

Force Management Statement

2022-2023

Official Sensitive



Version Control

Version	Author	Date	History
0.1	[REDACTED]	5 th -12 th May 2023	Individual draft chapters reviewed by FET leads
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Contents

Version Control	2
Contents.....	3
Chief Declaration for West Midlands Police	4
Acronym Glossary	6
Strategic Risk Assessment.....	9
Executive Summary.....	10
1: Finance	16
2: Wellbeing	19
3a: Responding to the Public – Requests for Service.....	26
3b: Responding to the Public – Incident Response.....	32
4: Prevention and Deterrence (Neighbourhood Policing)	37
5: Investigations	46
6: Protecting Vulnerable People	52
7: Managing Offenders	60
8: Managing Serious and Organised Crime.....	65
9: Major Events	70
10: Knowledge Management & IT	74
11a: Force-wide Functions - Professional Standards Department (PSD).....	82
11b: Force-wide Functions: People and Organisational Development	85
11c: Force-wide Functions: Corporate Asset Management	92
12: Collaboration.....	95

Chief Declaration for West Midlands Police

West Midlands Police (WMP) is the second largest police service in England, serving one of the youngest and most diverse communities in the UK with a population of three million people. The region experiences sustained pressure on public services and many acute levels of deprivation which present complexity and challenge that the organisation must continue to address and overcome, in order to provide a service that works effectively to keep people safe.

WMP continues to face significant financial challenges in both the short and medium term and remains one of the poorest funded police services when compared to our most similar forces, driven by a combination of budget cuts and the second worst precepting position in policing. The current inflationary pressures mean that we must continue to recalibrate how we operate to meet current and future policing demand. This includes a broadening mission and the shifting nature of crime, with additional demand and complexity since the last Force Management Statement in areas such as call handling, neighbourhood crime, domestic abuse and vulnerability, cyber and digital.

After a considerable period of austerity, which significantly reduced the number of police officers in the West Midlands, the national investment in 20,000 additional officers through the Uplift programme has led to some welcome growth locally. We have seen officer numbers increase by more than 1376 which provides us with fresh opportunities in terms of different generations bringing different skills and attitudes to deliver an improved service to the public. However, despite these figures, WMP still have 800 less officers than in 2010 with significantly more challenges. The addition of these new officers has required the organisation to tutor and induct them into policing in the last year and 23.5% of the workforce have under 3 years-service. One cannot buy experience and people need time to develop and flourish even in a fast-paced operating environment.

Against this backdrop, in April 2023 we introduced a new local policing model to ensure we are delivering an effective and efficient service to the public which enshrines the principle of local neighbourhood policing. We will carefully balance levels of experience, vacancies and workloads across the organisation as the operating model matures over time. This is a crucial building block in protecting the vulnerable, pursuing those who cause communities so much angst and improving the overall service that West Midlands Police provide to the people we serve.

Each Local Policing Area (LPA) Commander is a Chief Superintendent who is answerable locally, having authority and control of resources to meet local needs most effectively. This means that investigations, response, offender management and neighbourhood policing come together under one local command enabling us to meet the needs of the public better through optimised contact, resource allocation and incident management. Each LPA has a Priority Crime Team as a proactive resource to tackle local issues, as well as maintaining a strong focus on serious and organised crime and exploitation to prevent the harm caused and bring more offenders to justice. This builds on a renewed investigative focus on key crimes including burglary, robbery, vehicle crime and domestic abuse.

This new model is driving a stronger focus on early intervention and prevention, reducing crime and harm levels to local communities through partnership collaboration and exploring co-location opportunities.

Our specialist capabilities and teams including Operations, Intelligence, Force Criminal Investigations Department and Public Protection Unit (PPU) remain an important part of the new model. This ensures that we are 'big enough to cope' with everything that is asked of us and perform to consistently high standards. We remain focused on transforming our response to investigating domestic abuse (DA) and rape and serious sexual offences to improve outcomes for victims.

Providing an improved service that works for local people means ensuring the public can contact us easily and that we can respond quickly with the most appropriate resource. We are making a significant investment in Force Contact and options are being explored to improve resilience and the working environment between teams.

Alongside these changes we continue to explore what technological advances can be made, as well as optimising existing IT systems and equipment to improve efficiencies to enable the organisation to continuously improve.

Underpinning the new model is a renewed focus on ensuring the force is representative of our local communities so we have the skills, cultural awareness and talents we need to serve the public as criminality changes and adapts across communities. This means ongoing investment in staff, their training, development, mobility, agility and providing supportive opportunities during the cost of living crisis.

Declaration by Chief Constable Craig Guildford:

This is the Force Management Statement for West Midlands Police. Except where stated otherwise, the information in this statement is complete and accurate in all material respects.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Guildford', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chief Constable Craig Guildford QPM VR DL

Date: 6th June 2023

Acronym Glossary

AA – Appropriate Authority	DI&E – Diversity, Inclusion and Equality
ACAIT – Adult Care Abuse Investigation Team	DA – Domestic Abuse
AFEP – Achieving Financial Excellence in Policing	DARA – Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment
AI – Artificial Intelligence	DAL – Data Analytics Lab
API – Application Programming Interface	DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service
APMIS - Agency and Partner Management Information System	DF – Digital Forensic
APP – Authorised Professional Practice	DIR – Digital Interview Recording
ARMS – Active Risk Management System	DDP – Detectives Development Programme
ARV – Armed Responsible Vehicle	DEO – Detention Escort Officers
ASB – Anti Social Behaviour	DES – Digital Evidence Store
BAU – Business as Usual	DG6 – Attorney General Directors Guidance 6
BobE – WMP’s live chat robotic solution	DHEP - Detective Degree Holder Entry Programme
BVLOS – Beyond Visual Line of Sight	DMI – Digital Media Investigators
BWV – Body Worn Video	DNS – Domain Name Service
CAID – Child Abuse Image Database	DVPN – Domestic Violence Protection Notice
CAM – Corporate Asset Management	DVPO – Domestic Violence Protection Orders
CCE – Child Criminal Exploitation	E2E – End to End
CSE – Child Sexual Exploitation	EA – Early Advice
CDI – Crime Data Integrity	EAP – Employee Assistance Programme
CDIU – Crime Data Integrity Unit	EASI - Early Awareness Stalking Intervention
CDOP – Child Death Overview Panels	ECU – Economic Crime Unit
CED – Conducted Energy Devices	EMAC – Electronic Monitoring device
CIRV – Community Initiative to Reduce Violence	EMS – Electronic Monitoring Service
CJS – Criminal Justice Services	EMVAWG – Ending Male Violence Against Women and Girls
CL – County Lines	ESI – Enterprise Skills Initiative
CMPG – Central Motorway Policing Group	ESTIP – Emergency Services Trauma Intervention Programme
COP – College of Policing	FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions
COA – Custody Officer Assistant	FCC – Force Contact Centre
CPD – Continual Professional Development	FCID – Force Criminal Investigation Department
CPO – Case Progression Officers	FET – Force Executive Team
CPS- Crown Prosecution Service	FGM – Female Genital Mutilation
CRU – Central Referral Unit	FMA – Force Medical Advisor
CSE – Child Sexual Exploitation	FNO – Foreign National Offenders
CTSFO – Counter Terrorist Specialist Firearms Officers	FOI – Freedom of Information
CT – Counter Terrorism	FOU – Firearms Operating Unit
CTU – Counter Terrorism Unit	FPT – Force Priorities Team
CWG – Commonwealth Games	FSI – Forensic Services Investigations
	FSU – Force Support Unit
	FTE – Full-time Equivalent

GPS – Global Positioning System	NHT – Neighbourhood Teams
GUID - Global Unique Identifier	NIE – National Investigators Exam
HFA – Health and Fitness Advisor	NPAS – National Police Air Service
HOCA – Home Office Counting Rules	NPCC – National Police Chief’s Council
HT – Human Trafficking	NPWS – National Policing Wellbeing Service
IAG – Independent Advisory Group	OCG – Organised Crime Group
III – Internet Intelligence Investigation	OCSET - Online Child Sexual Exploitation Team
IOM – Institute of Offender Management	OH – Occupational Health
IOPC – Independent Office for Police Conduct	OIC – Organised Immigration Crime
IPP - Intelligence Professionalisation Programme	OIC – Officer in Charge of an Investigation
IT&D – Information Technology and Digital	OK – Oscar Kilo Framework
ITIL – Information Technology Infrastructure Library	OM – Offender Management
IVR – Interacted voice response	OOCDD – Out of Court Disposals
JAR – Joint Agency Response	ORU – Operations Resilience Unit
JTAI – Jointed Targeted Area Inspection	PACE – Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
JLS – Joint Legal Services	PBB – Priority Based Budgeting
KIN – Key Individual Networks	PCC/OPCC – Police and Crime Commissioner
KIRAT - Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool	PCD – Pre-Charging Decisions
KPI – Key Performance Indicator	PCO – Public Contact Offices
L&D – Learning and Development	PEEL – Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy
LOMU – Lifetime Offender Management Unit	PEQF – Policing Early Qualifications Framework
LPA – Local Policing Areas	PKI – Public Key Infrastructure
LRF – Local Resilience Forum	PNC – Police National Computer
LRO – Lead Responsible Officers	PND – Police National Database
LTDB – Local Tasking Delivery Board	POD – People and Organisational Development
MAI – Manchester Arena Inquiry	PPU – Public Protection Unit
MAPPA - Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements	PRT – Protest Removal Team
MARAC – Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences	PSD – Professional Standards Department
MASH – Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub	PTSD – Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
MDS – Modern Day Slavery	QA – Quality Assurance
MDT - Multidisciplinary Team	RAP – Reasonable Adjustment Passport
MORiLE - Management of Risk in Law Enforcement	RASSO – Rape and Serious Sexual Offences
MOSOVO - Management of Sexual and Violent Offenders Course	ROCTA – Regional Organised Crime Threat Assessment
MS – Modern Slavery	ROCU – Regional Organised Crime Unit
MSHT – Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking	ROCUWM – Regional Organised Crime Unit West Midlands
NABIS – National Ballistics Intelligence Service	RPA- Robotics and Process Automation
NCA – National Crime Agency	RSO – Registered Sex Offender
NECC – National Economic Crime Centre	S&S – Stop and Search
NHP – Neighbourhood Policing	SAC – Serious Acquisitive Crime

