



ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

28th April 2026

Protecting Victims and Witnesses
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Cover Report

1. Police and Crime Plan

1.1 This report outlines a strategic programme across the West Midlands Police force area to directly advance the ‘*Protecting Victims and Witnesses*’ priority of the Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029 by increasing compliance with the Victim’s Code of Practice, improving victim outcomes and reinforcing victim confidence in policing.

2. KLOE 151 - Enforcing the VCOP within West Midlands Police (“WMP”).

2.1 What internal and external audits have been conducted to test Victims Code Compliance, and what were the findings and assurance ratings?

2.1.1 Since October 2023, West Midlands Police have conducted monthly Qualitative Assurance Thematic Testing (QATT) and Business Insight to track performance. With the introduction of monthly Victim Satisfaction Audits in October 2025, these tools collectively measure, monitor and drive continuous improvement in victim focus and compliance with the Victim Code. These processes ensure that service improvements are grounded in listening to victims, acting on their feedback, and ensuring investigations reflect their needs.

2.1.2 Over the last 12 months, QATT results show that 88.5% of investigations demonstrate an adequate or better focus on victims. Victim enhanced status is correctly identified in 895 of cases, with initial victim contact achieved in 80%. Victim’s preferred outcomes are sought in 74% of investigations, and contact frequency is discussed in 79%.

2.1.3 The Victim Satisfaction Audit indicates sustained performance, with 83% of victims being up to date with their investigation. Key updates are delivered within the correct timescales in almost 80% of cases and agreed contact intervals are maintained in 83%. Evidence that victims are informed of their Victim Code rights is present in 65% of investigations.

2.1.4 Business Insights data shows that victim needs are consistently assessed in 91.1% of cases, and victims are kept informed in 81% of investigations.

2.1.5 A Victim Service Assessment was completed in November 2025 to internally assess how effective the force is at focusing on victims when investigating crime. Appropriate victim needs assessments were clearly recorded in 75% of cases, the victim contract adhered to in 80% and a good level of victim service, in line with the Victims' Code, was judged to have been provided in 68% of cases.

2.2 How is Victims Code compliance embedded into day-to-day operational processes (e.g. crime recording, investigations, case progression)?

2.2.1 Victims Code compliance is embedded across West Midlands Police through a combination of strong strategic governance, clear local accountability, and structured operational processes that ensures victim centred practice is embedded within routine policing activity and performance monitoring.

2.2.2 Strategic oversight is provided through the Assistant Chief Constable of Crime chaired Improving Investigations and Justice Board and the creation of a Force Victims Board which is chaired by the Victim Lead. These boards set expectations, monitor performance, and drive continuous improvement. At a local level, each department and Local Policing Area has a newly designated Victim Lead responsible for championing good practice, overseeing compliance within their area, as well as supporting teams through training and guidance. This reinforces the principle that every member of West Midlands Police plays a critical role in delivering high quality victim care.

2.2.3 Operational embedding is achieved by integrating victim focused processes into routine policing activity from first contact through to case progression. Investigators and public contact staff receive Victim Code training to ensure they have the skills and tools to deliver a high-quality service to a victim.

2.2.4 Compliance is built into key touchpoints including Force Contact, Crime Desk, Foundation Investigations and the Initial Investigation Question Set (IIQS). Victim needs assessments are completed at the outset and reviewed by the allocated investigator to ensure support is tailored to individual needs.

2.2.5 Referrals for specialist support are recorded at the point of contact and continues throughout the investigation. This includes support from the Witness Care Unit, ensuring continuity of care throughout the lifetime of the investigation.

2.2.6 Performance monitoring is supported by a Business Insights investigation and Victim Code dashboard. These tools track compliance against core entitlements of initial information and written confirmation of the crime, whether this is through a digital message, email, letter or in person.

2.2.7 The tools monitor completion and review of the following: Victim Needs Assessment, creation and maintenance of a victim contact plan, regular victim contact within agreed timescales, informing victims about the Victim Personal Statement, compensation, complaints processes, timely notification of court dates, outcomes, and case progression.

2.2.7 These structures ensure Victim Code compliance is not an isolated activity but a consistently applied standard embedded into everyday crime recording, investigation, and case progression.

2.3 We know the VCOP dashboard, taking data from CONNECT, is measuring VCOP compliance. Are you planning on putting on realistic targets against each metric to improve compliance? When do you see this data being ready to be able to be publicly shared?

2.3.1 We do not have set targets for compliance. Instead, we continually improve our adherence to the requirements of VCOP. There is ongoing work to ensure the end-to-end process correctly measures performance in the dashboard prior to it being able to be publicly shared.

2.4 The metrics for Victims Code compliance for the police it seems may expand beyond the 8 currently measured (Rights 1-7 and 12) as the MoJ confirms their final metrics to be formally measured. How quickly will you be able to respond to these new data requirements as they come through?

2.4.1 The Victim Code Dashboard is built and in the process of being updated to reflect current performance. This will be an ongoing process which can be refined should the MoJ introduce additional reporting metrics.

2.5 What themes of non-compliance have been identified, and what corrective actions and learning mechanisms are in place to address them?

2.5.1 Recent audits and performance data highlight several recurring themes of non-compliance across the victim journey. These relate primarily to the consistency of information provided to victims, the recording of statutory entitlements, and the timing of key Victim's code processes.

2.5.2 From Business Insights, the compliance of Victim Personal Statements (VPS) is at 5%. Although a VPS is offered within the Victim Needs Assessment and later by the Witness Care Unit (WCU), recording and measuring remain low. This indicates both a recording issue and a need to ensure the offer of a VPS is discussed at the right point for the victim. The 5% figure is what is offered at the point of the crime being recorded, which is recognised as not always being the most appropriate time for a VPS to be offered. While IDVA's and ISVA's occasionally assist with the completion of Victim Personal Statements, these are consistently routed through the WCU for submission. Although the Citizens Advice Witness Service does not

complete the statements themselves, they proactively notify the WCU when a victim expresses interest. Currently, VPS documents completed by the WCU are not captured within CONNECT however, will be a key priority going forward.

