



Essex Police 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 Essex Police'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:

- **Money:** Essex Police needs to save £42 million between March 2011 and March 2015. By spring 2012 they had planned how to save 100% of this amount.
- **People:** The force is planning to cut its total workforce number (i.e. police officers, police staff and police community support officers) by 790 between March 2010 and March 2015.
- 320 of these will be police officer posts; this means there will be 9% fewer officers in Essex (compared with a 10% officer reduction across England and Wales as a whole).
- **The front line:** By 2015 70% of its workforce will be in the front line. This is a lower proportion than most other forces.
- However, the proportion of officers in frontline roles will increase between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 82% to 91%). This means Essex Police will have a greater proportion of police officers on the front line than most other forces.
- **Collaboration:** Essex Police has a well-established programme of working jointly with other forces in the region – not least, with Kent Police. This has already enabled the force to deliver significant savings and achieve greater operational resilience. There is a strong commitment from both the force and authority to build on these foundations.
- **Crime:** Overall crime is falling across England and Wales; but crime rates in Essex increased between December 2010 and December 2011. The force has carried out work to understand and address this increase, some of which

results from changes the force has made to the way it records certain crime types.

- **Victim satisfaction:** 83% of victims in Essex were satisfied with the service from Essex Police. This is in line with national figures.

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

“Essex Police has a good track record of bringing down costs while increasing its efficiency and effectiveness; and this has stood the force in good stead as it works to address its financial challenge. It has put in place a comprehensive change programme to manage the reductions in its budget, and as a result is in a good position to achieve their savings target by March 2015

“Like other forces, Essex Police is reducing its workforce, and this includes cutting police officer posts; but it has clear plans in place to protect frontline services. In fact, the proportion of police officers working in frontline, crime-fighting roles by 2015 will be much higher than in other forces in England and Wales. This should help the force in its efforts to bring down crime and keep local communities safe.”

The full report for Essex Police, 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.