SDA – Strategy, Delivery and Assurance

SEG – Stakeholder Engagement Group

SFO – Specialist Firearms Officers

SHPO – Sexual Harm Prevention Orders

SIM – Service Improvement Meeting

SIO – Senior Investigating Officer

SLA – Service Level Agreement

SMB – Strategic Management Board

SME – Subject Matter Expert

SOCEX – Serious and Organised Crime and Exploitation

SOH – Single Online Home

SOM – Sexual Offender Management

SPO – Stalking Protection Orders

SRO – Sexual Risk Order

STO – Specially Trained Officers

STRA – Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment

STCG – Strategic Tasking Coordination Groups

SUDI – Sudden Unexplained Child Deaths

T&E – Testing and Exercising

THRIVE - Threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement

TIPP – Trauma Informed Policing Programme

TOEX – Tackling Organised Exploitation

TRiM – Trauma Risk Management

TRT – Turnaround Time

TTCG - Tactical Tasking and Commissioning Group

UoF – Use of Force

USG – Urban Street Gangs

VAIWG/VAWG – Violence/Intimidation against Women and Girls

VCOP - Code of Practice for Victims of Crime

VEP – Video Enabled Policing

VFM – Value for Money

VRP – Violence Reduction Partnership

WLO – Welfare Liaison Officer

WTR – Working Time Regulations

YOY – Year on Year

Strategic Risk Assessment

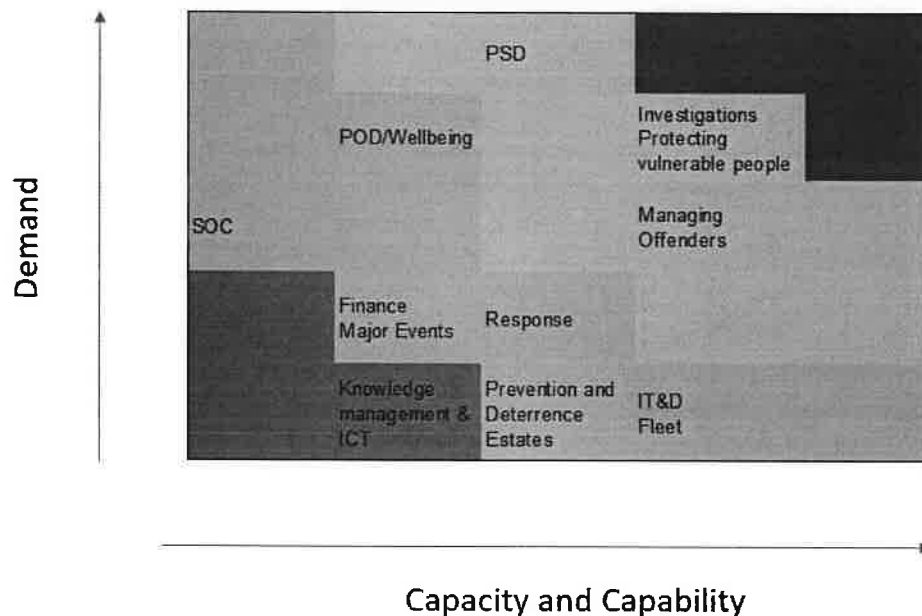
West Midlands Police has applied the same criteria and RAG (Red/Amber/Green) assessment against each chapter of the statement, as per the previous Force Management Statement:

Green/Green: The organisation is confident in the asset state and expects it to match current and future demand with minimal change and is showing good or exemplary performance.

Green: The organisation is confident in the asset state and expects it to match current and future demand with minimal change.

Amber: The organisation is confident in the asset state but expects challenges to meet current and / or future demand and will require more strategic action.

Red: The organisation has either concerns over the asset state, its ability to meet current and / or future demand or its ability to mitigate these challenges.



Executive Summary

Chapter 1 - Finance

Through its financial planning approach, West Midlands Police (WMP) continues to build on its excellent track record of delivering balanced budgets, allocating investment where possible to priority areas to best meet operational demand and making savings and efficiencies in non-priority areas. However, WMP is no different to other organisations and is facing exceptional financial pressures because of both domestic and global economic events. A strong focus has been made on addressing these issues both in the current year and planning for the next financial year.

Chapter 2 – Wellbeing

West Midlands Police (WMP) is committed to being an employer of choice. We therefore take our responsibility to support the health and wellbeing of all our colleagues very seriously and are confident we have continued to build on our work in this area since the PEEL inspection for 2021-22.

We continue to focus upon developing a culture that invests in values and improves the health and wellbeing of all our colleagues. The focuses for 2023 onwards are to continuously improve our wellbeing provision and improve capacity and capability in Occupational Health.

With the additional Wellbeing Advisor added to the team to assist in the implementation of the Wellbeing Strategy and utilisation of the Blue Light and Oscar Kilo frameworks, it is anticipated that WMP will continue to see an improvement in the joined-up offer delivered to colleagues. We have introduced a number of voluntary roles such as mental health first aiders, welfare liaison officers and peer supports to help and advise.

Chapter 3a – Responding to the Public - Requests for Service

In May 2022, West Midlands Police (WMP) was amongst the worst performing Forces nationally, when measured against the key metric of 999 response. Since June 2022, a significant process of change under the Force Contact Optimisation Project, has been implemented and has resulted in a current position in March 2023 where WMP are just outside of the top quartile for performance. It is anticipated that with the governance and performance structure in place, activity will ensure we continue an upward trajectory.

To assist in improving our calls to service, WMP are committed to increasing the resources available in our contact centres, as well as utilising the skills bank of staff to fill resource levels during peak periods. As well as building on our resources, we will be reviewing our systems and processes to ensure our service delivery is the best it can be. We are committed to review where our calls for service are likely to be, specifically ensuring that our response to the elderly and vulnerable are monitored to ensure they receive the best possible service.

Chapter 3b – Responding to the Public – Incident Response

West Midlands Police (WMP) continues to monitor response times on our P1-P3 logs and we flex staffing to ensure that our capability and capacity match requests for service. From April 2023, WMP moved to a new localised operating model which has divided the organisation into seven Local Policing Areas (LPA). The new operating model sees the four functions of responding, investigating (up to s.18 Assaults and some domestic abuse offences), neighbourhood policing and offender management

locally located within each LPA, under the command of a single leadership team and Commander. The model gives Local Commanders greater flexibility to use this increased number of locally based resources to respond to local needs, community priorities and performance expectations. Whilst the model embeds and uplift numbers continue to arrive at LPA's, there will inevitably be a requirement to deploy staff from other functions within the LPA to respond to calls for service. By doing this we will remain in a strong position to meet our SLA for P1, P2 and P3 incidents and since the 3rd April 2023, we have seen improvements across all three P grades. It is anticipated by Autumn 2023 when the final student officers have arrived at the responding functions across the organisation, the need to flex other (non-responding) LPA resources will reduce.

The Covid pandemic, the increased cost of living and the reduced service provision of partner agencies is having an impact on the nature and number of the calls for service that WMP receive. We anticipate the rise in mental health calls will continue and that this will challenge us as an organisation as well as our partners. Without intervention, this is likely to result in our officers spending more time and offering increased support to these calls. To support this area of business, WMP have now got in place a Mental Health Escalation Framework, are developing a Mental Health Strategy, are launching a Mental Health and Policing Strategic Partnership Group and are in the advanced stages of planning to implement the Right Care, Right People project.

Whilst the new operating model represents a significant shift in how WMP operate, it brings with it many benefits and improvements as to how we respond to the public. We will continue to embed learning from the Commonwealth Games and data analytics lab insights to ensure we effectively deploy and manage our resources and we will work hard to ensure we find an appropriate balance between consistency of our service delivery whilst meeting local need.

Chapter 4 – Prevention and Deterrence

The new operating model has improved West Midlands Police's (WMP) ability to engage with communities and the improve trust, confidence and legitimacy in policing. The development of a Neighbourhood Policing Strategy is underway which will provide a clear offer to communities of what to expect from local neighbourhood policing teams. Neighbourhood Policing (NHP) continues to focus on embedding and integrating the seven NHP guidelines, with a continuing emphasis on a place-based approach to policing, as well as an improved problem-solving response to managing entrenched issues and long-term problems. The officer uplift secured across NHP will further enhance our problem-solving capability. It will provide dedicated resource working with schools and early help to reduce criminal exploitation and youth violence. As an organisation, we will be working with our partners closely through a number of initiatives to ensure a preventative approach is taken to anti-social behaviour as well as upskilling our officers in managing trauma and utilising new technologies such as QR codes to learn from our interactions with the public.

Chapter 5 – Investigations

The organisation has seen a significant change to how we investigate crimes – the new operating model allows West Midlands Police (WMP) to investigate a greater volume of offences, more effectively and efficiently. Local investigative teams now investigate a broader range of crimes, including neighbourhood crimes, whilst the central Major Crime Unit investigate the more complex and organised crime types. The allocation of crimes to local neighbourhood teams increases overall investigative capacity and capability whilst aligning local officers to local crimes.

The organisation has surpassed the target for officer uplift. To counter the known shortage of trained and accredited Detectives, a Detective Pipeline Strategy has been developed to identify internal talent

and ensure a range of entry routes such as the DC Detective Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) and DC Police Now. The strategy and subsequent delivery plan will ensure WMP has sufficient investigators to manage demand across all areas of investigation in the future. There continues to be sustained incremental improvements in positive outcomes against key crime types.

