

Policing and Crime

Needs Assessment – Executive Summary

2024/28

Policing and Crime Policy and Performance Team.

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Introduction

In March 2022 the Mayor's first Police and Crime plan was published. The four priorities in the Police and Crime plan were chosen based on the Mayor's election manifesto which was voted for by the public, and after analysis of risk and community safety needs and extensive consultation with the public and partner organisations across West Yorkshire.

The Priorities were as follows



With the cross-cutting themes as





The Mayor's election manifesto in 2024 made clear that if elected for a second term, the Mayor would continue with the good work from her first Police and Crime Plan.

The Needs Assessment looks at these priorities and the cross-cutting themes alongside the performance measures in the Police and Crime plan to discuss the successes (or otherwise) of the measures in the first plan and to highlight any gaps with recommendations for the new Police and Crime plan.

It also takes into consideration the manifesto pledges of the Mayor for this new term and how they can be translated into action as part of the new plan.

Before we look at these priorities, there is a quick overview of the current policing context in West Yorkshire including a look at the WYCA West Yorkshire Plan and an overview of Policing in West Yorkshire.

This document summarises the detail in the Needs Assessment and includes the recommendations given – any further understanding of the recommendations given can be found in the full Needs Assessment document.

West Yorkshire Plan

This section looks at the West Yorkshire Plan and how the various missions in the plan also can effect change in community safety in West Yorkshire

Recommendation - It's important to note that whilst there is a correlation between all these factors and crime, this does not necessarily imply causation. Other social, economic, and legal factors can also influence crime rates. Therefore, comprehensive strategies across the Combined Authority to address these multiple factors are needed to help reduce crime and performance measures considered to highlight this link.

Policing in West Yorkshire

Police attendance at incidents

In the latest PEEL assessment of West Yorkshire Police, the victim service assessment was not graded, but the report did state that on most occasions, the force responds promptly to calls for service but stated that the force needs to improve the time it takes to answer emergency calls. It also needs to reduce the number of non-emergency calls where the caller hangs up before a call handler answers.

Recommendation: As previously The call handling times for WYP should be an area of focus and a performance measure to ensure a combined understanding of the current position for not just 999 calls, but also 101 and response times for victims.

Police Complaints

Police complaints have been the focus of the media with vetting under the spotlight due to some high-profile problems in the Metropolitan Police. In West Yorkshire there is a quarterly report that comes to the governance meetings which looks in detail at the different areas of police complaints

Recommendation: With the current focus on vetting and complaints, this needs to be an area of focus for the Police and should be reflected to improve confidence and feelings of safety in West Yorkshire.

Police Wellbeing

The recent PEEL inspection stated that West Yorkshire Police requires improvement at building, supporting and protecting the workforce

Recommendation: With all the current pressures on Policing, there is a need to ensure that the measures put in place to improve wellbeing are having the desired effect and checks on staff workloads are being taken.

Strategic Policing Requirement

The current Strategic Threats are

- 1. Violence against women and girls
- 2. Terrorism
- 3. Serious and organised crime
- 4. A national cyber incident:
- 5. Child sexual abuse
- 6. Public disorder
- 7. Civil emergencies

Recommendation: With regard to the SPR the Police and Crime Plan should:

- a) highlight the PCC's duty to have regard to the SPR.
- b) Explain what the SPR is in the Police and Crime Plan.
- c) Give an explanation within the Police and Crime Plan of how the Mayor has had regard to the SPR in setting the strategic direction and objectives for the force.

Current Policing Landscape

Includes

- Government and Local Priorities
- National Boards
- Legislation
- PEEL and Special Measures
- Code of Ethics
- WYP Strategy

Police and Crime Plan

Explains the structure of the Needs Assessment – looking at the priorities from the previous Police and Crime Plan and making recommendations for the new one.

