

Mayor of West Yorkshire

Policing and Crime Annual Report 2020/21

DRAFT

Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Introduction from the Mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy Brabin.....	4
Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour	5
Safeguarding Vulnerable People.....	9
Making Criminal Justice Work for Communities.....	12
Supporting Victims and Witnesses	15
Accountability and Engagement	17
Policing and Crime Financial Statement	22

Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

Policing & Crime Annual Report 2020/21

- Headline Achievements -

- The continued development of the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) – reducing serious violence in, and with communities, and building a fresh approach to partnership work to tackle the root causes of violence.
- Working with partners to prevent crime in neighbourhoods through the Home Office’s Safer Streets Fund.
- Making sure vulnerable members of our communities could still access important support services during the most intense phases of the Covid pandemic.
- The development and publication of the ground-breaking Modern Slavery Transparency in Supply Chains Statement – a key milestone in our modern slavery partnership work across the North East region.
- Further work with the West Yorkshire Safeguarding Communications Group, to help develop impactful campaigns to raise awareness, target perpetrators, and inform our communities on safeguarding topics.
- Working with West Yorkshire’s Local Criminal Justice Board to implement innovative new working practices as part of the local criminal justice service’s Covid recovery plan.
- Working to prevent reoffending by developing new partnerships and projects to support people suffering multiple disadvantage who are in contact with the criminal justice system.
- Putting the principles of our Victims and Witnesses Strategy into practice by working at the local and national scale to support and influence the response for victims living under the pandemic.
- Continuing to develop West Yorkshire’s domestic abuse perpetrator programme (the CARA project), and nationwide, being the only programme of this kind not to pause during the Covid emergency.
- Celebrating the PCC’s final Safer Communities Fund grant round. 827 community crime prevention projects have shared £3.77m in funding during the project’s lifetime.

Introduction from the Mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy Brabin

In May I was honoured to receive the support of the people of West Yorkshire to become the county's first elected Mayor, and the first female 'metro mayor' in the country. It is a tremendous privilege to take over the responsibilities of Police and Crime Commissioner from Mark Burns-Williamson. My approach will be to build on Mark's successes by putting the victim first and tackling the underlying causes of crime. In the year ahead we will work to deliver on my election pledges to recruit more frontline police officers and staff, and to work with stakeholders in the region to put keeping women and girls safe at the heart of my policing plan.

At the publishing of the PCC's Annual Report last year, we were already coming to terms with the unprecedented challenges of the Covid pandemic. At the start of 2020, few of us could have predicted the great challenges which the following 18 months would present. Covid-19 has affected every one of us; in our homes, workplaces, and schools. Throughout the year our dedicated key-workers in West Yorkshire Police continued their hard work to serve the public, and I would like to thank those officers and staff for their important role in aiding the national recovery.

This Annual Report summarises some of the great work carried out by the former Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and our partners in West Yorkshire Police and across the region, to tackle crime, safeguard the vulnerable, and support victims in our districts. Key achievements from the past year include helping our funded services to continue supporting their clients during Covid, providing grants through the Safer Communities Fund to help small-scale organisations to support their communities, developing projects which match the objectives of our Victims and Witnesses and Reducing Reoffending strategies, and continuing to build on the trailblazing work of the Violence Reduction Unit.

Perhaps most importantly, this report highlights that despite the major challenge which the pandemic placed before us all, we have come together to deliver services to the vulnerable, support victims, tackle and prevent crime, and reassure and inform communities under the unprecedented Covid lockdowns.

The new financial year 2021/22 coincides with my first year as Mayor, within which I will develop a new Police and Crime Plan for West Yorkshire. I look forward to working with the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Alison Lowe, the diverse communities of West Yorkshire, West Yorkshire Police, and our wider partnership to deliver on our shared ambitions.

Tracy Brabin
Mayor of West Yorkshire

Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

During the past twelve months, the level of recorded crime has fallen, as we have all lived under the restrictions of Covid lockdowns. Government advice to stay at home during the most intense phases of the pandemic has meant that there has been less opportunity for some types of offending (notably robbery, theft, and burglary offences). However, the OPCC and our partners were aware that the conditions of the pandemic may lead to an increase in other types of offending, and this was especially the case for offences which take place away from public view such as domestic abuse or child exploitation or abuse.

2020/21's total recorded crime fell by 13% in West Yorkshire (to 249,994 offences), and so continued the trend of a reduction in crime seen in 2019/20, albeit influenced in this year by the Covid emergency. Categories of offence which recorded a notable reduction over the past year include burglary (-36%), robbery (-32%), and vehicle offences (-40%).

Where there were increases in recorded crime, the significant case was in stalking and harassment (up by 17%; England and Wales average +28%), although later analysis by West Yorkshire Police (WYP) has identified that this increase has been influenced by new crime recording practices. In addition, drug offences were up 15%, and there were small increases in public order/miscellaneous crimes offences; this most likely linked to lockdown restriction infringements. Domestic abuse and sexual offences recorded decreases over the year (counter to expectations), although these crimes are likely to experience under-reporting.

It is worth noting that these crime figures are also a record of the hard work of the officers and staff of our local police service during the past year. West Yorkshire Police's officers worked throughout the most challenging phases of the pandemic, carrying out their duties with, and for the public, during a time of great national uncertainty. The police's work meant its staff were exposed to a greater risk of infection than many of us, whilst at the same time adapting to new legislation and ways of working to maintain the standard of service that the public demands. This dedication and commitment to their work is something we are accustomed to, but do not take for granted, especially during this exceptional period.

In accordance with her election pledges, the Mayor of West Yorkshire will lead on the further recruitment of police officers and staff to strengthen the frontline and the fight against crime in West Yorkshire. In February 2021, the PCC announced his plans for West Yorkshire Police's budget for 2021/2022, and emphasised his own commitment to help rebuild and protect frontline policing with the support of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel and those local residents who endorsed his proposals for that year's Council Tax Precept. This budget will fund additional officers and police staff in 2021/22 whilst sustaining the level of non-partner funded Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) as part of our local Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

Leading in the fight against serious violence in our communities, the **continued development of the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)** has been a significant achievement during the past year. West Yorkshire was one of eighteen areas in England and Wales which were awarded Home Office funding during 2019 to set up specialist Violence Reduction Units to tackle the increase in serious violent crime. These teams bring together a range of different organisations, including the

police, local government, health, and community and third sector bodies, as well as other key partners to tackle violence through a co-ordinated partnership response. The Home Office confirmed further funding for 2020/21 at the end of December 2019 with £3.37m allocated to the West Yorkshire VRU.