A new Digital Investigations Strategy will ensure appropriate training, equipment and coordination for investigators. This approach recognises the ever-increasing role of digital media, CCTV and telecoms data in our day-to-day investigations. Investments into Forensic Services and Case Management Units (CMU) will ensure files can be prepared swiftly and evidence provided at the earliest opportunity. WMP have recently opened an additional two custody facilities, ensuring more cell capacity is available across the force area, enabling frontline staff to progress investigations more efficiently.

Chapter 6 – Protecting Vulnerable People

The Public Protection Unit (PPU) has an established departmental structure with thematic Superintendent leads for Child, Adult and Complex (which incorporates the investigation of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO)). The balance of investigations across Adult Abuse and Complex Teams is under review as part of the new operating model and WMP is cognisant of the learning through Operation Soteria. The organisation has a Vulnerability Strategy that covers all strands of vulnerability. There is a Vulnerability Improvement Board chaired by a Chief Officer which monitors activity across these strands and each strand is led by a senior leader with minutes and action trackers. We continue to observe high levels of complexity when supporting those with wide-ranging vulnerabilities.

The organisation has a strong commitment to improving the skillset and knowledge of our teams so that they can better protect vulnerable people. A Skills Matrix Audit was completed early 2023 to understand what skills and training the PPU has across the department and to inform a training needs analysis which will drive the allocation of courses. From July 2022 to January 2023, 59 PPU officers and 21 Police Staff Investigators have passed the National Investigators Exam (NIE) and either been enrolled on or are in the demand for the Detectives Development Programme (DDP) course in the next financial year. Further recent changes include the publication of a New Starter induction pack on the intranet and change of shift patterns to ensure Child and Complex Officers have one Continual Professional Development (CPD) training day every six weeks.

Chapter 7 – Managing Offenders

The management of offenders within West Midlands Police (WMP) is undergoing significant change in its structure and functioning as we complete the transition into our new operating model. Sex Offender Management is now delivered by the Public Protection Unit (PPU) and the Violence Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) nominals are owned by Local Policing Areas (LPAs). Responsibility for Integrated Offender Management is retained by LPA commanders.

Chapter 8: Managing Serious and Organised Crime

West Midlands Police (WMP) has enhanced capacity and capability in Serious and Organised Crime and Exploitation (SOCEX) and as part of the operating model changes further strength will be added. The organisation has a mature understanding of the threats faced from SOCEX and the now embedded approach provides consistency to identifying, assessing, managing and disrupting a broader range of threats.

Progress has been made in identifying and tackling the threats from organised exploitation networks, which can often be hidden beneath the surface, but our threat grid now consistently includes networks who exploit both children and adults for criminal purposes.

The embedding of dedicated SOCEX resources into partnership hubs has enhanced our response to threats at a tactical level and has improved the sharing of information to inform our longer-term strategic partnership approaches. The organisation continues to have strong working relationships with the Regional Organised Crime Unit West Midlands (ROCUWM) who are a key contributor in tackling those threats that require the deployment of capabilities held in and accessible by the ROCU.

We are continuing to deliver a greater volume and wider variety of disruptions against those SOCEX networks who cause our communities the greatest harm. In 2022-23, the organisation recorded 3047 disruptions against identified SOCEX threats.

However, some significant threats persist. The threat from unlawfully held firearms is ever present and is felt most intensely locally, when firearms come into the hands of younger members of Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) or those operating as part of less organised but often far more chaotic and unpredictable Urban Street Gangs (USGs).

The threats relating to the criminal exploitation of vulnerable people, both child and adult, continue to be better understood and addressed with the existence of the networks driving this criminality more visible in our threat grid. The complexity involved with these type of investigations means we are seeing the end-to-end process of - identification of threat to dismantling of networks – which adds time and requires more resource.

The development and delivery of a dedicated County Lines Task Force (CLTF) has improved performance against dismantling drugs lines and achieving Criminal Justice outcomes. The development of this capability continues, supported by plans for the organisation to create a dedicated force-level surveillance capability in the summer of 2023.

Chapter 9: Major Events

West Midlands Police (WMP) has delivered and supported various major events and operations over the past year including Coventry City of Culture, Commonwealth Games, [REDACTED] Football and Rugby World Cups and a range of protest activity in relation to global and national affairs. These include strikes related to the cost of living crisis, protests against climate change and other environmental factors and global matters such as Iran, Palestine and Ukraine.

Our policing capacity and capability to counter the Strategic Policing Requirement threats remains strong.¹ However, we are mindful that we must continue to assess and monitor threats as we expect them to change over the next four years. Amongst other governance processes, threat assessments are completed weekly with intelligence updates for senior leadership to review and proportionately respond to and resource. This can include the mobilisation of gold, silver or bronze command structures.

Chapter 10 – Knowledge Management & IT

Significant resource investment was made in 2022 allowing the department to expand service offerings to West Midlands Police (WMP) and enabling the implementation of the new technology strategy for the Force (Synergy).

¹ Our analysis of the Strategic Policing Requirement is covered in this chapter but also in chapters 5, 6 and 8.

The new strategy which has been recognised nationally as best practice sees a significant move from large technical change programmes and a re-focus on continuous improvement initiatives, seeing smaller and faster agile design, development and deployment. In addition, new capabilities including User Experience and additional Cloud Services are being introduced, both with a view to exploiting new systems and technologies.

Whilst existing resources across Information Technology & Digital (IT&D) were challenged with supporting a number of high-profile operations during 2022, including the Commonwealth Games, a clear focus on organisational priorities and associated governance meant that business as usual service levels were achieved, alongside the successful delivery of a number of new technical implementations, proving positive for the function with a high level of achievement.

Requests into the IT&D service desk was lower in 2022 and for the first quarter of 2023 but clear links can be made between this and the improvements in the live service support model offered to the organisation. Outside of an isolated peak in degradation of service, service requests have continued to fall, which is attributable to a continued focus on well managed change and release management, as well as more effective self-help tools.

The department will continue to re-assess, triage and prioritise requests for IT assistance, ensuring resources can be flexed to deliver against the digital ambition outlined in the technology strategy and aligned to the new organisation service level agreements (SLAs) for the new operating model.

Information Management

We have retained our “Outstanding” rating in a recent audit by the Standards and Compliance Unit of the Disclosure and Barring Service. The force has achieved this highest of standards in this area for the third consecutive year.

Data Analytics

WMP continue to benefit from our in-house Data Analytics Lab, utilising advanced data science methods to gain information from the plethora of data held by WMP (and gathered in the course of its day-to-day business).

Chapter 11a – Force-wide Functions - Professional Standards Department (PSD)

West Midlands Police (WMP)’s Professional Standards Department (PSD) continues to deal with some of the most complex investigations. These investigations focus on learning and improving the overall policing service, rather than an exclusively punitive approach to errors and mistakes. The focus for the next 12 months is to continue to progress timely misconduct investigations. Consideration will be given to all the learning and information from the Baroness Casey report, HMICFRS vetting review and historical data wash to continually improve our working practices and improve trust and confidence. Our new staffing and structures have allowed us to increase timeliness in investigations and complaints and understanding and use data to continue to develop innovative preventative approaches.

Chapter 11b – Force-wide Functions – People and Organisational Development (POD)

West Midlands Police (WMP) have continued to be dedicated to building a culture which supports, encourages and enables colleagues to be the best they can. This is driven by our focus on enabling colleagues to own their own professional development and open opportunities to enable them to be successful.

Now that we have achieved our uplift requirements for police officers, we are keen to ensure WMP is seen and felt to be an employer of choice through the breadth of HR and organisational development activities. In particular, we are focusing on retaining the wide range of talent we have amongst both police staff and police officers. We are committed on increasing diversity in our teams as well as looking at other on-boarding opportunities such as a wider range of apprenticeship programmes.

We continuously review and improve our ways of working to ensure we can support all our colleagues in the best way possible to meet current and emerging needs, with a strong focus upon performance management.

Chapter 11c – Force-wide Functions – Corporate Asset Management

A new Environmental Strategy, based on best practice, has been launched for the period of 2022-27 which details how over the next five years we will build on our existing approach to sustainability, modernise our estate, further electrify our fleet and engage our supply chain. These activities all progress towards our ambition of Net Zero by 2035 and they necessitate proactive working with our partners in emergency services and with regional and national stakeholders. In addition to Environmental Strategy, the Corporate Asset Management team have made significant progress in a short period of time to adapt our estate and fleet for the new operating model and this activity will continue into 2024.

Chapter 12 – Collaboration

As identified in the most recent PEEL inspection, West Midlands Police (WMP) maintains mature and well-established collaborations that need to be resourced appropriately so that they continue to function effectively. These include Legal and Forensic Services, Counter-Terrorism, Central Motorway Policing Group (CMPG) and the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU).² As one of 2023-26 Strategic Goals, we continue to explore further opportunities to maximise the impact of statutory and other partnership activities to better serve the public.

² The ROCU is discussed in other chapters so is not included here. See chapters 5 and 8 for more information on this partnership. Similarly, the CMPG is discussed in chapter 9 so is not referenced here.

1: Finance

Executive Overview:

Through its financial planning approach, West Midlands Police (WMP) continues to build on its excellent track record of delivering balanced budgets, allocating investment where possible to priority areas to best meet operational demand and making savings and efficiencies in non-priority areas. However, WMP is no different to other organisations and is facing exceptional financial pressures because of both domestic and global economic events. A strong focus has been made on addressing these issues both in the current year and planning for the next financial year.

