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National Policing Priorities Statement

2025/26 Q4 Update

Introduction

In 2021, the Home Office developed a range of National Policing Priorities with the intent that each police force must achieve significant reductions or improvements in each priority area. The purpose of these measures is to complement existing local priorities set out by the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) Police and Crime Plan.

National Policing Priorities

- Reduce murder and other homicide
- Reduce serious violence
- Disrupt drugs supply and county lines
- Reduce neighbourhood crime
- Improve victim satisfaction with a focus on victims of domestic abuse
- Tackle fraud and cyber crime

Reduce murder and other homicides

For the 12 months ending March 2026, West Midlands Police (WMP) recorded 36 homicides. Domestic abuse continues to be a risk factor in homicide cases, with 5.5% of all homicides during this period linked to domestic abuse. Encouragingly, domestic abuse-related homicides dropped by 75.0% compared to the previous year. This reduction underscores the positive impact of WMP's ongoing efforts to tackle domestic abuse and protect individuals at risk of DA-related homicide.

The PCC has prioritised tackling DA within the West Midlands Police and Crime Plan, with comprehensive work conducted in office focused on prevention, supporting victims, and changing offender behaviour across the region. Most recently, the PCC commissioned a new specialist service to help male victims of domestic abuse, the new service will provide dedicated support for men aged 16 and over assessed as being

at high risk of DA. Integrating a dedicated male domestic abuse service ensures that all victims receive necessary support.

Reduce Serious Violence

Serious violence devastates the lives of victims and families. In the year ending March 2026, recorded violence-with-injury offences fell by 6.8% to 30,127 crimes. This decrease represents a substantial progression in strategies to reduce violent crime. Over the same period, serious youth violence also declined by 2.4%, with 6,291 offences recorded.

Knife and gun crime constitutes a form serious violence that poses a significant threat to community safety and remains a central priority within the Police and Crime Plan. In the year ending March 2026, recorded knife crime offences fell by 7.8%, compared with the previous year. Gun crime declined notably, with a 36.3% reduction. These reductions reflect the impact of effective enforcement, prevention activity and partnership working to reduce serious violence across the West Midlands.

The PCC recently extended 'Operation Fearless' to Soho Road and Handsworth Triangle in the Birmingham Local Policing Area. This deployment is part of ongoing initiatives to prevent and tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, and community violence. The new deployment builds on the success of Operation Fearless in other neighbourhoods. There, the team targeted knife crime, drug dealing, serious youth violence, organised crime, exploitation, shoplifting, and anti-social behaviour with significant results.

Disrupt Drugs Supply and County Lines

In the same period, WMP recorded 9,374 drug offences, marking an 14.1% increase compared to the previous 12 months. Drug trafficking offences rose slightly by 5.0%, while drug possession incidents increased by 17.0%. These rises reflect improved detection and enforcement activity, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted policing in disrupting drug-related crime.

In addition, the PCC has funded a drug and alcohol treatment service for individuals taken into police custody and found to be addicted to drugs and alcohol. By intervening early, at the point of arrest, it helps tackle the root causes of crime, cutting re-offending. This intervention demonstrates the PCC's commitment to proactive crime prevention, addressing the root causes of drug offences rather than merely responding to their consequences.

Reduce Neighbourhood Crime

Preventing and reducing neighbourhood crime is an overarching priority within the Police and Crime Plan. In the year ending March 2026, West Midlands Police (WMP) recorded 44,621 neighbourhood crimes, representing a noteworthy 7.6% reduction from the previous year. Key offences fell significantly: personal robbery dropped by 20.8%, residential burglary by 8.1%, and vehicle crime by 5.4%. Together, these results demonstrate substantial progress in tackling the offences that most impact local communities, helping residents feel safer and more secure.

The ongoing reduction in vehicle theft follows sustained strategic investment led by the PCC, who has delivered a comprehensive approach focused on bolstering frontline resources, dismantling illicit supply chains, and demanding higher standards from the automotive industry. To achieve this, direct funding has meaningfully strengthened both neighbourhood teams and roads policing units to increase visibility and deterrence in high-risk hotspots, while targeted, intelligence-led enforcement continue to track down repeat offenders and disrupt illegal chop shops.

Furthermore, following the publication of the latest vehicle theft index, the PCC has firmly called upon automotive manufacturers to treat security as an absolute priority, urging global brands to quickly patch the digital vulnerabilities and keyless technology exploits currently weaponised by organised gangs.

Improve Victim Satisfaction

Supporting victims remains a core priority for the PCC, with efficient 999 and 101 call handling serving as a critical first step. By ensuring prompt response times, transparent communication, and immediate access to specialist care, WMP actively drives victim satisfaction from the moment of contact. WMP consistently ranks among the top-performing forces nationally for force contact, reinforcing public trust and ensuring that the public receive swift and dependable assistance.

For year ending March 2026, WMP maintained exceptional standard accessibility and responsiveness across its public contact services. Managing high-volume emergency demand, the force processed over 730,700 emergency 999 calls with an outstanding average answer time of just two seconds. Compliance with the national 10-second service level agreement remained high, with 97.0% of emergency calls answered within the target window.

Non-emergency contact channels mirrored this strong operational performance over the same period. WMP answered more than 811,600 non-emergency 101 calls, achieving an average answer time of 30

seconds. Furthermore, the force maintained a 95.7% compliance rate against its three-minute service target, illustrating sustained improvements in call-handling efficiency and public accessibility.

To further enhance understanding of satisfaction, the PCC has launched a comprehensive Public Perceptions Survey to rigorously gauge trust and confidence in WMP. The findings will be used by the PCC to inform future policing priorities and ensure that resources are being used effectively to improve community safety and build public confidence in policing across the West Midlands.

Tackle Fraud and Cyber Crime

Fraud and cybercrime remain serious and growing risks. In the year ending March 2026, Action Fraud received 2,872 reports of cybercrime and 14,490 reports of fraud across the West Midlands. The PCC continues to prioritise strong oversight of WMP, to respond effectively to these crimes.

Moreover, the PCC recently re-launched the West Midlands Fraud Board, a strategic partnership that unites key agencies and stakeholders to combat fraud and cybercrime. By strengthening cross-agency collaboration and enabling knowledge sharing, the board drives a coordinated, regional response to these growing threats.