**Item 4**



**West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

**Draft Minutes**

**11th April 2025, Old Court Room, Town Hall, Wakefield**

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Eileen Taylor - Leeds Council (Chair)

Councillor Chris Hayden - Bradford Council

Councillor Nussrat Mohammed - Bradford Council

Councillor Brenda Monteith - Calderdale Council

Councillor Shazad Fazal - Calderdale Council

Councillor Anthony Smith - Kirklees Council

Councillor Gwen Lowe - Kirklees Council

Councillor Andrew Carter - Leeds Council

Councillor Nicole Lloyd - Leeds Council

Councillor Jackie Ferguson - Wakefield Council

Councillor Gwen Page - Wakefield Council

Mr Trevor Lake - Independent

Mrs Jo Sykes - Independent

**In attendance**

Alison Lowe - Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

Wendy Stevens - West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Catherine Hankinson - West Yorkshire Police

Russ Hughes - West Yorkshire Police

Sharon Fraser - Wakefield Council

Samantha Wilkinson - Wakefield Council

Fiona Bernardo - Wakefield Council

**1. Acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Celia Hickson.

**2. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 7th March 2025**

2.1 The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

**3. Urgent Items**

3.1There were no urgent items to add to the agenda.

**4. Members’ Declaration of Interest**

4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**5. His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Progress Update**

5.1 The Deputy Mayor introduced her report, which details how both her and the Mayor have held West Yorkshire Police (WYP) to account over the 18 areas highlighted for improvement following the HMICFRS Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection in July 2024. A further Force inspection is due in early 2026.

5.2 The Deputy Mayor detailed a number of meetings both her and the Mayor have had with the Force to understand the granular data behind areas identified as needing improvement, and how the picture compares to other Forces. Members of the Mayor’s office attend regular Force governance meetings and report back on work underway to address the 18 areas for improvement, to provide further and ongoing reassurance to the Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor was clear that resources to take this work forward were in place, and that she is assured of the robustness of the governance processes.

5.3 At 2.3, Panel asked for clarification around the figure of 75% compliance for recording of ethnicity for victim-based crime. The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that this figure shows recording compliance. There are technical reasons outside of WYP control which can hamper compliance in the recording of this data; despite this Panel were assured that WYP is ahead of other Forces in this area and are looking at ways to automate the inputting of data to increase the compliance rate.

5.4 At improvement points 15 and16, Panel noted the Force’s efforts to reduce workload pressures and asked for an update on the work undertaken by the lead Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) on improving the Personal Development Reviews (PDR) system. The Deputy Mayor reported that background work had been undertaken within the existing system, and a reset done. PDRs have been moved to a fixed window, with every employee having a new PDR which will include objectives setting. Every officer will have a review every 3 months (an IDR), and a full PDR on an annual basis. WYP have kept HMRCFRS informed of the progress, and have shared the timetable for change with them.

5.5 Panel asked the Deputy Mayor for assurance that she was satisfied with the changes, and if she believed that HMRCFRS were being consulted throughout the process. She responded positively on both counts and noted that the real test of the system changes would be in the next HMRCFRS Inspection in 2026. In the meantime, she assured Panel that she was content with progress and is kept well informed through regular governance accountability meetings. Panel requested an interim report in six months’ time on progress towards the Force’s IDM targets.

5.7 Panel asked for the Deputy Mayor’s assurance that she was satisfied with staffing levels in Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA) and Domestic Abuse investigation teams, and whether she thought the recent government announcement that enquiries into grooming gangs would be undertaken at a local level would put an additional strain on staffing levels. The Deputy Mayor said that the Force were prepared for a potential uplift in this area of work and were looking at more refined model of enquiry for investigations. She added that she was making enquires with national government about extra funding for Forces that are impacted should any local enquiries be established. In addition, WYP have a dedicated CSEA unit which is funded by Home Office, although funding has recently tapered. The Deputy Mayor told Panel that herself and the Mayor wrote to the Home Office recently, highlighting the work of WYP in this area, and asking for an uplift in funding to give extra capacity. This funding has now been agreed.

5.8 Panel asked for assurance that the number of officers assigned to high risk roles was adequate, and if the Deputy Mayor was satisfied that these officers were given adequate wellbeing support. The Deputy Mayor assured Panel of her passionate advocacy for mental health and how she regularly holds the Force to account in this area in terms of their culture and mechanisms to provide necessary support. She has been working closely with the lead ACC to simplify processes for officers to access help, and to embed ‘check ins’ within the IDR process. In addition, she speaks directly to police officers on a regular basis to understand their experiences of the system of support. She also shared her knowledge of the Force’s newly introduced Trauma Tracker which flags cumulative incidents experienced by officers and predicts when and where mental health difficulties are likely to occur to enable early intervention.

5.9 Panel asked for assurances around workload management to reduce the expectation for officers to pick up overtime. The Deputy Mayor referred to a recent quarterly governance meeting where she was updated in depth around newly introduced mechanisms to manage this. WYP have started to use detailed individual and team workload data to ensure resources to alleviate pressures are targeted correctly. She highlighted that overtime requirements are often multi faceted and issues are not always straightforward to solve, however she was confident that WYP were on track to improve the situation. In addition, the Force will shortly have an injection of 100 officers which will further reduce pressures.