West Yorkshire's VRU brings together the expertise of partners from law enforcement, youth justice, education, victim support, and health sectors to tackle violence as a 'public health' concern. This approach addresses the root causes of violence, in particular the factors which can draw young people into serious crime; issues such as exposure to domestic violence, exploitation and vulnerability, and disengagement from school or training.

The VRU's work is guided by its Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) of violence in West Yorkshire, which combines a wide range of data sets to reveal patterns, trends and hotspots in the extent and risk of violence in the region, meaning the VRU can respond to the right people, in the right place, at the right time. The development of the SNA identified the following major themes for the VRU's work in 2020/21:

- Reducing the risk of young people entering the criminal justice system and reducing reoffending
- Supporting children and young people affected by domestic abuse and violence
- Supporting people to move away from violent or chaotic lifestyles
- Promoting educational inclusion
- Reducing violence in the Night-Time Economy (NTE)
- Supporting victims of serious violence
- Supporting local initiatives and priorities through partnership working

The VRU's 'Knowledge Hub' is a dedicated research, evaluation and analysis team, and is tasked with ensuring that VRU funded programmes and projects are guided by the best available evidence. As well as commissioning large scale research to support the VRU's work, the Knowledge Hub undertakes in-house analysis of issues influencing violence in the region. Current projects include research into custodial violence, an exploration of the influence of social media on violence, a social network analysis of violent young offenders, and an assessment of the roles of women and girls in violent offending.

In 2020/21, the Knowledge Hub commissioned and completed two major research projects aimed at developing a better understanding of the relationships between the social and economic risk factors for young people and their involvement in serious violent crime or exploitation.

The first project was commissioned from the leading criminal justice consultancy *Crest Advisory* to explore the impact of school exclusions on serious violent crime. This research explored the West Yorkshire context of patterns in school exclusions (including temporary/ permanent/ off-rolling), and what the contributory factors are.

The second project looked at the root causes of serious violence and exploitation of young people and is jointly funded by the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership. This project explores the economic and social impacts of COVID-19, the determinants of health inequalities, and the specific challenges facing women and girls.

The VRU's violence prevention work is also guided by a **programme of engagement** with members of communities which are affected by serious violence. Insight gained from those with lived experience of violence in communities, combined with the research and intelligence from the Knowledge Hub, has informed the VRU's delivery of 36 programmes of early intervention and violence prevention in

West Yorkshire. Through funding and supporting these projects, the VRU has established some unique interventions, including:

Drop the Knife for a Better Life - this programme based at the Sunnyvale Centre in Hipperholme is an initiative which engages with harder to reach, vulnerable young people within the Calderdale community. The program offers canoeing, climbing, archery and other forms of activity to develop the life skills and confidence of young people and divert them away from gangs and knife crime. This intervention sees the VRU work in partnership with Sunnydale, WYP and the Calderdale Early Intervention Team.

Custody Diversion - Since December 2019, St. Giles Trust have been working alongside the police and the West Yorkshire Liaison and Diversion Service based at Elland Road Police Station, to combine their service with case workers with lived experience of serious youth violence and criminality. The aim of this collaboration is to engage with young people at the 'teachable moment' - when they have been arrested and are reconsidering their options and life choices. The service is working with education, training, and employment services to maximise opportunities for the young people they come into contact with. The programme was originally developed in Leeds and Kirklees and has now been extended across West Yorkshire.

IVDA Support in Leeds' Police Control Room - A domestic abuse specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisor has been based within the control room at Elland Road police station. Their role is to help victims and perpetrators of offences by signposting them to relevant support agencies. Following the first year of funding, the service was developed to meet the needs young people who witness or experience domestic abuse. There is now more awareness of the needs of those children who are witnessing an incident, and how we are best able to support them going forward.

Other locally based interventions have been delivered in conjunction with the five West Yorkshire Community Safety Partnerships. For example, in Bradford, the 'Breaking the Cycle' (BTC) project has continued to support referrals of young people with multiple and complex needs which may make them vulnerable to exploitation and involvement in serious violence.

The impact being made by some of the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) funded projects has been recognised in the annual **Howard League Community Awards for 2020**. The Calderdale Early Intervention Team at West Yorkshire Police received a commendation under the 'Policing and Children' category.

Traditional enforcement policing sits alongside the VRU's work on violence prevention, and since April 2019, **Operation Jemlock** has been West Yorkshire Police's dedicated violence reduction programme. Operation Jemlock utilises central government funding to tackle knife crime and serious violence through intelligence-led, high visibility patrols in areas at risk of weapon or violent crime offences. Since the operation was introduced, there have been some significant reductions in key crime categories. Up to March 2021:

- Knife enabled crime is down 11.8%
- Knife crime victims under 25 are down 15.3%
- Non-domestic Homicides are down 19.6%
- Robbery is down 20.3%
- Robberies involving a sharp implement are down 24.9%

The number of Section 1 Firearms and Shotgun discharges in 2020/21 has also fallen to their lowest levels since 2016. In 2021/22, Jemlock will continue into its third year with its focus to build on these strong results.

Other Headlines from the Year

In spring 2020 the OPCC co-ordinated a successful £709k bid to the Home Office's **Safer Streets Fund**. The fund supports neighbourhoods which experience an above average degree of acquisitive crime (such as vehicle theft, burglary, or robbery). We worked closely with West Yorkshire Police, the Safer Leeds Partnership, Bradford Community Safety Partnership, and social housing providers to develop projects to help reduce crime in the communities of Fagley (Bradford) and Gledhow (Leeds). The funding is helping to improve the security of homes by installing new locks, erecting fencing, installing new street lighting and CCTV, and providing crime prevention awareness-raising sessions for residents.

Following the success of the first wave of funding, Safer Streets Grant Round Two was launched in February 2021, leading to the award of a further £306k in June this year. Working alongside district Community Safety Partnerships, this funding will be used to target vehicle crime along the M62 corridor in Kirklees, Calderdale, and Wakefield by improving street lighting, installing temporary and permanent CCTV, further strengthening the WYP Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) network, and delivering a vehicle crime prevention campaign in conjunction with freight hauliers and motorists.

Two new police stations are to be built in Kirklees as part of a major investment in policing. The project will see new stations built in Dewsbury and Huddersfield town centre, both of which represent a major renewal of the Kirklees police estate. The new station in Dewsbury utilises the Dewsbury College site on Halifax Road, whilst the Huddersfield station will be built on Broadway, to accommodate over 200 police officers and staff. Both facilities are due to be opened in late 2024 and offer the best locations available in terms of size and accessibility for residents.

Road Safety: In July 2020, West Yorkshire Police and its blue light and local authority partners in the 'West Yorkshire Safer Roads' group launched '**Operation Snap**'; an online road safety 'media submissions portal'. The system allows members of the public to upload dash-cam footage of incidents of dangerous or illegal driving, as well as driver distraction offences such as using a mobile phone. By November 2020, Op. Snap had received over 800 submissions from members of the public, with over half of these resulting in further action being taken by the police.

In July 2020, West Yorkshire Police's Roads Policing Unit launched a new initiative, **Operation Safeway**, which aimed to educate people on all aspects of road safety all year round. One of the main aims of the operation is to highlight the dangers of the 'Fatal 4' motoring offences that are most commonly linked to death or serious injury: speeding, mobile phone use, drink and drug use and not wearing a seatbelt.

The project operated throughout the year working alongside local officers and partners targeting other specific road safety priorities relevant to West Yorkshire districts, and was supported by the #WYPTheCost campaign which reminds people of the potentially fatal consequences of driving while under the influence of drink or drugs.

Safeguarding Vulnerable People

Within the challenges of our year under the pandemic, making sure vulnerable members of communities could still access the important support they needed was at the forefront of our work. Covid - and the periods of lockdown which we all lived through - created an environment where new forms of criminal activity came to prominence. Working with our partners, the focus of our safeguarding work needed to adapt to respond to these new threats.

At the outset of the first national Covid lockdown, the PCC encouraged people for whom lockdown meant closer contact with abusive partners, to make contact with services which were available to offer support and advice. An example was our core Victim Support service who provided discreet methods of contact such as email and online web chat.

Government support for the response to domestic and sexual abuse under Covid was co-ordinated through the OPCC, allowing us to access **two waves of funding from the Ministry of Justice** to the total of £769k. These resources were distributed by the PCC across 16 different local organisations and charities to support ongoing domestic abuse and sexual violence projects, and new initiatives to meet the demands of the pandemic. The OPCC worked quickly to distribute this funding to these vital support services working with vulnerable people and victims of crime. Projects supported included Bradford Rape Crisis, Karma Nirvana, Leeds Women's Aid, and Survivors West Yorkshire.

Separately, the MOJ also provided a **£160k grant to fund Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs)** until 2022. Existing West Yorkshire ISVA services were asked to submit expressions of interest, with a remit to address gaps in provision which had been identified in the OPCC's independent review of ISVA services in 2020. These included provision for male victims; rape crisis services in Wakefield; and black and minority ethnic group outreach work. West Yorkshire's successful bid saw funding split between two organisations, Victim Support (who run the West Yorkshire ISVA service), and Kirklees and Calderdale Rape Crisis, who have agreed to extend their work to include Wakefield.

The Mayor's Commissioning Team have also worked to support the provision of further government funding for charities and social enterprises working to protect children from serious violence or criminal exploitation during Covid. Both funding rounds were co-ordinated through our **West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)** and resulted in £285k in Home Office funding to help 40 small charities to continue to deliver crucial support. This has supported crime prevention work at the grassroots, using music, theatre, and educational initiatives (enhanced with mentoring and coaching resources) to help vulnerable young people avoid the type of lifestyles that can lead to serious violent crime or criminal exploitation.

Finally, a further £198K was made available from central government to help local charities and social enterprises as part of a **'Winter Contingency Fund'**. Again, this funding was delivered through our Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and helped six local early intervention projects continue their work during lockdown periods.

Over the past year we have continued to promote and support important partnership work to tackle modern slavery through our national and West Yorkshire anti-slavery forums. This year, the coordination and delivery of the **West Yorkshire Anti-Slavery Partnership (WYASP)** became the sole responsibility of the OPCC, with the PCC taking on the role of Chair. Due to the pandemic,

partnership meetings moved to a virtual platform, but this did not hinder the Partnership from continuing to build its membership and influence in the collective response to modern slavery and human trafficking locally, and further afield.

Partnership meetings have attracted high-profile strategic stakeholders, including the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC), Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM, at the meetings in May and December, as well as representatives from the Home Office's Modern Slavery Unit who attended in September and March. This national recognition and support for the work being driven forward in West Yorkshire brings to light the collective strength and determination of partners working in our region to keep communities safe from exploitation and abuse.

The WYASP has also brought forward opportunities for partners to contribute to national consultations on policy and legislation. These contributions have been particularly significant in the areas of victim support (through the National Referral Mechanism Transformation programme), and in broadening the scope of the Modern Slavery Act to aid the development of transparency in supply chains within public sector bodies.

Our work on supply chains has been a key achievement from the year. We have helped to bring together the seven Police and Crime Commissioners and their respective Chief Constables across the North East region to develop a **Modern Slavery Transparency in Supply Chains (TISC) Statement**.

This agreement confirms that police services and OPCs in the North East are committed to eradicating modern slavery in their own businesses, and from organisations in their supply chains. Such abuses may 'hide in plain sight' but the statement helps to send a clear message to other businesses (particularly those in the private and commercial sector) to make sure they are not contributing, even unwittingly, to someone becoming a victim of slavery.

Our TISC statement was published on Anti-Slavery Day in October 2020, and West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Humberside, Cleveland, Durham, and Northumbria counties will now operate according to this single vision. The development and publication of this ground-breaking statement has been acknowledged as best practice in policing by Blue Light Commercial, the Modern Slavery Organised Immigration Crime Programme (MSOICP), and the Home Office Modern Slavery Unit.

