



Accountability and Governance Board

Notes of the Previous Meeting

Tuesday 16 December 2025

1	<p><u>Attendees:</u> Wasim Ali (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) Ryan Chambers (Detective Superintendent, WMP) Paul Drover (Assistant Chief Constable, WMP) Simon Foster (Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) Alethea Fuller (Deputy Chief Executive, OPCC) Craig Guildford (Chief Constable, WMP) Scott Green (Deputy Chief Constable, WMP) Laura Harrison (Superintendent, WMP) Tony Hopkins (Detective Chief Superintendent, WMP) Jonathan Jardine (Chief Executive, OPCC) Ian Parnell (Assistant Chief Constable, WMP) Andrew Parsons (Chief Superintendent, WMP) Lisa-Jayne Robson (Superintendent, WMP)</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Natalie Quieroz (Victims Advocate, OPCC)</p>
2	<p>Notes of last meeting</p> <p>The notes of the last meeting were approved, and the PCC confirmed any updates received regarding actions arising from the meeting on 25 November 2025.</p>
3	<p>PCC Update</p> <p>The Commissioner provided an update which covered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. 16 new Youth Commissioners have been welcomed to the OPCC. The 16 candidates will serve each of the 7 Local Policing Areas (LPAs) and play a vital role in ensuring the voices and priorities of young people are heard by the PCC and West Midlands Police. II. On 03 December 2025, the PCC welcomed the launch of Winter of Action. This programme will run from 01 December 2025 - 31 January 2026 to prevent and tackle high street crime, retail crime, anti-social behaviour and violence against women and girls. III. The PCC publicly disagrees with the proposed restrictions regarding the right to elect for jury trials, announced on 02 December 2025. The PCC asserts that we must believe in, value, and invest in our criminal justice system. IV. As chair of the West Midlands Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnerships the PCC has deep concerns regarding the recent proposals to deregulate alcohol licensing. Extended hours are likely to have an adverse impact on levels of crime and ASB and removing the late-night levy will result in a lack of funding for the increased policing required to address any increased levels of crime.

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. Police horses have been successfully deployed across the local authorities. Officers on horseback recently attended football matches and received positive feedback both locally and operationally. II. 3 Officers attended and passed the Senior Police National Assessment. This achievement will have a positive impact on policing nationally and in West Midlands. III. WMP have launched a Winter Drink Drive Campaign. Members of the public are urged to act responsibly in line with driving restrictions. IV. The implementation of Winter of Action, with the Home Office, has highlighted a positive working relationship between the two organisations. The Winter of Action initiative will ensure an enhanced level of support across the entirety of the West Midlands. V. Following additional police funding WMP are working with the National Football Partnership to utilise drones in policing football. VI. WMP are awaiting the publication of the White Paper to assess and inform Police reform in 2026. VII. The CC and PCC attended the Home Office Select Committee to discuss Aston Villa v Maccabi Tel Aviv. WMP are undertaking further work with HMICFRS regarding safety advisory groups. VIII. WMP dedicate an array of resources to ensure effective policing, impactful prevention, and retaining victim support. The CC highlighted the positive increase in rape charge rates over the last 2 years. IX. Evidence led prosecutions continue to rise as a result of WMP commitment to VAWG and the implementation of Safer Streets patrolling. X. Following the terror attack in Australia WMP have offered support to the Jewish community and pre-planned provision for upcoming religious events/celebrations. XI. The CC provided an operational update regarding a violent disorder in Walsall, July 2024. One individual sentenced and another jailed. All sentences for individuals involved in this case total over 120 years. The CC marked this an operational success. XII. The CC praised the achievement of a PC who received excellence award for developing technology. WMP endorses the innovation crafted behind the scenes to benefit policing in the West Midlands. XIII. The CC provided 2 updates on historic homicides dated 2008 and 2020 where individuals have now been changed as a result of continued policing.
5	<p>Questions from AGB members</p> <p>Question 1: Aston Villa FC v Maccabi Tel Aviv FC (Asked by PCC Simon Foster)</p> <p>Context: The Aston Villa football fixture with Maccabi Tel Aviv on 6 November 2025 has become a subject of wide public debate. Concerns have been raised about the intelligence used by West Midlands police, that led to the ban on Maccabi Tel Aviv fans, from attending Villa Park to watch the match.</p> <p>Question: Is the Chief Constable able to provide assurances on the credibility, reliability, and provenance of the policing intelligence relied upon by West Midlands Police, that was provided to the Birmingham Safety Advisory Group, and that led to the ban on Maccabi Tel Aviv fans, from attending the football game at Villa Park on 6 November 2025?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CC provided reassurance that the policing intelligence utilised by West Midlands Police was credible and reliable. The evidence provided to the select

committee was built up over a period of time from a variety of intelligence sources. The CC noted that decisions were made utilising a variety of information, specifically the intelligence provided by the Dutch Police.

