



## WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

17<sup>th</sup> July 2020

### COVID-19 – Briefing for the Police and Crime Panel

#### Introduction

This report is a COVID update following the paper that was discussed at the Police and Crime meeting on 12 June 2020. This report does not seek to cover information provided previously but does intend to update members on the latest COVID position from a PCC/OPCC perspective.

It will include an update on policing alongside additional partnership activity with consideration for the current situation and any anticipated scenarios that may require a change in the future.

Please be aware that this is a changing picture and will continue to be so. Updates will continue to be provided to Panel members outside of the PCP meeting structure where appropriate.

#### Background/Context

Since the previous Police and Crime Panel meeting in June 2020, a number of changes to the government guidance have been made including:

- Reopening of schools/private nurseries for some age groups
- Groups of up to 6 people being able to meet outdoors, including in gardens and private outdoor spaces
- Two households now able to meet indoors whilst maintaining social distancing, including being able to stay the night
- Non-essential shops reopened
- Pubs, restaurants, hairdressers, hotels/holiday accommodation and camp sites have also reopened
- Social distancing of 'one metre plus' where it is not possible to maintain two metres and other mitigations are being ensured to reduce the risk of transmission.

It should be noted that this is guidance only and not enforceable by the police. The previously released restrictions have been revoked and replaced with entirely new legislation.

In addition to national guidance and reports from the government and PHE, we continue to receive regular guidance and advice from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and information from the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) as part of their named Operation Talla in response to Coronavirus.

#### Current Activity

Interim arrangements to replace standard governance structures during the Coronavirus pandemic continue to follow the below structure:

Who	What	When	Notes
PCC / CC	Contact when required	Calls to take place when update required	
OPCC Exec / CC or DCC	Bilateral discussion to	Weekly on Wednesdays/Thursdays	Previously reported content to facilitate the discussion

	focus on Covid19	with Op Jinmen update from WYP and update from OPCC	remains the same for these meetings. Bilat papers for other areas now included for discussion and decision making
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The Community Outcomes Meeting (COM) took place on 24 June and members of the public were invited to submit questions for both the PCC and Chief Constable. Issues around speeding, hate crime and domestic abuse in relation to Covid 19 were some of the themes from questions answered. The PCC also sought to provide some reassurance to the BAME community following the recent demonstrations and events in America, across the UK and events elsewhere around the world, by considering policed enforcement of Covid-19 legislation and stop and search activity.

Prior to the planned PCC election it felt right and proper to refresh the Police and Crime Plan to ensure current priorities, such as serious violent crime, were reflected. It would, of course, have been for the newly elected PCC to produce a new strategic five year Plan going forward. Given the postponement of the election and the continuation of the incumbent PCC in post we need an up to date working document.

Therefore, the PCC has decided to further refresh the Plan to ensure the needs of our communities and the work of partners are reflected in the outcomes, the priorities and the measures. Any such changes made will then need to be reflected in the structure and in the text which will result in a further refresh within the body of the Plan.

Given the elections scheduled for next May, the PCC does not intend to do a rewrite, but to ensure a Plan that is fit for our collective working purpose over at least the next 12 months. This revision and wider needs assessment work will be undertaken in the coming months and the Police and Crime Panel will be sighted on the draft prior to anticipated 'publication' in September.

### **Victims And Witnesses Services**

#### **Supporting People Harmed By Crime – West Yorks Victims And Witnesses Strategy**

Following the strategy launch during February, the OPCC is currently developing a detailed delivery plan for the strategy, which has been adapted in light of the context. This is being developed in collaboration with Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) partners through the LCJB Victims and Witness Group. The PCC's Victims and Witnesses Adviser now chairs this group on behalf of the PCC and attends the LCJB Executive. The LCJB sub group has drawn up a public statement for the LCJB about the support being provided to victims given the back log of cases in the courts, which is a very practical example of the strategy being put into practice. The strategy is to be discussed with Community Safety Partnerships over the next few months, with a view to identifying their role in its delivery.

