

HMI Wendy Williams' assessment of West Midlands Police – Transcript

Hello. I'm Wendy Williams and I'm Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for West Midlands Police.

I am one of five inspectors, and our role is to inspect police forces on behalf of the public. Each year we produce an annual assessment of how each force is performing.

I would like to congratulate West Midlands Police on its performance in keeping people safe and reducing crime, which is particularly impressive given the complexity of its operating environment.

The arrangements for preventing crime and anti-social behaviour are good, as is the quality of investigations. The force is clearly committed to protecting vulnerable people, although improvements are needed in its understanding and assessment of the risks faced by some, particularly missing children and victims of domestic abuse. Good arrangements are in place to tackle serious and organised crime in Birmingham East, but elsewhere, more consistency is needed.

West Midlands Police is exceptionally well prepared to face future financial challenges. I continue to be impressed by its robust management of finances and demands for services. The force has embarked on an ambitious and innovative five-year change programme in collaboration with a commercial partner. The programme is expected to transform the operating model into one based on preventative policing rather than reactive policing, with the aim of reducing costs.

I am particularly impressed with the force's emphasis on continuously improving the services that it provides to the public. I am also encouraged by the force's determined efforts to recruit more black, Asian or minority ethnic people to make the workforce more representative of the community it serves.

In the year ahead, I will be particularly interested to see how the force improves its response to missing and absent children, and victims of domestic abuse.

I am also interested to see the strategic direction the new chief constable and his recently appointed deputy take, with the force transforming from a predominately reactive style of policing, to one that is more proactive.