



Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Monday 28 September 2026

14:00

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

The meeting will be webcast live and archived for 12 months. It can be viewed at the following link: <https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Kate Loader
County Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
18 September 2026

Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of interest**
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2026** (Pages 5 - 12)
4. **Decisions published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)**

No decisions have been published on the Commissioners website since the last meeting.
5. **Police and Crime Plan Update** (Pages 13 - 30)
6. **Fire Safety Plan Update** (Pages 31 - 42)
7. **Questions to the PFCC by Panel Members**
8. **Dates of Future Meetings and Work Programme** (Pages 43 - 44)
9. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:

"That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of

Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

Membership	
Charlotte Atkins (Vice-Chair) Amanda Bailey Richard Cox (Chair) Carol Dean Chris Elliott Ian Fordham	Georgina Jeffery Zdzislaw Krupski Vince Merrick Anthony Screen Graham Shaw Duncan Walker

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

Filming of Meetings

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Recording by Press and Public

Recording (including by the use of social media) by the Press and Public is permitted from the public seating area provided it does not, in the opinion of the Chair, disrupt the meeting.



Press and Public attendance at meetings

We welcome your attendance at this meeting. To ensure all business can be completed fairly and efficiently, we require a standard of mutual respect. Please be advised that any person causing a disruption or behaving in a manner that prevents the meeting from proceeding will be required to leave the meeting room. Security or local authorities may be called upon to assist if necessary.

Please be prepared to have your bag and/or personal belongings to be searched.





Minutes of the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel meeting held on Monday 13 July 2026

Present:

Attendance	
Charlotte Atkins Amanda Bailey (Co-Optee) Richard Cox Carol Dean	Georgina Jeffery Zdzislaw Krupski Vince Merrick Anthony Screen

Also in attendance: Ben Adams, David Evans and Louise Clayton

Apologies: Chris Elliott, Ian Fordham, Graham Shaw and Duncan Walker

1. Appointment of Chair

Resolved: That Councillor Richard Cox be appointed Chair of the Panel for the ensuring year.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved: That Councillor Charlotte Atkins be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the ensuring year.

3. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made at the meeting.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2026

Resolved: That the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 13 April 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.

5. Appointment of Independent Co-optee

The Panel were informed that interviews had taken place during June 2026 for the vacant position of Co-optee on the Panel. Amanda Bailey was recommended for formal appointment for a 4 year term (dependant of legislation).

Resolved: That Amanda Bailey be formally appointed to the position of Panel Co-optee for a 4-year term (dependent on legislation).

6. Decisions published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)

No decisions had been published on the Commissioners website since the last meeting.

7. Commissioners Annual Report 2025/26

Prior to the introduction of the Annual report, the Commissioner announced that a gross misconduct hearing for suspended Chief Constable Chris Noble had been scheduled for 29-30 July following a lengthy suspension process. The hearing would be held in public, but with restrictions on the sharing of information.

Introducing the report, the Commissioner explained that the Annual Report covered:

- What the Police and Fire services set out to achieve.
- What actions were taken.
- The outcomes achieved.

There had been a strong emphasis on Victims and Community Safety; Prevention work; Supporting vulnerable residents; and Providing high-quality services to victims.

The Commissioner highlighted improvements against priorities in the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan, particularly:

- Tackling anti-social behaviour.
- Retail crime and shoplifting.
- Vehicle crime and rural crime.
- Keeping public spaces safe.
- Preventing significant rises in retail crime seen elsewhere nationally.

The recent Police HMI inspection results had been mixed with Inspectors recognised recent improvements, particularly in answering 101 calls and emergency call response. However, improvements had not yet been sustained long enough to improve inspection gradings significantly. A public performance meeting with the Chief Constable would be held on 15 July to look at the inspection results.

The Fire and Rescue Service was undergoing an inspection at the time of this meeting. The Commissioner reported positive early indications and noted that inspectors were examining the effectiveness of the governance arrangements.

The Commissioner warned that local government reorganisation could distract

partners from community safety priorities. He stressed that community safety should remain a priority throughout the transition process, arguing that economic growth and community wellbeing depended on people feeling safe.

The Commissioner also warned that continuing budget reductions could make it difficult to maintain current service levels. He noted that council tax increases were increasingly being used to fund pay awards and committed to seeking further efficiencies while protecting frontline outcomes.

The Commissioner praised the service's response to increased demand during recent hot weather and warned of the risks posed by wildfires and open-water incidents.

The Panel asked questions and commented on both the responses and the annual report:

- Drug Driving was an increasing problem. Information on the assessment process at the roadside was not known at the meeting. Drivers were normally stopped if they displayed signs of poor driving. The Commissioner agreed to provide additional information to the panel on roadside testing.
- Kulpra was a policing platform which allowed victims and witnesses of abuse to load images and recording, particularly in relation to domestic abuse, and to share digital evidence with the police. It was a national pilot which would be fully evaluated and could be extended and more widely used. Staffordshire would be part of the evaluation process and would contribute to the national conversation. Evaluation of the Pilot and members reflections would be welcomed at a later date.
- The Commissioner stressed that anti-social behaviour; road traffic incidents; and fires were shared responsibility with partners including Health, Housing and Community Safety Partnerships.
- Neighbourhood Policing and PCSO's – the recent changes in contracts and the decision to restrict their hours to 8am to 7pm was questioned. It was reported that the loss of PCSO hours and payments was regrettable, but budgets had to be reduced across the service and the review had looked at productivity and effectiveness both currently and in the future. The change in hours would make PCSO's more visible to the public. Their role would also be extended to include taking statements in the community. The changes were an operational matter which was outside the Commissioners remit. The Commissioner agreed to ask the Chief Constable for the evidence which had led to the decision to reduce PCSO operational hours along with the staff retention/turnover rates before and after the contract changes. The aim was to maximise the PCSO's skills and value.
- It was felt that Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and the way calls were handled gave the impression that it was not a priority. The

Commissioner explained that it was very much a priority for both the Police and the Commissioner, and it was explained that the term 'downgrading' of calls didn't necessarily mean a lesser service. It could mean that the callout had been requested for the following day when the person was in a safe place. The HMI inspections had identified that the 'downgrading' reassessment has not adequate. The Commissioner reported that this would be discussed at the performance meeting with the Chief Constable on the 15 July.

- Threat Harm Risk Investigation Vulnerability and Engagement (THRIVE) and DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence) risk assessments were being carried out, and it was important that these were conducted correctly and were balanced.
- Anti-Social Behaviour was a key theme at resident meetings and there was concern that crime numbers were not automatically provided to victims and therefore incidents not appropriately recorded. The Commissioner assured the panel that all calls were logged and recorded, and reference numbers were provided if requested.
- The Commissioner felt that Police Commanders covering more than one locality seemed to be working well.

Demand for Policing during the World Cup period and Fire and Rescue services during the hot dry spell had been extremely high. The Commissioner and Panel expressed their thanks to both services during this very busy time.

Resolved:

- a) That the update report be noted.
- b) That the assessment process carried out to identify drivers under the influence of drugs be provide to the panel.
- c) That panel participation in the evaluation of the Kulpra national pilot be explored.
- d) That the evidence which had led to the decision to reduce PCSO operational hours along with the staff retention/turnover rates before and after the contract changes, be provided to the panel.

8. Annual Report on the Management of Complaints and Conduct Matters against the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

The report of the Panel Secretary listed the complaints received over the personal conduct of the Commissioner and/or his Deputy. Of the five received, only one had been considered at a Complaint hearing.

Complaint hearings were dealt with by the Panel Chair and Vice Chair. It was suggested that the complaints process be amended to allow a substitute to

be appointed if the Chair or Vice were not able to make the hearing date. The substitute would be appointed by the Chair.

Resolved:

- a) The report be received and information noted.
- b) That the complaint hearing process be amended to enable the Chair to appoint a panel member to substitute for the Chair or Vice (if required) at complaint hearings.

9. Home Officer Grant 2025/26 including Annual report

The report of the Panel Secretary summarised the details of the Home Office Grant for 2025/26 and the performance information which the panel submitted to the Home Office.

Resolved: The report and performance information be received.

