

 West Mercia POLICE		POLICY
Security Classification	OFFICIAL	
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes	

POLICY TITLE	Safer Neighbourhood Teams
REFERENCE NUMBER	WMP004
Version	2.0

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	LOCAL POLICING
BUSINESS AREA	TERRITORIAL POLICING

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	June 2019
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	November 2024
RISK RATING	MEDIUM
EQUALITY ANALYSIS	LOW

West Mercia Police welcome comments and suggestions from the public and staff about the contents and implementation of this policy.
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1.0 POLICY OUTLINE

This document sets out the West Mercia Police policy on how Neighbourhood Policing is delivered across the force. There is a structure of 82 Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) that have geographically defined areas of responsibility. These teams comprise of Inspectors, Sergeants, Constables, Special Constables, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Police Support Volunteers. The overarching aim of the SNT is to protect people from harm by creating confident, safe and secure neighbourhoods where police and partners understand the issues that matter most to local people and tackle them together.

The College of Policing's Modernising Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines underpin our approach to delivering neighbourhood policing across West Mercia.

2.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY

This document defines the policy and procedure for delivering local neighbourhood policing and explains the principles, structures and procedures governing the provision of local SNTs. It is compliant with national best practice and guidance provided by the College of Policing through the Modernising Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Introduction

Neighbourhood policing emphasises a local approach to policing that is accessible to the public and responsive to the needs and priorities of neighbourhoods. This is achieved by providing communities with access to policing services through a named point of contact, influence over policing priorities in their neighbourhood, intelligence led collaborative partnership interventions to tackle identified priorities, and responses through feedback on the actions taken to address priorities.

West Mercia Police recognises that effective neighbourhood policing is at the heart of ensuring the successful delivery of our vision, values, Code of Ethics and operational and organisational priorities.

Neighbourhood Policing is the term used nationally to describe this method of policing, however West Mercia Police has adopted the term **Safer Neighbourhoods**.

Governance

West Mercia Police has a Local Policing Community Charter which provides the strategic framework to guide and drive operational activity. This Plan is based upon the College of Policing's Guidelines on best practice for neighbourhood policing, and its principles define how neighbourhood policing within West Mercia will be delivered.

The role of SNTs is fundamentally linked to the delivery of West Mercia Police's strategic priorities as well as the Police and Crime Commissioner's priorities within the Safer West Mercia Police and Crime Plan.

3.2.1 Abstractions

SNT officers and PCSOs will not be abstracted routinely from their core functions. If exceptional or unforeseen circumstances arise and there is no alternative available, on occasions it may be necessary to require Safer Neighbourhoods to be re-deployed to other duties for all or part of a shift to support the delivery of operational policing functions. It must be stressed that any abstraction of a PCSO from their core role must consider that a PCSO has a limited number of powers and tasks and so any activity requested of them away from core role must still sit within the limits of their powers and role.

3.2.2 Tenure

Safer Neighbourhood police officers will be posted to their roles for a minimum period of 2 years. The only exception to this will be in the event of an officer seeking promotion or other developmental opportunity that is approved by the LPA Commander.

3.3 Core Service Responsibilities of Safer Neighbourhood Teams

The core service responsibilities of the SNTs are grouped into 6 areas – all of which support West Mercia's vision of 'protecting people from harm' and reflect the Local Policing Charter 6 key themes.

3.3.1 Visibility and accessibility

Patrol

The purpose of patrol is to provide a visible presence in communities, encourage communities to build relationships with their local officers, deter crime and disorder, and provide public reassurance.

Suitable liaison with Patrol Officers (e.g. attendance at shift briefings) is recommended to promote SNT activity and share information. This will be of particular value when there is shared responsibility for a geographic area under a 'patrol zone' arrangement.

Patrol Plans

Patrol Plans, when implemented in combination with community engagement and problem solving, can reduce crime, reassure the public and improve their perceptions of the police. Random patrols and only responding to calls are unlikely to have the same effect. Patrol Plans are therefore developed to focus attention on areas of high importance.

