



Commissioner's response to Staffordshire Police latest Public Performance Report (incorporating Specified Information Order Statement on National Crime & Policing Measures)

Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime Ben Adams was keen that key measures demonstrated the progress made against delivering the service-level ambitions in his Police & Crime Plan, the Staffordshire Policing Plan, and the National Crime & Policing Measures (NCPM).

The Commissioner welcomed the latest Public Performance Report and was reassured by continued progress across a number of NCP Measures. The force demonstrates a clear commitment to transparency through its use of the Digital Crime Performance Pack (DCPP), aligning local performance with national priorities and enabling robust scrutiny.

There was evidence of steady system-wide improvement, particularly in public contact, victim satisfaction and aspects of operational response. However, the overall picture remains mixed, with rising demand, increasing crime in key harm categories, and ongoing challenges in achieving consistent outcomes for victims. The Commissioner was satisfied that Staffordshire Police is contributing appropriately to the national framework, while also recognising that changes in national policy and potential reform of measures will require continued agility in how performance is measured and communicated.

1. Emerging Challenges

1.1. Chief Constable's Foreword and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspections update

The Commissioner welcomed the positive early feedback from HMICFRS following recent inspection activity, particularly in areas such as call handling, risk assessment and overall service delivery.

While formal gradings are still awaited, these findings provided encouraging independent validation of progress within Staffordshire Police. Acting Chief Constable Becky Riggs recognised that inspection outcomes remained a critical benchmark of legitimacy and effectiveness, and expected the force to maintain momentum in addressing areas for improvement, particularly around vulnerability, consistency of service and leadership oversight.

Against this backdrop, the Commissioner noted a broadly improving performance picture, while emphasising the complexity of the current operating environment including forthcoming police reform and local government reorganisation. He stressed the importance of sustaining service delivery and strong partnership working throughout this period of uncertainty, recognising that effective policing outcomes depended on collaboration across health, local authorities and communities.

Staffordshire Priorities including NCPM

2. Key Headlines

The Commissioner noted reductions in neighbourhood crime and improvements in contact performance were welcomed, however increases in ASB, violence categories and some crime types required deeper scrutiny. Acting Chief Constable Becky Riggs emphasised that headline figures must be understood in context, particularly where changes in recording practices (e.g. shoplifting and robbery) were influencing trends.



7. An Outstanding Local Police Service: Enabling Services

The Commissioner began with a detailed focus on finance, highlighting a £0.79m underspend and reduced reliance on reserves, equating to a £5m improved position compared to forecasts at the time council tax was set. While recognising strong financial management, he raised concerns about future pressures, including inflation, pay awards, and the requirement to deliver £13m savings. He also challenged the impact of national policy commitments, particularly around neighbourhood policing uplift, questioning how resources are being reallocated and where pressure is being felt across the organisation.

The Commissioner acknowledged positive progress in recruitment and neighbourhood policing uplift, despite ongoing challenges in workforce attraction and diversity.

7.1. Workforce Update: Officer Recruitment & Diversity

The Commissioner recognised the continued focus on strengthening the workforce, particularly through recruitment into neighbourhood policing and investigative capability. While officer numbers are broadly on track, the position remains slightly below target, reflecting the ongoing challenges in attracting and retaining officers within a competitive labour market.

The Commissioner welcomed the strategic emphasis on transferee recruitment, detective pathways and workforce planning, which support resilience, experience and service delivery across the organisation. Investment through the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is also positively contributing to visible, community-focused policing.

In relation to diversity, the Commissioner noted incremental progress in workforce representation, particularly among police officers. However, overall representation remains below that of the local population, indicating that further sustained effort was required. The Commissioner also welcomed the strong progress in gender representation at senior levels, with the current Senior Leadership Team comprising 80% female representation, demonstrating positive movement toward more inclusive leadership and providing visible role models across the organisation. The Commissioner will continue to seek assurance that workforce development delivers a skilled, representative and inclusive police service, capable of meeting current and future demand.

7.2. Efficiency

The Commissioner noted the positive financial position at year end, with a modest underspend and a continued focus on financial discipline and sustainability. This reflects prudent management of resources, particularly in the context of ongoing demand pressures and wider public sector financial constraints.

The Commissioner welcomed the delivery of efficiency savings, with most planned savings achieved and additional efficiencies identified during the year. The reinvestment of underspends and interest gains into capital and reserves demonstrates a responsible and forward-looking approach to financial planning, supporting long-term resilience.

7.3. Value for Money

The Commissioner recognised that Staffordshire Police continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering value for money, particularly within a constrained funding environment. The force remains comparatively low funded, with fewer officers per head of population than many other forces, yet continues to deliver a high level of activity and outcomes relative to its size.



The Commissioner welcomed evidence of efficient use of resources, including the positive year-end financial position and the focus on productivity, alongside one of the lowest proportions of officers in support roles. This reflects a clear emphasis on prioritising frontline delivery and maximising operational capacity.

However, value for money must be considered not only in terms of efficiency, but also in terms of effectiveness and outcomes for the public. While strong activity levels are evident, there remain areas, such as outcomes, public confidence and demand pressures, where continued improvement is required.

