



Accountability and Governance Board

Agenda

Tuesday 28 April 2026

1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Attendees:</p> <p>Wasim Ali, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Sarah Burton, Assistant Chief Constable Paul Drover, Assistant Chief Constable Simon Foster, Police and Crime Commissioner Peter Gillett, Director of Commercial and People Services Scott Green, Acting Chief Constable Jack Hadley, Chief Superintendent Jonathan Jardine, Chief Executive Jennifer Mattinson, Temporary Deputy Chief Constable Anastasia Miller, Chief Superintendent Richard North, Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Mike O'Hara, Assistant Chief Constable Ian Parnell, Assistant Chief Constable Natalie Queiroz, Victims' Advocate Matt Welstead, Assistant Chief Constable</p> <p>Apologies:</p> <p>Simon Down, Head of Policy Alethea Fuller, Deputy Chief Executive Andrew Parsons, Temporary Assistant Chief Constable</p>
2	<p>Notes of last meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.</p>
3	<p>PCC Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The West Midlands Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership has welcomed a significant reduction of nearly 20% in drug-related neighbourhood crime across the region. The West Midlands Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership Progress Report 2025, published in March, shows that drug-related neighbourhood offences have fallen from 1096 to 887 in a 12-month period. There has been progress in connection with investigation successes, saving lives, surges in treatment and dismantling networks. The Police and Crime Plan 2025-29 makes a commitment to reducing harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol. Disruption and enforcement are essential, as well as breaking the cycle of crime by ensuring people can access treatment and recovery services and taking dealers off streets and dismantling criminal networks.- The Winter of Action has been successful, seeing an unprecedented level of collaboration between West Midlands Police and local Community Safety Partnerships. Successes have included more than 280 arrests and the dismantling of a £1.7million cannabis factory. The Home Office initiative targeted issues facing communities, including retail theft, anti-social behaviour and drug-related crime across the region. Key highlights



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	<p>included tackling prolific offenders, major drug busts, and removing weapons, sending a clear message that crime and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated. WMP have worked with partners to make arrests, secure long-term civil injunctions, and rehome vulnerable individuals to break the cycle of reoffending. I am committed to continuing to rebuild community policing to ensure an accessible, reassuring and visible presence out on the streets, to prevent and tackle crime and antisocial behaviour and keep people, families, businesses and local communities safe and secure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Formal assurances have been sought from WMP regarding the safety and security of upcoming local elections on 7th May. Operation Applegreen is the policing plan to protect candidates, staff and voters from harassment, intimidation and electoral malpractice. Free and fair elections are fundamental to democracy and it is essential that candidates can campaign with fear of harassment or intimidation, and that every voter feels safe when attending their local polling station. Reassurance has been sought that operation Applegreen is robust and that lessons from previous elections are applied. The 2026 elections must be safe, secure and accessible for all. WMP have confirmed that a comprehensive security operation is underway, led by the Defending Democracy Team.- On 26th March, the OPCC held the Victims' Summit, chaired by Victims' Advocate Natalie Queiroz, joined by the PCC; Victims' Minister Alex Davis Jones; and Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales, Claire Waxman; as well as other leading partners and providers from across the region. The summit highlighted the Police and Crime Plan's commitment the rights and welfare of victims. Victims must be a top priority for policing and the wider criminal justice system. There was discussion of work taking place regionally and nationally to raise awareness, strengthen and ensure compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice, including a region-wide campaign, and the Victims Innovation Fund. A new Victims Strategy has ben launched, committing to the consistent delivery of victims' rights; ensuring that individual needs are responded to; offering services that are compassionate and empathetic; understanding and improving services; listening to victims and communities; and encouraging innovation. The summit also featured a Victim Support Services Showcase, and a Criminal Justice Panel, and was an opportunity to share a commitment to taking action to ensure that the rights and welfare of victims are at the forefront of policing and the wider criminal justice system.
4	<p>Chief Constable Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Winter of Action saw 288 arrests and was an opportunity to work with Community Safety Partnerships.- The conclusion of the football season presents challenges for policing.- Good weather over the Easter period has led to higher demand on policing.- Operation Applegreen is in place for the election period, with ACC O'Hara as Gold Commander, and experienced Silver and Bronze Commanders in the Force, overseeing the conduct of candidates and campaigners to ensure free and fair elections. WMP are working in partnership with local authorities and returning officers.- Policing continues to see demand from protests and the manifestation of global events impacting local communities. WMP continue to police to balance everybody's needs without fear or favour.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- There was a fatal house fire in Wolverhampton on 24th March which saw two children lose their lives. The thoughts of WMP and the Force Executive Team remain with the children, and their family and friends. WMP are working with the fire service and local authority to seek justice for these children.- ACC Welstead will be leaving WMP this week. ACC Welstead has improved WMP's understanding and approach to disability, difference and diversity, and his legacy will live on in future decision-making.
5	<p>Questions from AGB members</p> <p>Question 1: Asked by Natalie Queiroz, Victims' Advocate</p> <p>This question refers to the BBC news piece on 19th March concerning reports of children, as young as 11 years of age, being criminally sexually exploited in mini-marts in the Dudley area over the last 10 years, with the BBC quoting intelligence involving incidences occurring as recently as 2024. There were claims that West Midlands Police and other authorities in the area had previously discounted these reports despite continuing concerns.</p> <p>Please could West Midlands Police provide an update on the steps being taken to fully investigate these claims, ensuring WMP are in a position to identify all possible offenders and take action where needed. What are West Midlands Police doing to ensure identification of all potential victims, making sure they feel safe to report and are fully supported if and when they do come forward?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It is important that WMP's response to child sexual exploitation (CSE) is scrutinised. The Acting Chief Constable welcomes the opportunity to brief the PCC and Victims' Advocate on this matter in a closed session due to operational sensitivity.- WMP is part of a local safeguarding partnership, and the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership takes these matters extremely seriously. Lead safeguarding partners including police, health service representatives and the local authority, have met, with WMP represented at Chief Officer level by T/ACC Parsons. The partnership also includes education specialists and charities and has reviewed the cases and intelligence within them. Dudley Council is likely to commission an external independent review of its own intelligence, but this is not a decision for WMP.- Collectively, the Partnership remains committed to safeguarding children, responding proportionately to all the concerns and ensuring that every piece of intelligence is examined thoroughly and transparently.- WMP have also reviewed all intelligence within its systems, as well as reviewing open and closed investigations, and remain satisfied that all necessary steps have been taken.- The matter remains operationally sensitive so it is not appropriate to disclose further details in this forum. <p>Question 2: To be asked by Wasim Ali, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner</p>



