



WMPCP West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

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Mr Bob Jones  
West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner  
Lloyd House  
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cc. Jacky Courtney,  
Chief Executive, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2013

Dear Bob

### **West Midland Police and Crime Plan 2013**

On behalf of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel I would like to thank you and your colleagues for your attendance at the Panel Meeting on 18 March 2013 to present and discuss your draft Police and Crime Plan and the seven Local Policing Plans.

We were very pleased with the positive nature of the discussion and appreciate your listening and responding to our requests.

Please find attached the Panel's statutory report. We hope you find our comments helpful in completing your Plan this month.

Whilst we fully understand the time pressures you were under for producing the Plan and the Local Policing Plans late papers make it more difficult for Panel Members to undertake their work. We sincerely hope this will become easier for you and timescales will be more realistic in the new meeting cycle.

Yours Sincerely

Councillor Jess Phillips  
Vice-Chair West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

## **Report of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**

### **To the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner**

22nd March 2013

## **WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PLAN**

### **Introduction**

In accordance with section 28 (3) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Panel must review and make a report to the PCC on the Police and Crime Plan prior to publication at the end of the financial year.

On 18 March 2013 the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel considered the Commissioner's Draft Police and Crime Plan and seven Local Policing Plans.

### **Members Present:**

Councillors Arshad, Bains, Duggins (substituting for Cllr Mutton), Phillips, Lawrence, Meeson, Smith, Sparks, Webb and Whitby.  
Mr Nick Drew

### **Panel Decision**

The Police and Crime Plan is an important document that will set out the criteria by which the Panel will be holding the Commissioner to account in the coming year, and this draft is a strong basis from which we will continue to challenge and scrutinise the PCC and his work. We recognise the work that has gone into this and are satisfied that many important issues have already been included.

Below are several areas which the Panel would like the Commissioner to consider when finalising and delivering the Plan. Overall, we felt the Plan could have included more detail about how aspirations would be achieved. We also note that you assured the Panel that precise action plans would underlie all of the deliverables listed in your Plan – we look forward to seeing clear links to these action plans in a future iteration, along with some definitive timescales.

We were disappointed that some issues, such as hate crime and the objective relating to “maintaining vigilance” around child sexual exploitation raised by Panel Members on 6 February, had not been sufficiently incorporated into or strengthened in the version considered this week. However, we were reassured by your intention to make such changes prior to final publication.

### **Targets**

We accept the point made by Deputy Chief Constable Thompson that a focus just on targets can lead to underperformance. However, we feel there are some areas where targets are unclear or are not ambitious enough. We suggest greater clarity would allow communities and the Panel to track and

judge your success. If you wish to set a direction of travel instead of a specific target, can you outline in the Plan what the measurements will be, what are the current baselines (and trends of the last two years). If this is not possible in the time frame you have can you indicate when and where this will be published. It is also notable that some of the “deliverables and milestones” in the report are phrased as processes/projects, some as percentage targets, and some as references to changes in perception or satisfaction levels. It would be helpful if they could be phrased more uniformly as delivery outcomes.

In addition, the Panel request that you present quarterly performance reports in September, November 2013, January and April 2014 (or at an agreed time to fit your reporting cycles). We may also request to see selected action plans during the course of the year.

### **Objective 3.1 - Improving public confidence in policing**

How will increased confidence in policing be achieved? This was one example raised of an unclear target – both in terms of lack of clarity on how it is to be achieved, and also its measures and baseline?

We do feel you should include targets in respect of hate crime and domestic violence and we accept your view that, at the current time, these should focus on increasing reporting.

We may ask for reports during the year on the surveys referred to, such as Feeling the Difference, Crime Survey for England and Wales and the West Midlands Police internal staff survey.

### **Objective 3.2 - Creating stronger partnerships**

There is a lack of clarity within the Plan as to how you will work with local policing and crime boards and what might be delegated to them. Without reference to previous reports we have received on local policing and crime boards references to such bodies may be unclear for the general public.

We recognise the aspiration within the plan for some alignment with the emerging Health and Wellbeing Boards. We welcome your stated desire to have greater police involvement in Health and Wellbeing boards. We would wish for feedback to the Panel in future if you feel partners are not receptive to this.

However, we feel that the plan is not aligned enough to local partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Boards and councils on a number of issues including domestic abuse; drug and alcohol abuse; positive/diversionary activities; and management of “community payback” and restorative justice.

