



## Chief Officer Team Briefing for COM

**Title:** Drug and Alcohol Misuse  
**COT Sponsor:** ACC Osman Khan  
**Report Author:** Inspector Yvette Hammill  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022

---

### SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the interventions undertaken by West Yorkshire Police, in conjunction with Partners, to address drug and alcohol misuse.

### REPORT DETAILS

West Yorkshire Police and Partners work together to address drug and alcohol misuse and offer interventions to support offenders and prevent reoffending.

**Addiction** - can be defined as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterised by compulsive drug seeking and continued use, despite harmful consequences. It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain in terms of its structure and how it works.

**Signs of Addiction** – a person who is dependent upon alcohol / drugs will usually exhibit three or more signs of dependency. Such signs are an inability to stop or control the amount of alcohol or drug taken; having to take more to get the same effect and exhibiting symptoms of withdrawal if not taken.

The Police and Crime Plan 2021 to 2024 outlines that substance abuse is often linked to Serious Violent crime and ASB. This has highlighted the need to intervene early to stop this spiral of violence.

Offences committed whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs usually fall within two categories:

- those that are committed by being under the influence or being in possession of such a drug, i.e. driving whilst unfit through drink or drugs or possession of a controlled drug

## OFFICIAL

- or other criminal offences where the use of alcohol or other drug has contributory factor

Between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022, West Yorkshire Police recorded 8,259 drug offences. Of these, 261 were the supplying of drugs, 1,071 were possession with intent to supply and 5,898 were possession offences.

Year	Total	Production	Possession	Supply	PWITS	Other
2019/20	7522	776	5468	311	927	40
2020/21	8758	1029	6475	192	1012	50
2021/22	8259	983	5898	261	1071	46

In April 2022, 3,972 persons were arrested and detained in Custody in the West Yorkshire Police area. In April 2021, 3,711 people were arrested and detained, an increase of 7% on the previous year. This stabilises over the full year, with March and April only showing a slight increase in arrests.

In April 2022, 435 persons (11%) were recorded as being drunk or in drink at the time of arrest / detention and 1,380, persons (34.7%) stated they had consumed alcohol recently prior to arrest. In April 2021, 381 people (10.3%) were recorded as being drunk or in drink at the time of arrest / detention and 1,178 (31.7%) stated they had consumed alcohol recently prior to arrest. This represents an increase of 202 persons (17%).

When arrested in April 2021, 1,038 persons (26.1%) and in April 2022 2,732 persons (26.4%) stated they were alcohol or drug dependent. This represents a slight increase. It is important to remember that detained individuals who are recorded as being drunk / in drink / under the influence of alcohol / under the influence of a drug are not necessarily suffering addictions. What can be said is that at the time of arrest and detention the individual appeared to be under the influence of an intoxicant.

### **People in drug and alcohol treatment in WY**

Over the last year (March 2020-April 2021) there were 8,593 opiate users, 1,461 non-opiate only, 1,197 non-opiate and alcohol users and 4,254 alcohol users in treatment services across West Yorkshire, totalling at 15,505 service users. These figures do not represent those drug users not accessing treatment and consist of more 'entrenched' drug users.

### **Custody Interventions**

Drug Testing on Arrest (DTOA) was launched in 2003 and established partnership working between Criminal Justice and treatment and aftercare agencies to support drug users and addicts. Support is given from the point of arrest to sentencing and beyond to maximise opportunities to prevent further offending.

## OFFICIAL

The Police are usually a detainee's first contact with the Criminal Justice System and have the opportunity to identify appropriate individuals to be part of the programme. This could be through referral to support agencies or statutory requirements. West Yorkshire Police currently utilise two criteria to perform tests of detained individuals for drugs leading to a referral to the Drugs Intervention Programme:

- An offender aged 18 years or older is tested for a Class A drug as a result of being arrested for a trigger offence
- An Inspector can authorise the test of a person over 18 years of age who has been arrested or charged with any offence providing that the Inspector has reasonable grounds to suspect that use by that person of a Class A drug contributed to the offence

Should the detainee provide a positive result when drug tested, they must attend a required assessment to discuss their drug misuse with a member of the intervention staff. Should the individual be charged, the drug test result is passed to the Courts to assist in any decision, should they be convicted, on bail and sentencing. This statutory provision also requires the detainee to attend and remain for a secondary assessment with DIP staff. Failure to comply with the requirements can lead to further arrest.

### Drug Testing on Arrest Figures April 2021 – March 2022

District	Custody Suite	Arrests	Drug tests	% tested	Positive	% Positive
BD	BD Trafalgar	11098	1263	11.40%	589	46.60%
CD	CD Halifax	4584	635	13.90%	304	47.90%
KD	KD Huddersfield	6005	659	11%	334	50.70%
LD	LD Elland Road	13562	1702	12.50%	903	53.14%
WD	WD Havertop	6051	731	12.10%	440	60.20%
<b>Total</b>		<b>41300</b>	<b>4990</b>	<b>12.10%</b>	<b>2570</b>	<b>51.50%</b>

### District Monthly Breakdown

District	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22
BD	31	44	86	79	55	133	111	120	136	113	170	185
CD	27	42	58	50	43	62	70	76	53	11	76	67
KD	7	13	28	42	33	65	86	99	71	50	83	82
LD	10	59	42	61	96	118	176	249	205	191	230	265
WD	6	21	34	56	41	93	46	61	93	58	99	123
	81	179	248	288	268	471	489	605	558	423	658	722

Over the last 12 months the number of drug tests completed in our Custody Suites has steadily increased. It can be seen that all Districts showed strong improvements from September 2021 until the end of the year.

It is acknowledged that there was an issue with testing kit availability that occurred during the end of January and into February 2022 which resulted in a drop of tests completed by all Districts. This was due to a national shortage of tests from the central provider. West Yorkshire Police Procurement Department worked hard, supported by Custody Services, to overcome this issue and stock levels were replenished in all Custody suites in the first week in February.

## OFFICIAL

Since this date the number of tests completed has increased to its highest level for this 12-month period.

Since January 2022, West Yorkshire Police has been working with our Drug Referral Partners across all the five Districts to further understand and document the outcomes and successes of the Drug Testing on Arrests referrals. A new recording process came into effect for all the 5 different providers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022. The first reports are due to be received from each provider detailing the number and outcomes of the referrals on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and then every quarter thereafter.

Arrest Referral Workers are based in West Yorkshire Police Custody areas to provide guidance and advice to detainees with drug and / or alcohol addictions. Required assessments can also be done in Custody, with appointments arranged for anyone that cannot be seen at the time in all Custody suites. Their services are offered to all detainee's regardless of testing status and they can request to see a worker to discuss addictions and obtain referrals to external agencies able to assist with support. This intervention is provided by the Liaison and Diversion (L&D) service who conduct Custody assessments and are a pathway into appropriate local services. In Wakefield, L&D also provide the DTOA service and conduct the required assessments.

The L&D service intends to improve health and criminal justice outcomes for adults and children in the justice system who have complex needs that are factors in their offending behaviour. This includes alcohol and drug addiction, learning disabilities and mental ill health. They also have direct referral access into dedicated women's centres, which have a provision in each of the five Districts. West Yorkshire has a single L&D provider, which was commissioned from April 2019 and is fully now embedded.

L&D provide updates to the Police on Community Resolutions for young people and Conditional Cautions for female offenders, which are recorded on West Yorkshire Police computer systems. They also supply engagement rates for interventions at operational groups where the Police are present as part of the collaborative approach to reducing re-offending. This allows the Police and partners to target resources.

