

South Yorkshire  
Mayoral Combined Authority  
11 Broad Street West  
Sheffield, S1 2BQ

26<sup>th</sup> June 2025

To: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services

Dear Chief Inspector

**Response from Kilvinder Vigurs, South Yorkshire's Deputy Mayor, to the HMICFRS report: An inspection of the police response to the public disorder in July and August 2024 Tranche 2: use of an intelligence-led approach, tackling online content and social media, and crime investigations**

I welcome the findings and recommendations of this report.

I am pleased that here in South Yorkshire, our Local Resilience forum initiated a local de-brief following the violent disorder. It is important to identify any organisational learning and notable practice across partner agencies at the earliest opportunity, whilst waiting for any national findings and any associated recommendations. Within a week of the disorder, the Mayor met with local faith leaders which provided an early opportunity to understand community views and discuss early learning opportunities.

It is clear further work is required to improve the policing response to public disorder. We need to engage with all our communities, including those seldom heard and online communities, if we are to develop a more comprehensive picture of concerns and risks. However, policing agencies are not equipped to tackle the spread of disinformation through policing intelligence functions alone. I look forward to continuing to work with key stakeholders to ensure policing seeks to get ahead of disorder before it escalates.

The recommendations detailed in the report have been accepted by the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police (SYP). As the Deputy Mayor with PCC responsibilities in South Yorkshire, I have oversight of the implementation of these recommendations (as appropriate to South Yorkshire) through local governance arrangements.

**(Recommendation 1) With immediate effect, the National Police Chiefs' Council and chief constables should create a plan and begin work to improve how the police service collects, analyses and communicates intelligence about disorder. They should plan to:**

- a) **establish clear and resilient intelligence networks, functions and processes to help the police service respond to national emergencies involving disorder more effectively;**

- b) test these arrangements, once they have been established;
- c) give National Police Coordination Centre strategic intelligence and briefing greater capacity and capability to support the police service in recognising, analysing and responding to information and intelligence on disorder, particularly at times of national emergency;
- d) prioritise the collection, analysis and distribution of intelligence on disorder and community tension;
- e) make sure that frequent, accurate and comprehensive strategic intelligence assessments on the threat and risk of disorder are reflected in public order public safety strategic risk assessments;
- f) revise how the police service classifies and collects intelligence on disorder to help it to better assess the threats posed, including whether intelligence categories such as “cultural nationalism” and “domestic extremism” are relevant and understood across policing;
- g) make sure each police region has an intelligence team or function that can assess the threat of disorder, which we suggest could be part of each regional information and co-ordination centre; and
- h) make sure that neighbourhood policing teams perform a central role in helping forces to better understand community mood, sentiments and tension.

I agree with this recommendation in principle. A national network that effectively collates information about public disorder and community tensions will be vital in preparing for any future incidents. However, strengthening national coordination will only ever be possible if we also look to improve information and intelligence collected locally. A plan to improve local capabilities, as well as scoping any resourcing and financial costs, should therefore also be considered. This should include making best use of available technology and social media monitoring.

I am pleased to see that the integral role of neighbourhood policing teams is reiterated in the findings of this report. The neighbourhood policing grant is welcome, and we are committed to using this to further strengthen neighbourhood policing in South Yorkshire. We must build trust and confidence in our communities and increase community resilience. South Yorkshire Police are currently embedding a new centralised directory for key individual networks (KINS) and making use of Community Tension Impact Assessments. This should improve engagement and provide a better and more timely sense of how communities are feeling.

**(Recommendation 2) With immediate effect, the National Police Chiefs’ Council and chief constables, working with the Home Office, should create a plan and begin work to better understand and respond to the risk associated with online content. They should plan to:**

- a) make sure that at force, regional and national levels there is enough police capacity and capability to monitor, analyse and respond to online content;
- b) make sure that forces have capacity and capability to manage risk from online content through effective communication arrangements;
- c) identify the full range of technical solutions that the police service uses or could use to improve monitoring and analysis of online information and intelligence on disorder, and responses to it;
- d) review whether provisions within the Online Safety Act 2023 are fit for purpose to support policing in its response to disorder; and

- e) **improve structures and arrangements for liaison and support between the police service, government departments and online service providers.**

I agree with this recommendation. Policing needs to keep up to date with new and emerging technology and online capability. Increased capacity in this space will need to be supported with increased resources, in what is an already a constrained environment. I will monitor the progress of SYP in this area through our strategic and financial planning process and other local assurance mechanisms. I will seek assurance from the Chief Constable that SYP is making the best use of available technology, including utilising the Police Digital Service. I will also focus on how we might increase capacity and capability through working in partnership with key stakeholders. This joined up approach is particularly important between those monitoring and analysing online content and those responsible for communicating and engaging with local communities. An effective joined up approach should help us counter mis-information pro-actively at an early stage so that we can address potential issues before they escalate and increase public trust and confidence.

**(Recommendation 3) With immediate effect, the National Police Chiefs' Council and chief constables, working with the College of Policing, should create a plan and begin work to improve how the police service investigates offences associated with large-scale disorder. They should plan to:**

- a) **revise the public order public safety Strategic Policing Requirement to include and specify the range of investigative resources that can be deployed when the national mobilisation plan is activated;**
- b) **make sure that senior investigating officers receive training and guidance to better manage investigations into widespread disorder;**
- c) **make sure that there is an investigation plan or strategy that can be used by all forces at times of a national police mobilisation to disorder; and**
- d) **make sure that all forces routinely carry out structured debriefs of suspects and offenders, to obtain potential evidence or intelligence about disorder.**

I agree with this recommendation. Taking a national approach should create efficiencies and consistency for forces provided there is sufficient skilled investigative resource to do so – a challenge when we know the national context regarding attracting and retaining investigators. It is important that the mechanisms in place to gather and share intelligence and potential evidence are routinely used by all forces in a timely way to maximise effectiveness.

Reflecting on the summer 2024 disorder, my heartfelt thoughts are with the families directly affected by Southport murders, and those subsequently impacted within our wider communities. I was utterly appalled by the violence we saw directed against some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

It is clear from the local de-brief, that effective partnership working and a multi-agency approach will be key to addressing issues of community cohesion. I am thankful for the work of the Local Resilience Forum in South Yorkshire and confident this approach will continue to benefit local communities.

Events have shown we must address wider societal issues impacting community cohesion. The Children's Commissioner report on the 2024 violent disorder found that a large proportion of those involved were children. Any improved intelligence mechanisms must also be used to work in partnership to identify and safeguard children at risk of being caught up in any future disorder so that there can be a focus on diversion and early intervention opportunities.

The report states policing was caught off guard. For the sake of our local communities, particularly those most vulnerable to being directly impacted by disorder, this must not happen again. Policing must seek out every opportunity to be pro-active in identifying the threat of cultural nationalism and domestic extremism.

I have copied this letter to the Home Secretary for her information.

I look forward to working with you both to keep people safe across South Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely



Kilvinder Vigurs  
Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime