



Annual Review 2009/2010

Welcome to our...



Paragon - a new-look force, a new way

In June 2009 West Midlands Police Chief Constable Chris Sims announced a major change programme for the force, called Paragon. Throughout the year, various workstreams prepared the force to deliver the changes, which went live on 6 April.



The aim of the programme was to make WMP better able to serve the public and respond to your concerns.

The aims of Programme Paragon are to:

- increase public confidence
- focus on neighbourhood policing
- tackle community concerns like anti-social behaviour
- allow communities to influence local policing priorities
- work closely with partners
- reduce paperwork and bureaucracy



Programme Paragon – your police force has changed

In April, policing across the West Midlands changed, making officers better placed to tackle residents' priorities.

The restructure saw the force change from 21 operational units to ten local policing units, bringing police boundaries in line with those of other organisations such as councils to help promote partnership working.

Underpinning the restructure was a commitment to tackling community concerns like anti-social behaviour and criminal damage.

Paragon also changed the way some of the most complex detective work is carried out. Investigations into offences like serious assault and armed robbery are now handled by dedicated crime teams.



This frees up officers to focus on the kinds of local issues residents tell us are most important to them, helping to improve their trust and confidence in the police.



The force has been finding new ways to talk to our communities and find out like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube help us talk to young people, while the new ViewPoint website allows people to leave feedback about the service they receive.



New ways to communicate



Feeling the Difference

Each year, WMP carries out thousands of 'Feeling the Difference' surveys to measure people's quality of life and reassurance issues.

The surveys are conducted by an independent market research company. In the latest survey, eight out of ten people feel confident the police and council are dealing with the crime and anti-social behaviour that matter.

Most residents agree the policing priorities are relevant to their communities.

Residents were asked which crime and anti-social behaviour issues were a problem in their neighbourhood. Youth nuisance was nominated by just over a third of residents, followed by traffic offences, mentioned by one quarter and litter and rubbish by one fifth.*

Most people were happy that:

- the police treat everyone fairly and with respect
- their local police are doing a good job
- the level of foot patrol is right for their area



*For full details of the Feeling the Difference survey results, see the website, www.west-midlands.police.uk



Contact us

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- www.facebook.com/westmidlandspolice
- www.youtube.com/westmidlandspolice
- www.twitter.com/wmpolice
- www.west-midlands.police.uk/viewpoint
- a new website giving you the chance to have your say on policing

For an electronic version of this review or more detailed statistical information, go to the home page on our website and click on **Annual Review**.

Community resolutions

In April 2009, West Midlands Police introduced a form of speedy justice that allows the public to influence the way offenders are dealt with.

Community resolutions put the victim first. They are asked what outcome they would like to see, so they become part of the solution. Both the victim and offender agree to a course of action, which could be a simple apology, repairing any damage caused or an offer of compensation.

Over the last 12 months alone, over 12,500 low-level crimes were dealt with using community resolutions, equating to almost six per cent of total recorded crime. This saved around 188,000 hours of officers' time, allowing them to focus on issues of local concern.

West Midlands Police's work has been nationally recognised, with other forces interested in the success of this 'common sense' way of policing.

Examples of successful resolutions include:

- On an estate in Cradley four boys were arrested for graffiti. Officers spoke to their parents and the youths agreed to improve the area by picking up litter from the surrounding streets.
- In Wednesbury, a 14 year old was caught causing criminal damage to a property. The offender – who had no previous convictions – apologised to the owner, and his parents agreed he should help distribute crime prevention advice leaflets to other households in the area.
- In Coventry two old friends were arguing when one smashed the other's window. The victim did not want him arrested as nothing like this had ever happened before. The offender apologised and paid £100 for the damage.
- In Sutton a girl stole make-up from a shop. It was her first offence and she was very sorry. The shop manager didn't want her to be criminalised so she returned the items and apologised to the shop and the police.

