



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Joint Audit and Risk Committee (JARC) Governance Highlight Report from the Office of the Chief Constable

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Introduction

This report is intended to provide information and assurance to the JARC on the actions being taken around the following areas:

1. Key HMICFRS reports and recommendations
2. Internal audit reports and recommendations
3. Strategic Risk and Issue management

The last report was submitted in February 2025. Since this time, a significant amount of activity has been undertaken and progress made.

It is the intention of this report to provide a current position statement to JARC around the matters as set out above.

Recommendations to JARC

It is recommended:

- That the information within this report be noted for information / discussion.
- That any matters requiring more detailed scrutiny be raised for inclusion in the next Chief Constable's report to JARC.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspection

PEEL 2025 – 2027 Inspection

This is a national programme of inspection which covers the following 9 graded areas:

1. Leadership and force management
2. Attracting, developing and retaining the workforce and creating a diverse and inclusive workplace
3. Using powers fairly, appropriately and with justification
4. Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability
5. Responding to the public
6. Investigating crime
7. Safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm
8. Managing fraud
9. Providing a safe and lawful custody environment

Across the force, each of the nine areas have senior leader ownership, accountability, and governance arrangements in place. Preparations are supported by a central coordination team through a programme approach.

HMICFRS commenced their continuous assessment work in force in July 2025. This work will continue up until the final evidence gathering / fieldwork 2-week period in March 2026 which will consist of reality testing, focus groups activity and individual interviews.

The inspection of custody arrangements although part of the PEEL framework, will be an 'unannounced' inspection, therefore the force currently does not have dates to when this will be undertaken.

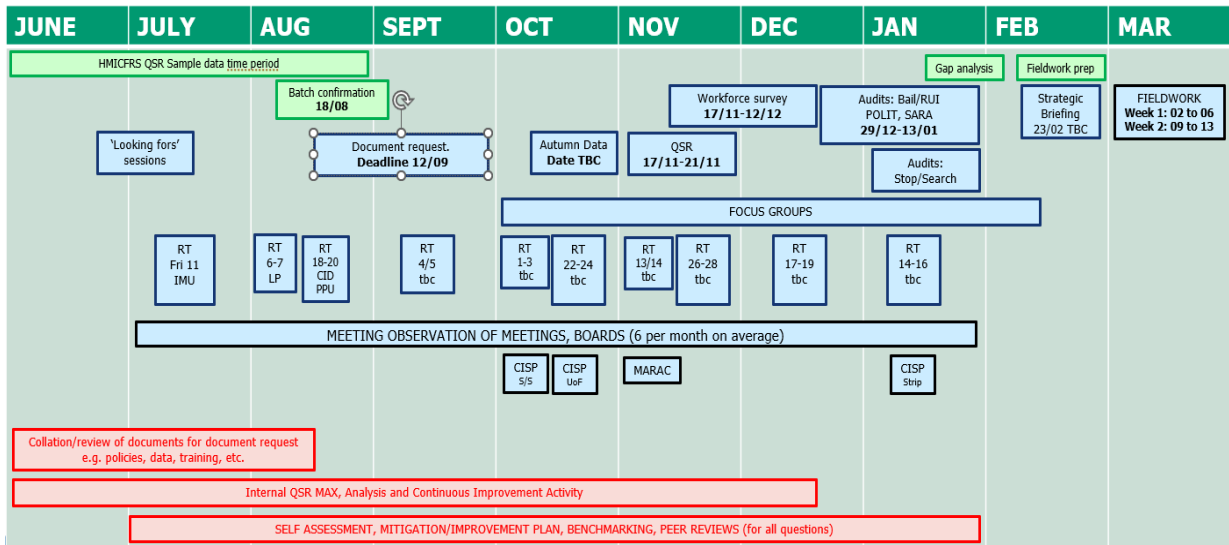
The inspection timeline for Staffordshire is set out below with the following dates of note:

- Formal documentation submission: September 2026
- Final evidence gathering / field work: March 2026
- PEEL report publication: June 2026

