

**A Review of Safety Related Matters
Liverpool Victory Parade: 26th May 2025**

UNDERTAKEN

July – February 2026

BY

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FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE

Liverpool City Council

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1.1 Introduction

This document aims to summarise any issues, challenges or learning points from the Liverpool FC Victory Parade of 26th May 2025. It is not a comprehensive review of the site, event, or its operation.

1.2 The Brief

The brief was issued to address the following:

Purpose

To engage a leading Event and Crowd management specialist to conduct an independent review of the Liverpool Football Trophy Parade, by externally scrutinising and challenging the Event Management Plans for the 2025 Parade.

Objective

To provide actionable recommendations that enhance operational efficiency, mitigate risks, and improve the overall event success of any potential future Football Parades.

Scope of Review

The review will assess the following key areas of the Parade Management Plans:

1. Location and Logistics

- Was the parade route suitable for the event type and the expected audience?
- Did the infrastructure cope with the demands of this scale?

2. Timeline and Scheduling

- Were the Event Planning processes and execution timelines clearly outlined and realistic?

3. Communication

- Did the Event Plan include key lines of communication to allow effective decision making?

4. Risk Management & Contingency Planning

- Were the potential risks identified and mitigated from a national intelligence perspective?
- Were contingency plans in place for delays or unforeseen issues?

5. Post-Event Evaluation and Follow-Up

- Were follow-up communications and reporting mechanisms in place to effectively de-brief the Parade and any other major events on the highway?

Outputs

The report will provide:

- i. **Key recommendations** for any improvements to the areas defined in the Scope of the Review.
- ii. **Include any learning** that can be applied to future major events of this nature, or which have a national and international profile.
- iii. A **summary report** highlighting strengths, weaknesses, and actionable next steps, including recommendations for any future parades or major events on the public highway.

METHODOLOGY:

1.3 Gentian Events were first approached the day after the victory parade, but, as these matters are prone to do, it took some time for the collation of documents and agreement of dates for interviewing those involved before it began in earnest. I was also cognisant that interviewing staff too close to the major incident after the parade would be challenging in asking them to recall incidents of a very difficult day, which at the time was still subject to ongoing criminal proceedings.

1.4 I have undertaken this review by considering both paper submissions from Liverpool City Council and by speaking informally to those who were involved either in planning or delivery on the day. I have reported those sequentially in terms of when I received the reports and only undertaken interviews once I had seen all that was relevant to the planning phase. In this way, I was able to establish a level of 'what was planned for and expected' without impairing my own impression from those who then saw a somewhat different event than what those plans were hoping to deliver. That said, it is also intended to try to deliver this report in a reasonably short time frame. The subsequent conversations and discussions with persons involved were limited only to those who I believed were essential to provide context or content on matters that are not covered by written reports.

1.5 **Conflict of Interest:** I have previously, Pre-COVID, given training to the Liverpool events team and city management in relation to Safety Advisory Group processes, and some general event safety training within that setting. I know some of the team at Liverpool, but have not worked directly in relation to an event on site with them, nor in the planning stages of any event. I have attended conference briefing sessions where they have talked about learning from events such as the Giants, and indeed, I have attended the Giants as a member of the public in Liverpool, with my family.

1.6 I do not believe that any of the above provides me with any conflicts of interest in relation to this report.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

2.1 **OUTCOME:** I was asked to establish from the outset whether Liverpool City Council should consider whether it is right and safe to repeat such a victory parade. I said then and repeat now that: ***“You could, you should, and I have no doubt you will do it again.”*** I explain this in more detail at Paragraph 4.4 and 4.5.

2.2 **PLANNING:** Having conducted a thorough review of the planning and documentation related to the event, I find the planning documents to be of a high quality and certainly fit for purpose. The planning was detailed and effective.

2.3 **THE CROWD PLAN:** I questioned the use of the crowd density chart without context of the angle of viewing or any sense of the crowd mood. During my review, I have been supplied with further details of how the chart is used, and although I remain concerned as to its simplicity, I am confident Liverpool uses it in the right context with more detailed briefings to staff.

2.4 **THE ROUTE:** The route worked well, although it is extensive. Shortening it though, brings a significant threat of crowd compression. If a linear route were available, this would be preferable, but I can see no simple option within the city where this can be achieved.

2.5 **THE CONVOY AND ‘BUBBLE’:** The convoy model works, although ideally its size and length might be reduced. There were suggestions that the pilot vehicle was being asked to slow down to enhance the quality of the pictures being obtained of the Parade buses. This is not the role of the pilot vehicle. It should set the pace and keep to the route. If a gap is opening between the pilot and any other vehicles, it is essential that those other vehicles close the gap (assuming the pilot is maintaining an appropriate speed and ideally one that does not permit spectators to follow closely behind it). However, it is clear from discussions that the pilot vehicle was in constant contact with the events team and was maintaining a difficult balancing act between making progress and not endangering dense crowds in places.

2.6 As the bubble convoy made the turn from Leeds Street onto The Strand, reduced visibility caused by dense smoke and the large crowds contributed to the players bus entering the wrong carriageway. This was quickly identified, and between 17:30 and 17:36, all agencies, including police, security teams, and event management personnel, worked together to create a safe route through the crowd and guide the convoy back onto the correct carriageway. The radio comms and the event log accurately reflect the sequence of events, and the swift, coordinated actions of all parties on the ground ensured the convoy was returned to the intended route safely and without further issue.

2.7 **COMMUNICATIONS:** There were some issues with communications at times. A review should be undertaken to try to resolve the issues, accepting that in such large crowds and noise levels, these will always be challenging. There is no digitised event command system as such; instead, incidents and actions are being logged by LCC via an Excel spreadsheet. This should be examined as to its reliability and functionality for the purpose of monitoring actions and for debriefing purposes.

2.8 **SUBSIDIARITY:** There were reported instances of delays in decisions and actions being taken on the ground. It is important to grant local decision-making powers to teams of local staff, perhaps joint teams containing a lead police officer, security manager and council/safety lead who are co-located to agree actions based upon need and priority with the authority and ability to implement those actions.

2.9 **PARADE ATTENDEE NUMBERS:** There appear to be multiple reasons for the anticipated increase in attendee numbers. However, these were perhaps still underestimated. The earlier than normal championship title being achieved so early in the season (with a victory over Tottenham on 27th April 2025) permitted a month of final detailed planning for the organisers, but also for those wanting to attend the parade. This was also the first victory parade to celebrate the winning of the Premier League, having won the 2019-2020 season; Covid prevented any such celebrations. This event followed newly observed trends of people's determination to attend 'destination events' and 'must be there' events. It follows trends such as those seen with worldwide travellers desiring to be at 'once in a lifetime' events and being prepared to spend money to do so.

2.10 The number of people arriving in the city to attend the parade that day was unprecedented, and attendance began early on the day. It is essential that these numbers arriving from stations many miles away are estimated and fed into Silver Control for an assessment of the impact for future planning.

2.11 This was planned as a 'city celebration' but took place with an international attendance. This must fall within future planning if any other such event has a similar lead-in time.

2.12 **CROWD BEHAVIOUR:** The vast majority of attendees enjoyed the spectacle of the Victory Parade in a spirit of good humour, positive support for their fellow attendees, and respect for the measures established to support their safe attendance. There were multiple reports of attendees supporting each other within the crowd and helping to protect vulnerable people who needed support. There are also reports that are of a public safety concern on the route caused by some spectator activity. These

relate to the use of smoke and flares, climbing of scaffolding and high buildings, risk taking by adults in relation to children who were exposed to danger.

2.13 High risk behaviour such as this is not specific to football, nor Liverpool, but is a behaviour observed globally nowadays. The desire to create a media moment and share it for 'likes' is boosted by the sometimes irresponsible behaviours of social media influencers. In a 2023 survey of 1,000 'Gen Z' respondents, 57% stated their wish to be influencers [Report: Influencer Marketing Trends for Brands](#). The view is that capturing such moments at an event such as this, or a music concert, or even 'own group' generated media, is the first step into the career they would choose if the opportunity arose. Such behaviours as these were discovered during the Casey report into Wembley, where some fans with tickets filmed and broadcast clips of themselves apparently bypassing security systems and guards, when in fact these were fake stories.

2.14 It was suspected and now verified through other documents and discussions that whilst the LCC event log was capturing all incidents reported, these seem to be a small proportion of the actual incidents that were taking place. Many of these incidents involved smoke, flares, fireworks, and some people climbing and even falling from height. It is recognised that the LCC log is one part of a bigger picture, with other parties using different logging methods.

2.15 Enquiries should be made to ascertain what controls on off-sales might be put in place, but authorities should also be reminded of the issues at Wembley in 2021 when licensed premises were closed but supplies were readily replaced by the public using moped-enabled food/alcohol delivery services from further afield. There was no clear evidence of this occurring at the victory parade, but it remains an area of concern for outdoor public events.

2.16 Many of these early and very challenging decisions included decisions to buy and bring flares, to climb to height, and to be 'just one more' person on a scaffolding tower. These could lead to the overwhelming of staff on an already busy and potentially dangerous day for the public attending. But each individual and selfish act does exactly that, although most do not comprehend the potential repercussions of their actions at the time.

2.17 In some controlled environments, such as a music concert with a popular artist, the artist themselves can be used to discourage such behaviour and minimise any dangerous activity. A well-documented example is at the Big Beach Boutique held in Brighton in 2002. At the event, the artist 'Fat Boy Slim' stopped playing and refused to restart until those who had climbed high above the crowd on lampposts came back to ground level. Using announcements and peer pressure from the crowd, the show was

able to restart after a few minutes and in a far safer setting. This option is simply not available in an open street parade of this nature, unless the whole length was strung with a PA system and the crowd addressed by the players or manager: a proposal I consider beyond reasonable.

2.18 The attendees were a global audience. This indicates and supports the concept of people willing to travel many thousands of miles to 'destination events' when given sufficient notice. The challenge this brings is that whilst there is a genuine wish on the part of the authorities to provide a spectacle for the fans, there is also a hope that the city is treated with pride and respect by those who live there and those who visit.

2.19 **PLAYER BEHAVIOUR:** A briefing to the players on the bus should make it clear that any actions that 'normalise' poor behaviours in the crowd and give tacit permission for others to copy them are not acceptable. This would especially apply to the use of smoke or flares.

2.20 **LEGISLATION:** There is a significant gap in legislation regarding responsibilities for safety around scaffolding and unoccupied and empty buildings. The only significant legislation in this regard is civil law under the Occupiers Liabilities Acts of 1957 and 1984 (which includes protection for trespassers). However, this legislation is aimed at and suited primarily to a civil action for injury or loss against those who should maintain their land and buildings, as well as structures upon them. It gives no powers to force those landowners to take action in advance of a parade of this nature. It is not precautionary or pre-emptive in that regard, and new legislation should be considered to permit authorities to ensure structures are safe in advance of such events.

2.21 The confusion and lack of legislation controlling the use of smoke and flares in public places led to their constant use during the day, with obvious risks. LCC might consider approaching the LGA for support in a government clampdown on those manufacturing, importing, or supplying pyrotechnics. A focus on the importation of such devices might be the most helpful in this regard.

2.22 **MEDIA:** The media should be encouraged to not live stream dangerous behaviours: the use of flares or scaffold climbing in a way that celebrates poor behaviour or encourages others to follow suit.

2.23 **THE SAFETY QUESTION:** I am often asked when undertaking post-event reviews: 'Was this a safe event?' and the fact is, there is no such thing as a safe event - all events by their very nature carry a degree of risk.

2.24 It is also important to note that there were minimal arrests by the police on the day, and there is no clear direct evidence that says the dangerous behaviours in relation to pyrotechnics and climbing to height were fuelled by alcohol. All events come with an element of risk, but where those risks combine alcohol, smoke and flares, dangerous climbing to height, people prepared to disregard their own and others safety, climbing over infrastructure and pushing aside staff close to a processional route lined with over 1 million people, then there are obvious risks. That said, no event where crowds gather is entirely safe, but if we choose to expect the public to be kept safe at all times, then we must either cancel virtually all events or accept that we will fail to deliver that which we have promised.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 **PLANNING:** Consider future similar events with a long 'lead-in' as national events, not local or regional. It may even be considered an international event, and all efforts to assess the scale of numbers attending should be sought. This includes monitoring hotel bookings more widely than the Liverpool area and consideration to monitoring early train bookings via Network Rail Services and flights into nearby airports, with 'comparative' data being collected in advance.

3.2 Undoubtedly, the early knowledge of the date gave people time to make plans, not all of them sensible ones. If possible, try to set a date, but not to announce it until as late as possible. There is, however, a balance: if the date has become known and obvious, which was the case here, then trying to hide it threatens the authorities with a lack of credibility, so releasing it may become inevitable.

3.3 Network Rail should be included in discussions and asked to monitor and supply comparison data on early bookings, as well as early monitoring on the day, with information into the Event Control and Silver Suites. They should be included in appropriate briefings and Tabletop Exercises.

3.4 Within my review of documents, I identified a crowd density document, which relies on a static viewing position of stationary crowds, whereas the latest preference is to seek movement and mood within crowds to indicate density and risk. I recommend it be adapted to include a phrase such as: *"Those using this chart should understand the importance of the viewing angle when assessing density. A higher angle (CCTV or a balcony view) will change the observers' perception, compared with a view from ground level. Lower angles will make the crowd appear denser even though the crowd has not changed its density or danger."* Within the context of this event, the document is further supported by experienced Safety Managers, with aerial drone imagery also fed directly into Event Control in real time, also informing the status of the crowd density situation. This means, in addition to the document, there is sufficient real time support in place.

3.5 As far as possible, avoid having multiple large events in such close time proximity to each other. Consider if mutual aid from other agencies could support local teams by using other authorities in the way police achieve that aid. This will enhance planning and protect staff from excessive hours and exhaustion. The learnings from this parade can and should be shared with other parts of the UK, as should learnings from elsewhere be used in Merseyside. The use of mutual aid in planning will support this process.

3.6 LCC should and will continue to build on its planning experience for this and other large events, not just parades. From a national perspective, there may be an option to consider an innovative and flexible ‘joint approach’ to planning from early spring, whereby the authorities and agencies of those teams nearing the top of the premiership or with realistic European or FA Cup ambitions meet jointly to discuss previous challenges and solutions. The benefit to any smaller clubs and potential winners with limited or no recent experience of such parades would be significant in working alongside those who are ‘regular’ winners. Some of those involved from elsewhere whose teams do not succeed might become ‘deployable resources’ if agreement can be reached between clubs, police, and local authorities.