Nationally, the PCC continued to work as APCC lead for modern slavery and human trafficking, and also chaired meetings of our **National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network (NATMSN)**. Working through this group, we continued to support the delivery of the Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Programme (MSOICP) as a member of its Strategic Assurance Board. There has been another opportunity this year to engage PCCs with the work of the MSOICP by accessing a funding round of small grants managed by the Mayor's NATMSN coordinator. Through this fund, approximately 60% of PCCs nationwide received grants of up to £3,000 to deliver anti-slavery prevention work within vulnerable sectors of their communities, in collaboration with their local police services and partnership networks. The majority of projects were for awareness-raising activities and educational initiatives, many as part of social media campaigns. West Yorkshire was successful in a bid for this funding and has worked in collaboration with West Yorkshire Police and partners to develop an animation to raise awareness of domestic servitude within our communities.

Domestic servitude is one of the least identified exploitation types in the UK, accounting for 6% of reported cases of modern slavery. This does not mean that domestic servitude is necessarily less common, however, because as these abuses literally occur 'behind closed doors', they are especially hard to identify and record.

Domestic servitude typically involves victims working in a private family home where they are subjected to unbearable living conditions, ill-treatment, long working hours, or made to work for little or no pay. The victim could be used in this way by their own family members or a partner. It is very difficult for them to leave this situation because of threats, the perpetrator holding their passport, or using a position of power over the victim.

The campaign featured a two-minute animated film developed in collaboration with international anti-slavery charity Hope for Justice and West Yorkshire Police. The script was based on a case study identified by Hope for Justice from a survivor they had supported and follows the journey of a female from their home country to the UK. The animation aims to raise awareness of domestic servitude within a relationship or familial setting, and details how to report concerns. It was promoted across our social media channels to mark the UN World Day Against Human Trafficking.

Other Headlines from the Year

Through the work of our Safeguarding Advisor, we support a number of important partnership forums which help to build a consistent approach to safeguarding across the five districts of West Yorkshire. They include the **West Yorkshire Safeguarding Communications Group**, which brings West Yorkshire Police and local authority communications leads together with the third sector to develop impactful campaigns to raise awareness, target perpetrators, and inform our communities on safeguarding topics. The Group has developed and **launched two important campaigns** during 2020/21:

- A ‘Night-Time Economy’ poster campaign developed from a *Safer Leeds* project, and targeted workers in hotels, taxi firms, and fast-food restaurants to help identify vulnerable young people who could be at risk of exploitation or abuse.
- Secondly, a ‘squaring’ campaign was developed with the support from the West Yorkshire Police Economic Crime Unit and the Mayor’s Violence Reduction Unit. So-called ‘squaring’ involves a person transferring stolen money on behalf of others, usually through their own bank account, and under the enticement of offers of quick cash in return. Criminals often target vulnerable people who are likely to be in need of money, but many students have also been approached. The criminals involved can be behind drug dealing, human trafficking, grooming, and County Lines crimes.

Further examples of West Yorkshire safeguarding communications campaigns include a West Yorkshire Police/VRU campaign to **encourage older victims to report cases of domestic abuse**. Although people often assume domestic abuse refers to physical assault, these offences cover a range of behaviours, such as manipulation, intimidation, sexual coercion, and psychological abuse. This new campaign was part of the national 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse, and focussed on the financial abuse of older people. A typical example of this type of crime is when a younger member of a family controls an older relative into giving them money. This can happen in a persuasive way, or it could be that they are threatening or violent towards the older person. In the 12 months up to September 2020 there were 2,189 domestic incidents involving a victim over the age of 65 in West Yorkshire alone.

Further information is available at www.westyorkshire.police.uk/ElderAbuse

Making Criminal Justice Work for Communities

The onset of the Covid pandemic had a particularly stark impact on the criminal justice system. Our partners in the courts, police, and prison services had to immediately reconfigure their services to reduce the transmission of Covid from person to person. This posed great challenges in maintaining normal court processes; in the handling of detainees; and in providing their usual access to legal representation. The impact on victims and witnesses awaiting justice has also been great, and with courts services finding themselves severely restricted, case backlogs quickly built-up.

The PCC took the decision to increase the frequency of **Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)** meetings to a bi-weekly pattern to help partners co-ordinate their work in these challenging circumstances. Mark also helped to lobby central government to build an improved communication structure between local LCJBs and the national CJB and MoJ. This helped to circumvent some of the barriers to innovative new practices which West Yorkshire partners hoped to adopt as part of their Covid recovery plan.

By September 2020, all court buildings in West Yorkshire were open, and our strong West Yorkshire partnership had developed some pioneering solutions to help maximise the capacity in our court spaces - notably in Leeds and Bradford where the use of Perspex screens allowed juries to sit and hear cases. In Leeds, car-parking space was converted to house Portacabins which could be used by juries to retire and reach a verdict.

A temporary '**Nightingale' Court** (a term coined here in West Yorkshire) was established in Leeds to address the Covid backlogs in civil cases, and this decanting of work away from the secure Combined Courts estate allowed those buildings to be used exclusively for crime work. This supported the other great work of our LCJB partners and has helped us to reach a position of stabilising, and now reducing, the backlog position from early 2021. As of August this year, Leeds' Nightingale Court is being adapted to accept criminal cases, which is a further step forward in our partnership's work to reduce backlogs and achieve better outcomes for victims.

Supporting these changes to courts' infrastructure, the PCC part-funded an additional analytical post under the LCJB's Performance Manager. By assessing courts' data released to LCJB partners, this post has helped to guide the most effective use of court space, with the objective to make sure 'every court room counted' as we sought to address the backlog. This post has continued to be supported throughout 2021.

In 2019 we launched the West Yorkshire Reducing Reoffending Strategy, and work through our **Reducing Reoffending Board** in 2020/21 has focussed on improving prison leavers' employability and access to stable accommodation. Highlighting the need for more accessible and suitable housing for those suffering multiple disadvantage has been at the forefront of this year's work, and through the PCC's Criminal Justice Advisor, we have championed the use of organisations such as Yale Housing. Yale have worked with *Together Women* and the Youth Justice Service to develop a package with local authorities which will ensure that vulnerable groups such as women (in Leeds) and young people (in Wakefield), have access to supported living.