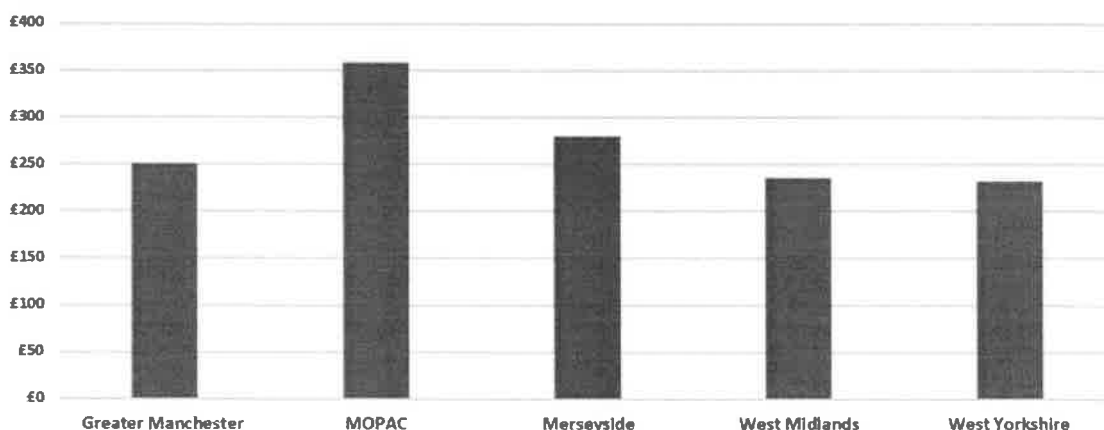
Financial Position

In the early part of 2022-23 the organisation faced a projected annual overspend of more than £5m due to the exceptional financial pressures due to domestic and global economic events. The impact included increased inflation, higher and inadequately funded pay awards, higher energy costs and contract prices.

Like other Forces, WMP continues to face significant financial challenges in both the short and medium term and remains by far the poorest funded Police Service when compared to our most similar Forces. Between 2010 and 2018, WMP's government funding was cut by £175m with the consequential loss of 2,221 police officers (25% of our police officers) and police staff, including 300 Police Community Support Officers.

The national police funding formula disproportionately disadvantages WMP to the sum of around £40 million per year. All of this has had, and will continue to have, a serious adverse impact on WMP's ability to prevent and tackle crime. Based on the funding settlement for 2022-23, the chart below shows the funding received per head of population, compared to our most similar group Forces. Compared to Greater Manchester Police, WMP received £17 million less in 2022-23, despite a larger, more deprived and urbanised population.

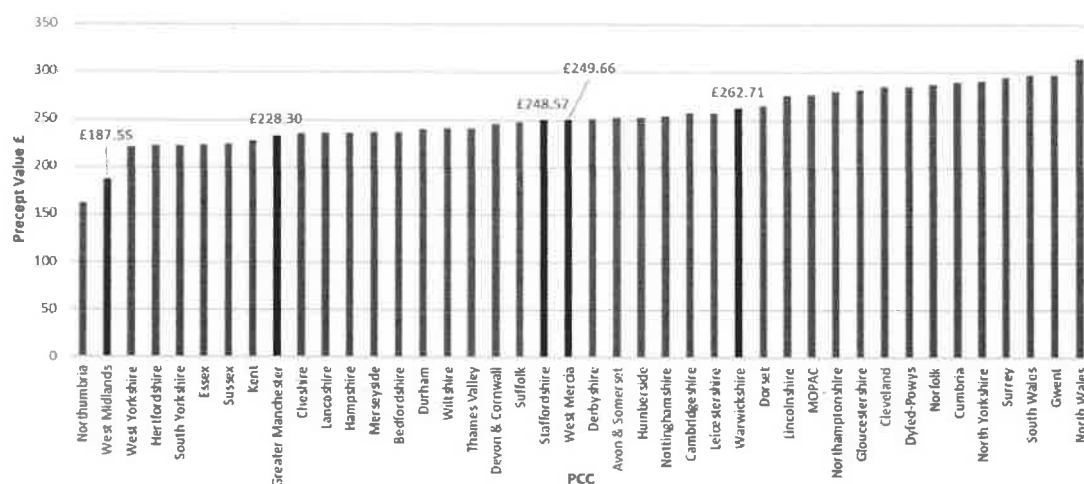
Funding Per Head of Population - Police Settlement 2022/23



The financial disadvantage is further exacerbated when Council Tax precept is taken into consideration. The graph below shows the Council Tax precept Band D levied across all Forces for 2022-23 if all Police and Crime Commissioners increased their precept by £10. The graph demonstrates

the West Midlands continues to have the second lowest policing Council Tax precept in the country at £187.55 for a Band D property. This is compared to £315.61 for the highest and significantly less than its nearest neighbours and other similar Forces. For example, neighbouring police Band D Council Tax precepts with a £10 increase in 2022/23 will be as follows: Staffordshire £248.97; Warwickshire £262.96 and West Mercia £250.19.

Police Precept, England and Wales - 2022-23 Band D Precept



Whilst the National Uplift Programme closes the gap in funding and distribution of officers, compared to police officer numbers in 2010, WMP will still have 271 fewer officers per 100,000 population.

Despite the challenges detailed above, through effective financial management, and specific saving interventions, WMP is now forecasting a full year underspend of circa £11m for 2022-23. The savings for 2022-23 are a combination of tactical one-off savings, and savings delivered through the Force-wide Priority-Based Budgeting (PBB) exercise.

Financial position

The 2023-24 police financial settlement was announced in December 2022. Against a backdrop of economic difficulties including high inflation, the annual settlement included the following headlines:

A commitment to maintain overall headcount, comprised of the agreed Police Uplift baseline, plus the allocation of the 20,000 additional officers. For WMP this equates to £16.8m in 2023-24, which is conditional on WMP maintaining a headcount of 7,909.

- £15 precept flexibility per Band D property
- Flat cash pension grant allocations compared to previous years.
- No capital grant funding to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)

There is an expectation to pay for the 2022 and 2023 pay award from the funding settlement. This will be a significant cost to the force budget.

Funding for the social care levy has been removed from core funding, due to the cessation of the increased contributions in November 2022.

Forces will be required to fund other significant cost pressures. These include increases in the cost of gas, electricity, fuel, and general inflation; currently at record levels, and other costs.

The Government expects the police to continue to build on the progress made on improving efficiency and productivity, expecting to see at least £100m of cashable efficiency savings by 2024-25. In addition, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has been commissioned to conduct a review of operational productivity in policing.

Despite an increase in precept funding and the allocated national police grant, there is a savings requirement for 2023-24 of £28.1m. Whilst the medium-term financial plan does outline a balanced position for 2023-2024, pressures on the revenue budget will continue to result in planned use of reserves and continued savings requirements in future years. To manage the funding shortfall in 2023-24 of £28.1m, the organisation has continued its good track record of using a PBB approach (with planned delivery of circa. £13m savings already in place); we will consider restricting and reprofiling non-essential spend; and take out one off short-term borrowing to fund part of the capital programme.

Work is underway to embed the newly launched operating model and the financial implications of which will be reflected in further updates to the financial plans. The focus is now identifying and delivering further efficiencies and savings for 2024-25.

WMP continues to maintain a strong track record of annual financial audits, with our external auditors having confirmed another good and unqualified set of accounts prepared for last financial year. We recently received the latest value for money assessment and overall, the Grant Thornton Value for Money (VFM) Report was very positive with only three minor improvement recommendations.

The summary position was:

Criteria	Risk assessment	2020/21 Auditor Judgment	2021/22 Auditor Judgment	Direction of travel
Financial sustainability	No risks of significant weakness identified	No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but improvement recommendation made	No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but improvement recommendations made	↔
Governance	No risks of significant weakness identified	No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but improvement recommendation made	No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but improvement recommendation made	↔
Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness	No risks of significant weakness identified	No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but improvement recommendation made	No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified.	↔

 No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified or improvement recommendation made.
 Significant weaknesses in arrangements identified and key recommendations made.

Forward Look

The organisation plays a key role in the national Achieving Financial Excellence in Policing (AFEP) programme and ensures that best practice developed in the programme is adopted. We have worked with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy to review and provide an independent third party review of our assumptions and our approach to financial planning, which we will continue to do as this represents best practice. The organisation is in a good position to further establish a 'commercial mindset' – to unlock greater potential from all its assets – whether buildings, people, intellectual property or services to others – and is developing an approach to maximise those opportunities and increase income levels.

2: Wellbeing

Executive Overview:

West Midlands Police (WMP) is committed to being an employer of choice. We therefore take our responsibility to support the health and wellbeing of all our colleagues very seriously and are confident we have continued to build on our work in this area since the PEEL inspection for 2021-22.

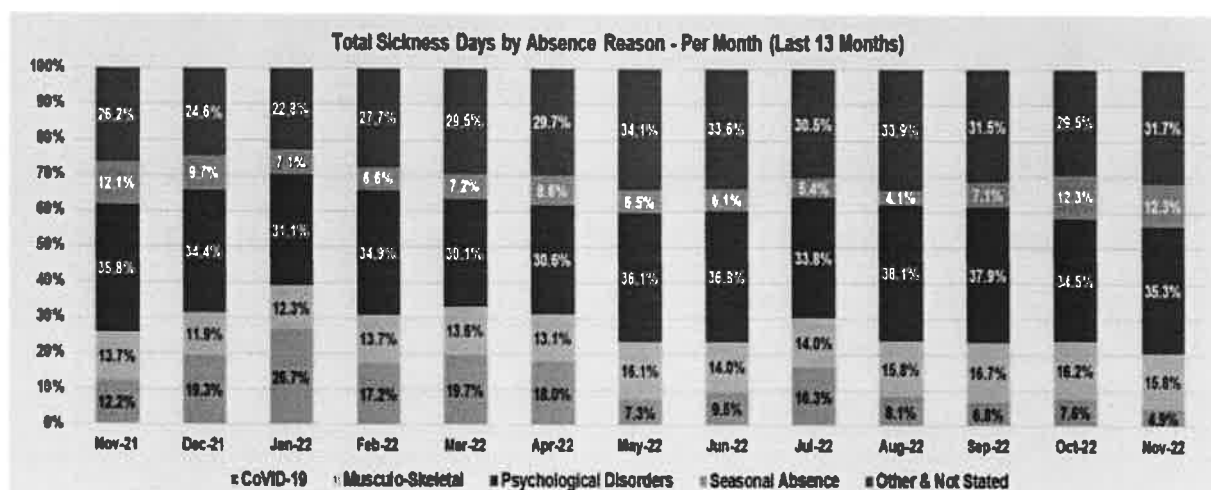
We continue to focus upon developing a culture that invests in values and improves the health and wellbeing of all our colleagues. The focuses for 2023 onwards are to continuously improve our wellbeing provision and improve capacity and capability in Occupational Health.

