



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Greater Manchester Police's response to the funding challenge

July 2013

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Greater Manchester Police: Executive summary

Greater Manchester Police faces a difficult challenge. It is the second largest police force in the country with serious and complex crime problems. Like many urban forces it has to manage an above average cut to its budget. As a large organisation it does have scope for economies of scale and a level of overall resilience, but driving major change and changing the culture of a large organisation is complex and demanding.

The force had a strong response to the spending review challenge and has achieved one of the greatest reductions in crime levels in a force area over the spending review period. It has a well-developed overarching change programme, has reshaped the organisation significantly, and is using partnership working and evidence based and innovative techniques to drive further cost savings and improve performance.

There is a high level of inherent complexity and risk for the force to manage when making further reductions in spending, but progress so far suggests the force has put itself in the best possible position to face this.

Financial challenge

Greater Manchester Police has identified that it needs to save £145.5m over the four years of the spending review (between March 2011 and March 2015).

As a proportion of its overall budget this savings requirement of 20% is higher than most other forces, and HMIC considers that Greater Manchester Police faces a particularly difficult challenge. This is because of the savings required and the overall demands placed on the force. However, there are opportunities to reduce its cost and its size means it has advantages of economies of scale.

Progress in making savings

Greater Manchester Police has planned how it will save £137.6m, and still has £8m¹ to find. This gap represents only 5% of the total amount required. Although a remaining gap is not ideal, the proportion is small and the force was able to demonstrate that it is developing plans to make the additional savings.

Changes to the workforce

All forces spend most of their money on staff costs (such as wages and overtime), and so have focused on reducing this expenditure in order to cut costs.² Greater Manchester Police is no exception.

¹ The amounts to save may not add up to the total due to rounding.

² See *Adapting to Austerity*, HMIC, London, July 2011, p13. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

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 is planned that there will be 1,525 fewer police officers in Greater Manchester Police. This means the number of police officers is planned to reduce by 19% between March 2010³ and March 2015. This is a greater reduction than in most other forces, but unsurprising given the scale of the challenge the force is facing.

There is evidence that Greater Manchester Police is successfully protecting 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 increase from 87% to 92%. 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 (e.g. through retirements and resignations), and as a result, by the end of the spending review period, it is planned that there will be 532 fewer police staff in the force. This means the number of police staff is planned to reduce by 13% between March 2010 and March 2015, which is lower than in most other forces. Greater Manchester Police is maintaining the number of police community support officers (PCSOs).

With an outstanding funding gap it is possible that the force may need to make more workforce reductions than it is currently planning.

Impact on the public

HMIC expects forces to make savings without reducing the service provided to the public. It monitors whether they are achieving this by examining crime rates and the results of the victim satisfaction surveys which all forces conduct.

Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime⁴ (excluding fraud) fell by 19%, which is more than the figure for England and Wales (13%). Victim satisfaction remains high at 85.1%⁵ which is broadly in line with other forces.

Future challenges

HMIC judges Greater Manchester's response to date to be strong and this will be a good foundation for future change and service delivery. However, the force's challenge has been significant by national comparison and there is still a small proportion of savings required from this spending review to be found. Further budget reductions as part of the spending round in 2015/16 will add to these challenges.

3 We use 2010 as our baseline as many forces started to make staff reductions in anticipation of the spending review.

4 Crime excluding fraud, as per the new crime classifications released in July 2013 by the Office for National Statistics.

5 ± 0.8%.

The challenge

Over the four years of the spending review (March 2011 to March 2015), Greater Manchester Police identified that it needed to find savings of £145.5m. This equates to 20% of its total expenditure⁶ (which in 2012/13 was £650.6m). Across England and Wales a 17% reduction in total expenditure is required.

Progress in making savings: Years 1–2

The force successfully made 64% (£93.8m) of the total savings required by March 2015 in the first two years of the spending review period. It achieved this by: limiting recruitment of new police officers; reducing the number of police staff it employs by redesigning the force through a change and transformation portfolio, made up of two key cross cutting programmes, Transforming Support Services and Transforming Police Services Programme. The force used £7.8m of reserves⁷ to balance the budget in 2012/13.

Plans for Year 3–4

The force has plans in place to achieve further savings of £12.8m in 2013/14, and another £31m in 2014/15. This leaves a funding gap of £8m at the end of the spending review period. HMIC does not judge this to be a concern as the gap is a small percentage of overall spending and the force is currently developing plans to make the additional savings.