Supporting Victims and Witnesses and Improving Criminal Justice Outcomes

Victims of Crime

The Mayor of West Yorkshire has a statutory responsibility for the commissioning of services which include supporting victims and tackling reoffending. This is mostly funded through the Ministry of Justice grant, and this looks at the data from this grant between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

Funding 2025/26 onwards

To date the Mayor has not been informed of the funding allocation for the victims' services for West Yorkshire from 1 April 2025. The position, value and funding

intentions from 2025/26 onwards will be directed by the new Governments spending review and funding allocated.

Recommendation: the central position of commissioning for the Mayor should translate into the new Police and Crime Plan with the flexibility required to respond to the funding allocations as stated.

West Yorkshire Police - Victim Satisfaction

There are no national statistics currently for us to compare victim satisfaction with other areas, and the previous government stopped plans to have a national victim satisfaction survey, so there are currently no plans to change this.

Recommendation: In order to understand the current position, it would be better to triangulate Victim Satisfaction with other surveys to see if the patterns hold which gives more assurance.

Crime Survey of England and Wales

The Crime Survey of England and Wales was originally a face-to-face survey which was completed each year by a team at the Office of National Statistics

Recommendation: These figures could be used to triangulate with Victim Satisfaction to give a more holistic view, but this would only be at Force Level.

Your Views' Survey - Victim Perspective

The original 'Your Views' survey was stopped for the pandemic, and recent online surveys have supplemented There are negotiations currently ongoing with CSP's to procure a telephone version of the Your Views survey which would produce those robust measures at district level, but even once started it will take time to build a strong data set

Recommendation: Whilst awaiting the new Your Views data, the Victim Satisfaction data could be triangulated with the Crime Survey of England and Wales and the online surveys from the Policing and Crime office – bringing in the Your Views data when available.

Maintain high levels of calls answered on target

In the last 12 months we have reported on the increases in the number of total contacts to West Yorkshire Police, but this seems to have now turned a corner. The graphs produced for the normal quarterly report show this increase along with the corresponding decrease currently

But the original call is only part of the contact with West Yorkshire Police, and it could be argued that the main impact on confidence and Satisfaction is how the call is dealt with by the Police be that via actual attendance at the incident or when the call is dealt with via other methods.

Recommendation: As something that can impact Confidence and Satisfaction, the call handling statistics of West Yorkshire Police should be monitored and any negative impacts raised to ensure the voice of the public in this area is held in due regard.

Improve outcomes for victims of Rape & Serious Sexual Offences

During the life of the previous Police and Crime plan, the numbers of crimes and outcomes were tracked by the Performance Measures, this has given us a limited understanding of what is happening regarding Rape and Sexual Offences, and especially in the light of national changes in this area.

The assessment looks at Op Soteria and the force self-assessment. To realise the improvements that can come from Op Soteria, the Mayor has instigated the Women's Safety Unit (WSU), and this has a focus on West Yorkshire Police's response and ensuring that the learning is embedded.

Recommendation: Continue with the high-level metrics for Rape and Sexual Offence outcomes with the reassurance that the WSU will be looking at all metrics linked to these offence types and be able to give a full picture of the current situation

Improve outcomes for victims of Domestic Abuse

West Yorkshire Police is one of three Forces to be identified as an 'Exemplar' Force and engages frequently with the National VAWG Taskforce to provide support, consultation and collaboration as well as leading the VAWG strategy nationally with innovation.

The new government have stated that top perpetrators of violence against women and girls (VAWG) to be targeted under new data-driven national strategy.

Recommendation: Domestic abuse and other VAWG offences will continue to be a priority for the new Police and Crime plan – as with RASSO offences, we should continue with the high-level metrics for Domestic Abuse outcomes with the reassurance that the WSU will be looking at all metrics linked to these offence types and be able to give a full picture of the current situation

Increase proportion of crimes with victim initial needs assessment

The guidance from the College of Policing shows that obtaining the victim needs assessment at initial contact is important to the ongoing investigation, as well as a key consideration towards effective communication and engagement with the victim.

