**Item 2**



**West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

**Draft Minutes**

**11th July 2025, Kingswood Suite, Town Hall, Wakefield**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Eileen Taylor - Leeds Council

Councillor Norma Harrington - Leeds Council

Councillor Oliver Edwards - Leeds Council

Councillor Nussrat Mohammed - Bradford Council

Councillor Chris Hayden - Bradford Council

Councillor Geraldine Carter - Calderdale Council

Councillor Ann Kingstone - Calderdale Council

Councillor Anthony Smith - Kirklees Council

Councillor Gwen Lowe - Kirklees Council

Councillor Jackie Ferguson - Wakefield Council

Councillor Maureen Cummings - Wakefield Council

Mrs Joanne Sykes - Independent

Mr Trevor Lake - Independent

In attendance

Alison Lowe - Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

Rob Forrest - West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Wendy Stevens - West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Catherine Hankinson - West Yorkshire Police

Russ Hughes - West Yorkshire Police

Tanya Wilkins - West Yorkshire Police

Sharon Fraser - Wakefield Council

Fiona Bernardo - Wakefield Council

Rebecca Westerman - Wakefield Council

**1. Acceptance of apologies for absence**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Celia Hickson and Andrew Carter (Cllr Norma Harrington substituting).

**2. To approve, as a correct record and deal with any matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel held on 13th June 2025.**

2.1. The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

**3. To note any items which the Chair has agreed to add to the agenda on the grounds of urgency**

3.1 The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items to add to the agenda.

**4. Members’ Declaration of Interests**

4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**5. Police and Crime Plan Priority 2 – Safer Places and Thriving Communities**

5.1 The Deputy Mayor introduced her report which details recent activity under this priority area including the delivery of the Anti-Social Behaviour Immediate Justice Pilot, projects funded by Safer Streets 5 and the Mayor’s Safer Communities Fund. The Deputy Mayor noted that the overall strategy for this priority is currently being updated.

5.2 The Deputy Mayor highlighted work within the government’s Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, which has enabled the recruitment of 100 new officers across West Yorkshire. A Summer Surge in policing activity is currently underway, and a Winter Surge is being planned.

5.3 Panel asked the Deputy Mayor to clarify whether the full £2 million allocation for the Immediate Justice scheme had been spent. The Deputy Mayor confirmed that West Yorkshire had been one of the highest performing regions under the scheme, and the only region to have fully engaged with the local probation services in delivering it. She acknowledged that the current government have decided not to extend the scheme, although she hoped to show through evaluation that it had been successful and press for its continuation. Unfortunately, evaluation of the programme had been challenging and complicated by the high numbers of children involved, necessitating safeguarding procedures, and a need to engage parents in the work. The Deputy Mayor would be working with partners in Youth Justice Services and with the restorative justice providers to gather information and comparable data on the successes of the scheme.

5.4 Panel raised concerns about shoplifting and assaults on shop workers, asking how the Deputy Mayor could influence businesses to put in place procedures to ensure proper recording of incidents, and staff training.

5.5 The Deputy Mayor responded that she is working to improve communication with retailers, including collaboration with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). A new radio system has been launched to facilitate faster information sharing. It was noted that approximately 60% of crimes in stores had previously gone unreported. She is also working with the Government on proposals to criminalise assaults on retail workers and is engaging with services supporting street homelessness, particularly where addiction is a contributing factor to criminal behaviour. The Crime Prevention Team has worked closely with retailers to reduce losses, and she felt that this work was joined up and collaborative. In addition, WYP run a Business Crime Forum which is led by Assistant Chief Constable Damian Miller, and the Deputy Mayor highlighted discussions on retail crime at a recent Community Outcomes Meeting (COM), during which an analysis of recent shoplifter demographics had been undertaken by WYP. This work had shown that one third of the recorded shoplifters were first time offenders, and one third were young people with dependent children. In addition, 60% of offenders had presented with drug and / or alcohol addiction issues. Panel welcomed the focus on supporting individuals rather than criminalising them, especially in light of the cost-of-living crisis.

5.6 The Deputy Chief Constable acknowledged the impact of increased police visibility as a deterrent to retail crime, noting that this would increase under the Summer Surge plans.

5.7 Panel acknowledged all the great work being done in different Neighbourhood policing Teams across West Yorkshire and asked how good practice is shared with the public to increase confidence and understanding around neighbourhood policing efforts. The Deputy Mayor had met retailers in Castleford recently, along with the Home Secretary, to discuss communication, and emphasised the importance of the West Yorkshire Police newsletter in communicating updates. She acknowledged the challenges of using social media, given its increasingly toxic nature, but reassured Panel that communication strategies are two way and do allow for public feedback. She also referenced the Partnership Intelligence Portal (PIP) as a tool for sharing information.

