

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

Overarching Introduction and Performance

The Metropolitan Police Service's West Area Basic Command Unit (BCU) incorporates the London Boroughs of Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow. As with all of London's 12 BCUs, West Area (WA) is segmented into five business areas: Response Teams, Neighbourhoods, Local Investigations (CID), Public Protection and HQ.

Response Teams

Response Teams lead the immediate response to incidents across the Hillingdon area. Response also have an investigative capacity which aims to ensure investigations are taken over from the emergency response officers to keep as many officers out on the streets as possible and they also have responsibility for the initial risk assessments and investigations relating to persons reported missing.

Neighbourhoods

The Neighbourhoods business area incorporates the local police (safer neighbourhoods) teams, including Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) for every ward. Unless there is a critical operational demand, DWO's are ring-fenced from abstraction into other duties (for example, covering Response shifts or aid in other parts of the capital). Neighbourhoods also incorporates: Safer School Officers, Youth Engagement and Diversions Teams, Faith Engagement Officers, Licensing and ASB Teams.

Local Investigations

The Local Investigations strand oversees the more serious and complex crime types. It also has responsibility for delivering the BCU's work on offender management and how gang issues are addressed. This business area includes teams which deal reactively to crimes, as well as an important proactive unit; this strand also own and manage the BCU's approach to investigating and reducing violent crime across Hillingdon and Youth Offending Teams.

Public Protection

Public Protection have the responsibility for investigating child abuse, rape and domestic abuse offences. It also takes the lead on high risk missing person investigations and hate crime. Key to Public Protection's work is ensuring a more joined up and victim-focused service and officers are expected to work closely with the council and other partners to achieve this.

HQ

The HQ business area has responsibility for the Basic command Unit (BCU) Ops Room, which is the local MPS control hub. This is responsible for joined up command and control 24 hours a day BCU wide. Other areas of HQ responsibility include: resourcing, professional standards, training fleet management, business continuity, Criminal Justice, finance and estates.

Performance:

2022 year was the first year since 2019 where Hillingdon was not subject of a directed lockdown or to restrictions on the night-time economy. This meant higher footfall across Hillingdon during both day and night-time periods and is likely to explain some increases in acquisitive crime when compared to the previous year. Robbery increased by 15% and Theft Offences by 9%. However, this was still lower than London wide increases for these crime types which were at 21% and 22% respectively.

The overall crime rate across the MPS area in 2022/2023 was 98.7 crimes per 1,000 population, for Hillingdon this rate was much lower for the same period, with 89.8 crimes per 1,000 population.

Tackling violent crime and a focus on addressing Male Violence Against Women and Girls were priorities of West Area BCU across 2022 and into 2023, which helped the Borough to experience no rise in violence against the person crime and a 1% reduction in sexual offences. The focus on tackling violent crime in Hillingdon has seen some notable achievements, including a 13% reduction in knife crime with injury, a 28% in possession of weapons offences and within the age group of 1-24 years the number of knife crime injury victims reduced by 6%.

Sanction detection rate indicates the rate of offences that resolve with a formal sanction to the offender. This does not necessarily mean a *conviction*; it may include a range of other sanctions including:

- The suspect being charged or summonsed
- The suspect being cautioned, reprimanded or given a final warning
- The suspect receiving a Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND) or other Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)
- System was put in place to correctly record them as PNDs for the relevant offence

As with the Metropolitan Police Service area as a whole, Hillingdon's sanction detection rate had been in steady decline over a number of years. This sharp decline has been driven by a number of factors, most notably:

- The overall reduction in police numbers and resourcing per head of population
- Changes in recording process and the steady uplift in overall crime figures
- Changes in detection targets and actions taken by certain forces to meet these
- The increasing reliance on Police to 'fill the gap' for other services, such as in responding to clients in mental health crisis

Across the 2022/2023 year, Sanction Detection rates for Hillingdon stood at 7% for all offences against an MPS-wide figure of 7.3%. There was variation across crime types for example with possession of weapons and drug offence detections sat at 70% and 43% respectively, with robbery Sanction Detection rates being 8% and Sexual Offences at 7% which were in line with wider MPS figures for the same crime types.

In any case, the data is stark and the challenge to the MPS and other constabularies to reverse the decline in Sanction Detection rates is significant, and something that requires changes at a legislative level.

Trust and Confidence

West Area Police recognise the scale of public concern following a number of cases involving MPS Officers which have involved behaviours which have truly been shocking and totally unacceptable to the Metropolitan Police Service and the public they serve. The scale of the challenge faced by the MPS is evidenced in the report of Baroness Casey. Significant reforms are already occurring, which will impact across London and locally in Hillingdon to ensure police improve trust with local communities and address the need to identify those officers who are unfit to be in the MPS. Some of these reforms include:

Ruthlessly rooting out corrupt officers / staff: A new Anti-Corruption and Abuse Command has brought together capabilities in intelligence, proactive investigation and prevention.

Speed and assertiveness: Police recognise there is a need to be quicker and more decisive in how police regulations are used to remove – at the earliest possible stage – those who should not be in policing.

Recruitment and training: A review of the resilience and effectiveness of police recruitment, vetting, initial training, and performance management of new police officer recruits.

Values and standards: The responsibility to fix this lies with all the leaders of the Met to tackle issues robustly and promptly. Police leaders will be more explicit about exactly what is unacceptable.

As West Area Police progress work to improve local policing in Hillingdon in order to build trust with the public they serve, they will ensure engagement with communities to enable the voices of local people to be heard on policing and obtain new ideas on how police can better serve the public.

The New Met for London Plan is directly aimed at improving public trust and confidence in London policing and will see additional investment into Neighbourhood Policing including uplifts in Sergeant and PCSO numbers.

Emergency Response Policing Teams (ERPTs)

Summary

Emergency Response Policing Teams (ERPT's) lead the immediate response to any incidents across the entire borough. This includes the initial response to missing persons and a designated team which deals with lower level (in terms of complexity) volume crime investigations. There is also a dedicated team which aims to take any arrested suspects from response team officers,

allowing them to quickly return back onto the streets, either answering calls from the public or being pro-active in any designated crime 'hot spots' areas.

ERPT in 2022

ERPTs respond to emergency calls and deal with ongoing incidents. They also undertake scheduled visits to members of the public reporting crime. ERPT provide a deterrent in response to crime trends by patrolling identified crime 'hot spots' and are a Met-wide flexible resource to respond to central Public Order Aid and force mobilisation. ERPT also investigate higher volume, non-complex crimes, offering immediate victim / Police contact to improve victim care and provide clear ownership of investigations.

The West Area Basic Command Unit (BCU) response teams are located in three patrol bases, one in each borough, with the Hillingdon Patrol Base situated in Uxbridge.

Since November 2020, the Response Teams have consolidated their investigation support functions to seek improvements in sanctioned detections and victim satisfaction. This is currently under review with the aim to make the service even better to the public and further improve our investigative capability; ensuring increased crime detection rates and continued improvements in victim satisfaction.

Due to a number of significant central policing events over 2022 (death of HM Queen Elizabeth II, volume of protests and sporting events), resourcing has been a challenge. Since December 2022, there has been an increase in ERPT officers which will undoubtedly improve performance into 2023. A previous lack of trained response drivers has also been addressed and a number of additional officers have now qualified, with plans to increase this number further.

In 2022, West Area BCU received a total of 86,392 calls for service, a 4.1% increase on the previous 12 months. Hillingdon accounted for 31% of these calls at 26,831 (which represented a 2.5% increase on the previous 12 months). In Hillingdon **71.7%** of 'Immediate Grade' calls were attended within 15 minutes (agreed charter times), and **50.8%** of 'S Grade calls' within an hour.

Post Covid pandemic demand appears to be increasing year on year in line with pre pandemic levels. Increased ERPT staffing numbers, with improved emergency response driving numbers and evolving volume crime investigation approach should see capacity meet increasing demand into 2023 and beyond.

Neighbourhoods and Partnership

The New Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police, Sir Mark Rowley, has been clear regarding what he wants the MPS to achieve: 'More Trust, Less Crime and Higher Standards', and Neighbourhood Policing is at the core of helping to achieve these aims by enacting crime prevention and deterrence initiatives, tackling ASB, problem solving, intelligence gathering, community engagement and reassurance. Doing these effectively can drive down future demand,

increase community trust and confidence, and mobilise the public to work with police in preventing crime.

