



ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

24th March 2026

Domestic Abuse

Presented by: ACC Richard NORTH

Cover Report

1. Police and Crime Plan

1.1.1 To provide the Commissioner with a report on progress towards the key performance indicators (KPI) in the West Midlands Police (WMP) and Crime Plan 2025-2029 relating to Domestic Abuse (DA).

1.1.2 In reference to the Police and Crime Plan specifically:

The Preventing and Tackling Violence chapter of the police and crime plan contains the following commitments to tackling domestic abuse.

- Positive outcome rates for domestic abuse crimes to continue to rise
- Support the introduction of domestic abuse specialists in police control rooms
- Ensure our MARACs effectively safeguard high risk victims
- Improve management of perpetrators and increase the use of bail conditions, civil protective order, arrests for breach of non-molestation orders and restraining orders, ensuring swift action for non-compliance.
- Ensure swift notifications from police to schools and colleges of domestic abuse (“Op Encompass”)

1.1.3 There has been a 1% increase in the number of DA crimes that have been recorded in the year to date compared with 2024-2025. However, the current year to date numbers are 4.97% lower than the 2023-2024 period.

2. Action ref 49: Positive outcome rates for domestic abuse crimes to continue to rise

2.1 DA positive outcomes continue to rise within WMP and are monitored on a monthly basis through DA Performance meetings, the Public Protection Department (PPU) Performance meeting and through the force Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) performance day agenda.

2.2 The End of Year DA positive outcome rate for the year ending March 2024 was 5.73%. The current Year to Date positive outcome is 13.1% and the monthly positive outcome rate for January 2026 was 15.8%, the highest figure for several years. The Year to Date DA positive outcome rate is currently 4.8% higher than at the same point in 2024-2025, with an additional 2331 investigations having a positive outcome compared to the same point last year.

2.3 Out of court resolutions are monitored on a weekly basis. They are scrutinised through the DA operations board, within the PPU performance packs and a bespoke out of court disposal team performance pack. Scrutiny panels are in place to ensure that the use of out of court resolutions is fair and justified. There is a dip sampling and audit process to support the scrutiny panel work. All learning from these panels is taken into the DA service improvement meeting (SIM), then escalated into the PPU wide SIM before the force organisational learning meeting for force wide best practice and recommendations.

2.4 Operation Soteria implemented sub codes for outcome closures of rape and serious sexual offences. This helps to better analyse the reason to which cases are closed with this extra level of detail. The same methodology has now been rolled out across all crime types. For DA offences this data is taken to the Independent advisory group (IAG) for further review and development – work is also being undertaken with Birmingham City University (BCU) to better analyse this data, understand it and look at how with working better with the voice of the victims and survivors we are able to understand in more detail why victims disengage from police investigations.

2.5 The DA Joint Justice Plan (DAJJP) objective is to improve timeliness of investigations from report to conviction, to build trust and confidence which should help to improve reporting. The plan is working to reduce victim attrition and improve overall outcomes.

3. Action ref 50: Support the introduction of domestic abuse specialists in police control rooms

3.1 WMP were the largest force to take part of the phase 1 rollout of Raneem's Law. As part of the rollout we have independent domestic abuse specialists from Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid and Coventry Haven EIT working within the force contact centre. Monday & Thursday 8am-4pm, Tuesday & Wednesday 10am-3pm – this is bolstered by a DA liaison team: 4 Call handlers with additional DA training, working 3x3x3 shift pattern (7am-4pm & 4pm-12am)

3.2 Performance measures are in place and have been tracked since this pilot started in March 2025. These can be categorised as follows:

- Number of logs reviewed
- Feedback direct to call handler
- Feedback via line manager
- Number of feedbacks given of a positive nature
- Live feedback given
- Logs regraded following review
- Logs reopened following review
- Risk assessment feedback

3.3 Phase 2 proposal to begin April 2026 is for Coventry Haven and Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid to post job vacancies on behalf of WMP. These roles remain independent but fit the business need. Coventry Haven and Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid are independent.

3.4 They are a commissioned service through the OPPC so are used as a recognised charity/advocacy service to support victims. The Home Office are aware of this approach as recruiting stand-alone agencies had an impact to timeliness through application/vetting, which would have impacted on the initial phase of the pilot.

