

Agenda Item 11

**JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE
26 March 2026**

**Risk Management Update
(Corporate and departmental high and critical)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members of the committee with oversight of the Corporate and departmental (high and critical) risks for the Chief Constable. The report also provides an update on the developments in the organisational risk processes of the force.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the last Committee meeting, we continue to improve and develop the risk management offer across the force as seen on the continuous improvement deliverables on the PowerPoint slide attached.
- 2.2 Horizon scanning documents continue to be distributed to all departments monthly, the Risk Team align all potential horizon scanning risks with relevant departments, providing tailored inputs for SLT meetings for consideration and scoping within their respective business areas with a view to proactively reporting on risk. This is then reported through relevant governance across the force.
- 2.3 Additionally, the risk team have been working with Corporate Communications to raise awareness of risk materials through wider communication channels including utilisation of the senior leader briefings.

3. ORGANISATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT IN WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

- 3.1 In relation to risk management, a summary of our forward plan and activities undertaken over the last quarter are listed below:
- 3.2 The Risk Culture survey closed at the end of the November; results were analysed and have been shared with the wider Force Executive Team. Throughout January and February these were also presented into each SLT across the force. The team are now reviewing the improvements and associated activities that may be needed.
- 3.3 The KPI relating to a positive increase in results for the culture survey was achieved.
- 3.4 The NCALT learning package on Organisational Risk Management went live on the 17th of November, this training is mandated to sergeant/ staff equivalents and above. To date 1,290 out

of 2,004 (64%) staff and officers have completed the course. Completion rates for each specific departments and portfolios have been raised through governance structures.

3.5 The Risk Function was subject to an audit by the Joint Internal Auditors, concluding in December. In contrast to the 2022 audit, which rated the force as having limited assurance, the most recent audit assessed the force as having overall substantial assurance in its approach to risk management. There were some minor actions required from the audit to improve controls, the team are working through these actions and will provide an update in due course.

4 PROJECT RISKS

4.1 In the last quarter, 9 projects were closed off and are listed as follows:

- Andi Esra
- Duty Management
- Op Vanguard
- Offender to Recovery
- Midland Regional Tactical Training Centre (MRTTC)
- People Service Implementation
- Performance Data Improvement (PDI)
- National Police dog trials
- Connect

4.2 Potential risks transferring into BAU are currently being explored with the relevant business leads.

5 NEW CORPORATE RISKS

5.1 There has been one new risk escalated to corporate level in the last quarter.

PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE	HIGH
<p><i>A loss of public trust and confidence may:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>make it harder for WMP to gain the cooperation of the public to report and support the investigation of crime</i>- <i>lead to a reduction of engagement with the force from the public</i>- <i>reduce opportunities for delivery of effective service</i>- <i>impact the ability of the force to recruit and retain officers and staff.</i>	

5.2 Operation Strive is the forces approach to restore the trust and confidence of the public and learn the lessons following the decision to ban away fans from the Villa v's Macabi Tel Aviv football match in November 2025.

5.3 There are nine strategic objectives linked to Operation Strive. To support the delivery, a Gold, Silver and bronze command structure has been put in place. The Acting Chief Constable is Gold with the Deputy Chief Constable as the silver commander. There are bronzes aligned to the strategic objectives.

5.4 As part of Operation Strive, there will be a public confidence survey launched to understand the current feelings of the public of the West Midlands, as well as seeking their views on how we can improve.

6 CRITICAL RATED CORPORATE RISK UPDATED

6.1 No corporate risks reflect a critical rating.

7 INCREASED CORPORATE RISKS

7.1 During the last quarter no corporate scores have been increased.

8 REDUCED CORPORATE RISKS

8.1 During the last quarter no corporate scores have been reduced.

9 ACTIVE / OPEN CORPORATE RISKS

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE	MEDIUM
<i>There is a risk that WMP's finances are not sustainable over the medium term. and/or efficiency savings required</i>	
<i>There is a risk that the outcome of the Funding formulae may not be a favourable change for the force.</i>	
<i>There is a risk that future Spending Reviews do not provide sufficient funding for the force.</i>	
<i>There is a risk that spending and budget reviews and necessary restructures and changes may negatively affect dept core service delivery, operational services, dept performance levels as well as retention and wellbeing in the areas.</i>	

9.1 The final police settlement was received on the 28th of January 2026. WMP have been required to make several adjustments as additional information during January was received, following the provisional settlement in December.

9.2 The budget for 2026/27 has now been balanced, the Police and Crime panel agreed to the £15 precept increase on the 2nd of February. The final decision notice is currently being drafted for the OPCC to sign. Although we have balanced 2026/27, pressures remain throughout the MTFP period with our funding gap growing to £53m by 2030/31.

MENTAL HEALTH DETENTIONS	HIGH
<i>There is a risk that legally permissible detention times are expiring before transfer to healthcare can be completed</i>	
<i>and as a result:</i>	
<i>WMP will be forced, frequently, to choose whether to Breach the law by exceeding the legal limitations established under the Mental Health Act (MHA) or, Comply with the law and release an individual who may pose a risk to themselves or others. After the 24hour detention period it is unclear what powers, we can use for use of force. Risk of corporate and personal liability for the officers involved.</i>	
<i>The current legal opinion would suggest that either scenario leaves the force liable to legal challenge or impacting significantly on public confidence.</i>	

9.3 The Mental Health Act 2025 was enacted on the 18th of December 2025 and as WMP anticipated police stations have been removed as a place of safety. What remains unclear is when this part of the Act will be enforced, WMP are currently awaiting clarity from the College of Policing who have confirmed that forces do not need to amend their mental health policies at this time.