To support the ward based work conducted by the local Dedicated Ward Officer and PCSO's, Neighbourhoods also has a Partnership and Prevention hub which acts as a focal point, co-ordinating and supporting the work of Neighbourhood officers. This hub incorporates dedicated officers, who facilitate partnership and collaborative working, having expertise in areas such as youth engagement, schools, licensing, ASB, vulnerable persons and crime prevention. The hub also lead on formal information exchange with council officers, providing daily responses to formal enquiries from the council's safer communities team.

Some of the key initiatives and areas of focus for Neighbourhood Policing in 2022 include:

Increasing Police Officer Diversity

The MPS has long recognised the need to have a workforce that is more representative of the communities which we serve, and this is the case within West Area. To this end there is an aspiration to have a representative workforce that mirrors the population of London. Within Neighbourhoods West Area had a dedicated 'Outreach' team made up of police officers and police staff which lead for recruitment activity. The team co-ordinates community engagement activity and partnership working to increase recruitment opportunities and create bespoke recruitment events and a number of these have been held within Hillingdon over the last 12 months.

Tackling Male Violence against Women and Girls

Violence against Women and Girls includes a range of offences and predatory behaviour towards female victims, such as rape and serious sexual offences, sexual assault and exposure. There is also a wider range of behaviour which contribute towards the perception of safety, such as unwanted approaches and conversations and the following / harassment of female victims. Neighbourhood police teams in Hillingdon have undertaken activity across 2022 in order to improve safety amongst women and girls, reduce offending and improve outcomes for victims. This has included:

- Working with partners to raise the public awareness of StreetSafe, a self-reporting tool where people can report areas in Hillingdon where they feel unsafe in order to help focus policing and partner improvement activity (this can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.met.police.uk/notices/street-safe/street-safe/>)
- Delivery of focus groups with women and girls around safety and how the public environment and support through initiatives can be improved – where people feel unsafe and why, sharing learning with Police design-out crime leads.
- CCTV – Ensure Local Authority operatives are briefed and trained to identify predatory behaviour and potential victims and address concerns with Police for an early intervention. Ensure adequate coverage of cameras and operators.
- Funding being provided to drive forward more enforcement activity against outstanding offenders and those named as suspects for violence against Women and Girls offences.
- Women's Self Defence Classes.
- Enhanced uniform and plain clothes patrols in hot spot locations.

Neighbourhood Policing also contributed to an operation called Project Vigilant which sought to target the night-time economy and public spaces where VAWG offences were prevalent. It utilised plain clothed and uniform officers working in conjunction to seek out predatory offenders who are potentially looking to commit an offence. Officers worked to engage and disturb potential offenders before a crime is committed either by using simple engagement and distraction techniques or by ensuring someone leaves an area. Prevention was the aim of Vigilant as well as being a way of gaining intelligence on persons who may present a risk to females.

Stop and Search

West Area police recognise the importance of working hard to address any disproportionality issues regarding stop and search on Hillingdon Borough and provide assurances that they have proper review mechanisms in place to ensure this policing power is used appropriately. To this end a number of work streams have been progressed and developed in including:

Youth Scrutiny Panels (YSPs) This platform is used to raise awareness amongst young people of their rights when stopped by police and the mandatory information (GO WISELY) that the officer will provide before the search is conducted. This platform also assists officers in understanding the lived experiences faced by young persons in Hillingdon through poor use of stop and search powers.

Community Monitoring Groups (CMGs): we also share information with our CMGs for each borough and there are 24 meetings planned every year. CMGs view the data of stop and search and how many were conducted within the last 3 month period, positive outcomes and most used section by officers. CMGs also attend police stations to view Body Worn Video (BWV) footage together with police. This is to ensure our powers and force used is reasonable and justified. Any concerns in relation to a stop and search encounter is reviewed and officers are spoken to.

Section 60s: West Area has introduced post S60 briefing which includes the local CMG and Hillingdon Local Authority partners attending a 30 minute post S60 debrief session. During this, the group monitor the duration, geographical area and whether a Superintendent was informed of this or not. If the duration or area covered by the S60 is beyond what the intelligence/information would suggest is proportionate then the authorising officer is spoken to and asked for an explanation and any learning disseminated accordingly.