With the additional Wellbeing Advisor added to the team to assist in the implementation of the Wellbeing Strategy and utilisation of the Blue Light and Oscar Kilo frameworks, it is anticipated that WMP will continue to see an improvement in the joined-up offer delivered to colleagues. We have introduced a number of voluntary roles such as mental health first aiders, welfare liaison officers and peer supports to help and advise.

Force Attendance

Attendance at the end of 2022 was 94% for all employee types. This ranges from 91.8% for police community support officers (PCSOs) to 94.6% for police officers. Attendance rates across all person types apart from PCSOs, shows an improved picture when compared to the same period in 2021. In November 2021, overall attendance was 93.2%, with police officer attendance at 93.4% and PCSO attendance at 92.6%.

Attendance rates peaked in June 2022 at 95.3%. Sickness due to psychological disorders has consistently been the highest reason for absence and, on average, accounted for 35.4% of absence each month. The information below is used to influence where we may need to amend or improve our wellbeing offer.



Sickness related to Covid has significantly reduced in the last 12 months and now accounts for less than 5% of all sickness, compared to 12.2% in November 2021. Part of this reduction can be accounted for by the change in the Covid testing approach across the country, with fewer tests being taken, together with the less aggressive nature of more recent strains of the virus.

While current functionality of our systems does not provide detailed analysis of the Working Time Regulations (WTR), the organisation can compile ad-hoc reports as requested to review the number of staff and officers who have exceeded the working time directive. For example, in April 2023, of those who exceeded the 48-hour week, the average recorded number of hours over was 4.28. The organisation has robust processes to monitor fitness for work and does not predict an increase in number of officers and staff who exceed WTR.

Occupational Health Referrals

The table below illustrates that nearly three and a half thousand referrals were received during the year to the Occupational Health team as outlined below. In addition, the department has continued to support the Uplift programme, along with business as usual throughout the year.

Referrals by Employment Type	Overall workforce	Police Officers	PCSO's	Staff
1 October - 31 December 2021	928	601	42	285
1 January - 31 March 2022	791	530	45	216
1 April - 30 June 2022	850	596	44	210
1 July - 30 September 2022	903	641	39	223
Total referrals in period	3,472	2,368	170	934
Percentage of referrals		68%	5%	27%
Percentage of WMP		62%	4%	34%

Police Officer Assaults

Both recording categories (Assault without Injury on a Constable covers Assault by Beating; Assault with Injury on a Constable groups together S47, S20 and S18 offences) have remained stable.

The offer of support to an officer following an assault must, in both the short and longer term, consider the need for both physical and psychological support. This will of course differ from person to person, but WMP follows a core wellbeing approach when any assault occurs. Consideration is given to the experiences of colleagues who have suffered multiple incidents of assault and abuse over the course of their duties and career.

In the early stages following the assault of a colleague, a supervisor will take the lead for wellbeing support, and a Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) practitioner may be allocated to risk assess the trauma they have been subjected to.

Within the 24 hours following a TRiM activation, a suitable practitioner can arrange a trauma intervention brief. We have doubled the number of TRiM practitioners in the last 12 months and they take responsibility for maintaining meaningful and regular contact with colleagues in need of support, including monitoring their behaviour.

Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2024

There has been considerable investment to embed the Wellbeing Strategy and utilise the Blue Light and Oscar Kilo (OK) Frameworks in recent years.

The Strategy incorporates five key workstreams and the ambition for each is outlined below with an assessment of the units, resources and departments dedicated to wellbeing and their current and future status.

It should be noted that all our student officers are provided with comprehensive wellbeing support as we are mindful that it can be a stressful time in their lives. This includes the Student Welfare Portal which links to our central Wellbeing Portal that offers “How To” guides on various topics. We deliver TRiM awareness sessions to cohorts so that when they are fully qualified they can better identify and manage trauma.³



1. Clinical Provision

Clinical services are provided through the Occupational Health (OH) department. The service is comprised of a number of specialities including nurses, nurses with OH qualifications, Force Medical Advisors (FMAs), physiotherapists and mental health specialists - the service is best described as multidisciplinary. The multi-disciplinary team (MDT) undertake a number of activities to support the lifespan of officers and staff at WMP from pre-placement (pre-employment) screening, to ongoing health checks (health surveillance) for specific roles such as firearms. The MDT will provide intervention when things go wrong such as specialist advice or recommend workplace adjustment plans. Teams such as physiotherapy and psychological support, can provide short term non-prescribed treatment if required. The OH service provides a core function to support illness, absence and disability through case management. This is carried out by nurses and FMAs and includes onward referral where indicated. In addition to the primary services described above, fitness advisors support physical health to prevent injury and maintain optimum performance in officer safety.

As well as the routine service offer, the organisations OH unit supports with public health matters that impact on the workforce capability such as the recent pandemic, providing both Gold and Silver support as well as individual assessments to our most vulnerable people. The service supports, prevents and advises on matters relating to accidental exposure to blood borne viruses such as hepatitis and HIV.

The OH unit is experiencing significant pressure and capacity issues, compounded by a national workforce shortage of clinical specialists. This, as well as a high demand on public health services such as the NHS and primary care due to the pandemic, are impacting on the capacity of the service to meet required levels of service and is affecting our performance. WMP's experience is, in part, mirrored by

³ See chapter 11b for more information on our we support and develop our student officers.

other Forces (and industries) due to the lack of trained and affordable OH professionals (including FMAs) in the labour market. We are working to address this including through a transformational review of the service, supported by colleagues in Strategy, Direction and Assurance (SDA) to ensure that it is fit for purpose going forward and works collaboratively with other departments

2. Trauma Support

As outlined above, a number of colleagues are assaulted during their work duties and the Wellbeing Team provide them with a robust support package to help address the immediate trauma, increase resilience, prevent ill health and ultimately increase attendance. This includes Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing) and crisis support. As described above, we are very proud of our well-established TRiM Practitioners. Our current establishment is nine managers, 39 practitioners and 156 Mental Health First Aiders. In addition, we have three new OK9 wellbeing dogs to help support trauma compared to the one dog we had last year.

WMP is one of the first Police services within England to embark on a successful Trauma-Informed Project to enable our colleagues to become more aware and “empathetic to trauma.”⁴ The training provided enables our supervisors to better understand trauma and be able to better identify trauma in teams and colleagues. While this is primarily for the benefit of our communities, it is intended to enable colleagues and line-managers to identify trauma amongst each other.

To further this offering, the peer support group follows the National Policing Wellbeing Service (NPWS) model and provides colleagues with a range of interventions to deal with personal and/or professional matters, and in supporting their health and wellbeing. We are on track for implementation this year, using training workshops delivered by Oscar Kilo, along with materials tools and guidance which we have developed with other Forces. The peer support network comprises a group of individuals who have volunteered to make themselves available to any colleague. This will provide a way for WMP colleagues to talk about matters confidentially with a suitably trained peer who can provide knowledge, experience, help and support. Examples of campaigns we have delivered for OK9 have been during our Neighbourhood policing and national response week.

The Emergency Services Trauma Intervention Programme (ESTIP) pilot commenced in October 2022 with colleagues from Public Protection Unit (PPU), Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID) and the Central Motorway Policing Group (CMPG). In support of the scheme, Peer Diffuser training has been provided by the College of Policing (COP) for 12 individuals from each department (predominantly first line supervisors). The training enables the Peer Diffuser to confidently undertake the first two stages of ESTIP before a TRiM activation or clinical intervention. We are running a second pilot in Operations and Local Policing Areas to expand the programme and its benefits.

3. Wellbeing Offer

WMP recognises that it is of utmost importance to have a strong wellbeing offering, particularly during the cost of living crisis, organisational model changes and for anyone involved in misconduct processes. Not only to genuinely support our workforce but to build a positive culture, increase engagement and assist with recruitment and retention. Many elements of our offer are outlined below:

- The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is provided by an external partner, Vivup. They offer a range of services to support financial wellbeing, including debt management guidance, workbooks and counselling for associated stress and anxiety arising from financial worries.

⁴ See chapter 4 for more information on this programme.

They have delivered a range of workshops throughout the implementation of the operating model for senior leaders, and provide group clinical supervision. The use of the EAP has supported staff greatly with the three top presenting issues, work-related stress, anxiety and depression when compared to monthly force Key Performance Indicator (KPI) absence trends.