Further work hopes to address the accommodation issues faced by women in contact with the criminal justice system, helping them to progress from a 'crisis phase' (which may have brought them into contact with the CJS), through supported living on release, and finally the prospect of independent tenancy in their own accommodation. Partnership work in this space is being informed by the MOJ's recently published 'Concordat on Women in or at Risk of Contact with the Criminal Justice System', which advocates a 'whole-system' approach to the challenges faced by female

offenders, such as drug or alcohol dependency, or abusive or exploitative relationships. This approach which has been at the heart of the work of our **West Yorkshire Females at Risk of Offending Group** from its foundation.

Criminal justice system clients with mental health or neuro-diversity issues can face specific challenges in finding appropriate accommodation. In particular, through our Criminal Justice Advisor we have linked-up with the NHS South West Yorkshire Partnership Trust's '**Forensic Outreach Liaison Service**' (FOLS) and NHS England's Learning Disabilities and Autism Programme, who provide enhanced support for those with a history of 'fire-setting'. This cohort face an especially difficult challenge to find accommodation, and once incarcerated, they often cannot secure parole as they have no suitable release address.

A newly formed partnership group (comprising health services alongside other partners including probation services and the Mayor's office), are keen to facilitate work with housing providers and the fire and rescue service to provide special adaptations to accommodation to help prevent fires. This is a valuable project aimed at a client group with complex needs; we hope to continue supporting this work in the year ahead.

In last year's Annual Report we described the PCC's support for the **West Yorkshire Finding Independence** team (WYFI), and specifically their project to share the knowledge they had gained from their work with people in the criminal justice system experiencing multiple and complex needs. Subsequently, WYFI have presented three reports to our thematic criminal justice forums, focussed on their overall client experience, the experience of young people with complex needs, and women suffering multiple disadvantage. A further output has been that WYFI's work has deepened our partnership engagement, leading to the establishment of a new forum, the 'West Yorkshire Improving Women's Lives Network'. This new body merges together former OPCC and WYFI groups, and will be co-chaired by the Mayor's office in conjunction with *Women's Lives Leeds*, and the Kirklees Better Outcomes Partnership.

Another example of our support for women in the criminal justice system has been the **Code 4000 project** at HMP Newhall. Alongside establishing stable accommodation for prison leavers, boosting employability skills is an important step in breaking the cycle of reoffending. Code 4000 is a technology charity which teaches digital skills to prisoners with the aim to prepare them for employment in the tech-sector. We have supported this project by funding textbooks for prisoners participating in the programme, which although impacted by Covid last year, is set to run successfully in 2021.

On the topic of child criminal exploitation, we are also working through the VRU with West Yorkshire Police and West Yorkshire's youth offending services to raise awareness of girls' involvement with County Lines drug dealing gangs. Often, girls' gang activity is not as straightforward as it may seem: girls can be exploited sexually or forced into criminality by gang members. The extent of the control of girls, and their use as a commodity, overlaps with our concerns for human trafficking and slavery, and deepening our partners' understanding of these issues is an important strand of work in our growing 'Women and Girls' agenda.

Finally on the topic of accommodation, valuable work has been coordinated by the **Housing Best Practice Partnership Network**. This joint initiative, established between the OPCC and Forbes Solicitors is designed to highlight the key role that housing plays when dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour in neighbourhoods. The network currently consists of representatives from Police, Fire, Health, Local Authorities, Probation services and the Third Sector - all of whom wish to see positive outcomes for victims of ASB and the ethical treatment of tenants.

Other Headlines from the Year

West Yorkshire Police successfully submitted a funding bid to the Home Office to improve the Force's digital capability in the monitoring and investigation of internet offending. As a result, the Force will gain the capability of remote monitoring of a Registered Sex Offender's computer, through a number of licences that can be allocated and moved throughout the year in line with the evolving threat and risk of different offenders.

The force has also developed a trailblazing initiative called Pol-Ed (Policing and Education). PolEd will be rolled out across local schools from autumn 2021, and provides a comprehensive programme of lessons that follow children through their school career. The resources provide teachers with the tools to deliver information on the law, crime prevention, and safeguarding, whilst also building an understanding of resilience, peer to peer support, and where to access help if needed. The ultimate aim of the project is to keep every child in West Yorkshire safe.

Finally, the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) secured the first Unidentified Wealth Order (UWO) obtained in the UK against an individual with suspected links to organised crime. This included the recovery of 45 properties and other assets. This is a demonstration of the power of POCA (proceeds of crime legislation) and the commitment from law enforcement agencies to work together to tackle serious and organised crime in communities.

Restorative Justice: Running between Sunday 15th and 22nd November, Restorative Justice Week helped to raise awareness of alternative pathways to justice through a series of virtual and online events hosted by the Leeds Faith Forum, the Youth Offending Team, Restorative Solutions, and West Yorkshire Police.

Restorative Justice (RJ) allows both a victim and offender to meet, with the goal of sharing their experiences and reaching a consensus on what the offender can do to take responsibility for their actions. Restorative Justice can provide victims with the chance to be heard, to get answers, and build a sense of closure. It also forces offenders to face-up to the impact of their behaviour, helping to prevent further harm. The West Yorkshire Restorative Justice service was commissioned by the PCC in 2018 with an investment of £900k over three years.

Supporting Victims and Witnesses

Following the launch of our landmark Victims and Witnesses Strategy in February 2020 *'Supporting People Harmed by Crime'*, the OPCC developed and put into action a detailed delivery plan with our partners during the past year. However, the onset of Covid meant that the focus of attention needed to be changed, and in particular, to working to maintain service provision to victims, including vulnerable victims, in West Yorkshire.

All victim services commissioned and funded through the OPCC were affected by the Covid lockdown. Through our commissioning team and the Mayor's Victims & Witness Advisor, we were able to maintain contact with service providers about the greatly changed environment in which they were operating. In the first months of Covid, support was generally delivered remotely rather than face to face in accordance with lockdown requirements, but our funded services remained open to support victims, receiving referrals from the Police and other organisations, as well as accepting self-referrals.

Contact was maintained through regular check-in calls with our funded services at Restorative Solutions, Victim Support, and the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) – helping us to understand partners' experiences of operating under Covid, and the changing support needs of victims. During the early stages of the pandemic, the OPCC's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board continued to meet remotely to support the partnership response to the new challenges we were facing. NHS representation on the Board has been strengthened during the year, to reflect its important role in supporting victims of domestic and sexual abuse.

