

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2017

An inspection of West Midlands Police



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Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

Incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

317

282



Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

21

31

Change in ASB incidents 12 months to 31 March 2016 against 12 months to 31 March 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

+2%

-0.05%



Crime (excluding fraud)

Crimes recorded per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

75

77

Change in recorded crime 12 months to 30 June 2016 against 12 months to 30 June 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

+14%

+14%



Crime outcomes*

Charged/summonsed

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

12%

10%

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

9%

13%

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

61%

48%



Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

19

15

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

10%

11%



Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per 1 million population as at 1 July 2017

West Midlands Police

England and Wales

36

47

*Figures are shown as proportions of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A.

Risk-based inspection

HMICFRS adopted an interim risk-based approach to inspection in 2017 in order to focus more closely on areas of policing where risk to the public is most acute.¹ Under this approach, not all forces are assessed against every part of the PEEL effectiveness programme every year. West Midlands Police was assessed against the following areas in 2017:

- Protecting vulnerable people;
- Tackling serious and organised crime; and
- Specialist capabilities.

Judgments from 2016² remain in place for areas which were not re-inspected in 2017. HMICFRS will continue to monitor areas for improvement identified in previous inspections and will assess how well each force has responded in future reports.

¹ Full details of the interim risk-based approach are available from the HMICFRS website: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based

² The 2016 effectiveness report for West Midlands Police can be found on the HMICFRS website: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-police-effectiveness-2016-west-midlands

Effectiveness overview

Judgments

Overall effectiveness 2017  Requires improvement

Question	Grade	Last inspected
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	 Good	2016
Investigating crime and reducing re-offending	 Good	2016
Protecting vulnerable people	 Inadequate	2017
Tackling serious and organised crime	 Good	2017
Specialist capabilities	Ungraded	2017

Summary

West Midlands Police requires improvement in how effectively it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Although it has made progress in some areas since 2016, we found serious failings in its ability to protect vulnerable people from harm.

Many of the services provided by the force to vulnerable people are good, but our most recent inspection found that it is failing to protect some victims adequately. Staff are generally good at identifying vulnerable people when they first contact the police, but at the time of our inspection there were often not enough officers available to respond to incidents quickly when required. This means that victims – including some who are vulnerable – do not always receive the response they need, and may be put in danger as a result. It also means that in some cases the force is

missing opportunities to secure evidence, which can undermine the quality of subsequent investigations. Following our inspection, the force immediately took steps to address these concerns and services have improved as a result.

By contrast, the force is good at tackling serious and organised crime and has made major improvements in this area since 2016. The force has greatly improved its understanding of organised crime threats, including urban street gangs, and it works well with partners to develop this understanding. It is effective at disrupting organised criminals and places a strong emphasis on preventing serious and organised crime. A wide range of activities is in place to help the force deter those at risk of being drawn into this type of offending. However, we found that the force does not have a consistent and structured process for the management and enforcement of serious crime prevention orders.

West Midlands Police has the necessary arrangements in place to fulfil its national policing responsibilities, and to respond initially to an attack requiring an armed response.

Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims



Inadequate

Identifying vulnerability

West Midlands Police is good at identifying people who are vulnerable through their age, disability, or because they have been subjected to repeated offences, or are at high risk of abuse, for example. It uses the College of Policing definition of vulnerability³; this has been communicated effectively to staff, who understand and apply the definition correctly. The force has a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability and has completed profiles for child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, domestic abuse, child neglect, parental imprisonment and vulnerable adult abuse. It holds monthly meetings to ensure that it has a comprehensive view of each area of vulnerability, taking full account of data from partner organisations.

The force is good at identifying vulnerable people when they contact the police. Call handlers follow a structured risk-assessment process to ensure that they recognise vulnerable people at the earliest opportunity and determine an appropriate response according to the level of risk presented. Force IT systems allow staff to 'flag' cases involving vulnerable or repeat victims so that this information is clearly visible to officers and staff who need it. However, due to the constraints of an old command and control system, it is not always easy to identify repeat callers and the application of these markers is inconsistent. This will not be fully resolved until the force's command and control system is replaced in 2019.

The force has developed and adopted a new approach to grading incidents, ranging from immediate response to telephone resolution of crimes. The force has worked hard to ensure that this is now fully understood and effectively applied by call handlers. During the inspection we found that call handlers identified vulnerability appropriately and the correct grading was applied to incidents.

However, we also found that at the time of our inspection the force had 2,400 incidents that were 'open' on its command and control system following a period of exceptionally high demand for its services during the summer of 2017. To address this high level of reported incidents, the force had set up a strategic group to oversee, manage and reduce the volume of incidents to a more manageable level. Some of these reported incidents involved vulnerable people, and call handlers had

³ The College of Policing defines vulnerability as: A person is vulnerable if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation.

rightly determined that an immediate response should have been provided. However, in a small number of the cases we examined the force response to some incidents that presented a high level of risk to victims was inadequate. Within these incidents, we identified some cases in which victims were at significant risk of harm, including victims of domestic abuse, children, and people threatened with serious violence. We also found that the force had a very limited understanding of these cases' level of risk. In the majority of incidents we examined, the level of risk to victims who had not been seen or spoken to had not been reassessed to allow control room staff and officers to decide who needed most urgent attention in order to keep people safe. This is a cause for concern.

The force's approach to missing and absent children was a cause of concern to HMICFRS in 2016. Since then, it has taken steps to alleviate this cause of concern and improve its overall approach. However, there is still room for improvement in the way the force categorises cases as either missing or absent, as well as in the initial investigation of missing persons cases. Audits conducted by the force suggest that although decision making in relation to risk has improved, it is still inconsistent, particularly in cases in which there is a risk of child sexual exploitation. Inconsistencies also remain in respect of initial missing person enquiries. Supervisors are still not always directing timely and appropriate investigative or safeguarding action in the early stages of these enquiries. Trigger plans⁴ which should support these initial investigations need to be updated and some plans lack specific actions for individual missing persons.

Since 2016 the force has introduced a force-wide 'Locate' team with dedicated specialists who take over missing persons cases after the initial response. This team is making improvements, including increasing the use of trigger plans for persistent missing persons, using covert techniques to locate vulnerable people and developing early intervention and prevention plans with partners. Although the improvements made by the force are encouraging, the causes of concern identified in 2016 have not yet been fully resolved. The force's approach to missing and absent children therefore remains an area for improvement for the force.

⁴ A trigger plan is a course of action with clear steps or 'triggers' indicating what specific actions should happen and when to assist in an investigation.

Initial response

West Midlands Police's initial response to incidents involving vulnerable people, particularly victims of domestic abuse, is inadequate. This is primarily due to the serious failings set out in the previous section. Last year we found that the force's subsequent response to domestic abuse incidents also needed to improve, and although this was still the case, the force had a robust plan to address the concern. At the time of our inspection, force policy gave officers discretion as to whether to complete a risk assessment in some circumstances, which meant that risk was not always assessed appropriately. This discretion was in the process of being removed and replaced with a requirement for officers to complete risk assessments for all victims of domestic abuse and incidents. At the time of our inspection, the force was due to introduce it in October 2017. In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, West Midlands Police completed 28,885 domestic abuse risk assessment forms. This represents 1.3 risk assessments for every domestic abuse-related crime. This is the second lowest rate of any force in England and Wales, and 37 percent below the England and Wales rate of 2.1 risk assessments for every domestic abuse-related crime. We also found that some sergeants were still not ensuring risk assessments were accurate and comprehensive. The force recognises that it needs to address these areas and is changing its policy to require completion of a risk assessment for every domestic abuse incident, regardless of whether a crime has been committed.

In the main, safeguarding of victims by West Midlands Police is good. The force has developed effective multi-agency arrangements in relation to vulnerable people in all seven local authority areas. During fieldwork we found that all incidents of domestic abuse (whether or not they were recorded as a crime) and all crimes involving children were reviewed within one of the force's seven multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASHs⁵). These teams assess each incident and make referrals to partner organisations as appropriate, as part of a comprehensive approach to safeguarding. The MASH officers we spoke to felt that the initial safeguarding was appropriate and assured us that, where the attending officer could have done more, this was highlighted to the officer's supervisor. However, we were concerned to find that immediate safeguarding of victims is not always conducted in a timely manner due to a lack of resources.

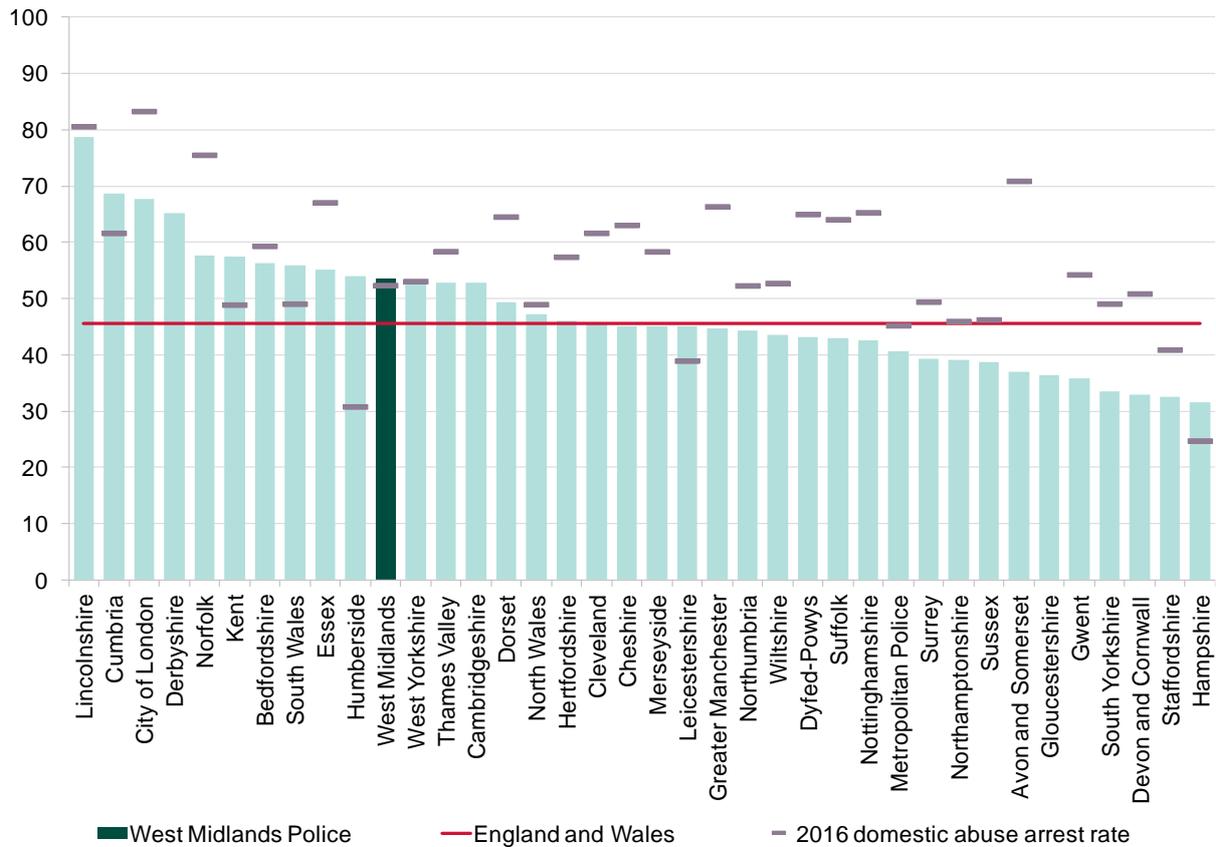
In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, the domestic abuse arrest rate in the West Midlands increased by 2.4 percent, when compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2016. In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, West Midlands Police recorded 11,848 arrests for domestic abuse-related offences. This represents 54 arrests per 100