Recommendation: this will now be looked at as part of the victim code measures (see LCJB update) so will be part of a holistic picture of measures from the LCJB.

Local Criminal Justice Board

Over the past year there has been a fundamental shift in the way West Yorkshire deals with the Local Criminal Justice Board. This is looked at as part of the overview document, but this has affected the criminal justice measures.

Since the start of the plan, the government has started to publish and refine the Delivery Dashboard, so more measures are comparable across the country. This has also affected the performance reports that are brought to the LCJB executive with different measures being prioritized.

The Victims and Prisoners Bill was pushed through before the general election. This bill has got several parts to be enacted these include

Putting the principles of the Victims' Code on a statutory footing.

The bill may place significant additional responsibilities for PCCs (or in our case the Mayor) to monitor the compliance of all agencies with the code. There are a suggested 21 compliance measures, measured in three ways: metrics, Victims' Feedback (though a new national survey), and Process Narratives (internal process review and management).

This is all still to be agreed but will form a comprehensive set of measures that looks at the experience of victims through the Criminal Justice System.

Recommendation: the victim code compliance measures will form a large part of the work of the Local Criminal Justice Forum and the measures in the Police and Crime plan should be flexible to understand which of those measures particularly affect West Yorkshire and so should be monitored.

Keeping People Safe and Building Resilience

Monitor the number of young persons flagged as at risk of Criminal Exploitation

In February 2020 the government produced guidance about the criminal exploitation of children (and vulnerable adults), and it was noted that Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity. It is a harm which is relatively little known about or recognised by those best placed to spot its potential victims.

Over the life of the plan these numbers have remained stable, but this is a large increase in comparison to 2020, which indicates that West Yorkshire Police have identified those that need flagging in this way and is now in a place where the numbers are showing a continuation of support and help to those most in need.

Recommendation: these numbers no longer need to be compiled as there is now an understanding of this issue shared by all agencies, including the police which originally led to a rise in reporting that is now stable.

Monitor Indicators from Cyber Dashboard

As fraud has now been included in the Strategic Policing Requirement, updates about cyber-crime will now also include updates about action against fraud.

Over the life of the plan West Yorkshire saw a positive decrease in offences and is now 4th highest in the MSG and whilst it was 2nd highest at the start of the plan. This could be the result of some areas seeing increases, but there has been a substantial drop in numbers in West Yorkshire

Recommendation: Cyber Crime and Fraud are now part of the Strategic Policing Requirement and should be monitored as part of the SPR updates.

Repeat Victims of Domestic Abuse and Hate Crimes

Domestic Abuse repeat victims' numbers show that the most recent quarters show a decline in numbers, although the ratios have stayed stable

Recommendation: This should be part of the suite of VAWG measures for the WSU and reflected in high level measures in the plan

Hate Crime Repeat Victims figures show that when hate incidents rise, the repeat rate falls and when the incident numbers fall the repeat rate rises

Recommendation: Understanding Hate Crime is a key metric for the Police Race Action plan and should continue to be measured as part of this strategy. More on the Police Race Action plan can be seen in the EDI cross cutting theme.

Increased Use of DVPN and DVPO

DVPN and DVPOs are interventions used after a domestic abuse incident has taken place, but Clare's Law is an early intervention to stop these occurrences taking place and could be argued as a better intervention.

Recommendation: This should be part of the suite of VAWG measures for the WSU and reflected in high level measures in the plan

Use of Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs)

The Force are increasing their use of Stalking Protection Orders. Four new Stalking Protection Orders were granted between January and March 2024 and the Force currently has 14 active SPOs. A further 25 applications have been authorised by Legal Services and are awaiting completion of statements by the OIC.