10. Regional Networking - Panel Membership

The report of the Panel Secretary invited members to consider joining the Regional Networking group. The Networking Group/Forums were organised by Frontline Consultants working alongside the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, LGIU and SOLACE. The cost of £420 plus VAT would be claimed back from the Home Office Grant.

Resolved: That the Panel join the Regional Networking Forum, payment of £420 to come from the annual Home Office Grant.

11. Questions to the PFCC by Panel Members

The Commissioner volunteered the following information:

- Public space consultation orders - consultation was currently taking place in Stafford Borough on face coverings in public places. It was suggested that this could be considered in other local authorities.
- The Commissioner offered to visit local authorities to discuss Community Safety and local authority area issues.

12. Dates of Future Meetings and Work Programme

Future work programme items could include:

- LGR and its implications on Community safety.
- Future Police and Fire board transition arrangements.
- Police reform arrangements



- A Police HQ visit
- Custody suite developments - South Staffordshire
- Fire Arms Training facility update

The next scheduled meeting was scheduled for 28th September 2026 at 10:00.

Resolved: That the Work Programme be received.

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

NOTE: The following action or information was requested at a previous meeting(s). When an item has been completed it will be reported to the Panel and then taken off the list.

Meeting / Agenda Item	Action Required	By Whom	Information requested/action taken	Completed or Target date
13 July 2026 Minute 5 co-optee	That Amanda Bailey be formally appointed to the position of Panel Co-optee for a 4-year term (dependent on legislation).	MP	Appointed	Completed
13 July 2026 Minute 7 (b) Annual report	b) That the assessment process carried out to identify drivers under the influence of drugs be provide to the panel.	MP	Information emailed to members 17/07/26	Completed
13 July 2026 Minute7 (c) Annual report	c) That panel participation in the evaluation of the Kulpra national pilot be explored.	MP	Information emailed to members 17/07/26. Chair and Cllr Screen invited to Board evaluation meetings	Completed
13 July 2026 Minute 7 (d) Annual report	d) That the evidence which had led to the decision to reduce PCSO operational hours along with the staff retention/turnover rates before and after the contract changes, be provided to the panel.	MP	Information emailed to members 09/09/26	Completed
13 July 2026	That the complaint hearing process be amended to enable the Chair to appoint a panel member to	MP	Updated	Completed

Minute 8 Annual report Complaints report/process	substitute for the Chair or Vice (if required) at complaint hearings.			
13 July 2026 Minute 10 Regional networking	Resolved: That the Panel join the Regional Networking Forum, payment of £420 to come from the annual Home Office Grant.	MP	Joined	Completed
13 July 2026 Minute 12 Work programme	Future work programme items could include: • LGR and its implications on Community safety. • Future Police and Fire board transition arrangements. • Police reform arrangements • A Police HQ visit • Custody suite developments – South Staffordshire • Fire Arms Training facility update	MP	Added to the work programme	Completed



Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 28 September 2026

Police and Crime Plan Update

Report of the Staffordshire Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report is to update the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on progress since 1 April 2026 in delivering the Police and Crime Plan for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the plan and make comment as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1. In October 2024, the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire and Rescue, and Crime (Staffordshire Commissioner) published his Police and Crime Plan for 2024-2028. The plan provides the strategic direction for how policing should be delivered during the Commissioner's term of office. It details how the Commissioner's Office (SCO) will work with Staffordshire Police, health, councils, the wider criminal justice system and community groups to reduce the number of victims of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB), reduce casualties on our roads and prevent people suffering due to the actions of others.
- 3.2. The plan sets out the Commissioner's priorities, designed to 'Keep Staffordshire Safe':
 - **An outstanding local Police service:** Closer to communities to really understand what matters to them and proactive in solving their concerns. Easy to contact, focused on the needs of victims and providing excellent customer service. Proficient and professional in everything they do. This will mean that people are safer and feel safer, and are confident in and proud of Staffordshire Police.
 - **Supporting victims:** Ensure that victims (which includes witnesses) are treated with respect and empathy to ensure they remain confident in the force's response and are provided with high quality, specialist support services so they feel able to cope and recover from the impact of crime and ASB.
 - **Preventing and protecting:** Prevent harm and protect people (particularly children and those who are vulnerable) by intervening early, ensuring they are appropriately safeguarded and receive the

help and support they need. Challenge and support people to make life choices that will prevent them from offending or reoffending. Doing so will mean fewer victims of crime.

- **Impactful partnerships:** Bring partners together and ensure the appropriate agency plays to its strengths in preventing crime and ASB, protecting people from harm, supporting those affected and delivering justice. Encourage people to get more involved in shaping priorities, volunteering and helping to solve problems in their community.

3.3. How effectively the Service performs against these priorities is a key part of how the Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public. To this end, the Chief Constable must have regard to the Police and Crime Plan in producing his Policing Plan for the force. Both the Police and Crime Plan and the Policing Plan will be kept under review and potentially refreshed during the Commissioner's term of office to take account of finances, changes in national policy or major events.

3.4. The [2025/26 Annual Report](#) was received by the panel on 13 July 2026. This report highlights progress since April 2026.

4. An outstanding local police service

4.1. In April 2025 Staffordshire Police published its **Policing Plan 2025-2027**. As required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the plan takes due regard of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan alongside the national Strategic Policing Requirement 2023 and its own self-assessment. The plan sets out areas of focus under the following headings:

- **Ensure Safe and Confident Communities:** Deliver what matters to victims and our communities
- **Develop an Exceptional Workforce:** Respect, inspire and support each other
- **Develop Active and Productive Partnerships:** Think and act collaboratively – doing better, together
- **Build an Outstanding Organisation:** Be efficient and effective in all we do

4.2. The Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account for performance through a robust governance framework including **Public Performance Meetings**, the next of which will be held at 10am on 5 November 2026 at the County Buildings. These meetings are live-streamed and available to view after the meeting and a detailed information pack published on both the Commissioner's and County Council's websites. Panel members are encouraged to read the pack and observe the meeting in person.

4.3. In July 2026, the latest report into Staffordshire Police's performance was published by **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &**

Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The report, published under the Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL) programme raises concerns about how the force responds to the public particularly in call handling and attendance times and highlights challenges in leadership and force management, investigating crime and managing fraud. However, the report also shows an improving picture in the prevention of crime, safeguarding of vulnerable people and neighbourhood policing and recognises strengths in digital transformation, financial planning and stop & search quality.

4.4. The follow ratings were given to key areas:

Adequate

- Attracting, developing and retaining the workforce and creating a diverse and inclusive workplace
- Using powers fairly, appropriately and with justification
- Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour and reducing vulnerability
- Safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm
- Providing a safe and lawful custody environment

Requires improvement

- Leadership and force management
- Investigating crime
- Managing Fraud

Inadequate

- Responding to the Public

4.5. **Victim Satisfaction Surveys** are carried out by Staffordshire County Council's Customer Service Team to understand how satisfied they were with the service they received from the force. Results for the 12-month period to 31 July 2026 compared with the same period last year show some improvement regarding ease of contact, however, satisfaction with the way in which investigations were carried out and being kept informed of progress has declined compared to last year. A bespoke survey is conducted with victims of domestic abuse. The latest results show improvement in most metrics.