SNT staff will therefore undertake targeted patrols within their area. This should be intelligence-led and involve the tasking of relevant staff. The aim of this activity is to concentrate on the locations and individuals that represent most threat, risk and harm to the community. In relation to ASB, patrol should be focused on the central cause/location of the ASB, and not merely conducted in the vicinity/periphery.

Most patrol will be in uniform but there will be occasions when plain clothes may be authorised. The patrols should generally be in line with the principles of 'PIER' i.e. Prevention, Intelligence, Enforcement and Reassurance. Foot and cycle patrols are an essential element of SNT work and are of immense value in terms of significantly improving levels of reassurance and confidence in communities.

Patrol therefore should be on foot or cycle and only in a vehicle where necessary. Where vehicles are used, every opportunity to stop at strategic locations within communities should be taken and foot patrol conducted to ensure effective engagement. PCSOs will not use vehicles for patrol unless it is to travel to a specific location. Once there, they will patrol on foot. The expectation is that PCSOs are single crewed, unless there is a requirement to be double crewed and authorisation has been given by a Sergeant.

Incident response and Deployment Policy

SNT staff by exception may be called upon to attend urgent incidents that require an immediate response. On these occasions and following initial attendance and investigation, further enquiries should be subject to a managed handover, unless it is decided by the SNT Inspector that the matter falls within the parameters for SNT investigation or involvement. SNT staff (if available within the relevant time-span) may also be called upon to attend non-urgent incidents within their area. Following initial attendance and investigation, further enquiries should be retained unless it is decided by the SNT Inspector that the matter falls outside of the parameters for SNT in which case a managed handover should be conducted.

Key Points –

- SNT staff who are showing as deployable may be tasked with a Grade 1 incident. This should be in line with THRIVE and the SNT resource should only be used if they are the nearest, most appropriate resource. Local

supervision are responsible for the smooth transition of ownership to patrol resources dependent on circumstances.

- SNT staff who are showing as deployable may not be tasked with Grade 2 incidents unless the circumstances of the incident mean the incident is within the SNT remit and so should be owned by SNT, or having made an assessment using THRIVE, there is a critical operational requirement for an SNT officer to attend and reasonable efforts have been made by dispatchers to find more appropriate resources.
- SNT staff who are showing as committed may not be redeployed from their commitment for a Grade 1 incident unless, following an assessment using THRIVE, it is operationally critical that they do so.
- SNT staff who are showing committed must not be diverted from their commitment to attend a Grade 2 incident.

3.3.2 Responding to our Communities

Investigations

The purpose of the investigation role is to improve the quality of service to the public by contributing local knowledge to the investigation process, particularly in cases where persistent local offending is an issue.

The core role of an SNT officer is to protect the local community from harm by being visible, accessible and engaged with people. The role is multi-faceted and should include the use of police enforcement and investigation where appropriate. It is a question of balance and SNT PCs should not be abstracted from their core role to conduct multiple, volume-based or long term complex investigations.

Intelligent allocation of crime

Threat, risk and harm is at the centre of all our decisions and is the basis for policing activity. This approach ensures that we improve our service to vulnerable individuals, protect our communities and reduce demand.

The following are examples where an SNT PC can be involved to assist the OIC (Officer in the Case) investigating a crime or incident (if available & within their geographic area) or where the SNT should provide suitable support to the management of the investigation:

- The crime or anti-social behaviour is part of a notable and ongoing local problem, which is also having a significant, adverse impact on the local community.
- Detailed local knowledge and understanding is necessary for the satisfactory management, investigation and detection of the offence.
- Other crime investigations as agreed by the SNT Sgt / Inspector.
- Fall as part of a wider problem solving profile.