Paragon - a new-look force, a new way

Local Policing – putting the public first

West Midlands Police are working to put the public at the very heart of our service. We aim to provide a service which responds to your needs.

Working closely with our partners, we are committed to community-based,

neighbourhood policing which allows us to identify and tackle those issues which matter to you.

Neighbourhood policing gives you:

- Access - to a named team of local officers
- Influence - over policing priorities in their neighbourhood

- Action - by both police and partner agencies
- Answers - feedback and solutions to their concerns

Neighbourhood policing teams are made up of police officers, special constables and police community support officers, but may include partners such as street wardens and volunteers.

They work closely with the public to identify and resolve local issues like anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, graffiti or neighbourhood disputes.



Behind the scenes - keeping you safe

Specialist Policing Units

As well as looking after local neighbourhoods, behind the scenes West Midlands Police has a number of dedicated units and specialist departments to help keep the public safe, protect them from harm and target criminals.



Under Programme Paragon, many of the specialist functions that were previously carried out locally moved to a more corporate control, freeing up officers to focus on local priorities and clearing the way for local commanders to concentrate on their core role of improving public trust and confidence.



Crime

Under Paragon a new Force CID was created, located at four 'hubs' around the force. There are 24 major investigation teams, along with a central Economic Crime Unit, the Forensic Service Unit, and a Review & Case Management Unit, dealing with murder investigations and kidnap and extortion investigations.

'Payback' teams located at each hub use trained financial investigators to ensure criminals don't benefit from the proceeds of their criminal activity. Over the last 18 months WMP forfeited or confiscated through the courts over £15 million – including four high performance cars worth over £450,000 – and seized more than £5 million of physical cash.



Public Protection

The new Public Protection Department has responsibility for adult and child investigations and safeguarding, working more closely with partner agencies to improve the service delivered to victims and the wider public.

Each LPU has a locally based Public Protection Unit, where specially trained staff deal with the investigation of child and adult abuse, domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences and child exploitation. They also have responsibility for the local co-ordination of missing people and sex offenders.



Serving our communities, protecting them from harm

Firearms

The force has a full-time firearms unit with three Armed Response Vehicles to provide the initial response to spontaneous firearms incidents 24/7. The unit also has a team of officers to deal with firearms incidents across the area and

Operations Support Unit

The OSU is a highly trained team of officers who can be called upon to support colleagues across the force area and beyond, often at very short notice, to deal with public

beyond. The unit provides protection for VIPs and armed security at Birmingham Crown Court if necessary. The force also provides armed officers to help protect Birmingham Airport.

disorder and protest. They also provide specialist search skills to support CID at crime scenes and help in the search for vulnerable missing people.



Dog Unit

The Dog Unit has over 60 general purpose dogs and provides 24/7 support to local policing officers at crime scenes by searching for suspects and stolen property, as well as over 30 specially trained handlers and dogs who can search for drugs, explosives and missing people. The unit also has a number of specialist officers who deal with the threat posed by illegally owned dangerous dogs.



Traffic Unit

The new-look Traffic Unit provides 24/7 support to local policing units and will usually be the first unit on the scene at serious accidents. The unit also has a team of motorcyclists who provide a range of specialist support skills including 'off road' motorcycling and VIP escort. In addition the unit has a team of officers who are responsible for the investigation of all fatal accidents in the force area.



Counter Terrorism Unit

Since the formation of the CTU in 2007, the force has established a team of professionals who provide a highly specialised service to the wider West Midlands region.

Their work is organised around the four 'Ps' of the Government's Contest counter terrorism strategy – Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare. Counter Terrorism policing has recently undergone a considerable culture change, becoming embedded in local policing, working alongside partner organisations and developing an open and productive relationship with the communities we serve.

A number of CTU officers, known as Security and Partnership Officers (SPOs) work out of every local policing unit and operate in much the same way as their neighbourhood colleagues.

They are a visible link between the CTU, the LPU and the community.

Anyone who has concerns about terrorism or violent extremism can contact their local SPO, or call the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321.