Recommendation: This should be part of the suite of VAWG measures for the WSU and reflected in high level measures in the plan

Safer Places and Thriving Communities

Serious Violence

The Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) was set up in West Yorkshire in 2019/20 and the 3 key measures for this unit were included in the Police and Crime Plan

The Needs Assessment also looks at the longer term and shorter-term trends about knife crime. This shows that crimes such as Homicide and Attempted Murder are seeing long term uplifts for Knife Crime, but other areas have seen recent short-term uplifts – such as Knife enabled robbery especially involving young people as victims.

Recommendation: As part of the new Serious Violence Strategy, as well as including the longer-term uplifts for knife crime (such as homicide) it should also consider shorter term uplifts for a deep dive.

Recommendation: Along with the Mayor's pledge regarding a West Yorkshire Serious Violence Strategy, there needs to be a look at the determinants of Serious Violence and what matters most to the public of West Yorkshire. This should form a major part of keeping people safe in the area.

Neighbourhood Crime and ASB

Reduce number of ASB incidents.

The recording of ASB incidents has changed during the life of the plan. HMICFRS crime recording inspections across several forces had highlighted that some ASB logs (and particularly ASB personal logs) should be considered as crimes rather than incidents

In March 2023, the government launched its Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) action plan to crack down on anti-social behaviour, aimed at restoring people's confidence that this behaviour will be quickly and visibly punished.

For 2024/25, they combined funding streams for ASB Hotspot Response and Grip serious violence hotspot policing, given the findings that there was a significant overlap between the hotspots. West Yorkshire Police have received these monies and have started the work on mapping the ASB hotspots.

Recommendation: The understanding of ASB has changed over the life of the previous plan and this must reflect on how we look at this area going forward. ASB incidents should be triangulated with linked crimes such as public order, criminal damage and harassment to give a fuller picture of ASB in the community.

Because of these different ways of reporting, there needs to be a mechanism in place where any unsatisfactory reports can be made

This is called an antisocial behaviour case review (previously the community trigger) and ensures that a full review of ASB takes place.

Recommendation: The number of ASB case reviews should be included as part of the ASB measures as well as an understanding of the confidence measures that particularly link to the council measures such as fly- tipping and vandalism/graffiti.

Keep Neighbourhood Crime below baseline.

The baseline for neighbourhood crime is like that of the Serious Violence Measures, in that the year to December 2019 is used as a yardstick to compare current performance with the last year not affected by the pandemic.

Figures for 2022/23 report that neighbourhood crime offences have fallen by 35.4% when compared to the 12 months to December 2019 baseline equating to nearly 12,000 fewer victims. Notable reductions are residential burglary (down 35.7%), theft from person (down 17.4%), and theft from vehicle (down 41%).

The data shows that the current level of Neighbourhood crime in West Yorkshire puts it below that seen in all the comparable mayoral areas, but above the other areas in the police most similar group. As Mayoral areas tend to be areas with higher deprivation, these numbers seem to speak to the societal issues of deprivation.

Recommendation: Neighbourhood crime continues to be a priority for the public of West Yorkshire and the link with deprivation highlights the need to work with partners to understand any hotspots. This will also link to the Serious Violence Strategy with several robberies being knife related.

Road Safety and Vision Zero

A baseline assessment has been completed by the Vision Zero team and has subsequently been signed off at executive level. The baseline assessment focused on the operational readiness of partners to adopt Vision Zero and each of the five pillars of Vision Zero were reviewed. From a performance perspective, the published DfT data for 2022 is being used as the baseline to assess the activity of Vision Zero moving forward

Recommendation: The Vision Zero team will be looking at all the performance measures for this area and will inform the picture around a top-level measure.

Other Metrics

There were some other metrics that were included under the Safer Places and Thriving Communities priority in the Police and Crime Plan

Monitor cyber-attacks on businesses via WYCA survey

This attempted but proved more complicated than originally thought. The emphasis on cyber-attacks is now part of the Strategic Policing Requirement and will be monitored there.

