



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Responding to austerity

Cambridgeshire Constabulary

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How well does the constabulary provide value for money?

Overall judgment

Cambridgeshire Constabulary has impressive and well-established joint working arrangements with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary. The constabulary has bold ambitions to extend this collaboration even further through a transformational ICT programme. The constabulary is well placed to be able to continue to provide an effective service to the public while reducing its costs further.

Good

Summary

Cambridgeshire Constabulary is on track to achieve its required savings of £19.8m over this spending review period, and to meet its further financial challenge in 2015/16. The constabulary is already planning how it can achieve savings beyond the next financial year.

The constabulary understands the issues facing it, and has change programmes in place that will lead to increased collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary. Through the tri-force ICT change programme known as Metis, the forces plan to make further savings and protect frontline posts as new technology and streamlined processes improve appreciably the productivity of police officers and staff.

The constabulary is working to improve understanding of the demand it faces, and plans to manage this demand through the collaboration of its control room, custody and criminal justice functions (operational support) and its human resources, finance and IT functions (organisational support), supported by the work of Programme Metis.

The constabulary is achieving the savings required and is planning sensibly for the future, while continuing to reduce crime and retaining high levels of victim satisfaction.

To what extent is the constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position for the short and long term?

Good

The constabulary has a strong track record of achieving savings and adding these to reserves for specific purposes or to assist with future budget gaps.

Cambridgeshire has clear plans in place to achieve a balanced budget for 2014/15 and is refining plans for 2015/16.

A joint medium-term financial plan developed with Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire is a clear signal of the commitment to future collaboration and the desire to achieve savings across the three forces. Future plans are being made and are based on prudent and realistic assumptions.

To what extent has the constabulary an affordable way of providing policing?

Good

Extensive collaborative arrangements are in place and are aimed at improving efficiency and realising further savings. Programme Metis is planned to achieve transformational ICT change. It is being led by Cambridgeshire on behalf of the three forces. The constabulary has piloted the use of 154 tablets for mobile working, which has freed up officer time by up to an hour each day.

There is a clear drive to reduce non-pay costs. Savings in this area, along with those made through collaboration and procurement, have contributed to the overall savings requirement.

Senior leadership in the constabulary is effective, highly visible, and, with good use of communications, is helping to improve its culture.

To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

Good

The constabulary is working to develop a greater understanding of demand, and has plans to manage future demand in collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary.

Performance has improved, with reductions in crime and a higher number of victims satisfied with the service they received than for England and Wales as a whole.

The constabulary in numbers



Financial position

The constabulary's savings requirement

Requirement Gap

£19.8m

£0.0m



Providing policing

Planned change in police officer numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15

Cambridgeshire England and Wales

-9%

-11%

Planned change in total workforce numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15

Cambridgeshire England and Wales

-16%

-14%

Planned proportion of police officers on the front line 2014/15 vs 2010/11 (percentage points)

Cambridgeshire England and Wales

+1.9

+3.0

Planned proportion of total workforce on the front line 2014/15 vs 2010/11 (percentage points)

Cambridgeshire England and Wales

+3.8

+3.7



Efficiency

Police officer cost per head of population
2013/14

Cambridgeshire

England and Wales

£82.3

£117.7

Workforce cost per head of population
2013/14

Cambridgeshire

England and Wales

£124.4

£168.1

Change in recorded crime
2010/11 – 2013/14

Cambridgeshire

England and Wales

-21%

-14%

Victim satisfaction 2013/14*

Cambridgeshire

England and Wales

89.2%

85.2%

*Confidence intervals: $\pm 1.2\%$ for Cambridgeshire; $\pm 0.2\%$ for England and Wales.

Introduction

In October 2010, the Government announced that central funding to the Police Service in England and Wales would reduce by 20 percent 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, our fourth year.

Our inspection focused on how well the constabulary is achieving value for money. To answer this question we looked at three areas:

- To what extent is the constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position in the short and long term?
- To what extent has the constabulary an affordable way of providing policing?
- To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

During our inspection 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, where possible, 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.

This provides the findings for Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

To what extent is the constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position for the short and long term?

