

PCC and CC Force Inspection response record

Version Dec 2024

Force	Staffordshire
Police and Crime Commissioner	Ben Adams
Chief Constable	Acting Chief Constable Becky Riggs
Title of inspection	Inspection of police role in safety advisory groups for public events
Published Date	04 September 2026
Inspectorate	 HMICFRS Making communities safer
Summary of inspection	The Inspection of police role in safety advisory groups for public events examined how effectively police forces contribute to local multi-agency Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs), which help assess and manage risks associated with public events. HMICFRS found that while police generally play a positive and valued role in supporting event safety, there is significant variation across forces in governance, training, policy, decision-making and the understanding of police responsibilities within SAGs. The inspection highlighted concerns about inconsistency in how police assess risk, record decisions and balance public safety with their advisory role, creating the potential for confusion about accountability. HMICFRS concluded that clearer national guidance, improved governance, better training and stronger assurance arrangements are needed to support a more consistent approach and ensure police involvement in public event planning remains effective, proportionate and focused on public safety.
Grade	
Recommendations	Recommendation 8 By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should provide specific safety advisory group training for police safety advisory group attendees who aren't public order public safety trained. Recommendation 9 With immediate effect, all chief constables should satisfy themselves that their officers always use the crowd and event safety template when they engage with event organisers. Recommendation 12 By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should satisfy themselves that the demands on gold commanders are manageable and support public safety, especially where public safety events and other responsibilities happen concurrently. Recommendation 14 By 31 August 2027, all forces should have a documented handover protocol between the police and event organisers for command responsibility for all public events. This should state that forces may need to take command, to meet the core responsibilities of the police under common law (long-standing custom, based on previous legal cases).

Recommendation 19 By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should take steps to make all intelligence products and risk assessments for public events, including football fixtures, comply with the refreshed College of Policing guidance for intelligence management. They should have robust quality assurance checks for processes using artificial intelligence technology.

Recommendation 20 By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should make sure a force intelligence representative attends safety advisory groups for those public events where a formal intelligence command structure is in place and shares any risk assessment in line with information sharing protocols.

Recommendation 22 By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should make sure their forces complete community impact assessments, business impact assessments and people impact assessments for events on a proportionate basis, in line with College of Policing guidance.

Recommendation 24 By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should make sure the silver public order public safety commander (or their nominated deputy) attends all safety advisory groups that consider the events they command.

Recommendation 27 With immediate effect, all police forces should decline any payment from private individuals or companies for the provision of police services at public events unless it complies with section 25 of the Police Act 1996.

Recommendation 31 By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should have the events portal available on their force website. They should submit relevant information and intelligence, collected via the portal, to the National Police Coordination Centre strategic intelligence and briefing team.

Recommendation 33 By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should make sure their force uses the new National Police Coordination Centre events risk matrix in operational planning for all public events.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's initial response

The Commissioner welcomes this inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and recognises the importance of effective partnership arrangements to support public safety at major events. The report highlights a number of national issues relating to the governance of Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs), the respective responsibilities of event organisers and public bodies, training, risk assessment and funding arrangements.

The Commissioner notes that the majority of the 37 recommendations are directed towards national organisations including the College of Policing, National Police Chiefs' Council, National Police Coordination Centre, UK Resilience Academy, the Home Office and wider government. A smaller number of recommendations are directed to chief constables and police forces.

Staffordshire Police contributes to local authority-led Safety Advisory Groups across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, supporting the safe planning and delivery of major public events. These event-specific arrangements operate alongside wider multi-agency resilience and emergency preparedness structures through the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Resilience Forum.



The Commissioner has requested the Acting Chief Constable's assessment of the findings and recommendations, including:

- The extent to which Staffordshire Police's current arrangements align with the report's recommendations.
- Any areas where further action or assurance may be required.
- Existing governance arrangements for engagement with Safety Advisory Groups and major public events.
- Any implications for training, risk assessment, intelligence processes and partnership working.

The Commissioner notes that the inspection found significant national inconsistency in the operation of Safety Advisory Groups and the wider legislative framework for public events, concluding that many of these issues require national policy and legislative consideration rather than force-level action alone. In particular, HMICFRS recommends a government-led review of event safety governance arrangements and the future status of Safety Advisory Groups.

Chief Constable's response

The force welcomes the findings of the HMICFRS inspection into the police role in Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) and major event planning. An initial assessment has been completed against the recommendations, identifying that many requirements are already met through existing public order and public safety arrangements, event planning processes and partnership working.

The force is satisfied that existing arrangements broadly support compliance in areas including SAG engagement, Special Police Services governance, Community Impact Assessments, event risk assessment processes and command structures. Training is already provided to Tactical Planning Unit staff who regularly attend SAGs, and accredited Gold Commanders remain available to oversee major events.

Some recommendations require further development to strengthen consistency and governance. These include:

- Establishing clearer assurance processes for SAG training.
- Embedding the national crowd and event safety template within force procedures.
- Reviewing command resilience and command handover arrangements.
- Strengthening guidance regarding intelligence involvement in event planning and SAG attendance.
- Considering the implementation of Business and People Impact Assessments.
- Reviewing arrangements for POPS Silver attendance at SAGs.
- Aligning local processes with emerging national guidance, including the National Event Risk Matrix and future events portal requirements.

Work is underway to address these areas through existing governance structures, with identified leads responsible for delivery. Progress will be monitored through established force oversight arrangements to ensure compliance is achieved within the implementation timescales.

The force is ensuring that the development and improvement of existing policing activity regarding SAG's is aligned with our wider multi-agency partnership work under the Protect and Prepare pillars of CONTEST. Over the past two years this has included bespoke training inputs to SAG Chairs and also event organisers on CT risks and considerations within event planning.

Overall, the force is well placed to respond to the recommendations and remains committed to strengthening event planning, partnership working and public safety arrangements through continuous improvement to ensure the safety of our communities.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's overall comments

I welcome the Acting Chief Constable's assessment of the HMICFRS findings and note that Staffordshire Police is already operating many of the arrangements highlighted within the inspection. I also welcome the force's commitment to strengthening governance, assurance and consistency in those areas where further development has been identified, including training, intelligence processes, command arrangements and event planning.

Effective partnership working is essential to ensuring public safety at major events and I am reassured that the force is continuing to work closely with local authorities, event organisers and wider resilience partners.

I will continue to seek assurance through existing governance arrangements that the identified actions are delivered within the required timescales and that Staffordshire Police remains well placed to support the safe planning and delivery of events across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.