



27th June 2025

Dear Home Secretary,

Re: An inspection of the police response to the public disorder in July and August 2024- Tranche 2

I welcome the inspection of the police response to the public disorder in July and August 2024 tranches 1 & 2 given the importance of these reports in identifying learning to ensure we are prepared for future incidents. Whilst protests are a pivotal part of our democracy, unlawful violence and disorder will not be tolerated in our region. It is right that we look at the how the force uses intelligence to inform its approach, what arrangements are in place for tackling online content, and how crime investigations are carried out.

West Yorkshire Police's public order capability was tested as the force was asked to provide significant resources to the national mutual aid requirements for the disorder seen across other parts of the country this summer. Whilst there was one instance of affray during a demonstration in Leeds city centre, West Yorkshire did not see the violent disorder that had taken hold elsewhere in the country. This operation saw officers from West Yorkshire deployed to Merseyside, Cleveland and South Yorkshire in various capacities. West Yorkshire Police were also proactive in their approach to tackling incitement offences and secured the first national charge (and subsequent conviction) for publishing written material intended to stir up racial hatred.

The force's public order capability was also tested earlier in summer 2024 when disorder broke out in Harehills in Leeds on the evening of Thursday 18th July 2024. This was spontaneous disorder where public order trained officers were withdrawn from their normal patrol and investigative duties putting significant pressure on the force and the officers involved. An extraordinary paper was taken to the Community Outcomes Meeting on 26th November 2024 where the public had the opportunity to ask questions.

I am assured that the appropriate structures are in place which will improve intelligence gathering, investigations and arrangements for tackling online content. This includes intelligence cell review and resourcing, expansion of digital capability to support online intelligence, and embedding multi-agency partnership and learning. As I also mentioned in our response to tranche 1, the plan to move responsibility for Local Resilience Forums to Mayoral Combined Authorities is also a positive step in this regard.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alison Lowe'.

Alison Lowe,

Deputy Mayor of West Yorkshire for Policing and Crime



Our response to key recommendations in the inspection report

Recommendation 1: With immediate effect, the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) and chief constables, working with the [College of Policing](#) and the Home Office, should create a plan and begin work to improve the police service's capacity and capability to respond to widespread serious disorder. They should plan to:

- in consultation with the Home Office, review the [public order public safety](#) (POPS)-related elements of the [Strategic Policing Requirement](#) and add relevant specialist capabilities, beginning with investigators and [intelligence](#) resources;
- complete a full assessment of the suitability and availability of personal protective equipment for all POPS trained [officers](#), including mounted branches and dog units;
- make sure that every police force or region can rapidly deploy drones during POPS incidents;
- develop and provide guidance on the use of drones within the [College of Policing's POPS authorised professional practice](#);
- review the range of available tactical options, equipment and technology to make sure officers can quickly and safely disperse people who take part in disorder; and
- review [POPS training](#) at all levels, including an assessment of the adequacy of the current fitness test for level 2 officers.

Recommendation 2: 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 mobilises [public order public safety](#) (POPS) resources. They should plan to:

- give the National Police Chiefs' Council POPS lead (national co-ordinating gold commander) explicit authority to set the national strategy for [POPS mobilisation](#), and full command and control of the deployment of tier 3 resources;
- improve the capacity and capability of all [regional information and co-ordination centres](#), including providing better guidance and a common operating framework;
- improve the technology available to the [National Police Coordination Centre](#), so that it can deploy and manage [mutual aid](#) more effectively and efficiently – the police service should be able to access information on the identity, number, location and nature of resources; skills available; length of deployments; and operational status of vehicles;
- prioritise a national structured debriefing process about the police response to disorder that supports rapid learning and improvement; and
- increase the police service's POPS [mobilisation](#) testing regime and take decisive action on its results.



West Yorkshire response to recommendations 1 & 2:

The force has assured the Deputy Mayor that a force plan has been created for recommendations 1 & 2, overseen by the Detective Superintendent, Head of Intelligence & District Forensic Unit.

Force Intelligence Cell Review

The force has assured the Deputy Mayor that West Yorkshire Police have undertaken a comprehensive review of the existing Force Intelligence Cell. The review acknowledged that while a process was in place—ensuring events were recorded in a central calendar, intelligence packs produced, and Silver Public Order Public Safety (POPS) assessments conducted where appropriate—the intelligence resources were not co-located, limiting operational efficiency.