#### **National Engagement**

The PCC's Victims and Witnesses Adviser is taking part in regular updates convened by the APCC and the Victims Commissioner at national level, to ensure awareness of key developments and contribute from a West Yorkshire perspective. Generally during the Covid 19 period, there has been increased communication between national and local levels in the victim's services field, and it has been possible to progress a number of issues as a result. One particular area of interest for WY has been improved information about the work of national helplines and their relationship to local provision, for example the National Domestic Abuse Helpline (female only) and the Men's Advice Line which provides a service to male victims.

### **Consultation On Revised Victims Code**

The Government has undertaken a consultation about a revised victims code, and explained its intention to implement a commitment to introduce a Victims Law into Parliament, based on the revised Code. The PCC submitted a response to the consultation, which is available on request. The issues raised are being followed up through the APCC Victims Portfolio Group, which will be in discussion with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) about the next steps. West Yorkshire Police also made a submission and discussions took place to ensure the PCC and Police complemented each other in the views expressed. Partnership discussions took place through the LCJB.

### **Domestic And Sexual Abuse**

The OPCC continues to hold a regular Skype call with commissioners and providers of support services for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse throughout West Yorkshire. This recognises the risk that social isolation may result in increased levels of domestic and sexual abuse. There is regular contact between OPCC staff and domestic abuse co-ordinators in the local authorities.

Following the extraordinary funding from the MoJ for services supporting victims of domestic and sexual abuse in June, funding requests were received from 16 organisations resulting in £495,640 being distributed across those organisations for delivery between 24 March – 31 October and ring-fenced for COVID-19 related emergency funding.

The PCC submitted an expression of interest for MoJ funding for additional Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) for West Yorkshire. The proposal was one of 15 successful submissions in England and Wales securing an additional £160k. Current providers of specialist ISVA services were asked to submit expressions of interest, with a remit to consider gaps identified by the PCCs independent review of these services. These were: provision for male victims; rape crisis type services in Wakefield; and BAME outreach work. In line with the recommendations of the report mentioned in the last paragraph, the grant has been split between two organisations, Victim Support who run the WY Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) service and Kirklees and Calderdale Rape Crisis who have agreed to extend their work to include Wakefield.

### **Brake & The National Road Victims Service**

As a result of discussions between the APCC and MoJ (in which West Yorks PCC and CC played a significant part) the grant arrangements for the national road victim's service operated by Brake has transferred to the Dept. of Transport. This means that Brake can support all victims of road traffic collisions (killed and serious injured) regardless of whether any culpability has been established. The DfT grant for 2020/21 is £169k, a significant increase on the £98k provided by the MoJ in 2019/20.

### **Safeguarding Update**

After working with partners and to respond to issues caused by lockdown and the information gained locally and nationally a new campaign, 'Safeguarding is Everyone's Business' has been launched across West Yorkshire with links to the local safeguarding hubs. Information is available here: <https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/EveryonesBusiness>

West Yorkshire Safeguarding Week ran 22 to 26<sup>th</sup> June with all districts and many organisations arranging a variety of events virtually and on social media using the hashtag #SafeguardingWeek2020. A press release from the PCC was issued in support of this and can be found here <https://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/news-events/news/partner-agencies-across-west-yorkshire-coming-together-raise-awareness-about-safeguarding-week>

The end of Safeguarding Week also saw the opening of the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) facility. Commissioned by the PCC and NHS England and NHS Improvement, the new SARC houses both the adult and child services under one roof and also incorporates court live-link facilities, interviewing suites for video recorded interviews (VVS/VRI), waiting rooms, a hub for specialist support services, and referral to Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA).

Further to the Chancellor's announcement of £750m funding for the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, the Home Office has secured additional, emergency support funding for small/micro charities that are working with vulnerable young people at risk of being involved in serious violence.

On 22 June 2020, the Home Office notified us that based on the existing 20/21 VRU funding formula, West Yorkshire VRU has been allocated an additional £285,168 to provide to small/micro charities (defined as those having an income less than £100,000 per annum). This emergency funding was contingent on it being provided to secure critical frontline services affected by COVID-19.