⁵ A MASH is a location in which staff from the police, local authority and other safeguarding agencies share data, research and decision making about local children and adults who are vulnerable; the purpose is to ensure a timely and joined-up response for children and vulnerable adults who require protection.

domestic abuse-related crimes. Officers have a clear understanding that arrest is an effective way to protect victims and they use it in appropriate circumstances. The force has now introduced body-worn video cameras; force policy requires that officers attending domestic abuse incidents activate these cameras to ensure the best evidence is recorded and to reduce the burden on victims providing all the evidence. Investigators within the public protection team told us that the evidence gained from body-worn video cameras – regarding violence, injury and demeanour – improved their investigations.

The rate of arrest for domestic abuse offences can provide an indication of a force's approach to handling domestic abuse offenders. Although for the purpose of this calculation arrests are not linked directly to offences, a high arrest rate may suggest that a force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action (for further information, please see annex A). HMICFRS has evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

Figure 1: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse-related offences), by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017^{6,7}



Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return, 2016 and 2017 Home Office domestic abuse crime data⁸

For further information about this data, please see annex A

⁶ Durham, Lancashire, Warwickshire and West Mercia forces were unable to provide 2017 domestic abuse arrest data. Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data.

⁷ North Yorkshire Police was unable to provide comparable domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, it has been removed from the graph. For further information, please see annex A.

⁸ The Home Office has provided HMICFRS with data on domestic abuse-related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These data are more recent than those published by the Office for National Statistics.

Mental health

West Midlands Police is good at identifying people with mental health conditions when they contact the police. It is also good at assessing risk in order to make effective decisions about how to support them. The force understands its role in supporting people with mental health conditions and has enhanced its arrangements for working with partner organisations to provide a more effective service. It has a mental health training programme and has trained over 3,000 officers and staff over the last three years. The force's mental health board oversees its approach to this issue and has representation from across the organisation, including from contact centres, neighbourhood teams, response teams and custody suites. Training for contact centre staff includes input from mental health nurses and paramedics. All these staff demonstrate a good understanding of what is required of them to protect people with mental health conditions.

The force also has a good understanding of how best to deal with those experiencing a mental health crisis. West Midlands Police has effective partnership arrangements in place for supporting people with mental health conditions. The force works with paramedics and mental health professionals to provide triage cars. Good information sharing arrangements are in place with partner organisations in relation to powers under the Mental Health Act 1983. This has reduced the use of powers of arrest and detention to 852 times in the 12 months to 30 June 2017. None of those arrested under the Mental Health Act 1983 have been detained in police custody in the West Midlands Police area in 2017, meaning that people with mental health conditions are being dealt with in a more suitable and effective way.

Frontline officers and staff understand their responsibilities when responding to people experiencing a mental health crisis, and trained mental health professionals are available to help them identify and assist those who require additional or specialist support. The force has developed a mental health triage scheme that involves a community psychiatric nurse, paramedics and a police officer. The triage scheme is overseen by the clinical commissioning group (CCG), the police and the ambulance trust and monthly activity reports are shared with these partner organisations at a senior and operational level.

Investigating crimes involving vulnerable people

West Midlands Police generally investigates crimes involving vulnerable victims to a good standard and allocates them to appropriately trained specialist investigators within the force's public protection unit. Last year we found that the force needed to improve the quality of investigations involving vulnerable people, ensuring that the workloads of specialist investigators were manageable at all times and that such investigations were subject to regular and active supervision. This year we found that the quality of investigations was generally good, particularly for more serious

offences. However In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, the rate of investigations assigned an outcome of evidential difficulties; suspect identified and victim does not support police action was 44.8 per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes. This is higher than the England and Wales rate of 41.8 per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes. The force must reassure themselves that they are effectively pursuing justice on behalf of vulnerable people'. In some cases, opportunities to secure and preserve evidence are also missed. There is generally good evidence of supervision oversight and involvement in investigation plans and throughout an investigation. The force has taken steps to balance the workloads of specialist officers and conducts regular audits to ensure these remain manageable. The average workload for specialist officers across the force was 13 investigations at the time of our inspection, with the highest number of investigations assigned to one individual being 17. This is an improvement on last year, and specialist staff we spoke to felt that this was now manageable.

