

PEEL: Police efficiency 2015

An inspection of Cumbria Constabulary



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Overview – How efficient is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

Overall judgment¹



Good

HMIC found that Cumbria Constabulary is well prepared to face its future financial challenges. Through robust financial management and accurate budgeting it is successfully making the savings required of it, and is well placed to continue to do so, while maintaining a high-quality response to calls for service from the public. It has plans in place to achieve further savings through to 2018/19. In last year's value for money inspection, which considered how forces met the challenge of the first spending review period, Cumbria was judged to be good.

Summary

HMIC judges Cumbria Constabulary to be good. The constabulary is working well to improve its efficiency. It has a proven record of robust financial management and providing planned savings.




The constabulary has analysed the current demand on its services and identified areas where it can work differently in order to make more efficient use of police resources. The constabulary has a change programme which is intended to deliver a significant re-organisation of how policing will be provided across the county in the future. New arrangements should make the constabulary more efficient in how it allocates its resources. In the future, it will seek to focus resources according to risk, rather than responding to all requests for service. There is a plan to streamline and improve frontline policing services, while making substantial cuts to the budget.

In the longer term, the constabulary has a secure financial position. Careful management of budgets and a considered approach to managing change has allowed the constabulary to meet the challenges of austerity and invest in its estate and new technology. The constabulary has financial and workforce plans to meet the required future budget reductions, recognising that its current approach to demand will not be sustainable when resources reduce.

The constabulary aims to be a smaller, more agile organisation. To achieve this, it

¹ Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement or Inadequate – see last page of report for definitions.

will need to implement planned improvements (including to its communication centre), working with local public sector organisations to reduce demand, and aligning future skills requirements to workforce plans.

<p>How well does the force use its resources to meet its demand?</p>	<p>How sustainable and affordable is the workforce model?</p>	<p>How sustainable is the force's financial position for the short and long term?</p>
<p> Good</p>	<p> Good</p>	<p> Good</p>
<p>Cumbria Constabulary has a good understanding of the current demand on its services, and has sufficient resources to be able to respond to calls for service. However, the constabulary recognises that its current arrangements will not be sustainable when resources reduce in line with future budget cuts.</p> <p>The constabulary is introducing new arrangements to be more efficient in how it allocates its resources. In the future, it will seek to focus resources according to risk rather than responding to all requests for service. The priority for the constabulary is the daily consideration and management of threat, harm and risk that assesses vulnerability with</p>	<p>The current workforce model is able to respond effectively to most areas of demand, and in some instances a better service than might be expected is being provided, because officers have the capacity to attend quickly.</p> <p>However, the financial plans require further reductions to be made in workforce numbers. The constabulary has a change programme which will oversee a significant re-organisation of how policing will be provided across the county in future. While there is an appreciation that the workforce will become smaller, there is a renewed emphasis on working more effectively with partners to better integrate services and reduce crime through</p>	<p>The constabulary has successfully balanced its budget every year from 2010/11 to 2014/15. It has planned a balanced budget for 2015/16, which includes a cut in spending of £1.8m.</p> <p>The constabulary has exercised prudent management. Finance plans are closely aligned to workforce plans and there is confidence that staff numbers can be reduced to affordable levels through planned retirements and people choosing to leave.</p> <p>The constabulary's plans reflect the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan, which is committed to a neighbourhood policing approach. The constabulary has strong governance arrangements</p>

<p>the aim of keeping people safe. Officers in local policing areas will focus on tackling the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour, which should reduce demand on the constabulary's services.</p> <p>The constabulary has a good understanding of how its costs compare with others, and focuses improvement activity in areas where costs appear high.</p> <p>The constabulary is rolling out new technology for officers to allow them to work more flexibly, away from police stations. In addition, high-level discussions continue between the constabulary and partner agencies, aimed at reducing the unnecessary demand passed on to the police and improving together crime prevention arrangements.</p>	<p>more prevention activity.</p> <p>The constabulary plans to provide the best service it can afford with a reduced workforce. It has detailed plans for how the new workforce model will work up to 2018/19, including staffing numbers, which align well with financial plans.</p> <p>The type and complexity of crimes are changing, and the constabulary is undertaking more analysis to identify the different skills and expertise its workforce needs in order to provide an effective service.</p>	<p>in place, and there is ongoing liaison between the treasurer in the police and crime commissioner's office and the constabulary finance director.</p> <p>The constabulary has clear plans in place to achieve the reductions in spending needed by 2018/19 through continued implementation of its change programme. The new workforce model, improved local partnership working and increasing use of technology aim to ensure that the constabulary can work more efficiently, and continue to provide effective policing with fewer resources.</p> <p>The constabulary is planning for beyond 2018/19.</p>
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Force in numbers



Financial position

Forecasted change in expenditure 2015/16 to 2018/19

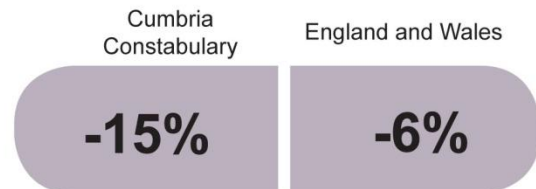


It is important to note that some forces only provided figures for savings they had formally signed off at that point, while others provided estimates for the whole period. As a result, the savings figure above might not reflect the full saving which the force might have to make. 2014/15 GRE has been used here as a baseline.