Police Officer Training: Young Persons now attend training sessions for New West Area police officers with social workers to observe stop and search training by West Areas Learning and Development team. This takes place every 5 weeks subject to availability of social workers and young persons. These sessions have also benefited new officers as they had input from young persons on previous stop and search which impacted the trust and confidence of the community. New officers learn directly from the input given by young persons.

Disproportionality / Quality Assurance: To ensure West Area police on Hillingdon are not misusing this power, police supervisors dip sample around 100 stop and search encounters every

month. This is ongoing and any concerns are addressed with officers/supervisors. As with every BCU, Hillingdon's stop and search data is updated and published regularly, making it available to all.

As with previous years, most of the stops in Hillingdon during 2022 were conducted on males (over 90%). Over 56% of those stopped were aged 14 to 24 years.

In 2022, regarding stops by ethnic appearance, more white people were stopped in Hillingdon than any other ethnic group classed by ethnic appearance with this group accounting for 42% of stops. 29% were of black individuals and 24% of Asian appearance. In terms of proportionality, stops by ethnic appearance by 1,000 of the population broke down as: 0.34 for persons defined as white, 0.88 for persons defined as black and 0.59 for persons classed as Asian.

Conversely, there was under-representation in the stops on people in other ethnic groupings. While the proportion of stops of Asian individuals was broadly in line with Borough demographics, white people were stopped only 0.73 times than would have been proportionate based on the Borough's population, and those in 'other' ethnic categories were stopped only 0.56 times than the proportionate level. There was a lower positive outcome rate for stops of Black and Asian people.

Looking at outcomes, 70% of stops led to no further action with 12% leading to arrest.

Neighbourhood Team Activity Highlights

Op Nightingale – This operation is focused in Uxbridge and was initiated in 2022 but will continue through 2023, with Hayes Town now also being included. Op Nightingale essentially aims to increase uniform policing presence in key demand locations whilst also enacting longer-term problem solving. As part of this, the BCU obtained over £100,000 for initiatives.

Ask for Angela - An ongoing operation providing education to local town centres / nighttime economy. Teaching the local community and businesses how a VAWG victim can ask for help "by asking for Angela". Teams are continuing to attend local pubs and clubs (in plain cloths) completing test visits "asking for Angela". This information is then recorded as a pass or fail by the venue and education again provided to the businesses.

Domestic Abuse Survivors group - We have continued our visible support and presence at a local Councillor's domestic abuse (DA) support group. Officers provide signposting, support and guidance. We have also worked fast time with victims of DA, ensuring safeguarding and partnership work with the council to provide a joint approach to support the victims.

Support / Advice to College Students - input from ourselves regarding the issues female students have been experiencing. This work with college students included: input to the male students about the law around harassment and what is and isn't acceptable behaviour; safeguarding input

for the female students, focussed on their rights, encouraging them to report matters, the support that is available; an input on basic self-defence for the female students.

Neighbourhood Policing Week of Action – This week of action took place across Hillingdon which aimed to highlight the work undertaken by neighbourhood policing, to drive crime down, engage with the local communities and bring offenders to justice. This saw activity including:

- Walk and Talk initiatives
- Licencing Visits to Pubs, Off licences and any problematic premises
- Visiting rough sleepers / homeless persons.
- Weapon sweeps with members of the public in open space areas
- Targeting our outstanding and wanted offenders
- Operation Cubo initiatives - Automatic Number-plate Readers to stop cars with no insurance, no tax or disqualified drivers

Local Investigations (LI)

West Area Local Investigations (LI) strands throughout the MPS hold responsibility for the investigation of serious and complex crime, utilising proactive and reactive asset to explore disruption, enforcement, engagement, diversion and rehabilitation opportunities. In accordance with Met Direction and MOPAC, performance is focussed towards MPS operational priorities:

1. Focus on what matters to Londoners

Violent crime tops public concerns and includes, terrorism, knife and gun crime, sexual offending, domestic abuse and safeguarding vulnerable people from predatory behaviour.

2. Work more closely with partners and the public

Safety requires action and intervention beyond the police service and revolves around developing key relationships with partners and communities, to keep communities safe and prevent crime from taking place.

3. Achieve the best outcomes in the pursuit of justice and in the support of victims

Ensure victims receive the best possible outcome by proactively managing offenders and delivering justice and support to victims.