Since last year, the force has increased the number of times it uses legal powers to protect victims of domestic abuse, such as domestic violence protection notices and orders (DVPNs and DVPOs⁹). Previous inspections found that West Midlands Police used a surprisingly low number of DVPOs. The Birmingham domestic abuse investigation team has been running a pilot scheme to improve the use of these legal powers, which has increased the number of applications and the proportion granted by the courts. In 2017, 125 DVPOs were granted compared to none in the previous year; of those DVPOs, 14 were subsequently breached.

The way domestic abuse investigations are concluded in West Midlands Police compares well with other forces. The rate at which investigations are concluded with an offender being prosecuted is higher than the rate for England and Wales as a whole. In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, West Midlands Police recorded 5,850 charged/summonsed outcomes for domestic abuse-related offences. This represents a charged/summonsed rate of 26.5 per 100 domestic abuse-related offences. This compares with 18.6 per 100 domestic abuse related-offences for England and Wales.

⁹ DVPNs may be issued by an authorised police officer to prevent a suspected perpetrator from returning to a victim's home and/or contacting the victim. Following the issue of the DVPN the police must apply to magistrates for a DVPO. The DVPO will be granted for a period of up to 28 days.

Partnership working

The force works with a number of partner organisations (such as local authorities, or health and education services) to protect vulnerable people. It makes effective use of health services by using the triage cars, and its custody provision supports the exchange of information between organisations to identify and support people with mental health conditions. It also works with local authority partners and has dedicated staff within Birmingham city's drugs and alcohol services teams who manage rough sleepers.

Each of the seven West Midlands local authority areas now has a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)¹⁰. The Coventry MASH contains a dedicated team for tackling child sexual exploitation from a multi-agency perspective. All MASHs generally function well, with no backlogs. Our previous inspections found that working practices differed between each MASH, due to varying demand across the force area. This is still the case, although the practices are now more aligned and the differences are appropriate to the resource levels and demand for services within each MASH.

We found that the force has well-developed relationships with partner organisations which enable it to support vulnerable people well and address the needs of victims. The force takes an active role in ensuring a consistent approach to multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs)¹¹ across the seven local authority areas. The force has an overall MARAC improvement plan. Each West Midlands MARAC is chaired by a detective inspector and has an action plan setting out the way organisations will work together to improve the safety of victims and their families. The force is also working with the office of the police and crime commissioner to ensure appropriate MARAC co-ordination and administration is in place across the whole of the West Midlands. In the 12 months to 31 March 2017, West Midlands Police and partners discussed 3,875 cases of high-risk domestic abuse through the MARAC process. This is an increase from 3,291 cases in the 12 months to 31 March 2016. In both years, the rate of repeat cases was 29 percent.

Last year we found that West Midlands Police needed to improve the way it managed the caseloads of sex offender managers (SOMs), so that routine visits and risk assessments of registered sex offenders (RSOs) could be conducted in a timely

¹⁰ A MASH is a location in which staff from the police, local authority and other safeguarding agencies share data, research and decision making about local children and adults who are vulnerable; the purpose is to ensure a timely and joined-up response for children and vulnerable adults who require protection.

¹¹ A MARAC is a meeting where information is shared on the highest-risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, independent domestic violence advisors, probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

manner. We also found that sexual offender management unit supervisors did not have sufficient capacity to quality assure all risk assessments in a timely manner. This year, the overall picture is much improved. At the time of our inspection the force had 78 staff, including 12 sergeants and 7 support staff, to manage just under 4,400 RSOs. Sergeants allocate new RSOs to SOMs and consider the level of risk as well as the number that each SOM has to manage in order to balance the workload across the team. We also found that generally SOMs are more comfortable with the number of RSOs they are managing than they were last year. Routine visits and risk assessments are completed in a timely manner.

The sexual offender management unit supervisors have responsibility for risk assessing all risk management plans and reviewing all visits to RSOs by the SOMs. The force monitors the number of outstanding visits to RSOs and on average we found only ten outstanding visits per team. However, the backlogs for supervisor checks could be reduced if outstanding risk assessments of risk management plans and reviews of visits to RSOs were more readily passed between supervisors on duty from other teams. They could then be completed in a more timely manner, rather than waiting for a team leader to return to duty.

Causes of concern

The force is failing to attend incidents promptly, putting some vulnerable victims at risk of harm.

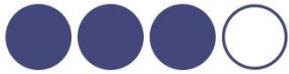
Recommendation

- The force should immediately take steps to:
 - fully understand the risk contained within the backlog of open incidents logged by the control room, and prioritise these cases for action; and
 - ensure that victims – particularly those who are vulnerable – receive an appropriate response when they contact the force for safety reasons.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve its response to missing and absent children by ensuring that these cases are correctly categorised.
- The force should provide regular and active supervision in missing person investigations to improve quality and ensure that victims are properly safeguarded.
- The force should ensure the risks posed by registered sex offenders are managed effectively.