Looking beyond the current spending review

The force has started to consider the savings it might need to make after March 2015.

The challenge for Greater Manchester Police in preparing for future funding pressures will be much greater if the existing savings plans are not achieved or if they take longer to deliver.

⁶ Based on a gross expenditure baseline in 2010/11.

⁷ Reserves are funds often used to pay for unforeseen events and balance liabilities.

The scale of the challenge in Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester Police faces a particular challenge because its overall budget reduction is higher than many other forces. It does have some opportunities given its existing cost base and size:

- it spends more per head of population than most other forces in England and Wales;
- it has a higher number of police officers per head of population than most other forces in England and Wales; and
- the cost of police officers and police staff per head of population is higher than most other forces in England and Wales

Demand

Forces face different levels of demand for the service they provide to the public. This section looks at three of the key indicators of demand to provide an overall impression of the challenges each force faces:

- the number of calls the force receives from the public;
- the number of crimes the force deals with, and
- the number of prosecutions (suspects charged with offences) the force brings.

12 months to March 2013	Greater Manchester Police	England and Wales
Emergency and priority calls per 1,000 population	240	134
Victim-based crime per 1,000 population	58.8	54.5
Prosecutions (charges) per 1,000 population	11.7	10.2

This table shows that, in 2012/13, Greater Manchester Police received more emergency and priority calls from the public, and deal with more crime per head of population than other forces. In addition it had to support more prosecutions than elsewhere.

How difficult is the challenge?

HMIC assesses Greater Manchester's challenge to be significant when compared to most forces; its percentage budget reductions are larger, and while the cost of policing is higher, this is due to the fact that the demand for service is greater.

Response to the challenge

Forces deliver their response to the savings requirement through a change programme. Because over 80% of a police budget (on average) is spent on staff costs,⁸ it is not surprising that the change programmes of forces across England and Wales, plan to achieve most of their savings by reducing the number of police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and police staff employed.

Greater Manchester Police is no exception. It made an early start on this in 2010, when it slowed its recruitment of new police officers and police staff, and reduced the number of police staff. The force plans to make 79% of its spending review savings requirement through savings from pay. This is higher than most other forces and indicates that Greater Manchester Police has not taken savings from bearing down on expenditure on goods and services to the same extent as some other forces.

Changes to workforce numbers

The following table shows the force's planned changes to workforce numbers over the spending review period, and compares these to the change for England and Wales.⁹

	31 March 2010 (baseline)	31 March 2015	Change	Greater Manchester change %	Change for England and Wales %
Police Officers	8,148	6,623	-1,525	-19%	-11%
Police Staff	4,199	3,667	-532	-13%	-16%
PCSOs	842	838*	-4*	0%	-17%
Total	13,189	11,128	-2,061	-16%	-13%
Specials	400	900	+500	+125%	+60%

*This figure represents the planned budgeted number in 2015, however, the force plan to maintain its 842 PCSOs without reduction.

Overall, the table shows that Greater Manchester Police plans to lose more officers and fewer police staff than in other forces; and will maintain the number of PCSOs marginally.

It is however possible, that the force's outstanding funding gap will mean that it will need to make more workforce reductions than currently planned (and shown in the table).

