



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

HMI Wendy Williams' assessment of West Midlands Police – Transcript

I am very pleased with the overall performance of West Midlands Police. It is good at preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour. The force has a sound understanding of the concerns of the people it serves, including those who would not routinely talk directly to the police. The force uses a range of innovative tactics, but it could be more to understand problems and assessing the effectiveness of its interventions.

I am pleased with the force's approach to investigating crime and reducing re-offending. Investigation plans are used to good effect to provide structure, and line managers supervise investigations well. The force also manages offenders well.

However, I have some concerns about the force's approach to protecting vulnerable people, and I am disappointed that the causes of concern I highlighted last year persist. The force is still inconsistent in how it assesses and manages cases involving missing people, which creates the potential for vulnerable people to be exposed to harm unnecessarily.

The force is also inconsistent in how it assesses risk in domestic abuse cases, and it cannot be confident that all victims of domestic abuse receive a multi-agency response that is tailored to their individual needs.

The force regularly disrupts and investigates serious and organised crime, and it has a variety of effective projects for deterring people from becoming involved in organised criminality.

I am pleased that West Midlands Police has maintained a detailed understanding of the current and likely future demands for its services, including so-called hidden demands such as internet crime.

West Midlands Police has comprehensive financial plans based on sound assumptions. It is continuing to invest in a more preventative style of policing, with many services integrated with those of partner organisations and supported by better technology.

I am pleased that the force has improved its approach to identifying and responding to potential corruption, and that it recognises officers and staff abusing their authority for sexual gain (that is, taking advantage of a position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime) as serious corruption.

I will be interested to see how the force responds to this assessment and to the areas for improvement that HMIC identified last year.