



Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Home Secretary
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7th July 2025

PEEL 2023-25: Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy: An inspection of West Mercia Police

I am writing to you in response to the above HMICFRS inspection report published in May this year. The inspection highlights both the progress made and the challenges the force are addressing head-on. The overall judgements are not where we want West Mercia Police to be, and I am clear that they must and will improve. It was, however, noted by His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary Sir Andy Cooke QPM DL, that "the public of West Mercia can be reassured that this is a force that's improving and one that will continue to keep them safe".

Alongside the good rating for crime recording, the report recognises some of the excellent work happening in the force and meaningful progress in several key areas. It highlights that neighbourhood policing teams are well resourced and are actively engaging with communities to resolve local issues, the force's dedicated online child exploitation team (OCSET) was praised for its effective use of civil orders and strong partnership working to protect children, as was the processes in place for external scrutiny of the use of stop and search powers.

In particular, the report noted the significant efforts to improve investigative standards satisfying the previous cause of concern.

The report also outlines areas where the force must do better, such as how they identify vulnerable victims, how they collect and use data and how they develop a positive workplace.

I share the public's high expectations, so it's important we use the findings as a platform to drive further change.

In response to the 23 areas for improvements (AFI), West Mercia Police has identified 116 actions which form an action plan following thematic analysis. These themes are designed to evolve as new opportunities for improvement arise, this ensures that West Mercia Police remains responsive and future focused.

The force has reestablished their Continuous Improvement Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, to apply additional scrutiny, oversight and governance of the proposed action plans.

On publication of the report, I called an Extraordinary Assurance and Accountability meeting with the Chief Constable which will take place on the 14th July. The primary aim of the meeting is to seek reassurance around planned activity to key themes identified within the AFIs. The Chief Constable has submitted a briefing note setting out immediate activity taking place, risks and challenges and next steps against key themes.

I will continue to maintain ongoing oversight and scrutiny over the next two years, via different areas of engagement with the force's activity as well as formal governance processes.

As Commissioner I will continue to work with and support the Chief Constable to deliver my Safer Communities Plan, by directing the resources needed to deliver the best possible service to the communities of West Mercia. However, delivering sustained improvement – particularly in areas such as visibility, public confidence and protecting the most vulnerable- requires continued and adequate investment.

As I know you are aware, West Mercia and Policing generally is operating under increased financial pressure. West Mercia have made considerable efforts to be more efficient over the last decade whilst the expectations on policing continue to grow in complexity. Sustained improvements require long term and predictable funding.

I will continue to advocate for fair and adequate police funding that reflects the operational and strategic demands of modern policing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'John Campion'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia