

Guidance to event organisers

These guidelines are intended to provide assistance to organisers who are planning to hold a public event.

Public events

In general the public perception is that the police are the lead agency for approving all public events, including those which take place on the public highway. In reality the police have no authority to either approve or ban such events and, in fact, police powers to regulate traffic for planned events are extremely limited. Furthermore, the police have no general duty to preserve public safety at any public event, except where there are imminent or likely threats to life.

Legal opinion suggests that the responsibility for public safety rests with the organisers of an event, the owners of the land on which it takes place and the local authority if the event takes place on a road. However, other persons or agencies who undertake actions regarding public safety at an event may assume a duty of care and, therefore, also become responsible.

In the past the police service has taken the lead and undertaken actions to facilitate public events, acting for what they believed to be the public good. However, with the emerging spectre of civil litigation, a more focused approach, confining police action to those issues which are part of our core responsibilities and where there is legal authority, has been adopted.

This guide is aimed at standardising the police approach to all organised events staged in a public place and on all public highways. It creates an environment where, through consultation and partnership, public events will continue to take place. A greater awareness of the individual responsibility of the organisers and those of the other agencies involved should emerge, which will ensure a more focused approach by all concerned resulting in a better planned, safer and more resilient event.

Cost recovery

The appointed Police and Crime Commissioner has the discretion to authorise cost recovery on behalf of Greater Manchester Police in accordance with the guidelines contained within force policy. Police Commanders will pre-determine where, how and at what level such charges will be made. The negotiations regarding such charges will go through the Police Commander or the police event planner and a formal agreement will be drawn up for signature by the organiser.

At the earliest opportunity in the planning process, event organisers will be given a written estimate of the likely level of the police cost recovery.

The police reserve the right, where it is deemed necessary, to require payment of all or a proportion of the police costs prior to an event. In circumstances where payment has been required, payment should be made at least 7 clear working days prior to the event and should the agreed sum not be received by the due date the police reserve the right not to attend and the relevant safety authority would be informed accordingly.

Where a failure by event organisers to meet their predetermined obligations, set out in the 'statement of intent', necessitates the deployment of any police resources, a further charge may be levied. The charge will be limited to recovery, from the organiser, of policing costs arising from dealing with the failure.

Greater Manchester Police will prepare a written invoice to facilitate recovery of the police