With increased demand over Summer 2025, the review concluded that co-locating intelligence resources would enhance the cell's operational effectiveness and strengthen the force's support for public order and public safety deployments. A strategic options paper was submitted to the Chief Officer Team. Following consideration, the decision was made to establish a co-located intelligence cell, managed by a dedicated supervisor, comprising tasking officers, researchers, and digital media investigators. This team operates across core hours and late shifts, with a reduced footprint in place over weekends. Overnight coverage is maintained by the duty Critical Incident Manager and the Force Firearms Intelligence team.

The force has also developed a contingency “sleeping cell” capability that can be activated when needed. This team includes a Detective Sergeant, Digital Media Investigator, researchers, and Field Intelligence Officers, drawn from a pool of trained volunteers and on-call staff. The enhanced resourcing model for the intelligence cell will remain in place until September 2025, at which point it will be reviewed. Longer-term, the force plans to transition to a hub-and-spoke model as part of a wider intelligence review.

Digital Asset Capability Development

Over the past 12 months, a dedicated working group has assessed the force's current digital asset capabilities. This has included a review of existing systems, licensing arrangements, departmental access, and wider organisational requirements. Through this process, West Yorkshire Police identified capability gaps and subsequently trialled several emerging technical solutions. These solutions incorporate artificial intelligence and machine learning tools, significantly enhancing the force's capacity to detect, analyse, and respond to online information and intelligence, including the classification and collection of digital content.

Based on the successful outcomes of these trials, a proposal is being prepared for submission to the Chief Officer Team, recommending the procurement of licences for two internet intelligence and investigation platforms. These platforms will significantly improve the force's digital intelligence capabilities by enabling faster and more accurate data processing.

The introduction of these technologies directly supports the delivery of Recommendations 1 and 2 from the HMICFRS Tranche 2 report. In particular, they will enhance the force's ability to identify localised disorder-related risks.



Recommendation 3: With immediate effect, the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) and chief constables, working with the [College of Policing](#) and the Home Office should create a plan and begin work to improve the well-being support the police service gives to its [officers](#) and [staff](#). They should plan to:

- create formal protocols with ambulance services and hospital trusts for the treatment of police officers who are injured on duty;
- assess how [public order public safety](#) planning and [mobilisation](#), at force, regional and national levels, considers and prioritises the well-being of officers and staff, such as making sure they have access to food and drink, rest and rotation, personal protective equipment and toilet facilities;
- consider whether [public order public safety](#) roles should be defined as 'high risk', particularly in police forces that face frequent, extensive and severe disorder;
- review whether officers deployed in hostile incidents need additional support on a case-by-case basis; and
- examine the level of contribution that each police force, and the Home Office, makes to police treatment and well-being centres, so that all officers and staff who need treatment can access it.

West Yorkshire response to recommendation 3:

The force has assured the Deputy Mayor that a force plan has been created for recommendation 3, overseen by the Strategic Lead for Specialist Learning.

A review of the force's mobilisation plan is being developed, involving collaboration between colleagues from both public order and crime investigation specialisms. This review will assess the force's investigative capability and capacity at both the strategic level—within Protective Services Crime—and the operational level, across all five policing districts. The overarching aim is to establish a dedicated incident room model that enables an effective response to major incidents without compromising ongoing investigative functions or routine policing activity.

Intelligence debriefs are currently integrated into district accountability meetings, ensuring that learning and intelligence are captured and disseminated locally. The force remains confident in the effectiveness of its existing training programmes for Senior Investigating Officers (SIOs), Detective Inspectors, Detective Sergeants, and Detective Constables. These programmes comprehensively address the full spectrum of investigative competencies required to manage incidents of this nature.

In addition, the Senior Leadership Development Programme (SLDP), which is delivered to all senior leaders, now includes a specific module on managing spontaneous incidents of violent disorder. This training outlines the expectations of senior officers assuming the role of district lead or providing PACE cover during such events.

Following the disorder in Harehills, the Learning and Organisational Development department delivered a multi-agency partnership training event. This session was supported by key stakeholders including the Gold Commander from the Harehills incident, the Neighbourhood Policing Team, a Silver Public Order Public Safety Commander, Senior Investigating Officers, and the Head of Corporate Communications. Attendees included Independent Advisory Group (IAG) members, representatives from the fire and ambulance



services, and the local authority. The core of the training involved a tabletop exercise, incorporating live feeds that replicated key events from the day of the disorder. This format facilitated discussion and engagement, reinforced JESIP principles, and identified key areas for development across all partner agencies. Further partnership training events are scheduled for September 2025, and the SLDP Hydra exercise continues to be delivered annually as part of the force's ongoing leadership development programme.