HMIC looked at the savings plans that forces have developed in order to meet the financial challenge of the spending review, and for the year after 2015/16. It is also important that forces look to the future beyond 2016 in their planning, so we also explored how they are starting to prepare for further financial challenges.

Financial challenge

Cambridgeshire Constabulary has identified that it needs to save £19.8m over the four years of the spending review (i.e., between March 2011 and March 2015).

As a proportion of its overall budget, this savings requirement of 14 percent is lower than the England and Wales figure. However, HMIC considers that Cambridgeshire faces a particularly difficult financial challenge as it was already a low-cost constabulary. This means it will find it harder to find further savings than many other forces.

The scale of the challenge

Cambridgeshire faces a particular challenge because of the scale of the financial savings that must be made. There are limited opportunities for it to reduce its costs because:

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

Savings plans for 2014/15 and 2015/16

The constabulary has a strong track record of achieving planned savings. Over the last three years, budget savings have been achieved in advance of the year end and these have been transferred to reserves (either to be used for specific purposes or to assist with future budget gaps).

Cambridgeshire has clear plans in place to achieve the £4.9m savings required in 2014/15. The constabulary predicts a savings requirement of £4.1m for 2015/16 and although plans are still being refined, the constabulary is planning to achieve savings of £4.6m in 2015/16, predominantly through collaboration with forces and Programme Metis.

Outlook for 2016 and beyond

While future reductions to central funding beyond 2016 have not been confirmed at this time, should the current approach continue, forces are likely to experience reductions of between three and five percent to their central funding year on year.

The constabulary has made some predictions about future savings that will be required through to 2017/18, based on prudent assumptions about likely grant reductions, cost increases and council tax (precept) increases. The plans for 2016/17 and beyond are being developed.

The constabulary's current medium-term financial plan (MTFP) identifies the challenges and opportunities for meeting the priorities in the police and crime commissioner's (PCC) police and crime plan over the next four years. The constabulary's finance directorate and the Office of the PCC have a strong and constructive working relationship, underpinned by good governance arrangements and effective ways to scrutinise the plan.

Cambridgeshire's approach in terms of meeting future challenges is to develop further collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary. The three forces have worked hard to develop the tri-force MTFP. This is impressive and signals a clear commitment from all involved for much greater collaboration and to work together to generate over £26m savings across the three force areas over the next three years.

Summary

Good

- The constabulary has a strong track record of achieving savings and adding these to reserves for specific purposes or to assist with future budget gaps.
- Cambridgeshire has clear plans in place to achieve the £4.9m savings required in 2014/15 and is refining plans to achieve savings of £4.6m in 2015/16.
- An MTFP developed with Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire is a clear signal of the commitment for future collaboration and the desire to achieve savings across the three forces.
- Future plans are being made and are based on prudent and realistic assumptions.

To what extent has the constabulary an affordable way of providing policing?

HMIC looks at how the constabulary is structured to provide policing. We ask if this is affordable as the constabulary responds to its financial challenge. We look at what the constabulary is doing to reduce its costs, how it is protecting officers and staff engaged in fighting crime and keeping communities safe, and how it is making the required changes through its change programme.

How the constabulary provides policing

During the course of its original change programme, Cambridgeshire introduced a new way of providing policing in April 2012. The constabulary moved to six policing districts from three basic command units, the merging of neighbourhood teams with response teams, and borderless deployment (where the nearest and most appropriate police resource is sent). Each of the six district commands have the autonomy to manage their resources and build district structures based on demand, performance and community expectations. In addition, the integration of response officers and neighbourhood policing teams into one safer neighbourhood team has enabled a more integrated approach to dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour.

This new way of providing policing has served the constabulary well to date, and the changes have contributed towards its improved performance. However, the constabulary has not undertaken any further resource changes. In addition, calls for service have changed, particularly in respect of serious and organised crime (e.g., people trafficking and child sexual exploitation) and the constabulary needs to be confident that the current structure remains fit for purpose.

Collaboration

HMIC monitors forces' progress on collaboration because it offers the opportunity to provide efficient, effective policing and helps to achieve savings.