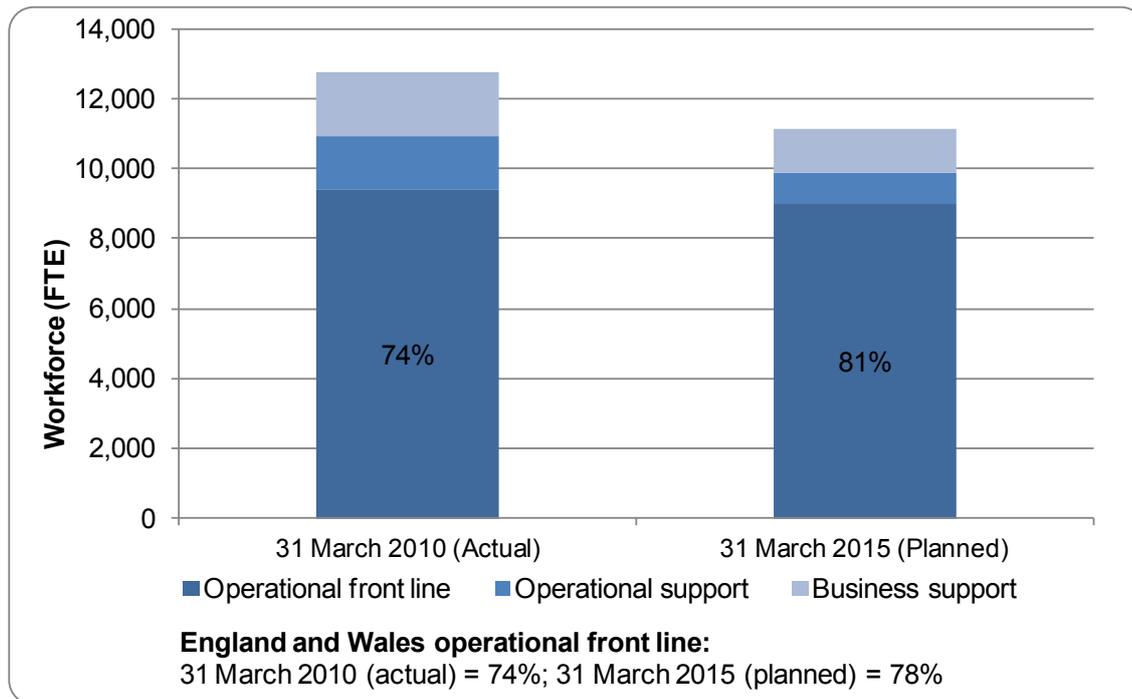
⁸ See *Adapting to Austerity*, HMIC, London, July 2011, p.13. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

⁹ Workforce figures for March 2010 show the actual number of people working for the force in permanent posts on the 31 March in that year. People on long-term absences (such as maternity leave) are included in these 'actual' figures, but vacant posts are not. Workforce projections for March 2015 are for budgeted posts, so the actual number of people who will be working for the force at that point in reality may be different, because some posts will be vacant or filled by temporary staff. Forces' projections may also exclude people who will be on long-term absences. The difference between actual workforce numbers and projected numbers should therefore be taken as an approximate expected change.

Changes to the proportion of workforce on the front line

HMIC defines the people who work on the police front line as: *“those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law”*. It is important that as forces reconfigure their structures and reduce workforce **numbers**, they focus on maintaining (or if possible increasing) the **proportion** of people in these crime-fighting roles.

The following chart shows the change in the workforce frontline profile in Greater Manchester Police.¹⁰

