



STAFFORDSHIRE  
**POLICE**

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

**Author:** Deborah Wilne

**Organisation:** Staffordshire Police

**Contact:** 01785 232284

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deborah.wilne@staffordshire.police.uk

### **Introduction**

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

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

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

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

### **Recommendations to JARC**

It is recommended:

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

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

## **Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspection**

### **PEEL 2025 – 2027 Inspection**

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

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

Across the force, each of the nine areas have senior leader ownership, accountability, and governance arrangements in place, with governance of delivery against the overall framework being overseen by the Deputy Chief Constable. Preparations are supported by a dedicated central coordination team through a programme approach, maintaining direct links with the inspectorate on a weekly basis.

HMICFRS commenced their continuous assessment work in force in July 2025, culminating in the final evidence gathering period (two-week fieldwork) from 2 March 2026. The final fieldwork phase was undertaken by a team of 11 inspectors through further reality testing, focus groups activity and individual interviews across the breadth of the force.

### **Custody Inspection**

Although part of the overall PEEL framework, this inspection is carried out by a specialist team with dates being announced to forces a few weeks in advance in order to allow time to provide evidence and data.

The force was notified during November 2025 that a 2-week inspection of the force's custody arrangements would take place in December 2025.

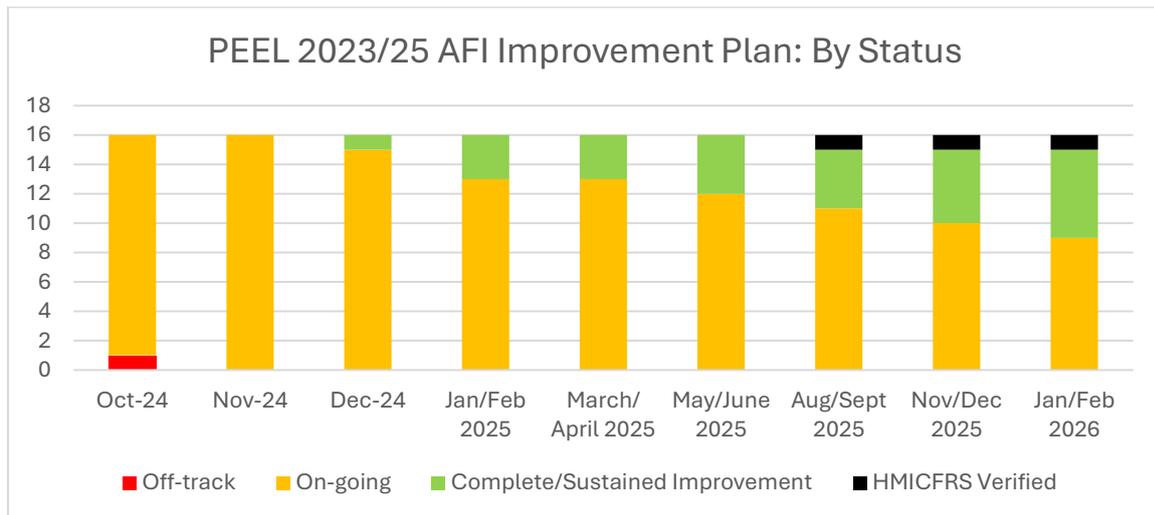
A 'hot debrief' was provided at the end of the inspection period which indicated positive findings in key areas such as leadership, safe custody environment and detention of children and vulnerable adults. The force demonstrated a strong commitment to learning and improving both during and post the inspection and have had the opportunity to demonstrate to HMICFRS additional progress that has been made to date based on the feedback given at the time.

The force is anticipating that the finalised full PEEL report will be published in June 2026.

## Staffordshire PEEL 2023-25 Areas for Improvement (AFIs)

Further progress has been made over the last quarter around addressing ongoing areas for improvement as can be seen in the chart below.

The force has been working closely with HMICFRS as part of the continuous assessment and also during final fieldwork to verify those areas for improvement considered as complete. This will require the most recent inspection findings to be reviewed and moderated before further verifications can be made.



## Child Protection Inspection 2025

Following on from the force's inspections in this area in 2021 and 2023, HMICFRS conducted a full inspection during May 2025 as part of the new national rolling programme. The force's report was published in December 2025. As anticipated the report reflected a continued trajectory of sustained progress across this area, whilst identifying where there is still more to do (see diagram below).

## National Child Protection Inspection – Progress Since 2021



## Police Integrity Inspection Programme 2025

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

- Vetting
- Professional standards
- Counter corruption

The force is currently working with HMICFRS to verify closure for previous force and national areas for improvement / recommendations in this area as significant progress has been made.

Preparations against the 2025 inspection framework continue as part of the forces overall approach to inspection preparedness.

## Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Inspection 2023

The force has submitted evidence to HMICFRS in relation to the review and verification of closure of the related AFIs. The national SOC inspection team have recently (February 2025) verified completion against 2 of the AFIs and the force is providing further information to support the verification of the remaining 2 areas (see diagram below).



## National Thematic Reports and Recommendations

The force records and monitors progress against all national recommendations through its bespoke action tracking system and internal governance arrangements. The majority of these recommendations<sup>1</sup> (83%) are complete and will be subject to scrutiny and governance as appropriate ahead of verification and closure against overall plans (see diagram below).

