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**Report to:** Police and Crime Panel

**Date:** 07<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Subject:** Neighbourhood Policing and ASB

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**Report of:** Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

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## 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

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- 1.1. Neighbourhood Policing is highlighted in the Police and crime plan as an important tool to ensure policing in West Yorkshire is working with the communities
- 1.2. When implemented effectively, the benefits of neighbourhood policing, whether directed at geographic communities or communities that share an interest, can include:
  - a flow of vital community intelligence on a range of issues, from neighbourhood to national security
  - promoting community safety and feelings of safety
  - prevention of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour
  - protecting the vulnerable and reducing repeat demands
  - the opportunity to create resilient communities less reliant on police support
  - the legitimacy necessary to enable policing by consent
- 1.3. At its best, and when properly integrated with other services, neighbourhood policing becomes an important part of neighbourhood management, which then has broader benefits for all.

- 1.4. This report also looks at Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and how the picture of ASB has changed across West Yorkshire.
- 1.5. In the forward to the Police and Crime plan I reiterated my commitment to neighbourhood policing and stated:

*My role is to hold the Chief Constable and West Yorkshire Police to account for you – the people I represent. My focus is to reduce crime and to ensure that your priorities are identified and acted upon. To do this, I will bring together partners to take an early intervention and prevention approach to our work, alongside an ongoing commitment to **neighbourhood policing**, to reduce the opportunity for crime to take place, and that saves young people from abuse, trauma, exploitation and vulnerability*

## **2. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT**

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- 2.1. The Policing Foundation looked at the context of Neighbourhood Policing in the UK during 2017/18 and gave the following picture.
- 2.2. Neighbourhood policing was developed in the first decade of the twenty-first century to address local crime and disorder issues, reassure the public, and reconnect the police with communities throughout England and Wales.
- 2.3. Delivered by a patchwork of small teams of police and community support officers, it had three main functions: to provide:
  1. a visible presence,
  2. to engage with communities and
  3. to tackle their concerns through ‘problem solving’.
- 2.4. It was universal, centrally designed and funded.
- 2.5. When workforce numbers started to decline during the years of austerity, a number of forces sought to absorb reactive demand pressures, while maintaining some element of neighbourhood policing.
- 2.6. They did this by adopting a more general or ‘hybrid’ approach in which local police officers perform both response and neighbourhood tasks, with PCSOs typically providing a more dedicated neighbourhood resource (although they too are increasingly abstracted to reactive work).
- 2.7. Other approaches are best described as ‘semi-hybrid’, for example where a smaller dedicated neighbourhood cadre is supplemented by a more general local resource.

- 2.8. Reports suggest these models can struggle to release capacity for proactive working and can even lead to 'over-resourcing' of immediate demand
- 2.9. There is consistent testimony from practitioners that a workload that contains significant amounts of responsive police work is unsuited to also delivering core neighbourhood policing activities like community engagement and partnership working
- 2.10. It is for these reasons that West Yorkshire has strived to keep Neighbourhood Policing separate from response policing. At times of high demand Neighbourhood officers have been used to support frontline Patrol Officers in call handling, but this is closely monitored.

### **3. STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

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- 3.1. In the Police and Crime plan, the Safer Places and Thriving Communities priority states that:

*The Police, Mayor, and partners will focus on the harmful and unacceptable behaviour that targets the different communities of West Yorkshire through an ongoing commitment to **Neighbourhood Policing** and partnership working in localities.*
- 3.2. Why is this a priority? –
  - Neighbourhood crime, road safety, and serious violence were the most frequently selected areas of focus under this priority
  - It was common to receive feedback that people did not want to see 'low level' neighbourhood crime neglected by the police.
  - Partners also told us that taking a place-based approach to serious organised crime is an effective tool in tackling a crime type that brings so much harm to communities.
- 3.3. I pledged to support this by maintaining a focus on neighbourhood policing through an increase of 750 frontline police officers by May 2024 and maintaining the number of PCSOs working in our communities.
- 3.4. Another important part of this was to ensure that the WYP workforce reflects the communities that it serves, and this is reflected in the performance measure to 'improve police workforce representation'. The data on this forms part of the Performance Monitoring Report each quarter.
- 3.5. The police agreed to

- Ensure the established Neighbourhood Policing Model continues to deliver for all communities in West Yorkshire.
- Work with partners to deliver the Neighbourhood Policing Model, to promote early action and deliver appropriate outcomes for all victims, improving community cohesion and satisfaction.
- Through the Police Uplift Programme, actively strive to increase the diversity of the workforce in line with the demographics of West Yorkshire.
- Continue our joint problem-solving approach with partners at a local level, responding to ASB and other local issues ensuring victims and communities are receiving the appropriate response.
- Maximise opportunities to gather information / intelligence to focus policing and partnership resources and activity to tackle crime, disorder, and disrupt criminals.
- Communicate effectively with our communities, encouraging their engagement with local policing priorities.

3.6. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority agreed to:

- Lead on a community wealth building approach as an integral part of the place-based and neighbourhood strategy.
- Through the Mayor's Safer Communities Fund, support and enable grass-roots community organisations to make an impact on crime, community safety, and cohesion in their local area.

3.7. Our partners agreed to:

- Embed the initiatives and delivery as part of Safer Streets 1/2/3 and the Safety of Women at Night Fund.
- Focus on ASB through 'share, learn and improve roundtables targeting specialist issues e.g., Bonfire Night and Halloween.
- Continue to further embed an early intervention and prevention approach to anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood crime and disorder, whilst reducing harm and vulnerability in neighbourhoods.

## **4. PROGRESS**

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4.1. In the last inspection of West Yorkshire Police under their Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) framework, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services graded West Yorkshire Police as 'Outstanding' for:

- Engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect

- Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour
- Disrupting Serious and Organised Crime (SOC)
- Use of resources

4.2. Most relevant to Neighbourhood Policing were:

- The Force's approach to community engagement is underpinned by its effective partnership working arrangements
- The Force's well-established Neighbourhood Policing Model has a strong focus on early intervention
- The Force is highly effective at combating the threats posed by serious and organised crime

4.3. Whilst West Yorkshire Police and our Partner agencies continue to face challenges in relation to demand, there have been clear reductions in the rates of ASB incidents across West Yorkshire.

4.4. The overall rates of ASB incidents in 2021/22 are lower than those recorded in 2020/21 and show a 40% reduction. The reasons for this are:

- The continued hard work of the Neighbourhood Teams and Partners in each District to reduce ASB and drive down demand within their Ward areas
- The Force has focused on ensuring incidents with an element of ASB are logged correctly at the point of reporting and finalisation
- Improvements in Crime Data Integrity (CDI) where criminal offences are better recognised and recorded

4.5. The ASVAT (Anti-Social and Vulnerability Assessment Tool) system operates across all five Districts. It enables staff to review ASB calls easily and evaluate and identify risk effectively. The ASVAT has been designed to identify risks for repeat callers / victims, who may have been overlooked in the initial call screening process. The PEEL 2021/22 Inspection highlighted our use of ASVAT as an 'innovative practice' and it formed part of our grading as 'Outstanding' at prevention and deterrence.

4.6. Users of the ASVAT system have also been trained to actively review the call Logs and assist with crime recording standards. Irrespective of whether an ASB related call is recorded as a crime or not, it is still picked up by the ASVAT system and reviewed, therefore vulnerability should not be missed.

4.7. Local Policing (the central police oversight team) routinely obtains staffing figures from Districts to monitor the 'actual' number of Neighbourhood staff against its budgeted strength. It is inevitable that there is movement of staff

across departments, including the Neighbourhood Teams, due to lateral development opportunities and promotion. Student Officers on Neighbourhood attachments provide additionality where those gaps currently exist within Districts

- 4.8. Neighbourhood Chief Inspectors are held to account internally at the Neighbourhood Chief Inspectors Steering and Delivery Group and any emerging issues or areas of concern can be escalated to the Assistant Chief Constable Chaired Reassurance Board, if required. This means a focus is maintained on seeking continuous improvement in the Neighbourhood Policing offer and the response to communities
- 4.9. The new Police recruitment pathway Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) has had an impact on all Districts and Departments. This process means new recruits have extended abstractions to complete their university degree and initial training, meaning it takes longer before they are fully deployable. Neighbourhood Officers are more experienced and generally move from the Patrol function which is a critical area of our delivery. Balancing the skills and experience needed to maintain Patrol has temporarily reduced the number of officers available to move to Neighbourhood Policing roles when vacancies arise.
- 4.10. Between July 2021 – July 2022 to redress the PCSO deficit and maintain strength and resilience, there have been 9 cohorts of new PCSO recruits. In total 113 officers successfully completed the training. The PCSO recruitment was open until 31st August 2022 with an active campaign
- 4.11. Mayoral/DMPC Activity to date includes:
  - In July 2021, a partnership bid to reduce motor vehicle crime in neighbourhood areas along the West Yorkshire M62 corridor received £306K from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund. The money was used to reduce the opportunity for motor vehicle crime by improving street lighting and installing and utilising CCTV and ANPR cameras in higher crime areas. The funding was also used for increased engagement and education around vehicle safety throughout the region to prevent vehicles being stolen.
  - West Yorkshire was also again successful in Safer Streets Funding in July 2022, £518K was awarded to West Yorkshire to tackle anti-social behaviour and misuse of motorised quad bikes and motorcycles in residential areas, as well as parks and open spaces. This includes enforcement activity focused on the misuse of vehicles, a youth outreach

and diversion programme working with charities in specific areas, and a public engagement campaign to ensure communities do not suffer or tolerate anti-social behaviour.