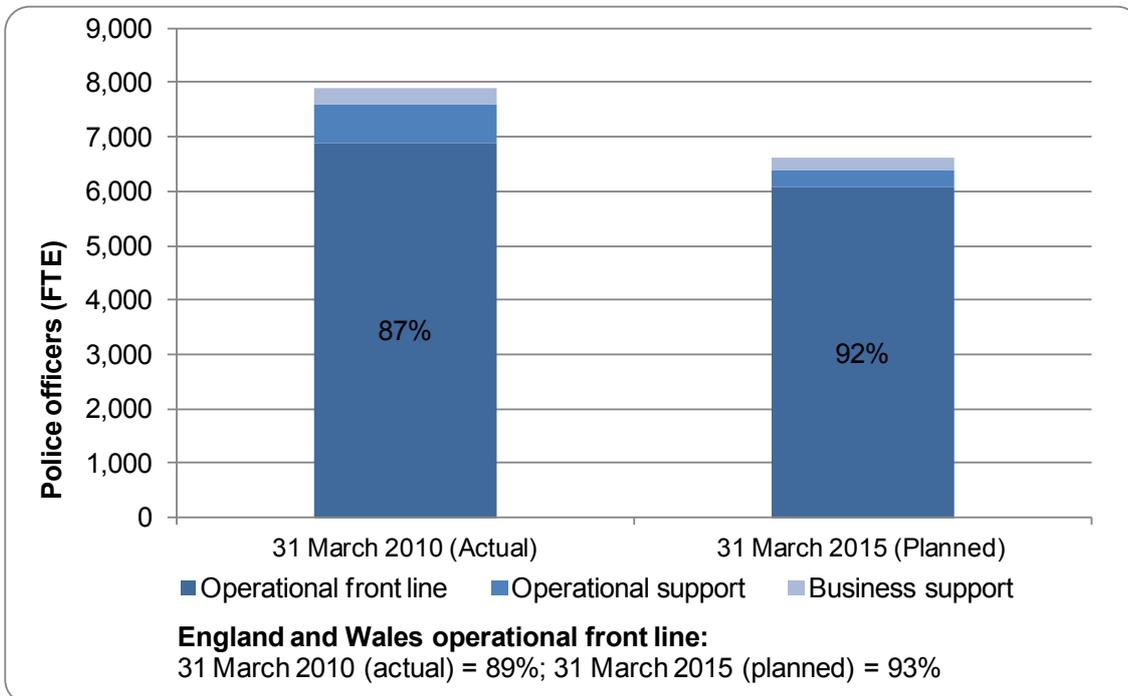


The **number** of officers, PCSOs and staff (i.e. of the force’s total workforce) working on Greater Manchester’s front line is planned to reduce by 5% between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 9,397 to 8,970).

Over the same period, the **proportion** of Greater Manchester’s total workforce allocated to frontline roles is planned to increase from 74% to 81%. This compares with an overall increase across England and Wales from 74% to 78%.

¹⁰ From 2010 Gwent, the Metropolitan Police Service, Wiltshire and North Wales police forces chose to code those officers and staff who are on long-term absence from duty due to maternity/paternity leave, career break, full-time education or suspension, and those on long-term leave, to their normal working role. This has the effect of inflating their workforce and frontline figures by up to 1% compared to other forces.

The **number** of Greater Manchester’s police officer’s in frontline roles is planned to reduce by 12% from 6,890 in March 2010 to 6,067 in March 2015, as the following chart shows. The **proportion** of those remaining on the front line is planned to increase from 87% to 92%. This compares to an overall increase across England and Wales from 89% to 93%.



Collaboration

HMIC monitors a force’s progress on collaboration¹¹ because it offers the opportunity to deliver efficient, effective policing and achieve savings.

Greater Manchester Police has been working in collaboration with other police forces across the North West and North Wales for a number of years. The policing services delivered in collaboration include intelligence; serious and organised crime; counter terrorism; underwater search; surveillance; witness protection; and motorways policing.

The force also works with other agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions, National Health Service and the Fire and Rescue Service, sharing resources to deliver services. Further opportunities for collaboration are being considered with local authorities, particularly in relation to vehicle fleet and shared public access points.

Despite this work, in 2014/15 the force expects only 3% of its total expenditure will be spent on collaboration. This is lower than the 11% figure for England and Wales.

¹¹ HMIC defines collaboration as “all activity where two or more parties work together to achieve a common goal, which includes inter force activity and collaboration with the public and private sectors, including outsourcing and business partnering”.

Managing change

Reductions in police budgets have inevitably led to a shrinking workforce. HMIC expects forces to consider long term transformation¹² when delivering their change programmes. This can help maintain or improve the service they offer to the public and prepare for future funding reductions.

Greater Manchester's has introduced a change and transformation portfolio made up of two key cross cutting programmes, Transforming Support Services Transforming Policing Services. As part of this, the force's operating model has been redesigned to align resources to newly integrated neighbourhood policing teams. The teams now include additional resources such as detectives to assist with investigations and civilian support officers to support frontline supervisors with administration. The model also adopts a 'hub' approach to the deployment of resources, which includes integrated neighbourhood policing teams and response officers. The force has also used Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) to redesign business and operational support areas to identify efficiencies and reduce costs. Consideration has been given to reviewing posts within change projects to ensure that only those requiring warranted powers are undertaken by police officers.

The change programme supports the ambitions of the Police and Crime Commissioner, set out in the Police and Crime Plan, which includes the recruitment of additional student officers, radio operators, investigative assistants, operational support officers and apprentices.

How is the force engaging police officers, PCSOs and staff in the change programme?

Although there was some variation, staff generally agreed that communication around change processes was good. Senior leaders were clearly dedicated to involving staff in the change process. Information was passed through supervisors and senior leaders and more detail was available on the force intranet if required. The force had developed a comprehensive approach to develop managers at all levels to lead substantive change, with formal training to build certain skills; conferences and masterclasses; and mentoring opportunities. Staff associations were engaged throughout the process and although police staff affected by the initial review process described it as brutal, they felt that subsequent programmes had been more consultative.