Cambridgeshire has well-established joint arrangements with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary. The three forces already jointly provide a range of protective services, including police dogs, firearms and major crime teams. The constabulary has a number of other collaborative initiatives, which include the National Police Air Service, joint custody arrangements at King's Lynn, and the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU). These latter three initiatives account for two percent of Cambridgeshire's budget.

In November 2013, a change plan between Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire was developed and agreed by the chief officers and PCCs. This plan describes why and how much greater collaboration is needed and how an integrated approach to providing the majority of business changes across the forces will be applied.

It addresses how the forces can maintain front line policing services in the face of considerable budget reductions.

Lead forces for each of the main areas of collaboration (protective services, operational support and organisational support) have been agreed.

In 2014/15 the constabulary expects to spend 15 percent of its net revenue expenditure on collaboration, which is higher than the 11 percent figure for England and Wales. Collaboration is expected to contribute 17 percent of the constabulary's savings requirement, which is considerably higher than the 10 percent figure for England and Wales, but it is reflective of the level of collaboration between Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

Managing change

Reductions in police budgets have led inevitably to a shrinking workforce. HMIC expects forces to look at longer-term transformation that can help to maintain or improve the service they offer to the public, and to prepare for future funding reductions.

Programme Metis is being led by Cambridgeshire Constabulary on behalf of Hertfordshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police. It is an ambitious programme designed to *“deliver transformational change through the streamlining of processes and development of enabling technology across all areas of business to enable the Constabulary to protect frontline operational policing, continually improve the quality of service provided to the public, and to optimise all available resources in order to work within a balanced budget.”*

If implemented as intended, Programme Metis will improve the flow of information within and across the three forces, thus enabling officers to spend more time out in their communities.

Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire submitted a bid to the Home Office innovation fund for support to bring together their operational and organisational support service. The project will receive nearly £1.6m of Home Office funding in 2014/15, which is part of total funding of £8.1m.

The constabulary has piloted the use of 154 tablets for mobile working. Early evaluation indicates that their use has increased the time that the officers using them are available to local communities rather than tied up in the station doing paperwork by up to an hour each day. The constabulary is developing applications and IT solutions that will improve the way officers can use the tablets. This should achieve considerable advances in workforce flexibility and resource management, along with resulting efficiencies.

Cambridgeshire has streamlined its performance management arrangements. The police and crime plan sets out a number of local priorities and the constabulary uses the plan's objectives to prioritise activity.

The constabulary's estate does not match the requirement for policing today, so the constabulary is conducting a full review. It recognises that it is essential to ensure that the new estate matches the constabulary's vision of improved ICT and a more collaborative approach. Currently, there are a number of buildings that are no longer used and a final decision about their disposal has not yet been made.

The constabulary identified that the main elements of its change programme during the current spending review are:

- improved IT;
- using IT to streamline processes and reduce bureaucracy;
- collaboration with other forces;
- priority-based budgeting; and
- borderless deployment.

The constabulary identifies that the main elements of its change programme as it responds to future financial pressures will include:

- improved IT;
- improved call management;
- collaboration with other forces;
- priority-based budgeting; and
- improving the way that operational support is undertaken.

How is the constabulary supporting its workforce to manage change and effective service provision?

The constabulary has invested in its leadership. It has an ambition to improve the culture of the constabulary. It surveys staff regularly and recently has conducted a full survey with five strands: leadership, pride, standards of behaviour, reward and recognition, and environment. The results of this survey have produced a range of actions including the constabulary revisiting how it promotes officers and staff.

There are clear and open lines of involvement with staff associations and trade unions. All have cited good communication, contact and involvement in the change process. As a result, they feel fully involved and are supportive of the change.

Through a number of locally based meetings, the chief constable has met a large number of officers and staff. He has used these meetings to present a clear message to staff that the constabulary's emphasis is a move away from performance targets to the safeguarding of victims. Staff are encouraged and supported to use their professional judgment to make decisions and to do what is important for the community. As a result, staff feel empowered and involved.

There is an overriding sense of pride in and commitment to the constabulary. The senior leaders make sure that they are seen out and about in the constabulary area. As a result, the workforce is clear that whatever is happening in terms of change is not because of any lack of leadership, but as a result of financial and other pressures.