- Community Safety Partnerships, Local Authorities, West Yorkshire Police and third sector organisations are working together with the Mayor to deliver distinct and localised aspects.
- The Mayors Safer Communities Fund continues to deliver projects which support Neighbourhood Crime. In Grant Round 1 (March 22) 39 projects were awarded a total of £208,254.93. This round saw 14 projects focusing on Neighbourhood Crime and ASB totaling £74,035.81.
- On a regular basis the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have visited Neighbourhood Policing Teams in the different areas, to talk to officers in localities.

## 5. GOVERNANCE

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5.1. To see how the Mayor/DMPC hold West Yorkshire Police to account on this topic, please see the on-line Community Outcome Meeting which was held on 18th October 2022. (Please see <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/holding-the-chief-constable-to-account/community-outcomes-meetings/community-outcomes-meeting-18-october-2022/>)

5.2. In this meeting. the DMPC questioned the Police about

- Keeping officers in their NPT and only taking them away if necessary

*The DMPC was assured that the Chief Constable (CC) is desperately trying to protect NPT officers and only uses them for call handling when absolutely necessary. This is tightly monitored and even when call handling they try to keep on their normal ward so that continuity continues*

- How West Yorkshire Police were looking at the skill and experience balance for officers in NPT when the workforce is getting younger

*The CC agreed that this was a balancing act currently when traditionally NPT was a specialism that officers apply for after being on response for a while. There is currently a 'swim lane' as part of the new officer onboarding to the police, but realization that this is not a normal choice for new officers.*

- Investigation of ASB and how many of these crimes are subject to further investigation.

CC stated that all crimes are investigated but all are screened to look at threat harm and risk and solvability. Currently 37% of ASB crimes are

included for further investigation.

- Work with Motorcycle nuisance for ASB

*The CC assured the DMPC that motorcycle ASB is currently falling in West Yorkshire, but this does not stop the work taking place in Neighbourhood teams to deal with this nuisance. As well as deploying off road capability, they are deploying several innovations including smart water, drones, CCTV and cameras.*

- 5.3. As part of the Quarterly Performance Scrutiny Meeting that Mayor/DMPC meets with the Chief Constable to discuss the performance measures from the Police and Crime Plan. These measures will then form the narrative of the Performance Monitoring report that is presented to panel.
- 5.4. In the most recent – Performance Scrutiny meeting (August 2022) the DMPC questioned the Chief Constable on the Workforce Representation measure and was reassured that this continues to be a priority for the police service and all diligence was taken to look not just at ethnicity and gender, but all protected characteristics,

## **6. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION BENEFITS AND IMPLICATIONS**

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- 6.1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion benefits and implications are considered throughout all the work of Neighbourhood Policing Teams.
- 6.2. With the Outstanding grade for prevention and deterrence, West Yorkshire Police have shown their desire to prevent people becoming victims of crime and this will ensure benefit for all.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WEST YORKSHIRE**

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- 8.1 As indicated in the Police and Crime plan, by intervening early in ASB crimes and incidents then this will help tackle issues which fuel offending and ASB. This in turn will ensure that fewer young people are involved with ASB and with the harm associated with it.
- 8.2 The document highlights the work that is taking place in West Yorkshire to deal with ASB, and this has culminated in an outstanding grade for prevention and deterrence in the last PEEL inspection which will benefit young people in West Yorkshire.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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- 8.1. In order to ensure this level of engagement, there is a need to ensure that



Neighbourhood Policing Teams are kept up to strength and given the tools that they need to deal with these incidents. This will bring financial implications which are discussed regularly in budget updates and forms part of the reasoning when discussing the precept.

- 8.2. The pressure on future budgets is recognized and this will continue to be an area focused on.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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- 9.1. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 as modified by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (Election of Mayor and Functions) Order 2021 sets out the requirement to issue a Police and Crime Plan as soon as practicable after taking office and, in any case, before the end of the financial year (31 March) in which the Mayor is elected.
- 9.2. The Police and Crime Plan should determine, direct and communicate the Mayor's priorities for their local area during their period in office.
- 9.3. With the mayoral pledge of 750 new frontline officers being converted into a performance measure, this will ensure that this is kept at the forefront.

## **10. EXTERNAL CONSULTATION**

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- 10.1. The report articulates the public consultation that took place for the Police and Crime plan.
- 10.2. More information on this can be found in the Voice of West Yorkshire document published alongside the Police and Crime plan

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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- 11.1. That the panel note this report

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES**

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## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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