5.8 Panel requested that details of local plans for the Summer Surge be shared with the panel. The Deputy Mayor agreed to provide high-level information, including programme outlines and complementary activities.

5.9 The Deputy Mayor was asked about opportunities for small community organisations to collaborate on funding applications to the Mayor’s Safer Communities Fund. She confirmed that groups have come together in the past to bid for funding and that this is allowed within the rules and framework of the scheme. She told Panel that staff in the Engagement Team within the Mayor’s office are happy to talk to or meet with any group preparing a bid for the Fund.

**5.10 RESOLVED**

**5.10.1** The Deputy Mayor to circulate high level plans for the Summer Surge to Panel members.

**6. Road Safety and Vision Zero update**

6.1 The Deputy Mayor introduced her paper, which gives an overview of the initiatives and work undertaken by the Vision Zero partnership and the road safety team in the Mayor’s office. Road safety is a strategic priority under the Safer Places and Thriving Communities priority.

6.2 A question was asked around the growing issue of off-road bikes and whether more innovative technologies could be used to combat illegal use of these vehicles. The Deputy Mayor confirmed that tackling off-road bike use is a priority. Funding through the Safer Streets initiative has supported training across West Yorkshire Police, resulting in a reduction in incidents and successful bike recoveries, and this will continue to be supported. She highlighted the importance of the public in intelligence gathering round this crime. The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that WYP actively used drones and SmartWater technology to track offenders, and continue to support the Pol-Ed education programme to deter young people from using these bikes and highlight the dangers of riding them without safety equipment.

6.3 Panel asked the Deputy Mayor is she was aware of a wider, cross border strategy to tackle road safety on the M62, and the impact of diversions through rural towns and villages. The Deputy Mayor explained that the Vision Zero Board includes Highways England, which monitors and controls closures and risks around the M62, however she acknowledged concerns about smart motorways and committed to including M62-specific data in future reports.

6.4 The Deputy Mayor encouraged Panel members to promote wider awareness of Operation Snap, which is WYP’s facility for members of the public to upload dash cam footage which can be used as evidence in dangerous driving cases.

6.5 The Deputy Mayor was asked to clarify the use of the term ‘civil enforcement’ in the context of the School Streets initiative. The Deputy Chief Constable assured Panel that the term refers to traffic enforcement under the Traffic Management Act and applies to authorised employees, not the general public.

6.6 Panel noted the expected fall in numbers of road deaths over the past year, as referenced in the report. The Deputy Mayor was asked if she thought that the work of the Vision Zero Partnership was starting to have a measurable impact. The Deputy Mayor credited WYP and the Vision Zero Partnership for ongoing progress and improved accountability and clarity. She also acknowledged the role of a previous Panel member, Amanda Carter, as an early champion of this initiative. She highlighted the positive effect of ongoing political engagement and flagged an upcoming public event on 14 August in Leeds to promote Vision Zero.

6.7 Panel asked the Deputy Mayor if she could provide further background on the unusually high fatality rate reported for Calderdale in 2023. She explained that a single collision involving multiple fatalities in Calderdale caused the figure to jump. She noted that such incidents often involve young drivers, substance use, or lack of seatbelt use, and acknowledged that while these events are unpredictable and tragic, lessons are always learned from them.

6.8 A follow-up question was asked around how incidents are classified, as many drivers come into West Yorkshire from surrounding areas. The Deputy Mayor confirmed that incidents are attributed to the location of the road. The Deputy Chief Constable reported ongoing collaboration with Greater Manchester Police around cross border road incidents.

6.9 The Deputy Mayor was asked to share her views and understanding on the scale of the issue with illegal e-bikes and e-scooters in West Yorkshire. Deputy Mayor noted that inconsistent geographical strategies and pilots were confusing and called for government intervention to enable consistent enforcement. She added that she is aware that WYP do run targeted enforcement sessions. In addition, she stressed that trading standards and food outlets have a duty to be part of the responsible licencing of these bikes as users of food delivery apps. The Deputy Chief Constable emphasised the importance of public education and confirmed that persistent offenders risk having their vehicles confiscated.

6.10 The Deputy Mayor was asked if she could expand on the specifics of what she is asking the government to do in this area. She highlighted the confusion over pilot sites, and the limited regulation of batteries and supply chains. She stressed the need to address the issue at its source, as the police can only act on what they can intercept.

6.11 A question was asked around the Community Safety Fund eligibility rules, and whether road safety and speed monitoring equipment could be bid for through this funding stream. The Deputy Mayor did not believe that capital equipment purchases were eligible for funding in this way.

**6.12 RESOLVED**

**6.12.1** The Deputy Mayor to include data and narrative specific to the M62 in future Vision Zero and performance reports.