How is the constabulary achieving the savings?

Because around 80 percent of a police budget (on average) is spent on staff costs, it is not surprising that 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.

However, we also expect forces to bear down on their other costs (non-pay) such as the equipment they buy, the accommodation and vehicles they use and the contracts they enter for services (e.g., for cleaning). The constabulary plans to make 56 percent of its savings from non-pay, which is higher than for most other forces.

The constabulary achieved savings by limiting its recruitment of police officers and holding vacancies open across the workforce. However, it then had to move towards a greater focus on non-pay costs as it had already achieved many of the efficiencies possible through pay costs. Non-pay costs have been carefully considered across the business support function, with the constabulary undertaking an internal review to challenge business areas to improve efficiency. In addition, all buying (supplies and services) is scrutinised in order to make savings.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary has actively sought out joint buying opportunities and is involved in a multi-force buying approach with the South East Region Police Insurance Consortium (SERPIC) that provides insurance buying for 12 forces.

With other forces, most savings come from reducing the workforce. However, the constabulary plans to make 44 percent of its spending review savings requirement from its pay budget. This is lower than for most other forces.

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

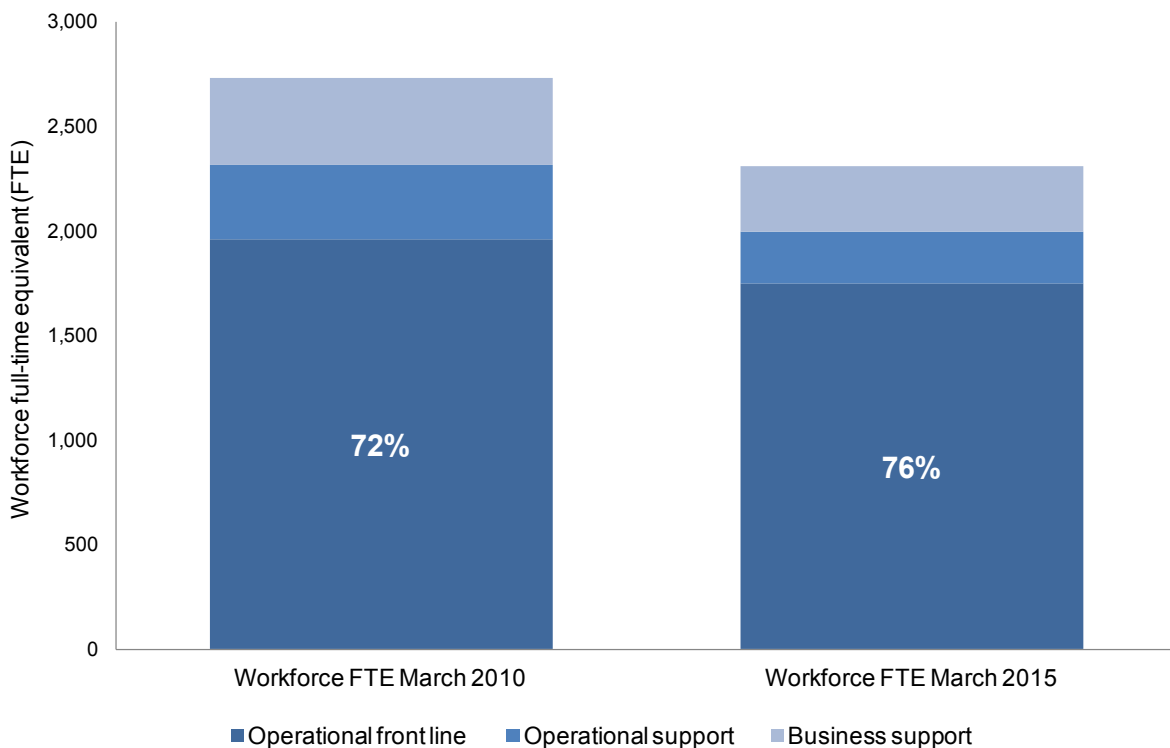
Please note, these figures are rounded.