The Commissioner will continue to seek assurance that Staffordshire Police is delivering not just a lean service, but an effective and high-quality one, where value for money is reflected in both performance outcomes and the confidence of the communities it serves.

3. An Outstanding Local Police Service: Local Crime Priorities

3.1. Rural Crime

The Commissioner recognised the continued progress in tackling rural crime, supported by the work of the County Proactive & Rural Crime Team and strengthened partnership approaches. The force's investment in proactive capability, intelligence development and problem-solving activity is delivering positive outcomes, with encouraging evidence of effective targeting of offenders and harm in rural communities. The Commissioner also welcomed the improved use of data and mapping to better identify rural demand and risk, enabling a more tailored and evidence-led approach to policing across a geographically diverse county.

Rural communities face unique challenges, including isolation, underreporting and the impact of organised criminality. The development of specialist areas such as heritage crime capability is a positive step in recognising and responding to these risks. The Commissioner will continue to seek assurance that rural crime activity delivers sustained reductions in harm and reassurance to communities who can often feel more vulnerable due to their location.

3.2. Retail Crime

The Commissioner acknowledged positive work on retail crime, with improved engagement and visibility in communities.

3.3. Vehicle Crime

The Commissioner noted that vehicle crime performance presents a continued area of concern, particularly in relation to outcomes and suspect identification. While overall volumes and national positioning are broadly stable, the proportion of investigations concluding with no suspect identified remains high, with over 70% of cases falling into this category.

The Commissioner acknowledged the ongoing work of specialist teams, including roads policing and proactive units, and the wider use of intelligence, enforcement and prevention activity. However, the persistently low criminal justice outcome rate, just over 5%, highlights the ongoing challenge in achieving successful resolutions for victims.

The Commissioner will continue to seek assurance that vehicle crime is addressed as a priority area, with a clear trajectory toward improved outcomes, reduced offending and increased public confidence.



3.4. Roads Policing

The Commissioner noted the continued priority placed on roads policing, particularly considering the increase in fatalities and serious injuries on Staffordshire's roads over the last 12 months. While there are signs of stabilisation in recent months, the upward trend in killed and seriously injured (KSI) collisions remains a significant concern given the profound impact on victims, families and communities.

The Commissioner welcomed the work of the Road Crime Team and the increased focus on both enforcement and prevention activity, including targeting the 'fatal four' offences, proactive patrols and partnership engagement. The scale of operational activity, including arrests, testing and seizure of vehicles and assets, demonstrates a strong commitment to tackling road-related harm.

However, the Commissioner was clear that enforcement alone will not be sufficient to deliver sustained reductions in harm. The variability in serious collisions, alongside increasing complexity in driver behaviour and road use, requires a broader, system-wide approach.

The Commissioner will continue to seek assurance that roads policing activity delivers sustained reductions in harm and visible improvement in safety for all road users, recognising that this remains one of the most direct and tangible ways policing protects life.

An Outstanding Local Police Service: Public Confidence and Victim Surveys

3.5. Public Perception Surveys

Public confidence remains stable at around 64% but below pre-2019 levels, with perceptions of ASB continuing to drive lower confidence. The Commissioner welcomed improved satisfaction among domestic abuse (DA) victims and continued development of survey insight. There remains an opportunity to strengthen trust through visible local policing, improved communication, and clearer evidence of action taken in response to community concerns.

3.6. Improve satisfaction among victims & witnesses, (focus on DA victims (NCPM))

Victim satisfaction shows encouraging progress, particularly among DA victims (76.5% satisfaction), and improvements in communication ("kept informed"). However, there has been a decline in satisfaction with investigations, and outcome data highlights ongoing attrition, particularly where victims withdraw support.

3.7. Local Complaints, IOPC Bulletins and Complaint Reviews (Focus on Organisational Learning)

The Commissioner noted continued progress in the handling of complaints, including strong performance in timeliness and proportionality, with Staffordshire performing better than the national average in responsiveness to the public. The introduction and maturity of the triage model is particularly welcomed, with over 70% of complaints being resolved at an early stage, helping to provide more immediate resolution for the public while maintaining focus on higher-risk cases.

The Commissioner was encouraged by the force's clear emphasis on organisational learning, including the use of reflective practice, learning by outcome and structured feedback mechanisms. Evidence of learning being identified through both complaints and conduct matters demonstrates a positive culture of improvement. However, the Commissioner noted that the most common complaint themes, police action following contact, level of service and communication, remain consistent year on year, indicating that underlying issues in service delivery and public experience persist.



4. An Outstanding Local Police Service: Contact and Local Policing:

4.1. Emergency and Non-Emergency Calls

Significant improvements in 999 and 101 performance were welcomed, reflecting sustained leadership focus. Initiatives such as the Victim Portal and digital contact channels demonstrate innovation and service modernisation. However, abandonment rates and demand pressures across non-emergency services highlight the need for continued investment in capacity, workforce planning, and demand management.

4.2. Response: Grade 1 and Grade 2 including Enhanced Video Response

The Commissioner welcomed the continued improvement in emergency response performance, supported by targeted initiatives such as **Operation Maximus**, which is helping ensure resources are better aligned to demand and deployed more effectively. This is reflected in improved attendance times for both Grade 1 and Grade 2 incidents and a clearer operational focus on prioritisation and responsiveness.

The Commissioner also recognised the sustained progress in managing contact and incident demand, with evidence that more incidents are being resolved appropriately through alternative pathways, including Enhanced Video Response and improved triage processes. However, he noted that performance remains under pressure from demand, complexity and resourcing challenges, particularly where Grade 2 incidents, often involving vulnerability and safeguarding, require additional attendance standards (e.g. double crewing for domestic incidents). The Commissioner will continue to seek assurance that response improvements translate into enhanced public confidence and a consistently high-quality service at the point of greatest need.

4.3. Reduce Neighbourhood Crime (NCPM)

Neighbourhood crime shows reductions in some acquisitive crime types (e.g. shoplifting) but continued challenges in vehicle crime outcomes, where a large proportion of cases remain undetected. The Commissioner noted the importance of visible policing and problem-solving approaches in hotspot areas. Improving investigative outcomes and suspect identification rates remains a key priority to build public confidence and deliver justice.

4.4. Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The Commissioner recognised that ASB remains a significant concern and a key driver of public confidence. While increased reporting reflects both seasonal trends and more proactive policing, the impact on communities remains considerable. He welcomed hotspot policing, high-visibility patrols and targeted problem-solving, and the move to embed these within neighbourhood policing to ensure longer-term sustainability.

However, enforcement alone will not deliver sustained improvement. Greater emphasis is required on preventative, partnership-led approaches, particularly in addressing repeat victims, offenders and locations driving demand.

The Commissioner also welcomed strengthened partnership activity to tackle issues such as nuisance bike use, including joint funding with local authorities to support targeted deployment. While this reflects a more agile and collaborative approach, he emphasised the need to maintain appropriate safety, governance and proportionality. He will continue to hold the force to account for delivering sustained reductions in harm and improving how safe communities feel.



4.5. Outcomes

While charge rates and timeliness show some improvement, outcome rates remain a challenge, particularly in crimes with no suspect identified and victim attrition in domestic abuse cases.

5. Preventing and Protecting (NCPM)

The Commissioner noted stable performance in serious violence and homicide, alongside increased activity to tackle drugs and county lines. However, increases in VAWG and hate crime remain concerning. The Commissioner expects continued focus on prevention, safeguarding, and offender management, alongside partnership delivery through the Violence Reduction Alliance.

5.1. Reduce Murder and Other Homicide (NCPM)

Performance remains stable, with no significant deterioration in homicide volumes or patterns. The Commissioner welcomed the continued partnership approach through the Violence Reduction Alliance, recognising that homicide is often rooted in complex social drivers such as substance misuse, mental health and domestic abuse. Sustained focus is required on early intervention, prevention and system-wide safeguarding, ensuring that insight from homicide reviews continues to inform practice and commissioning.

5.2. Reduce Serious Violence (NCPM): inc. DA and Violence against Women & Girls (VAWG)

Serious violence has remained broadly stable year-on-year (+0.9%), although this masks complexity within categories, including increases in robbery and violence linked to recording changes. More concerning is the rise in VAWG (+10%) and hate crime (+13%), alongside stable but persistently high DA demand. There is a need to maintain attention on VAWG and vulnerability, ensuring that prevention activity, offender management and victim confidence remain central. The Commissioner will continue to seek assurance on how effectively partnership activity is reducing harm in these areas.

5.3. Disrupt Drugs Supply and County Lines (NCPM)

The force demonstrates strong operational activity in disrupting organised crime, with increased enforcement, arrests and county lines closures, and a clear shift toward targeting line holders and higher-level offenders. Emerging threats such as drug importation and 'monkey dust' highlight the evolving nature of criminal exploitation and community harm. The Commissioner welcomed this proactive approach but expects continued focus on prevention, safeguarding of vulnerable individuals, and reducing demand, alongside enforcement.

5.4. Tackle Cybercrime and Fraud (NCPM)

The force continues to operate within a nationally coordinated system, with Report Fraud replacing Action Fraud and relatively low levels of cases disseminated locally for investigation. This reflects the structural challenge of policing cybercrime, where ownership and outcomes often sit outside local control. The Commissioner expects continued development of local capability, prevention activity and public awareness, alongside effective use of national systems.



6. Supporting Victims

6.1. Victim's Code of Practice Compliance

The Commissioner welcomed strong compliance with the Victims' Code and improvements in engagement with victims. He emphasised that victim experience must remain central, particularly for vulnerable groups. He reinforced his commitment to investment in support services, including stalking and harassment provision, and stressed the importance of maintaining this focus through future governance changes

6.2. Criminal Justice – Timeliness

Reducing delays and improving communication with victims remains a priority.

The Commissioner thanked the Chief Officer team for their candid responses and looked forward to the next public meeting.