Through the **Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' Victims Portfolio Group**, we worked at the national level through virtual meetings to learn from best practice and build synergies between West Yorkshire-based and national organisations. The West Yorkshire OPCC was also one of a small set of organisations to meet regularly with the Victims Commissioner for England, Dame Vera Baird QC. This channel of communication helped us to both understand and inform the national debate about support for victims arising from the Covid lockdowns.

An example of our ability to shape national practice through this forum was our work to make sure national victims helplines were linked into and aware of the local context in West Yorkshire. This was particularly the case with the National Domestic Abuse Helpline service, where through our influence we were able to see that PCCs nationwide were provided with greater detail about the type of calls the service was receiving. We were also able to raise our concerns about the degree of support available for male victims at the national scale.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the OPCC and its partners comprising the **LCJB Victims and Witness Group** were acutely aware of the need to support victims and witness when courts struggled to hear cases in light of Covid social distancing regulations. Victims experienced considerable delays as case backlogs built up. This impact of Covid 19 provided an opportunity to put the principles of our Victims and Witnesses Strategy into practice, by encouraging criminal justice partners to work closely together to overcome these issues. Important development work was also carried forward despite the difficult circumstances. An example from the past year is use of the network of remote video-link sites which has now been established in West Yorkshire, and which allow victims to give evidence in safe places away from the accused perpetrator, and with the support of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) and other victim services. These remote

sites help to keep victims engaged in the criminal justice process, and increase the chances of successful outcomes against perpetrators of domestic and sexual abuse.

A further development since the launch of the Victims Strategy has been work to implement the recommendations of **the independent review of support services for victims of sexual abuse and violence**. The response was led by the PCC and the OPCC's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board. The OPCC had an early opportunity to take forward the recommendations of the review by investing MoJ funding for additional ISVAs starting in April and July 2020.

Wider partnership discussions on the strategy have learned from the 'Essex Synergy Model' (a collaborative approach between different providers of ISVA services). Key issues discussed have included enhancing partnership working and victim referral routes, improving access to mental health services, and improving criminal justice outcomes.

Engagement with CSPs has focussed on working to ensure that the needs of victims are explicitly recognised in their new strategies and plans, whilst work with NHS partners within the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership has led on mental health support and improving referral routes for victims.

In last year's Annual Report, we were able to describe the important work undertaken by the OPCC and our partners in West Yorkshire Police to establish an early intervention programme to address the behaviour of low to medium risk perpetrators of domestic abuse (**the CARA programme**). In November 2020, we were able to secure additional Home Office funding of £215k to develop this project further. In Leeds, the funding was used to provide a dedicated Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Worker to improve partner joint-working, as well as improve victims' access to support. Whilst in Bradford, the funding supported an early intervention perpetrator worker, offering one-to-one and whole family support. The funding also supported a domestic abuse perpetrator programme in the city which is culturally appropriate for South Asian communities. Finally, a portion of the funding was used to expand a West Yorkshire-wide 'location tagging' programme for perpetrators, developed alongside the police, probation, and local authorities.

To ensure the continuation of these crucial strands of work, the PCC and key partners provided additional match funding beyond the Home Office's investment. Looking back on this difficult year, we can be especially proud of our work in West Yorkshire in light of the fact that nationwide, ours was the only CARA programme not to pause during the pandemic.

Also last year, we highlighted the official opening of West Yorkshire's purpose-built facility for victims of sexual violence and assault, the **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**. SARC has been a landmark project for the OPCC and its partners in West Yorkshire Police, NHS England and NHS Improvement, Mountain Health Care, the Courts Service (HMCTS), and West Yorkshire victims support services. The SARC's purpose is to ensure victims and survivors have access to specialist medical and forensic services and advice when they need it most. SARC has had a successful year of operation, working with people of any age or gender, seven days per week. Despite the challenges faced by operating under Covid restrictions, the SARC received a very favourable inspection result by the Care Quality Commission in February this year. We were also delighted that the SARC received an award from the National Police Estates Group (NPEG) for 'best construction project over £1m'. Both of these accolades are well deserved, and reflect the great effort made by partners over several years to deliver the best facility to vulnerable people in need.

Engaging With Communities During the Pandemic

In looking back over the period since our last Annual Report, we are reviewing a period in recent history unlike any we have experienced before. During the initial phases of the Covid emergency, the OPCC and its partners worked to affect the local dimension of the national fight against the virus. One aspect of that work was to provide information and reassurance to our communities, and at the OPCC, the Engagement team led on this work by developing the PCC's Communications and Engagement Plan for the early months of the pandemic.

Whilst during the early phases of the emergency, the PCC participated in weekly conference calls with the Policing Minister to escalate any West Yorkshire issues, the local dimension to our engagement work between March and July 2020 included:

- A weekly 'Coronavirus Bulletin', which was circulated to partners and members of the public providing advice and information.
- A residents survey - which was held during June and October to gather public opinion on policing during lockdown, and to gain feedback on the challenges faced by different communities within the context of the impact on British policing following the murder of George Floyd in the USA.
- Regular online meetings of the Third Sector Advisory Group via video-call.
- Increased engagement with young people through virtual meetings of the Youth Advisory Group (YAG), helping to gain a young person's perspective on life under lockdown.

The OPCC placed a strong emphasis on work with young people through YAG at this time. Young people faced specific challenges under Covid, and had to learn to live with being forced to stay away from their friends, and transferring to online channels for their day-to-day school experience. For many this had contributed to poorer mental health. The OPCC held three competitions during 2020 to help give a focus for young people in lockdown and these competitions led on themes of community safety, social inclusion and diversity, and people's experience of lockdown. Examples included designing a new logo for the YAG team, and expressing their feelings on their lockdown experience through creative writing, art, or video work.

The Safer Communities Fund

April 2020 saw the launch of an **Extraordinary Grant Round** of the PCC's Safer Communities Fund (SCF). This funding round helped local organisations to meet the initial challenges of operating services and providing support during the pandemic. Funded projects targeted issues such as domestic and sexual abuse, child sexual abuse, mental health, fraud, and drugs and alcohol abuse.

