



Matthew Barber

Police & Crime Commissioner
for Thames Valley

Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner Response to HMICFRS: *An inspection of the police's role in safety advisory groups: planning for major public events*

HMICFRS Report:

<https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/publication-html/inspection-of-police-role-in-safety-advisory-groups-for-public-events/>

HMICFRS Report Published: 4 September 2026

PCC Response: October 2026

Introduction

I welcome the publication of HMICFRS's report *An inspection of the police's role in safety advisory groups: planning for major public events* and thank HMICFRS for its comprehensive review of this important area of public safety.

The inspection was commissioned by the Home Secretary to examine the role police forces play in supporting Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) and assessing risks associated with major public events. It follows growing national concerns about the consistency of arrangements used to plan and oversee public safety at large-scale events and the need for greater clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of organisations involved.

As Police and Crime Commissioner, I recognise the importance of effective planning and partnership working in ensuring public events are delivered safely and that risks to communities are appropriately identified, assessed and managed.

The report highlights a number of recommendations directed at policing, Government and national partner organisations. Many of the findings relate to the wider national framework for public event planning and safety governance rather than the performance of any individual police force. I have therefore sought assurance from the Chief Constable regarding Thames Valley Police's position against those recommendations relevant to policing.

PCC Response

Thames Valley Police Position

I have received and considered a detailed assessment from Thames Valley Police regarding the recommendations directed towards Chief Constables and local policing responsibilities.

The force has reviewed its governance arrangements, command structures, training provision, partnership engagement, event planning processes and intelligence arrangements against the recommendations contained within the report.



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The assessment concludes that Thames Valley Police is currently compliant with the majority of recommendations applicable to Chief Constables. A small number of recommendations have been assessed as partially compliant, with improvement activity already underway to strengthen existing arrangements and achieve full compliance within the timescales identified by HMICFRS.

The force has also identified several recommendations that are dependent upon the development of national products, guidance and frameworks that are not yet available. In these areas, Thames Valley Police has confirmed that existing local arrangements remain in place pending national implementation.

Overall, I am reassured that the force has undertaken a thorough review of its position and identified clear actions to address those areas requiring further development.

Areas of Assurance

I am reassured that Thames Valley Police has established governance and operational arrangements in place to support the safe delivery of major public events across the Thames Valley.

The force has demonstrated evidence of:

- Established command and control arrangements through the Joint Operations Unit;
- Effective event planning and risk assessment processes;
- Existing training and professional development arrangements for relevant personnel;
- Strong partnership working with local authorities, emergency services and event organisers; and
- Governance structures that support oversight of public order and public safety activity.

These arrangements provide assurance that the force is well placed to manage the complex demands associated with major public events while working collaboratively with partners responsible for public safety.

I also welcome the force's continued engagement with Safety Advisory Groups across the Thames Valley and its commitment to maintaining effective partnerships that support safe and successful events.

Areas for Further Development

While the overall position is positive, the assessment identifies a number of areas where further work is required to fully meet HMICFRS expectations.

These areas relate primarily to:



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- Further embedding intelligence-related processes associated with public event planning;
- Ensuring consistent intelligence representation where required;
- Continued development of Safety Advisory Group-related training and guidance; and
- Preparation for the implementation of forthcoming national products and revised guidance.

I welcome the force's proactive approach to addressing these areas and note that appropriate action plans and governance arrangements are already in place.

Conclusion

This report highlights important issues concerning the governance, regulation and oversight of public events and Safety Advisory Groups. The findings reinforce the importance of effective collaboration, robust risk management and clear governance arrangements in supporting public safety.

The report also highlights the need for greater national consistency in the governance and oversight of public events. I welcome the recommendations directed towards national bodies and look forward to seeing progress made in strengthening the overall framework that supports public safety.

Having considered the findings of the report and the assurance provided by Thames Valley Police, I am satisfied that the force has appropriate arrangements in place to support the safe planning and delivery of public events across the Thames Valley.

Where improvements are required, the force has identified clear actions and timescales to deliver them. I will continue to monitor progress through established scrutiny and assurance arrangements and will seek further updates from the force as the remaining recommendations are implemented.

Above all, I want to ensure that Thames Valley Police continues to work effectively with local authorities, emergency services and event organisers to maintain public safety and public confidence at events across our communities.

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