- The CC explained that one piece of incorrect evidence was provided by an Officer as a result of internet research.
- The CC reiterated that they have no concerns regarding the credibility of the decision or the research in totality.

Question 2: Theft and Assault of Delivery Drivers (Asked by DPCC Wasim Ali)

I recently attended a meeting with over 100 delivery drivers in south Birmingham who reported facing repeated attacks and thefts by organised gangs stealing their bikes and phones while they work. What steps is West Midlands Police taking to protect these workers and prevent these crimes?

- WMP acknowledged that theft from and the assault of delivery drivers is an area of policing that has low traction for victim participation in investigations.
- WMP have reviewed offences reported in South Birmingham and identified a trend in victims not wishing to participate in the investigation. WMP have noted a need to review the specifics of the cases and identify why individuals do not wish to participate.
- Work is being conducted by WMP to provide support around prosecutions, encourage reporting and to create a joint approach to tackling the issue.

Question 3: Winter of Action (WoA) (Asked by DPCC Wasim Ali)

Context: The Home Office's Winter of Action national initiative went 'live' on the 1st December. Indeed, it was launched by the Policing Minister here in Birmingham.

It requires a focussed partnership approach to the prevention, reduction and enforcement re Nighttime Economy issues and Violence Against Women and Girls, as well as a focus on ASB and Retail crime, and is being delivered in areas across the WMP Force Area. Winter of Action runs to the end of January 2026.

The West Midlands Winter of Action Plans build on the existing and ongoing work of the Force to address these key issues. It follows on from the Home Office's 'Safer Streets Summer Initiative.' OPCC and WMP are holding a joint review of both initiatives, with our Local Authority Community Safety partners, in March 2026.

Question: What do you see as the key successes and learning for WMP in delivering the Safer Streets Summer Initiative and the Winter of Action so far? And how can this partnership delivery approach be used to improve ongoing prevention, harm reduction, and enforcement delivery across WMP?

- The implementation of Winter of Action, in alliance with the Home Office, highlights the success and positive impact of the Safer Streets summer initiative.
- WMP have undergone a period of review identifying insights to inform the Winter of Action plan and inform implementation tactics.
- WMP have already noted monthly performance improvement in Retail Crime including a considerable increase in arrests and a reduction in incidents.
- Utilising partners WMP are able to combine additional resources and funding to positively impact the core areas; retail crime, street crime, ASB, and Nighttime Economy (NTE) linked to VAWG.
- The Christmas NTE plan comprises of prevention, support, and intervention for a wide range of items including drink driving, NTE and personal safety, high visibility patrolling, and non-traditional Ask Angela campaigns.
- WMP are confident that the nationwide programme will have positive impact and reduce these core areas.

6	<p>Business Crime</p> <p>This item was presented by Assistant Chief Constable Paul Drover and Superintendent Lisa-Jayne Robson. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>How is WMP complying with the 3 commitments on police attendance included in the Nation Crime Action Plan (Oct 2023)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP acknowledged various categories of response including emergency responses (arrival in 15 mins), priority responses (arrival in 60 minutes), and scheduled attendance (a time is agreed in advance). • WMP now attend 99% of calls in each of these three categories within the appropriate timeframe. • WMP acknowledge the need to review compliance of police attendance with the targets in the National Crime Action Plan. <p>How do WMP pursue reasonable lines of enquiry and evidence gathered by retailers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursuing reasonable lines of enquiry is fundamental to WMP. • In the last two years WMP have witnessed increased outcomes as a result of officers efficiently progressing key lines of enquiry. • WMP have conducted engagement with retailers utilising case studies to instruct on reporting and the specific evidence WMP require to build strong cases. • Investment in the use of platforms to instantly exchange CCTV has also resulted in quicker progression of lines of enquiry and better results. <p>Is there a benefit to encouraging retailers to record and report these crimes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP always encourage individuals to report all retail crime and are actively engaging with the community of retailers, and building relationships to inform intelligence, positively reduce these issues, and build up an accurate picture of the issue. <p>How is WMP ensuring it identifies and tackles repeat offenders/ locations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMPs Offender management approach and Offender to Recovery program offer a bespoke approach to reduce re-offenders. • WMP conduct daily reviews of top offenders and deploy appropriate resources to locate and apprehend these individuals to break the cycle and prevent future incidents. <p>Retail Crime remains high in the West Midlands and across the country. What evidence do you have that sustained reductions will be seen in this area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP employ a full system approach, working in partnership and investing in prevention to result in sustained reduction. • Over the last 12 months articles and figures highlight the positive impact of custodial sentences. • WMP have witnessed increased number of offenders turning away from crime and working with police to tackle the issue. • Investment into encouraging reporting and submission of evidence will also sustain reductions. <p>How are you addressing the issue of Officer extractions across the West Midlands?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP acknowledge the impact of extracting Neighbourhood Officers and the importance of ensuring presence in the LPAs. • The ACC is tracking extractions across the LPAs and will continue to review this in 2026. • WMP have specifically targeted extractions in Birmingham and realigned the number of dedicated officers with the policing mission of the area.