Increase proportion of workforce from ethnic minorities

The workforce representation was a key measure during the uplift programme and seen to bring a stronger representation into the force. Although a higher representation was achieved as part of the uplift programme, this is slow to affect the overall proportion of officers

Recommendation: As this higher representation works its way through the ranks, we would expect to see the workforce structure reflect these changes. Going forward this should be included as part of the measures for the EDI arena.

Multiple and Complex Needs

Monitor VRU early intervention programme attendee figures

As part of its monitoring information for the Home Office, the Violence Reduction Partnership must show the impact of its work by counting the number of young people (and others) that it reaches.

The VRP sends these figures quarterly to the Home Office to show the impact of its interventions. These interventions have been detailed in previous papers to the panel and will continue to be part of the impact of the Police and Crime Plan.

As part of the VRP work with young people, over 450 children have shared their views on a pioneering '**Child First' Framework** for West Yorkshire, placing children at the heart of decision making.

Recommendation: Although the original measure was valuable to track the impact on Young People, the work alongside the Child First Framework is a priority and this will form a large part of the interventions and tracking going forward

Reduce number of repeat missing persons

As part of the Police and Crime plan there was some questions as to how missing persons fit into the Priority of Multiple and complex needs. This measure was to highlight the drain on police resources that are caused by missing persons, and to bring to notice the good work that is taking place in West Yorkshire.

Recommendation – Missing persons can be very vulnerable whilst missing and although West Yorkshire has seen a decrease in numbers in comparison to before the pandemic this still needs to be tracked to ensure this reduction in vulnerability continues.

Reduce Re-offending Rate for Drug Related Crime

Due to the time lapse required to ensure all offences are taken into consideration, the re-offending rates are for offenders who were convicted 12 months ago.

West Yorkshire Combatting Drugs Partnership Strategic Board

The WY Combatting Drugs Strategic Board's objective is to address those issues which call for a co-ordinated response from key partners working in the criminal justice and substance misuse space.

The work in this space was on that back of a report which looked at the rising problem of drug and alcohol abuse in the country including deaths due to these substances

Recommendation – this area is of key concern to the public of West Yorkshire and the successful treatment of drug and alcohol dependents should be part of the community measures for the plan.

Reduce the number of first-time entrants to the CJS

There is a bit of a time lapse with this measure, as we rely on the Ministry of Justice data which is based on offenders on PNC as having their first conviction, caution, or youth caution. This now compares 12 months to September 2020 to 12 months to September 21 (which is the latest data available).

As well as reducing the first-time entrants, there is also the need to stop offenders reoffending and during the last plan the Reducing Re-offending board has taken shape and had its first meeting.

Recommendation – this measure will form part of the work of the Local Criminal Justice Board and will be part of the plethora of measures that are considered by the board. The Police and Crime plan needs to be flexible to include these measures as they evolve.

Increase number of offenders referred to drug treatment services via Liaison and Diversion

Referrals are down for both adults and young people, but this was due to many factors such as vacancies and training of new staff. Areas are looking at other pathway contacts to enhance this data from partners.

Recommendation: The Drugs Rehabilitation Partnership will drive the work of the Mayor's office to look at not just drug crime but also rehabilitation of users to prevent crime in the future. Rather than a single set of measures to understand the picture in West Yorkshire, each district is looking at the priorities for their area.

Recommendation: Those with Multiple and Complex Needs impact all areas of Policing and Crime and rather than being a priority should form part of a cross-cutting theme that looks at reducing vulnerability in all areas.

Cross Cutting Themes

Safety of Women and Girls

The Safety of Women and Girls being at the heart of the whole of the Police and Crime Plan was one of the Mayoral pledges in the first term and this has led to a focus in the Policing and Crime Team and the inclusion of a Policy Manager and more recently a policy assistant to drive this work forward.