Conditional Cautions are available to be used as an alternative to Charge in certain circumstances. They can place a requirement on the individual to attend an appropriate course of treatment or awareness in respect of drug and / or alcohol addiction and are actively used. Officers are now able to include L&D as a secondary condition to another rehabilitative or restorative condition. This has been created on our computer system NICHE to auto populate the Disposal fields.

Upon release from Custody, all detainees undergo a pre-release Risk Assessment which encompasses the consideration of drugs and alcohol addiction amongst others. The detainee is provided the opportunity of information, leaflets and contact details of suitable agencies who can support them after release. The responsibility to make contact and engage with the support service lies with the individual, although Custody officers will contact agencies by phone on behalf of the individual if appropriate. A similar process for Voluntary Attendance (VA) interviews has also been introduced and now includes a specific question around support needs that also captures consent to refer to L&D services.

## **Preventative Action**

### **Integrated Offender Management (IOM)**

West Yorkshire Police moved from a 3-Cohort IOM Model of managing offenders to the new National Refresh Model for IOM in December 2021. This includes Fixed, Flex and Free Cohorts and is designed to focus on Neighbourhood crimes and reduce acquisitive crime re-offending. The National Model splits the IOM Cohorts into 3 different groups:

- Fixed – Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) offenders make up a minimum of 60% of all managed Cohorts
- Flex – Can include local priorities to meet local needs, examples include prison transitions, female offending, or other locally defined priorities
- Free – If capacity allows, other Cohorts can be added for IOM focus

IOM Teams will focus on crime types and offenders that cause the most harm to communities.

Both Registered Sex Offenders and Domestic Abuse perpetrators have been removed from the core IOM function and now have their own dedicated Offender Managers (OM) that are part of the Safeguarding Teams and they apply IOM principles to focus on these offenders. The OM Cohorts are now managed by the District Safeguarding Teams under the Central Safeguarding Governance Unit.

IOM and OM teams engage with offenders to identify their triggers to offending and provide referrals and pathways to agencies (e.g. housing, substance abuse, mental ill health, training etc.) who support and guide offenders towards the removal of such triggers. IOM teams have strong links to the DTOA service providers and will also refer offenders to voluntary and funded agencies who support offenders to manage their addictions and thus reduce the risk of offending.

In addition, each District has created a new proactive capability called 'Catch and Control' of located wanted people to ensure that are brought to justice promptly. All Districts, with the exception of Bradford, introduced their Catch and Control Teams in May 2022. Bradford have selected the officers and are just awaiting on the release of them from their existing teams which is expected by July 2022. The teams will work alongside the IOM teams to identify nominals who the new team will then focus on to achieve positive results.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Hub IOM Team continue to identify and manage offenders within the main Prisons in West Yorkshire. This includes the Cohort 20 New Hall female revolving offender programme which offers bespoke interventions and additional support to vulnerable females. The Together Women's Project operate in Leeds / Bradford and have a Hub in HM Prison New Hall offering a bespoke intervention service to women over the age of 18 years to assist in reducing offending. Various support services are offered including alcohol and drug intervention. The Prison HUB officers continue to work closely with the Prison Wardens and Probation Officers to ensure all support is in place, including drug and alcohol referrals, for when the offenders are released back into the community.

The IOM teams continue to have access to Buddi GPS tags and West Yorkshire possess 24 tags for general use. A new performance monitoring recording process was introduced in May

## OFFICIAL

2022. This will assist in reviewing the effectiveness and reasons behind the use of the Buddi tag and a biannual report will be completed for all Districts to share good practices.

We also have an additional 32 tags that are funded by the Home Office as a pilot for use with Domestic Abuse perpetrators and those tags can be paired up with a 'victim clip', which is a small keyring that will trigger an alert if the perpetrator wearing the linked Buddi tag comes within a pre-defined proximity of the victim. This is fairly new technology and Ministers have expressed specific interest in this pilot.