### **Transport: Objective 3.1 Creating stronger partnerships and Objective 3.9 Supporting stronger communities**

An effective transport system is essential for the economic good of the region. In the foreseeable future bus travel will remain the key form of public transport in the region with over 10% of journeys to work currently made in this way. The recent death of a young girl on a bus reinforces our concerns to ensure public transport is safe to use.

We support your aspiration to make public transport safer. We note that you report that crime and anti-social behaviour on the West Midlands' transport system has reduced. We suggest that traveller perceptions may be at odds with this.

We feel it important to measure the outcomes of this and to set out the changes that are needed (such as greater uniformed presence and more inspectors). We suggest that details including the financial contributions from partners need to be clarified within the Plan.

In addition we are keen to encourage that all partners can work together to tackle safety on buses in particular. We suggest that once the new Integrated Transport Authority is established you write to them to raise this issue asking them to address it as an issue of major strategic importance and ensure safety is embedded as a priority at the beginning.

### **Objective 3.4 - Delivering better value for money**

We note your campaign on fairer funding and agree on the importance of authorities and key partners in the region working together on a cross party basis to get a better deal for the West Midlands. We would wish to work with you and other partners on a broad response.

### **Objective 3.5 - Demonstrating the Force's commitment to social responsibility**

We would welcome feeding into your proposed consultation on a new procurement strategy. A clarification in the final Plan as to how this is intended to "influence the economic well-being of the area" would also be welcome.

### **Objective 3.7 Better protecting people from harm – knife crime**

We wish to see a continuation in the reduction of knife crime but note that a specific future intent is not included and suggest that it should be.

### **Objective 3.7 - Better protecting people from harm - safeguarding**

We agree that adopting a consistent approach to safeguarding across the West Midlands and strengthening the multi-agency approach will be beneficial. We were pleased to hear your commitment to addressing the concerns of OFSTED about police involvement in child protection conferences. We will add this issue to the Panel's work programme.

We would also expect to be consulted on the review of the Public Protection Unit in the coming Municipal Year.

**Alcohol and Drugs: Objective 3.2 Creating stronger partnerships and Objective 3.7 Better protecting people from harm**

We note and welcome the priority of tackling drugs. However, given the impact of alcohol in the region we were surprised by its omission from the Plan, especially given it is raised as a priority in the Local Policing Plans of Sandwell, Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham. We feel that alcohol has a severe impact on a lot of young people and is an area where prevention / reducing recurrences can have a positive impact. Tackling both alcohol and drug abuse for young people should be a key priority in the Plan and we wish to see some outturn measures included.

We would like an assurance regarding robust measures to tackle drunkenness in public places in order to reduce anti-social behaviour and risks of violence.

Whilst we recognise the limitations of police powers in relation to licensing of premises and outsales we would urge close working with communities and local authorities on licensing issues. Given tight budgets on both sides we feel joint working with Trading Standards teams on under age sales is important. We note that this is an opportunity for partnership working with Health and Wellbeing Boards and would expect progress to be made on this in the coming year.

**Objective 3.10 - Ensure an effective contribution to national policing**

We note you have set out how you intend to meet the strategic policing requirement. However, we were unclear how you will ensure sufficient resources in cases of major demonstrations or public disorder within the West Midlands.

**Equalities and Human Rights**

The Plan makes reference to the Strategic Board's role in supporting you in your equalities and human rights obligations. However, there was no indication included as to how you intend to ensure adherence to the public sector Equality Duty. Nor was there information about how you propose to carry out your duties in line with the Human Rights Act 1998.

**Final comments**

As you are aware the statutory requirement is to set out a plan for the term of your office. As this plan appears to deal just with the next year could you clarify within it the timetable and process for refreshing it at the end of that period. Within this could you set out a clear timetable for ensuring that local priorities affecting a number of the districts and set out in the Local Policing Plans will be reflected in the West Midlands Police and Crime Plan.

In conclusion and, subject to the above comments, the Panel is satisfied that the Police and Crime Plan is reflective of the current priorities across the West Midlands and that it will support the continuation of the existing work being undertaken by West Midlands Police and partner organisations to reduce crime and improve community safety.

The Panel will publish this report on [www.birmingham.gov.uk/wmpcp](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/wmpcp) on 25th March 2013.

The Panel hopes that you will carefully consider its recommendations and feedback and recognise our intent to be supportive of your work. We were very pleased with the positive nature of the discussion on 18 March 2013 and appreciated your responses to our requests. The Panel looks forward to your response to this report and receipt of the final version of the Police and Crime Plan.