3.5 Force Contact are currently reviewing this position with procurement to establish a longer-term position of wider involvement/rotation of agencies. Outside of their role within the Raneem's Law pilot they still offer a service/provision to victims of their respective geographical areas.

3.6 From the performance data available to date, it is clear that those IDVA's have identified opportunities for learning, which supports their level of scrutiny of WMP calls to service. Any additional recruitment will be completed by those organisations themselves to increase numbers to support the initiative and therefore not recruited by WMP.

3.7 Job roles and rotas will reflect victim and business needs with hours that accommodate peak demand. Rotas will accommodate keep in touch days with their own organisations to ensure they remain objectively independent from WMP. A more robust and fairer implementation of a 'critical friend' through a move to auditing schedule appointment logs, which have a delayed response. All of this to underpin the values of Raneem's Law and

the findings from the enquiry. Continuation of 'advice given' log trawls, with the inclusion of other closure codes where risk has been identified.

3.8 In December 2025 no logs reviewed contained any victim blaming language. From March to December 2025 there has been a 31% increase in reassurance provided on calls. From March to December 2025 there has been a 25% increase in asking if victims are involved with support services, to better facilitate a multi-agency response. From March to December 2025 there has been a 27% increase in identifying children present or otherwise involved in DA incidents. From March to December 2025 there has been a 30% increase in asking about key risk factors (i.e. recent separation).

4. Action ref 51: Ensure our MARACs effectively safeguard high risk victims

4.1 A quality assurance framework is in place to ensure protocol thresholds are consistently applied. The findings from this, and from any auditing activity, bespoke to MARAC or as part of the wider PPU/ Force auditing processes is taken into the monthly DA Service Improvement (SIM) meeting and into the PPU SIM for best practice and learning to be developed and explored. The MARAC process is aligned to Safe Lives guidance and their '10 Principles of an Effective Marac'. All high-risk cases will have a safeguarding team footprint recorded on the case when not referred to MARAC.

4.2 Governance for MARAC is in place with partners through the Operational Governance Group (OGG) chaired by the DA Superintendent which reports into the Strategic Governance Group (SGG) chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive of the OPCC. This helps to ensure that partners are jointly involved in the activity around MARAC. Partnership engagement happens on a daily basis through the work of the Domestic Abuse Safeguarding Officers (DASO) where appropriate. MARAC is led by one Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) to ensure consistency across the seven local authority areas. This DCI will report into the SGG Chair any emerging issues or trends.

4.3 The time period between a Marac referral being received and the case being heard in a Marac meeting is monitored on a weekly basis. There is a control limit of 28 days between the referral and the meeting to ensure cases are heard in a timely manner. During the last quarter all areas have remained within the control limits and during January 2025 the average time period between referral and hearing was 15 days.

4.4 All high-risk cases are reviewed by PPU safeguarding teams, regardless of whether a decision is made for them to be referred to be heard in a MARAC setting. This will include DASO's reviewing what opportunities exist to support victims, safeguarding measures throughout the investigation or through signposting to any additional support where consent is given to do so. The DASO's will contact other agencies where support is already ongoing/in place (usually from previous reports). The DASO's will update crime investigations with all contact, including which agencies are involved. This includes other non-statutory agencies/partners. Scrutiny is applied through QA to ensure decisions not to refer are in line with existing MARAC protocol. Any DA incident where a child is involved is subject of a screening process to assess whether the child needs to be referred into Children's Services and an Operation Encompass referral is also made into the relevant Education department to notify the child's school.

4.5 A business analyst as part of the Phase 2 review of PPU is supporting to revisit the demand in MARAC and to advise on the business model going into 2026/27 is fit for purpose.

5. Action ref 53: Improve management of perpetrators and increase the use of bail conditions, civil protective order, arrests for breach of non-molestation orders and restraining orders, ensuring swift action for non-compliance.

5.1 The number of arrests for DA offences has increased from 5075 during April-June 2024 to 5732 during Oct-Dec 2025. Arrests for breaches of restraining orders have increased from an average of 37 per month during April-June 2024 to 49 per month during Oct-Dec 2025. This partly reflects an increase in reported offences from 157 to 202 in these periods. Reported breaches of non-molestation orders have decreased from 266 during April-June 2024 to 218 during Oct-Dec 2025. This has resulted in a decrease in the numbers of arrests for breaches of non-molestation orders, which have reduced from an average of 52 in the quarter April-June 2024 to an average of 43 per month during Oct-Dec 2025.