Tackling serious and organised crime



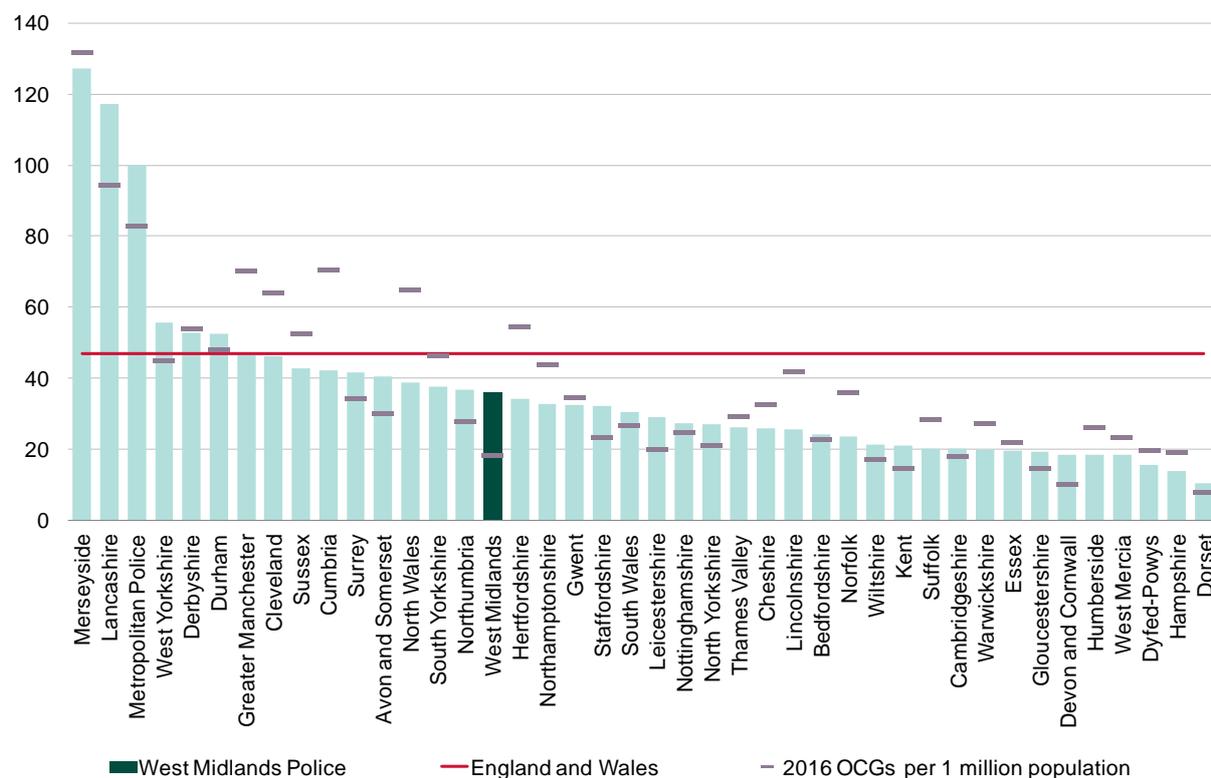
Good

Understanding threats

West Midlands Police has a good understanding of the threats posed by serious and organised crime. The force has effective ways of assessing the threats posed by both emerging crime and traditional criminality, and has developed an effective strategic assessment to address those threats. HMICFRS found good examples of extensive partnership working and information sharing. This enables the force to produce detailed force-wide and local profiles of serious and organised crime (including drugs, firearms, child sexual exploitation and gangs), which influence its work with partners to tackle these problems. The force uses effective methods to obtain intelligence from a wide range of sources, including digital sources, and obtains good access to information by working closely with the regional organised crime unit (ROCU), the national crime agency (NCA), and partner organisations. This has allowed the force to identify gaps in intelligence and respond accordingly. It also means that the force can initiate preventative measures aimed at diverting people away from serious and organised criminality.

The force has responded positively to previous areas for improvement identified by HMICFRS and has developed the ways it identifies and assesses organised crime groups (OCGs). All forces should go through a nationally standardised 'mapping' procedure when an OCG is identified, to understand the threat it poses and to inform decisions about how to respond. West Midlands Police has applied the mapping process more rigorously in the last 12 months, and has identified several new OCGs as a result. The force is now in line with England and Wales rate for the number of mapped OCGs. Although these groups have been fully assessed and mapped in accordance with national guidance, the force will need to ensure that there are sufficient resources available in the future to allow effective reviews within national guidance timescales.

Figure 2: Rate of organised crime groups (OCGs) per 1 million population, by force, as at 1 July 2017¹²



Source: 2016 and 2017 HMICFRS data return

For further information about this data, please see annex A

Disrupting and investigating serious and organised crime

West Midlands Police is good at investigating and disrupting serious and organised crime. In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, the force recorded nearly 200 disruptions per 100 active and archived OCGs. This is almost double the rate of disruptions per 100 OCGs for all forces across England and Wales. West Midlands Police has processes in place to prioritise its response to OCGs and uses a range of assessment methods such as MoRiLE¹³ and local serious and organised crime profiles to direct policing activity. These processes are supported by local organised crime partnership boards and community safety partnerships which provide a multi-agency response to organised crime.

¹² The City of London Police has been removed from the graph as its organised crime group data are not comparable with other forces due to its size and its wider national remit. For further information, please see annex A.

¹³ MoRiLE: the 'management of risk in law enforcement' process developed by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This tool assesses the types of crimes, which most threaten communities and highlights where the force does not currently have the capacity or capability to tackle them effectively.

The force's lead responsible officers (LROs) have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in managing OCGs. The LROs have a good knowledge of the range of tactics available to – and used by – them at a local and regional level, and there are good working relationships in place with partners and other forces to target organised crime which takes place across multiple force areas. There is regular scrutiny of LROs' activity and progress, and they are provided with appropriate support and guidance from the head of tactical intelligence for the force. However, HMICFRS found that in some cases individual LROs manage too many OCGs. The force acknowledges this and is reviewing the way it allocates OCGs as a result.