- “Cancer Club” support Group launched in Feb 2023, with the view to help support those who have or had cancer. The group has now expanded to include supervisors, and friends and families who are in organisation and have been affected by cancer.
- Wellbeing chairs a group for those colleagues who live with, or are affected by a neuro-diverse condition in collaboration with the Enable association and the work being done nationally within neurodiversity.
- Joining up with the NPWS to produce a Neurodiversity National Wellbeing Toolkit.
- Oscar Kilo peer review has been submitted, with considerable improvement in areas that were “in development” from 2020 that have now moved to “fully developed”. There are now no areas that fall in the “under developed” category. The 2023 assessment is still being prepared with the College of Policing.
- 1:1 support from Aquarius for those suffering with alcohol and drug dependencies or gambling addiction. This is a completely free and confidential service on a self-referral basis, with Aquarius delivering sessions around these core areas throughout the year, and bespoke presentations to the Professional Standards Department (PSD) to highlight vulnerability concerns.
- Mental Health support via the Clic Online Forum, “Tough Enough to Care”, “It takes balls to talk” and Birmingham MIND organisations, to help ease the pressure on OH, and provide colleagues with a variety of avenues to explore with regard to psychological safety.
- WMP provided, in collaboration with Police Care UK, a two-week residential intense therapy course for officers suffering with complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and respite breaks through the Benevolent Fund and Police Federation.
- A number of easy to access app based supporting tools, including the Back Up Buddy App, My Healthy Mind App from Vivup and the Health Assured Careline app from Police Mutual.
- 1Team Active and promotion of Couch to 5k with support from our dedicated Health and Fitness Advisors (HFAs) who will personally train colleagues for 12 weeks in our Force gyms to help achieve health and fitness goals. Colleagues can book in with the HFA’s for full body assessments and seek advice for topics such as blood pressure, exercise, weight.
- Police Mutual Support provide a wide range of initiatives, services and one-to-one support to make a positive difference to the lives of serving and retired Officers, in conjunction with the College of Policing’s new support package for the policing covenant.
- Maximus to support colleagues for up to nine months to prevent sickness, and support colleagues back into the workplace after being away from work.
- Bespoke wellbeing events to support department’s local wellbeing initiatives and dedicated packages to support issues that arise due to pressures during the year and larger or critical events.
- Engagement with the OK wellbeing vans at our sites, providing advice and guidance as well as health checks.
- Welfare Liaison Officers (WLOs) throughout the Force to support those colleagues going through PSD investigations in addition to support from line managers.
- OK Peer Supporters to replace WMP Buddies for some welfare issues with 56 people currently trained.
- Menopause support relaunched within the organisation in line with the national delivery plan, with local menopause steering groups helping to deliver the support package, which will include menopause peer supporters and supervisory awareness training.
- Continuation of the flu voucher scheme.

4. Benchmarking

To ensure WMP continuously improves and provides a leading wellbeing offer, one of our key workstreams is benchmarking against other Police Services and external partners. Part of this benchmarking capability is achieved through being a joint chair of the National Wellbeing Group facilitated by Oscar Kilo and representation at the National Investigator Wellbeing Group. The College of Policing supports in pairing us with a Police Service of similar size and composition so that we can assess ourselves against the frameworks.

5. Engagement

To ensure all colleagues are aware of the wellbeing offer, the intention is to develop a clear communications and engagement plan. We are currently reviewing our Wellbeing Portal to ensure wellbeing support is accessible, clear and up to date, and exploring the messaging that can be released to coincide with the national Op Hampshire campaign.

The Wellbeing Council is being developed over 2023 as a step forward towards central governance of wellbeing and reported on at a Force Executive (FET) level. On a national level we sit on various boards and are members of various groups to promote and discuss the wellbeing agenda including the National Wellbeing group.

WMP captures both qualitative and quantitative feedback from its employees to measure success including the most recent Employee Survey.⁵ Monthly Wellbeing Engagement Forums are held to bring various representatives together to openly discuss issues so that they can be resolved. To measure continued progress against the wellbeing agenda across the year we will be launching a Pulse Survey.

Reasonable Adjustments in the workplace

Police Officers and police staff who have a requirement for reasonable adjustments are supported within the workplace to be the best they can be and ensure we comply with the Equality Act 2021.

We have a Reasonable Adjustment Passport (RAP) in place for colleagues and line managers to identify and discuss the reasonable adjustments required. This process is supported by Human Resources Advisors, the Reasonable Adjustments Coordinator, Staff Networks, Occupational Health, IT and Digital and the Diversity and Inclusion team.

We have a team of employees who complete workplace assessments to support colleagues who may have dyslexia, by identifying practical solutions, such as assistive technology and colour overlays. We have an active Dyslexia Support Group to support individuals as required.

Police Covenant

The Covenant is a recognition by government, policing and society, acknowledging the sacrifices made by those who work or have previously worked in our police forces. WMP is supporting a number of workstreams in this area. We have supported the COPs research project on policing families which will provide initial insights into the impacts of policing life on the wider family.

Oscar Kilo Wellbeing Awards 2023

We are delighted to have been shortlisted for the 2023 Oscar Kilo awards, following our submission, which described our joint project with The Naked Mind. WMP designed and delivered with qualified coaches The Live Alcohol Experiment, that sought to explore colleague's relation with alcohol. The overall objectives are to encourage colleagues to understand why they drink, with the view to have a

⁵ See chapter 11b for a review on the latest survey results.

healthier relationship with unhealthy habits and replace them with more sustainable coping mechanisms.

Forward Look

Working collaboratively with colleagues in the Health and Safety team, we intend to implement a stress risk assessment framework to support line managers in managing stress within their teams in the current year. We will strive to ensure support is available to colleagues by launching our new OH and Wellbeing Portal, to ensure the offering is centralised and more accessible as well as a more joined up approach with Occupational Health.

The risk assessment will follow the Health and Safety Executive's Stress Management format which is made up of six management standards (Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role, Change). We will commence a pilot to embed the risk assessment by including it as part of our grievance, capability and conduct processes. The pilot will allow us to test, learn, and make any changes based on feedback before it is fully implemented. From a risk perspective we are planning to review Health and Safety training and key roles and responsibilities.

Over the course of 2023 and 2024 we are writing a Mental Health Policy. We are exploring the development of a dashboard within Business Insights to provide management information to ensure we continually improve the support we offer.

3a: Responding to the Public – Requests for Service

Executive Overview:

In May 2022, West Midlands Police (WMP) was amongst the worst performing Forces nationally, when measured against the key metric of 999 response. Since June 2022, a significant process of change under the Force Contact Optimisation Project, has been implemented and has resulted in a current position in March 2023 where WMP are just outside of the top quartile for performance. It is anticipated that with the governance and performance structure in place, activity will ensure we continue an upward trajectory.

To assist in improving our calls to service, WMP are committed to increasing the resources available in our contact centres, as well as utilising the skills bank of staff to fill resource levels during peak periods. As well as building on our resources, we will be reviewing our systems and processes to ensure our service delivery is the best it can be. We are committed to review where our calls for service are likely to be, specifically ensuring that our response to the elderly and vulnerable are monitored to ensure they receive the best possible service.

Current and Future Demand

Significant improvements have been made in the last six months across both the 999 and 101 call handling environments and considerable investment has been made with non-telephony channels. In May 2022, the 999 Service Level Agreement (SLA) was at 48% due to a largely static or occasionally declining resourcing profile (2015-2022) that did not match increasing volume and complexity of calls for service. This was compounded by some outdated call handling processes that reduced efficiency. In contrast, the 999 SLA has consistently been above 80% since the beginning of 2023 with an average time to answer of seven seconds. Although work remains ongoing, this is a significant and consistent improvement over the last six months. For the first two weeks of April 2023 the SLA has been plus 90%, demonstrating more sustainable delivery at, or above, the SLA.

In relation to 101, the SLA average at the time of writing was 30.5%, with an abandonment rate of 51%. Non-emergency calls for service have increased by 18% in early 2023 compared to December 2022, with 3,240 more calls received than at the beginning of the previous calendar year in January 2022. We have a number of duplicate calls for service on 101 and Live Chat based on whichever channel responds faster – demonstrating the changing expectations of the communities we serve. This is based, at least in part, on improvements across the wider contact centre sector where the speed with which the private sector deals with service requests has quickened, intensifying pressure on policing. For the first three weeks of April, the 101 SLA has improved to being 65.8% month to date.

WMP provides multiple ways that the public can report a crime in line with the National Contact Management Strategy. There are the standard channels via 999 and 101 telephony, which see the bulk of incoming requests for service. With 101 calls, further requests for service are generated when members of the public contact 101 when they actually need to speak to a certain officer or department rather than the contact centre. Therefore, work has been completed to update the internal telephone directory and the voice recognition system that provides more direct access to the right person. This relieves pressure on the contact centre, while ensuring the member of the public is routed to the person best able to assist with their enquiry. Further Interactive Voice Response (IVR) interventions have been deployed, to ethically manage calls that are non-policing matters or do not require call handler interaction.

There are ten Public Contact Offices (PCOs) across the organisation that are open between the hours of 0800 and 2200. The city centre office at police headquarters is open 24/7. Footfall and in person requests at PCOs have been decreasing over time with only 1% of requests for service being received through this channel. While requests for service through public contact offices are low, they remain essential to public satisfaction, accessibility and operational necessity for certain functions such as registration of persons. PCO staff record online incident reports onto relevant systems such as Connect, ensuring that online contact is serviced efficiently and at pace. WMP receive approximately 100 Online Incident Reports each day.

WMP have developed digital channels that can be used to answer public enquiries, increasing public access and enhancing user experience. Traditional telephony does not appeal to everyone and by widening the channels, WMP gathers more information from a wider cross section of communities. This better informs the organisations understanding of risk and community cohesion in a way that would not have been previously possible.

Online Incident Reporting allows for members of the public to report and track their crime online when it relates to certain high volume, low risk crimes and its functionality is being increased. Live Chat is available between 7am to midnight. WMP do not provide 24/7 Live Chat service due to limited demand versus resources. Live Chat is enhanced by bespoke robotic solutions that resolves over 30% of enquiries on behalf of the public (BobE). It is important to note that digital channels allow contact for people who would be hesitant to call us, which is of huge benefit to vulnerable people. It is not however, necessarily channel shift, but rather a generator of new requests for service.

WMP is expecting and preparing for a continued increase in requests through digital channels as society becomes more used to requesting services through web-chats, applications, and other channels. Crimes that are more sensitive in nature such as rape and domestic abuse are being reported in greater volumes digitally. The West Midlands region has one of the highest proportions of young people in the country. This increasingly digitally competent demographic is going to accelerate the rise of digital channels disproportionately faster than some other police forces. WMP are working hard to expand this digital offer to meet this increase and continue to provide the strongest possible service, with our efforts in robotics intended to future proof processes.