3.7 Endeavour to achieve a standard approach with an escalation process to the way the crowd are treated by all agencies, with consistency of agreed messaging that ‘sets the tone’ and forms the opening for all briefings from LCC, police, medical, security, and all partners on the ground, with the main objective to de-escalate issues. It is clear that different organisations and agencies will have differing approaches because of their roles and responsibilities. But if consistency can be achieved at the outset, then escalation to a ‘firmer’ position will only be necessary if crowd behaviours dictate it.

3.8 **ROUTE:** In the body of the report, I compare the route with others that have brought challenges by giving opportunities for those at the start to revisit the parade at later stages. Consider options that include a more ‘linear route’ rather than the existing ‘part circular’ course to prevent leapfrogging by those attending. There will always need to be a continuous review of the route with consideration to changing factors such as roadworks and local developments.

3.9 Be wary of suggestions to significantly shorten the route that has been proposed by some. Such action may significantly increase crowd density and lead to a threat to public safety.

3.10 Consider ‘marking’ the route with paint in a similar fashion to major marathon and cycle routes so as to avoid any chance of the route being missed or a wrong direction being taken in smoke.

3.11 Consider an earlier start time, accepting this may not be possible if such a parade were on the back of a European win, with a returning team flying back at a time and country as yet unknown.

3.12 **CONVOY:** Seek methods to reduce the length of the convoy, particularly the number of vehicles and people present within it. Ensure that surplus staff do not gather in front of the bus despite their desire to be ‘part of the parade.’

3.13 The Bubble must work to one pre-agreed plan without agencies adding resources late in the day and/or without discussion. Adaptations may need to be made on the way, but should, wherever possible, be part of pre-agreed contingencies.

3.14 Endeavour to ensure that the speed of the convoy must exceed a good walking speed for those trying to follow a 'parallel' or shortcut path for multiple views of the Parade.

3.15 **COMMUNICATION:** Streamline and enhance communication channels – consider the use of location tagging on vehicles or staff to track the convoy more easily.

3.16 **EVENT AND DECISION LOGS:** There should be consideration given to the use of an established event logging system such that radio communications as well as meeting notes are documented and shared with all others. Individual or organisational notes can and are frequently made in relation to any actions, but a holistic log of the ELT or any 'catch-up' meeting is also important. Such systems also make the capture of learning and preparation of debriefing easier and more comprehensive.

3.17 **SUBSIDIARITY:** Ground 'commanders,' of no matter what agency, should be sufficiently experienced and trusted such that a policy of subsidiarity can be in place. Local decision-making at the lowest level with responsibility at the highest level. The principle of 'role not rank' is crucial with staff on the ground, perhaps being best placed to assess crowd mood and the best tactics to deploy.

3.18 Consider models such as those deployed at Edinburgh Hogmanay (teams of three: one each of police, security, and crowd safety) or the Tornado Teams used in Toronto emergency services (one each of police, fire, and medical) that can be considered as rapid decision-making resources on the ground.

3.19 **PUBLIC BEHAVIOUR:** All authorities and agencies should seek ways to educate event attendees about the dangers of climbing lampposts, scaffolding, etc., with sanctions against the wider participants if it continues (the threat of parade cancellation set out in the earliest advertising). Continue to focus on and share the 'respecting the city' message by all partners, but especially LCC and LFC. Players are a significant part of setting good examples.

3.20 Ensure all pre-event advertising 'sets the tone' for the event you wish to see. Pre-publicity photographs should, as far as possible, exclude smoke, flares and climbing to height. The media should be asked to take responsibility for similar

messaging. Lamp post 'hangers' featuring players could be deployed with messaging regarding behaviour and the 'no use' of pyrotechnics.

3.21 **LEGISLATION:** All local authorities with football clubs and the potential for such parades should work with central government to deliberate about strengthening such powers or applying new legislation, such as that of 'reckless endangerment' discussed below. Clarity over legislation must be sought in relation to scaffolding usage and responsibilities, and additional powers sought to control the use of smoke and flares in the public domain. There remains a wider issue of the antisocial and dangerous use of other pyrotechnics around the 5th of November each year, and these discussions could encompass or be encompassed within those.

3.22 All authorities should share any learning about climbing at height with others. They might consider asking Government to extend or update the powers under the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890, Section 37, thereby making those responsible for them to be forced to make them safe in the likelihood of their use during processions, etc.

3.23 In relation to some of the worst crowd behaviours, which, as always was by a minority, I am inclined to refresh the memories of those who read the Casey report into Wembley and perhaps point those who have not read it to one specific part. Smoke, flares, climbing at height and potential scaffolding collapse all endanger others but are not covered by specific legislation. There was no harmful intent, but the reckless nature of the behaviour might have led to either injury or death.

3.24 For this reason, Baroness Casey sought the advice of Daniel Greenberg CB on a new specific offence of 'Reckless Endangerment of Life.' Such legislation should be considered by central government to cover those acts where no actual intentional assault or damage was intended. It should be preventative rather than reactive so that those climbing scaffolding should be advised of the risks to those underneath should the climber fall, or the scaffold collapse.

3.25 Refusal to desist in such behaviour should lead to the threat of arrest and charge to empower police with a realistic threat to deter such behaviours. This recommendation of the 2021 report remains unactioned by government and should be brought back to its attention.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 This was by far the largest football parade of its kind held within the city, and perhaps within the country, in recent years. The work of all the agencies to keep the event safe was impressive. There is no doubt that this is largely in part due to the strong working relations the agencies of the city, the club, police, and many others have through previous large-scale events and challenges, including terrorism.

4.2 It is thought that the numbers who attended the parade in May might have been double the size of the city population, which generally sits just above 500,000. Those numbers in any city would bring considerable challenges to its infrastructure, transport, and authorities. The lack of other serious incidents bears witness to the work done by Liverpool's agencies and authorities that day. If there were 1.2 million people present, as believed, then could the city and its resources, particularly health, have coped with anything other than the one major incident that presented itself just after 18:00 hrs? That question fortunately remains unanswered, but after 18:00 hrs it did respond and did so effectively, and by doing so, no doubt saved lives.

4.3 Both UK and international travel was a significant factor in the numbers who attended and must be noted for future events, with closer monitoring of modes of transport and hotel capacity further afield than just Liverpool.

4.4 One question I was asked during the writing of this report was: 'Do we continue with such events: should we do it again?' My response at the time and now is that the question is wrongly phrased. It should be: 'How do we **not** continue with such events? If we are to cease such activities, our lives would be poorer for it. If we cancel, or do not plan for these and other mass gatherings of human beings in one place, celebrating our successes, to meet in large numbers and enjoy that company whilst listening to music, watching sports, enjoying parades or processions, celebrating our history and culture, then we cease to be the humans that we are and strive to be. We would simply go to work to earn money to eat, drink and acquire property and possessions. It is our ability to interact, to celebrate and create memories in environments that are not always inherently or naturally safe that sets us apart from most other species. We must never forget the dark days of Covid when we were not permitted to socialise, and people found themselves isolated. It was not long before shortcuts were found, 'private' parties sprang up, and illegal 'raves' resumed at a scale not seen since the 80's.

4.5 I believe it is important to stress that at times of such significant division within the country, any events that can unite rather than divide are to be encouraged and supported. The significant lift in mood that is brought about by people coming together is more likely to strengthen national unity than almost any other method of doing so.

4.6 If we restrict or prevent these activities through fear of constant catastrophes, be it through a dread of terrorism (though that was not an issue here) or by those who seek a risk-free world, then victory has been granted to those who succeed in preventing us from enjoying such activities. Frankly, that is not a world we should aspire to, nor is it one in which most people would wish to reside.

4.7 This report is intended to address the issues that occurred in Liverpool on the day of this event, but it is accepted by its instigators and this author that it might reach more widely and be read by those involved in events in a much wider context and perhaps used to enhance the safety of others elsewhere. Liverpool Council, as the instigating authority, has never shied away from the risk of events and the further risk of external scrutiny. It embraced being the pilot city for Covid Testing and soon after became part of the post-Covid Event Research programme. It has taken on some of the biggest events, including 'The Giants' (several times) and the Eurovision Song Contest. It embraces those challenges and will, I hope, continue to do so. It has also previously instigated and shared learning from external commercial operator events that have faced challenges in the city, such as the learning from the private, third-party event, 'Hope and Glory' in 2017: [Appendix 3 TESS Independent Report on Hope Glory Festival.pdf](#)

4.8 I believe Liverpool will take the lessons from this report and apply the learning to the next event of whatever size or scale, be it a victory parade or some other unusual artistic or creative event.

4.9 The conclusion of this report is that the planning was thorough and complete, and the numbers who arrived could not have been anticipated, other than by those with remarkable hindsight.

4.10 Despite this, the hard work of all the partners and agencies kept the vast majority of people safe on an incredibly challenging and difficult day, against a backdrop of other events having taken place over recent days and with more than double, possibly treble the number of people in the city than were expected or planned for.

4.11 The majority of those interviewed said they would do it again, although differently. It is this final comment from many of those involved that suggests to me that, despite the risks, even for those staff working in extremely difficult circumstances, they fully understand the importance of such events to this city, and it is for this reason that I remain convinced that such events should, can and will happen again.

4.12 In advance of interviews, it occurred to me that the relationship between agencies might be so close in Liverpool that criticism of each other might be unlikely. I probed this relationship significantly but found only a strong working partnership that undoubtedly benefitted the public on the day of the parade. I am left with a lasting impression of a group of agencies and partners within whom trust and professionalism have been reached over many years, and who will work through any challenges they face.

4.13 I conclude this report with my sincere thanks to those who took the time to sit and talk through a very difficult day. The honesty, transparency and professionalism shown by those I interviewed and those who worked for and with them is a good indication as to why the event passed safely and concluded on time at 18:00 with no major incidents to that point, despite some very challenging moments. That said, there were many moments of pure joy and celebration, with many people sharing the best day of their lives with those all around them.

DATE 13th February 2026

Eric Stuart QPM, BA Hons CSM

Director: Gentian Events Ltd

APPENDIX A

5.0 AUTHOR: Eric Stuart QPM is the director and owner of Gentian Events Ltd, a specialist Crowd Safety Management Company. He was a Metropolitan Police Officer from 1980 to 2012. He holds both Foundation and Honours degrees in Crowd Safety Management, was the Chair of the United Kingdom Crowd Management Association (UKCMA) from 2019 until 2024, the inaugural Chair of the Global Crowd Management Alliance from 2022 until 2024 and was an elected board member of the Events Industry Forum (EIF) responsible for delivery of chapters of the Purple Guide. His involvement with safety includes undertaking reviews both before and after incidents have occurred, and include examining:

- **London New Years Eve 2005:** Safety review after injuries outside LUL Embankment.
- **Sellafield Nuclear Site:** Re-writing site evacuation plans.
- **Edinburgh Hogmanay 2015/16:** After crowd crushing led to scores of injuries.
- **Lincoln Christmas Market 2017:** After an emergency weather cancellation.
- **Olympic Park 2013 – 2017:** Examining the 'Grey Space' issues of crowd safety.
- **Lewes Bonfires 2016 - 2017 and 2023:** After significant crowd crush and injuries.
- **Major Cycling Event in London 2017:** A cycle v spectator incident: threat to life injuries.
- **Aldermaston Weapons Establishment 2018:** Residential Proximity Safety Submission.
- **Westfield /West Ham FC 2019:** Plans and evacuation plus Boxing Day shopping crowds.
- **Harrogate Xmas Market 2017 – 2019:** CT and HVM planning with crowd egress conflicts.
- **Vaisakhi Parade Surrey, Canada 2016 – 2018:** 6-800,000-person parade with crowd injuries.
- **Toronto Raptors Victory Parade 2019 – 2023:** 2-million-person event: hundreds of injuries.
- **Wembley Euros 2020 Safety Review 2021:** A review into the crowd safety at Wembley following serious disorder, led by The Baroness Casey of Blackstock.

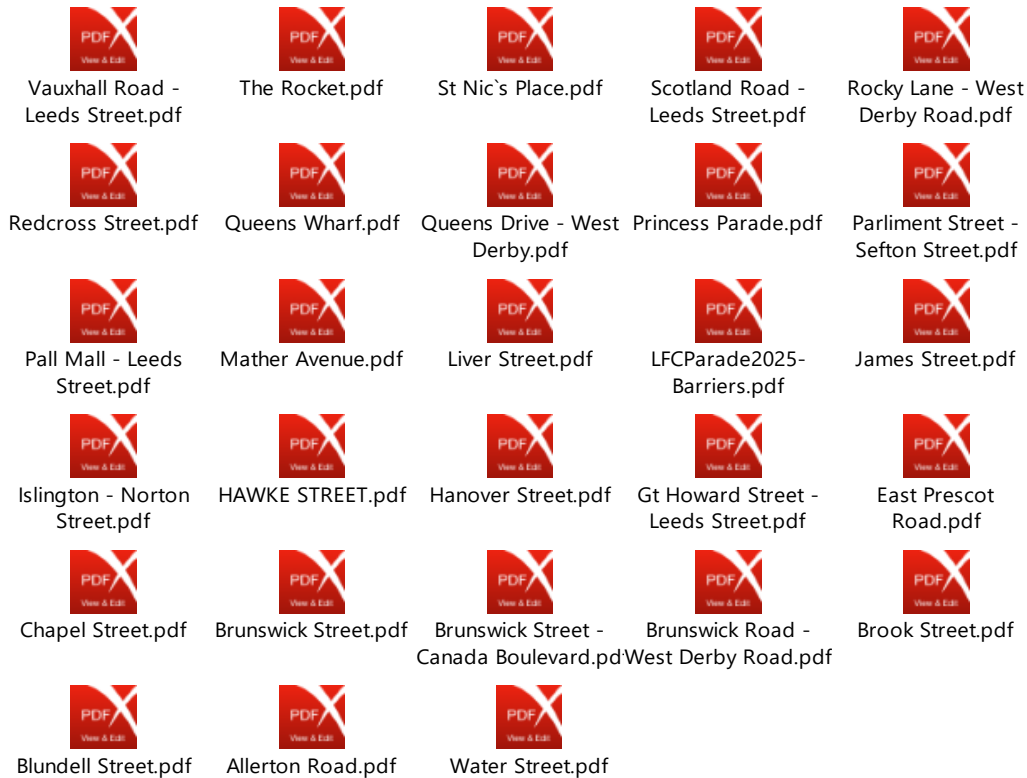
- **O2 Academy Brixton 2022:** Review and 'Crowd Safety Tactical Advisor' to Police after two fatalities at a concert in December 2022 - ongoing.
- **Global Crowd Advisor, Formula 1 Grand Prix; 2022 – 2025:** An ongoing contract into crowd safety for the F1 organisation across its growing racing calendar.
- **Crowd Safety Review, Afro Nation Ghana 2023:** Show stop/cancellation by a UK Company.
- **Crowd Safety Review:** Travis Scott Concert, Astroworld, Texas.
- **Crowd Safety Review:** Manchester Arena Inquiry.
- **Pre-Public Consulting and ongoing implementation Advisor:** Home Office 'Protect Duty.'
- **2024/25 Calgary Stampede, Canada:** An independent review of safety and implementation of measures for the 2025 event.
- **Lapu Lapu Incident in Vancouver, Canada April 2025: Safety Review –** Advisor to the appointed Safety Commission for future similar events.

Appendix B

6.0 DOCUMENTS PROVIDED AND COMMENTED UPON: The following documents have been provided; they have all been examined and some have been commented upon.

Provided 16th July 2025

- 6.1 LFC Event doc Final.pdf (65 Pages)
- 6.2 2025 Parade TM Plan Final.pdf
- 6.3 FGH Security x LFC Parade 2025 - Security Management Plan - v1.pdf
- 6.4 FGH Security x LFC Parade 2025 - Security Schedule - v3 - no costs.pdf
- 6.5 LCC-LFC25-Route A-A1-7 Feb 2025.pdf
- 6.6 LFC Bubble Drawing 2025 v4.pdf
- 6.7 In addition, the following maps and plans have been provided to the author.



Provided 7th August 2025

- 6.8 Culture Liverpool Internal Debrief - 26.06.25
- 6.9 LCC Internal Service Area Debrief - Parade - 22 July 2025 (1).docx
- 6.10 LFC Parade 2025 WhatsApp images.pdf
- 6.11 LFC-Parade-25-Xxxx-Xxxxxx-22-05-2025.pdf (Name of author redacted by me)
- 6.12 LFC Parade-post-event-recovery-Xxxx-Xxxxx 27-05-2025.pdf (Name of author redacted by me)
- 6.13 LFX Safety - Post Event Report - LFC Parade 25.pdf

Provided 12th August 2025

- 6.14 Parade social media research.docx
- 6.15 All of the above will be used to ascertain the detail of planning and whether, equipped with hindsight, more might have been done.

Provided 15th September 2025

- 6.16 SJA Liverpool F.C. Homecoming Parade 2025. Post Event Report dated 11/9/25

Provided 18th September 2025

- 6.17 TTX Liverpool Homecoming Parade 25 dated 15/5/25
- 6.18 TTX Debrief Liverpool Homecoming Parade 25 dated 15/5/25

Provided 24th October 2025

- 6.19 LFC Parade Tabletop Final
- 6.20 LFC Tabletop Parade Plan

Provided 19th November 2025

- 6.21 Liverpool Football Parade 2025 - Multi Agency Debrief - FAO Eric Stuart

APPENDIX C

7.0 COMMENTARY ON SUPPLIED DOCUMENTATION

7.1 LFC Event doc Final.pdf (65 Pages) (Titled ‘Parade Management Plan’)

7.1.1 This document is a comprehensive document which starts with Liverpool City Council identifying itself as the organiser of the event: this is quite usual. Although the football team may be those celebrating in this case, it is the norm for the local authority to be the organising body for such victory parades. This is not necessarily a position with which I agree, but it is standard practice throughout the UK. There is a particular note which states “*The Parade route has been agreed with Merseyside Police and LCC Highways and had to be based around LFC timings.*” These comments generally relate to contractual obligations between clubs, the players (for the purposes of a summer leave break) or other football authorities (such as the national teams who may require availability for competitions). There may be options in the future where football clubs and city authorities share responsibility and costs to some greater extent. In other words, any group that has a significant input in any part to the parade, the day, the timings, or any other aspect of it must also bear some responsibility, culpability, and costs.

7.1.2 This document also identifies other events taking place over the course of the weekend, including the Radio One Big Weekend running from Friday the 23rd to Sunday the 25th of May in Sefton Park and the final Liverpool match being played on the 25th of May. It had been supposed that as a result of this, the city would be full. What it does not say explicitly is that this means that the events team will also have been working hard all weekend, as will have the emergency services and the partner agencies. It is difficult to say whether or not this might have affected decision-making on the day, but the Liverpool Parade would have fallen at the end of a busy weekend with some very long days being worked.

7.1.3 Planning for the possibility of a parade began in January 2025, with the basis of those plans relying on early planning in 2024 and the continued learning from previous parades. The document does note that this is a parade for the people of Liverpool and friends from across the UK and Europe. The parade was scheduled for the 26th of May 2025, but Liverpool had actually secured victory of the Premiership on the 27th of April. This gave the authorities a final month to plan the actual details of the victory celebration, but it also gave members of the public one month to plan their own celebrations and travel arrangements. With hindsight, what seemed to be a huge advantage at the time may have been part of the problem for what occurred on the day, certainly in terms of the numbers who attended and some of the behaviours witnessed.

7.1.4 The parade route is identified as 15.6 kilometres in length, certainly one of the longest that I recall seeing. I have heard public commentary suggesting that this is simply too great a distance to manage adequately. However, I've also heard significant comment about the numbers attending and there being areas of very high crowd density. It is easy to imagine a situation where if this route were, perhaps, half its length, but the same number of people attended, that crowd density could have reached critical and life-threatening proportions at times. I will comment on this in more detail at a later stage, particularly my experience of reviewing the safety at the Toronto Raptors Victory Parade in 2019, which led to the injury of hundreds of people during an incident that occurred there.

7.1.5 However, it is worth noting now, that the route consisted effectively of three parts of a circle, being west, north, and east. In a similar way, the Toronto Raptors parade, a zigzagging route with two doglegs, gave people the opportunity to see the start and then see the parade from several different locations. The nature of Liverpool's Parade being in nearly a circle, meant that those at the start could easily take shortcuts to then reach the end or near to the end. The significance of this is that people will often, if given the opportunity, take multiple options to watch a parade passing by, as was learned from the Olympic Torch Relay. It means that many of those from the start had the opportunity to rejoin the route halfway, 2/3 of the way or towards the end of the parade and perhaps at all of those opportunities, thus leading to high densities at



Liverpool FC Victory Parade



Toronto Raptors Parade 2019

and near the latter stages. One lesson for the future would be to try, if feasible, to identify an almost linear route from start to finish, reducing the opportunities for people to make such shortcuts.

7.1.6 In relation to the Raptors parade, it is notable that an estimated 1.5 to 2 million people were in attendance, but over a far shorter, perhaps 4-kilometre route. This led to much higher crowd densities and some interesting 'challenges' in the middle of Toronto outside the mayoral offices of Nathan Phillips Square. It is for this and several other reasons, which I will investigate further, that I considered the two events to be worthy of comparison.

7.1.7 Another point of comparison and perhaps learning is the Raptors Parade started at 10:00 as opposed to the Liverpool Parade, which started at 14:30. The estimated time of finish for the Liverpool Parade was 18:00. Considering this was a football parade, one wonders if an earlier start time might have been beneficial. The impact of an earlier parade start time, however, is that the HVM infrastructure and road closures would need to be in place the night before, affecting city centre BAU and the nighttime economy.

7.1.8 I will consider further comments at the bottom of Page 6 that states specific action will need to be taken if crowd densities exceed 3 people per square metre. I hope to find these actions within the Crowd Management Plan, for it is hard to imagine what action could be taken in a crowd of this size to reduce density. (See 5.1.20)

7.1.9 I note the timing table on Pages 8-10 and find nothing contrary to what I might expect for those timings. Resources seem to have been appropriately allocated in relation to the time that control rooms opened and staff were deployed.

7.1.10 I note that whilst the strategic level 'significant risks' noted on Page 11, lists 7 factors that might lead to operational risks, there is no suggestion at any stage of a hostile or inadvertent vehicle entry into the crowd. There is no mention of terrorism intelligence, information, or any reason to think that a vehicle might reach into the crowd. This, of course, does not mean that the prospect of such an attack had not been considered. If it were not thought relevant, then no hostile vehicle mitigation or other measures would have been put in place. Coming within just a few weeks of the Lapu Lapu incident in Vancouver, it seems highly likely that this would have been playing on the minds of those planning this event. This is evident from the five pages allocated to matters of terrorism, starting at Page 44 and the references in the risk assessment at Sections 3 and 17. NB, by Page 51, other risk factors have been added to the list.

7.1.11 I note at the bottom of Page 15 the existence of an Emergency Liaison Team (ELT), sometimes known as an Event Liaison Team. The team seem to consist of all in-house management and safety specialists with the addition of the medical and security teams. But I have since clarified this matter, and it involves all the emergency services, including the Coastguard, and the Head of Operations Transport - Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

7.1.12 I note the suggestion that ELT meetings would be logged (Page 16). I have since clarified with LCC that each group present makes its own notes at these meetings. I will recommend that a log is kept of such meetings by a nominated person present, and those notes are shared with all others. Individual notes can and are frequently made in relation to any actions, but a holistic log of the ELT is also important.

7.1.13 A detailed breakdown of names, roles, contact numbers, etc., is available up to Page 27. I will not include these in this report as they are confidential and sensitive and should not be shared.

7.1.14 Page 29. I note an audience assessment with the profile of 70/30, male to female, with a wide variety of ages. This seems a fair and reasonable assumption. There is an expectation of around 300,000 plus supporters on the whole route. It is also noted that this is the club's first premiership celebration parade, with the victory in 2019-20 being not fully celebrated because of Covid restrictions.

7.1.15 The document states that a crowd management and security management system is in place, but gives no details of what this is.

7.1.16 Page 30 and 31 of the document indicate that 30 or more meetings took place that are recorded here. There were undoubtedly even more smaller meetings not formally recorded. However, the existence of 30 meetings alone suggests a comprehensive level of planning and coordination between the multi agencies.

7.1.17 Page 34. This page had caused me some concern, because it relies on an old, basic methodology of assessing crowd density without context. It suggests a means of assessing and responding to crowd density such that:

- I. Green is a status where all of the bodies of the crowd are visible: there are no crowd issues.
- II. Yellow is where bodies and heads are visible, and the crowd should be monitored.
- III. Amber is where only shoulders and heads are visible, and action 'may' be required.
- IV. Red is where only heads are visible, and crowding is unacceptable.

7.1.18 The consequence of a red crowd status is that stewards and security would identify points and road closures to prevent further ingress to specific areas. This might in itself lead to the closure of a zone.

7.1.19 My concern is that this is a basic and unscientific method of monitoring crowds. It is often associated with police public order training and assessments but has been removed in many cases. I note that this is not a table/chart used by Merseyside Police. It relies on a single source of information, i.e. the viewing of a crowd, potentially from road level. It disregards the viewing angle that can change the perception of density. A crowd being observed at the same level from a pavement or worse, from the road (which is a lower viewing angle) will give a misleading interpretation of crowd density.

An observer on a roadway looking at a pavement will only be able to see the first 3 to 4 layers of people at best. They are unlikely to be able to assess the crowd density behind that. They will almost always only be able to see heads beyond the first three layers of a crowd, therefore assuming a crowd status of 'red,' when in fact there is free movement further back in the crowd that the observer cannot see.

7.1.20 If the observation was made from a raised viewing position or CCTV the higher angle of viewing down into the crowd would give a more accurate assessment of what is taking place. For instance, if a camera was tilted down at 90°, it wouldn't matter how dense the crowd was, the observer would still see heads and shoulders,

and possibly even torsos, and therefore never go beyond amber status. Even at a density of 5 or 6 people per square metre a CCTV position may be able to see all those body parts. In those circumstances, the observer would never report a density of more than yellow status, whereas in fact the crowd might be at a density at which action should be taken.

7.1.21 Furthermore, it states that if a red crowd status occurs, where only heads are visible and crowding is unacceptable, then this is the point at which ELT will instruct road closures to be implemented to prevent further ingress to a specific area. My concern here is that, almost by definition, it will now be too late to implement those closures. Information passed to the ELT to undertake an assessment, then passed

Ingress

The Parade is held in a publicly accessible location and is not ticketed. This prevents the Organisers from monitoring numbers at ingress points. Instead, the areas at the front of each side of the strand will be monitored for crowd densities, using the visual aid below. Crowd density status shall be reported to Event Control for review



by the ELT and action taken as necessary. This includes but is not limited to restricting access as necessary to strand via Red Cross St, James St, Brunswick St Water St and diverting along castle st Exchange Flags and Old Hall ST.

- If an Amber Crowd Status is reported to Event Control the ELT shall determine whether any closures to particular area(s) are required.

- If a Red Crowd Status is reported to Event Control the ELT shall issue instruction to deploy security / stewards to identified points and road closures in order to prevent further ingress to specific area(s).

The decision to close a zone, will be taken by Event Control and will be based on a number of factors such as event duration remaining, known footfall through the city towards the viewing areas and advice taken from other agencies relating to transport, public order, required emergency services vehicle movement, infrastructure, and the availability of welfare amenities (list not exhaustive).

Where possible (not withstanding a life-threatening situation where immediate action is required), the Event Manager, shall consult with joint agencies ahead of implementing any closures. Barriers shall be located at each strategic point to facilitate closures where these are required.

back to stewards and security to close roads, will take time to implement. The roads, streets and footpaths leading to this area will already be full of people, and they will continue to flow inwards as if in a pipe (the roads) from the tap (the end of the road/path where control measures and closures might have been placed) into the bucket (the area which is overflowing). It is a fairly well-established protocol that once an area is reaching anywhere near capacity, the tap needs to be turned off, in the knowledge that the pipe will still continue to drain into the bucket, probably filling it to the point at which some maximum comfort level has been reached, but not beyond it to a dangerous level.

7.1.22 I have discussed this with LCC, and the angle of viewing is discussed verbally during briefings with managers, and this is intended as a simple guide for those without extensive crowd management experience to call for support from those with more experience when needed. I have recommended that an additional paragraph be added to this section to explain the importance of understanding the viewing angle.

7.1.23 There are certainly areas within the crowd, which can be seen on social media footage, where high-level crowd densities can be seen, accompanied by 'bouncing' activity in the crowd, which would leave most experienced crowd managers feeling uncomfortable. I have detailed these later, but they would have been a cause for concern both in density and behaviour, with no means of management and limited means of rescue intervention had a crowd collapse occurred.