Within the force there is a strong culture and sense of pride and belonging. Staff morale is good considering the level of changes the force has undergone. The workforce tended to cite national changes to pay and conditions as the issues affecting them, while being supportive of the changes being made within the force. A recent staff survey had been carried out, as had a more detailed audit around the organisational culture and health.

¹² Transformation is a process of radical change that orientates an organisation in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness. It implies a fundamental change of character, with little or no resemblance to the past configuration or structure.

How effective has the response been?

Despite the force's significant challenge, it has delivered the required savings in the first two years of the spending review. Performance and satisfaction have continued to improve. Based on this and on the strength of plans going forward HMIC has confidence in the force's ability to deliver change and respond to further funding reductions while maintaining service delivery.

Impact of the changes on the public

The challenge for forces is not just to save money and reduce their workforce numbers, but to ensure the choices they make in deciding how to achieve this do not have a negative impact on the service they provide to their communities. HMIC therefore looked for evidence that the force had kept a consideration of the effect on the public at the heart of their choices.

Visibility

The work done by police officers and staff in visible roles (such as officers who respond to 999 calls, deal with serious road traffic collisions or patrol in neighbourhoods) represents only a part of the policing picture. Chief Constables need to allocate resources to many other functions in order to protect the public, such as counter terrorism, serious and organised crime, and child protection (to name just three).

That being said, research shows that the public value seeing visible police officers on patrol in the streets, and that those who see police in uniform at least once a week are more likely to have confidence in their local force.¹³ HMIC therefore examined how far the changes being implemented by the force had affected the visibility of the police on the streets of Greater Manchester.

In March 2013, Greater Manchester Police allocated 55% of its police officers to visible roles. This is three percentage points higher than it allocated in 2010, and is slightly higher than the figure for most other forces (which was 54% across England and Wales).

Police visibility is further enhanced by PCSOs who principally support community policing. Looking at the proportion of police officers and PCSOs, Greater Manchester Police allocated 59% to visible roles. This is three percentage points higher than it allocated in 2010 and is in line with the 59% figure for England and Wales.

HMIC conducted a survey¹⁴ of the public across England and Wales to assess whether the public had noticed any difference in the way their area is being policed. Of those people surveyed in Greater Manchester, 11%¹⁵ said that they have seen a police officer more often than they had 12 months ago; this is broadly in line with the 13% average across all survey respondents in England and Wales.

Of those people surveyed, 73%¹⁶ said they felt either as safe or safer in the areas where they live compared with two years ago. This is broadly in line with the figure for most other forces which is 75%.

¹³ See *Demanding Times*, HMIC, London, 2011. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

¹⁴ A YouGov survey was carried out during a four-week period during March 2013. Satisfaction and confidence surveys are also carried out at a national level by the Crime Survey of England and Wales. These use larger sample sizes and are carried out quarterly over a rolling-year period. Some forces also carry out their own surveys of the general public. More information can be found at www.crimesurvey.co.uk, www.hmic.gov.uk or from force websites.

¹⁵ ± 5%.

¹⁶ ± 5%.

Calls for service

HMIC examined whether Greater Manchester Police was taking longer to respond to calls for help, as a result of its workforce reductions and other changes designed to save money. Forces are not required to set response times or targets and are free to determine their own arrangements for monitoring attendance to calls, so information between forces is not comparable.

Over the spending review period, Greater Manchester Police has maintained the same target response times of within 15 minutes for calls classed as 'emergency', and within one hour for calls classed as 'priority'.

The force met its target response time for 'emergency' calls 98% of the time in 2010/11, 97% of the time in 2011/12 and 96% of the time in 2012/13.

In respect of 'priority' calls, the force met its target 88% of the time in 2010/11, 87% of the time in 2011/12 and 76% of the time in 2012/13.

While emergency response times have remained broadly consistent, there is a reduction in the number of times priority calls are attended within the target time.

Crime

In 2010 the Home Secretary, Theresa May, set a clear priority for the police service to reduce crime.

Between 2010/11 and 2012/13 (the first two years of the spending review), Greater Manchester Police reduced recorded crime (excluding fraud) by 19% compared with 13% in England and Wales. Compared to other forces, this was among the highest reductions seen over the period. Over this period, victim-based crime (that is, crimes where there is a direct victim – an individual, a group, or an organisation) reduced by 18% compared with 12% in England and Wales.

By looking at how many crimes occur per head of population, we can see how safe it is for the public in that police area. The table below shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Greater Manchester (per head of population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

12 months to March 2013	Rate per 1,000 population in Greater Manchester Police	England and Wales rate per 1,000 population
Crimes (excluding fraud)	66.0	61.4
Victim-based crime	58.8	54.5
Burglary	10.5	8.2
Violence against the person	10.8	10.6
Anti-social behaviour incidents	49.8	40.7

It is important that crimes are effectively investigated and the perpetrator identified and brought to justice. When sufficient evidence is available to say who has committed a crime, it can be described as detected.

Greater Manchester Police's sanction detection¹⁷ rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to March 2013 is 25.8%. This is broadly in line with the England and Wales sanction detection rate of 27.0%.

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in Greater Manchester. For information on the frequency of other kinds of crimes in your area, go to www.hmic.gov.uk/crime-and-policing-comparator.

Victim satisfaction surveys

An important measure on the impact of changes to service delivery for the public are how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance.

In the 12 months to March 2013, 85.1%¹⁸ of victims were satisfied with the overall service provided by Greater Manchester Police. This is broadly in line with the England and Wales figure of 84.6%.¹⁹

Changes to how the public can access services

Forces are exploring different ways in which the public can access policing services. Greater Manchester Police is planning to close 32 front counters²⁰ (although they remain as visible police stations within the community) and three shared public access points.²¹

However, they are making more use of the internet and social media to communicate with the public and developing different mechanisms for the public to contact the police.

17 A sanction detection is a 'solved crime' where a suspect has been identified and notified as being responsible for committing that crime and what the full implications of this are, and has received an official sanction. Official sanctions include charges, cautions, penalty notices, offences taken into consideration (TICs) and cannabis warnings.

18 $\pm 0.8\%$.

19 $\pm 0.2\%$.

20 A police building open to the general public to obtain face-to-face access to police services.

21 A non-police building open to the general public to obtain face-to-face access to police services. For example, shared facilities with council services (e.g. libraries or offices), the fire service or other partners.

Conclusion

Greater Manchester Police faces a more significant challenge than most other forces because it faces a higher percentage cut to its total budget and has a high level of demand and a complex crime situation.

In HMIC's assessment the force has delivered a strong response to the budget reductions. It has implemented a change programme that has redesigned the way policing is delivered in Greater Manchester, allowing the force to continue to deliver effectively with fewer members of staff.

The force has been particularly imaginative in how it has embraced partnership working and innovative structural models and approaches to reduce and manage demand. It has a strong commitment to evidence based approaches and the robust evaluation of new ways of working.

HMIC saw evidence of strong workforce engagement and significant work being undertaken to ensure that the behaviours and cultures necessary to drive change are in place and maintained. The force, is recruiting to both police staff and police officer posts with the ambition to have a more efficient workforce mix and is reaching out to different sections of the community through the apprentice scheme. It has a major programme of change to update its legacy IT systems to enable more productive working.

Greater Manchester Police has had strong force performance over the spending review period. It has had one of the most significant reductions in crime over the spending review of all forces. Crime detections and victim satisfaction are in line with national figures. Emergency response times are holding up, although there is a decline in the number of priority calls attended within target times.

The force has well advanced plans to continue to deliver an excellent service to the public of Greater Manchester. This has put it in the best possible position to face further budget reductions, but it is a large and complex organisation with a significant level of high risk business to manage.

In October 2010, the Government announced that central funding to the Police Service in England and Wales would reduce by 20% in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.

HMIC's Valuing the Police Programme has tracked how forces are planning to make savings to meet this budget demand each year since summer 2011. This report identifies what we found in this third year.

Our inspection focused on three questions:

1. How is the force responding to the budget reduction?
2. What is the impact for the workforce and the public?
3. How is the force managing current and future risks?

To answer these questions, we collected data and plans from forces, surveyed the public to see if they had noticed any changes in the service they receive from the police as a result of the cuts, and conducted in-force inspections. We also interviewed the Chief Constable, Police and Crime Commissioner and the chief officer leads for finance, change, human resources and performance in each force, and held focus groups with staff and other officers.

National findings and patterns across all 43 forces are given in our thematic report, *Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge*, which is available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

This report provides the findings for Greater Manchester Police.