	<p>Provide an update on WMP plans to utilise live facial recognition technology?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP prioritises a pro-active approach, utilising investigations to identify and prosecute offenders above facial recognition technology. • The CC is committed to strengthening the policing standard before utilising the technological advancement of live facial recognition. • While WMP support the use of live facial recognition any progress in this area will be slowly incorporated. <p>What assurance can you provide that engagement with Business Crime Reduction Partnerships (BCRPS) and BIDs is proactively sustained rather than reactive?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP have well-established BIDs and BCRPs across the West Midlands with Officers embedded in WMP providing sustainability. • Dedicated Neighbourhood officers are creating links between BIDs across the West Midlands. Although these relationships are new, WMP are witnessing strong partnership foundations. <p>What tangible evidence can WMP provide illustrating that retail crimes reported lead to meaningful outcomes, specifically repeat low level offending?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of arrest rates and caution levels have doubled reflecting WMPs commitment to tackling retail crime. • Business Crime team members also contact local businesses to provide updates on outcome of retail crime. WMP are actively investigating more routes to link in with independent shops to share intelligence and support. <p>How many Officers have achieved the NVQ Level 4 Police qualification in Alcohol licensing and what value does this add to their roles?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 licensing officers have undertaken the qualification and have ongoing CIPDs. • Officers gain insight into legislation and opportunities to link up with other licensing officers across the country. • WMPs licensing Officer for Birmingham is at the forefront of licensing work and a national expert. • The DCC is investigating centralising licensing officers under one team. <p>What are the difficulties in obtaining Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness and competency of teams directly impact success in obtaining CBOs. • WMP have invested in upskilling officers and staff in the process of submitting CBO applications. • WMP have identified a trend between officers attending courts and the approval of CBOs and will advocate for officers attending courts to increase the number of CBOs approved and raise awareness of this enforcement method.
7	<p>Fraud and Online Harm</p> <p>This item was presented by Assistant Chief Constable Ian Parnell, Chief Superintendent Tony Hopkins and Superintendent Ryan Chambers. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>How does WMP measure victim outcomes in fraud and online harm cases and what tangible improvements have been delivered in the last 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP receive two strands of information, crimes committed in the West Midlands, and victims living in the West Midlands targeted by individuals outside of the area. • The Economic Crime Unit (ECU) review a list of victims and assess their cases using a triage model. This model considers the needs of the victim and the service WMP can offer. • WMP have made a national commitment that 100% victims of fraud and online harm will receive a form of victim care. • Assessing the individual needs of victims allows WMP to protect vulnerable individuals and linking victims in with partner services.

- WMP have a significantly increase their output in this area to 12.6% and anticipate a 15% output rate by the end of the financial year.

How has WMP assured itself that it has the right investigative capability, digital skills, and supervisory oversight at scale, particularly at first contact and investigation handover point?

- Investment has been made into LPAs to ensure that front line staff have adequate knowledge and awareness of fraud.
- Fraud investigator officers are based locally to drive investigations.
- The Cyber Crime Unit (CCU), within ECU, work collaboratively with a variety of partners and teams to generate innovative tactics to address fraud and online harm.
- WMP will be utilising the Report Fraud AI driven data to inform signposting and awareness campaigns.

How is the Force shifting from being a re-active victim led model to pro-actively engaging in prevention, and how does it measure success in relation to these strategic aims?

- WMP utilise a SOC master lists that detailing the most harm causing individuals
- When reviewing sanctioned investigations WMP utilise a matrix and national threat assessment, to identify any secondary threats such as fraud, financial and online crime.
- The local ECU and Regional ECU work with other investigational teams to identify factors that may be enabling their criminal activity.
- WMP are at the forefront of utilising a national restorative justice programme to address strands feeding into Fraud and Online Harm. For example, low level money mules washing illicit funds through legitimate bank accounts. Education and Diversion directed at these strands reduce repeat victims and offenders.