7.1.24 I note on Page 44 the reference to terrorism, and particularly 'The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act'. Whilst this will be a legal requirement (probably in mid-late 2027) it is rightly pointed out that it would not be applicable at the time of the parade and not being a ticketed event would fall outside of scope in any case. The document does reference the Health and Safety legislation already in existence to manage the foreseeable risk of terrorism. It also states there will be a discussion between Culture Liverpool and Merseyside Police in regard to event threat levels and intelligence leading up to the live event day. I have not sought nor seen the vulnerability or threat assessment supplied by the police though I have confirmed that it was received (albeit relatively late, arriving on the day of the TTX) and with an agreement of a very tight circulation list. It contained recommendations and supporting justification for those recommendations.

7.1.25 The document notes that at the time of writing and of the parade, the threat level is substantial, meaning an attack is likely to happen in the UK. It should be noted that there are 5 levels or categories: Low, Moderate, Substantial, Severe, and Critical. These have been in place since 2006. The current threat is substantial, meaning an attack is likely, but this is the lowest category since 2006. At no stage in that period have the low or moderate levels been used. The highest level in recent years was

dropped in February 2022 from severe to substantial, and that severe setting had followed the attempt to explode a device at Liverpool Women's Hospital.

7.1.26 I comment on this because it is well established that human beings cannot maintain high levels of focus, attention or indeed security regimes for prolonged periods of time. Whilst it is accepted that the phrase 'an attack is likely' (the definition of substantial) should mean all persons should expect an attack, and is the current position, this does not mean that the human beings, even those in positions of authority, such as police, security, local authorities, etc. will be able to maintain a mindset such that they genuinely believe that an attack is *actually* likely. This was one of the challenges of the Manchester Arena inquiry, where Sir John Saunders suggested that a lack of attention to detail and a lack of security focus was one of the problems that led to the bombing of the City Rooms. He highlights this at length in his report, but offers no practical solution that can overcome this human frailty.

7.1.27 This review does not suggest that any lack of attention to detail or focus on security was in any way related to the incidents that occurred on the Liverpool Victory Parade. On the contrary, as was explored, those working the event maintained high levels of focus, despite known human frailties, and delivered an event despite the numbers attending and the behaviour of a minority of those attending.

7.1.28 On Page 45, the document describes the multi-layered approach that will be used to deal with any matters and mitigate the risk of any such attack. There is also on the following pages a comprehensive list of briefing material that can be used on the day, including the HOT Principles and Run, Hide, Tell, amongst many others.

7.1.29 There is a short, clear, and simple evacuation process outlined on Page 50. I am a strong advocate of simple plans because in the heat of any incident, complex plans regularly fail.

7.1.30 Page 51 onwards consists of the Event Risk Assessment (R/A), which I have read in depth. I will not break down that R/A in detail as this is exempt for security reasons.

7.1.31 I note and strongly agree with the statement that "*The combination of people, the potential for public order issues and design of the sites, is not, and cannot, be considered as risk-free.*" There is no such thing as a risk-free site, even when it is designed and built from scratch, as would be the case for a greenfield site. A combination of workplace activity within a built environment, then a high-profile procession with large numbers of excited and, in some cases, inebriated members of the public present, will all bring additional risks. Although the demographic of attendees is described as predominantly male, there would have been a huge range

of ages, from the very elderly to the very young. Which leads to the remaining question of do we continue with these events, or do we cease to hold such ceremonial, celebratory, and civic activities? I will address this question in my closing comments.

7.1.32 The initial Parade Management Plan from LCC specifies nine types of risk which are highly likely. These include matters such as the misuse of flares and misuse of flares by children, falls from height, overcrowding and crushing, severe weather, and evacuation. Other risk assessment documents also cover these matters, with appropriate mitigation put in place.

7.1.33 In relation to the mention of terrorism, the risk, which starts as high, remains unresolved or mitigated downwards, with the (reasonable) explanation that police operations are not detailed within the report but will mitigate such risks to a tolerable level.

7.1.34 **Summary.** This document is more than adequate and sufficient, along with the other paperwork provided, to indicate a high level of thought, planning and mitigation of those risks that might have reasonably been foreseen. I have seen documents of this nature run into hundreds of pages of irrelevant and unnecessary detail, whereas here, all matters that are contained are concise and necessary.

7.2 **2025 Parade TM Plan Final.pdf (43 Pages) (Titled: “Liverpool Football Club Homecoming Parade 2025 Traffic Management Plan”).**

7.2.1 I have read the document and note the following. *P3.4.3 states all road closures will conform to chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual.* Whilst this may seem obvious, it is by no means always the case with many marathons and half marathons, as well as cycle events, not complying with the manual.

7.2.2 *P3.4.5 states that all closures will be staffed by stewards in radio communication with Traffic Control and Traffic Managers.* As per my previous point, whilst this seems obvious, it is by no means the case across the country, with volunteers without comms sometimes being used to manage such closures.

7.2.3 *P3.6.2 states the vehicles “trapped” (a common occurrence when road closures are implemented) will only be allowed to leave with the express permission of the Traffic Manager.* I mention this because at events I have witnessed, it is often the case that the vehicles are refused permission to leave under any circumstances. This is a dubious and probably unlawful practice and can lead to heated arguments and has on occasions led to frustrated drivers and residents trapped inside the route to drive at

staff when an exit route is clear just yards away from them and with minimum pedestrian traffic in the way.

7.2.4 Page 33 to 40 is a highly detailed Business and Residents pack. It is very comprehensive and includes contact numbers and FAQs.

7.2.5 These four points above I emphasise are signs of good practice in Traffic Management plans that are regularly missed elsewhere, indicating a high standard of professionalism for this event (as I would expect).

7.2.6 **Summary:** This is a comprehensive TMP as expected, with much good practice and can be easily understood by readers. I would not envisage many changes if the Parade were to be run again.

7.3 **FGH Security x LFC Parade 2025 - Security Management Plan - v1 (30 Pages):**

7.3.1 The document is dated the 18th of May, although still shown as Version 1, which seems slightly unusual. Plans tend to develop as knowledge of an event grows, and changes are made. However, it is likely as in my own documentation for events where there are multiple versions named 'draft 0.1, 0.2' etc in the background, and this is the first and final 'published' document (although there is no evidence of this in the version control). There is no real standard in the events industry as to protocols to follow in this regard, so this may well be standard practice for this company on short-notice events to 'get it right first time' in terms of documentation.

7.3.2 At Para 6.4: I note the 'trespass at height' section in particular. It is stated that the security company were asked by LCC to 'strongly advise and deter' climbing activity. However, the document goes on to say that the company have no legal powers to prevent such behaviour and will not be physically intervening to prevent climbing or instruct climbers to get down. It is generally agreed throughout the industry that physical intervention in such matters is highly dangerous and can lead to serious accidents, with culpability for injuries or worse. This became significant during the day.

7.3.3 **Summary:** The document is fairly generic and with extensive reference to the security deployment schedule, as should be expected. NB: It is not, and does not claim to be, a Crowd Management Plan.

7.4 FGH Security x LFC Parade 2025 - Security Schedule - v3 - no costs.pdf (2 Pages):

7.4.1 My only comment on this two-page spreadsheet is that the previous document above (The Security Management Plan) stated that the security deployment schedule would contain the detail of 'trespass at height' locations within it. I have identified just two locations: Beetham Tower and Moor Street scaffolding, but these seem to be the only two specified within the sheets.

7.4.2 **Summary:** This document is much as expected with no issues noted.

7.5 LCC-LFC25-Route A-A1-7 Feb 2025.pdf: A high-resolution map of the route

7.5.1 The most significant thing to note with the route is that it follows a greater than half circular route, following the face of a clock (anticlockwise) from around the 5 o'clock marker on that clock face to around 9 o'clock on the face. This 3.5-hour route (1430 to 1800) covers some 15.4km or just under 10 miles. The distance 'as the crow flies' is a considerably lower 6.5km or 4 miles. However, for pedestrians or those who have planned well using public transport, a direct route between the start and end points could be as little as 8km or 5 miles, a steady 2-hour walk.

7.5.2 This gives ample 'shortcut' opportunities for those determined enough to see the parade from multiple locations. I have explained this in length in previous paragraphs and will not reiterate them, other than to say that, in future, if possible, a more linear route with less short cut opportunities should be explored.

7.5.3 I do not argue with its length, though. With the numbers always likely to attend, I fear significantly greater problems could have been anticipated if a much shorter route was used.

7.5.4 Based upon an assumption of 10 miles travelled in 3.5 hours, then the average planned speed was 2.86mph (I will assume it was planned at 3mph). The average human walking speed ranges from 2.5 to 4mph, although those higher figures tend to be for competitive walkers. The lower average, though, sits at 3.1mph. In effect, any person seeking to see the parade on multiple occasions, which is travelling a journey twice the length of the pedestrian journey, could easily do so.

7.5.5 I believe it is highly likely, and quite normal if physically possible, that many thousands of those attending did so at least at two separate locations. Others might, where physically possible, have tried to walk along the back of the crowds following the bus route until they eventually reached a 'plug' of people where it was no longer possible to continue.

7.5.6 **Summary:** For all the above reasons, I would suggest a more linear route driven at a slightly higher speed with a rotating team of security 'runners' and motorcycle outriders to maintain momentum might be a safer way to consider future events. This would be much like the 2012 Olympic Torch Relay that generally avoided multiple viewings at each site or each day (apart from those who drove between towns and cities to see a separate leg) by maintaining a momentum that was not able to be maintained by spectators on foot.

7.6 **Parade - Event Log - Eric.docx: (12 pages).**

7.6.1 This log was provided, but I requested that only the parts up to 18:00 be included to avoid matters of sub-judice.

7.6.2 There are surprisingly few entries on the LCC analogue log (spreadsheet), which is a Word document of 12 pages and a total of around 180 entries, 21 of which are in the days leading up to the event and not of the event itself (which is not to say they are not relevant). The time span for the day itself commences in the log at 08:30 and finishes with the parade ending at 18:00. To me, this feels like a relatively low number of entries for an event of this magnitude, complexity, and challenge. I am also slightly surprised that the log is maintained via a Word document rather than one of the many available software options. My final comment in relation to the format is that there is no 'conclusion' or 'completed' section which would be normal to indicate that the particular incident is now concluded or still ongoing. Other partners have different logging systems.

7.6.3 I note from as early as Wednesday there were issues being raised regarding scaffolding along the route and the refusal by a homeowner to act over it. Unfortunately, this is often the case and the only real legislation covering such an issue would be the Occupiers Liabilities Acts of 1957 and 1984. Both are civil law and would apply retrospectively if an incident occurred. If stretched, the scaffolding company might be asked to prevent climbing on such structures using S3 of the HASWA, but I fear any pre-emptive action by the LA might not be supported by the HSE. This is not a new problem but a repeated one along parade and procession routes. I have made further enquiries and confirmed that issues over scaffolding were ongoing for months before the event. It is the lack of powers and legislation here that brings that challenges faced by Liverpool but also by many other authorities at events around the UK.

7.6.4 However, of the events noted, a significant number relate to public behaviour on the parade. These include:

- 10:31 Reports of pedestrians on cars on Fiveways and Rocky Lane.

- 11:51 A BTP vehicle having had a flare thrown on its roof.
- 12:10 Reports of a member of the public having brought a ladder to the parade to climb.
- 12:19 Reports of public sitting on Mersey Tunnel Ticket Office.
- 14:36 Reports of pyro use within the crowd.
- 15:33 Fencelines around a scissor lift are breached with toddlers now in the area.
- 16:42 Reports of a serious incident at Beetham Plaza (trespass at height).
- 16:57 Barrier lines broken and security trying to hold back crowds.
- 17:14 Member of the public overwhelmed by smoke due to the amount of smoke in the air.
- 17:33 Public launching fireworks at Beetham Plaza.

7.7 Culture Liverpool Internal LFC Parade Debrief Report. Dated 26th Of June 2025. Focus Operational Delivery. This is an internal report for the staff from Liverpool City Council who were involved in planning and delivering the event. It is split into two parts, with the first being just a headline or bullet points. The second part being a more detailed breakdown of the notes made on the day of the meeting.

7.7.1 There are significant comments made on the difference between this and previous parades. Not least of these was the full final months planning time, having won the league in April, the date falling on a Bank Holiday, no Premier League parade taking place back in 2020 and no conclusive match in the last few days of the season. All these factors joined to give attendees a considerable period of time in which to plan their attendance and objectives.

7.7.2 **Football Season Constraints:** Player contracts influenced date selection. This has also been referred to elsewhere in other documents. There should be discussions between Liverpool City Council and the Club to have these plans as a contingency within the contracts. It is fair to say that these contracts would also have caused problems for other clubs elsewhere in the UK.

7.7.3 I note in Section 3 the mention of reviewing scaffolding management and licencing agreements. This clearly is a major focus and should have continued attention.

7.7.4 There are several matters of concern on the heading of “staff, welfare and safety.” I have already received verbal reports of the hostility, both verbal and physical, received by staff. This behaviour and treatment of staff is utterly unacceptable and should be highlighted in any reports and briefings.

7.7.5 It is disconcerting to read that both flares and overcrowding endangered children along the route. This should have been a triumphant day that they were entitled to celebrate as much as all other generations.

7.7.6 A number of issues are noted regarding communications, including Silver's 'Comms' not being received on the ground due to noise levels. In addition, there is a recommendation to split the radio channels and increase the number of operators. Noise-cancelling 'cans' were used by some on the ground, but even these struggled to cope because of the noise levels of the crowd. NB: It is worthy of note that on previous similar events, ten channels were used, but this had been increased to eighteen for the 2025 event. Comms will always be a challenge on such events, and I am confident the team are aware of this and will continue to seek improvements.

7.7.7 There are many comments about the press and media. LCC need to consider a far stricter regime whereby, unless you have announced your attendance in advance, there will be no special provision granted. Instead, they were adding facilities as the day went on for those journalists who had not advised of their attendance. In future, those arriving on the day should be treated just as anyone else would be, with no special treatment. They might also consider insisting that Accredited Media attend an online safety briefing in advance of the event. It seems from the debrief that the media continued to film certain behaviour, including those climbing to height and those using flares. Whilst the suggestion is that the filming should be stopped, this may not be the right answer or even possible. Perhaps the filming should continue, but not broadcast live or even on the same day, but saved as evidence to be provided at a later date and to make a compilation video of dangerous behaviour that should not be repeated. This would, of course, require the support of the journalists involved.

7.7.8 I note in several documents the discussion over budget and whether such events are affordable going forward or feasible in such days of financial challenge. This is an age-old discussion in relation to costs at football matches and for parades. The core question is 'who benefits' from the parade itself? The Club, the city, or the spectators. Liverpool is fortunate that the football club meets the costs, though that may not always be the case in other towns and cities, as other partners may have costs incurred associated with the event.