Weekly Violence Meeting

This Pan-BCU meeting takes place every Thursday and includes representation from all policing strands and from Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow local authorities. Hillingdon are represented by senior management from safer communities, as well as the Violence Reduction Coordinator and CCTV manager. The forum is primarily focussed on reviewing and addressing serious violence, violence against women and girls, burglary and robbery, with the flexibility to amend agenda according to operational need. Analytical products provide an overview of the previous seven days and examine common themes, trends and hotspots, allowing forward facing strategic planning and effective multi-agency risk management.

Pan London IOM Model

Following MOPAC's introduction of the pan London IOM model, LI has invested in resourcing a dedicated team of officers to work in collaboration with Local Authority and National Probation Service representatives to deliver IOM on WA. The new model seeks to standardise IOM processes throughout London and utilises the Violence Predictor Score (OVP) to identify cohorts of offenders to be managed. Locally, LI are developing a youth cohort focussed on delivering multi-agency engagement and diversion opportunity to 17–25-year-olds.

Offender Management

DCI Andy Jackson acts as the lead responsible officer for offender management. LI accommodates the Offender Management Unit (OMU) a dedicated team of specialist officers responsible for the coordination of complex fugitive-based enquiries and general offender management performance administration.

VAWG Strategy

DSU Figo Forouzan acts as the lead responsible officer and manages the BCU response to violence against women and girls. The VAWG strategy seeks to identify violence occurring both in public and private places and utilises resources from across the BCU to proactively police emerging trends and mitigate risk through community-based target hardening.

Challenges

Residential Burglary

One of the areas of challenge for WA (and also the MPS) is residential burglary offence sanction detection rates. LI has implemented operational and structural change, which continues to deliver uplift in performance. One particular structural change has been the implementation of a Forensic Conversion Team (FCT) who focus on dealing with forensic lifts from burglary scenes and focus on prolific burglary nominals. LI has also invested in a new WA/NW/NA team called Operation Angleton – the team's primary focus is dealing with cross border criminality as criminals have no boundaries. This unit focuses on burglary teams who are prolific in committing residential burglary offences on WA and surrounding boroughs. Over the last six months, they have supported in arresting and charging a high number of suspects responsible for carrying out high volume of residential burglaries on WA.

Detective Growth and Experience

As an organisation, the MPS continues to experience challenges in terms of the level of Detective experience within its Criminal Investigation Departments (both within the LI and PP strands). The MPS has introduced a number of schemes to increase the growth numbers of Detectives within the organisation such as the direct entry detective scheme. However, the levels of experience in the detective constable rank still possess a challenge for LI.

Looking forward

2022 has been positive for LI, with the most of KPIs being exceeded. 2023 presents opportunities to build on recent success including further collaboration with Hillingdon Council whom we have a close working relationship with to deliver the best possible service to victims of crime and our communities.

Public Protection

Public Protection covers a range of serious and complex crimes that often affect the most vulnerable in a community. Within WA BCU, Public Protection encompasses multiple strands, including child abuse; domestic abuse, stalking and harassment; exploitation (CSE and CCE), harmful practices, hate crime, mental health, missing people, online child sex abuse and exploitation, rape and serious sexual offences and abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults. It also incorporates our child abuse referrals team and our MASH desks. Supporting our investigation teams is our Predatory Offender Unit. WA Public Protection teams cover three London Boroughs; Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow.

During 2022, tackling violent crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls and often involve predatory violence by men, such as domestic abuse, stalking and sexual violence have remained the priority. This type of abuse has a profound and long-lasting impact on those directly affected, shattering the lives of victims, their families and those closest to them.

Domestic Abuse

Hillingdon, like many other London boroughs, has seen increases in recorded domestic abuse crime in recent years – a crime we know disproportionately affects women. WA has continued to see the highest volume of both domestic abuse incidents and domestic abuse offences across the Met, with over 17,450 incidents 10,900 offences over the past year – which equates to 11.6% and 11.4% respectively of the Met's total overall domestic abuse volume. Calls to domestic abuse incidents and offences accounts for 17% of total I grade and S grade calls responded to by Emergency Response Policing Team (ERPT) colleagues.

Despite recent yearly increases, Hillingdon Borough recorded 3,168 domestic abuse offences in the 2022/2023 year, which was a reduction of 4% on the previous year.

The volume of crime coming into our Community Safety Units (CSU) has brought some real challenges and we have bolstered team strengths with colleagues from other Units to ensure our operating levels remain satisfactory. In 2022, we appointed an additional Detective Inspector to ensure leadership levels were commensurate to the levels of threat, harm and risk this unit manage. This has allowed us to align one Detective Inspector to one local authority area.

2022 saw the introduction of a new Risk Management Unit (RMU) to support our response to domestic abuse. This Unit has brought together a number of existing functions, including the recruitment of specialist officers to apply for Domestic Violence Protection Orders, Forced

Appendix A

Marriage Protection Orders, and FGM Protection Orders, Claire's Law (Right to Know / Right to Ask) disclosure, stalking experts and also family court disclosure requests. Also supporting the RMU's work is our small, dedicated MARAC team.

In 2022, WA BCU secured the most Stalking Protection Orders (SPO) of any BCU thanks to the efforts of our dedicated SPO officer – WA successfully applying for a fifth of the Met's stalking orders. We absolutely recognise the importance of these orders in order to keep victims safe, some of whom will have been subjected to unwanted, fixated and obsessive conduct for many months. We are hoping to expand our stalking team in the near future.

WA BCU also participated in Project Tenacity, a 100-day project set by Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley. This focussed period of activity resulted in over 80 arrests for domestic abuse, taking some of the highest harm offenders away from their homes and preventing further harm to victims and survivors.

Referrals, Child Abuse Investigation Teams (CAIT) and Police Conference Liaison Officers (PLCO)

Our CAIT teams (Referrals, Investigation and PCLO's) continue to be one of the busiest teams in the Met, with the third highest volume across London. In 2022, the team dealt with over 1500 offences, all of which would have been initially reviewed by our Referrals Team. About a third of all investigations concern allegations of neglect and child cruelty and around 46% concerns allegations of assault, with the remainder largely comprising of allegations of sexual abuse. This breakdown is consistent with other BCU's across the Met. Performance in this area is relatively consistent, with WA securing charges and cautions for around 11%, above the Met average. WA have the fourth highest volume of Initial Child Protection Case Conferences, with 505 conferences in 2022, which remains challenging.

Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO)

WA BCU continue to have a dedicated RASSO team, known as our 'Sapphire Team.' Out of all 12 BCU's across the Met, WA BCU has the fourth highest volume of all sexual offences, with rape offences accounting for about 37%. WA have the highest number of rape allegations, where the victim and suspect are or have been in a co-habiting/marital relationship - this accounts for over 43% of rape investigations. Given WA experience the highest number of domestic abuse offences in London, this is perhaps not surprising, but nonetheless it is concerning.

Predatory Offender Unit (POU)

The POU was launched at the end of 2020 and its primary focus is to tackle high harm repeat offenders who commit offences against the most vulnerable members of society and in particular offences against women and children. In 2022, WA's POU have located and arrested almost 300 suspects to date.

There are numerous examples of good work from our POU, including a case involving a registered sex offender who had failed to meet his notification requirements following offending in another

force area. He was located by the team and has been convicted of three breaches, for which he received a custodial sentence.

Child Exploitation Team

Throughout 2022, we have continued to work closely with partners to ensure child exploitation (both sexual and criminal exploitation) is identified and investigated, and that those children and young people who are affected by predatory behaviour are supported and kept safe. Our Child Exploitation Team work alongside other policing teams, including WA's Gangs Unit and Missing Persons, and engage with partners at the Multi-Agency Vulnerability and Exploitation (MAVES), including Children's Social Care, Health, Education, Youth Offending Services and Safer Communities as well as third sector partners.

In 2022 the team investigated over 130 reports of exploitation, with wider criminal exploitation making up around 75% of cases and sexual exploitation 25%. 2022 saw two separate periods of targeted activity, through our County Lines Intensification Weeks, a national initiative targeting drug traffickers who target and exploit children and vulnerable adults to supply drugs across the country. Other areas of activity that WA have supported include Exploitation Awareness Day (working with key partners to raise local awareness about the importance of all forms of modern slavery, including criminal and sexual exploitation and trafficking). WA have also been actively involved in the 'Look Closer Campaign', which aims to protect young people by raising awareness in the community of exploitation – how to recognise it and how to report it. The team have also participated in Operation MakeSafe, which has been developed to raise awareness of child exploitation in the business community and to empower businesses to tackle exploitation through increased awareness and training.