2.5.3 The Victim Service Audit completed in November 2025 found that 68% of investigations had considered Victim Personal Statements, demonstrating significant improved performance than Business Insights measures. There is a variation in the quality and timing of victim needs assessments, including when they are discussed with victims and how updates are recorded in the system.

2.5.4 There is inconsistent provision of core information, with only 45.1% of victims receiving their crime reference number, information about the complaints process, and information about compensation. There has been a reliance on automated digital messaging, which only triggers when victims provide digital contact details. Victims who opt out of contact are not automatically sent written confirmation, despite still being entitled to Victims' Code information. The OIC provides information for those who choose to opt out.

2.5.5 A series of targeted interventions have been introduced to address these gaps and strengthen compliance across the Force. These include the introduction of the Officer in Charge (OIC) review of the Victim Needs Assessment, which ensures it becomes a routine part of investigative conversations and is updated at the right time for the victim. Through focused communications and learning, force wide bulletins on the Victim Needs Assessment and VPS reinforces expectations and good practice.

2.5.6 Operation Vanguard is leading ongoing work to provide clarification of recording requirements, ensuring investigators understand where and how to record key entitlements so that dashboards accurately reflect performance. This is being achieved through an end-to-end review of Victims' Code compliance within Force Contact, Crime Desk, Investigations, Criminal Justice, and Witness Care. This work aims to streamline processes and strengthen automated processes to ensure victims receive consistent information about their statutory entitlements even those who opt out of contact.

2.5.7 The Victim Board provides a platform to deliver local learning loops. This is supported by departmental Victim Leads who provide guidance, sharing good practice and address performance issues directly with teams. These actions ensure non-compliance themes are not only identified, but actively translate into organisational learning, improved practices, and more consistent delivery of Victim's Code entitlements.

3. KLOE 154 - Raise awareness of victims' rights within the VCOP, including their entitlement to make a Personal Victim Statement, Special Measures and the Victims' Right to Review.

3.1 It is understood that Victims are informed of their rights under the Victims Code via an automated text message. How can we ensure that victims are accessing that link and fully understanding what they mean to them? What are we doing to make sure Victims who aren't receiving a text – which from the dashboard seems to be around 50% of all victims – are getting a clear awareness of their rights under the Victims Code, and how is this measured?

3.1.1 As part of the continued commitment to upholding the rights of victims, a new process has been introduced in December 2025 to reinforce the responsibilities of the officer in charge (OIC) to ensure that victim rights are actively considered throughout the investigation. From the point of allocation, the OIC is responsible for ensuring the Connect record is as complete and accurate as possible by amending errors or omissions at the time of initial reporting. Within seven days of the report being allocated, an OIC review of the Victim Needs Assessment (VNA) provides a system prompt to assess the existing information, speak with the victim to update/amend the VNA and record what action has been taken. The OIC review of the VNA will be measured on the Business Insights dashboard.

3.2 We are aware that staff have been undergoing a training programme focussed on Victims Code - what percentage of officers and staff have now completed this? What plans are there, if any, for follow up/ongoing training?

3.2.1 Victim Code training is being delivered to all investigators and staff who have direct contact with victims. To date, 60% of investigators and staff have completed the training, with further sessions scheduled to ensure full coverage across the workforce.

3.2.2 Ongoing development is supported through a structured approach to continuous learning and local reinforcement. The Victims Board and departmental Victim Leads will identify local training needs, ensuring teams receive targeted support based on emerging issues or performance gaps.

3.2.3 The Improving Investigations and Justice Board provides strategic oversight and identifies force wide training requirements, ensuring consistency and alignment with organisational priorities. The QATT dashboard enables teams to self-serve performance insights, using real time data to identify areas where additional learning or refresher training is required.

3.2.4 Operation Vanguard contributes to improving investigations by identifying common themes and learning opportunities from investigative reviews, which are then fed back into training design and delivery.

3.2.5 Together, these mechanisms ensure that Victims Code training is not a one-off exercise but part of a continuous cycle of learning, performance improvement, and professional development across the organisation.

3.3 The measure for Victim Personal Statement is still exceptionally low – around the 5% mark. How are we making sure that the offer of a VPS is repeated throughout an investigation and that it is properly recorded as being offered?

3.3.1 The 5% is measured from the Victim Need Assessment (VNA) completed at the time of recording the crime and initial engagement with a victim. It is recognised this is not always the most appropriate time to offer a VPS to a victim.

3.3.2 The offer of a VPS has been repeated by the introduction of the OIC review of a VNA to prompt the ongoing conversation. The continuing work by Operation Vanguard measures this right under the Victim's Code ensuring that the post charge victim contact is recorded and measured in Connect.

3.4 Could there be an auto-check when a charge is being submitted on the system that VPS has been offered and the box on CONNECT filled out.

3.4.1 The Witness Care Unit offers and records VPS post charge. Current efforts to update the Victim Code dashboard will ensure this data is accurately captured for robust performance reporting.

3.5 What are the rates of take-up for Personal Victim Statements, Special Measures, and Victims' Right to Review, and how do these compare over time?

3.5.1 Since the rollout of the Victims' Code training, awareness and value of registered intermediaries has increased significantly across the organisation. This heightened understanding has translated into a sustained rise in appropriate referrals for intermediary support.

3.5.2 The data shows a consistent year on year increase in intermediary requests, with the most substantial growth occurring during the delivery of Victim Code training and improved identification of communication needs. As investigator confidence and competence have grown, so too have the intermediary referrals, ensuring more victims and witnesses receive the specialist support required to give their best evidence.

3.5.3 A total of 156 Victims' Right to Review (VRR) were completed in a 12-month period in 2025. Monthly volumes fluctuated between 7 and 21, with no single month showing disproportionate variance. This indicates a steady and manageable workflow throughout the year. Timeliness in performance shows a positive trajectory, just over 60% of VRRs were completed within six weeks. This demonstrates improved compliance with expected service standards, supporting a timelier and victim-focused review process.

