

18 July 2013

## **Staffordshire Police has made good progress in meeting its financial challenge, finds HMIC**

*Staffordshire Police has made good progress so far and has a good understanding of the financial challenge. There is a well-managed programme of change in place that will enable the force to make the required savings, while at the same time protecting front line policing and maintaining service quality.*

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

### **Progress in making savings**

- Staffordshire Police has identified that it needs to save £32.6m over the four years of the spending review (i.e. between March 2011 and March 2015). The force has planned to save all of this total by March 2015.
- As a proportion of its overall budget (16%) the savings requirement is broadly in line with most other forces. Staffordshire Police still faces a moderately difficult challenge because the amount of money it receives is comparatively low given the size of the population in Staffordshire; it has fewer officers per head of population than most other forces and it already spends less on police officers and staff compared to most other forces.

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

- Staffordshire Police is reducing police officer numbers by limiting recruitment and holding vacancies when officers leave or retire. As a result, by the end of the spending review period it plans to have 464 fewer police officers.
- The evidence demonstrates that Staffordshire Police is 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 93% 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 (e.g. through retirements and resignations). As a result, by the end of the spending review period, the number of police staff will reduce by 242 or 18%. Again, this is more than in most other forces. Staffordshire Police plans to decrease the number of community support officers (PCSOs) by 28 (12%), which is a smaller reduction than in most other forces.

### **Impact on the public**

- Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 16%, which is more than the figure for England and Wales (13%).
- Victim satisfaction remains high at 88.6% – this is higher than other forces.

## **Future challenges**

- An interim plan has been prepared setting out some of the Police and Crime Commissioner's ambitions
- The force must consider how best to deliver further savings where necessary as plans develop.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Wales and Western Region, Dru Sharpling, said:

*“Staffordshire Police has responded well to the challenge of making savings. It has a well-managed and comprehensive programme to deliver the changes necessary to save money while protecting front line policing and improving services.*

*“The programme has so far successfully delivered more savings than required each year and over this period the force has maintained strong performance in reducing crime, and securing high levels of public satisfaction.*

*“HMIC is confident that the force has the capacity to deliver all of the savings required and is well placed to face future challenges.*

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

The full report for Staffordshire Police, 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  $\pm 1.7\%$
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.