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	<p>What changes have taken place in the West Midlands Police estate over the past 6 months and how has this impacted on operational policing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Phase one at Ridgepoint House enabled the centralisation of Forensic Scene Investigators (FSI) from Ladywood, Oldbury and Forensic Collision Investigators from Wednesbury. This supported the disposal of Ladywood and Oldbury sites. Phase two completed in December 2025 and focused on refreshing existing spaces across Ridgepoint House, providing improved facilities aligned with Force design standards. Centralising FSI has improved operational policing by enabling stronger mentoring and professional development, ensuring more consistent deployment of resources, enhancing dispatch efficiency, and significantly reducing average dispatch times without impacting arrival times. This has also led to more streamlined internal processes such as exhibit movement, improving timeliness, continuity and overall investigative effectiveness whilst increasing resilience and standardisation right across the forensic service provision for the force.- Secondly, there have been refurbishment works to the Castlegate building, the new Dudley Headquarters. Refurbishments were completed in October 2025, with a public contact office opening in November 2025. Changes included improvements to vital safety and security systems, the creation of a new Victim Care Suite, interview rooms, and a public contact office. This provides improved facilities for officers and staff, as well as victims, witnesses and visiting members of the public.- Work has been ongoing in Smethwick for the enhancement and part disposal of this site. Enhancement works are due to complete imminently, as planned. Improvements will be delivered for operational response and neighbourhood teams remaining on site. This follows approved by the PCC to retain the former Magistrates Court, and to sell the rest of the site, enabling WMP to retain a strong policing presence in the heart of the town at a reduced cost to the public purse, and to ensure better working conditions for officers and staff. Works include improved welfare facilities and building efficiency improvements such as boiler and LED light replacement works. A new Solar PV Scheme is also under consideration as part of the Environmental Strategy, demonstrating commitment to a greener WMP. This is expected to be delivered later in 2026. Surplus land and buildings have been sold subject to contract, with completion expected in a few months' time.- There has been a programme of building works to relocate the Crime Desk from Lloyd House to the Park Lane site in Aston. This is expected to be completed in March 2026. The Crime Desk combines Initial Investigations, Crime Service and Log Quality teams under one umbrella under the leadership of an ACC. This approach enhances investigative efficiency, improves compliance with HMICFRS and the Victims' Code, improves call handling, ensures a structured investigation framework and focuses on quality assurance. The Crime Desk strengthens WMP's ability to manage demand, deploy resources effectively, and deliver a high-quality service. It also offers resilience to 999 call responses. <p>Question 3: To be asked by Wasim Ali, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner</p> <p>What changes are being made to the Driver Training Unit, and what is the new hub model that is being proposed?</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Plans are underway to support a new Three Hub Model for the Driver Training Unit (DTU), including a 10-week programme of work launched at Tipton in March, which will see the provision of two new classrooms, agile office accommodation, and DVSA training booths. There are additional operational vehicle parking facilities on site and additional student parking for officers. The Western Hub is expected to be ready in early summer 2026, with consultation ongoing with staff and officers. The Eastern Hub at Foals Hill will remain a WMP site and will be considered as part of the wider review of the Estate Strategy. A Central Hub solution will be worked through with teams remaining at the Halesowen base whilst work continues. A Three Hub Model allows for easier travel for staff and officers and reduces the carbon footprint.
6	<p>Improving Road and Travel Safety</p> <p>ACC O'Hara presented the paper, Improving Road and Travel Safety. The report provided an overview on progress made by West Midlands Police (WMP) towards the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to Roads Policing, Roads Safety & Safer Travel. and discussion followed. The report can be viewed here: Improving Road and Travel Safety.</p> <p>Action: ACC O'Hara to send the 17 Safety Performance Indicators over to the OPCC for review.</p> <p>Action: ACC O'Hara to come back to JJ with an answer on whether there is feedback provided to operators when fake plates are identified on commercial vehicles.</p>
7	<p>Protecting Victims and Witnesses</p> <p>T/ACC Richard North presented the paper, Protecting Victims and Witnesses. The report provided an overview on progress made by West Midlands Police (WMP) towards the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to protection of victims and witnesses, including compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice. The report can be viewed here: Protecting Victims and Witnesses.</p>
8	<p>Community Safety Partnerships</p> <p>Chief Executive Jonathan Jardine presented the paper, Community Safety Partnerships. The report provided an overview of work between local authorities, police, health authorities, fire and rescue services and probation services. The report can be viewed here: Community Safety Partnerships.</p>
9	<p>CLOSE</p> <p>The next meeting will be on 26th May 2026.</p>