Hate crime

SNTs have responsibilities within the Hate Crime Policy and have a clear role in developing community cohesion and engaging with hard to reach communities. Hate crime officers are available to advise and support SNTs as well as the Equality & Diversity Advisors

Briefing and tasking

SNTs will take direction from relevant briefing and tasking systems. They will also review reported incidents and crimes to identify emerging problems, patterns or trends. OCC will email ASB reports that do not require deployment to SNT email inboxes and these must be reviewed and responded to appropriately. OCC will ensure such incidents have a SAAB SAFE incident created to allow auditing and maintain crime data integrity. SNTs will ensure that where such an ASB incident is attended or reviewed and a crime is disclosed, that crime will be recorded. SNT officers will ensure that automatic replies (out-of-office) are in place to act as a reminder to OCC Staff that emails are not to be used for crime allocation SNTs will gather and submit intelligence to facilitate effective policing and will develop intelligence packages that have been allocated to the team.

It is the responsibility of each SNT officer and PCSO to self-brief on all issues related to their area of geographic responsibility and raise areas of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability to their Sergeant and/or Inspector.

Local operations

It is the responsibility of SNTs to identify ongoing antisocial behaviour, emerging crime trends, road safety concerns, and locally identified problems, and organise local operations to tackle these issues, working collaboratively with partners and communities where appropriate. Problem Solving Hub staff will be able to assist with the development of these operations and will provide operational support to SNT staff where possible.

Where operations are directed to SNT by the relevant tasking process, additional resources from other teams and departments should be identified to support SNT, for example, in the circumstances of a road safety concern, the issue must be owned by SNT but the Road Safety Team may be called on for support. This is important to ensure that SNT staff are not adversely diverted from their primary role of community engagement.

3.3.3 Prevention

West Mercia Police puts problem solving at the heart of everything we do. Solving local problems of crime and disorder is important because if they aren't solved they will continue to harm the lives of the people living in that community. Problem solving aims to ensure that fewer crimes occur, and that the problem does not reappear. SNTs will therefore work with communities and partners to

actively seek ways to tackle issues of local concern that have an impact on crime levels, disorder and quality of life. By addressing causal factors, the occurrence of crime and disorder can be reduced.

Problem Solving Process

SNTs will use the SARA problem solving model of Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment to address issues and problems, focusing on the particular features of the Place, Offenders and Victims that are associated with that problem.

Problem Solving Plans

Problem solving plans are the means by which activity is recorded and are stored on a database (Genie). A plan can be created based on any issue that has an element of complexity and/or requires integrated partnership working. The plans are viewable by the whole organisation and are reviewed by the Problem Solving Coordinator's. The plans can be shared with partners to enhance problem solving capabilities in line with data protection requirements.

Problem Solving Hubs

The purpose of the Problem Solving Hubs is to ensure a consistency of approach to partnership working and local policing, ensuring effective delivery of the prevention of crime and ASB across the Force. Good practice can be identified and shared ensuring the benefits of local partnership working, community engagement and demand reduction are fully realised in each policing area.

Staff in the Problem Solving Hubs will support SNTs in the problem solving process, working collaboratively with partners and the community to deliver preventative measures to reduce harm. Staff in each Hub are supervised by a Sergeant and include:

- Analyst
- Problem Solving Co-ordinator
- Harm Co-ordinator
- ASB/Licensing Administrator
- PC - Licensing/MATES
- PC - WeDon'tBuyCrime/Rural & Business
- Missing Person Prevention Officer
- PC/PCSO Youth Engagement & PCSOs Safer Schools
- Design Out Crime Officer
- Rural and Business Officer
- PC – Care Home Co-ordinator
- Hate crime officer
- Intervention and prevention

In addition, there are 2 Sergeants responsible for implementing the Serious and Violent Crime Strategy across West Mercia, and Exploitation & Vulnerability

Trainers who will provide educational inputs to the public and partners in relation to criminal exploitation.