9.4 WMP continue to improve handover times, for the last two months there is no indication that we have recorded any detentions under section 136 that have exceeded the legal time frames. This would suggest that the measures that have been put in place through the Right Care, Right Person partnership and our escalation processes are reducing the likelihood of us exceeding the legal framework.

9.5 This risk is currently 'monitored' meaning it will be subject of a quarterly review. The reason for this is that there is nothing further that WMP can do at this time, but given the nature of the risk, it is important that we keep it under periodic review in order to track the impact it is having on WMP.

OP BRIGHTMIND - CONNECT NOMINAL MATCH AND MERGE PROCESS**MEDIUM**

In 2022 WMP Data Analytics Lab algorithm was implemented to identify duplicate records, the list goes to a Robotic automation process referred to as Radical Robot to use the connect match and merge system to merge the records together.

Since launch (Oct 2022) it will have processed hundreds of thousands of records.

In 2024 several records come to light where individual records that are different people have been incorrectly merged. Having checked the Match and Merge process we know:

- The current rules are too expansive*
- The algorithm does not 'apply' them correctly*

It is beneficial to WMP to merge duplicate records together to reduce the risk of not acting on information that is known but linked to a duplicate record. However, merging records also carries the risk of incorrectly merging Nominal records that do not in fact relate to the same person.

- 9.6 Quality checks for all phases up to and including 5 continue. Phase 5 uses first name, surname date of birth and address whereas phase 6 uses first name, surname date of birth and phone number. For each phase a list of IDs is provided for the robot to merge and the results are checked by IM. Phase 6 will no longer be included in the process in identifying matches due to its relaxed tolerance
- 9.7 Once the quality checks have been completed, the findings will be presented to the Data Analytics and Assurance Board to agree the output to robotics and agree closure of this.

10. CORPORATE RISKS AWAITING MOVEMENT

- 10.1 There are currently no corporate risks awaiting movement.

11. CLOSED AND DE-ESCALATED CORPORATE RISKS

- 11.1 There are currently no corporate risks closed in the last quarter.

DEPARTMENTAL RISKS AND ISSUES (CRITICAL / HIGH)**12 OPEN / LIVE DEPARTMENTAL RISKS SCORING HIGH / CRITICAL****PENSIONS CAPABILITY, CAPACITY AND DEMAND****HIGH**

Pensions Team tasks, functions and performance are being negatively impacted by competing demand, impacted areas include:

- Altair system changes*
- Manual intervention and amendments to ITrent Reporting*
- 2006 refunds 1987 additional payment request*
- Mortality screening & overpayments*
- Data Quality investigation and improvements*
- Ill-health underpin Calculations for legacy Scheme*
- Information provision to other forces*
- Transfers In*

12.1 An implementation plan is being formulated and a contract with XPS has been signed. However, the issues remain significant until full implementation in October 2026. HR support is in place and dedicated project support provided.

13 INCREASED DEPARTMENTAL RISKS

13.1 In the last quarter, there were two risks where the scoring has increased. One of these is captured on the sensitive paper.

JLS SOLICITOR ATTRITION AND DEMAND	CRITICAL
<i>Due to solicitor resignations, it is likely there will be a period where we have 1 full time solicitor to litigate work for WMP and Staffordshire Police in the field of misconduct and inquests.</i>	

13.2 The department is carrying a vacancy rate of 23% due to challenges with recruiting suitable staff. This does not include those that are currently working out their notice period.

13.3 Sickness absence, whilst not outside usual tolerance levels, is further impacting the resilience of the department due to existing vacancy levels.

13.4 WMP is not unique in their position and are regularly engaged with other forces to learn from others and look for opportunities to ease the current challenges faced.

14 REDUCED DEPARTMENTAL RISKS

14.1 In the last quarter, no risk scoring was reduced.

15 DEPARTMENTAL RISKS AWAITING MOVEMENT

15.1 There are currently no departmental risks awaiting movement.

16 CLOSED DEPARTMENTAL RISKS

16.1 In the last quarter, two departmental risks were closed, one is listed in the sensitive paper.

REGIONAL IT CONNECTIVITY- CITRIX	LOW
<i>Senior Investigating Officers (SIOs) from non-WMP forces require system access but are currently unable to gain it, hindering their ability to fulfil operational responsibilities.</i>	
<i>Also, problematic the other way with WMP SIO's unable to access other Forces systems.</i>	

16.2 The AVD (Azure Virtual Desktops) solution is live for all Regional Forces, all users have been transferred from the current Citrix access lists. Regional Forces can now utilise this solution whilst connected to their regional IT Network, an issue has arisen where both Warwickshire and Staffordshire Police have intermittent connectivity whilst connected away from their corporate network.

16.3 Both forces use the same technology within their network, and this appears to have caused the issue. WMP have requested supplier information from Staffordshire Police to understand if there is any solution from this product whilst evaluating options from a WMP perspective.

16.4 As an Interim measure WMP have delayed the decommission of Citrix to allow Warwickshire and Staffordshire Police to gain access to WMP systems whilst away from the office due to the criticality of the role undertaken.

16.5 WMP are assured that all forces requiring systems and information have this now and therefore the risk scoring has been reduced to reflect and risk closed.

17 RECOMMENDATIONS

17.1 The Committee to note the contents of the report and any associated appendices.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Melissa Horton

Title: Senior Risk and Assurance Manager

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