	Aug 25 to Jul 26 (Last 12 months)	Aug 24 to Jul 25 (Prev 12 months)	%Change	DA Surveys 1st August 2025 to 30th July 2026	DA Surveys 1st August 2024 to 30th July 2025
Q10-Before this incident took place, how would you describe your opinion of Staffordshire Police? - Positive	68.9%	70.8%	-1.9%	69.8%	64.4%
Q46-As a result of contact with the Police on this occasion, has your opinion of Staffordshire Police changed in any way? - Positive	71.1%	71.7%	-0.6%	76.3%	76.3%
Before and after difference	2.2%	0.9%	1.3%	6.5%	11.9%
more positive	14.7%	21.5%	-6.8%		
positive (unchanged)	56.3%	50.3%	6.0%		
more negative	11.1%	12.3%	-1.2%		
neutral opinion/no opinion	16.7%	14.3%	2.4%		
negative (unchanged)	1.2%	1.6%	-0.4%		
Q13-How did you find making contact with the Police? - Easy	81.9%	79.9%	2.0%	90.1%	90.4%
Q22-After your initial contact, did the Police get back in touch with you at all? - Yes/Not Req'd (Follow up)	69.4%	78.0%	-8.6%		
Q30b-Thinking about your follow-up contact with the Police, how did you feel about the way in which you were kept informed about the investigation? - Satisfied (Kept Informed)	79.2%	83.3%	-4.1%	76.1%	70.4%
Q37-Overall, how did you feel about the way that the incident was investigated? - Satisfied	79.1%	84.3%	-5.2%	84.0%	77.0%
Q39-Did you feel that you needed additional support (i.e. counselling, specialist services etc) as a result of the incident? - Yes	7.3%	10.1%	-2.8%	34.8%	34.4%

4.6. From April 2026, **Public Surveys** are being carried out continuously online with residents of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent through a new contract with Zencity, a company which specialises in helping public sector agencies to better understand community concerns, needs and priorities to improve trust and confidence. The toolkit now available to the SCO and Staffordshire Police enables more people to be engaged through social media channels as opposed to traditional face-to-face and telephone surveys previously carried out. It also analyses social media comments around policing and community safety issues. These two elements together provide real-time sentiment analysis which can be dissected by geographical areas, demographic groups and themes and overlaid with other data. The findings are now fully integrated into police performance monitoring arrangements and are being used to help drive service improvement and track the impact of public engagement initiatives. Highlights as at July 2026 include:

- 56% say that when it comes to the threat of crime, they feel safe in their neighbourhood.
- When asked what would most improve their feelings of safety in their neighbourhood, the top responses are:
 - 60% More visible police patrols
 - 32% Faster police response times
 - 28% More CCTV cameras in public places
 - 25% Clearer ways to report crime or anti-social behaviour
 - 20% A stronger sense of community

- 18% More active streets and visible public activity
- 17% Cleaner, well maintained streets
- 59% agree that Staffordshire Police are approachable.
- 76% would be willing to contact the force to report a crime or if they felt unsafe.
- 63% agree that the force would treat them with respect if they needed them
- 41% agree that the force listens to and takes account of the concerns of local residents.
- 43% are confident the police treat people fairly
- 41% feel informed about what the police are doing in their area
- 59% state that, overall, they have confidence in Staffordshire Police.

4.7. In March 2026, the force achieved the targeted recruitment of 53 additional police officers funded by the Home Office under the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (NPG). The NPG has five pillars:

1. **Police back on the beat:** A dedicated, focused neighbourhood policing team in every local area, carrying out intelligence-led and visible patrols, including in town centres and on high streets.
2. **Community-led policing:** A named, contactable officer for every neighbourhood, responsive to local problems. Residents and local businesses will be able to have a say on Police priorities for their area.
3. **Clear performance standards and professional excellence:** New training for officers and standards for professional excellence will ensure neighbourhood policing is developed as a specialist policing capability.
4. **Crackdown on ASB:** Neighbourhood policing teams will have tougher powers, and be supported by other agencies, to tackle persistent ASB.
5. **Safer town centres:** Neighbourhood policing teams will crack down on shop theft, street theft and assaults against retail workers, so local people can take back their streets from thugs and thieves.

4.8. Work on the new **armed police training facility** at police headquarters is due to complete in November 2026. This project replaces the existing leased outdoor range which is not fully compliant with Health and Safety legislation or standards for firearms training set by the College of Policing. The new training centre will meet national standards and current and future needs, offering state-of-the-art facilities including a 10-lane 50-metre indoor firing range, training rooms and office space. The scheme also includes a skills house to train tactics relating to building entry and searching. This follows a detailed review initiated by the Commissioner in 2021 to understand the force's future requirements for deploying armed officers and evaluate a range of alternative options to meet them.

4.9. The force continues to implement an ambitious **Digital Strategy**, using

data, information, and digital capabilities to improve efficiency and effectiveness. A Virtual Assistant is being tested for release later this year. It is designed to make life easier for the public by answering common questions, signposting to useful resources, and guiding users on how to report non-emergency crimes online. This will reduce demand on 101, cut abandonment rates, and free up call handlers to focus on more complex and urgent queries. At the same time, it will help improve trust and confidence in the service by giving communities quick, clear, and accessible information at first contact.

- 4.10. New **body-worn camera** technology is being rolled out across the force. More officers and staff than now have access to body-worn capability, helping strengthen evidence gathering, transparency and officer safety. The platform on which the cameras operate also enable officers to securely request CCTV or video footage from victims, witnesses and business, reducing the need for return visits and helping detectives receive evidence more quickly. A new app also gives users access to digital evidence tools on their mobility devices, while specialist teams are testing and using the live-streaming capability to support operational activity. This is encouraging innovation in operational teams. Firearms support dogs, for example, are now using live-streaming capability during searches, helping handlers and officers build a clearer picture of what is happening in real time.
- 4.11. As with other public sector organisations, police forces are learning to use AI with confidence and unlock the power it provides to improve efficiency, reduce admin tasks and improve ways of working. Maintaining public trust, however, is essential and understanding how to use AI appropriately, securely and ethically is critical. Staff training sessions are underway which cover key considerations around data protection, security, governance and the importance of following Staffordshire Police's AI Usage Policy when using these tools.
- 4.12. In August 2026, Staffordshire Police launched a [CCTV Registry](#) to encourage residents, businesses and organisations to register their CCTV and video doorbell cameras. It allows people to register the location of their cameras so that if an incident happens nearby, investigators know who they can contact.
- 4.13. The SCO has been recognised nationally for the quality of its **independent custody visiting scheme**, receiving a Gold award from the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA). Under the scheme, trained volunteers from the local community make regular unannounced visits to Police custody suites to check on the rights, entitlements, wellbeing and dignity of the detainees held there. Their findings are reported to the Police and Crime Commissioners, Mayors and equivalents across the UK who hold Chief Constables to account.

5. Supporting victims

- 5.1. The **Staffordshire Victims and Restorative Justice Gateway** received 16,758 referrals between 1 April and 30 June 2026, of which 14,994 victims received advice, guidance and information signposting them to other services such as New Era, Survive, Uniting Staffordshire Against Hate (USAH) and ASB Harmony. 1,123 enhanced victims received a managed handover to specialist services and 195 were referred to the SVG cope and recover team for 1:1 support.
- 5.2. Services commissioned by the SCO continued to provide **specialist support to victims**. The Victims Code is promoted by all specialist support services. From 1 April to 30 June 2026:
- 532 referrals were received by the Survive Sexual Assault and Abuse Service, with 369 accepting ongoing support for counselling and practical and emotional support.
 - 77 referrals were received by USAH (hate crime service) with a total of 29 receiving advice and guidance only and 33 victims receiving practical and emotional support. 23 training sessions were delivered to professionals, and 46 education and community awareness sessions were delivered. The tendering exercise has commenced for the Hate Crime Service to start on 1 April 2027.
 - 157 referrals were received by Harmony (ASB & Mediation service) with a total of 5 receiving advice, signposting and guidance only and 152 victims receiving mediation, practical and emotional support. 2 training sessions were delivered to professionals and 18 education and community awareness sessions. The tendering exercise has commenced for the ASB and Mediation Service to start on 1 April 2027.
 - The Adult SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) service received 100 referrals and supported 63 victims.
 - The children and young people's SARC service received referrals for and supported 71 victims.
 - The Business Crime Support Service received 1,922 referrals of which 678 accepted support. Businesses were contacted within 1.5 days from the point of the crime being reported. 243 businesses also accepted 1hr free, confidential, specialist support sessions.
 - 22 referrals were made to the Restorative Justice (RJ) Service with 14 accepting ongoing RJ support.
 - 173 victims of domestic abuse were provided with counselling support.
- 5.3. The Ministry of Justice have confirmed the allocation of £2,287,907 to the SCO to fund services for victims of crime in 2026/27.
- 5.4. The **Survive Sexual Assault and Abuse Service** has continued to work with Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and North Staffs Combined Healthcare Trust to support the Ascend recovery service. There

is a plan for Ascend to fund a case coordinator role to sit within Survive to help provide a seamless service for individuals with complex trauma due to sexual assault and/or abuse.