**7. WYCA Policing and Crime complaints**

7.1 The Deputy Mayor introduced her report, which gives an overview of complaints and conduct matters referred to the Mayor’s Policing and Crime Team.

7.2 Panel noted the success of the Professional Standards Department (PSD) Reviewing Officer role in helping officers clear a backlog of complaints and enquired as to whether the position would be made permanent. It was confirmed that the police are submitting proposals to make the role permanent.

7.3 A question was asked regarding the reasons for the high number of upheld reviews that resulted in no further action. The Deputy Mayor explained that in several cases, this had been appropriate due to reasons such as multiple reviews being submitted by the same individual, or a lack of clarity in communicating the rationale behind the decision. Ongoing efforts are being made to improve how these outcomes are explained.

7.4 Panel asked the Deputy Mayor to provide further context around the increase in complaints, which have gone up substantially by 27.8% over the last year. The Deputy Mayor believed that the increase was due to a number of reasons, including some individuals submitting multiple complaints, the decision of WYP to deal with some complaints informally when complainants want a formal response, and an increase in public confidence to complain.

7.5 Panel asked the Deputy Mayor if the data indicates an increase in reports from diverse communities. The Deputy Mayor stated that the data can be analysed to identify disproportionality, but only high-level data can be shared for confidentiality reasons.

7.6 A further question was asked around vetting procedures, and the Deputy Mayor noted that discussions are ongoing about centralising vetting. In the meantime, WYP continues to vet new entrants and an annual integrity review is conducted to assess any changes in officers’ circumstances.

7.7 A follow-up question was asked as to whether incomplete Personal Development Plans (PDPs) could allow issues to go unnoticed. The Deputy Mayor expressed confidence in the system, noting that disciplinary measures are in place for non-compliance, and that WYP have reported a 92% PDP completion rate, with the remaining 8% likely due to staff on different leave schemes such as maternity leave.

7.8 The Deputy Mayor was asked for her thoughts on the comparatively high number of discrimination allegations recorded in West Yorkshire. She clarified that the numbers shown included allegations, and not proven cases, so the team would need to wait for confirmed numbers before drawing any conclusions. She suggested that the higher numbers may reflect increased public confidence in reporting but was alive to the fact that it could also mean higher incidences of discrimination. In addition, changes in recording practices may account for the difference as WYP place greater emphasis on tracking such cases.

**7.9 RESOLVED**

**7.9.1** Panel noted the report.

**8. Complaints received by the Police and Crime Panel – annual update**

8.1 The Complaints Chair introduced the update report, which showed the number of complaints received by the Police and Crime Panel over the 2024/25 municipal year. Panel had received complaints from 19 different complainants (often multiple times from the same complainant), in addition to numerous telephone calls from people who wished to remain anonymous.

8.2 One Complaints Review had been undertaken by the full Panel in the last year; this had not been upheld.

**8.3 RESOLVED**

**8.3.1** Panel noted the report.

**9. Review of Panel Complaints and Misconduct Procedure**

9.1 The Complaints Chair explained that the Complaints and Misconduct Procedure is reviewed annually to ensure it is up to date and compliant with statutory requirements.

9.2 There were no proposed changes recommended to the Complaints and Misconduct Procedure for the upcoming municipal year.

**8.3 RESOLVED**

**8.3.1** Panel noted the report and that the Procedure would remain unchanged for the upcoming municipal year.

**10. Mayor’s Response to any current issues**

10.1 The Deputy Mayor shared with Panel that West Yorkshire has recently received £1.3m in funding to develop a County Lines taskforce.

10.2 The Deputy Mayor has recently appeared at the Home Affairs Select Committee to give evidence on the work in West Yorkshire to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

10.3 The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be hosting a series of public roundtable events on Serious Violence, with the first one taking place on 23 July. In addition, the Mayor’s Serious Violence consultation has now launched.

10.4 There will be a family friendly Vision Zero event in Leeds on 14 August, and the Deputy Mayor encouraged Panel members to attend and spread the word amongst their communities.

10.5 The Deputy Mayor wished the Deputy Chief Constable well on her impending retirement and thanked her for her work in West Yorkshire and her many years of public service.

**11. Published Key Decisions**

11.1 The published key decisions were noted.

**12. Agreed Actions Log**

12.1 The updated Agreed Action Log was noted.

**13. Forward Agenda Plan**

13.1 The Forward Agenda Plan was noted.

**14. Complaints Received by the Panel**

14.1 The update report was noted.

**15. Any Other Business**

15.1 There was no other business.

**16. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

16.1 The next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel will be held at 10.00am on Friday, 12th September 2025 in the Old Court Room, Town Hall, Wakefield.