7.7.9 For future parade events, if they are to take place, it is worth considering whether inbound pedestrian and public transport is monitored more closely in order to attempt to gauge the levels at which transport might need to be 'turned off.' Referring to the 2002 Brighton Big Beach Boutique, it is worth noting that on the morning in question, there were thousands more passengers on trains leaving London heading towards Brighton than had previously ever been witnessed. These were early indications that were perhaps missed on both occasions, as to just how popular this

event was going to be. The ‘turning off’ of a rail or transport network is a huge decision that cannot be made on the spur of the moment and must be discussed and pre-planned. I note closely comments from the transport network that plans to cease inbound trains if the city were becoming overcrowded would have a major impact not just on the network, but on the city as a whole. This consideration is not mentioned lightly, but I believe should be an option open for discussion, even if ultimately not chosen.

7.8 LCC Internal Service Area Debrief - Parade - 22 July 2025 (1)

7.8.1 This document is marked confidential, and its content will remain so as much as possible through this report. It is for LCC to choose if they release it, or parts of it. The release of any planning or contingency documents might ultimately pose a threat to public safety in the wrong hands and so might need to be protected under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

7.8.2 There was a significant attendance by those of Liverpool City Council at a senior level, with over 30 people in attendance from across its departments.

7.8.3 There is much to be applauded, including high-level political engagement and support by councillors and others, good partnership working with Merseyside Police and others, and the significant economic benefits to the city, driven by the estimated 1.2 million attendees. However, there were warnings as to the scale of the numbers of people attending had they been noted and considered at the time. These include hotel occupancy not just in Liverpool, but as far away as Manchester and Leeds. Whilst this report does not specify it, I suspect this is likely to have been unprecedented.

7.8.4 The debrief notes first attendees arriving as early as 07:30 in areas where the parade was not due to arrive until 18:00 hours. This brings back memories of the Euro finals at Wembley in 2021 and the early attendance that caught planners off guard. Spectators in Liverpool were noted to have come from as far away as the USA, South Africa, and Canada in key viewing areas such as The Strand. This is a sea change in crowd attendance and will have to be noted not just in Liverpool but for other such victory parades with sufficient notice.

7.8.5 I notice the desire to ensure future messaging is around a civic pride to try to avoid the significant amount of glass left behind in the city. It should also reference tolerable or acceptable behaviours and positively reinforce that pride. Whilst I understand the intention, as already stated, this is now a global event, and the success of such messaging may be less likely if those attending are not from the Liverpool area, although this doesn't mean that attempts should not be made.

7.8.6 Equally worrying, or perhaps more so, was the open sale of pyrotechnics on the street by vendors operating from bags in high footfall areas, despite both police and local authority efforts. These sales seem to have continued at very high volumes for much of the day. It is questionable whether current legislation and punishment is sufficient to deter such offenders. One only has to examine open-source footage on social media to note the high levels of smoke, which must have been both unpleasant and unhealthy. But in addition to smoke, there were high-temperature flares being used with significant burn risks. Many individuals may not have realised the consequences of setting off such smoke and flares, but with the education within football grounds these days, it seems obvious to the observer that there is a high risk of injury and a threat to health for those standing in such environments. This health threat, of course, includes all of those who are working in the area at the time, such as the local authority, police, fire, ambulance volunteers, security stewards, and traffic marshals. There is something of an anomaly here whereby the threat to public safety, albeit in a working environment, is actually being made by some members of the public to themselves and each other. As with crowd disturbances that we have seen at recent public events across the UK and the world, both sporting and musical, there are limits to what private security stewards, police and other authorities and agencies can do to limit this type of behaviour.

7.8.7 Whilst not named, it is noted that several contractors extended their working hours without additional charge. This is commendable, and certainly praise is due to those companies and individuals who did so.

7.8.8 There are good suggestions for the future with regard to using Liverpool Football Club as the prime source of messaging. This message should include no pyrotechnics, avoiding dangerous behaviour such as climbing, and respect for the city and its environment. Most attendees are less likely to listen to messages from police or city authorities, whereas they are far more inclined to listen to those that they support the most, i.e. the club and its players.

7.8.9 Whilst the debrief seems to leave the question of the time of the parade open to further discussion through the Joint Agency Group, there are a number of reasons given as to why an earlier start would not be practical. Those reasons are valid, but they do not seem insurmountable if the will is present, and an earlier start time should be investigated further. The exception might be a return home from Europe the day after a victory, and thus constrained by flight times.

7.9 LFC Parade 2025 WhatsApp Image

7.9.1 In general, these repeat some of the pictures seen on early TV footage of the day. What must not be forgotten is that these would have been repeated endlessly

and for days afterwards if the incident in Water St had not occurred. Instead, TV images of smoke, pyro, high-density crowds, climbing crowds, etc (including children at height on buildings) would have featured significantly and been the focus of both media and public attention.

7.9.2 One picture shows what appears to be nothing more than a red screen. The person taking and sharing this picture explains that this is a genuine picture. The smoke is so dense just before the buses arrive that you simply cannot see your hand in front of your face. There is also evidence within one picture (and I have heard verbal reports from others) of persons having acquired or brought ladders to the scene to assist their efforts to climb to a height. LCC should be given credit for acknowledging these factors.

7.10 **LFC-Parade-25-xxxx xxxx-22-05-2025.pdf** (Name of author redacted for this report)

7.10.1 This document is actually the event safety log by the contracted supplier and submitted by a highly experienced and highly regarded safety professional who is well known to me. I have, though, reviewed this with a critical eye and have strived not to be influenced by my knowledge of the individual or the company concerned.

7.10.2 The opening parts of the log relate to the weather forecast and expected impact on the crowd. It particularly notes an increase in base speed winds and significant rain towards the end of the parade. These factors are important when one considers the number of people who are climbing to heights on scaffolding and similar items during the course of the day. An increase in wind speed and rain would have caused some significant concerns for those in safety roles when reflecting on the safety of the people who were climbing to height.

7.10.3 I note Log entry 17 states that at 14:00 a 'parallel crowd following the bus currently - this behaviour has not been seen before'. This is pertinent to my previous comments and conclusion that consideration should be given to a more linear, rather than semicircular or zigzagging route. If a reasonable vehicle speed is maintained in a direct A-to-B route, it is very difficult for crowds to remain parallel and reach a secondary viewing objective further along the route. At some stage, they will realise that the vehicle is getting further ahead of them and give up the 'pursuit.'

7.10.4 There are multiple comments that support reports made from elsewhere, such as people climbing on scaffolding (and sometimes throwing items from them (Log 34), people falling from height (Log 35), crossing points having failed, increased numbers on The Strand based on figures from 2022, infrastructure breached and such like. I

see no point in itemising all of these entries separately, although of note at Log 25, it states: 'Current estimate of crowd is 525,000'. It is not clear where this information is sourced from, and 525,000 seems a rather precise number given the length of the parade and the wide range of activities taking place.

7.10.5 Log entry 26 at 15:00 instructs the pilot vehicle to slow to enable live footage of what is occurring within the buses. This is a matter I will raise as questions elsewhere. The pilot vehicle has a specific purpose, as it is generally there to set the pace for all vehicles behind it. To ask it to slow down to close a gap, rather than asking the buses to increase speed to close it, seems at odds with its primary function.

7.10.6 At Log 39, 15:16 it is noted that a father ran in front of the buses whilst carrying a child. Another indication of some people's disregard for their own and even their children's safety.

7.10.7 There is some discussion in the log about the scaffolding, particularly at Beetham Plaza:

16:30 Log 46 It is described as being a threat.

16:30 Log 47 Recommendation to clear scaffolding Beetham Place. *I note, though, that there is no comment as to who this suggestion came from or who was to action it.*

16:30 Log 47 The outcome according to the log was to have a Gold meeting. NB: I have subsequently clarified that whilst the log indicates that a gold meeting was held (which I questioned), it was in fact a Silver meeting that took place to discuss the options to deal with that issue.

16:36 Log 51 Gold (actually Silver) meeting deploys assets to the bottom of scaffolding with PA messages for people not to climb. NB, I note (rightly) that there is no attempt to bring anyone off the scaffolding. FRS resources being deployed.

17:00 Log 53 PA Messages made for people to leave the scaffolding, "response from public minimal." I doubt this response was a surprise to anyone on the ground, and was always likely to fail, but needed to be attempted.

7.10.8 My understanding is that this area had become a real focus of concern and attention for the safety team. I reiterate my earlier comments regarding the focus we as human beings are able to maintain and how many incidents we can manage at the same time. In this case, whilst extremely busy, the teams managed exceptionally well.

7.11 nt-recovery-XXXX-XXXXX-27-05-2025.pdf (Name of author redacted for this report)

7.11.1 Having begun to read this Log, I quickly noticed it relates to welfare management for those involved in the vehicle incident. As such, I have ceased to read it and will not include any part of it in my report.

7.12 LFX Safety - Post Event Report - LFC Parade 25.pdf

7.12.1 This is the post-event report of the company engaged to provide safety services for the event. It names all of those in the roles working with/for that company, and I know a number of them quite well in a professional capacity, but some also as friends. I will however, endeavour to comment without fear or favour on the document.

7.12.2 It reiterates many points, particularly regarding the reason for such large numbers of people having attended, which has already been mentioned extensively elsewhere. There is little point in reiterating these.

7.12.3 It is worth remembering that there were reports of mutual support amongst those attending, and there is ever-increasing research that demonstrates that crowds are generally far more self-supporting than is often reported. Subsequent reporting often focuses on the poor behaviour rather than the virtuous. LCC and partners must encourage and celebrate this, making this the 'norm' alongside developing interventions that challenge poor behaviour by a minority to make the event safer and more enjoyable for all.

7.12.4 This report reminds us of the four strategic safety points, which were identified before the event. It also gives evidence of all of those having occurred. The four items, as a reminder, were 1. Crowding on the route, 2. Crowding on The Strand, 3. Flares and related injuries, especially to minors, and 4. Trespass at height.

7.12.5 In relation to the 1st and 2nd, despite the high densities and discomfort, there were no reported crush injuries. In relation to the 3rd point, flares etc, there is no data available on injuries through this report (see medical report), although it is reported that the smoke effect was so comprehensive at The Strand that the sky became opaque with 20 times the normal levels of particulates.

7.12.6 In relation to the 4th point, it is once again emphasised that the trespass at height on scaffolding in The Strand was so dangerous that emergency services were deployed because of fears for the stability of that scaffolding. Those vehicles were

deployed to a 'hold off' position in Drury Lane so as not to be in direct contact with high-density crowds.

7.12.7 There was also trespass at height on virtually all fixed structures with a view or a flat roof. I would stress once again the difficulties this causes for decision makers in local authorities, police, safety stewards, and security, who were all trying to manage multiple locations at the same time, knowing that the public is in danger, but with no powers or authority to prevent them from such activities. Once in place, unless essential, it is generally acknowledged that leaving the people where they are is a lower risk than attempting to remove them by force. This is certainly well known by police in the context of trespass at height during protest, where S.O.P.s are generally to leave the protesters where they are unless they are causing considerable harm and risk to others, and even then, it is easier and safer to remove 'the others' below them rather than those on the scaffolding.

7.12.8 I particularly note the learning point on Page 3 that the operational gap between the buses and the lead vehicle became too much and that the pace needs to be parade-led, not police led. But it is important to note that the police are very clear on this point. They were the lead pilot vehicle but were in direct contact with parade staff throughout in terms of setting the pace for the convoy. Crowd density reduced the vehicles to a crawling pace at times, with a need to physically and verbally move back crowds.

7.12.9 In relation to the deployment of snipers (correctly termed 'Police Marksmen') on rooftops, this is a matter entirely for the police and the judgement of the Gold Commander, the Firearms Commander, and the risk assessors. It is easy to say in hindsight that no incident took place that would have caused the use of such a tactic, but it is impossible in advance to say exactly what the threat is likely to be. The use of this tactic, watching over large-scale crowds, is by no means unusual and is often used elsewhere as both a deterrent and response.

7.12.10 The post-event report suggests 9 recommendations, which I will not repeat here word for word. I will, though, pick up two specific points that I do not believe have been raised so far elsewhere. Within this report's recommendations at point 8, it states, "Loggist with controller for safety team; safety team to have own comms channel to prioritise and protect messaging". I have clarified this matter with both the report's own author and LCC themselves. There was a loggist throughout the majority of the day, but there was no channel/event controller dedicated just to safety. The Safety team initially started on a main working channel that was so busy that they switched to another, non-dedicated but much quieter channel. The recommendation (supported by LCC) is for a dedicated safety channel from the outset, with its own controller and loggist.

7.12.11 The second relates to the players having an onboarding safety briefing regarding any behaviour on the bus inadvertently influencing attendee behaviours. Once again, one would like to think this was not necessary, but a reminder is always useful.

7.13 **25- 12 - 08 Parade social media research.docx**

7.13.1 This document shows links to 17 pieces of social media footage and static pictures from X, Instagram, and TikTok.

7.13.2 The videos show a variety of locations but invariably show very large crowds, sometimes engulfed in smoke. Particularly concerning is Video 3, which shows thousands of attendees 'bouncing' from side to side. Whilst this is a common activity at some music festivals, it is carefully managed and watched by artists, crowd managers, and security teams. In this setting, without such controls, it is worrying to watch with an awareness of the consequences of just one person falling within the crowd.

7.13.3 Video 10 shows crowds forcing their way past and battling with stewards who are trying to hold them back from attempts to follow the parade.

7.13.4 Video 13 is particularly telling with the amount of smoke, numbers in the crowd, numbers who have climbed lampposts and one of the bus occupants apparently standing on a seat with one leg over the side of the bus. This latter activity should be brought to the attention of the club and warnings given about future behaviours.

7.13.5 Video 14 is from Crewe Railway Station, indicating very high-density crowds on the platform waiting for trains inbound to Liverpool. This is not dissimilar to the scenes seen early in the morning at London railway stations, waiting to depart for Brighton and its Big Beach Boutique in 2002. The footage is not timed, and I cannot see what time it was posted.

7.13.6 Videos 15 and 16 give views at Liverpool Central Station and Liverpool Lime Street. Future plans might include having contact with all surrounding railway stations and telephone contact numbers during egress, for them to be notified of excessive numbers attending. Contingency plans might consider the stopping of trains running into Liverpool if numbers were that severe. Such action has been taken at events that have been known to be excessively crowded (Lewes Bonfires). There are however, major consequences with this decision as it can cause untenable situations in stations, which can escalate.