- 5.5. A commissioning process has commenced to secure a new pan-Staffordshire **support service for Stalking victims**. This will commence on 1 December 2026.
- 5.6. The **Staffordshire Domestic Abuse (DA) Victim and the DA Behaviour Change services** are funded under a tripartite agreement led by the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office (SCO) with Staffordshire County and Stoke-on-Trent City Councils. Both contracts currently run until September 2027 with the option available to further extend to 30 September 2028 currently being considered. Total annual investment in DA services by partners is £3.46m.
- 5.7. Pan Staffordshire commissioned DA services are provided by Victim Support, operating under the brand 'New Era', and deliver consistent, free and confidential support for victims, perpetrators, families, communities, businesses and stakeholders across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.
- 5.8. During the first quarter of 26/27, New Era's Victim service received almost 2,000 adult referrals seeking support, advice and guidance together with over 525 additional referrals for child victims. New Era's Behaviour Change service received 140 adult referrals and an additional 38 children seeking support in changing their abusive behaviour during the same period.
- 5.9. Victims engaged in the DA service continue to report an improved feeling of safety, resilience and empowerment and knowledge of support services, with those engaged in Behaviour Change support report they are better able to take responsibility for their behaviour, challenge their own thoughts and attitudes and think about their style of communication with their partner.
- 5.10. The CPD Accredited **DA in the Workplace Champion programme** operated by New Era in conjunction with the Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce continues to provide specialist DA training within the workplace environment. Attendees are trained to recognise the signs of DA, and signpost those who might want help to specialist services. Supporting DA victims in the workplace is an investment in the health and wellbeing of employees and is available to local businesses and partner organisations across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent free of charge. Over the 9 months October 2025 – 30 June 2026 the Workplace Champion programme has delivered:
 - 8 specialist full day training sessions, either face-to-face or online
 - 81 new Champions have been trained, representing 35 organisations
 - 27 DA Workplace Pledges have been signed
 - 27 new DA Workplace Policies have been embedded by attending

organisations

6. Preventing and protecting

- 6.1. The SCO continues to convene meetings of the countywide **Reducing Reoffending Board** which brings key agencies together to ensure a consistent 'whole system' approach to reducing offending and reoffending in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. The Board continues to drive improvements in joint working across the criminal justice system ensuring that agencies work together to deliver safer communities, reductions in offending behaviour and better offender rehabilitation outcomes.
- 6.2. Since the last report to the Panel this work has included:
- Work with Youth Justice and Support Services (YJSS), criminal justice and wider partners to support implementation of planned improvements in YJSS services arising from the findings of recent HM Inspectorate of Probation inspections and Service's own Improvement Plans.
 - Work with Probation, criminal justice and wider partners to support the implementation of changes to adult offender management arrangements arising from the 2026 Sentencing Act. The Act introduced changes to the structure of prison and community sentences, offender supervision arrangements and prison recall procedures. Preparation for the rollout of these changes will help local partners understand and manage local impacts.
- 6.3. Further improvement work has been undertaken with criminal justice and health partners, including sentencers, to increase the use of **Community Orders** with Drug and Alcohol Treatment Requirements as a sentencing option. This has resulted in a further increase in the use of CSTRs in both Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. Use of Community Sentences with a Mental Health Treatment Requirement is currently at its highest level since 2023.
- 6.4. The SCO has worked with public health and ICB partners to secure long-term funding for the delivery of the multi-agency Staffordshire **Mental Health Community Triage service**, responsible for responding to Police incidents / calls involving individuals with mental health needs and for diverting individuals, where appropriate, away from contact with the criminal justice system and into treatment and support services.
- 6.5. The SCO has also provided support to the formation of a new Probation-led strategic Board (Continuity of Care and Wider Health Needs Strategic Board) to lead work on the strengthening of support services for individuals involved in the criminal justice system with mental health needs and other vulnerabilities, including individuals returning to the community following

release from custody.

- 6.6. The SCO has maintained work with Staffordshire Police and criminal justice partners to increase the range of **Out of Court Resolution (OoCR)** options available for both juvenile and adult offenders to enable the Police and criminal justice agencies to deal effectively with low level crime without the need for prosecution. As a result of the improvement work use of OoCRs has continued to increase with Staffordshire now being ranked amongst the top 30% of police force areas for use of OoCR delivery.
- 6.7. Further work has been undertaken with local authorities and other partners to support the delivery of improvements in the provision of community-based **offender rehabilitation support services**, with a particular focus on services for offenders requiring help with accommodation, employment and in accessing substance misuse treatment and support.
- 6.8. The SCO has maintained investment in the commissioned countywide **Floating Housing Support Service** for Offenders. This provides practical support to offenders identified by Probation staff as requiring help in taking up/maintaining appropriate accommodation in the community as part of a planned programme of rehabilitation and resettlement. Over the past year, since the award of a new contract for the delivery of the service, the service has received over 167 referrals with over 90 individuals going on to engage with the programme, with over 90% of those supported reporting that the service had been successful in helping them to achieve stable lifestyles in the community away from crime.
- 6.9. Discussions are ongoing with DWP and local authority Employment and Skills partners to determine how local **employment support services** can be best aligned to meet the needs of offenders identified as requiring help in accessing employment and training which have resulted in a number of improvements to service delivery arrangements, including the provision of an enhanced service to high-risk offenders subject to multi-agency Integrated Offender Management (IOM) supervision.
- 6.10. The SCO has continued to work with local authorities, public health and criminal justice partners to improve the availability of criminal justice-related **substance misuse treatment services** to ensure that individuals whose offending is related to substance misuse are able to be quickly referred into local treatment services for support – including the piloting of a new ‘Monkey Dust’ CSTR Treatment option.
- 6.11. The SCO has continued to support the newly-established Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent **Women Offenders Task and Finish Group** with the aim of improving rehabilitation outcomes for women and girls involved in the criminal justice system, recognising the unique challenges many face.
- 6.12. The **Personal, Health, Social and Economic (PHSE) Education Service**

continues to support schools to improve the quality and consistency of PSHE curriculum delivery. 1,234 professionals in schools and other education establishments signed up to receive a monthly PHSE digest. A website providing guidance and resources for young people, education providers, parents and carers is now accessed by 70% of education establishments. The most visited pages in the resource library are:

- Online Safety
- Knife Crime
- Extremism/Exploitation
- Water Safety
- Alcohol
- Aspirations & Goals
- Online Safety
- Communities (including ASB)
- Puberty
- Smoking & Vaping

- 6.13. 18 schools requested advice and guidance visits from the Service which focused on PSHE curriculum delivery and the local needs of the children and young people at the schools, which include healthy relationships, prevent, health and wellbeing. The service has been delivering training and advice to schools to be RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) ready for the new curriculum in September 2026. 79% of participants advised that their confidence had improved following the training. The service has commissioned a specialist provider to provide webinar training for schools on AI and deepfakes, pornography and sexual strangulation. This is in line with the new emphasis of the RSHE curriculum from September 2026. The service has also produced 5 PSHE lessons and 5 tutor sessions to support the 'I'm Here' Attendance Campaign in Staffordshire schools.
- 6.14. Project delivery has commenced after a successful bid to NHS England to address the **prevention of harmful sexual behaviour**. This includes delivery from the Lucy Faithfull Foundation around training and resources for professionals working with SEND children, NSPCC delivering Intrafamilial Sexual Abuse training, Staffordshire Women's Aid delivering healthy relationship workshops, and PSHE Co-ordinators producing a consent toolkit.
- 6.15. The new **Child Criminal Exploitation Prevention Service** commenced in April 2026 delivered by Action for Children. The service has a strong prevention focus and supports children identified by education providers who are vulnerable to being criminally exploited. Referrals from education providers (Primary Schools, Secondary schools, Special Schools, Alternative Provision, and those Electively Home Educated) can be for those aged between 9-16 years or up to the age of 25 for those with special education needs or disabilities. Between April and June 2026, the service received 33 referrals from 13 schools, and group work commenced to

provide. 91% of the children referred are male, and the most represented age group is 15 years old. Engagement with education settings has been positive, with those who have referred and engaged with the service reporting an increased awareness of child criminal exploitation, violence related risks and available support and pathways.