3.6 How does WMP ensure Victims Code rights are communicated effectively to vulnerable or repeat victims?

3.6.1 Enhanced victim status and the Victim Needs Assessment identify vulnerable, intimidated and repeat victims. The OIC review of the VNA is designed to ensure an ongoing conversation with victims and identify their individual support needs.

4. KLOE 155 - Introduce a new approach to measuring victim satisfaction at each stage of the policing process, to ensure victims receive care and compassion throughout.

4.1 How does WMP ensure feedback is captured from a representative range of victims, including those disengaged or dissatisfied?

4.1.1 WMP captures victim feedback to draw insight from a broad and representative range of people, including those who disengage early, withdraw support or express dissatisfaction. This enables the force to target improvements prior to the Victim Insights platform going live. The contracts are currently undergoing review by the procurement and legal departments of WMP. Further updates will be provided as soon as progress is made.

4.1.2 WMP operates a Citizen Satisfaction Survey that is automatically sent after first contact with the police. This provides a consistent method for capturing feedback across crime types, demographics, and localities. The survey has recently been extended to include victims whose investigations have been investigated and filed, ensuring that individuals who may be more likely to feel dissatisfied or disengaged are not excluded from feedback opportunities. Launched on 3rd March 2026, the survey revealed that 74% of victims felt WMP took the time to understand their situation. While 89% received written confirmation of their crime number and offence, awareness of rights under the Victims Code stood at 75%. Additionally, 74% were offered support services. Overall satisfaction was high, with 49% of respondents being 'very satisfied' and another 14% 'fairly satisfied'.

4.1.3 WMP uses outcome codes and subcodes to record when victims withdraw their support. These subcodes provide granular insight into why victims disengage, for example fear of reprisal, personal circumstances, dissatisfaction with progress or not wanting to prosecute the perpetrator. Outcome 14 subcodes launched in March 2026; however, the current dataset is not yet large enough for meaningful analysis.

4.1.4 This structured data enables WMP to identify patterns in victim withdrawal and understand which crime types are disproportionately disengaging. This will allow targeted improvements in communication, safeguarding, and investigative practices. Victims recorded under these subcodes are also included in the extended survey cohort, ensuring their experiences contribute towards organisational learning.

4.1.5 The Witness Care Unit captures feedback throughout the criminal justice process, including concerns about communication, support needs, and case progression. This provides real time opportunities for service recovery and ensures that victims who remain engaged, but experience difficulties are heard.

4.1.6 The Professional Standards Department captures feedback from individuals who raise concerns or complaints. It provides rich insight from victims who are dissatisfied or feel let down, offering a perspective that may not be captured through surveys. Service recovery and learning is fed back into local teams and governance structures to improve victim care and decision making.

4.2 What methodology has been adopted to measure victim satisfaction across different stages of the victim journey, and why?

4.2.1 Insights are gathered across the entire victim journey. From initial contact to the progression of charged cases, to using surveys, audits and outcome subcodes. This data identifies key themes and disparities, allowing us to strengthen safeguarding, improve communication, and support evidence-led prosecutions in cases where fear or vulnerability might lead to withdrawal. Furthermore, these insights help clarify investigative decision making and inform training for frontline staff.

4.2.2 Where a victim requests a Victim Right to Review, a senior officer considers the decision to take no further action. This provides another mechanism of measuring victim satisfaction at the conclusion of an investigation. By embedding this insight into governance, it ensures that the victim voice directly shapes service design, operational practice and system improvements.

4.3 At which stage, from reporting, is victim feedback collected, and how soon can the findings be utilised in informing operational decisions?

4.3.1 Victim feedback is captured at the initial point of contact through the Citizen Satisfaction Survey, delivered via text message with an approximate 10% response rate. This data, combined with daily operational oversight, ensures timely interventions. By integrating victim needs assessments into the first supervisor review and the OIC evaluation, we create a strong foundation for both incorporating victim views and making informed decisions on evidence-led prosecutions.

4.4. What evidence demonstrates that changes made because of feedback have improved care, compassion, and victim confidence?

4.4.1 Feedback has resulted in the provision of Victim Code of Practice and outcomes training to all investigators and staff who have contact with victims. This training aims to deliver a tailored service to every victim, offer essential support throughout the criminal justice process, and ensure the appropriate outcome is applied. There has been an increase in victim-based outcomes, indicating an enhancement in service and results. The Victim Insights platform has been commissioned to further improve and gather feedback from victims.

5. KLOE 156 - WMP are accessible to the public and maintain trust and confidence and victim support provision, encouraging more reporting of crime.

5.1 By what means does WMP actively promote the provision of victim support?

5.1.1 Every victim is asked at the point of recording the crime if they consent to their details being provided to Victim Support. The Initial Investigation Question Set, Victim Needs Assessment and OIC Review of the Victim Needs Assessment ensure this is an ongoing conversation with victims. The Witness Care Unit provide the reinforcement of this support provision for post charge cases.

5.2. What is the full diversity of support that WMP offer to victims with differing disabilities (visible and hidden), or neurodiversity or non-English speaking? What mechanisms are in place to ensure that those are taken into account and support provided for with EVERY interaction WMP has with that victim? Then the mechanism to ensure all of that information is passed clearly on to the other CJS partners as the victim's journey progresses beyond the police?

5.2.1 WMP ensures victims with disabilities can engage confidently and without disadvantage. These include accessible reporting routes, online, phone, in person and third-party reporting designed to accommodate mobility, sensory or cognitive needs.

5.2.2 WMP ensures language is never a barrier to reporting or accessing the criminal justice service with provision for interpreters to be available for telephone, video and face to face translation services on demand or a pre-booked service.