7.13.7 Finally, Video 17 gives a clear indication of the depth and density of crowds taken by one of the players from the bus. The sheer number of people in this video is somewhat disturbing. Whilst I will not estimate the number of people present, I could not argue with the figures and assessments given of up to 1.2 million. I am generally averse to crowd counting as it can be an imprecise science. The only realistic means of assessing a crowd is an aerial view of the whole route taken at one time with an extremely high-resolution picture that can then be counted later using a density matrix. Any other methodology is likely to be inaccurate as crowds move spontaneously and rapidly along the route and form, leave and reform elsewhere.

7.14 Draft Parade Minutes - JAG debrief July 2025.doc

7.14.1 This is the record of the multi-agency debrief held on Tuesday, the 22nd of July 2025. The names of those present are not included in the debrief note, and the rationale for that is to allow greater transparency and openness during the discussions. It was noted as being held under Chatham House rules. The debrief could not discuss the vehicle incident that took place at the end of the parade. That matter was subject to ongoing legal investigation and was Sub Judice. Any comments in relation to hostile vehicle mitigation, the incident response, and any aspect of the Water St incident was then and remains outside of the scope of the meeting as it is with this report.

7.14.2 The matter of the club and players' schedules was discussed again, and noted that, to some extent, the timing of the parade must be dictated by the availability of players.

7.14.3 The length of planning time was also discussed, as was the planning time available for those wishing to attend the parade. The issue for all those involved in planning was that the date had already been guessed or at least speculated upon by both media and the public, with both social media and local press having published the likely date. Of course, just because the date is set, it does not need to be made public immediately, but once it is in such common knowledge, it is pointless denying it and could lead to a breakdown in trust.

7.14.4 As I have previously noted, the option of an earlier start time was discussed by this group.

7.14.5 There was some confusion in relation to planning timescales. For instance, the first medical meeting was held on 5th March, but some, in a wider context, did not know that had taken place and thought those plans were much later. On page 3, it was noted that although it varied between different agencies, it was felt that there was still not sufficient planning time given the scale of the event. Some felt it was late even though there was additional time than in previous parades. For instance, a medical meeting

was 'held only in the week before the event, and even then, it was more of a presentation than a joint planning exercise.' Such perceptions are not uncommon: if every member of every team across the whole planning spectrum attended every meeting, those meetings would be unmanageable and impossible to arrange. It should be noted that these comments came from a single agency and do not reflect that of the majority.

7.14.6 Again, the decision to have the event on the Bank Holiday gave mixed opinions, with some stating that it was better for the city and far less disruptive, but very difficult for some services, creating some staff resourcing issues and additional costs and resourcing issues.

7.14.7 Rail transport hubs such as Manchester, Crewe, Chester, and Birmingham saw large rises in numbers, causing concerns about how these people might get home after the event.

7.14.8 Many organisations said they were working at 'full stretch,' and any other incident would have led to challenges.

7.14.9 Although no source evidence is provided, once again, there is reference to this having now become an international parade due to the large numbers coming from outside the UK.

7.14.10 Whilst I will not repeat the numbers in detail, it is worth noting that 23 additional trains had to be used to help cope with egress at the end of the day, and all 51 units available to Merseyrail were used, carrying over 140,000 passengers.

7.14.11 A major learning point which must not be forgotten is that, as this is a parade, the vast majority of people will leave as soon as it is over. Any expectation for a staggered egress is unrealistic if the crowd perceive an opportunity to all be near or at the end of the parade route. It seems obvious now, and with hindsight, that many along the parade may have continued to travel parallel routes to try to see the parade again, or to reach City Centre transport hubs, culminating in large numbers at the very end. Dissipation from this final end point was far higher than anybody had anticipated, exacerbated by the Water Street incident and the weather.

7.14.12 There is a considerable amount of low-key, practical and tactical learning, much of which is specific location-based, and which has been noted by the teams concerned.

7.14.13 The risk of those climbing to height is specified as a risk both to themselves and to others who may be at ground level beneath them. The complexity of those risks depends on who and what has been climbed, such as lampposts, multi-storey buildings, cranes, or other unsuitable structures. It is clear that the authority is considering the legal position to try to resolve what might be termed a 'wicked' problem. If one is obtained and the solution is found, then this might be usefully shared more widely with the local authorities.

7.14.14 I note for the first time in this report a specific figure of 23 minor injuries that were flare-related. Worryingly, 18 of those patients were under the age of 18. The additional planning time for those attending probably gave them more opportunities to purchase smoke and flares in advance. This is beyond the means of local authorities or police locally to manage, and it may be that government needs to consider stronger legislation and punishment for those caught carrying, but certainly those manufacturing, importing, or permitting the importation or sale of such articles. This may be a matter that could be addressed by the Local Government Association, but Liverpool City Council may need to be the instigator of that action.

7.14.15 There are further comments, and there is one aspect of note. The document states that a great deal of media content before the event featured parade attendees with smoke. Psychologically, then, this is almost giving permission to the attendees to bring these devices, as their previous behaviour is celebrated in the advertising content.

7.14.16 It is fair to say that the vast majority of those attending, including families with young children, had an extraordinary day celebrating the achievement of the team and the city as a whole. However, it is disconcerting to hear of the number of safeguarding issues with children and even babies being exposed to danger caused by the irresponsible actions of some of those attending the event, using smoke and flares in this environment. It is difficult to know what to do in a society in 2025 where public expectations and entitlement levels remain so high. Some people are prepared to challenge authorities at all levels and feel emboldened and entitled to do so. Nationally, the levels of mistrust between authorities and the public have probably never been at a higher level. This has undoubtedly been accelerated by COVID and post-COVID behaviours, which have been noted by crowd management experts and crowd psychologists alike.

7.14.17 It is noted that on some locations, security personnel were double what they had been for previous events, but this still was not deemed to be enough.

7.14.18 As always, communications are the key theme, and there are issues over some radio messages not being received on some channels. It appears that not all

channels were being logged, and this could prove problematic in future if something went catastrophically wrong. Having no documented record of what was said, by whom, when and what decisions were made based upon that could lead to serious consequences.

7.15 Post Event Report LFC 2025.doc

7.15.1 This is a Post Event Report of the Victory Parade dated the 26th of May 2025. It estimates attendance of around 1,000,000 and gives SJA figures of 21 x minor burns and 23 x under-eighteens that are smoke/flare related.

7.15.2 The document summarises many other points already made that might improve future planning for events. It talks of giving less notice, so people have less time to plan. It also comments that the Bank Holiday is better because it is less impactful on the city. It suggests an earlier start time, of perhaps 10:00, but also comments that this would not be possible if players were travelling from abroad, perhaps from a Champions League Final. Early infrastructure deployment might also have an impact on the nighttime economy. It highlights the players' contracts dictating the parade day: "No football players, No Parade."

7.15.3 It rightly points out, in my view at least, that shortening the route may lead to greater problems. It highlights a number of locations where reviews need to take place, specific to roundabouts, etc. It references the need for this to be treated as a national event with DfT engagement as per the Eurovision model. However, comments elsewhere have stated it is an even wider, international event, so perhaps all the more reason to treat this as a national event with an international impact.

7.15.4 In the section referring to the convoy, there are a significant number of bullet points with which I strongly agree. Strengthening the bubble to key agencies will assist it to run more smoothly. Its pace can therefore be increased, which will leave pedestrians struggling to follow in their attempts. All vehicles should have communications inside the vehicle, so they can be contacted or call for support if needed. The option of adding some form of air tags or tracking device to a number of staff is one that has already been used elsewhere in the UK and could be used with the consent of the carrier. It is one we have successfully used on an event on which I led as a safety manager in conjunction with the police, and it was their own officers who carried the trackers.

7.15.5 There were three types of drone and those without thermal imaging were ineffective at times, primarily at least due to the extensive smoke cover. If all drones used in the future had full thermal imaging capability, this might be overcome to some extent.

7.15.6 There is mention again of the high volumes of refuse that were left over after the parade. This is to be expected. It is generally a good indication of the number of people present when volumes of refuse exceed the amount expected, or if it is unprecedented, as it was in this case.

7.15.7 **Summary of Post Event Report:** Whilst I have not commented extensively on this particular debrief, it is only because most of the factors have been mentioned elsewhere in other reports. Of all the documents seen so far, this probably summarises all the learnings and recommendations for the future. If I were to refer to one document for the learnings, it would be this one.

7.16 **Liverpool Football Parade 2025 - Multi Agency Debrief - FAO Eric Stuart**

7.16.1 On 19th November, I was sent a final version of the JAG debrief, this one marked as 'final' as titled above. I have compared the two and find only that a (successful) attempt has been made to make these more readable by a wider audience, should that become necessary and appropriate.

7.16.2 Significantly, the JAG debrief covers almost every point I have reported upon, and it is fair to say that my independent review agrees in almost all aspects with the internal debrief. This once again reflects the honesty of intent of those involved in the process, to prepare, practice, deliver, debrief, learn, and move forward. Furthermore, I am pleased to see that each learning point has an owner allocated to deliver on the intentions. This is not always the case and can sometimes lead to learning points not being developed and delivered later.

7.16.3 One area of note that was less commented upon in my interviews was the size of the crowd compared to the capacity of the city and its ability to cope with any more people. Despite this, when the emergency arose after 18:00, the city resources flexed and coped admirably. The question remains, though, had there have been a previous serious incident, such as a scaffolding collapse earlier in the day, whether those same resources had the capacity to cope after the vehicle incident. The internal report already notes the need for 'surge capacity assessments' into future operations.

7.16.4 Those numbers were generated in some part by extensive travel distances by some of those attending, including international travellers to this event, which, whilst not unprecedented, was certainly unusual in terms of the numbers.

7.16.5 The JAG debrief contains some significant travel details, including:

- TransPennine Express reported its busiest operational day to date, with over **44,500** passengers, compared to **7,500** during the 2019 Parade.
- Liverpool Lime Street Station saw over **170,000** passengers pass through its gates.
- Merseyrail deployed **all 51 available train units**, operating **23 additional services** to support egress.
- The network carried over **140,000** passengers, with Liverpool Central Station experiencing significant congestion—at one point, queues extended up Bold Street towards St Luke’s Church.

7.16.6 Yet despite these numbers, the city and mostly even the railway operators coped, despite having to implement emergency measures and additional resources through contingency plans. The reported major incident at Lime Street Station led to some initial concerns until it was clarified as an internal matter (to activate additional resources). That needs to be clarified from the outset to avoid fears of some other type of incident impacting the station rather than just excess numbers and the behaviours of some of the crowd. It was an administrative issue rather than an additional ‘incident.’

7.16.7 The debrief contains specific locations where additional work may be required for future parades. The debrief notes are comprehensive, and I see no point in repeating them here.

7.16.8 The JAG debrief captures many of the issues associated with the use of smoke and flares, especially around the injuries to younger people. It also captures a significant behavioural issue that is occurring more frequently around:” *people’s desire to capture dramatic content for social media*”, which is influencing behaviour.

7.16.9 The debrief notes the very real risk that some were prepared to place children in so that both they and the children (although elsewhere it is reported that some were so young that this was about the parents’ wishes rather than the child’s) could view the parade. Whilst strong messaging is suggested to try to alleviate this, one wonders at what point the agencies may have to physically intervene to protect children and indeed, the response that this might generate within a crowd. It is likely to be a negative one unless the concern for the child has actually been raised by the crowd to the authorities, which would then give it some perceived legitimacy to act.

7.16.10 I note the behavioural differences between the two crowds facing each other on opposite sides of the road in The Strand. There is little detail, and indeed doesn’t even state which behaved better/worse. This is a matter I will seek to explore further outside this report, and I agree that differential messaging and signage should be considered. There may be challenges, though in two sides of the same road,

perceiving that they are being treated differently, and this should be investigated thoroughly, perhaps with the help of crowd psychologists.

7.16.11 One suggestion within the debrief is to establish Forward Control Points (FCPs). I agree with this proposal, and Liverpool might look to such events as Notting Hill Carnival, where police establish Bronze Command facilities around the sectors, although for a parade of this nature, they would need to be less complex. This option, though, will rely on adherence to my comments on subsidiarity and permitting local commanders to make decisions (jointly between agencies) without reference to higher positions such as Silver. Local decision makers would be permitted to action local problems and then relay those actions to Silver, rather than having to seek permission first.

7.16.12 I also note the issues with following the location of the convoy this year as opposed to previous years. This could be easily resolved with live tracking devices such as 'air tags' or similar products. These have been used previously at events elsewhere in the country to track the front and rear of the processions in a complex environment.

APPENDIX D

8.0 COMMENTARY ON MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

8.1 During the week commencing 15th September, I attended Liverpool and spoke in person to a number of those involved in command or operational roles on the day. These included agencies and partners, those in Control and those on the ground. This was followed by an online interview with another group, a few days later, who were unable to attend Liverpool for the live meetings. Those interviewed were (not in any order):

- Superintendent Chris Barnes - Police Silver
- Susan Gibson - Head of City Events, Culture Liverpool
- Chloe Gebhardt- Events Manager, Culture Liverpool, LCC
- Jen Falding - Strategic Lead for Major Sports Events, Culture Liverpool, LCC
- Angie Redhead - Head of Operations, Culture Liverpool, LCC
- Claire McColgan - Director of Culture and Major Events, Culture Liverpool, LCC
- Eddy Grant - Director of Safety at LFX Events
- Simon Finnie - Head of Network Performance - Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
- Liam Phelan - Head of Operations - Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
- Jason Dolman - Senior Events Manager at Culture Liverpool, LCC
- Graham Ward - Independent Consultant Traffic Manager for Liverpool City Council
- Ben Knott - FGH Silver
- Amy Stanley - FGH Bubble Supervisor
- Rachel Rahbarzare - Station Manager - Liverpool Lime Street (Email exchanges)

8.1 Each discussion was held on an informal basis, with participants advised that whilst the report would identify the individual by name and organisation, those individuals, companies, agencies, or personnel would not be identified by attributable comments. Upon this basis, participants could speak freely and openly without fear of internal or external criticism.

8.2 The conversations were widely varied and unbounded, other than to not refer to any incidents currently sub judice or subject to any other investigation. Discussion would not extend to any matters that occurred beyond 18:00, to avoid referencing matters that related to the incident at the end of the parade in Water Street.

8.3 The discussions were later grouped by me into a series of headings and topics that are not confined to any one group but were mentioned by most or all of them. For ease, they are listed alphabetically below in the named category I gave to them.

8.4 **Behaviour by a minority**

8.4.1 I will point out from the outset here that the behaviours described below cannot be attributed to any single group of people. Indeed, the interview participants were themselves reluctant at times to identify crowd behaviour as problematic, but what *must* be remembered was that this event (as described elsewhere) was to some extent a global event with attendees from dozens of countries and from all over the United Kingdom. I will re-emphasise that this was a small minority by comparison to those attending who behaved well and enjoyed the day.