Whilst newly in the power, the new government made clear its priority in this area, setting out new measures to combat violence against women and girls

The cross-cutting theme of Safety of Women and Girls goes beyond the idea of Violence against women and girls and looks at how to keep women and girls safe.

Recommendation: The Women's Safety Unit form an important part of working with West Yorkshire Police under this strategy and should be continued to drive both the recommendations from Op Soteria and an understanding of the crimes that most affect Women and Girls.

Recommendation: Men and Boys can be considered a vulnerable minority when looking at VAWG offences and should be a cross-cutting theme in the new police and crime plan to ensure that provision and programmes reflect the key concerns that are identified for men and boys as victims as well as being allies for the Women and Girls Strategy.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our Objective under this cross-cutting theme was to:

Celebrate the diversity of West Yorkshire and ensure that the principles of equality and inclusion underpin all the work we do.

There are a number of both local and national initiatives which we are part of as the Deputy Mayor has lead roles for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners in this arena.

Recommendation: Some of the areas of the Police Race Action Plan should be included in the performance measures to help drive assurance in this arena.

Also, there was a recent AFI from the PEEL inspection which looks at data in this area and should be considered going forward

Recommendation: This should continue to be an area of focus for the Policing and Crime Team and subject to scrutiny as part of the PEEL updates.

Early Intervention and Prevention

Our Objective under this Cross-cutting theme is to

Champion and support the use of effective early intervention to improve the lives of children, young people, and families at risk of experiencing poor outcomes

Much of the work in this area is focussed on Children and Young People with other areas of early intervention and prevention covered in the other priorities and Cross Cutting Themes

The West Yorkshire Reducing Reoffending and Rehabilitation Partnership Board

The first meeting of this iteration of a West Yorkshire wide Reducing Reoffending and Rehabilitation Partnership Board took place on the 20th of September 2023 and on the 20 March 2024, the Deputy Mayor launched the planning day for the board at an in-person event

Workstreams are:

- Training, skills, and work
- Family, accommodation, and readjustment to society
- Drugs and alcohol addiction
- Women in criminal justice
- Reduction in Short Custodial Sentences

Much of this work is now covered by other areas of the plan –and this board falls under the Local Criminal Justice Board so much can be covered in the measures from this board

Recommendation: Criminal Justice should fall under a Victim and Witness Priority and this line of work should be captured under that priority.

Recommendation: As stated, many of the priorities under Early Intervention and Prevention now focus on Children and Young People, and with much of the other work taking place under the corresponding priorities and/or cross cutting theme this cross cutting theme should particularly look at Children and Young People with the implementation of the Child First Framework as a necessity

Performance Management

Under the previous Police and Crime Plan the decision was to include several statistics under each priority which best reflected the key points in the priority. One of the problems with using statistics in this way is that it is hard to be clear if the priority was successful or not.

In the most recent PEEL assessment as well as an AFI for the data around equality, the force also had an overarching AFI about performance data – as follows:

West Yorkshire Police needs to consistently make the best use of its available data to improve performance and productivity

The force has access to a wide range of data. It has good systems in place to supply detailed information through data systems such as its Power BI applications (apps). But during our fieldwork we found the force doesn't consistently make the best use of its available data to understand productivity or areas where it can improve performance. The force needs to improve its processes for recording, checking and understanding its data to make sure this has a positive effect on productivity.

Also, there are several unknowns currently, particularly with a new Government in place and some data requirements that will come in during the life of the Police and Crime Plan.

Rather than have several data measures under each priority the recommendation is to have the measures grouped under key overarching topics which would be flexible for including reporting on updated measures as they come online or become available

Recommendation The performance measures will need to stay flexible for the plan as some of these will come online during the life of the plan and others cannot be reported quarterly.

This will mean that the performance reports to the Police and Crime Panel will change. Rather than updating all the measures quarterly, we can look at exception reporting for panel including looking in depth at areas when national figures are released which link into the Police and Crime plan measures.

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