- 6.16. The Commissioner's SPACE programme brings together public, voluntary and private sector organisations to provide fun, positive activities for potentially vulnerable young people to help increase their skills, improve their health and wellbeing and create opportunities with an additional aim of reducing levels of ASB. Since being relaunched, SPACE has gone from strength to strength, with an 82% reduction in youth ASB during the summer period since 2016. 1,395 reports of youth-related ASB were recorded during the school summer holidays in 2016 compared to 237 in 2025. The evaluation of this year's scheme is underway, and outcomes will be shared with the panel in due course.

7. Impactful partnerships

- 7.1. The **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Violence Reduction Alliance** (VRA) continues to prepare the local response to the Serious Violence Duty.
- 7.2. A £435,535 investment from the Home Office has been secured to work with partners to target locations experiencing higher volumes of knife crime. This money will be invested in regular police patrols, supported by partner initiatives to address local issues.
- 7.3. Between April and June 2026, the VRA Navigator and Tailored Support Service has seen 144 children and young adults, 135 parents/families and 212 professionals supported. This has resulted in 19 safeguarding referrals, 45 referrals to other agencies, 14 reports to safeguard communities and prevent future violence, 61 follow-on sessions and 31 referrals to the Tailored Support element of the Service.
- 7.4. The VRA has secured an additional 12-months of funding from the Home Office to work with partners to target and reduce violence through the Violence Reduction Alliance. Investments will be made in:
 - Youth Justice Services - providing focused support for those identified as at risk of being involved in or affected by violence through being a victim of violence. This initiative will comprise targeted one to one support, social skills training, education support, mental health support, group work and where appropriate restorative justice.
 - CCE Prevention - delivering targeted early intervention/support for children with identified risk factors, aged between 9-11 years to prevent an escalation of issues.

- A social media campaign – focusing on social media and digital, mis and dis-information and the associated risks.
- Step Together – developing a uniformed youth worker provision to directly engage with young people on identified locations on the way to and from school, to promote a safe journey, signposting and safeguarding where appropriate.
- Relationship violence prevention – developing and enhancing service capacity to intervene and support incidences of relationship violence within a family setting – particularly child on parent violence.
- Violence Prevention Training – supporting educational establishments to undertake workforce development in relation to violence and its associated harms with frontline staff.

7.5. Two new campaigns have been launched. The 'Choices' campaign shows how drinking too much and taking drugs on a night out can influence a person's inhibitions and make them act violently as a result. For casual drug users who don't see the harm in low-level drug use, the 'No Choice' campaign highlights the reality for vulnerable children who are abused and exploited by criminals to deliver drugs. Highlights include:

- Through paid ads, the campaigns reached more than 145,000 unique users and had over 270,000 views on Meta (Facebook and Instagram)
- The 'No Choice' campaign reached over 52,000 users through an advertising platform the SCO has recently started using called SOLV. This also resulted in 425 click throughs to the campaign website.
- The 'No Choice' campaign also achieved more than 100,000 impressions through Nextdoor advertising and had more than 600 click throughs.
- Through Tik Tok advertising, the 'Choices' campaign reached over 72,500 users, was viewed more than 250,000 times and generated just under 950 clicks.
- The VRA website received 8,100 new users, representing the number of people who visited the website for the first time during the campaign period. Both campaign webpages include signposting information to the local drug and alcohol support services.

7.6. The VRA has rolled out the WalkSafe personal safety app in Newcastle, Stoke-on-Trent, Tamworth and Stafford. This enables people to choose safe walking routes, share their journeys and planned arrival times with friends and family in real time and report local safety concerns.

7.7. The VRA Wellbeing Service continues to support children and young people at risk of being involved in or affected by violence and provision has been made to extend the Service across the remaining geographical areas of Staffordshire. The service links closely to the work of the police violence reduction team.

7.8. The VRA provided Serious Violence Duty funding to the PSHE Service to

develop a knife crime comic and supporting resources to help manage emotions through the Where Will It End campaign (a violence related production). The PSHE Service has started to co-produce the resources with children.

- 7.9. In partnership with Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT), the VRA delivered four lunch and learn sessions to improve knowledge of neurodivergence, and promote the Neuro-Verse resources, tools and techniques. The sessions have included: What is neurodivergence in criminal justice, making reasonable adjustments, understanding ADHD/Autism, sensory processing and regulation, and consent and information governance in practice is planned for September 2026.
- 7.10. The annual Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment has been developed with partners to provide insight to inform and enhance the local response to violence prevention and its associated harms.
- 7.11. The SCO continues to lead the local implementation of the Government's new National Drugs Strategy through the pan-Staffordshire **Drug and Alcohol Partnership** (DAP). The Partnership is governed by a multi-agency Board, chaired by the Commissioner, which meets quarterly.
- 7.12. The Board oversees delivery of three drug-related action plans; to break supply chains, deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system and achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs. This has resulted in:
- targeting and removing / disrupting organised crime groups,
 - seizing assets and drugs
 - delivering drug test on arrest in custody for relevant offences and referring detainees into treatment and support services
 - offering a pre-arrest diversion scheme for some low-level drug related possession offences
 - offering drug worker support at all criminal justice settings (custody, court, prison and on release)
 - delivering a broad range of drug treatment services ranging from harm reduction, treatment, psychosocial support to rehabilitation and recovery, attracting more drug users into treatment
 - anti-stigma training being delivered to help communities and professionals better understand drug and alcohol issues
 - providing opportunity for lived experience to thrive
 - increasing awareness and targeting interventions so that fewer people take drugs or feel drawn toward taking drugs such as campaigns and educational resources in schools
 - Developing testing and launching a Local Preparedness Plan (to respond to an outbreak of drug related deaths / incidents). It provides the framework for an emergency response to suspected drug-related deaths, non-fatal overdoses or related drug poisoning serious incidents, outlining the roles and responsibilities of relevant organisations to ensure the timely and coordinated management of an

incident in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, to prevent further incidents and reduce harm

- undertaking focussed work to better understand the use of and response to synthetic cathinones
- working with health to develop pathways where co-existing issues exist, to improve access to relevant services.

7.13. The Board has also overseen the development of an Alcohol Strategy (ahead of national direction) and 5 supporting action plans to:

- prevent the use of alcohol or change behaviour so alcohol use disorder and alcohol-related crime is prevented
- strengthen targeted prevention by identifying and targeting those at risk of developing unhealthy relationships with alcohol or living with high-risk consumption of alcohol
- provide effective support for individuals with high alcohol intake or alcohol use disorder, to help improve quality of life and life expectancy, enable people to live as well as they can, and maximise their health and wellbeing
- use the powers available to manage the availability of alcohol and enforce responsible, safe alcohol sales, fully utilising swift, visible justice to address alcohol-related issues
- challenge social attitudes and behaviours towards alcohol that foster unhealthy relationships with alcohol, changing the mindsets of community members, professionals and businesses regarding alcohol.

7.14. The **Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership** (SSRP) is a collaboration between public sector organisations within Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, who work together to make our roads safer. The SSRP is currently chaired by the Commissioner and aims to achieve a long-term, sustained reduction in road traffic collisions through joint work by partners including Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent councils, Police, Fire & Rescue Service and National Highways. A revised strategy for the partnership is in development.

7.15. SSRP announced seven routes across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to be the focus of the annual 'Ride it Right' campaign, designed to reduce motorbike casualties. The campaign features eye-catching yellow 'Think Bike' signs on specific routes and social media messages asking drivers to be more aware of motorbikes and urging bikers to ride carefully. The routes, which are updated each year, have been identified by the SSRP as the highest risk based on the analysis of motorcycle collisions.

7.16. The SSRP is investing £24,000 in improving cycle safety in Burton-on-Trent, thanks to an award from the Toyota Manufacturing UK Charitable Trust. The funding will be used for a range of projects including face-to-face engagement activities in the Burton area and an awareness-raising campaign aimed at reducing the number of collisions involving pedal

cyclists and drivers. Projects funded through the initiative will include:

- Roadside stop checks for cyclist commuters to undertake maintenance checks and provide safe cycling advice and equipment
- Engagement with cyclists and drivers through events with local businesses
- Communications campaign to promote safety messages to cyclists and drivers
- Close pass operations to promote the safe overtaking of cyclists.

7.17. The Staffordshire Commissioner's Office on behalf of **Community Safety Partnerships** (CSPs), has recently commissioned the refresh and delivery of the statutory Community Safety Strategic Assessments, to provide a clear picture of local crime and community safety, and underpin local Community Safety Plans.

7.18. The Commissioner has made £100,000 available to CSPs for the financial year 26/27. The funding is used to meet locally identified needs and support delivery of local community safety priorities defined within the local Community Safety Plans.

7.19. The Commissioner's **Community Safety Forum** maintains community safety collaboration between agencies and focuses prompt joint action to tackle community safety issues.

7.20. As Chair of the **Local Criminal Justice Partnership Board** (LCJPB), the Commissioner continues to oversee collaborative work across criminal justice agencies to improve timeliness and case progression. The Board continues to oversee collaborative work across criminal justice agencies to **improve timeliness, quality and case progression**. Staffordshire has seen sustained improvements in police investigation timeliness and is now performing better than the national average on key measures relating to the time taken to progress investigations. In addition, outstanding caseloads within the Magistrates' Courts have reduced by 5% compared to the previous year, making Staffordshire the only area within its most similar force group to achieve a year-on-year reduction. Alongside improvements in timeliness, the Board remains focused on maintaining the quality of justice outcomes. Staffordshire continues to make effective use of Out of Court Resolutions, remaining above the national average and third amongst comparable force areas. As volumes increase, disposals remain appropriate, proportionate and effective, with current compliance data providing encouraging evidence that quality standards are being maintained. Partners remain committed to further improving system efficiency, reducing delays and ensuring cases progress through the justice system as effectively as possible. A 'blitz' on trials has been undertaken to reduce the number of non-guilty pleas presented, a Domestic Abuse pilot to improve waits and outcomes, and the use by Police of efficiency tools to

enhance file quality.

- 7.21. Additionally, strong emphasis remains on **victim engagement and witness attendance** in the criminal justice system. This reflects both local performance data and national developments that place greater focus on victims' rights and experiences. Encouragingly, compliance with the Victims' Code and the quality of victim updates has improved during the last 12 months. Partners are working to further improve the ways victims are kept informed of case progression, alongside increasing the levels of Victim Personal Statements taken and used in court proceedings. The results of the victim surveys are also being reviewed, and any necessary changes to process introduced. The Board is also addressing witness attendance and reducing the number of cases affected by victim disengagement.
- 7.22. The Board is actively monitoring the implementation of significant **national criminal justice reforms**, including the Sentencing Act 2026, the Victims and Courts Act and emerging recommendations arising from the Leveson Review. Local partners are assessing the implications for probation services, courts, community sentencing, treatment orders and wider criminal justice capacity. This work is intended to ensure Staffordshire is well positioned to respond to legislative changes, maximise opportunities for rehabilitation and maintain the effectiveness of the justice system during a period of considerable national reform.
- 7.23. Improving outcomes for **children and young people** remains an important priority for the LCJPB. The 2026/27 Delivery Plan includes specific actions aimed at reducing unnecessary remands into custody, improving timeliness for young people progressing through the justice system, supporting diversionary approaches and reducing first-time entrants into the Youth Justice System. The Board is also continuing work to better understand and address disproportionality.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. The Police, Fire and Crime Panel will continue to receive updates in line with their proposed work plan for the coming year and as requested.

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Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 28 September 2026

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service

Safety Plan 2025 - 2028 Update Report

Report of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report is to update the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the delivery of the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Safety Plan. The Safety Plan fulfils the legislative obligations to publish a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) as defined in the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2018.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the plan and make comment as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1. The National Framework requires each Fire and Rescue Service produce a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which must:
 - reflect up-to-date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
 - demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a way that makes best use of available resources;
 - outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
 - set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat;
 - cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;

- reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
 - be easily accessible and publicly available.
- 3.2. The new CRMP 2025-2028 was published in December 2024 following an extensive period of consultation. It recognises the strategic priorities set out in the Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan 2024-2028 which in turn acknowledges the operational risks identified in the draft CRMP.

Please click [here](#) to read the CRMP 2025-2028 in full.

- 3.3. This report is based on the priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue Plan 2024-2028:
- An outstanding Fire & Rescue Service
 - Preventing
 - Protecting
- 3.4. The Commissioner holds the Chief Fire Officer to account for performance through a robust governance framework including **Public Performance Meetings**, the next of which will be held at 10am on 4 November 2026 at the County Buildings. These meetings are live-streamed and available to view after the meeting and a detailed information pack published on both the Commissioner's and County Council's websites. Panel members are encouraged to read the pack and observe the meeting in person.

4. An outstanding Fire & Rescue Service

- 4.1. This update provides an overview of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's HMICFRS inspection activity, emerging national themes from the 2025-2027 inspection programme and how these continue to inform the Service's approach to assurance, improvement and future priorities.
- 4.2. **Progress Against Previous HMICFRS Inspection Findings and Recommendations** - All improvement activity arising from previous HMICFRS inspections and thematic reviews has been completed and formally closed through the Service's governance arrangements. The current inspection has included assessment of how effectively these improvements have been embedded across the organisation.
- 4.3. **HMICFRS 2025-2027 Inspection Programme** - Emerging findings from the HMICFRS 2025-2027 inspection programme highlight a growing emphasis on organisational assurance and the ability of fire and rescue services to demonstrate effective governance, workforce sustainability, organisational learning and positive culture.
- 4.4. Increasingly, HMICFRS is focusing not only on what services do, but on

how they evidence that activity is delivering intended outcomes and improving services for communities. These themes align with established priorities within Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and provide important context for the current inspection programme.

- 4.5. **Inspection Activity** - Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service has now completed the fieldwork phase of its HMICFRS inspection as part of the 2025-2027 inspection programme. Activity included document reviews, interviews, focus groups, reality testing and station visits, providing HMICFRS with a comprehensive assessment of service performance, leadership, governance and organisational culture.
- 4.6. The inspection also considered the extent to which improvements arising from previous inspections and thematic reviews have been embedded across the organisation.
- 4.7. As an independent assessment of the Service's effectiveness, efficiency and people arrangements, the inspection supports organisational learning and continuous improvement.
- 4.8. Staff from across the Service engaged extensively throughout the inspection process, enabling HMICFRS to gain a broad understanding of the organisation, its achievements and its approach to service delivery.
- 4.9. Following the HMICFRS debrief, the Service will receive a draft report for factual accuracy review ahead of publication of the final report, which is expected later in 2026. The findings will be used to identify areas of good practice, inform future improvement activity and support the continued development of the Service's strategic priorities, performance arrangements and organisational learning.
- 4.10. Any recommendations or Areas for Improvement will be incorporated into the Service's existing improvement and governance framework, with progress monitored through established performance and assurance arrangements.
- 4.11. **HMICFRS Cyber Security Thematic Inspection** - HMICFRS has completed a national thematic inspection examining cyber security resilience across police forces and fire and rescue services. The report is expected to be published shortly.
- 4.12. A summary of the key findings, any implications for the Service and the planned response will be reported through the appropriate governance arrangements. The findings will help inform the continued development of the Service's cyber resilience, assurance and risk management

arrangements in response to emerging risks and national learning.

- 4.13. In line with HMICFRS requirements, we now publish a summary of our progress against all its recommendations on our website which you can read by clicking **here**. We are also required to provide HMICFRS with a quarterly update on our progress against these recommendations which we upload to a dedicated secure portal.
- 4.14. The Service is undergoing a multi-phase **Transformation Programme** to meet financial sustainability targets set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Following the successful completion of Phase 1 which delivered substantial recurring savings, the focus has shifted to the implementation of Phase 2 initiatives. This includes the identification and delivery of additional transformation options required to secure the required savings from 2025 onwards.
- 4.15. **Phase 1 (2022–2025). Total Recurring Savings Achieved: £1,300,000.** Phase 1 was delivered successfully, meeting targets through a combination of:
- Workforce efficiencies with savings made from reducing wholetime crewing figures and reviews of prevention and protection staff.
 - Process improvements around operational crewing and training.
 - Strategic project completions which have seen investments in the On-call service and procurement of new innovative appliances.
- 4.16. **Phase 2 – (2025–2029) – Savings Requirement (2025–2029) Savings Target: £1,000,000 (recurring) –** On track, with declared savings to date of £734,000
- Removal of 6 On-Call Support Officer Roles - with an estimated £140,000 reinvestment required for Learning & Development to maintain training delivery. Net Saving: £260,000 per annum from 2026
 - These achievements reflect the Service's commitment to responsible financial management while maintaining high standards of public and firefighter safety.
- 4.17. Other key transformation developments include:
- Continued development and optimisation of ICT systems to enhance efficiency and enable smarter working practices.
 - Environmental and Sustainability Strategy: work towards long-term sustainability goals.
 - Ongoing work on clean concept initiatives to minimise the risk from contaminants and protect operational staff.
- 4.18. **Medium-term Funding Pressures and Phase Three of the Transformation Programme.** For the 2026/27 financial year, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is forecasting a stable financial position. However, for 2027/28 and 2028/29, there is a recurring funding gap estimated

between £0.8m and £2.4m.