The force makes good use of the specialist capabilities provided by the ROCU and draws on intelligence from partner organisations – for example through the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN). However, although the number of GAIN referrals made per OCG has increased, we found some scope for the force to exploit GAIN throughout the investigation or lifetime management of OCGs.

The force should also do more to involve local policing teams in OCG disruption. Several of those we visited had little awareness of the OCGs that were active in their area and there was little real-time information or intelligence available to them. This has deteriorated since 2016, when we found that local policing teams played a bigger part in tackling serious and organised crime. The force is missing opportunities to target these groups as a result, and should seek to harness the skills, knowledge and capability within local policing teams more fully as part of a force-wide approach to tackling serious and organised crime.

Preventing serious and organised crime

West Midlands Police is good at preventing serious and organised crime, and has a wide range of activities in place. The force has a number of multi-agency programmes which are used to identify and divert those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime. The force's Prevent team works closely with partners and LROs in this area. The force regularly evaluates this prevention activity, and has found that Operation Jigsaw has been effective in reducing organised criminality committed by specific individuals in the Birmingham area. The force is seeking to expand this prevention activity across other force areas. West Midlands Police has a good understanding of urban street gangs across its region, with gangs being identified, mapped and reviewed alongside OCGs. The force makes good use of gang injunctions and manages the activity to ensure that breaches are effectively policed.

The force undertakes wide-ranging activity to prevent offending among established organised criminals. Together with partner organisations it uses several diversionary tactics in respect of OCGs. An example is the Wolverhampton Reducing Gang Violence reference group. The force worked with the local authority, armed forces and schools to try and divert the siblings of current OCG members from criminal

activity. A similar strategy within the Birmingham area mapped an OCG network and family members and associates in order to put measures in place to prevent individuals being drawn into serious and organised crime. The force also uses mediation services on a case-by-case basis as a tactic to address violence between gangs. Another strand of multi-agency activity is aimed at youth offending and diversion, through local gang forums and the community reference groups. The force, through the ROCU, has good access to prison intelligence and prison investigation teams to ensure that there is effective management and monitoring of organised criminals while in prison. Although the force does use serious crime prevention orders (SCPOs) in some cases, HMICFRS found that there was limited knowledge about the application and use of such orders by LROs and other officers and staff. The force has now developed and is using a structured process to manage and enforce SCPOs relating to individuals who live in the area. The process has been formed through the SCPO working group, which has worked with the ROCU, the National Crime Agency and West Midlands Police Offender Management Team.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that the workloads of lead responsible officers are not excessive so that they can properly manage organised crime groups over their active lifespan.
- The force should ensure that serious crime prevention orders are routinely considered as part of the force's approach to preventing serious and organised crime, and that robust arrangements are in place for their monitoring and enforcement.

Specialist capabilities

Ungraded

National policing responsibilities

*The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)*¹⁴ specifies six national threats: terrorism, cyber-crime, public order, civil emergencies, child sexual abuse and serious and organised crime.

West Midlands Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. The force has a good understanding of its capability to respond to the six national threats included in the SPR.

A chief officer has been appointed to lead a programme to build the force's capacity to respond to national threats. In addition, a senior manager has been assigned responsibility for monitoring each of the threats and they report frequently to the chief officer. These managers are required to make frequent assessments of the force's capability. Their assessments are based on the outcomes of training exercises, incidents the force manages, and the professional judgment of senior practitioners.

The force has an established track record of managing major incidents; this is respected by the external organisations it works with. A regular programme of training exercises takes place annually and partner organisations are active participants.

The force carefully debriefs all training exercises and major incidents. This helps to identify how improvements can be made and develops better ways of working on a consistent basis. We reviewed one good example of the force debriefing the policing of significant local sporting fixtures, which identified useful learning points for future events.

¹⁴ The SPR is issued annually by the Home Secretary. It sets out the latest national threats and appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter them. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from police forces, national agencies or other partners. *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf

Firearms capability

HMICFRS inspected how well forces were prepared to manage firearms attacks in our 2016 effectiveness inspections. Subsequent terrorist attacks in the UK and Europe have meant that the police service maintains a firm focus on armed capability in England and Wales.

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of organised crime groups or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. The *Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*¹⁵ makes forces responsible for implementing national standards of armed policing. The code stipulates that a chief officer be designated to oversee these standards. This requires the chief officer to set out the firearms threat in an armed policing strategic threat and risk assessment (APSTRA). The chief officer must also set out clear rationales for the number of armed officers (armed capacity) and the level to which they are trained (armed capability).

West Midlands Police has a good understanding of the potential harm facing the public; its APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the code and the College of Policing guidance.¹⁶ The force last reviewed its APSTRA on 20 October 2017. We found that the designated chief officer scrutinises the APSTRA closely. He formally approves its content, which includes the levels of armed capability and capacity that the threats require. His decisions and the rationale on which they are based are clearly auditable.

West Midlands Police receives additional Home Office funding as part of a national programme to boost armed capacity in England and Wales. We established that the force had fulfilled its commitment to the programme by increasing the availability of armed response vehicles by the target date set for April 2017.

¹⁵ *Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons*, Home Office, 2003.

¹⁶ College of Policing authorised professional practice on armed policing available at: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/?s

Annex A – about the data

The information presented in this report comes from a range of sources, including data published by the Home Office, the Office for National Statistics, inspection fieldwork and data collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales.