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<sup>1</sup> please note that this number / proportion is subject to frequent change dependent on the frequency of new national reports and recommendations being published.

## Addressing National Thematic Recommendations

- Strengthened governance and monitoring – DCC led Inspection & Audit Governance Board
- Improved sign-off process and completion rates
- Part of wider continuous improvement focus



All published reports can be accessed via the link below:

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

## 2. Internal Audit Reports and Recommendations

There are 12 live Internal Audit Reports that are being monitored via the Force Action Plan System, with a significant number of management actions either on track or completed.

Since the last report 5 Internal Audit management actions plans have been formally signed off and closed. Further information can be found in Appendix 1.

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

## 3. Strategic Risk and Issue Management

Oversight and monitoring of Strategic Risk and Issues takes place monthly at Executive Management Board (EMB). Risks are owned and aligned to relevant Chief Officer led Boards to direct activity and review the impact of mitigations in place.

The Strategic Risk Register, as discussed at EMB on 24th February 2026, contained 8 Risks and 1 Issue.

EMB will next meet on 24th March 2026.

Summary of changes since the last report (see appendix 2 for further details):

- 2 Risks have been reviewed and escalated to the register
- 3 Risks and 1 Issue have been de-escalated from the force register, with routine monitoring taking place via the relevant strategic level boards and registers

The Force Strategic Risk Register is also shared with the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office and reviewed at each monthly Strategic Governance Board Meeting (SGB).

## Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Reports

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

1. AUDIT 2024 Finance Systems - Reasonable Assurance	Signed off at IAGB 16.09.25
2. AUDIT 2025 Key Finance Controls - Reasonable Assurance	Signed off at IAGB 16.09.25
3. AUDIT 2023 Health and Safety - Employer Responsibilities (including Remote Working) - Partial Assurance	Signed off at IAGB 18.11.25
4. AUDIT 2025 Asset management Report 6.24/25 - Reasonable Assurance	Signed off outside of IAGB on 10.02.26
5. AUDIT 2024 Business Continuity Management - (Advisory)	Signed off outside of IAGB on 10.02.26

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

Action Plan	On Track	Off Track	Complete	Total Rec's
1. AUDIT 2024 Change Management and Delivery - Partial Assurance	1		3	4
2. AUDIT 2024 Vetting FINAL - Partial Assurance			6	6
3. AUDIT 2025 Capital Programme - Southern Area Custody	1			1
4. AUDIT 2025 Final Internal Audit Report Follow Up 2.25/26 - Firearms and Data Integrity	2			2
5. AUDIT 2025 Key Financial Controls and Finance Systems Implementation - Follow Up Report	1		1	2
6. AUDIT 2025 Overtime	1			1
7. AUDIT 2025 EMU/Property (Combined) Minimal Assurance - "OFFICIAL SENSITIVE"				
8. AUDIT 2025 Workforce Planning - Training and Development (Advisory)	1		4	5
9. AUDIT External 2025 - Joint Audit Completion Report Year Ending 31 March 2024	1		12	13
10. AUDIT 2026 Cyber Security - OFFICIAL SENSITIVE				
11. AUDIT 2026 Income Generation - Reasonable Assurance	1		1	2
12. AUDIT 2026 Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee – Advisory			2	2

## Appendix 2 – Summary of Strategic Risks and Issues

### Risk:

1. **Emergency Services Network (ESN) Project:** Risk of compromised operational viability due to delays in decommissioning of Airwave. This is a nationally led programme.
2. **Contact Business Continuity Management (BCM)** – Capability to transfer contact and dispatch functions to alternative locations should the site at HQ be compromised.
3. **Evidential Management Unit/Property Store** – Effectiveness of property store current operating model post implementation of the new POM model.
4. **SyAP/Cyber** – Protection of the force infrastructure and data from cyber threat. This is both a local and national risk.
5. **Custody Facilities** – An assessment of the risk posed by Staffordshire Police's current custody capabilities.
6. **Transformation Realisation** – Risk of being unable to deliver required MTFs savings due to the transformation programme being insufficient in scope or limited by 'red lines'.
7. **Public Confidence** – The declining public confidence in UK policing. This is both a local and national risk. **[NEW SINCE LAST REPORT]**
8. **Officer Strength and Resilience** – Operational and wellbeing challenges associated with officer numbers and experience, amplified by national disparities and internal constraints. **[NEW SINCE LAST REPORT]**

### De-escalated Risks or Issues since the last Report:

#### Risk(s):

**Sexual Misconduct:** Abuse of position for a sexual purpose. This is both a local and national risk. This risk has been **de-escalated** to the DCC Command risk register with any associated residual risk built into the new overall public confidence risk.

**Vetting** - Capacity to deliver against increased demand placed on Force Vetting Unit. This risk has been **de-escalated** to the DCC Command risk register.

**Information Governance** - The effectiveness of the Information Governance Function to fulfil the statutory requirements placed on the Force. This risk has been **de-escalated** to the DCC Command risk register.

#### Issue(s):

**Pensions (McCloud)** – Implementation of the Police Pensions Remedy; both a local and a national issue. This risk has been **de-escalated** to the Enabling Services Command risk register.