

E-Zine Newsletter

West Midlands Police Authority, August 2011

Newsletter for MPs and councillors on Police Authority matters – West Midlands edition



A message from the Chair Bishop Derek Webley
Disorder in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, West Bromwich & elsewhere
The events in August were hugely testing for West Midlands Police. The Force was faced with persistent and severe violence, looting and lawlessness. I watched each night at the Events Control Suite into the small hours and saw the abhorrent behaviour of those they had to deal with.

There were two nights of violent disorder in the West Midlands from the evening of Monday 8 August to the early morning of Wednesday 10 August 2011.

Three men died, shots were fired at the police and there were significant levels of looting and rioting. The Authority has offered its thanks to police officers and partners, such as the other emergency services and councils, who worked together to restore order to our streets.

During the disturbances, Authority members met with and supported officers across the Force and provided information to the public and their representatives. The challenge was not just the disturbances but maintaining visibility across the West Midlands to prevent disorder elsewhere.

Throughout, we had support from our partners and the communities of the West Midlands. The strong community relationships built over years were not fractured by these

events. We were united in our revulsion at the violence and disorder. We will not forget the tragedies of lives cut short, or the trauma of businesses wrecked. I know that community support will continue, helping to rebuild and bring to justice the perpetrators of these vile and empty crimes. We also know that our work is far from over. Whatever the will of Parliament on future governance arrangements, I will ensure that we continue to fulfil our responsibilities.

There have been two special meetings of the Authority, on 8 September and 27 October, about the riots. We had over seventy members of the public at each, demonstrating just how interested people are in what happened. We filmed the first meeting in September, at which the Chief Constable presented his interim report on the riots. The video, and the Chief's report, can both be found on our website

(www.west-midlands-pa.gov.uk). Although the investigation into the crimes that took place during the disturbances continues, attention has also turned to the financial costs. Direct costs, such as overtime and damage to police property, will be over £10 million. Compensation payments under the Riot Damages Act could add millions more. We remain hopeful that these costs will be met by central government, but at a time of very tight budgets and funding reductions, the risk of costs falling locally cannot be ignored. There will be a further meeting in early 2012, and we hope by then to also fully understand the financial implications. Our objective, whatever the outcome, is to learn what lessons we can from the riots, and ensure that West Midlands Police retains the necessary capacity and capability to respond efficiently and effectively to whatever challenges lie ahead.

The HMIC report, published in the summer, describes the financial challenge facing policing. West Midlands Police and West Midlands Police Authority are facing a **£126million** cash reduction to our budget over the four years of the Comprehensive Spending Review period (2011/12–2014/15). This represents 18 per cent of our gross revenue expenditure. The report found that we understand the scale of the financial challenge, and have developed a plan to meet it that builds on ‘Programme Paragon’, the Force change programme established in 2009. The Authority and Force have a costed plan to save

£40 million in 2011-12, and an active programme to transform information services, custody, criminal justice, contact management, learning and development, local policing, crime portfolio and business shared services. Detailed plans for the next three years are still under development. Programme and project management principles are however in place, and financial targets and workforce reduction requirements have been assigned against each year of the plan. The Force and Authority have joint oversight of progress against these targets, and clear governance arrangements are in place. We will achieve savings

through service improvement projects. The Force and Authority are also actively engaged in exploring possibilities to collaborate with partners, and participating in a Home Office sponsored project to explore opportunities for partnering with the private sector. The report concludes that both Force and Authority will ensure that local communities are engaged and informed about the challenges, the proposals and the implications of decisions made. The full version of the report can be viewed at www.hmic.gov.uk/media/adapting-to-austerity-20110721.pdf

West Bromwich Police Station

The new Sandwell Police Headquarters opened on 30 September 2011. Councillor Bob Jones, Chair of the Authority’s Finance and Resources Committee said: “Tesco has paid for the new building and it is an excellent example of investment in both modern facilities and the regeneration of West Bromwich. We have worked with Sandwell Council to create both a new Police Station and a new Tesco, which is good news for people in Sandwell.”



