

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

16 October 2026

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's role in safety advisory groups - planning for major public events

Effective planning for major public events is fundamental to public safety. This is particularly relevant within South Yorkshire. South Yorkshire Police support a significant number of large-scale and complex events each year. These include major sporting fixtures including those taking place across four league football clubs, city centre events and large music festivals such as Tramlines. The scale, diversity and frequency of such events require effective collaboration between policing, local authorities, event organisers and other partners to ensure risks are understood and managed proportionately whilst enabling communities to enjoy events safely.

To better understand the context of the report and the operational and strategic requirements placed upon policing, I recently attended public order and public safety training. This has provided me with valuable insight into the planning, command structures, training requirements and legislative considerations associated with major events, further supporting informed scrutiny and assurance activity in this area.

The findings and recommendations contained within the HMICFRS report have been accepted by South Yorkshire Police. Having liaised with the force, an initial response has been provided, but a number of actions remain in motion.

Many of the underlying concerns within this report arise from broader legislative and governance arrangements. Meaningful resolution of several of these issues will depend on the completion of the ministerial led cross-government review that has been proposed, to ensure there is a robust national framework and greater legal clarity. This will also help support local governance arrangements and consistent implementation at a local level.

Assurance has been sought against all eleven recommendations to understand the extent of current compliance within South Yorkshire Police and identify any further activity required. I will seek assurances on the implementation of any outstanding actions through existing governance mechanisms.

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.

I support this recommendation in principle. As the report identifies, there is significant variation nationally in both how Safety Advisory Groups operate and the training provided to those who attend them. The extent to which this recommendation can be effectively implemented by local forces will therefore depend on the development of the supporting guidance and training products by the College of Policing (Recommendation 6 and 7).

I have been advised that currently, all South Yorkshire Police Public Order Public Safety (POPS) Commanders, POPS advisors and planners are required to complete the POPS events training module, with a number of key officers also attending a 'Working with Safety Advisory Groups' course.

Once the new guidance and training is available, I will seek assurances that existing arrangements align with national standards and any gaps have been identified and addressed.

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.

I agree with this recommendation. This remains in progress and will continue to be monitored through established governance arrangements.

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

I agree with this recommendation and have been advised that the force already considers gold commander capacity when planning for concurrent events. Where circumstances require, separate gold commanders are appointed for different events to ensure effective strategic leadership, oversight and decision-making across all operations.

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).

I agree with this recommendation. I am advised that the force already operates in line with Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP), with well-established partnership working, governance and command arrangements for public events. Where an event assessment identifies the need for a formal transfer of command responsibility, event-specific documentation can be developed to clearly record and support these arrangements. Further work in progress to support this recommendation.

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.

I support recommendation. In previous responses, I have highlighted concerns regarding the national drive for police forces to adopt widescale usage of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly where legal, regulatory and governance frameworks have not kept pace with technological developments. These concerns extend beyond ethical considerations, but as this report highlights, includes questions of accuracy and accountability.

While AI presents opportunities to support operational efficiencies, its use also presents significant reputational risk to policing. Where AI-generated products contact inaccurate information, the impact extends beyond the originating force and has the potential to undermine public trust and confidence in policing more broadly. I therefore welcome this recommendation to introduce more robust quality assurance arrangements and compliance with intelligence management standards.

I would also go further and consider that stronger national oversight is required. There remains a capability gap across policing and policing oversight bodies in relation to the technical expertise required to effectively scrutinise the development, procurement, and implementation of AI products. I would welcome further discussion with HMICRS, College of Policing and Chief Constables to support meaningful scrutiny in this area of business and help ensure our local governance processes are robust.

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.

I agree with this recommendation. This remains in progress and will continue to be monitored through established governance arrangements.

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.

I support this recommendation and I am advised that this is currently being progressed. South Yorkshire Police are awaiting further College of Policing guidance to inform implementation. In the meantime, benchmarking activity is being undertaken to identify good practice and support future development. There is already evidence of impact assessments being completed and actively used, alongside ongoing reviews of risk and engagement with affected communities and local businesses. Recent protest activity has provided examples of this approach in practice.

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.

I support this recommendation and I am advised that it is currently being considered by Chief Officers within Operations Support, who are reviewing the detailed requirements and implications for existing command arrangements.

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.

I support this recommendation and I am advised that South Yorkshire Police are fully compliant.

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.

I support this recommendation. An events portal is available on South Yorkshire Police website that details how members of the public can help in the planning and policing of events and circumstances in which organisers should notify police. I am also advised that processes are in place in relation to information and intelligence submissions to the appropriate body.

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

I agree with this recommendation. I am advised that South Yorkshire Police already has arrangements in place to assess risk and support operational planning for notified events. However, as not all events are subject to notification requirements, further clarification is required regarding the scope of this recommendation.

Commenting more broadly

I am reassured that South Yorkshire Police is already compliant with a number of the recommendations in this report, reflecting existing governance arrangements and well-developed processes for managing major events.

The report also highlights that the wider legislative, regulatory and governance framework remains underdeveloped. The absence of a consistent national framework limits the extent to which assurance can be provided by policing oversight bodies, and, while Safety Advisory Groups remain non-statutory bodies, some variation in decision-making and oversight will be inevitable. I welcome collective consideration of the findings from this report to help improve governance arrangements at all levels.

There are several areas where further work is required to strengthen existing arrangements, improve the evidence base supporting compliance, or gain a more detailed understanding of current performance and consistency of application across the force. I will track progress through existing governance structures to ensure that the force can demonstrate compliance and, where appropriate, enhance its current approach.

Yours sincerely



Kilvinder Vigurs

Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime