



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Valuing the Police: Preparedness Inspection

**City of London Police
July 2011**

Purpose of the review

The Police Service, along with all other parts of the public sector, is facing its biggest financial challenge in a generation. This could be seen either as an opportunity to innovate and refresh – or as a reason to continue as is and see services cut back.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been heavily involved in monitoring the Service's reaction and preparedness for cutting crime while reducing costs. As part of this, in Spring 2011 we carried out an inspection of all 43 forces and authorities in England and Wales, to assess:

- how they are planning to meet the financial challenge; and
- what the impact will be on the service they provide to the public.

This report summarises the findings for City of London Police. A thematic report, *Adapting to Austerity*, which brings together findings from all 43 forces, is also available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

Findings for City of London Police

What is the financial challenge in the City of London?

City of London Police and City of London Police Committee reported that they are facing a **£21.4m** cash reduction to their budget over the four years of the comprehensive spending review (2011/12–2014/15). In real terms (ie when inflation is taken into account), this equates to 19% of their gross revenue expenditure.

There will also be a reduction in the force's Dedicated Security Post (DSP) grant. This is a special form of funding provided by the Home Office to pay for posts which serve a national remit (for instance, counter terrorism officers).

Are the force and committee prepared to meet this financial challenge?

At the time of inspection, the force and committee were in the very early stages of developing a plan; this put them significantly behind other forces. While they acknowledged that they could have responded more quickly to the forthcoming cuts, the force and committee were optimistic that, given the flexibility and small size of the City of London Police, they will meet or surpass other forces' achievements. They also had sufficient funding to bridge the financial gap in 2011/12, and intended to develop fuller plans over that year.

In addition, a new Commissioner and Commander had been appointed, who have galvanised the force to focus on meeting the financial challenge. The committee, which had already driven efficiencies throughout 2010/11, have made the most of the opportunity to work with the new chief officers to achieve the required savings.

The force and committee planned to deliver the majority of the savings through a change programme called City First, which had recently commenced with notable momentum. They were developing good methods for overseeing and managing this programme. Due to the early stage of development, it was not anticipated that City First will generate savings until 2012/13; and at the time of inspection there was no detailed schedule of cost reduction.

What will be the impact on the number of police officers and staff?

City of London planned to make the following changes to its workforce numbers.

	Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSO
31 March 2010 (actual)	852	310	52
31 March 2015 (proposed)	752	247	43

March 2010 figures have been used as the baseline, because most forces began a recruitment freeze in that year, and as a result workforce numbers started to fall. The proposed figures shown for March 2015 were provided to HMIC by the force in June 2011.

The force and authority’s plans for the workforce will continue to be refined as the change programme progresses.

City of London Police is currently in the early stages of planning City First. As a result, these figures (including PCSOs) are likely to change as the programme develops. In addition, although the 31 March 2010 figure is an accurate reflection of the actual headcount, it does not account for vacancies the force is carrying and employment of temporary staff. The force may remove vacancies from its establishment figures when City First moves into implementation.

What will be the impact on service to the public?

The force and committee have not communicated in any detail with their communities on the specific issue of funding cuts and organisational change, because they had not yet identified the possible impact of the changes on the service they deliver to the public. However, they were in the process of developing a communications plan.

Does the force have targets to reduce crime and ASB?

The first job of the police is to reduce crime and keep the peace; and in 2010, Theresa May, the Home Secretary, stated that she expects forces and authorities to make financial cuts while still reducing crime and without damaging the front line.

City of London Police’s *Policing Plan* includes targets to reduce crime and ASB in the coming year.

