



Avon and Somerset Constabulary has made good progress in achieving its savings for the comprehensive spending review period.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has today published a report on Avon and Somerset Constabulary's progress in meeting the challenges of the 2010 comprehensive spending review.

A thematic report, *Policing in Austerity: One Year On*, found that police forces across England and Wales have risen to the financial challenge of the spending review, cutting their spending while largely maintaining the service they provide to the public; but HMIC has some concerns about whether all forces have transformed their efficiency to the extent that this can be sustained through the next three years (and into future spending reviews).

Based on the data provided by the force, HMIC found that:

- Avon and Somerset Constabulary needs to save £42 million between March 2011 and March 2015. By spring 2012 they had planned how to save 86% of this amount.
- The force is planning to cut its total workforce number (i.e. police officers, police staff and police community support officers) by 610 between March 2010 and March 2015.
- 400 of these will be police officer posts; this means there will be 12% fewer officers in Avon and Somerset (compared with a 10% average officer reduction across England and Wales).
- By 2015 73% of its workforce will be in frontline roles. This is broadly similar to other forces in England and Wales.
- However, the proportion of officers in frontline roles will increase between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 86% to 93%) This means Avon and Somerset Constabulary will have a greater proportion of police officers on the front line than other forces
- Avon and Somerset Constabulary continues to drive down crime and achieved a 2% reduction in overall crime between December 2010 and December 2011.
- 88% of victims of crime in Avon and Somerset were satisfied with the service they received from the force. This is higher than the national figure.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Western Region, Dru Sharpling, said:

“Avon and Somerset Constabulary has a track record of reducing costs. It has carried out a number of reviews as part of its ongoing change programme in order to deliver the savings required following the 2010 spending review. As a result of this careful approach, the constabulary is in a good position to achieve its savings target.

“Although Avon and Somerset Constabulary will be reducing its workforce, and this includes cutting police officer posts, it intends to increase the proportion officers in frontline roles by 2015. The force has an ambition to continue delivering improved policing in Avon and Somerset, to secure the highest levels of confidence in policing services and make communities feel safe.”

The full report for Avon and Somerset, along with the national thematic review ‘Policing in austerity: One year on’, can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk

Notes to editors

1. The full thematic report ‘Policing in austerity: One year on’ and supporting material can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk
2. The review ‘Adapting to Austerity’ published in July 2011 and the accompanying force reports can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk
3. In October 2010, the government announced that the central funding provided to the police service would reduce by 20% in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.
4. Figures are rounded (financial figures to the nearest million and workforce figures to the nearest 10) and financial figures are in cash prices.
5. For further information, or to request an interview, HMIC’s press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
6. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the effectiveness of police forces and authorities to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects and regulates all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the British Transport Police and HMRC.
7. HMIC’s out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.
8. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out an inspection of all 43 police forces in England and Wales in spring 2011, to see how they were planning to meet this financial challenge. When the results were published in July 2011 (search for ‘Valuing the Police’ on www.hmic.gov.uk), we committed to returning one year later to report on progress, and to assess whether there had been any impact on the service provided to the public.