Licensing and crime prevention

SNT staff will be expected to undertake licensing checks and enforcement to support the licensing role of the PC and Sergeant in the Problem Solving Hub. PCSOs are able to accompany police officers whilst undertaking licensing visits.

SNT staff will be expected to support the delivery of corporate campaigns and operations including crime prevention initiatives and advice.

3.3.4 Vulnerability

Offender Management

It is important for SNTs to work with the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) and Management of Sexual Offenders & Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) teams as well as other specialists to carry out activity to deter offending by prolific offenders. SNTs should actively seek out information on IOM individuals and Registered Sexual or Violent Offenders (RSO/ RVO)) within their area and IOM and MOSOVO teams should use the local knowledge and accessibility of SNTs to achieve their aims. This type of information should sit within the Beat Profile of each SNT.

Risk Management Plans

SNT staff are responsible for undertaking visits and carrying out other problem solving / enforcement activity in relation to Risk Management Plans (RMPs). This will primarily be for medium risk domestic abuse victims, vulnerable persons and Personal Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) victims. Within ASB, this includes working with the Harm Coordinator in the Problem Solving Hub to secure Injunctions and Criminal Behaviour Orders under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. SNT staff will undertake joint visits with Registered Social Landlords and issue and support the issuing of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, to deal with neighbour disputes and behaviour affecting the quality of life of the community.

The Harm Assessment Unit (PVP) will review risk assessments in relation to domestic abuse and vulnerable adult incidents. High risk domestic abuse RMPs will be managed by Domestic Abuse Risk Officers (DARO) who will task SNT to carry out visits and problem solving activity. Medium risk domestic abuse RMPs requiring SNT visits will be managed by the SNT Sergeant, who will oversee the updates. It is the responsibility of the SNT Sergeant to close these RMPs in line with the agreed RARACC mnemonic.

RMPs in relation to ASB will be developed by SNT. PCSOs should not have sole responsibility for Risk management plans. The relevant specialist departments will retain the IOM and sexual offender plans, and SNT staff should be fully aware of the relevant individuals and contribute to their management with

relevant support and/or enforcement activity as appropriate. Additional updates and reviews should be undertaken by relevant supervisors and specialist staff / departments.

SNT staff must build relationships with Registered Firearms Dealers (RFDs), in order to enhance community engagement and obtain any intelligence that needs consideration from both a general policing purpose but also in relation to firearms. This does not replace the work of Firearms Enquiry officers, but is intended to compliment it.

SNT staff must identify locations of interest where vulnerable communities or groups exist and build relationships to enhance community engagement. This includes for example, Care Homes, Schools and Pupil Referral Units. While Problem Solving Hub may take ultimate ownership of issues at such locations (for example the care home coordinator or the schools PCSOs) SNT must support the PSH and work collaboratively to solve problems and protect people from harm.

3.3.5 Relationships

The purpose of community engagement is to develop a better understanding of communities and their needs, risks and threats. This is done by increasing contact and accessibility between the police and local communities, and having an ongoing two-way dialogue between the police and the public. The tactics of how we engage with the public are defined in the Local Policing Charter and include –

- Contact contracts with each Parish Council and schools and other potential community groups
- Newsletters
- Engagement Calendars to record activity
- Priorities tracker to record and review priorities identified by Parish Councils.
- Use of Neighborhood Matters – a digital messaging platform, survey and confidence mapping and response tool

Engagement can be defined in terms of a ‘confidence cycle’ (see Appendix A) with engagement shaping neighbourhood priorities, collaborative problem solving and identifying neighbourhood problems. When local people are involved in decisions about the issues that concern them most, public confidence will improve. This can facilitate a greater willingness for the public to cooperate with the police, thereby enriching intelligence collection.

Effective and meaningful community engagement will have a positive impact on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and can create an increase in public perceptions of safety. It is essential in order to achieve greater inclusivity as per West Mercia Police’s values that additional effort is made to identify and engage with seldom heard communities and people from marginalized or under represented communities .