Where HMICFRS collected data directly from police forces, we took reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other interested parties such as the Home Office. We gave forces several opportunities to quality assure and validate the data they provided us, to ensure the accuracy of the evidence presented. For instance:

- Data that forces submitted were checked and queried with those forces where data were notably different from other forces or were internally inconsistent.
- All forces were asked to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors identified.

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is set out in more detail within this annex. The source of Force in numbers data is also set out below.

Methodology

Data in the report

British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data, so will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Where other forces have been unable to supply data, this is mentioned under the relevant sections below.

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2016 population estimates. These were the most recent data available at the time of the inspection.

For the specific case of City of London Police, we include both resident and transient population within our calculations. This is to account for the unique nature and demographics of this force's responsibility.

Survey of police staff

HMICFRS surveyed the police workforce across forces in England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and the suitability of assigned tasks. This survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample which means that results may not be representative of the workforce population. The number of responses varied between 16 and 1,678 across forces. Therefore, we treated results with caution and used them for identifying themes that could be explored further during fieldwork rather than to assess individual force performance.

Ipsos MORI survey of public attitudes towards policing

HMICFRS commissioned Ipsos MORI to survey attitudes towards policing between 21 July and 15 August 2017. Respondents were drawn from an online panel and results were weighted by age, gender and work status to match the population profile of the force area. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, varying between 300 and 321 individuals in each force area. Therefore, any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

The findings of this survey are available on our website:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/data/peel-assessments

Review of crime files

HMICFRS reviewed 2,700¹⁷ police case files across crime types for:

- theft from person;
- rape (including attempts);
- stalking;
- harassment;
- common assault;
- grievous bodily harm (wounding);
- actual bodily harm.

Our file review was designed to provide a broad overview of the identification of vulnerability, the effectiveness of investigations and to understand how victims are treated through police processes. We randomly selected files from crimes recorded between 1 January 2017 and 31 March 2017 and assessed them against several

¹⁷ 60 case files were reviewed in each force, with the exception of the Metropolitan Police Service, West Midlands Police and West Yorkshire Police where 90 case files were reviewed.

criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected per force, we did not use results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance, but alongside other evidence gathered.

Force in numbers

A dash in this graphic indicates that a force was not able to supply HMICFRS with data or the data supplied by the forces were not comparable.

Calls for assistance (including those for domestic abuse)

These data were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales. In 2017, the data requested from forces contained a different breakdown of occurrences where the police were called to an incident.

Recorded crime and crime outcomes

These data are obtained from Home Office police recorded crime and outcomes data tables for the 12 months to 30 June 2017 and are taken from the October 2017 Home Office data release, which is available from:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables

Total police-recorded crime includes all crime, except fraud offences, recorded by all police forces in England and Wales. Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime and outcomes include British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMICFRS inspection. Therefore, England and Wales rates in this report will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Data referring to police-recorded crime should be treated with care, as recent increases may be attributed to the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMICFRS' national inspection of crime data in 2014.

Suffolk Constabulary was unable to submit 2017 outcomes data to the Home Office due to data quality issues, relating to the changing of its crime recording system to Athena. Therefore Suffolk Constabulary has been excluded from the England and Wales figure.

Other notable points to consider when interpreting outcomes data are listed below.

- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome. Therefore these data are subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time.

- Under the new framework, 37 police forces in England and Wales provide outcomes data through the Home Office data hub (HODH) on a monthly basis. All other forces provide these data via a manual return also occurring on a monthly basis.
- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces participated in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. This means they no longer issued simple cautions or cannabis/khat warnings and they restrict their use of penalty notices for disorder as disposal options for adult offenders, as part of the pilot. These three pilot forces continued to operate in accordance with the pilot conditions since the pilot ended in November 2015. Other forces subsequently also limited their use of some out of court disposals. Therefore, the outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind.
- Direct comparisons should not be made between general crime outcomes and domestic abuse-related outcomes. Domestic abuse-related outcomes are based on the number of outcomes for domestic-abuse related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, irrespective of when the crime was recorded. Therefore, the domestic abuse-related crimes and outcomes recorded in the reporting year are not tracked, whereas the general outcomes are tracked.
- For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see Crime Outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2017, Home Office, July 2017. Available from:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633048/crime-outcomes-hosb0917.pdf

Anti-social behaviour

These data are obtained from Office for National Statistics data tables (year ending 31 March 2017), available from:

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables

All police forces record incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported to them in accordance with the provisions of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). Forces record incidents under NSIR in accordance with the same victim-focused approach that applies for recorded crime, although these data are not subject to the same quality assurance as the main recorded crime collection.

Incident counts should be interpreted as incidents recorded by the police, rather than reflecting the true level of victimisation. Other agencies also deal with ASB incidents (for example, local authorities and social landlords), but incidents reported to these agencies will not generally be included in police data.

When viewing this data the reader should be aware that Warwickshire Police had a problem with its incident recording. For a small percentage of all incidents reported during 2015-16 the force could not identify whether these were ASB or other types of incident. These incidents have been distributed pro rata for Warwickshire, so that two percent of ASB incidents in the reporting year for 2015-16 is estimated.

Domestic abuse

Data relating to domestic abuse-flagged offences is obtained through the Home Office for the 12 months to 30 June 2017. These are more recent data than those previously published by Office for National Statistics. The Home Office collects these data regularly and requires all forces to record accurately and flag domestic abuse crimes. Domestic abuse flags should be applied in accordance with the Home Office Counting Rules¹⁸ to ensure consistency across forces, and within published data sets.