Provide a brief insight into the 4 newly fraud-trained officers, what training they have undertaken, and how this will help tackle fraud in their local areas?

- The 4 newly trained LPA officers have undertaken a Fraud Intelligence Officer Course. Although these officers have not completed the national fraud investigation course, they have an elevated awareness, can conduct some financial enquiries on behalf of the banking authorities, and understand/ interpret data available from the banking sector.

Does the Report Fraud change include section 22 agreement or framework setting out expectations?

- There is no section 22 agreement, changes have been owned and driven by City of London Police.
- The changes will modernise/ update the method of reporting, allowing WMP to view vulnerable person alerts, request for questions, cancel crime requests and transfer crimes to other forces, and provide access to metrics and performance data. This will provide the Force with greater understanding and awareness of fraud.

What expectations are placed on financial institutions to prevent fraud, and how are they being held to account if these safeguards fail?

- WMP expect all financial institutions to abide by the UK National Banking Protocols.
- WMP identified that Bank of China and Bank of India were not adhering with these protocols. Work with these organisations has resulted in compliance and mitigated risk for customers in the UK.

How prepared is WMP for the growth in AI enabled fraud, deep fake scams and synthetic identity crime?

- The introduction of cyber teams has ensured officers are at the forefront of skill capacity and capability in policing to address these offences.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP have also identified challenges with crypto enabled crime that is specifically designed to prevent police recover funds. • WMP assured the Board that they will pursue everyone to maximum legal capacity to regain lost funds and bring offenders to justice. <p>Provide an update on the implementation of the Force vulnerability desk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vulnerability desk is currently live, and staff members are undergoing initial training. • The Force is digitising the intranet system with an ECU page signposting all WMP employees to key information, learning, and timescales. • Digitalised training and video boxes will be made available to allow staff to undertake training flexibly and quickly. <p>Are there any plans to update technology infrastructure to meet demands on the system?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force has made substantial investment into digital hubs for all LPAs and relevant departments. • This investment will significantly enhance capacity and capability of WMP to process all digital exhibits and meet the demands on Fraud and Online Harm work. <p>Is WMP satisfied it is making best use of civil preventative orders in fraud and online harm?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal services to attend a performance day to discuss civil prevention orders. Following this session DCC will update the PCC.
8	<p>Bringing Offenders to Justice</p> <p>This item was presented by Detective Chief Superintendent Tony Hopkins, Superintendent Laura Harrison & Chief Superintendent Andrew Parsons. The following discussion took place:</p> <p>Identify any areas that require more improvement regarding the quality of investigations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP identified the need to obtain and secure evidence within the first hour of the crime being committed. • there are complexities regarding obtaining statements from victims. • CCTV and mobile phones are also complex and challenging for initial investigators. <p>What assurances can you provide that investigations are being built to a prosecutorial standard from the outset?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial investigation question set has been streamlined to ensure that an initial narrative is built up and sets good foundations resulting in more positive outcomes and efficiency of investigations. • Victim engagement is a core focus for officers when engaging in any investigation. Officers are committed to ensuring high charge rates and a positive impact on the victim. • Supervisor and manager reviews are engaged with to ensure investigators are held to account. Chief Inspector and Superintendent reviews have been introduced to build on the governance structure and promote improvement at all levels. <p>What specific changes have been made to the investigation practice to improve victim communication and timeliness to reduce victim attrition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMP have identified a correlation between victim attrition rates and time taken to address crimes reports. • A joint approach is utilised by WMP to ensure victims receive responses in a timely manner, and that investigations are presented to the CPS quicker.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other barriers are being identified and WMP are tailoring communication methods and engagement based on crime type to keep victim communication clear, relevant, and reassuring. <p>How is WMP ensuring that complex investigations are not impacted by the lack of officer experience and that implementations are in place to ensure level of investigation is commensurate with their training?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the Force has limited experience, the commitment of officers should not be underestimated. • Review of body worn footage provides reassurance that officers are providing unique and high-level investigations. • WMP reiterated the great value youthful officers can provide, specifically the use of digital tools and mobile devices to improve victim support/engagement. • WMP utilise a variety of methods to provide experience including training, buddy systems, drop-in sessions and 30-day challenges.
9	<p>CLOSE</p> <p>Next meeting: Tuesday 27 January 2026</p>