- 4.19. This range reflects significant uncertainty related to the following factors which could further compound and increase the Reasonable Worst-Case scenario:
- The amount of council tax precept (up to £5 per year) for years two and three of the CSR is not yet known.
 - Inflationary pressures and pay awards.
 - External governance changes, (including LGR and Police Reform) and associated costs.
 - Increases in capital expenditure (or borrowing) and potential long-term investment costs.
- 4.20. As a result, early and transparent planning is required to protect community safety, firefighter safety, and the long-term sustainability of the service. The Service has held 5 service wide financial briefings for all staff to ensure a clear understanding of the scale and recurring nature of the pressure, a collective approach to responsible financial decision making and engagement in identifying innovation and efficiency opportunities across the organisation.
- 4.21. Key Principles Guiding Our Approach in Phase 3
- Community and Firefighter Safety First
 - Statutory Duties, Legally Compliant and Managing Risk appropriately
 - Prudent Use of Reserves
- 4.22. The average total **Service availability** across Q1 2026/27 is 67.3% compared with 64.2% for the same period last year. Average service availability for Whole Time crewing is 98.8%. On-Call appliance availability has continued to stabilise at just under 60% since the start of the year. Average On-Call availability in Q1 is 57.5% compared with 53.3% for the same period last year.
- 4.23. The Service Attendance Standard is based upon the first pump appliance attending Primary/Secondary fires and Special Service Calls within 8 minutes to a high-risk area, 10 minutes to a medium risk area, and 18 minutes to a low-risk area. The target set for attendance is that 80% of the time this will be achieved. In Q1 of 2026/27 the attendance standard was achieved on 83.6% of occasions compared with 78.3% for the same period last year.
- 4.24. **Fire and Health Partnership Team:** Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to work in partnership with Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (SSOTICB) and Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) to deliver two important health partnership services: the Falls Response Service and the Home from Hospital Service.

- 4.25. The Falls Response Service has been operating since December 2022, with the Home from Hospital Service following in December 2023. Together, these services support vulnerable residents to remain safe and independent at home while helping to reduce pressure on health and social care services. Funding discussions continue to secure the long-term future of both services beyond the current funding period. Whilst these discussions are taking place against the backdrop of significant NHS organisational change, funding for both services has been confirmed until 31 March 2027. Although delivered as part of the Fire and Health Partnership Team, the two services provide distinct functions and are summarised below.
- 4.26. The **Falls Response Service** provides a seven-day-a-week response across Staffordshire, helping people who have fallen safely regain their independence while reducing unnecessary ambulance dispatches and hospital admissions. As at 30 June 2026:
- 3,836 mobilisations have been completed, averaging 2.9 calls per day, with demand continuing to increase and recent activity exceeding three calls per day.
 - 94% of patients attended were aged over 60, enabling crews to identify additional fire risks and offer Home Fire Safety Visits where appropriate.
 - The team maintains an average attendance time of under 40 minutes across the county.
 - The average incident duration is 66 minutes, demonstrating an efficient response while providing appropriate patient care.
- 4.27. The service continues to demonstrate effective triage, ensuring the right resource is sent to the right patient at the right time. Of all Green category non-injury fall incidents, (where patients simply need assistance to get up):
- 80% resulted in the patient being safely assisted with no further medical intervention required.
 - 9% of patients had already been assisted before the team's arrival.
 - 10% required onward referral to the Integrated Care Centre (ICC) following assistance.
 - Less than 1% required escalation to the Integrated Care Centre and West Midlands Ambulance Service due to injury.
- 4.28. In August 2025, the service expanded to include Failed Contact responses, supporting the Integrated Care Centre by attending patients who could not be contacted following an initial assessment by West Midlands Ambulance Service. Between 1 September 2025 and 30 June 2026, the team completed 274 Failed Contact incidents:
- 76% – Contact made, no further action required.
 - 8% – Patient assisted following a fall.
 - 7% – Patient had already managed to get up.
 - 5% – Referred back to the Integrated Care Centre.
 - 4% – Required alternative action, including urgent ambulance support.

- 4.29. Through these interactions, the team has also completed 1,863 Home Fire Safety Visits, further strengthening the link between health intervention and fire prevention.
- 4.30. The **Home from Hospital** Service supports patients returning home safely following discharge from hospital, helping reduce delays in discharge while enabling individuals to settle safely back into their homes. As at 30 June 2026:
- 5,381 mobilisations have been completed, including 3,805 Discharge and Settle In (DSI) requests.
 - Average daily discharges have increased significantly from four to six per day since the previous reporting period.
 - 95% of patients supported were aged over 60, providing further opportunities to identify fire risks and offer Home Fire Safety Visits.
 - The average DSI visit takes 79.5 minutes, reflecting continued improvements in service efficiency.
 - 96% of discharges are completed without any issues, with only a small proportion requiring additional support from the Integrated Discharge Hub.
- 4.31. Since the service expanded in July 2024, the team has undertaken a wider range of activities to support safe hospital discharge, including:
- 1,676 key safe installations
 - 406 furniture move requests
 - 61 property inspections
- 4.32. Across all elements of the service, the team now completes an average of 7–8 jobs per day. A revised shift pattern introduced in November 2025 has increased capacity to support the strategic objectives of the Integrated Discharge Hub. Since implementation, demand and activity have continued to grow, demonstrating the value of the service and the strength of partnership working between Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and NHS colleagues.
- 4.33. Both the Falls Response Service and the Home from Hospital Service continue to make a significant contribution to improving patient outcomes, supporting independent living and reducing demand on wider health and emergency services, while creating valuable opportunities to deliver fire prevention interventions to some of the county's most vulnerable residents.

5. Preventing

- 5.1. 7,392 **Home Fire Safety Visits** (HFSV) and 528 Extended Visits were undertaken in the last six months compared with 7,685 and 681 respectively for the same period last year. Extended visits are carried out after an initial HFSV has taken place or when the information provided requesting a visit has suggested a greater deal of support and advice for the resident is

required. It is at these visits where further intervention measures including the provision of additional safety equipment such as fire-retardant bedding and smokers' bins are provided. Prevent Teams will also signpost people to partners for additional support e.g. requesting an Assessment of Needs for the resident or may request hard of hearing equipment is fitted.

- 5.2. A total of 26 referrals requesting **Fire Safety Intervention** were received in the last 6 months compared with 21 for the same period last year.
- 5.3. The **Road Safety Delivery Plan** is now live as a supporting document to the Prevention, Partnerships and Safeguarding Strategy 2024–2028. The plan sets out Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's coordinated approach to road safety, clearly defining the Service's contribution alongside partners within the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP). It provides a live framework for delivery, ensuring activity is targeted, evidence-based and complementary to the work of partner agencies, avoiding duplication while maximising the impact of prevention initiatives.
- 5.4. The plan outlines SFRS activity across priority and higher-risk road user groups, including children and young people, pre/young drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, pedestrians, mature drivers, work-related road risk, military personnel, and children with SEND/SEMH. It also includes wider road safety initiatives such as child car seat awareness, vehicle safety checks, high-risk driver behaviours and seasonal communication campaigns. Where appropriate, the plan identifies new opportunities to integrate road safety messaging into existing prevention activities, such as Home Fire Safety Visits and community engagement, with performance monitored through existing reporting mechanisms and regular review to ensure the plan remains current and responsive to emerging priorities.
- 5.5. The mature drivers pilot commenced in July 2025, and the evaluation has now been completed. The findings will be reviewed and used to inform the next phase of the programme.
- 5.6. **Safe+Sound** has completed delivery for academic year 25/26, and the delivery timetable for 26/27 is in place, with schools already booking.
- 5.7. Year 5 children are invited including many SEND settings. SEND settings send a variety of age children whose learning is at Year 5 level so that they are able to participate and get the most out of the workshops available.
- 5.8. Partners engaged in delivery include St John Ambulance, HSBC Bank, Canal and River Trust, RNLI, DHL, Wincanton, Network Rail, Staffordshire Police and the Community Drug and Alcohol Service.
- 5.9. Delivery locations, dates, numbers and percentages of schools attending can be seen below:

Number of schools invited	339
Number of schools attending	190 (56%)
Number of children attending	8,087
Number of looked after children attending	83
Number of children with SEMH attending	476
Number of children with SEND attending	1,108

- 5.10. Bilbrook and Codsall Fire Station has been added as a Safe+Sound venue, meaning the programme is now delivered at 17 Fire Stations across the County every year.
- 5.11. Events for Home Educated Families were also piloted and feedback was extremely positive. Whole family groups attended and partners adapted their delivery to meet the needs of the group dynamics that they encountered.
- 5.12. Online delivery of **Safe+Sound** on the Learn Live Channel continues with a weekly programme every Wednesday during term time:
- In response to identified local and national need, Safe+Sound delivered a Water Safe Special Programme in June.
 - The number of live views exceeded any Safe+Sound programme produced before (and was Learn Live's highest viewed programme of 25/26) with 441,088 live views nationally, of which 67,491 were in Staffordshire.
 - Promotion of the programme was supported by the NFCC via StayWise, with Fire and Rescue Services across the country promoting the event to their schools.
 - Plans are in place for 26/27 to provide more special themed programmes at specific times of year or to meet identified need.
 - Below are viewer numbers for this and last academic year which shows a continued increase in live views – the addition of the Water Safe Special has led to agreements to include further Special themed programmes at appropriate times in the next academic year.

	Staffs	National	Total	On Demand	Total 25/26 views including Water Safe Special
24/25	268,788	312,270	582,058	156,639	
25/26	313,403	382,865	696,268	155,431	
Water Safe Special	67,492	373,596	441,088	TBC	1,292,787

- 5.13. Partners involved in content of the weekly programmes include SFRS, Staffordshire Police, RNLI, Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership, Stop

Loan Sharks, Violence Reduction Alliance and many more.

- 5.14. Five **Young Driver Events** were delivered at Sandyford, Burton, Stafford, Newcastle and Cannock Fire Stations during 2025–26. The programme, co-ordinated by Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership, brought together Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service, other partner agencies and stakeholders to improve road safety awareness among young people aged 16 years and over. 171 students attended.
- 5.15. Workshops delivered include:
- HGV Blind Spot Awareness – Wincanton/GXO Logistics
 - Drink & Drug Driving Awareness (None for the Road) – Staffordshire Police & Staffordshire County Council Road Safety Team
 - Hazard Perception & Driver Distraction (The Driver immersive pod) – Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service
 - Vehicle Checks & What to Do in an Emergency – National Highways
- 5.16. Students reported gaining valuable knowledge about:
- HGV blind spots and stopping distances
 - The risks and consequences of drink and drug driving
 - Hazard perception and driver/passenger distractions
 - Essential vehicle safety checks and maintenance
- 5.17. **Safe+Sound Careers events** aim to demonstrate the variety of roles available within the Fire Service, whilst also showcasing the role of the Firefighter. Feedback has been positive for all events.
- 5.18. 240 students from Stafford, Newcastle, South Staffordshire Colleges attended a Uniformed Public Services Event at SFRS HQ. We asked the students who responded with feedback 'Are you considering a role in the Fire Service' Of the 92 that answered the question;
- 15 answered 'Yes, I was already planning to prior to attending' (16%)
 - 10 said 'Yes, today has changed my plan' (11%)
 - 31 said 'No' (34%)
 - 36 said 'Maybe' (39%)

6. Protecting

- 6.1. The Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) is now fully embedded in the work of Protection Teams. This is the primary method used to prioritise risk for premises covered by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This impacts the premises proactively chosen for fire safety audits by Protection Teams as well as the role operational crews take to ensure its full effectiveness. Premises deemed very high and high risk (based on national best practice methodology) receive a full fire safety audit by a specialist Fire Protection Inspecting Officer. A selection of premises

deemed medium, low and very low risk receive a compliance check visit by suitably qualified (Level 2 award in fire safety checks) operational crews with any serious issues referred to the relevant Protection Team.

- 6.2. To date, 496 Compliance Checks have been completed by operational crews, with 225 operational members of staff trained to complete them. In terms of Protection Staff qualifications, all 21 members of the team now have at least a Level 3 Certificate in Fire Safety, with 16 deemed competent having achieved their Level 4 Diploma in Fire Safety.
- 6.3. Between February and July 2026, the service carried out 260 fire safety audits, the vast majority of which were in high and very high-risk premises. As a result of these audits 6 Prohibition Notices and 5 Enforcement Notices have been served. In terms of compliance with the RBIP - of the premises which should have been visited in that timeframe, 99% now have been visited. In the same period, 367 Building Regulation Consultations were received of which 94% were responded to within 15 days.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The Police, Fire and Crime Panel will continue to receive updates in line with their proposed work plan for the coming year and as requested.

Ben Adams
Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

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STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

28 September 2026

WORK PROGRAMME PLANNING 2026/27

Report of the Secretary

Recommendation:

That the Panel note the dates of future meetings and considers the contents of its future Work Programme.

Background

By Regulation this Panel is required to meet on a *minimum* of 4 occasions each year with the facility to convene additional meetings as and when required.

There are a number of reports/matters which the Panel is required to consider:

Police and Crime Matters: the proposed Policing and Crime Precept each year, the Police and Crime Plan, The Commissioners Annual Report on the delivery of the Plan, Confirmation Hearings for a number of key posts and Reports on the Handling of Complaints.

Fire and Rescue Service Matters: The proposed Fire and Rescue Service Precept each year, the draft Fire and Rescue Plan/Corporate Safety Plan (incorporating the Integrated Risk Management Plan), the Annual Statement of Assurance and Confirmation Hearings for key posts in the Service.

Panel Meeting date	Agenda Items
22 June 2026 10am	Panel training- private meeting - Members only
13 July 2026 10am	• Appointment of Chair • Appointment of Vice-Chair • Appointment of Independent Co-optee • Annual Report on the Management of Complaints and Conduct Matters against the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner • Home Officer Grant 2025/26 inc. Annual report • Regional Networking - Subscription

	• Consideration of the Commissioners Annual Report 2025/26 • Any decisions made by the Commissioner
28 September 2026 2pm	• Police and Crime Plan Update • Fire and Rescue Plan Update • Any decisions made by the Commissioner
September – Site visit	• Panel visit to Pirehill (Fire and Rescue Service) - private meeting – members only
7 December 2026 10am	• MTFS/Budget Update – Policing Service • MTFS/Budget Update - Fire and Rescue Service • Fire and Rescue Annual Assurance Statement • Any decisions made by the Commissioner
1 February 2027 10am	• PFCC's proposed Police Budget and Precept 2027/28 • Police and Fire Misconduct and Complaint – annual report • Annual Conference for PFCP's (if held) – report • Any decisions made by the Commissioner
8 February 2027 10am	• Consideration of the PFCCs proposed Fire and Rescue Budget and Precept 2027/28 • Fire and Rescue Service Safety Plan - Update Report • Any decisions made by the Commissioner
15 February 2026 10 am	If required , further consideration of proposed Police and/or Fire and Rescue Budget and Precept 2027/28
12 April 2027 10am	• Annual Review of Panels Terms of Reference and Procedure rules (agreed by Panel 13/04/25) • Any decisions made by the Commissioner
Pending items	
1. Custody Suite redevelopment – requested at 28 July 2025 meeting and 13 July 2026 – at an appropriate time 2. Stalking and Domestic Abuse and the work taking place locally – requested at 22 September 2025 meeting Items suggested 13 July 2026: 3. LGR and its implications on Community safety. 4. Future Police and Fire board transition arrangements. 5. Police reform arrangements 6. A Police HQ visit 7. Fire Arms Training facility update	

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