	31 March 2010 (baseline)	31 March 2015	Change	Constabulary change %	Change for England and Wales %
Police officers	1,471	1,341	-130	-9%	-11%
Police staff	1,072	819	-253	-24%	-17%
PCSOs	209	150	-59	-28%	-22%
Total	2,752	2,310	-442	-16%	-14%
Specials	167	300	133	80%	44%

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 frontline crime-fighting roles.

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.

The following chart shows the change in the workforce frontline profile in Cambridgeshire Constabulary.



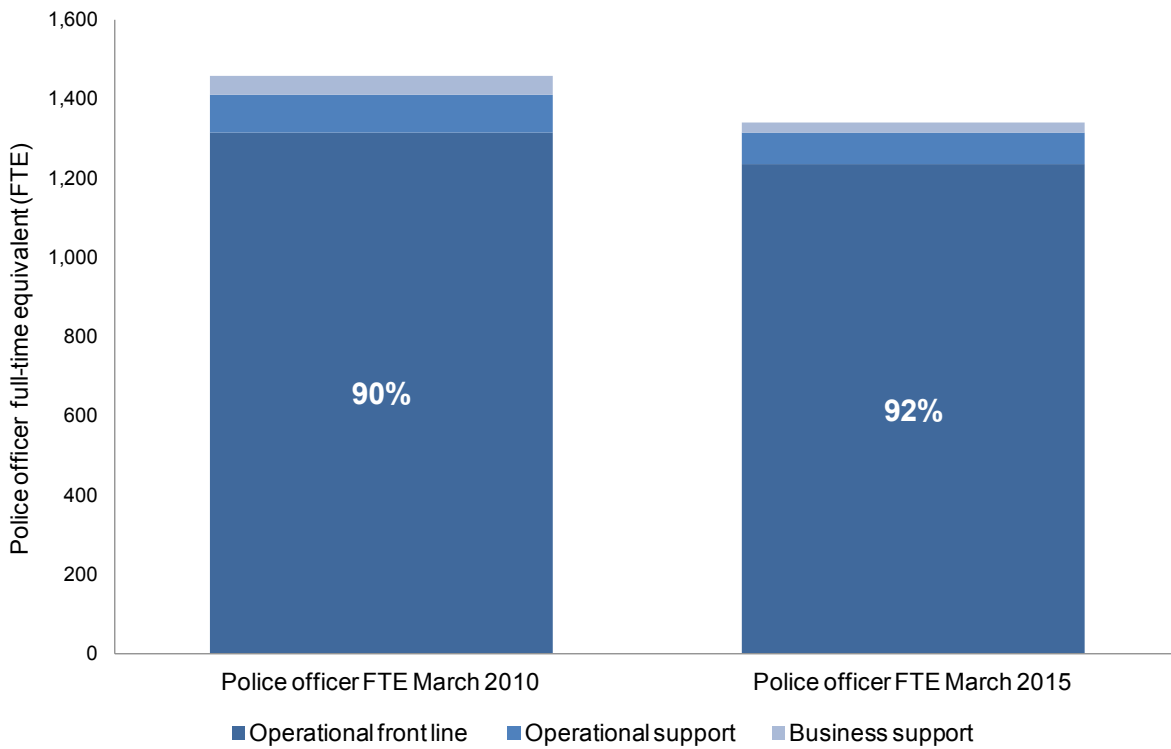
Note: England and Wales reports an increase in the proportion of workforce on the front line from 74 percent in March 2010 to 78 percent in March 2015.

The number of officers, PCSOs and staff working on Cambridgeshire’s front line is projected to reduce by 215 between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 1,962 to 1,747).

Over the same period, the proportion of Cambridgeshire’s total workforce allocated to frontline roles is projected to increase from 72 percent to 76 percent. This compares with an overall increase across England and Wales from 74 percent to 78 percent.

The number of Cambridgeshire’s police officers in frontline roles is planned to reduce by 81 from 1,315 in March 2010 to 1,234 by March 2015. As the following chart shows, the proportion of officers remaining on the front line is projected to increase from 90 percent to 92 percent. This is in line with other forces where there is an overall increase across England and Wales from 89 percent to 92 percent.

The following chart shows the change in police officers' frontline profile.



