

18 July 2013

## **Derbyshire Constabulary has made sound progress in meeting its financial challenge, finds HMIC**

*Derbyshire Constabulary has made sound progress in meeting its financial challenge. Although it has not been as ambitious as some forces in protecting its frontline and reducing its costs, the force has recorded one of the highest reductions in crime seen in England and Wales over the last two years.*

In a report published today, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has found:

### **Progress in making savings**

- Derbyshire Constabulary has identified that it needs to save £21.7m over the four years of the spending review (i.e. between March 2011 and March 2015). The force has identified how to save £18m and is developing further plans for the remaining £3.7m. In addition the force has existing reserves it can use to close any gap should this be necessary.
- This savings requirement is 12% of its overall budget, and is a much smaller proportionate reduction than that faced by most other forces.
- Derbyshire's position is not without challenge, as it already spends less on policing than most other forces, has a lower number of staff and a comparatively lower pay bill. The amount it spends on officers and staff is also lower than in most other forces, which means it is more challenging to find further savings.

### **Workforce changes and protecting the front line**

- The force is reducing police officer numbers by limiting recruitment and holding vacancies. As a result, by the end of the spending review period it plans to have 174 fewer police officers. This means the number of police officers is planned to reduce by 8% between March 2010 and March 2015; this is a smaller reduction than in most other forces.
- The force is not taking the step that we have seen most other forces take to protect frontline posts as it makes these cuts. Between March 2010 and March 2015, the proportion of police officers in frontline, crime-fighting roles is planned to slightly decrease from 92% to 91%. This compares to an overall increase across England and Wales from 89% to 93%.
- The force has also made some police staff redundant and not replaced others as they have left. By 2015 it is planned that there will 196 fewer police staff. This means the number of police staff will reduce by 14% between March 2010 and March 2015. This is a smaller reduction than that planned by most other forces.
- The force plans to do as much as it can to protect the number of its police community support officers (PCSOs) and it is planning to at least maintain the same number.

### **Impact on the public**

- Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 21%. This is an excellent outcome as it is considerably greater than the 13% reduction recorded across England and Wales as a whole.
- Victim satisfaction remains high at 87.0%.

### **Future challenges**

- The force's response to the funding challenge has been well managed and led. However, further work needs to be undertaken to find the remainder of the savings to close the funding gap by March 2015.
- Derbyshire Constabulary has not been as ambitious as some forces in changing the way it operates. Instead, it has done quite simply what needed to be done to achieve the savings, but no more. This is a legitimate and proportionate response, particularly in light of the strength of the force's performance bearing down on crime.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Eastern Region, Zoë Billingham, said:

*“Derbyshire Constabulary’s savings requirement is smaller than that of most other forces. However, as a low cost force, spending less on policing than most other forces, closing the funding gap is not without its challenges.*

*“It has developed a change programme which has allowed it to reduce costs while continuing to fight crime. The force has made sound progress in reducing its costs.*

*“During this period of cost reduction the force has demonstrated excellent performance, reducing crime in Derbyshire by 21%. This is one of the highest reductions in crime seen in crime in England and Wales.*

*“The force is one of only five forces that is planning to decrease the overall proportion of its workforce in frontline roles over the period of the spending review. Similarly, the proportion of police officers in frontline roles is set to decrease.*

*“The force faces further budget reductions in March 2015. In light of this, it should consider whether it would be even better placed to keep the people of Derbyshire safe if it takes steps now to protect its frontline crime fighting capability.*

*“HMIC will continue to monitor the force for the remainder of the spending review period.”*

The full report for Derbyshire Constabulary, along with the national thematic review, can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)

### **Notes to Editors:**

1. The thematic report ‘Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge’ can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
2. Victim satisfaction for this force has a confidence interval of  $\pm 1.5\%$
3. HMIC’s July 2012 report ‘Policing in austerity: One year on’ and July 2011 report ‘Adapting to Austerity’ along with supporting materials can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
4. 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.

5. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies.
6. For further information, HMIC's press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
7. HMIC's out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.