



West Midlands Police Authority and West Midlands Police Communication Protocol

General Principles

In the event of a significant incident occurring in the West Midlands (or elsewhere involving the use of West Midlands Police Officers and Staff), both West Midlands Police Authority and West Midlands Police recognise that they have clear and complementary responsibilities. As such incidents almost inevitably involve some measure of public discussion, it is essential that both the Authority and the Police Service keep each other closely informed, working in tandem in a complementary manner.

West Midlands Police recognises the Authority's responsibilities to discharge their role of public accountability. West Midlands Police Authority recognises that operational matters are the sole responsibility of the Chief Constable including the responsibility to ensure the integrity of all police operations.

On occasions issues emerge involving West Midlands Police and/or West Midlands Police Authority which can give rise to contentious or significant press and public comment. Where these occur or are anticipated the West Midlands Police Authority and West Midlands Police will share relevant information at the earliest opportunity.

West Midlands Police interact on a daily basis with local authorities and other partners in a range of operational and partnership scenarios. As a general principle West Midlands Police will inform the West Midlands Police Authority if significant and unusual activity is planned or has occurred which involves a local authority and/or other partner falling outside of normal arrangements.

Communication Structure

The Chief Constable may brief the Chair of the Authority on an 'in confidence basis' of sensitive matters which in their mutual judgement cannot be shared with the full Authority.

West Midlands Police Chief Officers will inform the Chair or Chief Executive of the Police Authority of matters falling within the terms of this protocol. The Chair, Vice Chairs or Chief Executive will inform the Chief Constable of matters falling within the terms of this protocol.

West Midlands Police and West Midlands Police Authority will ensure that information is provided through their respective offices on the single points of contact within the Force and Authority to facilitate communication on a 24/7 basis under this protocol.



ADDENDUM TO THE COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

The purpose of this addendum is to provide illustrative examples of those circumstances or events which would bring into effect the operation of the Communication Protocol between West Midlands Police and West Midlands Police Authority. The purpose in providing illustrative examples is to provide 'benchmarks' against which decisions can be taken to activate the arrangements set out in the Communication Protocol.

The following are illustrative of those events or circumstances which would ordinarily be sufficient for a member or chief officer of Force and/or Authority to contemplate the activation of the communication arrangements:

1. the implementation of special or temporary powers under the Terrorism Act
2. any significant impairment, or risk of significant impairment of operational capability at individual OCU or Force level
3. any significant or unusual civil contingency event or similar circumstances which might reasonably require public reassurance at individual OCU or Force level
4. the briefing by the Force of local authority or other agency Chief Executives resulting from any significant or unusual matter
5. the provision of unusual or significant mutual aid or assistance to another Force or agency
6. any unusual or significant matters which might have a reputational impact on the Authority and/or the Force
7. any unusual or significant matter of which a member of the Police Authority is aware that has an operational impact on the Force



Communications structure

1. The Authority and Force will keep each other informed of their 24/7 on-call officers. This will be through the secretariat functions for the Authority and the Command Team.
2. Where the Force contacts the Authority under this protocol via the Chairman and/or Chief Executive (or nominated officer), the Chairman and/or Chief Executive (or nominated officer) will determine the extent and nature of further contact with the remainder of the Authority. Normally the Vice Chairs of the Authority would be informed. If all members of the Authority are to be contacted then this contact normally will be via email. Where contact is urgent, members will be notified of the email via a text to the number provided to the Authority for this purpose.
3. Where the Force contacts the Authority, or vice versa, on a matter relating to an OCU, contact will normally be under arrangements agreed between the OCU Commander and the link member.
4. Where members contact the Force under this protocol this will be done through the Police Authority officers during office hours and with the Force Control Room outside of these hours. Where a member contacts the Force under this protocol they will notify the Chief Executive (or nominated officer).
5. The Authority and Force will have separate agreed arrangements for sharing of press and media related matters which will also cover matters falling under this protocol.

West Midlands Police Authority and Force arrangements for sharing of non-emergency press and media matters

The Authority and Force have an agreed a separate Communication Protocol for sharing of information in the event of a significant incident occurring in the West Midlands.

The following is an agreement for the procedures that will be followed by the Authority and Force for less significant incidents, which may still have an impact on both parties.

Where there is media interest or the potential for media interest in matters that concern both parties, it is agreed that they will liaise with one another.

When Authority Members and officers are aware of issues that may give rise to media attention, they will liaise with the Police Authority's Communications Manager.

Authority members and officers will liaise with the Communications Manager before giving comments to the media, to ensure that information given out by the Authority is verified and also consistent with information held by the Force.

Where a media issue or request for information has implications for the Force, the Communications Manager will inform the Press Office, and ask for the matter to be placed onto the Press Bureau log.

The Communications Manager or another officer of the Authority will make sure that the Press Office is made aware of issues either by phoning the Press Desk or, out of office hours, the duty press officer or FCC will be contacted.

Similarly, where a media issue or request for information has implications for the Authority, the Force Press Office will inform the Authority's Communications Manager or a Police Authority Policy Manager.

WMP press office should contact the Communications Manager on her mobile number 07968 273361, which is available 24/7. Alternatively, they should contact the Police Authority's Chief Executive Jacky Courtney or a named duty policy manager whose names are circulated to them by the Authority's secretariat.

Police Authority Contacts:

Communications Manager:

Chief Executive:

Policy Managers:

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Committee Manager	<input type="text"/>

WMP Press office contacts:

Head of Press Office	Ch Insp Sally Seeley
	<input type="text"/>

Head of News	Keiley Gartland
	<input type="text"/>
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Head of Public Relations	Jackie Harrison
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Press Office on call	0121 626 4040
	Ask for FCC Duty Inspector