### **Drug Related Data**

- Three quarters of all drugs offences relate to Class B drugs (76%) and 23% to Class A. Drug offences have increased across all five Districts. Cannabis is the most prevalent drug across the Force (70% of all drug offences) and 36% of information reports mention Cannabis. Cocaine accounts for 10% of all drug offences and is mentioned in 9% of information reports. Heroin offences account for 4% of all drug offences, and 5% of information reports.
- In relation to illicit prescription drugs the most frequently mentioned drugs within information reports are Diazepam, Pregabalin and Xanax.
- The main hotspot for recreational drugs (MDMA, LSD, Ketamine, Amphetamine) is in Leeds city centre and this likely due to the high concentration of night-time economy venues in the area.
- Cannabis infused edibles, which are essentially food (sweets, chocolate, cakes, crisps, drinks etc.) infused with THC, the psychoactive part of Cannabis. They are a Class B drug. 47 offences were recorded in the last year (November 2020-October 2021) based on key word searches. There have been several cases of young children overdosing, including a child as young as 8 years old. Cannabis edibles are available to purchase online via social media and there are videos on popular apps such as Tiktok which show the viewer how to make edibles themselves. Their presence on social media, coupled with bright packaging and the adaptation of popular brand names makes them particularly popular amongst young people.
- There has been a significant increase in the year 2020/21 of cannabis productions recorded. Most grows are found in Bradford, followed by Leeds. 26% of suspects linked to Cannabis grows are foreign nationals.
- There were 684 Fast Parcel seizures recorded in the last year. Leeds is consistently responsible for the most seizures. The Netherlands is the most frequent country of origin, and Cannabis is the most frequent commodity imported.

## **Drug Related Deaths**

Drug misuse deaths include any deaths where: the underlying cause is drug abuse or drug dependence. The underlying cause is drug poisoning and where any of the substances controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 are involved. Drug-related deaths are at an all-time high nationally. ONS figures for England show an increase in drug poisoning deaths of 72% between 2010 and 2020. Deaths relating specifically to drug misuse have increased by 63%.

There is a clear North-South divide in drug-related death figures. Specifically, within West Yorkshire, the increase is even more significant at 87%, with drug poisoning deaths increasing from 121 in 2010 to 226 in 2020. All five local authority areas have shown an increase in drug misuse deaths over the last 10 years. Wakefield District showed the highest increase of 150% (14 to 35), followed by Kirklees at 88% (17 to 32), Calderdale at 75% (8 to 14), Leeds at 74% (35 to 61) and only a slight increase in Bradford of 7% (27 to 29).

## **Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults**

Organised Crime Groups (OCG's) also take advantage of vulnerable adults to aid in drug supply. Generally, these individuals are drug users themselves and are exploited through the promise of drugs as payment e.g. for their properties being used to store drugs. 'Cuckooing' is a term used to describe a property that has been taken over for the purpose of using it in criminal activity, such as storing/dealing drugs or storing firearms.

Cuckooed addresses are often a feature in the county lines model of dealing. There has been a total of 91 flagged cuckooed addresses across the Force in the last year to December 2021. Across the year, most cuckooed addresses have been in Leeds followed by Kirklees and Bradford.

## **Fast Parcels**

Fast parcels are those illicit drugs imported into the UK from abroad via the postal service and seized by UK Border Force at airports. UK Border Force hold these parcels for a certain length of time should police need to collect them for evidential purposes. They are also able to provide police with full details of the consignment.

It is often difficult to prove whether an individual that is listed as the consignee is responsible for the imported drugs due to them not receiving the parcel. More often than not, suspects give a full and frank denial of the importation. Investigations rarely result in a conviction. It is also possible that the individual/address listed on the parcel was not the intended recipient. There is anecdotal evidence that OCGs use the names and addresses of vulnerable individuals to import drugs via fast parcels, with the intention of intercepting the parcels upon delivery.

There has been an increasing trend in fast parcels which could be attributed in part of Covid 19 pandemic, but also could be due to improved methods of detection by Border Force.

## **Western Balkans**

Western Balkan nominals, particularly Albanians, are a significant minority within the Cannabis production market and are increasingly so over the last few years. This trend is not only noted in West Yorkshire, but nationally and internationally.

Western Balkan nominals are known to have the propensity and capability to commit serious acts of violence, including murder, in order to facilitate their criminal activity. However, violence is not frequent among this group.

## **Impact of COVID-19 on Drug Supply**

Across May / June 2021 drug trafficking offences increased by 17% compared to the previous 6-week period, possibly indicating that the movement of drugs is going back to normal and that drugs will become more readily available on the streets.

As restrictions ease over the summer and as Festivals / Night Club's fully reopen, it is expected that there will be an increase in drug related hospital admissions and possibly deaths. This is due to the tolerance levels of recreational drug users more than likely being lower than usual and those users consuming the same amounts as previously consumed (i.e. prior to Covid-19). Also, it is an assumption that this demographic will want to celebrate the ease of restrictions and some may decide to celebrate by including the use of drugs. Concerns have been raised amongst colleagues and by Partners such as Public Health England (PHE) and local drug and alcohol services. There is also an uncertainty of purity levels across the drugs market as there have been significant national / international seizures over the last 12 months and a lack of movement / transport resulting in drugs being harder to obtain, which may mean that there is an inconsistency in purity levels across the drugs market.

## **Neighbourhood Teams**

The issues of drug and alcohol abuse tend to be associated with ASB that directly affects the community. Neighbourhood teams collaborate with Partners to address the various triggers of ASB and make referrals where appropriate. This includes providing information on drug and alcohol support services.

Neighbourhood Teams' partnership with the Local Authority often utilise Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) to address behaviour which is or is likely to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, be persistent or continuing in nature, and be unreasonable. They provide Police with discretionary powers to stop persons from drinking alcohol and to seize alcohol in public places. These orders also encompass intoxicating substances allowing the Police and Partners to address the issue of legal highs.

The Force Drug Coordinator has delivered drug awareness training to new cohorts of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) around the subjects of substances misuse, addiction, and the supportive services available. This involves inputs from previous drug misusers with the aim of challenging stereotypes, promoting understanding, and encouraging PCSO's to signpost

## OFFICIAL

the misuser onto treatment services wherever possible. There have also been inputs given to Neighbourhood staff at the Training days for the Neighbourhood Policing Teams across the Force, as well as inputs to officers attending the National Drug Investigation Course.

To address prescribed medication addiction, which is rising, West Yorkshire Police now has a Controlled Drug Liaison Officer engaging with pharmacies, hospitals, and vet surgeries across the County. They provide support and guidance on good practices and ensuring correct controlled drug procedures are followed. They also assist healthcare providers to investigate controlled drug crime and intelligence and contribute to the Controlled Drug Local Intelligence Network.

### **Drug Threat Delivery Group**

Detective Superintendent Heather Whoriskey, as the Force Drugs Lead, chairs the Force and Regional Threat Delivery Group which aims to encompass all WYP actions around tackling substance misuse. The Tactical Plan that has been developed will be actioned through this meeting, which includes representation from around the Force and Region. There is also a quarterly Strategic Partnership Meeting with external stakeholders including Local Authorities, PHE, Prisons and Probation. External actions in terms of tackling substance misuse will be monitored through this meeting. To support and steer the actions through these meetings the Drugs Analyst on the Threat Desks has created a Drugs Problem Profile and is now developing a Drugs Market Profile.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Force understands the link between addiction and offending and continues to work with partners and offenders to provide the support individuals need to make positive changes to their lives. We are responsive to external factors that affect drugs supply and can adapt our Policing tactics locally, nationally, and internationally to effectively disrupt and arrest offenders. Through training, we are able to make our staff aware of new and emerging drugs of preference so that they can identify activity and take positive action within their communities to reduce crime, protect vulnerable people and reassure the public.