8.4.2 It seems reasonable for this event and some of its attendees to be compared with the 2020 Euro finals incident (in 2021) when many of those attending simply wished to participate in the ‘carnavalesque’ atmosphere of the day rather than having a true affiliation to the actual event, club, or city. Most of those who wore red that day and supported the team were Liverpool fans and from the city, but many were from elsewhere.

8.4.3 Some interviewees described self-supporting crowd behaviours, especially if people were taken ill in the crowd.

8.4.4 Staff on the way to work describe hundreds and sometimes thousands of people along the route and in the city, even as they drove to work from 07:00.

8.4.5 The attitude of some of those attending was described by those who had worked previous events as ‘considerably different’ and more hostile than that in 2022. Only one group of people interviewed thought the crowd were not much different to the 2022 crowd, but the nature of their work exposes them to crowd behaviours more frequently

8.4.6 Attendees were described at times as looking after each other well, but did not apply that same level of care to staff/stewards who were treated poorly. *Author Comment: This seems to be clear evidence of the psychological factor know as Ingroup – Outgroup behaviour whereby those wearing yellow jackets, although there for the benefit and safety of the crowd, are perceived as being present to spoil the fun by asking people to comply with what some in the crowd might deem unreasonable: not using flares or smoke cannisters and not climbing high structures.*

8.4.7 The majority of parade attendees had the time of their lives, and this should not be forgotten.

8.4.8 Social media on the day, up to the course of events just after 18:00, was very positive. Social media is driven by the public, and those attending had a ‘fantastic time.’ This was shared by LFC and shows that the majority of people had the time of their lives.

8.4.9 We should acknowledge that behaviour relating to football, along with much of society’s behaviour, seems to have changed significantly. COVID is generally blamed for these changes, but that is too simplistic. Overall, the behaviour of some elements of the public has deteriorated with a general lack of respect for authority and with people choosing which rules and laws they follow, and which they disregard.

8.5 **Blame/Criticism**

8.5.1 During interviews, I considered whether the relationship between some agencies might be so close that they may not wish to condemn other agencies if there were weaknesses or failures, especially as the relationships must endure with groups working together again in the future. As such, I tried to rouse those interviewed to see if any blame would be attributed to other parties or the public. The response was very constrained, which, after a significantly difficult series of circumstances, is not always the case. Human nature often seeks to blame others, but that did not occur on this occasion with a few limited exceptions. I am left with a lasting impression of a group of agencies and partners within whom trust and professionalism have been reached over many years, and who will work through any challenges they face. That said, they accept there were perhaps areas of learning, and believe improvements can be made as referred to below.

8.5.2 Some commented that it was a council led multi agency event. As such, there is neither blame nor success for one agency, without the close teamwork of all the partners that pulls it all together.

8.5.3 None of the participants interviewed blamed any of the others on the wider team or teams with whom they worked closely on the day or during planning. Overall, it was just the excess numbers beyond those that were anticipated that caused the majority of the issues.

8.5.4 There were some minor challenges, such as the football club wishing (at short notice) to include a sponsor who would throw items into the crowd. The proposal was rejected, but it took time and energy when time and energy were already in short supply.

8.5.5 It was suggested that some agencies did not seem to understand that the fans want to see their 'idols,' sometimes described by the fans as 'heroes,' and they will do anything to see them and show them their support, and at almost any cost. NB: whilst this is a challenging concept for a psychological 'outsider' to understand, this is a genuine phenomenon that ranges from fans of artists such as Taylor Swift being willing to queue for days in cold, wet, or extreme heat when 'non Swiftys' would scratch their heads as to the sense in them doing so. 'Outgroups' rarely understand the logic of 'Ingroups', and it is a constant challenge for event and crowd safety professionals to try to understand the mindset of those they are planning for.

8.6 **Bubble Operations**

8.6.1 The general view was that the 'bubble operation' works, but there are two consistent issues.

8.6.2 The first is that it is not always the case that everyone is working to the same plan. The schematic I was shown (and that was shared with all agencies) did not have a police foot patrol element within it, which is clearly unlikely to ever be the case when the bubble contains billions of pounds worth of assets (the players). Only when the parade formed up did some of the security team find themselves surrounded by an additional outer layer of police that did not appear on the 'dot plan.' That additional layer made the bubble wider than initially expected and, at times, jeopardised aspects of the route as it entered areas that were narrow and densely packed.

8.6.3 There should only be 'one plan', and the bubble dot plan must contain all elements. No organisation should add additional resources or change plans, other than as a response to a changed risk, threat, or significant change of circumstances. Even then, the impact of such a response must be communicated to partners, be measured and balanced with the new risks that they might create and considered in the context of its impact on partners and agencies on the same task. In future instances, the 'shareable' bubble plan may need to indicate that it is not the complete picture. Verbal briefings can relate to the additional assets that might be expected.

8.7 **Command, Control and Communication (C3)**

8.7.1 Those in the Silver Suite stated it was busy and very loud. Having been successful for previous events, this event outgrew the Suite, and some considered that it may have to be rethought going forward with future events.

8.7.2 Communications to the street failed at times despite noise-cancelling headphones (cans) being used. Messages reached some but not others, but this appears to have been just as a result of the pure number of messages, people present, and background noise. Many said that even with ‘cans,’ the noise levels meant it was hard to hear messages.

8.7.3 But many stated that it was the people in the Silver Suite that ‘saved it.’ The experience of those present meant that the city continued to operate around ‘the incident’ with ‘clear up’ proceeding and BAU (Business as Usual) resuming quickly as a result.

8.8 **Flares and smoke**

8.8.1 It seems that the attitude of many fans globally is now one of: ‘No Pyro, No Party.’ This does not relate just to Liverpool or even to football, having spread into parts of the music industry as well. It is hard to predict where or how this problem might be resolved, but it does seem to be on the increase and needs resolution before a significant injury or death occurs.

8.8.2 Flares are clearly inherently dangerous, as can be demonstrated through the number of burns that occurred at the event, especially to those in the under-18 age group (see below). But smoke at the levels seen at this parade may themselves become a factor at events that needs to be taken far more seriously than currently seems to be the case around the UK and at a government level.

8.8.3 The source of the smoke grenades is unknown, but the general view was that most are imported from Spain and other parts of Europe. It was also generally well known to many that there were no ‘red smoke’ devices available from Spain for weeks in advance of this event, thus indicating that such levels might have been anticipated. Staff reported blowing their noses 3-4 days after the event and still producing red mucus. PPE for smoke was issued to and used by many of the agencies, but not by all.

8.8.4 Some stated that there were fewer marine flares than had been seen before, which “was a relief.” Worryingly, though, some agency partners stated that there was ‘open sale’ on the streets with ‘people carrying bags full of smoke and pyro.”

8.9 **Future Parades – Are they wanted?**

8.9.1 During interviews, we intentionally asked the question as to whether future parades were welcome. The overwhelming response was that they would work the event again with conditions and wanted to create a different memory from this one. This again is symptomatic of the timing of interviews after major events.

8.9.2 Some suggested that there needed to be a way to make sure it was more local or regional, and certainly not national or international, as this had been. One group suggested it was necessary to make it 'less attractive' to keep the impact and attendance local, though no one had suggestions as to how that might be achieved.

8.9.3 Some staff had no breaks whatsoever: They worked under pressure from well before 10:00 (some earlier) and far later than 18:00. Managers considered this was unacceptable but unavoidable as the day developed, and they would be far from comfortable asking them to do the same again, even if the risk of repetition was minimal.

8.9.4 Although the staffing was on planned numbers across the board, and numbers had been significantly uplifted compared to the previous parade in 2022 (by +30% in some areas), it was still insufficient on the day.

8.9.5 There was also the issue that many LCC event staff had worked long hours over the weekend, with some having 3 days on site during the Radio One 'Big Weekend' as well as having worked the build (see below).

8.10 **Legislation – (Lack of)**

8.10.1 There was constant reference to a lack of power or ability to intervene in matters of obvious danger, such as occurred with the use of flares/smoke.

8.10.2 The overwhelming concern was the risk of those who climbed on scaffolding causing danger to the many below. In this regard, there was real concern that a lack of preventative powers led to an imminent threat to life in one instance: being declared as a 'red risk.' But even then, the powers to intervene were limited, and the risk of doing so, perhaps even greater than taking no action.

8.11 **Medical Incidents**

8.11.1 These reports were submitted to me in Mid-September and are dated 11th September, some three and a half months after the event. I draw no inference from this; it is not abnormal to wait lengthy periods for medical reports which have to be

scrutinised to avoid the release of any personal or personnel information. It is a detailed report.

8.11.2 The report is also careful to separate those casualties in the later incident (to which I will not refer) from those during 'normal' operations during the day. During the event, 146 patients were treated, with 11 taken to the hospital by St John Ambulance. No figures are given for those transported by other means (including Northwest Ambulance Service (NWAS)), who may have dealt with others.

8.11.3 Whilst the headline data suggests 146 total casualties, in breaking down the age groups, the total of casualties only reaches 129. Of this 129, 48 (37%) are under the age of 18, a significant and worrying percentage.

8.11.4 Of those presenting, the highest single cause of injury is minor burns or moderate burns (22).

8.11.5 Of significant note is that even without the post-parade incident figures, the numbers treated in 2025 (146) are a significant rise on those in 2022 (84), an almost 75% increase.

8.12 **Parade Numbers**

8.12.1 There have been many suggestions as to how many attended the event, and without hundreds of hours of dedicated CCTV viewing combined with AI technology and complex calculations of crowd density across the footprint, combined with 'guesstimates' of how many moved from one part of the route to another, and perhaps onwards again, that real number will never be known.

8.12.2 Despite this, there will be those who speculate and attempt to 'crowd count.' The science behind such speculations for a moving parade and migratory crowd is, at best, nebulous. It is challenging at least to ascertain on a parade crowd how many people attempted to jump from the start, to the middle, and then to the finish of the parade and without a level of high definition photography, taken at regular levels and then subject to advanced AI or precise calculations based on 'old fashioned' (but highly valued) methods of density /area calculations, the precise numbers will remain inaccurate. In such circumstances, I have always believed in trusting those on the ground, especially those with vast previous experience.

8.12.3 Be it .75 million or 1.5 million? I have no idea, and it is immaterial for most of this report. But what is clear is that it was 2, 3, or even 4 times greater a crowd than historically seen on such events by those who have managed them before. Even then, previous estimates were just that and trying to extrapolate a new number

based on it being twice as many as a previously uncalculated number is somewhat pointless.

8.12.4 Those interviewed report full trains leaving Birmingham, Glasgow, Crewe, Hull, Manchester and elsewhere from early in the day. Network Rail communicated the numbers attending to LCC and others through the 'drumbeat' calls from the Transport Coordination Cell (TCC).

8.12.5 It is suggested that hotels were full from many miles away, with Manchester, Birmingham and beyond specifically mentioned as being at capacity, though again, obtaining data to support this remains challenging.

8.12.6 Staff spoke with people who had travelled from at least a dozen different countries. Some had attended Liverpool just for this event, and many more who had been in Europe or the UK by chance and took the opportunity to be at a 'once in a lifetime event,' or otherwise a 'destination event' as was the case at Wembley almost 4 years beforehand.

8.12.7 It was noticed that on the street that morning, there were a significant number of people with bags, cases, etc., who had probably stayed nearby overnight, but had checked out of hotels and apartments to come to the parade before heading home. This caused understandable concerns and rightly so, given the numbers who might be carrying potential IEDs. No matter what level of Hostile Vehicle Mitigation might be put in place, it would be worthless against anyone intent on causing harm with a device on board one of these cases, etc. The number of bags and cases seems to indicate that these were people from out of town or staying in town overnight.

8.12.8 The sheer numbers of people meant that previously well-managed crossing points were lost and just became dwell areas from an early stage in the day. Blocked crossing points are incredibly challenging to manage and once they become obstructed, can become a real frustration to the public attempting to join up with family or friends, or just move around the city, especially if they are unconnected with the parade, trying to reach work destinations, etc. This potentially explains some of the angry behaviours seen by some in these areas.

8.12.9 Finally, in relation to the numbers present, it should be noted that the volume of refuse cleaned after this parade far outweighs any previous parade or event in the city. It is estimated on this occasion to have been between 40-50 tonne of waste (40,000 to 50,000 Kilogrammes).

8.13 **Perfect Storm**

8.13.1 Many of those interviewed used the phrase ‘the perfect storm.’ It is no coincidence that these same words were used during the Wembley Euros report and often appear in investigations and enquiries elsewhere. Rarely does a single factor lead to significant consequences during such incidents. Instead, multiple issues accumulate and culminate in an overwhelming number of problems or challenges occurring such that those trying to manage them are surprised by the cumulative effect. On this occasion, the agencies were surprised by a number of factors, but maintained a high degree of management of the event and the crowd.

8.13.2 Contributory factors to the perfect storm were said to include:

- The 4-week final detailed planning period, which, whilst giving the agencies a useful lead time, also allowed attendees to make their plans and travel to the event.
- The event falling on a Bank Holiday Monday permitted more people to attend than might normally be the case, especially those with further to travel.
- The already planned busy 3 days of Radio One Big Weekend, which led to a long working weekend for many staff, but also meant that many additional visitors were in the city than normal.
- The apparent willingness for many more people to attend ‘destination events’ that are perceived as ‘once in a lifetime’ or ‘must not be missed’ event, including fans from overseas. This has been noted at numerous events globally in the last few years and appears to be a trend that will continue.
- Liverpool’s history of being supported by fans worldwide.
- A seemingly greater willingness to spend money to reach such events and ‘stay over’ if necessary.

The perfect storm is said to have led to:

- Extra planning time for those who wanted to be at the Parade, who were not necessarily all fans
- Time to plan where to view, observe and climb
- Time to plan to bring devices to assist them, such as ladders
- Time to obtain smoke and flares
- Time to travel for those from overseas
- Time to book hotels and travel by those in countries beyond the UK
- Time to become highly excited in a 4-week build-up to the event

8.14 **Planning Time**

8.14.1 Planning time was discussed extensively as having been very useful but, with limited options available, the knowledge of the most likely celebration date was being discussed widely on social media and was certainly not a secret that could have

been held. Planning for previous parades was built upon throughout 2025, and finer detail added in the last four weeks.

8.14.2 It was suggested that in future, if given such time, the team should consider challenge panels (peer review) to check and question planning assumptions. (See author proposal for joint planning panels from spring onwards for the leading Premiership teams, where such challenges might be made).