The SCF represents a landmark project for the OPCC. Launched in February 2014, the SCF was founded on the principle of returning money recovered from criminals by West Yorkshire Police, back into communities to help fund crime prevention across West Yorkshire's districts. Since then – and over the course of 21 Grant Rounds - the SCF has received over 3,600 applications for small grants (up to £6,000) which have helped to support vital neighbourhood projects and charities.

SCF projects are led by people who care passionately about their communities and want to make a real difference to peoples' lives. SCF funding can also provide a financial lifeline for many small-scale organisations working in our neighbourhoods.

During the lifetime of the SCF, every type of crime and community safety issue has been addressed, but in all cases, the fund's objective has been to support the most vulnerable people in our communities.

At a celebration event held in March 2021, the SCF's final total value was revealed of 827 supported projects sharing £3.77m in funding. It is estimated by the time these final projects finish, nearly 243,000 people will have been positively impacted by the fund.

The project as a whole represents an incredible achievement for the OPCC, West Yorkshire Police, and the charities and organisations who have worked so hard in their communities. A renewed version of the SCF will be announced by the Mayor in the year ahead.

Third Sector Conference:

The PCC's 8th Annual Third Sector conference was held in November 2020, and was the first entirely online conference we had arranged. The event brought together over 70 participants from organisations who represent and support the sector in our area. The conference reflected on the unique circumstances of the past year, and alongside delegates, the PCC celebrated the vital role Third Sector organisations had played to help keep individuals within all our communities safe, supported and reassured by continuing to deliver their important services in challenging times.

Speakers on the day included Clint Hepworth from the West Yorkshire Liaison and Diversion Service, who spoke about how they work with the Third Sector to support people who have entered the criminal justice system; Julie Stott, Development Consultant with Disability Partnership Calderdale, who spoke of their work to support people with physical disabilities and sensory impairments during the year; and from the Black Health Initiative, Heather Nelson JP spoke about minority communities' experience of the pandemic, and BHI's work to help organisations provide services which are inclusive and unbiased.

Responding to Serious Violence

At the heart of the **Violence Reduction Unit's crime prevention work** is engagement with members of communities which are affected by serious violence. Although Covid restrictions have impacted on this work, the VRU has been able to establish a Community Advisory Group (CAG), which met for the first time in March 2021. The group's members reflect a wide range of experiences and expertise, and provide an insight into the impact of serious violence within communities.

The group will allow participants to share their views with decision-makers about violence reduction programmes and campaigns; provide opportunities for community feedback to co-develop projects, and advise on engagement to bring communities closer to the work of the unit. A good example of this approach is the VRU's 'co-production' pilot project in Leeds. Entitled 'Tackling violent crime together', the pilot has focused on three key ward areas with key themes for intervention including mental health, criminal exploitation, and employability. Community feedback has led to an approach where young people are listened to and not stereotyped, with delivery led by trusted partners with an established relationship with the community.

Finally, the tragic murder of **Sarah Everard** brought to all our attentions the ongoing threat of violence which women and girls can face. It is a sickness in our society which the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have put at the centre of their agenda for change in West Yorkshire. In the aftermath of Sarah's disappearance, the PCC and Chief Constable met to address immediate concerns with over 80 representatives of voluntary and community groups in a virtual event. Speakers also included the Chief Executive of Leeds Women's Aid, Nick Peasgood, and Councillor Jenny Lynn, Chair of the Calderdale Community Safety Partnership. The meeting aimed to provide reassurance to communities, and enabled us to hear from local partners who support women and girls to help shape our future approaches. The response in West Yorkshire cannot be managed by any one agency alone, and there was a recognition of the need to influence national action plans and legislation such as the Home Office's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, Domestic Abuse Strategy, revised Victims Code, and forthcoming Victims Law. There was also an identified need for long-term sustainable funding and support from Government. Working with these partners in the months ahead, we plan to adopt a strategic approach to this issue, which is central to the Mayor's ambitions for her time in office.

Holding the Chief Constable to Account

My regular Community Outcomes Meetings (COM) require the Chief Constable and senior police officers to answer questions about policing and community safety priorities which are important to the communities of West Yorkshire. In particular, COM provides an opportunity for the PCC/Mayor to put questions to the Chief Constable which have been submitted by members of the public.

June 2020's COM represented a particularly important session, coming in the wake of two internationally important matters; the onset of the Covid pandemic, and the tragic death in the USA of George Floyd. At this time, the PCC sought to provide reassurance to members of ethnic minority groups through his questions to the Chief Constable.

At the meeting, the Chief Constable said that racist prejudice and biases had no place within policing. He explained that WYP had made significant investments in training officers and staff to recognise and challenge conscious or unconscious biases, and that this work was supported by WYP's Professional Standards Department (PSD) and a complaints team that allowed the public to report any incident of concern.

The debate moved on to consider Stop and Search, and whether the programme to tackle serious violence in West Yorkshire (Operation Jemlock) had impacted on racial disparity in the use of stop and search. By June last year, Op. Jemlock had increased stop and search activity by about 10%, but more people from a BAME background had been stopped when compared to standard stop and searches. To understand this disproportionality, a range of work had been undertaken to look at stop locations, officer profile, intelligence and community information, so that the Chief Constable could better understand the reasons for this effect.

The Chief Constable explained that officers had used body worn video (BWV) throughout the operation, and all stop and searches had been scrutinised. In addition to this, all Operation Jemlock staff had received unconscious bias and community engagement awareness training to understand the effects of their actions within communities.

The Chief Constable explained that WYP were committed to understanding the data to be certain there was no discrimination, and he highlighted that data on the demographic characteristics of those stopped was fully published to allow transparency in the police's practice. He also added that

public scrutiny panels allowed people to review body worn video footage of stops, and that the 'ride along' programme allowed members of the public to see stop and searches at first hand.

He said he was aware of the need to jointly publish stop and search data with the PCC to ensure transparency, and this was one of the actions taken from the meeting.

Other topics covered in COM during the year include countering terrorism, safeguarding the vulnerable, serious and violent crime, road safety, and Stop and Search and the police's use of force. Minutes from these meetings can be found at www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime.