The funding opportunity was advertised to West Yorkshire partners on 22 June, with a closing date of 6 July. 70 applications for funding were received and following due diligence and eligibility checks, a list of organisations recommended for funding has been sent to the Home Office for their authorisation.

### **Criminal Justice update**

Since the last report, the PCC has continued to convene bi-weekly Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) meetings. There is ongoing progress by all partners in providing the best service possible to Victims Witnesses and Offenders, under current restraints, and a recovery action plan is now in place with CJS agencies feeding into the different strands through sub-groups.

Continued pressure and lobbying at the highest levels through the APCC has led to an improved communication structure between local LCJBs and the national CJB, as well as the MOJ and Ministers, where appropriate. This has included the recent release of data from HMCTS (Courts) which will allow for a better understanding of the backlogs in court cases, and the amount of work required to address these.

West Yorkshire is undertaking some detailed work of now understanding this data, through the work of our LCJB Manager, who has been consistently supported by the PCC. In addition the PCC is now part funding an additional resource to ensure improved use of the local data moving forward. This insight will allow us to focus in on any slippage and a further group has been tasked with ensuring that each and every court case is as effective as possible whilst many of the social distancing difficulties still remain.

We have started to see a steady increase in the number of cases which the Courts are able to facilitate, although these still fall some way yet to effectively addressing the backlogs that have built. All court buildings within WY are now back open, although operating only the level of service which social distancing will allow. Jury trials within Leeds however, are being undertaken using various innovative methods, which if successful will potentially be rolled out across the country. This includes the use of Perspex screens and additional estate to house the Jury, and the PCC will continue to work with the local Recorders to ensure that he can support this work moving forward with other partners.

The use of new technology platforms have also been progressed, with many cases now taking place "virtually". It is hoped that the opening of the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) will allow for remote access by vulnerable victims, but the technology is still being finalised, and this is no fault of local partners, but a national issue with Vodafone. Work continues however,

between HMCTS and Victim Support to try and progress the use of the video link facilities within the two existing Victims Hubs, although social distancing and issues around cleaning remain a challenge.

Mindful of keeping Victims, Witnesses, Offenders and communities informed of progress, the LCJB will shortly release more details about their commitment to those involved in the justice journey and the new ways of working.

Since the last panel the OPCC Criminal Justice and Mental Health Forum has met and the group heard an update on work being piloted in Bradford to address callers in crisis, involving a police officer using an unmarked car alongside a MH Nurse or MH Practitioner to ensure that clients are given appropriate and timely support. Getting the right service to those in need has been a key objective of this board for some time.

The Forum also heard about innovative work which the OPCC has assisted in facilitating, around the movement of detainees between court and prison, and prison and the community. This work is making good inroads to ensuring that the transmission of information when a person is remanded to gaol, is streamlined, so as to remove unnecessary stress and upset to detainees, and unnecessary extra work for associated services.

Details of PCCs commitment to the West Yorkshire WIFI project were also discussed; a small underspend is now being used to fund research, which will inform the future work of the Reducing Reoffending Board, by listening to the voice of the user, and ensuring that services are based on clients own views wherever possible moving forward.

### **Police Response to COVID-19**

West Yorkshire Police continue to respond to Covid-19 through Operation Jinmen, with the focus and approach outlined in the paper to Panel on 24 April 2020.

The full webpage on the internal WYP intranet to keep all officers/staff updated as well as the public facing pages on the WYP webpage which is available here <https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/coronavirus> continues to be updated where appropriate.

### **Policing within new legislation parameters**

The Health Protection Regulations have remained in place, however, alterations have taken place with regard to business premises allowed to open, public gatherings, the removal of restrictions of movement and overnight stays now allowed.

The WYP response continues to follow a four-step escalation process that adheres to NPCC guidance regarding the four E's of 'Engage', 'Explain', 'Encourage' and finally 'Enforce'. With an emphasis on the first three 'E's', enforcement action should be predominantly utilised for blatant breaches that endanger public safety through the spread of the virus such as through large public gatherings of more people than is currently permitted.