8.15 **Route - Length and Location**

8.15.1 This topic was probably one of the most often and lengthiest discussed as far as planned and intended aspects that might be changed or amended for future parades.

8.15.2 Some (including many of those at a senior level) say the route is too long to close off effectively and to exclude all risk. However, even this group agrees that shortening the route will compress crowds into a smaller space, potentially leading to high crowd density and thus making parts of the route even more dangerous.

8.15.3 The vision and mission for those planning the event is for as many people as possible to watch from close to their homes and then go home; this seems to have been mostly the case, but there will always be some who then try to follow or parallel the parade into the city centre. Streets were busy even in areas at the start of the event, suggesting residents did watch locally, but then some began to travel in and joined the already heavily crowded areas in the city centre and in the latter stages of the parade route.

8.15.4 It was widely agreed that the route has worked well previously and has been developed over many years, and until this year, had stood the test of time. It has changed and developed from time to time, depending upon roadworks and other factors, but the aim has always been to try to use as much dual carriageway as possible with minimum disruption to the rest of the city.

8.15.5 Certain aspects of the route may need a little more work, and it was suggested that the Jolly Miller and the Navigator needed to be re-examined. Other aspects worked very well, such as the Rocket Flyover. All of these are already captured within LCC's own debriefs and are part of planning moving forward.

8.15.6 Most consider the 'Bubble Option' to remain valid (rather than full road closures throughout the parade).

8.15.7 It was suggested (and many pictures support) that there were two layers of bubble around the team bus, with police on the inside and security on the outside and sometimes mixed together. This widened the Bubble more than planned and made some points quite narrow to pass through.

8.15.8 Generally, after much deliberation and learning, it was generally agreed that the route needed to remain unchanged as far as possible.

8.16 General Matters

8.16.1 Some suggested that the event needs to be earlier in the day if logistically possible, even though there will be an impact on the nighttime economy, and everyone agreed that the event could never be during a working day!

8.16.2 Many wanted to remember the '2 minutes of success': It was a great day, a great event, and the club and public perception was one of a huge success. It finished on time and mostly on track, but of course, then memories were clouded by the events of what followed after the parade had finished.

8.16.3 It was commented upon that any such routes would always need to have some porosity; they can never be 100% sterile. It would take too long to achieve that: the costs would be impossible to meet, the time to implement and remove such measures would close down large areas, and the financial, commercial, and residential impacts would be intolerable.

8.16.4 There was not agreement throughout, though, either on the route or timing: not all thought the Bank Holiday was a good idea, nor a change of timings feasible, suggesting it could not be brought on earlier because the impacts elsewhere would be too great.

8.16.5 Some commented that there needs to be consideration for using mutual aid, not just from a police perspective, but possibly from other agencies and partners. Agencies such as the local authority might consider bringing in other experienced event organisers, experienced professionals and perhaps enforcement officers from local authorities elsewhere. "There is simply not the resilience to continue at this level."

8.16.6 One question raised by a small number was the option of moving the parade off the street, perhaps into the stadium or an open space. Each group that considered this then started to discuss the challenges, such as where this might take place, with Anfield, Sefton Park and other venues discussed. As the discussions took

place, most groups began to dismiss the venues as being unsuitable or, bringing new challenges such as what to do with potentially tens of thousands who might gather outside just 'for the atmosphere' (Wembley). It felt as though most groups began to argue against their own proposal, but this does not mean it is an option that should be dismissed without further discussion.

8.17 Security and Traffic Management Staff

8.17.1 A number of people referred to a lack of security and stewards. Reports from all parties suggest that all the staff booked attended, indeed it seems likely that there were additional security staff over the booked numbers: this was verified and confirmed by the local authority.

8.17.2 It was also mentioned that many were young and perhaps did not have the "firmness of attitude to deal with the people they were trying to dissuade from misbehaving." It was further stated that 'staff lacked the authority needed and the public just would not listen.' It is worth noting that this is no criticism of either the security providers or the staff themselves. It is more a reflection of the situation that currently exists within the security industry as it continues to slowly recover from the damage caused when so many left their roles during Covid.

8.17.3 Police though said some posts that started with 6-8 security or stewarding staff were reduced to 2-4 as stewards and security staff had to be redeployed. These posts then had to be backfilled with police officers. Again, this is probably a symptom of the overwhelming public numbers and the need to relocate staff multiple times to new locations in an attempt to manage ever-growing numbers in some places.

8.18 Scaffolding and Other Climbing at Height

8.18.1 This issue was raised by virtually every group. Questions as to the powers and policies of trying to remove scaffolding in advance, keep scaffolding empty of opportunists or remove people once they are in place (accepting the further safety risks this might cause) and where legal and public liability/costs sit in such matters (landlord, tenant or scaffolding company), need clarity and perhaps legislative changes.

8.18.2 A structural engineer within the safety team assessed the risk of the scaffolding with over 200 persons upon it. They declared it Red on the RAG assessment scale (Red, Amber, Green) and at risk of collapse. This left the authorities with no choice other than to take action, and in this case, this was to start

to position emergency vehicles close to the scaffolding in case of collapse and clear as far as possible the area around and underneath it. The scenario reminded me much of the stories told by those involved in the F1 event in London's Regent Street, where enthusiasm to see the racers meant people climbed to every vantage point, including scaffolding. There is potential for education here, though: F1 cars are low to the ground, and height is an advantage; the Liverpool players were atop a double-decker bus, so they can be seen from a pavement level position quite easily, even in a crowd.

8.18.3 It was commented upon that the scaffolding became a focus of attention, a distraction, at a very early stage, and those who might have expected not to be involved in managing them suddenly had to do so despite having no powers or training to do so. No one can expect to have to put their own staff in danger to deal with those who climb at height. All that can be done is to try to clear space underneath to prevent avoidable casualties, accepting that those who climb might well be injured.

8.19 **Tabletop Exercise**

8.19.1 Everyone agreed that the TTX was well delivered and covered all the necessary topics.

8.19.2 There has been some confusion as to whether BTP and Network Rail were at the main TTX. Checks have revealed that BTP were both invited to and attended the TTX, whereas it seems Network Rail were not. Information states that Network Rail undertook a separate TTX for their network. This lack of invitation to the main TTX may have been the one gap in the planning. This will be resolved with the new Major Event Group and governance structure.

8.20 **Teamwork and Cooperation**

8.20.1 The constant theme through every interview was the level of cooperation and teamwork amongst all agencies. Many of the teams have been together through scores of events, including major international events such as the Eurovision Song Contest, previous parades, a major fire during a show in 2017 and dealt with the outcomes of the Liverpool Women's Hospital bomb in 2021. There are strong relationships, and this is attested by the fact that from the 'morning after' to the writing of this report, no one was blaming anyone else within the groups, but was willing to point out errors made both by their own organisation and others. The general view was that this was not about blame, but about every agency learning and improving, with honesty being essential in doing so. This was repeated by

employees, consultants, and contractors. When events 'go wrong' or at least not as well as hoped, it is unusual to see such relationships survive the first layer of critical questions, with fingers being pointed at others. This simply was not the case here and is to be admired.

8.20.2 It also means roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by the groups who have worked together for so long and faced many challenges along the way. It was generally suggested that the right team were in the right place at the right time, and that helped to keep things running smoothly, but there simply were not enough people, and the behaviour they faced was far from acceptable.

8.20.3 One group commented that there seemed to be some delays at times in police decision-making, as those on the ground wished to pass even minor changes to plans upwards for approval. It was frustrating, but it did not lead to major issues, though it was suggested that if circumstances were critical, it might have. Such observations are important, but it must be borne in mind that these judgements are based on hindsight. Were the situations more critical, those officers might well have reverted to 'on the ground' fast time decision making rather than referral upwards. However, in future years, it should be made clear that those on the ground in command positions need to be granted subsidiarity to make such decisions and then report on those actions rather than seeking permission prior to making them. That should be the case unless the decision is likely to impact more widely than just within their locality. In such cases, a wider view may need to be sought.

8.21 **Transport**

8.21.1 It appears the sheer volume of train passengers who arrived may have overwhelmed and overloaded some of the rail systems, particularly Network Rail. It was suggested by some that Network Rail had ceased to function effectively by 10:00, although local trains managed to maintain operations, and that is not considered to be the case by Network Rail, which maintained operations until much later in the day.

8.21.2 Network Rail report that a major incident was declared at 18:45, which suggests they had certainly not thought there were issues of significant note beforehand. One assumes that had operations ceased to be effective at 10:00, then they might have escalated the situation far earlier.

8.21.3 The declaration of a major incident at Lime Street at 18:45 led to the deployment of an Incident Local Operations Manager (ILOM) to provide tactical

support to the local station team. Soon afterwards, at 18:55, a Gold Command was established.

8.21.4 Early morning posts on social media showed trains full of people wearing red shirts and football attire from Glasgow, Hull, Manchester and elsewhere. Network Rail are suggested to have managed their own situations, and that the information on the scale of the numbers was not shared as widely as some expected. That view is not reflected by Network Rail or those in the Silver Suite, with information being passed ‘via the drumbeat’ calls into the Transport Coordination Cell (TCC) and into Silver.

8.21.5 It is suggested by some that each station was overwhelmed locally, but no national picture was being shared. However, Network Rail insist that whilst Gold was established in Manchester Route Operations Centre (MROC) at 18:55 (ten minutes after the activation of the major incident), they already had strategic commander for rail based at Mann Island within the TCC structure. There is clearly some confusion amongst some of those who were interviewed, who may not have had a complete picture of what was happening elsewhere and when. On a day of such intensity, that is hardly surprising, and whilst these views should be recorded, they must not be permitted to taint the staff involved on the day, nor this report with incorrect assumptions.

8.21.6 It is suggested by some groups that there was just too much happening at the same time, or perhaps that those with that knowledge did not want to share it for fear of overloading those without it. This may be the case, but it might also be true that so much information was arriving at the same time that distribution of that information was simply not possible to everyone who thought they might wish or need it. Whichever version is the truer, there is no doubt that this was an unprecedented day in terms of its challenges, and it is not surprising in such circumstances that systems and humans can and do become overloaded.

8.21.7 Despite the challenges, 27 additional trains were supplied, and all used but the additional coaches and buses which were available were stranded due to traffic and so of limited or no use.

8.21.8 It was suggested that Liverpool might look at the Wembley (and West Ham) queueing and egress systems, which may support future crowd operations. These systems work well because they are in confined spaces and practiced regularly. To place such a system in place in an open environment and just once a year at any of the railway stations might prove less effective.

8.21.9 It is clear that Lime Street Station suffered a mass ingress to the station around the time of the end of the parade. It is my view, having read debriefs and spoken to many people, that this was caused by the parade finish, the coincidence of even heavier rain at the end of an already wet day and then a human 'self-evacuation' triggered by the incident on Water Street, also exacerbated by surges in social media after the incident. People on the ground, public and staff alike, were receiving calls to come home, to stay safe, etc. There was significant misinformation about knife and similar attacks, etc., with lots of social media speculation as to what was happening. That could not have been expected or anticipated by the planning team and certainly not planned for. It led to a significant level of anxiety amongst some parts of the crowd (and staff) and caused many of the former to wish to leave earlier and more quickly than might otherwise have been the case.

8.21.10 Network Rail have stated clearly that the major incident was declared at 18:45, although they have not stated at what time it was stood down. They go on to say that whilst no full closure of the station took place (trains were still leaving with passengers onboard throughout), there was a period of around 15 minutes when the doors of Skelhorne Street were closed to the public to regain control with the use of a 'Very Short-Term Plan' (VSTP).

8.21.11 The atmosphere at the station was described by some as truly unpleasant. "The queue ran around the block 3 times, with people banging on the walls, banging on the windows and children crying". Amidst the attempts to reestablish control, some trains were suggested to have left 1/3 or 1/2 full because the station had to be closed to regain that element of control. This is not a criticism but an observation! In such circumstances, such a pause in operations (like a show pause/stop during a crowd incident at a music festival) can be an important way to re-establish management and safe operations. The consequences at a music festival may be a late-running show or some songs cut from the set, and be quite localised. At a railway station, holding those trains back until filled would have a knock-on effect across the network and potentially cripple operations over the whole network.

8.21.12 It was reported by some interviewed (not Network Rail Staff) that business as usual was not properly re-established until 23:30 and the station was emptied by 00:30. However, Network Rail report that after a short-lived hold at the doors as described, they re-opened to the public. However, business as usual did not resume until the next day, as there were people stranded at the station overnight and foil blankets and food were issued to them. Network Rail state that the next day (Tuesday) was busier than usual, as people started to return home from the Monday event. It is worth mentioning that in mid-October, I discussed this matter with LCC staff, and none had been made aware of persons stranded overnight.

8.22 Workload combined with other events

8.22.1 The parade occurred after three days of the Radio One 'Big Weekend', and many of the staff working the Victory parade were also on duty over that weekend, as well as during the Radio One build. I asked the question as to whether there was so much happening on the weekend that people were already tired; everyone denied that suggestion, which does not surprise me. Admitting as much, even with hindsight, might lead some to conclude that it was a potentially foreseeable situation that could have been avoided, although short of not having a parade, it is hard to see how that could have been the case. The date for the 'Big Weekend' was set months in advance; the date for the Victory parade was fixed by other equally unsolvable circumstances. The two events were almost inevitably forced to run back-to-back unless a highly unpalatable decision to not celebrate the city's success was taken.

8.22.2 Those in the events industry have a determination and passion to deliver events repeatedly, often at short notice, and whilst multi-tasking on multiple events. It is not uncommon to work lengthy hours for many days, where the detailed knowledge of all that is happening across an event simply cannot be shared between several individuals, making a 'handover' halfway through a day very challenging and potentially at risk of learned knowledge being lost in that handover.

8.22.3 This is not ideal, but this is the nature of the 'gig' economy, with preplanned events sometimes occurring at short notice and events arising out of incidents or circumstances beyond anyone's control. Virtually everyone in the event industry will admit to having been guilty of such activities at the height of the short and very busy event period. However, working excessive hours for prolonged periods of time can lead to several factors exacerbated by tiredness. Amongst these are decision fatigue and situational overload, both of which can hamper critical decision making. Whilst there is no evidence of this during the Liverpool Parade, in future, all reasonable attempts to avoid such a major clash of events within such proximity should be made.

8.22.4 Such factors are difficult to identify, even with hindsight but it is important to note that I found **no** evidence of the issues mentioned above. I point it out only to reiterate the points made by many of those I spoke to that 'we can't do this many events close together again; we need to build on our own resilience.' I have raised this issue within the 'Conclusions and Recommendations' section of the report.