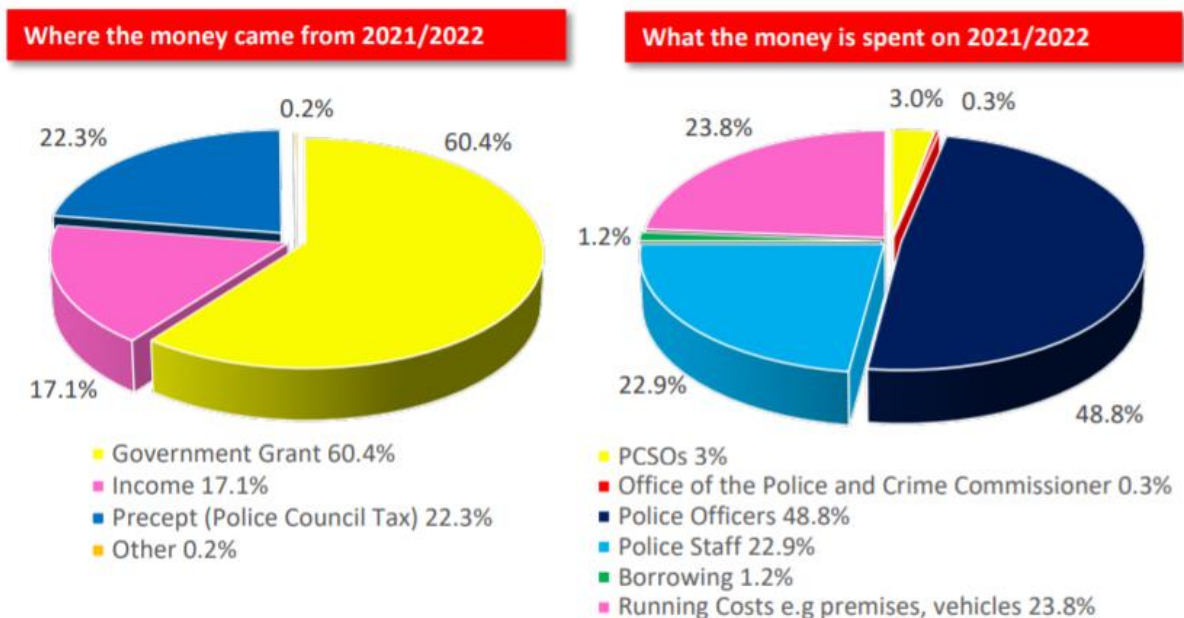
Police Service Funding and Officer Recruitment

The PCC's budget for 2020/21 maintained his commitment to support frontline policing in West Yorkshire.

The previous financial year had seen over 300 new student officers recruited, and 20/21's budget provided for a further 251 officers and 73 police staff to be recruited and invested into protecting local communities, while sustaining the level of non-partner funded Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) as part of Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

In his Revenue and Capital Budget report for the year, the PCC identified that investment in neighbourhood policing, digital forensic capabilities, and critical communication infrastructure were priorities for the year.

The budget for policing in West Yorkshire in 2020/21 was £616.2 million; a breakdown of expenditure is shown below:



The PCC presented the details of his proposal for the Council Tax precept to the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel in January 2021, and an increase of £15 on the Council Tax for a Band D

property was approved. This proposal corresponded with an approximate increase on the cost of residents' Council Tax of 19 pence per week for band A property; 22 pence per week for Band B property; and 29 pence per week for Band D property. 61% of households in West Yorkshire are in Bands A and B. 80% of respondents to the PCC's budget consultation in January this year supported this proposal for Council Tax funding.

Police and Crime Plan Performance Monitoring

Progress in the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan's outcomes is evaluated through 25 performance indicators. Four times per year we produce a full assessment document of these measures in our 'Delivery Quarterly' report. Delivery Quarterly can be found on www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk in the 'Holding the Chief Constable to Account' section.

As we have mentioned previously in this report, the unprecedented circumstances of 2020/21 meant that many of our indicators of performance recorded falling levels of crime during the year. In some cases, Covid had meant that data collection had been suspended and so no new performance updates were available (this was particularly the case with regard to the Crime Survey of England and Wales).

At the close of 2020/21, ten of the performance indicators were showing improved performance, five recorded no change, and two were showing declining performance, with no new data available for the balance of measures. Performance headlines from the year include:

- Total crime stayed below the levels experienced last year, with the exception being the last month of Q4. As lockdown restrictions eased, crime has started to increase back to usual levels, but overall there was a 13.3% reduction in the volume of offences during the year.
- Recorded incidents of ASB were at a higher level during 2020/21 than in the previous year. Nuisance motorcycles/quad bikes was the category showing the greatest increase in reports.
- The positive outcome rate for rape offences increased by 4.5% during the year, whilst positive outcomes for domestic abuse remained stable.
- Data on reoffending provided by the Ministry of Justice has a large time lag as it captures information on an individual's offending behaviour in the year after their release. Data up to to 2019 currently shows a slight decline in reoffending in West Yorkshire, and in youth offending, the reoffending rate has fallen below the England and Wales average for the first time since March 2012. Data from the West Yorkshire Police cohort study of offenders (managed through the Integrated Offender Management programme), also shows a reduction in reoffending within this group.
- West Yorkshire Police has recorded a significant increase in victim satisfaction over the year. Out of the 9,727 victims surveyed during the 12 months to March 2021, 77.7% said they were satisfied with the overall service provided, which is an increase of 2.8 percentage points in comparison to the previous 12 months, and the highest level seen for over 3 years.
- In March 2021 the OPCC recommenced the Your Views public opinion survey after a 12-month suspension during the height of the pandemic. The survey was free for any West Yorkshire resident to take online, in contrast to the previous postal survey of randomly selected households. The online survey attracted 2,954 responses during the 10 days when the survey was open; 76.3% of respondents said they felt safe or very safe in their local neighbourhood. Although this is a strong positive response, the score is five percentage points lower than that recorded in the last postal Your Views survey of 2020. The change in survey methodology is likely to have contributed to this change in scoring.

Policing and Crime Financial Statement

A full record of the budget and accounts for 2020/21, produced by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire, is available at our website at: [www. https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/finance/the-police-budget/](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/finance/the-police-budget/)