Data relating to domestic abuse arrests and outcomes were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales.

Further information about the domestic abuse statistics and recent releases is available from:

www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2017

When viewing this data the reader should be aware that North Yorkshire Police was unable to give the Home Office comparable data on domestic abuse-flagged crimes. The force extracted data for HMICFRS on the powers and outcomes used to deal with these offences by using an enhanced search. This search examined additional factors (such as the victim / suspect relationship) and included a keyword search to identify additional domestic abuse crimes which may not have been flagged. The force used a simpler search, which identified domestic abuse crimes by flagging alone, to extract data it supplied to the Home Office. As North Yorkshire Police's data on domestic abuse are not comparable with other forces, we have excluded the data.

¹⁸ Home Office Counting Rules are rules in accordance with which crime data – required to be submitted to the Home Secretary under sections 44 and 45 of the Police Act 1996 – must be collected. They set down how the police service in England and Wales must record crime, how crimes must be classified according to crime type and categories, whether and when to record crime, how many crimes to record in respect of a single incident and the regime for the re-classification of crimes as no-crimes.

Organised crime groups (OCGs)

These data were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales. City of London Police is excluded from the England and Wales rate as its OCG data are not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

As at 1 July 2017 City of London Police had recorded 46 OCGs. However during the inspection we found that only six OCGs were within the force's geographical area and the remaining 40 were part of the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau's remit.

Figures in the report

Not all forces' reports will contain all the figures we mention in the sections below. This is because some forces' data was incomplete or not comparable with England and Wales data, and in 2017 HMICFRS undertook risk-based inspections. More details about our risk-based approach can be found here:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peel-assessment/#risk-based

Rate of anti-social behaviour (ASB) powers per 1 million population, by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017

These data were collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales. HMICFRS collected data on anti-social behaviour powers, including:

- criminal behaviour orders;
- community protection notices;
- civil injunctions;
- dispersal orders.

Together these powers form the anti-social behaviour (ASB) powers considered in this report.

The Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced ASB powers which can be applied by both local authorities and the police. The ASB powers data provided in this report covers police data. Therefore, results should be treated with caution as they may not include instances where local authorities exercised these powers.

When viewing this data the reader should be aware of the following:

- Bedfordshire Police, Greater Manchester Police and the Metropolitan Police Service were unable to provide data on anti-social behaviour powers as the data are not held centrally within each force.

- Greater Manchester Police was unable to provide any 2016 ASB use of powers data. Greater Manchester Police intends for its new integrated operational policing system to incorporate recording of ASB powers.
- Suffolk Constabulary was only able to provide data for the southern area of the force in 2017. Therefore its data are excluded.
- The forces highlighted above are not included in the figure or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.
- Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Humberside and Merseyside forces were only able to provide partial 2017 ASB use of powers data.
- Gloucestershire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary were unable to obtain data regarding the number of civil injunctions as their local authorities lead the application of these.
- Humberside Police was unable to provide data on community protection notices and civil injunction notices as its local authorities lead the application of these. The force does not collect data on criminal behaviour orders and dispersal orders.
- Merseyside Police was unable to provide data on dispersal orders as these orders are attached to individual crime files.

Proportion of investigations where action was taken, by force, for offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

Suffolk Constabulary was unable to provide 2017 crime outcomes data. Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crime outcomes data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the figure.

Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crimes outcome data, because it had difficulty with the recording of crime outcomes for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was due to the force introducing the Niche records management system in spring 2015. Problems with the implementation of Niche meant that crime outcomes were not reliably recorded.

Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse-related offences), by force, in the 12 months to 30 June 2017

Please see 'Domestic abuse' above.

- The arrest rate is calculated using a common time period for arrests and offences. It is important to note that each arrest is not necessarily directly linked to its specific domestic abuse offence recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017 in this calculation. It is also possible to have more than one arrest

per offence. In addition, the reader should note the increase in police-recorded crime which affected the majority of forces over the last year. This may mean arrest rates are higher than the figures suggest. Despite this, the calculation still indicates whether the force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action. HMICFRS evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures (such as use of voluntary attendance or body-worn video cameras) during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

When viewing this data the reader should be aware of the following:

- Durham, Lancashire, Warwickshire and West Mercia forces were unable to provide domestic abuse arrest data. North Yorkshire Police was unable to provide comparable domestic abuse crime and arrest data, so a rate could not be calculated. Therefore, these forces are not included in the figure.
- Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces do not have 2016 data included in the figure.

When viewing domestic abuse arrest data for 2016, the reader should be aware of the following:

- Cambridgeshire Constabulary was unable to provide 2016 domestic abuse arrest data due to a recording problem that meant it could only obtain accurate data from a manual audit of its custody records.
- Lancashire Constabulary had difficulty in identifying all domestic abuse-flagged arrests. This affected 23 days in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force investigated this and confirmed that the impact on the 2016 data provided to HMICFRS would be marginal and that these are the most reliable data it can provide.

Rate of organised crime groups (OCGs) per 1 million population, by force, as at 1 July 2017

Please see 'Organised crime groups' above.

Organised crime group data from City of London Police are not comparable with other forces. Therefore, its data are not included in the figure.

For data relating to 2016 the number of OCGs in Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force areas is a combined total of OCGs for the two force areas. The OCGs per 1 million population rate is based upon their areas' combined population. For the 2017 data Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force split their OCGs into two separate force areas.