Mental Health

WA are regarded as one of leading mental health teams in London, in terms of assessing and managing risks relating to MH vulnerability. 2021 saw the introduction of the 'Risk Management and Demand Reduction' (RMDR) protocol and this has continued to be used effectively throughout 2022. This protocol allows the team to capture all risk/demand information that comes into the MH team; assess the risks and collaborate with internal and external partners to ensure there is an approved and proportionate joint response.

Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation team (OCSAE)

2022 has been a busy year, with only a very small reduction in cases from the previous year. In 2022, our OCSAE team saw over 380 crimes being referred in. (Crimes which involve online indecent images of children). The demands placed on the investigation team are significant, both in terms of volume and the impact such crime types can have on their own welfare. The team have achieved some excellent results, executing warrants and securing charges against individuals who are accused of possession and often distributing hundreds of indecent images of children, of the most serious category. So overwhelming was the evidence in some cases, that guilty pleas were entered at court.

Missing Persons Unit (MPU)

WA BCU has continued to investigate high numbers of missing people, with the third highest volume across the Met. Those deemed at highest risk are managed by our investigation team and this cohort accounted for about 11% of all missing people. Our MPU manage all other cases and works closely with our Exploitation Team and Gangs Unit, in order that actions are co-ordinated and all available information is shared, which will enable those missing people to be safely recovered as quickly as possible.

Challenges

Resourcing our Public Protection teams continues to be a significant challenge, particularly with experienced officers. We have also been unable to fill key supervisory posts for the most part of 2022, which has been difficult. It is hoped with the recent completion of the Constable to Sergeant promotion process, we will be in a stronger position to fill these critical vacancies.

Looking forward

Public protection is very much at the centre of the Commissioner's Turnaround Plan as we strive to deliver More Trust, Less Crime and Higher Standards. Within the Plan, there is clear acknowledgement that much crime takes place in private, often predatory violence by men against women and girls.

As we move forward in 2023, we will continue to collaborate with our partners on areas to solve the problems at source.

2023 will see the implementation of the recommendations from the London wide Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) review, which began in June 2021. The review was undertaken in partnership with local authorities and other key stakeholders and was the first review of MASH since inception in 2011.

Overall resourcing within Public Protection continues to remain challenging and it is fair to say it has not kept pace with the rising demand in this critical area of policing. A Met wide review has been conducted for all elements of Public Protection and it is hoped that WA will benefit from some degree of uplift in terms of staff numbers. In almost all areas of Public Protection, WA are one of the highest BCU's, in terms of volume of crime and also referrals and we need to ensure that the strand is adequately resourced to effectively manage threat, risk and harm.

HQ

Professional Standards Unit (PSU)

The PSU deal with complaints from the public, internal grievances, misconduct matters, Business Interests and Hospitality.

Appendix A

Over the last year the main challenge for the local professional standards team has been the volume of complaints and misconduct matters that the strand deals with. Last year the MPS Directorate of Professional Standards (DPS) introduced a Complaints Resolution Unit (CRU) to help all PSUs deal with the less serious or protracted matters and the development of this team and how it better supports West Area's PSU will be an ongoing area of focus. The DPS are also conducting a general review across London with the aim of re-structuring both themselves and Borough PSUs.

The main aim locally for next year, once we know what the restructure looks like, will be to become more proactive and start looking at patterns of misconduct with a view to providing training and prevention.

Criminal Justice

The Criminal Justice Unit are responsible for ensuring that Case Files are completed by Officers and that these files are of a sufficient standard.

One of the main challenges for the Criminal Justice locally and across the MPS is the introduction of Connect, which is a new system for the preparation of Case Papers. This is one of the biggest IT uplifts undertaken by the MPS and as expected implementation has been challenging but will deliver longer-term benefits in relation to workflow efficiency and intelligence collation.

The aim over the next 12 months for the Criminal Justice department will be to build on the opportunities presented by Connect to improve the standard of case files to ensure the right court outcomes.