

Chief Constables' Council

Please select intended audience: **Chief Constables Council**

Title: *Guidance: Police Attendance and participation at Publicly Arranged Community Events*

**Agenda Item: Session 1 – Regional**

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<b>Force/Organisation:</b>	NPCC
<b>Date Created:</b>	29/01/2026
<b>Coordination Committee:</b>	DEI coordination Committee
<b>Portfolio:</b>	N/A
<b>Attachments @ Para</b>	Guidance: Police Attendance and participation at Publicly Arranged Community Events
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When completing the Chief Constables' Council submission template the below 3D model agreed at the December 23 meeting should be reviewed and the paper written against for completion and final submission to the respective Coordination Committee and then onward to the NPCC Business Support team managing Chiefs' Council via CCC [ccc@npcc.police.uk](mailto:ccc@npcc.police.uk)

Decision	Discussion	Dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the item is for decision, what is/are the decision(s) that are sought from council?</li><li>• Has it been through the relevant Committee first? Is the decision appropriate for delegation?</li><li>• Has it been through the Regional process?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the item is for discussion, is it for discussion with Chief Constables, all Chief Officers, Heads of Departments, a particular Committee?</li><li>• If it is for a group other than Chief Constables, use the relevant forum. If it is for Chief Constables, be clear on the points for discussion.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the item is for information only, who is it for? Can it be disseminated via another route than CCC, such as ChiefsNet, email, or an All Chief Officers Day?</li><li>• If it is purely for Chief Constables, be clear on why it needs to come to CCC for dissemination.</li></ul>

Please indicate what the paper is requesting: **Decision**

## 1. INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE

The NPCC has developed national guidance in response to Recommendation 5 of the HMICFRS Inspection into Activism and Impartiality Review which was:

**'By 31 July 2025, the National Police Chiefs' Council should publish national guidance for forces in relation to officers and staff attending and participating at community events'**

The purpose of this paper is to seek agreement from chiefs council for publication of the guidance by the NPCC. Following its publication the College of Policing will incorporate the guidance into Authorised Professional Practice.

## 2. BACKGROUND

[The HMICFRS inspection into activism and impartiality in policing](#) commissioned by the then home secretary aimed to assess how police involvement in politically contested matters impacts operational policing.

The report published in September 2024 highlighted the importance of maintaining police impartiality and the need for clear guidance and training for officers and staff regarding their conduct in relation to activism and impartiality it also addressed the risk of perceived bias and the

need for public confidence and accountability in policing and made a series of recommendations for improvement.

This paper specifically focuses on Recommendation 5 of the HMICFRS Activism and Impartiality Review 2024 and the subsequent guidance that has been developed by the NPCC.

### **Recommendation 5**

By 31 July 2025, the National Police Chiefs' Council should publish national guidance for forces in relation to officers and staff attending and participating at community events. This should include guidance on:

- the decision about attendance at or absence from the event;
- communication with the public and the workforce about the reasons for attendance at or absence from the event;
- the dress code for those attending;
- the conduct of those attending; and
- whether attendance is on or off duty.

The College of Policing should reflect this guidance within the relevant authorised professional practice.

The publication of the guidance was delayed beyond the original HMICFRS deadline to allow for the outcome of [Lindsey Smith, R \(on the application of\) v The Chief Constable of Northumbria Police](#) to be taken into consideration and subsequent consultation and feedback on the proposed guidance.

### **3. SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL**

The proposed guidance provides a clear framework for making decisions around police attendance at an event, communicating decisions, defining expected dress and conduct, and clarifying on/off-duty roles at publicly arranged community events. It will help to reduce risk of perceived bias, strengthen public confidence, and provide guidelines for engagement with community events where extra consideration is required on matters relating to the police duty of impartiality.

The guidance aims to:

- Safeguard real and perceived impartiality of the police.
- Provide clarity and consistency for decisions on attendance at publicly arranged community events.
- Support operational decision-making by establishing standards for communication, conduct, and presentation.
- Maintain community trust and confidence, especially where events may carry political sensitivity or a risk perception of bias.

Chiefs' Council approval is sought for publication of the guidance by the NPCC.

## **Reassurance, Consultation and feedback**

The guidance has been developed in close collaboration with the College of Policing; once published it will be reflected in their authorised professional practice.

The guidance has been circulated and feedback sought from a range of key stakeholders, relevant NPCC committees and has been presented to both the DEI and Local Policing Committees prior to its submission to Chiefs Council.

In addition, we have taken into consideration last year's judicial review against [Northumbria Police](#) and incorporated learning from this into the guidance.

**Those involved in discussion and consultation to develop the guidance included:**

- College of Policing
- Metropolitan Police Service DLS (Legal team for legal validation)
- National Staff Networks and Associations
- NPCC Human Rights Portfolio
- NPCC LGBTQ+ Portfolio
- NPCC Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee
- NPCC Neighbourhood Policing Portfolio
- NPCC Race, Religion and Belief Portfolio
- NPCC Trust and Confidence Portfolio
- Police Scotland
- Police Service of Northern Ireland

**4. STATEMENT/DETAILS OF COST OR RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (All papers which have a funding request or implication (i.e. resource abstraction) will need to be reviewed by the NPCC Finance Coordination Committee before submission to the NPCC central office) – Finance Committee Coordinator will provide financial contribution per force / partner organisations.**

### **Funding and Financial Implications (NPCC/Forces):**

**Is there a financial implication for Police Forces and/or policing bodies?**

**No**

Why? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

If there is a financial implication, has this been costed? [Choose an item.](#)

Who has verified these financial implications/figures?

Name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Organisation: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Title/Role: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

<u>Funding Required</u>	2025/26 (£)	2026/27 (£)	2027/28 (£)	Total
<i>Revenue Expenditure</i>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
<i>Capital Expenditure</i>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
<i>% Efficiency Saving</i>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
<b>Total</b>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>

<u>Benefits</u>	2025/26 (£)	2026/27 (£)	2027/28 (£)	Total
<i>Revenue Benefits</i>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
<i>Capital Benefits</i>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
<b>Total</b>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>

<u>Reserves Held</u>	2025/26 (£)	2026/27 (£)	2027/28 (£)	Total
<i>Reserves</i>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
<b>Total Net</b>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>

**As an Appendix, please provide a breakdown of your funding request e.g. Pay Budget broken down by Officer Pay, Staff Pay, Overtime etc and Non-Pay Budget broken down by Travel Expense, ICT, Rent/Rates, etc**

Please provide details of financial liability, alternative funding streams, Home Office, Reserves etc. relevant to the above:

N/A

Finance Coordination Committee Commentary:

N/A

Signed off by the Finance Committee Chair?	Choose an item.
Date:	Click or tap to enter a date.

Proposed NPCC Programme/Function End Date	Click or tap to enter a date.
Is there a closure/exit plan in place?	Choose an item.
Is there a financial liability to the NPCC at the end of the programme of work? E.g. Redundancy / Pension Strain Costs	Choose an item.

## 5. STRATEGY, DELIVERY AND BUSINESS PLANNING

The guidance supports strategy, delivery and business planning by providing a clear, consistent national framework that forces can embed into local policies, reducing operational ambiguity and reputational risk.

## 6. OPPORTUNITIES AND RISK – What are the strategic, operational and/or tactical opportunities, benefits and risks associated with the funding request and the proposed strategy/deliverables outlined above?

### 6.1. Benefits

#### 1. Strengthened Police Impartiality

The guidance provides a consistent national framework that helps forces avoid actions that could be perceived as politically partial, supporting public confidence in police neutrality.

#### 2. Operational Independence

The guidance supports forces' operational independence by enabling local decision-making informed by national criteria, allowing each force to consider its own community context, risks and engagement needs.

#### 2. Improved Transparency and Accountability

Clear criteria for attendance, communication, and behaviour mean that forces can use these to rationalise decisions and communicate them consistently to both the public and workforce.

#### 3. Enhanced Community Trust

Consistent, fair, and transparent approaches to police participation and attendance at community led events will lead to enhanced trust and confidence in policing.

#### 4. Reduced Legal and Operational Risk

Ensuring and documenting how decisions have been made against clear criteria reduces the likelihood of future legal challenges and ensuring compliance with relevant standards and legal duties.

#### 5. Improved Workforce Clarity

As a result of using the guidance officers and staff will receive clear expectations around conduct, dress, and attendance, reducing confusion and inconsistent practice.

## 6.2. Risks

### 1. Ongoing Reputational Risk

Even with national guidance, decisions on whether to attend or not attend—may still attract criticism, media scrutiny, or negative feedback.

### 2. Potential Limitation on Community Engagement

Parameters around attendance could unintentionally reduce positive engagement with communities who rely on visible police support at events, potentially impacting trust. It is recommended that where the guidance is used an Equality Impact Assessment/Community Impact Assessment is completed to mitigate this.

### 3. Internal Workforce Concerns

Officers and staff may feel constrained by rules on attendance, dress or conduct, especially in relation to events they personally value or have historically attended.

## 7. DECISIONS

7.1 Chiefs Council approval for publication of the Guidance for Police Attendance and participation at Publicly Arranged Community Events.

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<b>Title:</b>	DEI Coordination Committee Coordinator
<b>Committee:</b>	DEI
<b>Lead Area:</b>	CC Rachel Swann