Note: England and Wales reports an increase in the proportion of police officers on the front line from 89 percent in March 2010 to 92 percent in March 2015.

Summary

Good

- Extensive collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary is in place to improve their efficiency and realise savings.
- Programme Metis will provide transformational ICT change and is being led by Cambridgeshire on behalf of the three forces.
- The constabulary has piloted the use of 154 tablets for mobile working, which has increased the time that the officers using them are available by up to an hour each day.
- There is a clear drive to reduce non-pay costs; savings in this area, along with those made through collaboration and procurement, have contributed to the overall savings requirement.
- The constabulary aims to improve the culture of the organisation and is using good communications alongside highly visible senior leadership to achieve this.

To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

HMIC looks at how the constabulary understands the demands that it faces and how it allocates both financial resources and staff to meet these demands. We look at how these decisions are leading to effective results for the public; in particular, that police are visible and that they attend promptly when called, that they are fighting crime and keeping communities safe, and that victims are satisfied with the service they receive.

How well does the constabulary understand and manage demand?

The constabulary is working to improve understanding of the demand it faces, and plans to manage this demand through collaboration for its control room, custody and criminal justice functions (operational support) and its human resources, finance and IT functions (organisational support).

The constabulary has also worked closely with Cambridge University on an innovative approach to managing demand. Work includes the identification of micro beats and predictive patrolling in hotspot locations (though detailed analysis of crime and demand data it is possible to identify very specific locations where crime is most likely to occur).

However, no work has been done to manage calls for service that should be dealt with by other public services (such as the health service or local councils). The constabulary is planning to undertake a survey of calls through the summer and then to work with other public bodies on meeting better those areas of demand that do not require a police response.

How efficiently does the constabulary allocate its resources?

The constabulary has regular meetings to allocate resources to emerging problems. Daily constabulary-level operational meetings decide how to deploy resources to deal with emerging threats, and the annual strategic threat assessment is updated with current information. The constabulary gives due consideration to national requirements, particularly in relation to the regional and national impact of serious and organised crime originating in the constabulary area.

The constabulary reviewed demand across the local policing functions of response, neighbourhood policing and local crime investigation. It also considered demand within specialist departments, particularly within the public protection functions. As a result, the constabulary developed an operating model that gave autonomy to each of the six districts to manage their resources and build their structure based on demand, performance and community expectations.

Flexible shift patterns have been introduced to allow resources to meet demand, and new contracts have been given to new staff that allow flexibility between the hours of 0800 and 2000 hours, when demand is usually highest.

The constabulary's IT project within Programme Metis aims to streamline the business, improve back office functionality, and reduce duplication and bureaucracy. The constabulary has made considerable progress in implementing an effective mobile IT solution through piloting the use of tablets. This will improve response and staff effectiveness, achieve considerable savings in officer time, and achieve financial savings and enhanced services for the public.

Cambridgeshire plans to manage demand through collaborating on operational support, organisational support and Programme Metis. This will ensure that the constabulary has its workforce in the correct location, with appropriate ICT support, in order to provide an effective service.

For the future, collaborative working, Programme Metis, a review of the estates strategy, and more partnership working, will help the constabulary to meet demand and ensure that provision remains affordable.

How does the constabulary respond and keep its communities safe?

The challenge for forces is not just to save money and reduce their workforce numbers, but also to ensure the choices they make do not have a negative impact on the service they provide to their communities. HMIC looked for evidence that keeping the communities safe is at the heart of the constabulary's decision.

Calls for service

HMIC examined whether Cambridgeshire Constabulary is 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.

In 2010, Cambridgeshire set a target response time of 15 minutes for calls classed as 'emergency' (also known as Grade 1) in urban areas and 20 minutes in rural areas. In 2013 the constabulary moved to a more challenging single response time of 15 minutes for all areas.

It should be noted that because of this change, data between years is not directly comparable. However, to provide an indication of change in the number of calls responded to within its target the constabulary has provided data for 2013/14 broken down into urban and rural areas.

For calls classed as a 'priority' (also known as Grade 2) the constabulary has maintained its target response time of within 60 minutes between 2010/11 to 2013/14.