5.2.3 Use of accredited intermediaries for victims with communication difficulties, learning needs or cognitive impairment in conjunction with referrals for specialist report are on a case-by-case basis. The Victim Needs assessment captures considerations at the first point of contact with a review of the needs by the OIC to identify specialist pathways of support.

5.2.4 The MG 2 form is the primary mechanism for communicating special measures and the Victim support needs to the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure timely applications to the court.

5.3 How does WMP ensure that they remain accessible to all members of the community and what measures does WMP take to ensure they advertise victim support to all?

5.3.1 WMP ensures accessibility for all communities by providing multiple reporting routes, including Single Online Home, telephone reporting, in person contact and third-party reporting centres. These options remove barriers for individuals with disabilities, language needs, digital exclusion or concerns about direct approach.

5.3.2 At first contact, victims are asked for consent to be referred to support services, ensuring they are immediately informed about available support. Investigators complete and review the Victim Needs Assessment, enabling the OIC to identify and regularly reassess any communication, accessibility or safeguarding requirements.

5.3.3 Victim support information is promoted consistently through force contact staff, frontline officers and investigators, ensuring all victims are aware of the services available to them. This approach ensures WMP remains accessible, inclusive and proactive in advertising support to every member of the community.

5.4 What actions will WMP take to regain the trust of confidence of victims specifically?

5.4.1 WMP will continue to seek improvements to systems, investigative practices and victim engagement to raise standards, improve victim experiences and increase victim-based outcomes. Good news reporting of performance and a focus on supervision, scrutiny and a case-by-case basis of improved service delivery remains a priority.

5.5 What performance data is collected to measure trust and confidence amongst victims? How is this reported and acted upon?

5.5.1 Surveys from the point of first contact with the police have recently been extended to include at the point of filing an investigation. Monthly audits are completed by Inspectors and above for Qualitative Assurance Thematic Testing (QATT), whilst monthly Victim Satisfaction Audits are completed by Chief Inspector and above. Business Insights and Operation Vanguard collectively measure, monitor and drive continuous improvements through monthly departmental Service Improvement Meetings, monthly Improving Investigations and Justice Board and the monthly Deputy Chief Constable's performance meeting.

5.6 What obstacles for victims' reporting of crime have been identified and what learnings have been taken from this and are in place to reduce them?

5.6.1 Looking back 18-24 months, victims of crime endured significant waiting times on 101, sometimes in excess of 30 minutes. Whilst the 999 calls did not endure similar delays, performance was not acceptable. A whole system review of Contact Handling resulted in a significant uplift in resources, introduction of new and innovative software and a new operating model.

5.6.2 The outcome is that on average callers wait 2 seconds on the 999s and 31 seconds for 101. WMP are now the best performing force for 101s and consistently in the top 5 for 999s performance. With the introduction of new reporting mechanisms such as Single On-line Home (SOH), Live Chat, 24/7 monitoring of all social media platforms and a new Public Contact Office model, the public have a full range of accessible and effective access points to report crime.

5.6.3 There does not appear to be any significant obstacles for the reporting of crime in WMP. There are, however, some areas that could be improved. The primary issue is SOH. Due to it being a national system, individual forces cannot amend the form or reporting procedure. Once completed, forms can lack key information that delay in criming matters within 24 hrs or being able to contact the victim quickly to arrange follow up support.

5.6.4 On occasions, the only point of contact would be an email address for the person reporting. This creates a delay in arranging appointments and managing vulnerability, resulting in the immediate deployment of operational officers when an appointment may have sufficed, or vice versa.

5.6.5 WMP are proud to have introduced an updated Public Contact Office model that increased the number of locations from 10 to 12 locations. Most locations are open between 8am and 10pm, with Lloyd House remaining open 24/7. Front office colleagues now work a pattern that is more aligned to demand at each of those locations resulting in a more resilient and effective offer for the public who seek our assistance.

5.6.6 WMP have social media accounts across all the main platforms that are monitored 24/7 which appeals more to the younger people. Digital desk monitors activity on all platforms to identify risk and vulnerability. On the week commencing 2nd March 2026, WMP dealt with a live kidnap incident where the victim contacted via social media. The digital team found the message that was then used to help safeguard the victim.

6. KLOE 157- WMP to improve investigative performance to protect victims and witnesses and ensure VCOP compliance.

6.1 What measures are used to assess investigative quality, and how do these correlate with victim outcomes and VCOP compliance?

6.1.1. Qualitative Assurance Thematic Testing (QATT) assess the compliance and quality in investigations which shows an increased performance over time. Overall quality in investigations has increased from 79.8% in April 2025 to 86.1% in February 2026. Victim focus has seen the highest grading of 77.1% in November 2025 with the current assessment in February 2026 at 73.6%.

6.1.2 In February 2026, the overall victim focus is 3.30 out of 5. Victim based outcomes have increased from 4% in 2023 to 12% in 2026. Total recorded crime outcomes have increased from 3% in 2023 to 15% in 2026. There are 235 out of 30,000 open investigations which have outstanding victim contact by one to seven days.

6.1.3 WMP has over time, seen a sustained increase in positive victim-based outcomes and quality. This demonstrates sustained improved performance whilst ensuring quality of service for victims remains a priority focus in system and investigative improvements.

6.2 How do we ensure that victims in ELP, where therefore the victim has chosen to not be part of the prosecution process, are being updated and informed as per their victims' rights? Or at least being made aware of their rights as the investigation progresses without their direct input/support?

6.2.1 When a victim withdraws support for an investigation and opts out of contact, the automated messages are not sent. However, audits demonstrate that continued victim engagement direct to victims or a nominated point of contact does continue so that key updates and support are provided. Audits confirm that victim engagement persists even after an individual opts out of contact, supporting the pursuit of evidence led-prosecutions. The current improvement plan focuses on ensuring investigators consistently consider and document these prosecutions within CONNECT to accurately track and report compliance.

6.3 How effectively are victims and witnesses safeguarded throughout investigations, particularly in high-risk or complex cases?

6.3.1 The end-to-end process of an investigation ensures safeguarding opportunities and risks are considered, identified and managed to prevent escalation of offences.

6.3.2 THRIVE (threat, harm, risk, investigation opportunities, vulnerability, engagement) is a call handler aid to assess risk to victims, children and identify vulnerabilities.

6.3.3 The Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA) is a structured approach to assessing risk and providing consistent and effective risk grading designed to identify patterns and escalations of harm.

6.3.4 Serious incidents relating to violence, firearms or incidents having a significant community impact or raised tension can be managed through a Consequence Management Meeting which aims to reduce the impact serious incidents may have on local communities. The meeting structure brings together internal and external stakeholders with a key interest in the reactive investigation; the forward-looking policing response and wider community safety are brought together to maximise the effectiveness of the policing response. It is intended as a place to record actions, stakeholder engagement plans and the communications strategy.

6.3.5 Threats to life and risk management is managed for a threat relating to a victim of crime by taking immediate action to safeguard victims, disrupt offenders and record actions taken.

6.3.6 The governance of managing identified threats is owned by the local policing area with strategic scrutiny and oversight through daily threat and Risk Management (TRM) meetings held locally and by the duty ACC at Force TRM.

6.4 How does investigative timeliness impact victim engagement, and how is compliance with VCOP update requirements monitored?

6.4.1 Investigative timeliness is a primary driver of victim confidence. Delays in initial contact or allocation can lead to victim attrition and a perceived lack of police commitment. To mitigate this, WMP has streamlined the transition from initial report to active investigation.

6.4.2 Emergency and priority incidents that require physical attendance generate an investigation for immediate allocation, ensuring the victim receives a seamless transition from response to investigation.

6.4.3 Within the Crime Desk (handling approx. 25% of demand), 90% of crimes are recorded and the victim is informed within 24 hours. By completing investigations on the same day the report is received (unless the victim requests a deferral) there is maximised engagement during the critical early stages of the "victim journey."

6.4.4 For the 40–50% of demand handled via Local Policing Area (LPA) appointments, the structured nature of the contact ensures that victims have a clear expectation of when their investigation will begin, reducing the uncertainty that often leads to disengagement. Monitoring is conducted through a multi-layered governance structure to ensure consistency across the force and adherence to the Victims' Code of Practice.

6.4.5 The Business Insights Dashboard provides real-time oversight of allocation timeliness. While the force aims for allocation within 48 hours, the Crime Desk operates on a more ambitious 24-hour cycle to ensure victims are contacted immediately. Compliance is formally tracked through the Improving Investigations and Justice Board. This board compares performance across different crime types, departments, and LPAs to identify and address any regional or thematic inconsistencies in how quickly victims are being updated.

6.4.6 For cases remaining with Crime Desk investigators, an "enhanced" initial investigation is completed. This process ensures that VCOP requirements such as the victim's preferred method of contact and the setting of an agreed update schedule, are established at the earliest possible opportunity

6.5 What supervisory arrangements and skills development are in place to ensure investigators meet expected standards?

6.5.1 Operation Excellence masterclasses continue to be delivered to new first and second line supervisors who deal with investigations. The aim being to promote awareness of the Victims Code of Practice, foundation investigations, Investigations plans and Supervisor or Manager reviews.

6.5.2 A College of Police pilot of Professionalising Investigations Programme 1 (PIP1) has received positive feedback and is awaiting evaluation prior to rolling out to all PIP1 supervisors. PIP1 training across departments is centrally coordinated to ensure consistency, standards and shared learning opportunities. PIP2 is an area of development to improve the continuous professional development of investigators in line with WMP Conversations and to be of relevance across departments and roles. PIP3 and PIP4 training and accreditation are managed centrally through ongoing professional development and operational competence required to support continued accreditation.

6.5.3 Chief Inspector six-month reviews and Superintendent twelve-month reviews of investigations have been introduced to ensure strategic oversight and scrutiny of investigations. The Business Insights Dashboard will shortly measure this compliance.

6.6 What lessons have been learned from failed or delayed investigations, and how have these been translated into improved practice?

6.6.1 An audit of investigations with limitations of proceedings identified delays in investigations due to a lack of consideration at the outset and the difference in crime to charging standards. CPS have provided educational videos to raise awareness, and the Investigation Plan template has recently been amended to prompt considering time limits in summary and either way offences at the start of investigations.

7. KLOE 159 - Closer alignment of victims' services with the WMP Witness Care Unit will further streamline provision of support, reducing the need for the re-telling of traumatic experiences.

7.1 How will WMP ensure the change of provider for the witness service does not negatively impact the extent to which the witness care unit and commissioned service are aligned?

7.1.1 The Witness Care Unit is an internal WMP Criminal Justice department with Victim Support being a commissioned service funded by the OPCC. The Witness Care Unit provides care services for victims and witnesses throughout the court process prior to the first hearing to after the point of conviction.

7.1.2 Due to increases in arrests and outcomes and the pressures within the Criminal Justice System described in the [Leveson Review](#) as 'truly appalling', current caseloads have risen from 180 (circa Jan 2023) to over 300 per witness care officer. The lifespan of each case, post charge, can be up to four years at present.

7.1.3 The [Citizens Advice Witness Service](#) provides free, independent, and confidential support to witnesses in criminal courts across England and Wales, covering both prosecution and defence. They help with pre-trial visits, court familiarity, and in-court support, but do not provide legal advice. On 1st April 2026, the provider will change to [Victim Support](#).

7.1.4 WMP CJS are coordinating with Witness Service, Victim Support and OPCC to ensure referrals and commissioned services are aligned, reporting into CJS Service Improvement and WMP Victims Board governance.

7.1.5 Going forward, there is a plan to map services across the different agencies and providers. The objective is to gain a better understanding of all support that is available to ensure that victims are made aware at the earliest stage of the different partners that can support and more importantly their role in the wider CJ process.

7.2 How does WMP utilise victim feedback to streamline support provision and best inform trauma-informed practice within the organisation?