5.2 The percentage of suspects who are bailed following arrest has increased from 31% in 2024 to 41% in January 2026. At the same time, the number of arrests resulting in no further action or Release Under Investigation (RUI), without conditions, after the initial period in custody has decreased, whilst the charge rate has increased. In DA investigations bail conditions are routinely applied in all cases where bail is used to protect victims and witnesses and manage perpetrators. Only in the most exceptional circumstances would a suspect be bailed without conditions or released RUI. It is now also common for a DVPN to be issued in addition to the police bail conditions to provide

further protection for the victim. Overall more investigations are being pursued, with increased positive outcomes and greater use of control measures on suspects to protect victims.

5.3 The national trial of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPO) is ongoing until November 2026. At present it is still an unknown on the final impact this will have on WMP. The civil orders team have been to Greater Manchester Police to understand their processes and consider what could be an impact and how we will be able to transition to the new order process.

5.4 Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) have undergone a new monitoring process whereby the order is having tasks set for local policing officers to ensure that a weekly check of the victim/suspect takes place to ensure the order is being enforced. This is monitored through the DCC performance day pack. Where a breach is found, the suspect is then raised through the daily risk meetings to ensure they are arrested and dealt with appropriately.

5.5 The Force actively seeks opportunities to apply for Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs). The Early Awareness Stalking Intervention Team (EASI) monitor all recorded reports of stalking and highlight to the OIC if they feel the situation would benefit from discussion at the Stalking Triage meeting, with consideration for an SPO to be sought.

5.6 The Force's performance in relation to stalking has oversight from the designated Superintendent Strategic Stalking Lead and is managed through the multi-agency Stalking Working Group. The Force currently has 64 full and interim SPOs in place. 21 full and interim SPOs have been obtained during the current performance year and 61 are in progress. There have been 27 reported breaches of SPOs during this period, 10 of which have resulted in a charge, 12 with no further action and 5 are still under investigation.

5.7 Changes to protective orders are rare. Should there be a change to bail conditions there is a process whereby the views of the victim are to be captured within CONNECT. Proactive checks allow for victims to feel supported and able to report breaches. The number of police generated breaches and victim reporting breaches will be tracked and reported on going forward so we can assess how effective this process change is.

6. Action ref 56: Ensure swift notifications from police to schools and colleges of domestic abuse ("Op Encompass")

6.1 OP ENCOMPASS has a daily triage via all 7 local authorities, where all domestic abuse matters (crime and non-crime) are reviewed. Linked children are shared with education partners – reporting times are positive and timely with a focus on a Monday morning to ensure that weekend reporting is not delayed.

6.2 WMP are exploring technological options within CONNECT fields, in order to establish if we can add mandatory fields for linked children, in order to assist education colleagues in efficiency. OP ENCOMPASS is part of the front-line training/awareness, delivered to officers by PPU senior leadership team to highlight and impress its importance.

6.3 WMP attend regular meetings with a regional OP ENCOMPASS focus group, with all partners represented to review/amend policy and highlight issues when they present. Any issue around timeliness can be highlighted at this forum, although PPU have a Detective Inspector OP ENCOMPASS single point of contact, who will attend to any urgent matters.

ANNEX ONE

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

Reference	Individual Commitment – Domestic Abuse	Q2 25/26 Deliverable Rating
49	Positive outcome rates for domestic abuse crimes to continue to improve	Green
50	Support the introduction of domestic abuse specialists in police control rooms	Green
51	Ensure our MARACs effectively safeguard high risk victims	Green
53	Improve management of perpetrators and increase the use of bail conditions, civil protective orders, arrests for breach of non-molestation orders and restraining orders, ensuring swift action for non-compliance.	Green
56	Ensure swift notifications from police to schools and colleges of domestic abuse (“Operation Encompass”)	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

Author(s): **Detective Chief Superintendent Tony HOPKINS**
Job Title: **Head of Public Protection**