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## Police, Fire & Crime Panel – Public Question

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### Questions Posed:

30+ Police officers were deployed recently to escort Oldham Athletic FC supporters to Port Vale FC. Who paid, the clubs or Staffs council tax payers

### Panel Member: Public Question

Question Date: 03/05/2022

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### Commissioner Response:

Under S.25(1) of the Police Act 1996, a person or organisation may request Special Police Services (SPS) subject to payment of charges as determined by local policy set by the PCC. The local policy in Staffordshire is based on national guidance and sets different charges depending on whether an event is commercial, non-commercial, statutory or small-scale.

In the case of football matches, whilst they are clearly commercial in nature, there are other legal factors that must be considered. Football clubs may request SPS for policing within the stadium and the footprint of the ground for which they would be charged. However, a court ruling (Leeds United v West Yorkshire Police [2013]) and a subsequent appeal which was refused (Ipswich Town v Suffolk Constabulary [2017]), have confirmed that charging for policing outside of this area is not permitted. Policing of the extended area (e.g. pedestrian routes and town centres) before and after a match is therefore, legally, a public duty for which clubs cannot be charged.

In the case of Port Vale FC vs Oldham Athletic FC, there was no Special Police Services request made by PVFC to Staffordshire Police for policing inside the stadium or the ground footprint. As such no charges were payable by PVFC.

### Contact Officer

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>25/05/2022</b>