To maintain the ability to police with the consent of our communities, the PCC has worked with the Chief Constable to ensure that WYP use these powers correctly, fairly and only when absolutely necessary.

As previously discussed, the policing of the legislation is scrutinised by the Gold group of Op Jinmen on a daily basis.

On 26<sup>th</sup> June the NPCC released updated provisional data from all police forces in the UK which included the numbers of fines given to persons breaching the new legislation up to 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

There were 15,856 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued in England up to 22<sup>nd</sup> June. In England, fines have been issued for reasons such as driving with non-household members, house parties, large gatherings of people from different households, and camping, among other things .

The NPCC data shows that West Yorkshire has issued 774 fines between 27<sup>th</sup> March to 22<sup>nd</sup> June in this time period and this still compares well with other areas such as North Yorkshire (1,122) although the NPCC does note that *this data is provided in quick time and needs to be viewed with caution*

The latest press release and associated data can be accessed via the NPCC website here: <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/npcc-issues-update-on-fines-given-during-covid-lockdown>

As noted in the recent Community Outcome Meeting, West Yorkshire Police have looked at the proportionality of the notices given, and the following highlights some of the areas that were analysed. The NPCC data is up to 22<sup>nd</sup> June, whereas the following data is up to 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

85.9% of all the notices were given to male recipients

For the age ranges, the most notices were given to the 18-24 age group (53%) and 25-34 were next with 32%. No Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued to under 18's, however 9.3% of occurrences have an under 18 linked, the majority of these are where a Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued to their responsible adult.. The least were given to the 65 and over group (0.7%).

With regard to ethnicity – there are two records for this metric, self-defined and officer defined ethnicity.

With the self-defined ethnicity, nearly 13.2% of the data is recorded as not stated, this is one of the options the person can pick to define themselves as and is also used when the person refuses to identify their ethnicity. Only 0.6% of self-defined ethnicity data is not recorded.

Officer defined ethnicity is recorded as 'unknown' in 3.7% of cases. This is a valid option the officer can select when they cannot identify which ethnicity the person belongs to. Only 0.5% of cases do not have an officer defined ethnicity recorded.

The following looks at the self-defined ethnicity. It excludes the cases with not stated or not recorded data.

For this data set, the largest number of notices were given to those defined as white (60.0%).

2.1% of the notices were given to those defined as black. This correlates perfectly with the proportion of the population which were classed as black in the 2011 census (2.1%)

This is similar to those of a mixed background with 3.2% of the notices given to this group whereas the actual population is 2.2%.

The largest discrepancy is with regard to the Asian population with 31.9% of the notices given to this group which makes up 13.1% of the population, a difference of 18.8%.

At the recent COM meeting it was highlighted that officers had been responding to calls for service from the public who were reporting breaches, so officers were deployed, both NPTs and operational support, to those areas. Analysis had shown that calls and deployment demand directly correlated with the ticket numbers but these were the areas where members of the public were stating that breaches had occurred. They were not an officer based random approach but were community based intelligence reports.

## Public Engagement

The OPCC continues to work to the new Engagement and Communications plan that has been produced in response to Covid-19. This plan sets out how we continue to communicate and engage with our communities and to reassure and stay in touch with people during this global pandemic. The PCC and his office continue to engagement with the public and partners through a variety of ways including email, online through the website/social media, press releases, video and audio messages.

**Listening to you** – Using an online facilities, a qualitative survey was launched during the first week of June, closing on the 29 June. The aim of the survey was to gather public responses on the policing of Covid to date and take a reading on how individuals and communities were coping. The majority of the questions offered respondents free text boxes to collect more qualitative data and analysis of the responses is still ongoing.

**Engagement with the Third Sector** – The Third Sector Advisory Group continue to meet via skype, with the next meeting taking place at the end of July. Regular inputs continue to be received and shared to support our communities on the PCC's website (COVID-19 information page).

**Increased engagement with Young People** – Entries to the Youth Advisory Group logo competition, which closed at the end of June, are being judged during early July, with the winning logo due to be used as soon as possible.

A story writing competition to further engage and consult with young people in West Yorkshire was launched on 26 June, with a closing date of end of July. Open to three age categories of under 10 years, 11 to 16 years, and 17-21 years, young people are being asked to submit a short story based on their views and experience of policing and community safety.

**Communications, Press Releases, Website and Social Media** – the dedicated Coronavirus Support Page on the PCC's website continues to be updated regularly. Recent press releases include support for the national 'Pause for Applause' to thank the NHS and other key workers on 5 July and advertising the 'Little Book of Big Scams' published in West Yorkshire during June

All communication methods are under constant review in terms of any further emerging issues or advice from the Government and NHS.

## Impact on Crime and Community Safety

As highlighted in the 'Current Activity' section on above, in order to inform on the policing priorities, WYP reports weekly on its operation to deal with the pandemic (called Op Jinmen) and this report for the PCC compares crime and incidents before the lockdown (prior to March 27<sup>th</sup>) with the period during the lockdown and then again with the period after the partial release of lockdown (13<sup>th</sup> May)

The most recent report dated 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020 shows the following comparison

Measure	Daily Average pre-pandemic (1st Jan 2020-16-March 2020)	Daily Average during Pandemic 17th March to 5th July	Daily Average - RoL 13th May - 5th July 2020	Change in daily average comparing pre-pandemic and during pandemic		Change in daily average comparing RoL with during pandemic	
999 calls	1207	1101	1171	-106	-8.8%	70	6.4%
101 calls	2121	2115	2188	-6	-0.3%	73	3.5%
All incidents Attended by the Police	1018	1273	1215	256	25.1%	-59	-4.6%
Emergency Incidents attended	324	317	332	-7	-2.0%	15	4.8%
Priority Incidents attended	338	466	424	128	37.8%	-42	-9.0%
Standard Incidents attended	356	490	458	134	37.8%	-32	-6.5%
Custody Throughput	213	220	224	6	3.0%	5	2.1%
Primary Arrests	129	128	133	-1	-0.8%	5	3.7%
Total Recorded Crimes	775	655	696	-120	-15.5%	41	6.3%
Anti Social Behaviour	99	151	175	52	51.8%	24	15.8%
Domestic Incidents	173	185	190	12	6.9%	6	3.1%
Missing People	37	27	29	-10	-25.8%	2	5.9%
Hate Incidents	22	23	27	1	5.2%	4	16.4%
Online CSEA	9	6	6	-3	-30.7%	0	0.0%

Each of the sections looks at the daily average for each of the time periods and then the comparison columns look at the changes. For the period of the pandemic, incident calls (999 and 101 calls) decreased significantly whereas incidents attended rose, due to an increase in online reports reporting COVID regulation breaches and the force attending a greater percentage of reports received to attend these. Since the partial release the number of incident calls (999 and 101) has started to climb and the number attended has fallen slightly.

The biggest change has been for priority and standard incidents which is where the majority of the calls with regard to COVID 19 regulations were situated and this has now returned to more normal levels.

Provisional data is available for April 2020 and the effect of the Coronavirus outbreak is clear in the reduction of crime for all police forces in England and Wales.

For the period in question:

- Total Crime has reduced in West Yorkshire by 23% in comparison to the national reduction of 25%
- Residential Burglary has fallen by 44% in comparison to 34% nationally
- Vehicle Crime has fallen by 42% in comparison to 36% nationally
- Violence against the person has fallen by 13% compared to a 25% reduction nationally
- The number of sexual offences is down by 31% in comparison to a 29% reduction nationally
- Violence without injury has seen the smallest drop with only 9% drop in West Yorkshire compared to a 3% drop nationally

### Organisational Impact and Staff Welfare

A four phase plan for reopening of Ploughland House has been developed. Whilst staff are still predominantly working from home, a small number of staff are using Ploughland House on an ad hoc basis for business that cannot be achieved at home.

Business Support staff are currently working with colleagues in the WYP Health and Safety and Estates teams, looking at the available office space and social distancing measures that will be required before any progression into the next phase and more staff accessing the building for work. This is ahead of the final phase when Ploughland House would be open to all staff and visitors in a controlled way.