Community engagement forms part of the accountability and transparency process mandated by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and is a means through which communities can be empowered to help shape service delivery.

Our minimum standards for Community Engagement will include:

- Ensuring each LPA has a DE&I (Diversity, Equality and Inclusion) tactical plan in place. Each LPT understand this plan and how activity on their area contributes towards it
- Attendance at community meetings
- Conducting street surgeries or walkabouts with residents, councilors and partner agencies
- Beat surgeries
- Engaging seldom heard and minority groups identifying and responding to their needs.
- Making use of community messaging, surveys and the enhanced functionality of via Neighbourhood Matters
- Making use of the local news services, internet and social media.

Contact details for SNT staff will be published on the Neighbourhood Matters platform as well as on posters outside police stations.

3.3.6 Partnerships

West Mercia recognize that no single organisation can single handedly tackle all of the complex social issues facing modern society, in order to achieve our strategic goals we must work collaboratively with partner agencies.

SNT will develop strong working relationships with local and national partners in order to provide the most effective policing response to local problems, aiming to prevent offending, bring offenders to justice, to reduce and prevent ASB and to promote confidence and satisfaction in West Mercia.

Partnerships can broadly be categorized as 3 sectors –

- Public sector. This includes the NHS, Fire and Rescue, Local and County Councils, Educational facilities.
- Private sector. This includes local shopping centres, local businesses, Pub watch or Shop watch groups.
- Third sector. This includes voluntary or not for profit groups such as Street Pastors, Church groups, youth clubs.

Educational establishments

SNT staff will work alongside their Youth Engagement and Safer Schools colleagues in the Problem Solving Hubs to develop relations with educational

establishments on their areas. SNTs will ensure that they are considered as crucial partners within the problem-solving process where relevant

4.0 KEY GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS RELATING TO SNT

- College of Policing Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines 2018
- Building Communities - Beating Crime, White Paper 2004.
- Professionalising the Business of Neighbourhood Policing, NCPE 2006.
- College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice – Engagement & Communication.
- West Mercia PCC's Safer West Mercia Police & Crime Plan.
- West Mercia Consultation & Engagement Strategy
- Role profiles for SNT and associated Problem Solving Hub staff.
- Local Policing Implementation Team 'PCSO Tasks, Powers and Responsibilities' document.
- Local Policing Charter

5.0 CONSULTATION

- Local Stakeholders – SNT Chief Inspectors.
- Supt Williams

<i>Business Lead/ Chief Officer Consulted</i>	<i>Date Consulted</i>
Supt Mel Paley/Supt Ed Hancox/ ACC Jones	Aug 2022/ Nov 2022

Officer(s) Consulted

All local SNT CI's

6.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

The history and rationale for change to policy will be recorded using the below chart:

Date	Author / Reviewer	Amendment(s) & Rationale	Last Approval / Adoption
		Previously approved at JNCC meeting	JNCC 18/05/2016
Jun 2019	F Green	Review by West Mercia to make WMP unique. Full review to follow early 2020 v1.0	June 2019

Oct 2022	F Green	Further review to ensure the prevent agenda and local policing Charter are reflected and aligned into this policy and change of IT systems. Further review to ensure that deployment principles are clear and robust, RFDs and Vulnerable locations included and OCC emailing ASB log process is clear and robust. v2.0	JNCC 08/11/2022
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7.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The following generic risk assessments apply to this policy:

- Officer on Patrol
- Mobile Patrol in Marked Police Vehicles
- PCSO generic risk assessment
- Equality Impact Assessment
- H&S, Risk & Organisational Learning Assessment

8.0 MONITORING / EVALUATION

The monitoring and review of this policy is the responsibility of the policy owner

9.0 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Is a DPIA required? – No, agreed by Audit, Risk and Compliance on 2nd November 2022



The confidence cycle