7.2.1 There are pathways for victim feedback such as complaints, letters of gratitude and Victims Right to Review. However, this is not coordinated within WMP governance structures at present. Although there are no fixed deadlines for victim feedback, this work remains integral to meeting victim code requirements.

7.2.2 A Victims' Insight Survey is being conceptualised through Victims Board governance, which will capture victim feedback and enable the streamlining of support provision and improved trauma-informed practice.

7.3 What measures are used to assess the alignment of service and extent of re-traumatisation within the support offered by WMP and commissioned services?

7.3.1 OPCC are accountable for commissioning services. There are currently no measures to assess the alignment of service and re-traumatisation within WMP Witness Care. This will be explored by mapping witness services and governance through the Victims Board.

7.4 What supervisory arrangements and skills development are in place to ensure staff meet expected standards, particularly regarding trauma-informed practice?

7.4.1 Specific Trauma-Informed training has been delivered to all Witness Care Officers, Team Leaders and Managers. This now forms part of the new starter induction training and is delivered internally.

7.4.2 Multiagency engagement between Witness Care, CPS, Witness Service and Victim Service is being conducted to improve inter-agency understanding of service provision. This forms part of new starter induction process which allows them to attend court to see first hearings and trials. New starters spend time with partners through shadowing, where specific learning/training needs are identified which are set as part of WMP conversations.

7.4.2 Mental health training is also being provided to Witness Care Officers (WCO) to better support victims of crime and to assist in the management of WCO's own mental health in what is recognised as a challenging role. This is a full day training course delivered by MIND and is being delivered to all Witness Care Staff during March 2026.

8. KLOE 161 - Maintain the availability of restorative justice for cases proceeding through the CJS / Extend the availability of restorative justice within OOCRs and explore opportunities to integrate restorative practices into broader services.

8.1 What learning can be taken from the pilot in Wolverhampton in which a more 'proactive' approach was taken towards RJ referrals considering more referrals were received in the month of the pilot than the previous year's total?

8.1.1 In June 2025 OOCR identified Wolverhampton LPA as the area within West Midlands Police to have the least Restorative Justice (RJ) referrals. WMP's contracted provider Remedi, Wolverhampton LPA SLT and CJS OOCR delivered a week of action. Remedi practitioners and management were co-located within LPA teams in line with operational shift patterns. Remedi briefed and upskilled teams and triaged caseloads with operational staff to identify RJ opportunities.

8.1.2 12 RJ outcomes were recorded on Wolverhampton LPA over the 12 months preceding the 'all out' week of action. In the week of action, 12 RJ were completed, i.e. a year's worth in one week. A further week of action is planned with DY LPA, the next lowest adopter of RJ.

8.2 What plans, if any, are there for WMP to improve overall knowledge of the complexities of RJ and its effectiveness?

8.2.1 To improve RJ within WMP, Remedi deliver RJ training to new recruits at Tally Ho and are featured within the initial officer training. Remedi practitioners will be co-located within LPA estates. Each LPA is providing 1 person per area who will be given additional OOCR and RJ

training and all training provision will be tracked and reviewed through CJS Service Improvement governance

8.3 The OPCC are in the process of recommissioning the RJ service. How will WMP ensure there is no dip in service should the provider change?

8.3.1 OOCR and RJ performance is governed through CJS SIM which is chaired by the Head of CJS. Performance is monitored across all LPAs and departments with actions to improve uptake. OOCR will maintain liaison and continue to maximise visibility and linkage to RJ services throughout any change in service provider.

8.4 How does WMP work with the service provider to increase the use of RJ and explore opportunities for other services to include an RJ element?

8.4.1 RJ compliance and uptake improves with engagement from OOCR and Remedi practitioners, through methods such as the week of action described above. The OOCR team review custody populations daily to identify OOCR and RJ opportunities and liaise directly with the prisoner handling team and tracking uptake through force systems. SPOCs will be co-located within LPA estates to encourage further uptake.