Working for you to ensure your police service can effectively meet your needs

The Continuous improvement programme

Continuous improvement is a re-organisational change programme underway across West Midlands Police, eventually changing how we work in Local Policing Units (LPUs) and central departments. The aim is to re-shape operating processes so we can improve productivity, reduce operating costs and improve our service standards. The first two LPUs to undergo reorganisation were Birmingham South and Solihull. Next will be Coventry and Birmingham East. Continuous improvement involves identifying inefficiencies in the processes associated with attending incidents and dealing with crime. Police officers and staff have been asked where they think things need to be done differently, in order to provide a better service and make processes more efficient. The two pilot LPUs have adopted new structures that offer greater specialisation and resilience with fewer resources. Dedicated Neighbourhood Teams, which will not be abstracted for other duties, will have community engagement

and problem solving at the heart of their role. Although it is too early to assess fully the impact of Continuous Improvement on overall levels of confidence in the two pilot areas, there is already evidence of improved satisfaction for victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, a better response to ASB, and improved call handling, response times and initial investigation. This should in turn lead to improved detection rates and offender management.

Priority Based Budgeting

Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) is the means by which we will balance the 2012/13 budget. The project commenced in February 2011 and has undertaken detailed reviews into work areas across the Force, culminating in a series of cost reduction proposals. PBB is a new approach to setting budgets with the detailed work undertaken and presented to the Authority much earlier than usual in the year. Proposals were considered at the Police Authority's meeting in September 2011, yielding potential cumulative savings of £25 million. It was reported that up to 88

compulsory police staff redundancies may result from the changes proposed.

Business Partnering for Policing

Since early 2011, West Midlands Police has been working with Surrey Police and the Home Office in a programme designed to identify the potential for working with the private sector in the delivery of policing. The programme seeks to achieve a combination of savings and service uplift through radical integrated change to the 'middle' and 'back office' functions. At its meeting in September 2011, the Authority agreed to enter the pre-procurement phase, to include the selection of external support teams, the development of detailed procurement plans, and the preparation of an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement advertisement notice. Should the Authority agree to continue further, the procurement phase is expected to last until after the election of a Police & Crime Commissioner in November 2012, and will not yield significant savings until the next CSR period.

101 — Non-emergency number

The force is set to get a new phone number to make it easier to contact police. 101 is a new, non-emergency national telephone number.

It has already been launched in southern England and parts of Wales and will go live across the Midlands region on **Tuesday 9 November**.

The current 0345 and 0845 numbers will continue to operate in the same way.

The 101 system will work by redirecting people's calls, wherever they are in the country, to their nearest police force and is intended to be easier for people to remember. The number should be used to report a crime or anti-social behaviour

which does not need an emergency response. In an emergency, members of the public should continue to use 999. (Callers phoning from overseas need to call 0121 626 5000.)

The number will be rolled out across the UK on an incremental basis, with the last forces going live in January next year.

Your Local Police Authority Members

Coventry



Cllr Sucha Bains



Brendan Connor JP

Sandwell



Cllr Keith Davies



Phil Holmes JP

Walsall



Cllr Mohammed Arif



Phil Holmes JP



Prof. Ron Amann



Brendan Connor JP



Cllr Ernie Hendricks



Roger Hughes



Jean McEntire



Cllr Yvonne Mosquito



Zahid Nawaz



Bishop Derek Webley

Birmingham

Dudley



Cllr David Caunt



Cllr Judy Foster

Solihull



Cllr Diana Holl-Allen



Julia Lyle JP

Wolverhampton



Cllr Bob Jones



Zahid Nawaz

Please note that some Members appear twice on this page because they are link members for two local authority areas

Did you know that you can...

Rate the service you receive from police officers and staff?

www.rateyourlocalpolice.co.uk

This site allows you to make comments anonymously and see what everyone else says. Messages are forwarded to the local station and the senior management team or local neighbourhood officers can post a reply.

Talk to us about policing in your area?

We are your Police Authority link members for Birmingham and we hope you will get in touch

with us. If you would like us to come along to speak to you or your constituents, for example at a Neighbourhood Watch or residents' association meeting, please let us know and we will be happy to attend.

www.west-midlands-pa.gov.uk or you can contact us by phone on

0121 626 5143 or via email at police-authority@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk