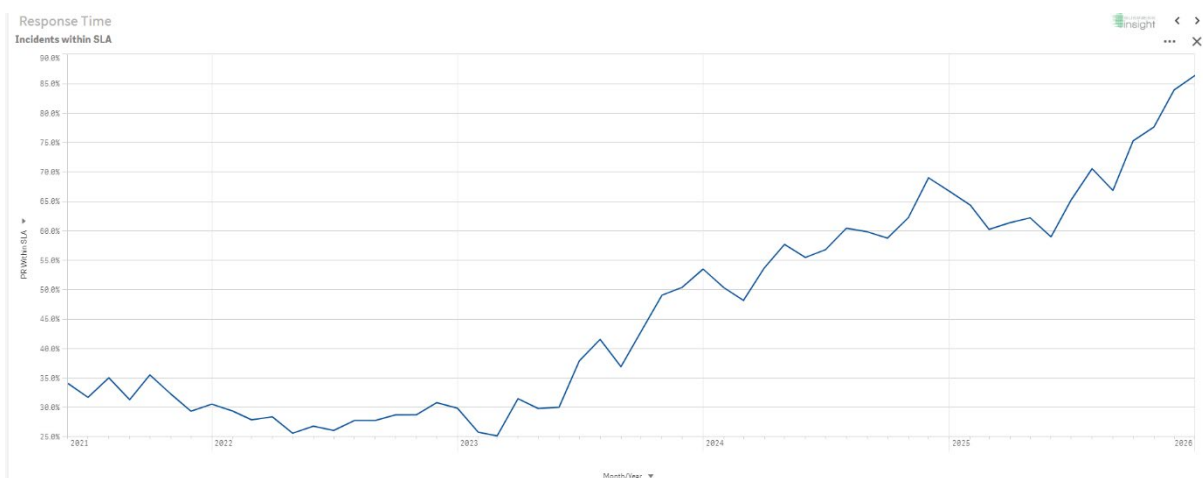
2.4 December was the best month for Emergency Response, since the introduction of Controlworks, when the previous 9 grade system was introduced, with 86% of incidents attended within 15 minutes, with an average time of 8mins 42secs.



Responding to priority response incidents

2.5 West Midlands Police has focused over the last 12 months on improving its performance around responding to priority response incidents. Over the last two quarters there has been significant progress, particularly within Birmingham Local Policing Area.

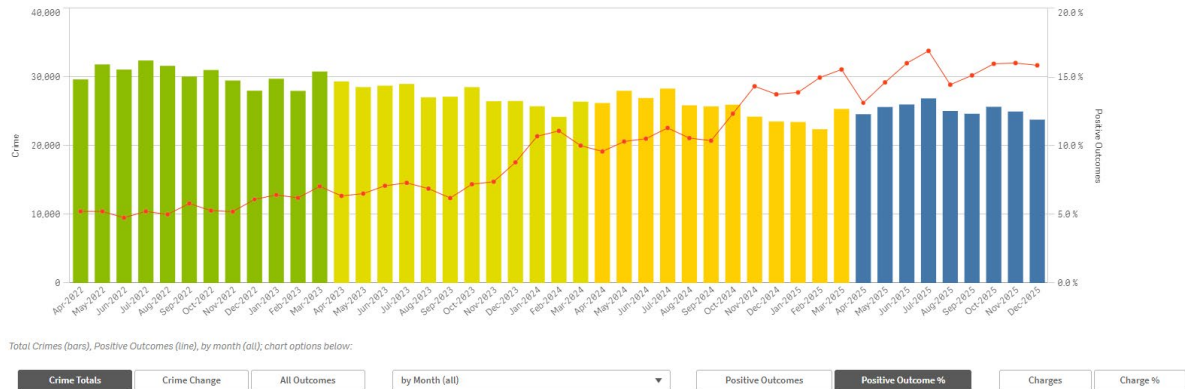
December saw 84% of all incidents graded as Priority Response attended within an hour, with an average time of 29mins 30secs.



Improving Investigations

2.6 Operation Vanguard has been the Force's response to concerns over the quality of its investigative process. The operation has focused on a range of investigative areas, from evidence gathering, timely arrests and victim focus. This portfolio of work has delivered continuous improvement in the volume of positive outcomes achieved for victims.

2.7 The force in the first 9 months of this performance year is recording a 15.5% total recorded crime detection rate. This compares to 11.5% this time last year and 7.2% for 9 months April 23-Dec 23.



2.8 The force has used His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services question framework to continuously assess its progress in this area and have a developing confidence that this will result in a positive grading.

Reduce complaint investigation times

2.9 Not requested as part of this paper. Standalone briefing to AGB in April 2026.

Challenges:

Categorisation of calls for service

2.10 West Midlands Police needs to ensure that calls for service that require Emergency and Priority attendance are accurately identified and that the appropriate type of incident is responded to in the timeliest manner.

2.11 Every call to the Police is unique and accurate grading thousands of incidents is a challenge. To ensure that the most pressing needs are met requires other important but less urgent incidents to be responded to in a more planned way.

2.12 The force has developed a R24 grade for incidents where it is appropriate to respond to a call for service within a 24-hour period. This is in addition to dealing with some incident by way of a scheduled appointment. The Force will continue to ensure that the threat and risk around a call for service is kept under proportionate review and that it can upgrade incidents when information changes.

2.13 WMP faces a continual challenge to ensure all investigations are of a good standard. This is due to the increasing complexity of crime, a shortage of detectives and the ongoing requirement to improve PIP1 capability.

2.14 The evolution of digital technology such as CCTV and mobile phones necessitates continual upskilling and integrating this evidence into coherent investigative plans, alongside maintaining victim-centred focus and consistent supervision. Achieving quality investigations therefore depends on prioritising digital evidence processing, strengthening supervision, fostering ongoing training, monitoring workloads and balancing operational pressures with robust, legally compliant and victim focused outcomes.

2.15 The continued focus to improve quality is centred on the PIP1 Supervisor Pilot being underway. System improvements have been introduced, with a supervisor reviewing an Investigation Plan of an Officer in the case (OIC) and an OIC reviewing the Victim Needs Assessment when allocated the investigation.

2.16 The Review and Allocation function in Local Policing Areas has been reviewed to identify opportunities of best practice and consistency. This continued work is designed to equip investigators with a focus on the detail required to deliver a quality and evidence led investigation which has the necessary oversight to drive improvements.

Maintaining focus on long term issues and problem solving

2.17 West Midlands Police will naturally prioritise emergency and urgent incidents. This will sometimes mean utilising resources that are normally dedicated to solving local problems, building confidence with communities or working on longer term complex investigations. Balancing the immediate needs of people who need the Police quickly with solving longer term issues is a significant challenge.

3. Actions undertaken

Development of Command Hubs

3.1 The Force have developed “*Command Hubs*” on each LPA area. This is to maximise the utilisation of local knowledge and situational awareness around resources to ensure that

incidents are appropriately graded and deployed to within service level agreements as often as possible.

3.2 Command hubs were introduced during the Autumn of 2024 with analysis showing the “Bridge” model in Walsall was performing the best. This saw an initial step change in performance however this was not consistent across the LPA’s. The Deputy Chief Constable set action (ACT|3286|2025) in June’s performance day to ensure all command hubs were operating in the same fashion.

3.3 The second step change in performance occurred shortly after this action was initiated and performance continues to improve. Priority Response SLA performance in June was 59%, last month 84% (see chart in 2.3)

Performance monitoring around “R24 (Routine) grade and Scheduled Appointments

3.4 The Force has been cautious in the deployment of a “24 hour grade”, initially only launching it on a trial basis on two Local Policing Areas.

3.5 The performance around the new areas is closely monitored and supported by qualitative audits of logs to ensure that their calls for service are appropriate categorised. The timeliness of schedule appointment is measured and reported on, and subject to daily scrutiny by senior officers in daily force level management meetings.

3.6 Initially Sandwell LPA was chosen for a pilot in August 25 due to them experiencing the 2nd lowest SLA performance. In December Sandwell were the highest performing Local Policing Area with 94% of Priority Response incidents attended within an hour.

3.7 Birmingham were the second Local Policing Area to start the R24 pilot in October 25 and they have seen their Priority Response performance increase from 57% in Sep 25 to 79% in December.

3.8 December saw all other LPA’s start using R24 and December PR performance was the highest since the introduction of Controlworks and the original 9 grade system, by 6% points. A consequence of having an additional grade has been that the volume of scheduled appointments have reduced, leading them to be dealt with in a more timely fashion. The average time taken to close a scheduled appointment us now less than 2 days.

3.9 Following a successful pilot on Sandwell and then Birmingham, the R24 grade was rolled out across the force at the end of December. January has been first whole month when R24 data is available. In this month R24 was used in 4,169 incidents which is 6% of the force's incident demand, this has been consistent with the pilot demand.

3.10 The SLA for January was 89.1% with median response being 3hrs and 52mins. The reason that the SLA isn't closer to 100% is that 26% of incidents were upgraded from either a Scheduled Appointment or a Contact Resolution.

Minimising the abstraction of officers from problem solving work.

3.11 The force is in the process of developing it's corporate understanding of how many resources are re-deployed from localised, longer term work to deal with Emergency and Priority incidents. There are a number of mechanisms to do this.

3.12 Dedicated Neighbourhood Officers now have the ability to record when they are abstracted from neighbourhood policing as defined by the policy. The form is then captured and reported through a Qlik Dashboard that allows top level force data right down to individual officer % of abstracted time to be monitored.

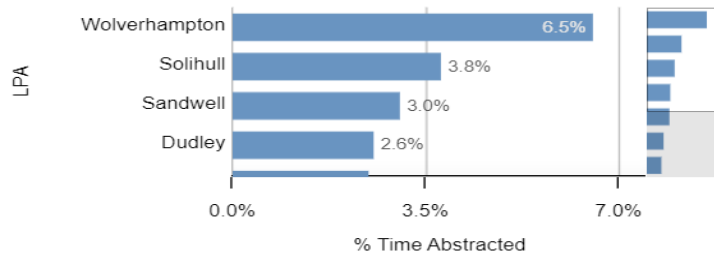
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Abstractions

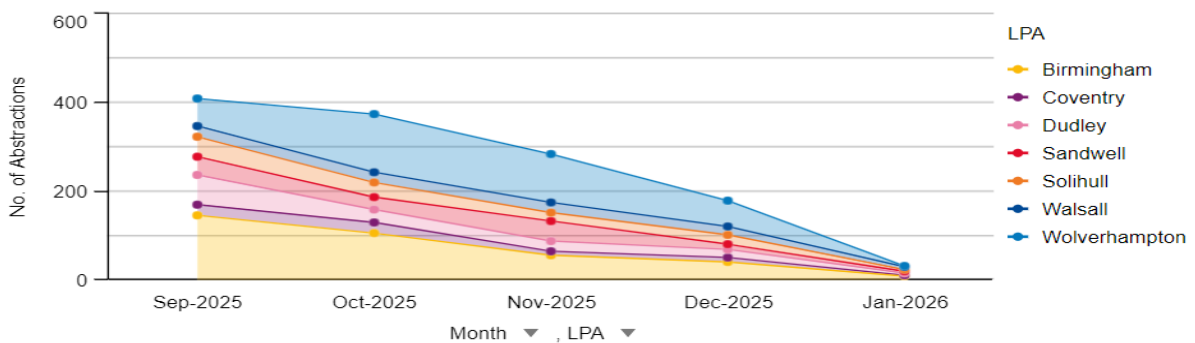
Abstractions

Total
2.52%

The % of Abstracted Time when the Radio is on



Number of Abstractions per LPA Over Time



Operation Vanguard

3.13 Operation Vanguard is a detailed programme of action to improve investigation standards. This has directed officers to focus on EVOLVES which is a model which aims to help investigating officers to make consistent decisions about investigations, with the overarching aim to ensure that all reported crimes are investigated to the satisfaction of the victim. The model requires officers in all roles to consider themselves investigators and assess reported crimes from the public in line with the themes set out in the EVOLVES mnemonic – *i.e. evidence, victim, offender, likelihood, vulnerability, extent and severity*.

3.14 WMP has made a commitment that all crime that is reported to West Midlands Police will be thoroughly investigated to ensure a positive impact, the right outcome is achieved and increase victim satisfaction. WMP cannot achieve a positive outcome in every case, but our aim is to leave the victim feeling that we have done our best.

3.15 These principles have been supported by various training processes around how to properly recorded investigations within the CONNECT system as well as structural changes to the system itself. This now directs investigating officers to make effective investigation plans, consider the needs of the victim and to ensure that there is effective supervision of cases.

Qualitative Assurance Thematic Testing (QATT)

3.16 The QATT is an online questionnaire that consists of around 100 questions about a specific and randomly selected investigation which is completed every month by each Inspector, Senior Leadership Team member and by members of the Force Executive Leadership team.

3.17 The process is effectively a structured and extensive “*dip-sample*” of a wide range of investigations to ensure that all middle to senior level leadership in the force can see firsthand the current levels of investigation being delivered, which can be systematically measured and reported to the Force Performance Meeting.

3.18 QATT supports improved performance with overall investigation quality in December 2025 recorded at 82%. Open investigations continue to decrease from an average 32,500 in December 2025 to an average 29,600 in February 2026, demonstrating efficiency and focus. Overdue Investigation plans have significantly reduced from over 16,000 in July 2024 to 320 in January 2026, the lowest volume recorded.

3.19 QATT data shows Investigation Plans completed in 91.2% of cases and overdue supervisor reviews have fallen to around 500. QATT has graded further investigation as 81% being adequate and above which has increased from 63% being adequate and above in January 2025. This supports improved and sustained performance in ensuring investigations are planned and supervised to achieve the best outcome for victims.

4. Future Work

Call handling, responding to incidents and investigation standards

4.1 The force has made significant improvements in call handling and the way it responds to incidents. We will continue to monitor these closely through the rigorous performance framework the force has in place. Similarly, the force will continue to maintain its focus on maintaining improvements in investigation standards.

Development of the Visibility Application

4.2 The application will make use of airwave technology and geo fencing across neighbourhoods and around police buildings, to calculate how much time officers spend on duty physically outside, away from their stations, visible to the public.

4.3 The data will be presented in a dashboard so managers and senior leaders can measure performance in this area and seek to maximise engagement with communities. The technology is still being tested but there are positive signs about its effectiveness and accuracy.

Vanguard Next Steps

4.4 The key focus of Operation Vanguard for the next six months is to ensure investigators and supervisors are supported to deliver and sustain improved performance by providing recommendations from audits, simplifying investigation planning and driving victim focus, in particular by assessing the needs of a victim.

4.5 Ensuring clear communication to investigators, supervisors and managers through a bulletin and timely internal communication messages to equip them with awareness and tools to continue to deliver the best service for victims.

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