



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Valuing the Police: Preparedness Inspection

**Dyfed-Powys 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 Dyfed-Powys 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 Dyfed-Powys Police

What is the financial challenge in Dyfed-Powys?

Dyfed-Powys Police and Dyfed-Powys Police Authority reported that they are facing a **£9.5m** cash reduction to their budget over the four years of the comprehensive spending review period (2011/12–14/15). In real terms (ie when inflation is taken into account), this equates to 8% of their gross revenue expenditure.

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

The force and authority clearly understood the financial challenge facing them, and have considered a range of options in developing a plan to meet it. The resulting ambitious change programme will restructure the force and provide savings over the next four years. The intention was that these savings will, in fact, exceed the financial ask of £9.5m by approximately 30%; this would provide a good cushion to cope with any unforeseen changes or costs.

A strategy was in place for the whole comprehensive spending review period, with detailed plans for the first two years. These identified where and when the force will make savings, and included timescales and savings milestones. Progress was being overseen by the force and authority, with clear governance arrangements and good project management in place.

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

Dyfed-Powys Police planned to make the following changes to its workforce numbers.

	Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSO
31 March 2010 (actual)	1,195	720	83
31 March 2015 (proposed)	1,200	555	83

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.

What will be the impact on service to the public?

The force and authority have a clear vision for policing over the next four years, which prioritises service delivery to the public (especially neighbourhood policing), and protecting them from harm. The force recognised the risk that the cuts will have an impact on the service they deliver to their communities and acted to address this (for instance, by changes to shift patterns to maximise the number of officers available to the public).

A new communications and marketing strategy was in place to inform the public of potential changes. The force also consulted their local community on the change programme, and there is evidence that the feedback they received helped shape the four-year strategy.

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.

Dyfed-Powys has targets in place to reduce serious violent crimes and criminal damage. It also aims to keep the number of most serious violent crimes stable (ie not to let the level increase).