**5.10 RESOLVED**

**5.10.1** An interim report to be brought to Panel in six months’ time on progress towards the Force’s IDM targets.

**6. Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)**

6.1 The Deputy Mayor introduced the annual update on the work of the VRP over the past twelve months, following confirmation of £4.3m in funding for the continuation of the Partnership into the coming year.

6.2 The Deputy Mayor highlighted what she saw as the risks and opportunities around the Partnership, these being: the uncertainty of annual funding; local authority budget cuts to preventative work; and the prospect of Youth Hubs moving to a policy area (education) not under the Mayor’s remit. The Mayor’s office are currently liaising with national government to highlight the strategic importance of keeping Hub work tightly linked to the VRP. The team are looking at potential alternative methods of funding to keep Youth Hub work within the Policing and Crime remit, including potential match funding by local authorities, and have asked to be considered for one of ten national Youth Hubs pilot schemes.

6.3 The Deputy Mayor was asked how she and the Mayor were responding to a further polarisation of extreme views, in terms of potential impact on policing. The Deputy Mayor highlighted the work of the Mayor’s Inclusivity Champion who works across all sectors, races, and ethnicities, and regularly feeds information and intelligence back to the Mayor, which informs strategic planning and helps to combat misinformation. Operationally, WYP continue to roll out their PolEd programme in schools to support understanding and tolerance. The Force track hate crime reports and are cognisant of upcoming protest, working constantly to understanding when and where resources may need to be deployed.

6.4 Panel asked the Deputy Mayor to expand on the work of the Women’s Safety Unit which now has a direct line into areas of operational policing to support the work of Operation Soteria. The Deputy Mayor replied that the Unit has two overarching ambitions: to improve investigations, and to improve risk assessments in response to criticism from women’s and victim’s groups. The Mayor has written to the Home Secretary to ask for funding to expand the Unit to address the ongoing demand for CSEA and historical CSEA investigations. offering to pilot a scheme developed by WYP which uses specialist tactics and methodology to identify potential victims of CSEA using indicators such as whether they were or are a ‘looked after child’ or excluded from school. The Mayor has established a Men and Boys Unit alongside the Women and Girls Unit to work with those identified as ‘at risk’ of becoming victims and / or perpetrators.

6.5 The Deputy Mayor highlighted the risk of the upcoming cuts in funding for the local Integrated Care Boards, which have been tasked with reducing spend by 50%. These cuts could impact work such as the A&E Navigator project, and partnership work around trauma informed approaches.

**7. Mayor’s Response to any current issues**

7.1 Awards from Round 7 of the Mayors Community Safety Fund have recently been made to 58 community organisations across West Yorkshire.

7.2 The Mayor had recently hosted a visit from the Children’s Commissioner for England to discuss and improve partnership working.

7.3 The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will today be hosting a Violence Against Women and Girls roundtable event, to which all West Yorkshire MPs have been invited, along with providers working in this policy area.

7.4 The Deputy Mayor wanted to mark the recent, tragic death of another young person to knife crime in Huddersfield.

7.5 The Deputy Mayor clarified recent reports concerning WYP recruitment practices in the national press. She referred to previous discussions within Panel around efforts by WYP to recruit a diverse workforce, reflective of the population of West Yorkshire. Research undertaken by the Force to improve recruitment rates within ethnic minority groups identified the limited window of time given for application submissions as a barrier. To address this, the application window is now open 24/7 for ethnic minority applicants. She stressed that this does not give any advantage in the process, and that no limits on numbers interviewed are in place for any ethnic groups. She reiterated her support for the policy, and stressed that Force efforts to increase diversity are fully in line with Peelian principles of policing which advocate policing by consent, and by officers who reflect their communities. Both she and the Mayor are assured that the policy is not discriminative and supports WYP’s ambition to build a force representative of West Yorkshire.

**8. Published Key Decisions**

8.1 Panel asked if there was a threshold at which Key Decisions were published. The Deputy Mayor committed to checking whether procedures have changed following a change in key personnel in the Combined Authority.

**8.2 RESOLVED**

**8.2.1** The Deputy Mayor to confirm the threshold at which Key Decisions are published on the Combined Authority’s website.

**9. Agreed Actions Log**

9.1 In relation to two outstanding actions to provide training completion rates across the Force, the Deputy Mayor has spoken to ACC Khan and the data will be provided as soon as possible. Panel asked for the rates to be circulated before the next meeting, which will not be until June, and almost a year since the request was made.

**9.2 RESOLVED**

**9.2.1** The Deputy Mayor to provide further data on WYP training completion rates for circulation amongst Panel members prior to the next scheduled meeting on 13 June.

**10. Forward Agenda Plan**

10.1 The Forward Agenda Plan was noted.

**11. Complaints received by the Panel**

11.1 The update report was noted.

**12. Any Other Business**

12.1 Panel Members and the Deputy Mayor congratulated the Police and Crime Panel Officer on her retirement and wished her well for the future.

**13. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

13.1 The next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel will be the AGM and will be held at 10.00 am on Friday, 13 June 2025 in the Old Court Room, Town Hall, Wakefield.