PEEL Programme breakdown

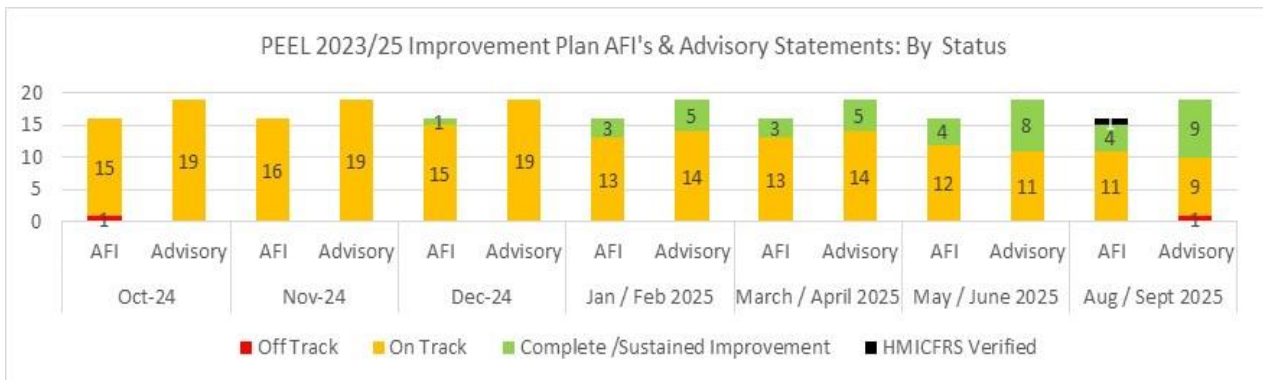
Key

Red	Force preparation activity
Green	HMICFRS Admin
Blue	Formal Inspection activity



Staffordshire PEEL 2023-25 Areas for Improvement

The force is working closely with HMICFRS as part of the continuous assessment process for the 2025 inspection to verify those areas considered as complete. Collaborative working is also in place to understand what evidence is required to meet the criteria to sign off on the remaining areas. The chart below shows progress to date:



Child Protection Inspection 2025

Following on from the force's inspections in this area in 2021 and 2023, HMICFRS conducted a full inspection during May 2025 as part of the new national rolling programme. The new programme will see each force graded against the following 5 criteria:

- Leadership of child protection arrangements
- Working with safeguarding partner
- Responding to children at risk of harm
- Assessing risk to children and making appropriate referrals
- Investigating reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children

Although the final report will not be published until later in the year, the force is anticipating that this will reflect a continued trajectory of sustained progress across this area, whilst acknowledging that there will likely be areas where there is still more to do.

Police Integrity Inspection Programme 2025

HMICFRS have commenced a rolling national programme of integrity inspections. This replaces the previous Inspection that looked specifically at vetting and counter corruption and will now see forces graded against the following areas:

- Vetting
- Professional standards
- Counter corruption

The force is currently working with HMICFRS to review and verify closure for previous force and national areas for improvement / recommendations in this area as significant progress has been made. Preparations against the 2025 inspection framework are also underway as part of the forces overall approach to inspection preparedness.

Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Inspection 2023

The force has submitted evidence to HMICFRS in relation to the review and verification of closure of the related areas for improvement. This now requires the national SOC inspection team to schedule this work which is anticipated during November 2025.

National Thematic Reports and Recommendations

The force records and monitors progress against all national recommendations through its bespoke action tracking system and internal governance arrangements.

All published reports can be accessed via the link below:

[Publications - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

2. Internal Audit Reports and Recommendations

There are 10 live Internal Audit Reports that are being monitored via the Force Action Plan System, with a significant number of management actions either on track or completed.

Since the last report 4 Internal Audit management actions plans have been formally signed off and closed. Further information can be found in Appendix 1.

Progress against all HMICFRS recommendations (force and national) and internal audit management actions is monitored and driven through the Deputy Chief Constable chaired Inspection and Audit Governance Board.

3. Strategic Risk and Issue Management

Oversight and monitoring of Strategic Risk and Issues takes place monthly at Executive Management Board (EMB). Risks are owned and aligned to relevant Chief Officer led Boards to direct activity and review the impact of mitigations in place. The Strategic Risk Register, as discussed at EMB on 12th September 2025, contains 9 Risks and 1 Issue. Details can be found in Appendix 2. EMB will next meet on 28th October 2025.

The Force Strategic Risk Register is also shared with the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office via their Strategic Governance Board Meeting (SGB).

Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Reports

Since the update provided in February 2025 the following reports, have been through the relevant governance route and are considered appropriate for archive, these will no longer feature on JARC reports:

1. AUDIT 2023 Evidential Management Unit "OFFICIAL- SENSITIVE" - Minimal Assurance	Signed off at IAGB 09.04.25
2. AUDIT 2024 Evidential Management Unit (formerly Property Store) - Follow Up - Reasonable Progress	Signed off at IAGB 09.04.25
3. AUDIT 2024 Force Risk Management - Substantial Assurance	Signed off at IAGB 09.04.25
4. AUDIT 2024 Information Governance (Advisory)	Signed off at IAGB 09.04.25

A number of internal audit plans are being routed to through appropriate governance (where all actions are considered as complete) to review and verify this progress. The table below sets out the current position for all remaining open plans.

Action Plan	On Track	Off Track	Complete	Total Rec's
1. AUDIT 2023 Health and Safety - Employer Responsibilities (including Remote Working) - Partial Assurance	0	0	5	5
2. AUDIT 2024 Business Continuity Management - (Advisory)	0	0	10	10
3. AUDIT 2024 Change Management and Delivery - Partial Assurance	1	0	3	4
4. AUDIT 2024 Finance Systems - Reasonable Assurance			4	4
5. AUDIT 2024 Vetting FINAL - Partial Assurance	0	0	6	6
6. AUDIT 2025 Asset management Report 6.24/25 - Reasonable Assurance	0	0	8	8
7. AUDIT 2025 Key Finance Controls - Reasonable Assurance	0	0	2	2
8. AUDIT 2025 EMU/Property (Combined) Minimal Assurance - "OFFICIAL SENSITIVE"				
9. AUDIT 2025 Workforce Planning - Training and Development (Advisory)	2	1	2	5
10. External Audit 2025 - Joint Audit Completion Report Year Ending 31 March 2025	9	0	4	13

Appendix 2 – Summary of Strategic Risks and Issues

Risk:

1. **Emergency Services Network (ESN):** Risk of compromised operational viability due to delays in decommissioning of Airwave. This is a nationally led programme.
2. **Sexual Misconduct:** Abuse of position for a sexual purpose. This is both a local and national risk.
3. **Contact Business Continuity Management (BCM)** – Capability to transfer contact and dispatch functions to alternative locations should the site at HQ be compromised.
4. **Evidential Management Unit/Property Store** – Effectiveness of property store current operating model post implementation of the new POM model.
5. **SyAP/Cyber** – Protection of the force infrastructure and data from cyber threat. This is both a local and national risk.
6. **Custody Facilities** – An assessment of the risk posed by Staffordshire Police's current custody capabilities.

The following risks have been escalated to the force register since the last report:

7. **Transformation Realisation** – Risk of being unable to deliver required MTFS savings due to the transformation programme being insufficient in scope or limited by 'red lines'
8. **Vetting** – Capacity to deliver against increased demand placed on Force Vetting Unit.
9. **Information Governance** – The effectiveness of the Information Governance Function to fulfil the statutory requirements placed on the Force.

Cosford - Uncertainty around regional collaboration agreement for tactical training centre at Cosford and continuation of training. This risk has been de-escalated since the last report and is now managed at FCO Programme Board.

Issue:

1. **Pensions** (McCloud) – Implementation of the Police Pensions Remedy; both a local and a national risk. This was last reported on as a risk but has since been re-assessed as an issue.

Sergeants Resilience and Effectiveness - Capacity and capability of substantive sergeants and challenges around abstraction rates. Since the last report this issue has been de-escalated and is now managed at Command level through Workforce Planning Board.