The following table compares the constabulary's performance in 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Calls for service	2010/11	2013/14
Percentage of urban emergency calls on target	81.3	70.6
Percentage of rural emergency calls on target	78.9	68.5
Percentage of priority calls on target	77.0	63.5

Over the spending review, the constabulary's response to both emergency and priority calls has declined.

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 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 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 constabulary. HMIC, therefore, examined how far the changes being implemented by the constabulary had affected the visibility of the police in the Cambridgeshire area.

In 2014, Cambridgeshire Constabulary allocated 52 percent of its police officers to visible roles. This is 3.1 percentage points lower than the number allocated in 2010 and lower than the figure for most other forces (which was 56 percent across England and Wales).

Police visibility is enhanced by PCSOs, who principally support community policing. Looking at the proportion of police officers and PCSOs, Cambridgeshire Constabulary allocated 57 percent of these staff to visible roles. This is 4.2 percentage points lower than it allocated in 2010 and lower than the 60 percent figure for England and Wales.

HMIC conducted a survey¹ 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 Cambridgeshire, 5 percent said that they have seen a police officer more often than they had 12 months ago; this compares to 12 percent of respondents in England and Wales.

Furthermore, 89 percent of respondents in Cambridgeshire said they felt safe from crime where they lived, compared to 84 percent of respondents in England and Wales. Finally, 6 percent said they felt safer from crime than they did two years ago, compared to 9 percent of respondents in England and Wales.

Crime

In 2010, the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to reduce crime. Between 2010/11 and 2013/14 (which includes the first three years of the spending review), the constabulary reduced recorded crime (excluding fraud) by 21 percent, compared with a reduction of 14 percent in England and Wales. Over this period, victim-based crime (that is, crimes where there is a direct victim, such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) reduced by 21 percent, compared with 14 percent in England and Wales. These reductions represent some of the largest reductions of any force in England and Wales and are commendable.

Looking just at the last 12 months, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 4 percent in Cambridgeshire, which is better than the figure for England and Wales of 1 percent.

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.

¹ Sample sizes for each force were chosen to produce a confidence interval of no more than ± 6 percent and for England and Wales, no more than ± 1 percent. Forces' differences to the England and Wales value may not be statistically significant.

The table below shows recorded crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Cambridgeshire (per head of population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

12 months to March 2014	Rate per 1,000 population	England and Wales rate per 1,000 population
Crimes (excluding fraud)	54.0	61.1
Victim-based crime	48.1	54.3
Sexual offences	1.1	1.1
Burglary	6.6	7.8
Violence against the person	8.4	11.1
ASB incidents	33.2	37.2

It is important that crimes are effectively investigated and that the perpetrator is identified and brought to justice. When sufficient evidence is available to identify who has committed a crime, it can be described as a detection. Cambridgeshire Constabulary's detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to March 2014 was 26 percent. This is in line with the England and Wales detection rate of 26 percent.

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the Cambridgeshire constabulary area. 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 of the impact of changes to service provision for the public is how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance.

In the 12 months to March 2014, 89.2 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) of victims were satisfied with the overall service provided by the constabulary. This is higher than the England and Wales figure of 85.2 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Changes to how the public can access services

Over the course of the spending review, Cambridgeshire Constabulary has closed two front counters, but it will open one shared access point (a location other than a police station where the public can access police services).

The constabulary is making greater use of the internet and social media to communicate with the public. As more people become used to contacting large commercial and public organisations in different ways, the constabulary is planning to offer the public different ways to contact them. Greater use of technology will enable the constabulary to offer options such as online reporting and crime tracking.

Summary

Good

- Performance has improved, with reductions in crime and a higher number of victims satisfied with the service they received than for most other forces in England and Wales.
- The constabulary is working to develop a greater understanding of demand, and is developing plans to manage future demand in collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary.
- Programme Metis will bring about considerable transformational change and streamline processes and service provision.

Our judgments

HMIC uses four categories for making judgments, two are positive and two are negative. The categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how well the constabulary achieves value for money, it is not an assessment of the overall effectiveness of policing. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the way the constabulary is achieving value for money is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the constabulary requires improvement in the way it achieves value for money, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the constabulary's provision of value for money is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.