**Agenda Item No. 9**

**COMMUNITY OUTCOMES MEETING**

**29 April 2025**

**SUBJECT: Rural Crime**

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| **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT PRODUCED BY WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE**1. The attached report outlines work undertaken by West Yorkshire Police in respect of Rural Crime.
2. This cover paper highlights the importance of the report topic in respect of the Police and Crime Plan and also includes the delivery of the Mayor and her office. Together the West Yorkshire Police report and the cover paper provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of work underway in support of Rural Crime.
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| **RECOMMENDATION**1. That the Mayor/DMPC uses the WYP report to scrutinise Force performance in respect of Rural Crime.
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| **POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 24-28**1. The Police and Crime Plan was developed after extensive public and partner consultation culminating in the creation of ‘The Voice of West Yorkshire’.  The Voice of West Yorkshire represents the views of over 6,500 respondents and includes the views of children and young people.  It is part of a series of documents which includes a summary needs assessment.  You can review the documents here: [West Yorkshire Combined Authority](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/the-police-and-crime-plan/)
2. Priority 2 - Rural Crime sits within priority 2 - Safer Places and Thriving Communities, as part of our commitment to neighbourhood policing across West Yorkshire. Through the Plan, the Police, Mayor, and partners aim to tackle the harmful behaviour that targets the different communities of West Yorkshire, whether they are rural or urban in nature.
3. Voice of West Yorkshire – feedback included in the Voice of West Yorkshire amplified the voice of rural communities. This was a major issue with links to ASB and Serious Organised Crime. Communities felt that Rural Crime was under resourced and increased police visibility was needed.
4. Rural Crime commonly effects areas on the boundary of West Yorkshire, namely: NE and East Leeds, Holme and Colne Valleys (Kirklees), areas of Calderdale, the Worth Valley, and SE Wakefield.
5. Common rural crime topics include:
* Farm machinery, plant, and vehicle theft - including quad bikes, tractors, tools, and equipment from out-buildings.
* Livestock offences - including theft, worrying and attacks.
* Fuel theft - including heating oil, diesel, and petrol.
* Equine crime - including horse trailer and horse box theft, horse theft, tack theft, fly grazing and neglect.
* Fly tipping - including household and commercial waste, often linked to organised criminality.
* Wildlife crime - includes hare coursing, poaching and interfering with protected species.
* Heritage crime – damage to historic monuments or buildings. Theft of Yorkshire Stone paving is a local example.
1. Rural crime is often linked to Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) who target and exploit rural communities across a range of crime types for example organised plant theft, livestock theft, burglaries targeting firearms, poaching and hare coursing.

A detailed Equality Impact Assessment which looked at how the themes and priories impacted communities was completed for the 2024-28 plan, you can read it here:[eqia-stage-1-pc-plan-final-web-version.docx](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.westyorks-ca.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F4tijlbky%2Feqia-stage-1-pc-plan-final-web-version.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)[eqia-stage-2-pc-plan-final-web-version.docx](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.westyorks-ca.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2Fd5hcfsqw%2Feqia-stage-2-pc-plan-final-web-version.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) |
| **KEY INFORMATION**1. Mayoral/DMPC Activity to date includes:
* Rural Crime issues tend to come to our attention through our Casework inbox, either from members of rural communities raising concerns about rural issues, or from rural interest groups contacting us about wildlife crime.
* In the past, the Policing and Crime Team has supported joint work on hare coursing with the Country Land and Business Association, whilst we have encouraged rural/Farmwatch community groups to bid to the MSCF. As an important crime prevention strategy, we would encourage residents of rural communities to build strong links with their Neighbourhood Policing Teams, to help establish Neighbourhood or Farm Watch schemes which can play a key role in deterring criminality in rural areas.
* The Mayor/ DMPC engage with rural communities as part of their routine consultation and engagement e.g., via attendance at Parish Council meetings.
* As part of the Community Outcomes Meeting (COM) an action was agreed for WYP to ensure that rural communities received feedback on policing in their area. Rural Crime has now been added to COM as a core item to be reviewed annually.
* The Mayor’s Safer Communities Fund supports the priorities and cross cutting themes in the Police and Crime Plan. You can find out about how the fund supported the delivery of the 2021-2024 plan on our website. Monitoring delivery against the new plan (Grant round 7 onwards) has started which now includes Rural Crime specifically.
* There are MSCF projects running in all communities across West Yorkshire which are delivering in or impact on rural areas (West Yorkshire wide projects or other projects in rural wards will support rural communities).

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| **PARTNERSHIP CONTRIBUTION – POLICING AND CRIME**The Mayor/DMPC will work with partners to continue to further embed early intervention and prevention projects to support safer communities. We will continue to monitor rural crime and the response to it, triangulating information through casework enquiries, reports into Community Safety Partnerships, and meetings with and in rural communities. **VIOLENCE REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (VRP)**A key role of the West Yorkshire VRP is to lead and coordinate a preventative, whole-system approach to violence reduction, with a particular focus on children and young people under the age of 25. We are aware that organised crime groups may be exploiting rural locations in West Yorkshire for illegal activities, however this has not yet been specifically flagged regarding links to children, young people and serious violent crime. More detail about the work of the Violence Reduction Partnership can be found here:[West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/west-yorkshire-violence-reduction-partnership/)[Strategic Needs Assessment/Response Strategy/Influential Factors](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/west-yorkshire-violence-reduction-partnership/needs-assessment-response-strategy/)[VRP Annual Report 2023-24](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/12890/vrp-annual-report-2023-24-final.pdf) |
| **EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION** Some Individuals and communities may be more vulnerable to Rural crime based on their protected characteristics and or the communities where they live/work. |
| **POLICING AND CRIME CONTACT** Paige Cowling – paige.cowling@westyorks-ca.gov.uk  |
| **ATTACHMENT**[Chief Constable’s report – Rural Crime](https://theauthorityv13-auth.azurewebsites.net/media/jkaeo2i0/com-rural-crime-report-march-2025.docx) |