

18 July 2013

Nottinghamshire Police has made sound progress in meeting its financial challenge, finds HMIC

Nottinghamshire Police has made sound progress in meeting its financial challenge - its savings programme has allowed it to reduce costs while continuing to fight crime and it is redesigning the way it delivers policing services to the people of Nottinghamshire.

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

Progress in making savings

- Nottinghamshire Police has identified that it needs to save £43.6m over the four years of the spending review (i.e. between March 2011 and March 2015). The force has planned how it will save all of this and has no outstanding funding gap.
- This savings requirement is 19% of its overall budget, above most other forces. HMIC considers that Nottinghamshire Police faces a difficult challenge because its spend on policing is below the average spend for forces in England and Wales. It also has a lower number of staff so has a comparatively lower pay bill and the amount it spends on each officer and staff member is also below the figure for England and Wales.

Workforce changes and protecting the front line

- The force has reduced police officer numbers by limiting recruitment and holding vacancies. As a result, by the end of the spending review period there will be 180 fewer police officers in Nottinghamshire Police. This means the number of police officers is planned to reduce by 7% between March 2010 and March 2015 which is a smaller reduction to most other forces.
- Nottinghamshire Police will be protecting frontline posts as it makes these cuts. This is commendable. Between March 2010 and March 2015, the proportion of police officers in frontline, crime-fighting roles is planned to increase from 91% to 94%. 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. Between March 2010 and March 2015, the number of police staff will reduce by 322 or 19%. This is a much higher reduction than that planned by most other forces.
- Nottinghamshire Police plans to increase the number of PCSOs by 108 (40%). This is commendable, as many forces are reducing the number of PCSOs.

Impact on the public

- Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 19%, which is more than the figure for England and Wales (13%).
- Victim satisfaction remains high at 87.3%, which is higher than the figure for England and Wales.

Future challenges

- A commitment by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the force to increase the number of police officers and PCSOs may potentially reduce the options available for the force to meet any further savings required after March 2015. HMIC believes this is an important consideration for how the next phase of the change programme and the operating model for the force is developed.

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

“Nottinghamshire Police has a more difficult financial challenge than many other forces. It has developed a change programme which should allow it to reduce costs while continuing to fight crime.

“The force has made sound progress in responding to the funding challenge, redesigning the way it delivers policing services to the people of Nottinghamshire. This has enabled it to deliver the savings required to date. The force is now planning a more comprehensive redesign, which should place it in a better position to meet future funding challenges.

“The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the force are committed to increasing police officer and police community support officer (PCSO) numbers, which may impact on the future design of the force.

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

The full report for Nottinghamshire Police, along with the national thematic review, can be found at 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
2. Victim satisfaction for this force has a confidence interval of $\pm 0.8\%$
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
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.