The geographic spread of service has a number of very deprived areas – the highest deprivation of any Force.⁶ Deprivation and its linkage to crime will be exacerbated by the impact of the cost of living crisis, increasing requests for service further. This will have an impact beyond Force Contact that is felt by the resources deployed to support this need. It is well established that deprivation and social inequality are drivers of crime, particularly youth violence, and the increase in both the quantity and complexity of this reaches beyond Force Contact and even beyond WMP, affecting partners too.

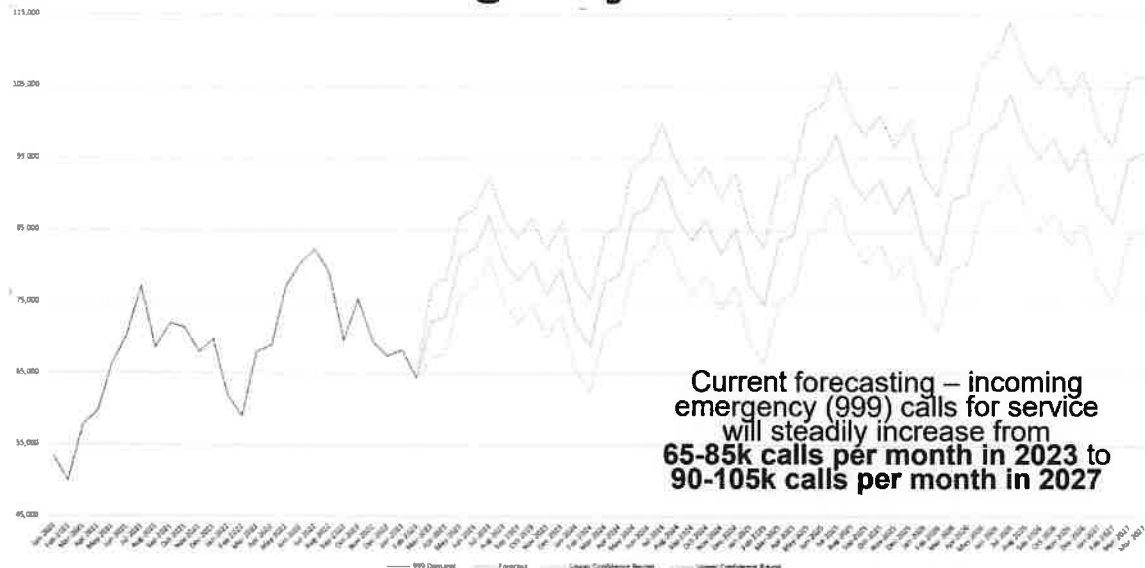
It is not only the pure volume of requests for service that is increasing but the complexity of these requests. Requests featuring mental health vulnerability is on the rise based on improved recognition of vulnerability by police services. In 2015 it was believed that 25% of police requests for service featured complex mental health issues and, like missing persons contacts, our colleagues have a comprehensive risk assessment that takes time to complete during a call – reducing the resource that can be deployed to answer further calls for service. This involves extra training for staff and greater reliance on expert support. This time is necessary to mitigate risk and support the needs of one of the more vulnerable cohorts in society that carries across all demographics and socio-economic strata. The building of a Vulnerability Hub that accommodates Mental Health Tactical Advisors, missing persons investigators and contact handlers is a concerted effort to respond to crisis efficiently and in the most caring and bespoke manner possible.

As we see the investment of resource into contact handling and our digital capabilities, we predict that there will be a reduction in failed calls for service. There is the potential that a concomitant

⁶ Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019.

increase in public confidence in our ability to respond to requests may lead to more calls to report crimes that may have previously gone unreported. Evidence suggests that increased trust leads to increased reporting.

Predicted Emergency Calls for Service



Based on the factors outlined we have forecasted a steady growth in the number 999 calls (see graphic above). This rise is likely to be matched by increases in other types of incoming requests for service.

Both improvement work and performance are tracked through governance structures in Force Contact Optimisation Project Silver and Gold meetings. Daily to monthly performance is tracked through Service Improvement Meetings, with detailed performance information developed by a bespoke Service Improvement Team led by a Chief Inspector. This team, manage organisational learning and audit compliance through the Departmental Improvement Plan. The plan includes all departmental learning from HMICFRS, Coronial Inquests, Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI), internal audits and learning reviews. This level of scrutiny is essential for continuing performance improvement and service delivery.

Workforce and Assets

In April 2023 the establishment total was 939 FTE with a vacancy gap of 35 FTE. It is anticipated that remaining vacancies should be met by quarter three of 2023, even with the known employment market difficulties with notoriously higher attrition rates within call-centres. The organisation has a call handling strength of five supervisors and 236 call handlers FTE against a budgeted 243 FTE, with around 196 FTE trained and deployable. The vacancy rate is around 9 FTE with a further 31 FTE either not fully trained or not currently at work for various reasons.

Over the coming year the organisation has committed to an increase of 66 FTE in the contact handling team to tackle the number of abandoned calls and plan ahead for the increased calls for service taking call handling establishment to 309, with an exception to recruit at 10% over establishment to accommodate attrition. This number has been developed in consultation with Accenture and following on from a review of our most similar Force's and their resourcing models. The recruitment plan will achieve the new baseline by the beginning of June 2023.

Before April, WMP had limited resilience to respond to any un-forecasted peaks in requests from the public. The team have started to implement a phased bank programme for any police staff or officer to sign-on for paid overtime, subject to operational demands and line manager's approval. This has helped manage the known increases in service requests for example during summertime. In addition, supervisors are able to request "bank resources" in times where we are experiencing an unexpectedly larger volume of calls. Around 530 colleagues have expressed interest in working for the Force Contact bank but initially from the end of January 2023, the scheme was only available to those with previous call-handling experience.

WMP have commenced training of a volunteer cohort and 200 plus have been trained to date with ongoing training throughout the year. The early implementation of bank, with between five and 15 extra resources routinely taking calls at peak times has resulted in a seismic shift in the SLAs with both 999 and 101 SLAs being much improved in April 2023 with 999 being 90.4% and 101 at 65.8%.

Outside of contact handling the dispatch function, has 273.5 FTE across a 24/7 shift pattern set against an establishment of 288 excluding supervision. Dispatch assess and transfer higher risk calls for service into resource deployment, typically between P1 and P3. Historically this was primarily for Force Response, but now belonging, in the main, to Local Policing Areas (LPAs). Dispatch is the conduit by which incoming service enters the wider force ecosystem and is essential for the delivery of the quickest possible response to the most vulnerable people and those at risk of harm. Dispatch teams are responsible for re-grading and continual risk assessment alongside deployment of other department's resources.

PCOs are maintained across 10 sites by a team of 80.5 FTE against an establishment of 88 FTE. Alongside supporting public enquiries, the PCO staff process online incident reports and record the report into Connect for crime recording purposes. This is an essential function for many of our more vulnerable communities who may have less access to technology or telephony, and/or require personal contact to resolve their need for service.

The Service Improvement Team complete a thorough auditing programme to ensure compliance and identify areas where the department needs to improve. Although the team is in its infancy and their service offer is constantly being reviewed and expanded, the analysts are performing THRIVE daily dip sampling of incidents to monitor incident risk assessments and grading. A departmental learning action plan has been created which documents learning and recommendations from a wide variety of perspectives, including JTAI, IOPC, HMICFRS and Coroners Inquests. This ensures the Head of Department has a single lens view of all the threats and a tactical plan to mitigate or remove them with workstreams allocated to accountable leaders for continuous improvement and delivery.

The Crimes Service Team have 82.6 FTE dedicated to crime data integrity and crime allocation, who maintain oversight of the force's compliance with Home Office Counting Rules. There is ongoing work to streamline this process, potentially via a partial merger of different teams across the organisation who perform similar functions in silo.

Projects and Initiatives

To meet the increasing and changing nature of requests for service, a number of initiatives have been trialled and work is ongoing to address recruitment challenges through our Force Contact Optimisation Project. The Force Contact Gold and Silver meetings continue to monitor the progress against change projects such as the bank scheme and other recruitment campaigns, telephony and technological improvements.

The diversification of channels by which we can be contacted is key to our ambitions for Force Contact. We will continue to use physical offices while there is still a need for them, however, to maximise the benefits of the West Midlands having a larger proportion of younger, technologically skilled members of the public, Single Online Home is being considered for implementation over the next year. The

scoping work is underway to determine how we can use Connect to feed directly from the website. VAWG offences, DA and sexual offences are already reportable on-line via police.co.uk. There is work ongoing to create a digital desk that will further enhance the offer of digital service to the public in a manner they want and expect from the police in 2023, and ideally, this will deflect away from our 101-call handling in a more efficient way. The increasing number of channels is however likely to equate to more contacts from the public but ultimately it is critical to achieving our 2023-26 strategic goal to increase confidence and trust in, and community perceptions of WMP.

One area of investment by Force Contact has been in ensuring that the right resource is directly available to members of the public. Historically, WMP has seen high levels of failed service where a member of the public has tried to reach the officer in the case, or staff member responding to an issue, but have gone through to the wrong (or an old) number. To address this failure demand, the organisation has put a great deal of effort into ensuring all public facing contacts have their name, role and contact details correct on our Bluepages system. Not only will this process improvement reduce the time a handler spends searching for a colleague or department the public requests to speak to, but it will enhance the success of the IVR and Voice Recognition system, which automates the process and removes the need for a middle person. Over the course of 2023 we are going to cleanse the voicemail inbox system and reduce the circa 6,500 landlines we have to a much smaller number of desk phones. Desk phones are checked less frequently, unlike personal mobile voicemails where ownership and responsibility are clear.

In addition, we are improving the voice recognition system, including new automated options and mapping out the IVR to streamline calls and offer a queue position capability. For example, if we can include crime prevention advice or divert the public to reporting issues such as anti-social behaviour to online, we can deflect the pressure on call-handling even further whilst offering the public an effective response to their call. The purpose of automation is not simply to improve efficiencies in police processes, albeit this does allow for reallocation of resource according to risk, but is to resolve the enquiry in the fastest way possible for the public.