Fig 1: RJ delivered by Remedi across WMP

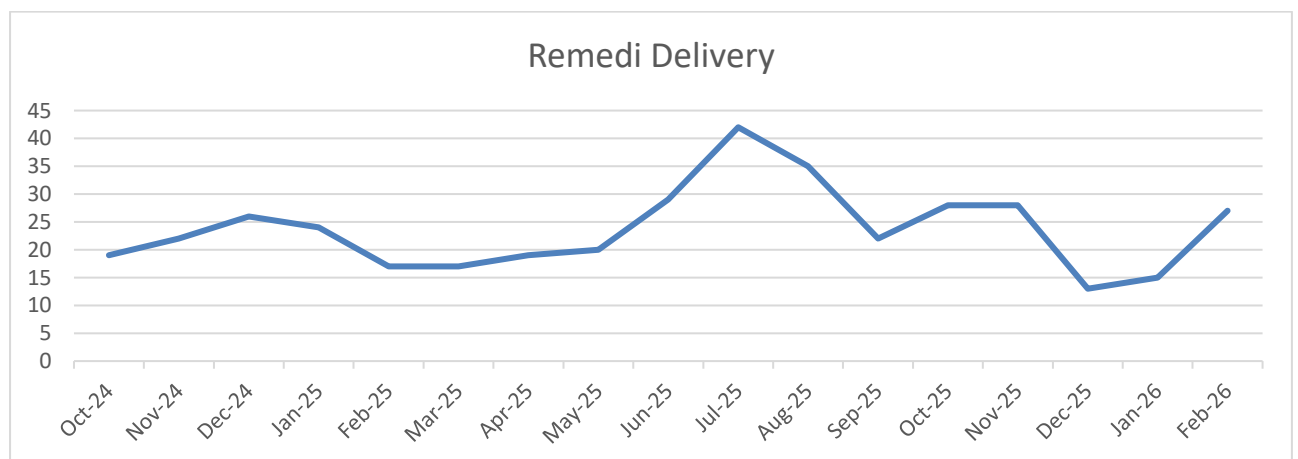
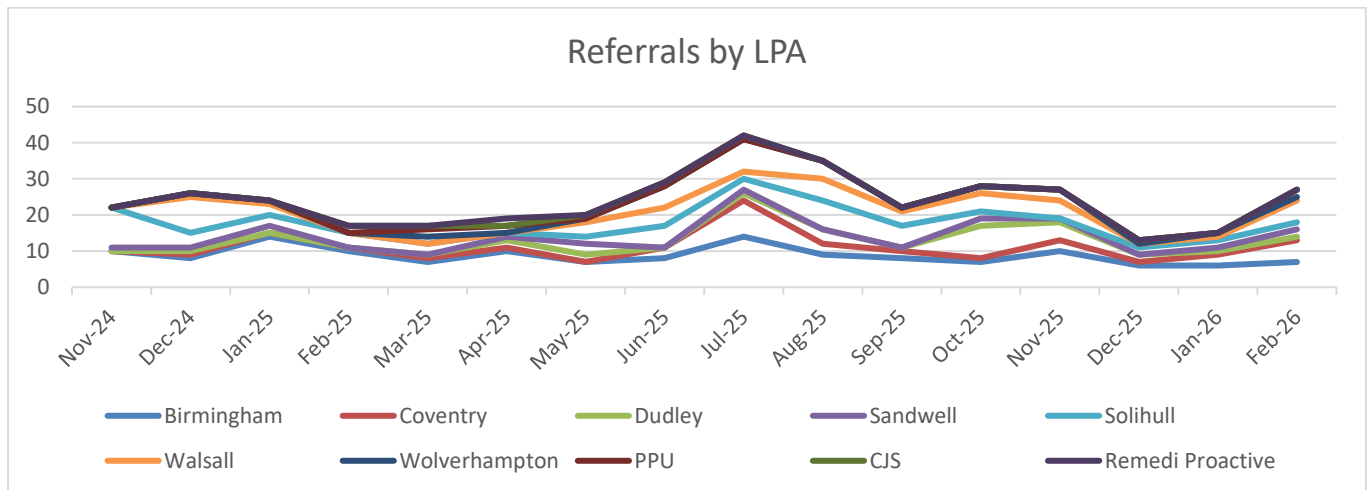


Fig 2: Referrals for RJ from LPAs into Remedi



8.5 What work is being done within WMP to increase the use of RJ to support victims of ASB?

8.5.1 RJ is being delivered for crime associated with ASB, including relevant harassment, public order and criminal damage through the above detailed mechanisms.

9. KLOE 171 - Improve opportunities for meaningful and trauma-informed engagement with victims and survivors, including through my Victims' Commission and enhanced victim voice processes within WMP

9.1 What measures are WMP taking to increase lived experienced voices in decision making processes?

9.1.1 The Public Protection Unit (PPU) conduct a Rape and Serious Sexual Offence No Further Action Panel which is attended by victim advocate and those with lived experiences. PPU have commissioned a research project with Bristol University around the experience of survivors of sexual violence for victims of black heritage.

9.2 WMP senior officers – CI and above – have been calling a number (target 5 each?) victims of active cases every month and asking a series of questions about their experience to date of the CJ journey? How long are these audits planned to continue for? How public are outcomes made? Will there be a similar in-person contact continued even when automated platforms take over – such as the Victim Insights Platform?

9.2.1 The current practice of senior officers manually calling victims for feedback was an interim measure necessitated by a fragmented legacy system. Under the direction of the Victims Thematic Board, WMP are transitioning to a proactive, consistent approach. While senior officer oversight will remain a core part of the governance, the manual "auditing" phase is being superseded by the implementation of the Victim Insights Platform (VIP), which will be fully operational by April 2026.

9.2.2 Currently, feedback data is not routinely integrated into performance packs. However, the VIP will transform how outcomes are shared. Findings will move from manual, resource-intensive spreadsheets to live, customisable dashboards. These outcomes will be filtered by officer, team, and department, allowing the Victims Board and Service Improvement teams to monitor compliance with the Victims' Code in real time.

9.2.3 While internal dashboards drive operational change, high-level sentiment trends and service improvements will be used to inform our public-facing accountability reports, demonstrating where the force is meeting or exceeding its statutory duties.

9.2.4 The VIP is not a replacement for human engagement; rather, it is a tool to make that engagement more meaningful. While the platform uses automated multi-channel surveys (Email, SMS, Web, Video, and Audio in 70+ languages), it enhances rather than removes "in-person" accountability.

9.2.5 The platform uses advanced text analytics to identify negative sentiment in free-text responses. When a victim reports a poor experience, the system triggers a real-time alert to the relevant supervisor. This ensures that instead of random manual audits, supervisors can intervene, specifically where the data shows a victim is dissatisfied or their rights are not being met.

9.3 What dedicated mechanisms does WMP have to engage with victims and survivors? How does WMP ensure these are conducted with trauma-informed practice?

9.3.1 Police Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) experience survey was launched in April 2025 to understand the victim experience of reporting to police; this is advertised by social media and via partner agencies. The survey is scheduled to repeat in performance Quarter one of 2026/2027. Sexual Assault Victim Advisor (SAVA) actively engages with victims of RASSO to seek best practice and encourage feedback to improve the service provided.

9.4 How does WMP ensure that it engages with all victim voices, particularly those of minoritized or marginalised communities?

9.4.1 The voice of the Victim Forum is established and co-chaired by the Police and OPCC. Voice of the Victim forum will take place in person and virtually to ensure inclusivity. The attendee list is continually reviewed ensuring all voices are heard.

9.5 How has meaningful and trauma-informed engagement with victims informed, improved, and become embedded within WMP decisions, policies and actions?

9.5.1 Engagement and feedback from victims have contributed to the development and delivery of Sexual Offence Liaison Officer (SOLO) training. This focuses on a victim centred approach, which includes use of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre 24/7.