Following changes to our operating model, the support desk has been transitioned to the Public Protection Unit (PPU). Initial plans are to establish a vulnerability desk in the call-handling team by the end of 2023. They will be focused on taking some of the more complex calls particularly around mental health, hate crime and other vulnerabilities and will be a specialist resource as part of the “Right Care, Right Person” project to ensure the most appropriate agency is dealing with the request for service in the first place – reducing the time pressures placed on our handlers.⁷ This process has already entered Phase One, with the mental health triage team drawn into Force Contact to provide bespoke and expert advice around mental health risk in calls. This enhances our response to crisis and vulnerability and provides an enhanced route into partners where support is required from other agencies.

It is anticipated that there will be wide reaching benefits in the proposed co-location of Force Contact staff at the C3 site in Aston which is currently going through consultation. This will cover spans of control, greater consistency and appropriate ability to be able to flex as per volumes of requests for service. To enable us to grow the organisation further, we are exploring the feasibility and practicality of allowing colleagues to answer 101 calls from home. Underpinning this work is the plan to utilise a resilience site for our Force Contact Academy - training new staff and the delivery of the Continual Professional Development (CPD) of existing employees.

WMP have launched the force bank process where we have more than 200 people, who work outside of Force Contact, trained to answer calls. This provides flexible resilience at peak times and has allowed for a significant improvement to our SLAs. IT&D has provided an innovative response to the

⁷ See our dedicated collaborations chapter (12) for detail on this workstream.

perennial Force Contact Centre (FCC) challenge that there was no strategic reserve available outside of the FCC, and this meant that all call handling had to be consumed within the department alone.

In addition to the bank programme, we have the ability to shift our dispatch function to 999 call handling when required which is something that has been done for resilience for several years. The option to alter contracts for public contact staff in order for them to be able to handle calls coming in is being explored as another route to increase resource capacity. It is our intention to continue to upskill our teams so that they are multi-functional to the differing public's requests for service.

Forward Look

On the assumption that requests for service do not increase beyond the estimated 90-105k 999 calls per month by 2027, the establishment capacity and capability should be fit for purpose. This needs to be considered in the face of an upward trend in both volume and complexity of calls for service, particularly in the emergency and digital spheres. Requests for service in comparison to 2020 is approximately 11.5% higher. Digital webchat usage is 210% higher, albeit the total number of contacts remains significantly below telephony. There will be close monitoring of any unpredicted trends meanwhile continuing to measure the benefits of the Force Contact optimisation project. The organisation plans to continue to utilise the dedicated Service Improvement Team who will assess and refine any new and existing change initiatives that are delivered to ensure maximum efficiency in the management of requests from the public for service.

In order to enhance the level of service we offer our communities and improve their experience as service users, we are designing a flexible model that is responsive to changes in demography, channel choice and demand typology. We are scoping Single Online Home to understand what improvements and efficiencies, if any, it offers above our current functionality. The primary benefits of Single Online Home appear to be a widening of online crime types available for report, but there is a potential risk of some loss of robotics functionality in web chat.

In addition, we will be looking at how we can improve our calls for service for the vulnerable. Specifically, we will be reviewing how we can monitor and improve our interactions with the elderly to ensure we optimise our service delivery. On average, WMP class between 8-10% of all recorded incidents as vulnerable, this can include domestic abuse, age, honour-based, mental health, suicide and vulnerable adults and children. This equates between 63-70k incidents per year. We will start to utilise our inhouse technologies to project our future calls for service and are currently expecting incident volumes to increase to over 71,000 in 2023-24.

3b: Responding to the Public – Incident Response

Executive Overview:

West Midlands Police (WMP) continues to monitor response times on our P1-P3 logs and we flex staffing to ensure that our capability and capacity match requests for service. From April 2023, WMP moved to a new localised operating model which has divided the organisation into seven Local Policing Areas (LPA). The new operating model sees the four functions of responding, investigating (up to s.18 Assaults and some domestic abuse offences), neighbourhood policing and offender management locally located within each LPA, under the command of a single leadership team and Commander. The model gives Local Commanders greater flexibility to use this increased number of locally based resources to respond to local needs, community priorities and performance expectations. Whilst the model embeds and uplift numbers continue to arrive at LPA's, there will inevitably be a requirement to deploy staff from other functions within the LPA to respond to calls for service. By doing this we will remain in a strong position to meet our SLA for P1, P2 and P3 incidents and since the 3rd April 2023, we have seen improvements across all three P grades. It is anticipated by Autumn 2023 when the final student officers have arrived at the responding functions across the organisation, the need to flex other (non-responding) LPA resources will reduce.

The Covid pandemic, the increased cost of living and the reduced service provision of partner agencies is having an impact on the nature and number of the calls for service that WMP receive. We anticipate the rise in mental health calls will continue and that this will challenge us as an organisation as well as our partners. Without intervention, this is likely to result in our officers spending more time and offering increased support to these calls. To support this area of business, WMP have now got in place a Mental Health Escalation Framework, are developing a Mental Health Strategy, are launching a Mental Health and Policing Strategic Partnership Group and are in the advanced stages of planning to implement the Right Care, Right People project.

Whilst the new operating model represents a significant shift in how WMP operate, it brings with it many benefits and improvements as to how we respond to the public. We will continue to embed learning from the Commonwealth Games and data analytics lab insights to ensure we effectively deploy and manage our resources and we will work hard to ensure we find an appropriate balance between consistency of our service delivery whilst meeting local need.

Current and Future Demand

In order to provide a more efficient and effective service to the public WMP moved to a localised policing model as of April 2023. As a result, our Force Response Team was de-centralised and police officers were moved from Force Response to an LPA based model. These figures equate to:

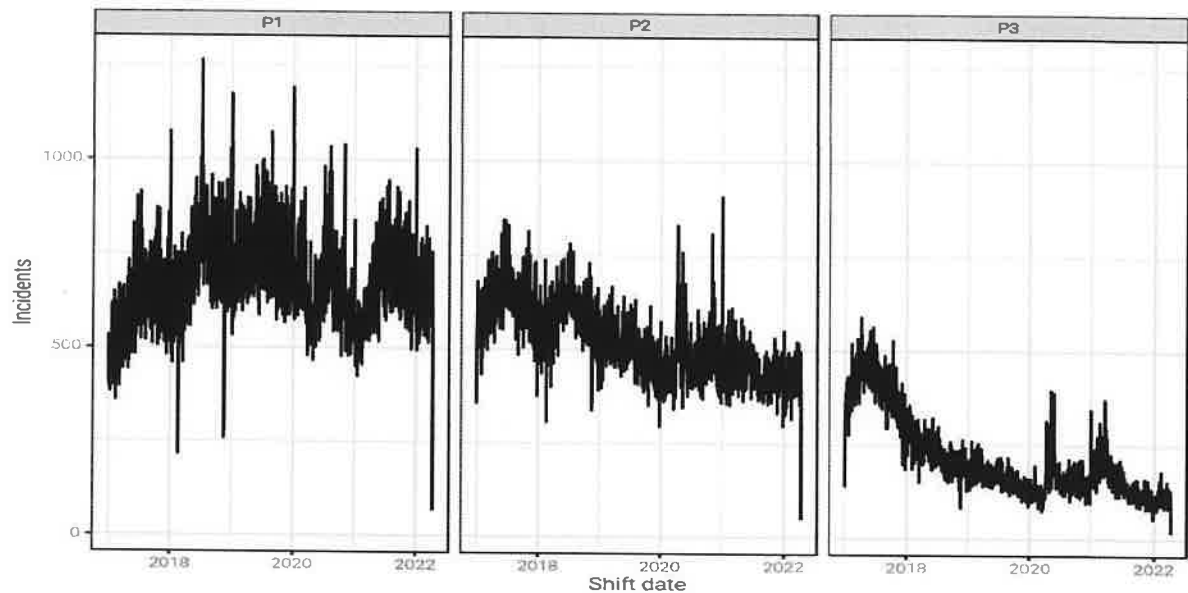
- 1245 Constables
- 128 Sergeants
- 43 Inspectors

In addition, resources were relocated from the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID) and Force Support Unit (FSU), these were:

	Constable	Sergeant	Inspector	Police Staff (PSI/PSIOs)
FSU	195	20	6	-

FCID VVA	463	61	10	33.76
FCID Force Priorities	14	2	-	-

Current performance and trend for responding to incidents:



The graphs above detail our P1 Immediate (danger to life, crime in progress, offender detained risk posed – response time 15 minutes), P2 priority response (concern for safety, evidence likely to be lost, offender detained but no risk – response time 60 minutes) and P3 priority investigation (concern for individuals' welfare but risk can be managed, need for investigation and time critical to preserve evidence – response time 24 hours) incidents. Over the past three years, our P1 calls have remained static. However, we have started to see a reduction in our P2 and P3 calls. Over the past three years our P1 calls have remained static. However, we have started to see a reduction in our P2 and P3 calls. This reduction has been influenced by a number of factors, including learning from our T3 pilot, a telephony-based pilot with the aim of reducing legacy requests for service, an internal cultural shift becoming smarter in utilising the P-grade system, as well as bringing new staff into the call handling team. In addition, since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, we have seen a significant change in the methods of contact used by the public (increased 999 and reduced non-emergency) reflecting a change in attitudes of the members of the public.

Prior to April and implementation of the new model, data was collated weekly and monthly. Performance documents were utilised by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to analyse the performance of teams and geographic areas. The ambition to answers todays calls today and provide an increasingly faster response, driving the department to continually improve. To supplement this performance information, our in-house Data Analytics Lab (DAL) was commissioned in the spring of 2022 to use data and learning from the Commonwealth Games to understand at what point our resources would sufficiently match calls for service. It was predicted that by November 2023, the Force Response team would be efficiently resourced to match the number of P1 to P3 incidents with, on average, █ officers on any given shift over a 24-hour period.