9.5.2 Victim centred training and relationship building with RASSO investigators includes trauma informed achieving best evidence interviews, Independent Sexual Violence Advisor support and bespoke engagement for victims who are neurodivergent or have learning difficulties. There is development of the 'Your Journey' booklet to empower victims.

9.6 What supervisory arrangements and skills development are in place to ensure staff meet expected standards and are able to conduct meaningful, trauma-informed engagement with victims?

9.6.1 The Victims' Code training promotes trauma awareness in capturing best evidence from victims. It allows investigators to engage with victims at the most appropriate time and not allow pressure to obtain recorded interviews due to time constraints with custody detention periods or charging advice from the Crown Prosecution Service. Public protection and Force Contact staff have bespoke training relevant to Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and Barnados for trauma informed practice with children.

9.7 How are victim feedback and lived experience voices embedded into day-to-day operational processes and practice?

9.7.1 The police experience survey, Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) audits of reviewing victim engagement, victim code compliance, investigation standards and decision making, provide themes for driving improvements.

9.7.2 The RASSO Service Improvement Meeting integrates oversight from several sources, including the No Further Action Scrutiny Panel, the Victim Right to Review, and PPU end-to-end case audits. By incorporating feedback from the OPCC Victim Voice Forum and performance data partners such as CPS, ISVAs and SARC; the meeting identifies systemic improvements. This approach ensures a better understanding of SARC usage and the accuracy of support referrals.

ANNEX ONE

Table 1. Showing the relevant individual commitments from the Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029 – that are the responsibility of West Midlands Police to deliver. RAG ratings as assigned through internal OPCC processes.

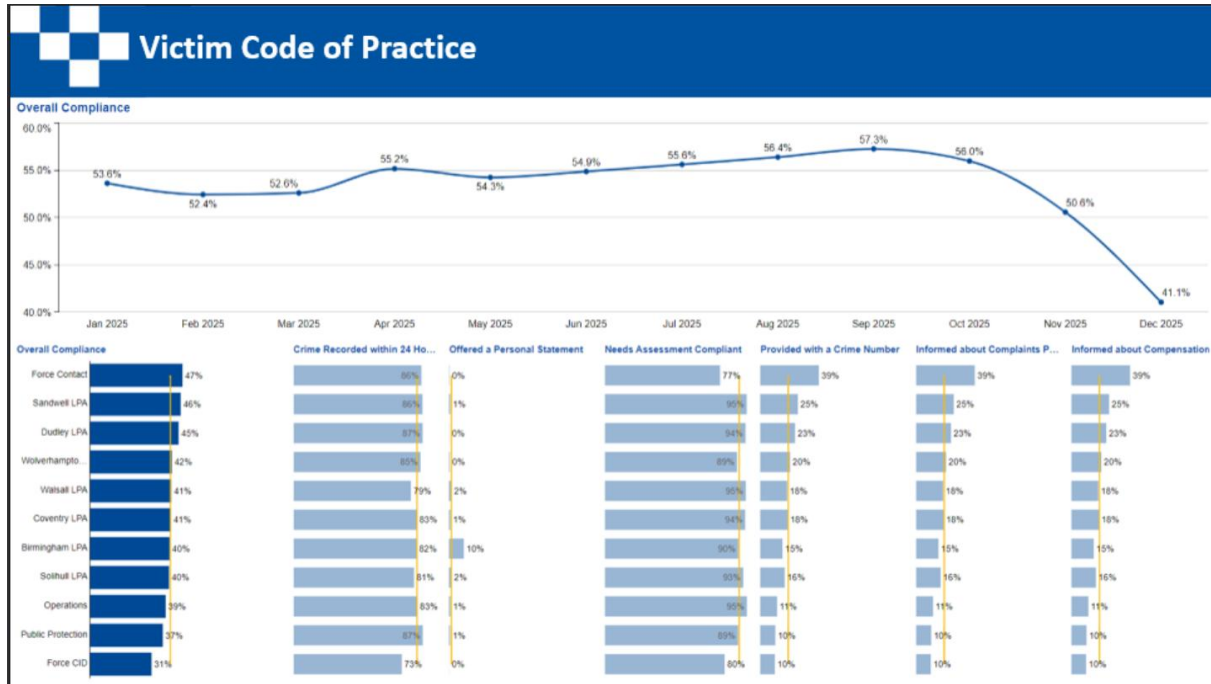
Individual Commitment (in the order listed above)	Q2 25/26 Deliverable Rating
151 - Enforcing the VCOP within West Midlands Police (“WMP”). I expect them to produce an auditable and proven account of their compliance.	Green
154 - Raise awareness of victims’ rights within the VCOP, including their entitlement to make a Personal Victim Statement, Special Measures and the Victims’ Right to Review.	Green
155 - Introduce a new approach to measuring victim satisfaction at each stage of the policing process, to ensure victims receive care and compassion throughout.	Green
156 - WMP are accessible to the public and maintain trust and confidence and victim support provision, encouraging more reporting of crime.	Green
157 - WMP to improve investigative performance to protect victims and witnesses and ensure VCOP compliance.	Green
159 - Closer alignment of victims’ services with the WMP Witness Care Unit will further streamline provision of support, reducing the need for the re-telling of traumatic experiences.	Green
161 - Maintain the availability of restorative justice for cases proceeding through the CJS / Extend the availability of restorative justice within OOCRs and explore opportunities to integrate restorative practices into broader services.	Green
171 - Improve opportunities for meaningful and trauma-informed engagement with victims and survivors, including through my Victims’ Commission and enhanced victim voice processes within WMP	Green

Table 2. Showing the RAG rating definitions used in table 1 above

RAG Rating Key
On track – can be delivered by lead
Not on track – requires support from SMT lead to resolve
Not on track – requires support from wider SMT to resolve

ANNEX TWO

Graph 1. Showing recent performance information from the Force Contact element of the Citizen Satisfaction Surveys for the last 12 months covering January 2025 to December 2025.



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