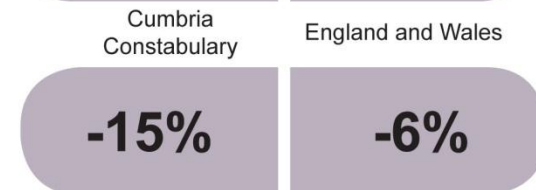


Providing policing

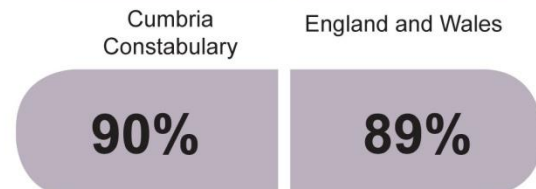
Planned change in police officer numbers 31 March 2015 - 31 March 2018



Planned change in total workforce numbers 31 March 2015 - 31 March 2018



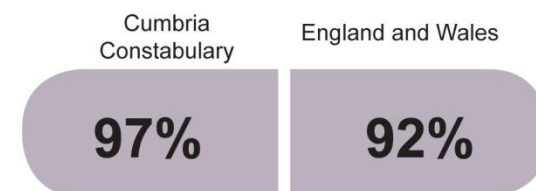
Proportion of police officers on the operational frontline 31 March 2010



Proportion of police officers on the operational frontline 31 March 2015



Planned proportion of police officers on the operational frontline 31 March 2018





Organisation

Police officer cost per head of population compared to England & Wales (2014/15)



Workforce cost per head of population compared to England & Wales (2014/15)



Key statistics

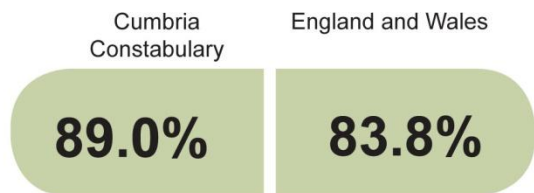
Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2014 to 12 months to 31 March 2015



Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2010 to 12 months to 31 March 2015



Victim satisfaction 12 months to 31 March 2015



Changes in victim satisfaction 12 months to 31 March 2011 to 12 months to 31 March 2015



Victim satisfaction: Cumbria confidence interval +/- 2.7 percent. England and Wales confidence interval +/- 0.2 percent.

For full details on the data used in this graphic see annex A in the efficiency national report.

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. Now, in a period of sustained budget reductions, forces need to continue to make efficiencies while focusing on reducing crime and keeping communities safe.

As part of its annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), HMIC's Efficiency programme assessed how a force maximises the outcomes from its available resources. We reviewed both the financial and workforce planning of police forces whilst examining wider questions of cost, capability and productivity. Our inspection focused on the overall question, 'How efficient is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?'

To answer this question we looked at three areas:

- How well does the force use its resources to meet demand?
- How sustainable and affordable is the workforce model?
- How sustainable is the force's financial position for the short and long term?

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 received and conducted in-force inspections. We interviewed chief constables and the chief officers responsible for finance, organisational change, human resources and performance in each force and held focus groups of officers and staff at different grades and ranks, and made unannounced visits to police stations.

This report sets out the findings from this wide-ranging inspection for Cumbria Constabulary.

How well does the force use its resources to meet its demand?

HMIC examined how the force understands the demands for its services, and how it allocates its staff and financial resources to meet these demands. We then assessed whether these decisions are leading to good results for the public – that the 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 force understand its demand?

The constabulary has a good understanding of the demand for its services it receives from the public. This is based on a detailed analysis conducted in January 2014, which looked at the type of incidents reported to the police and assessed how the police responded. From this, the constabulary assessed that only 17 percent of incidents related to reports of crime, and that the average officer spent 68 percent of their time dealing with crimes and public safety issues. However, they found that the complexity of incidents had increased, in particular those relating to concerns for public safety and welfare (such as responding to calls involving people with mental health problems).

The constabulary has recognised that although the overall number of reported crimes has reduced by 10 percent since 2010, the type of crimes reported has changed. As with public safety and welfare, the force assesses that reported crimes are becoming more complex in nature (with more crimes involving child protection and online offences, for example). These require more resources and take longer to deal with than many other types of crime.

A priority for the constabulary is to understand the additional demand they face as a result of changes in the working arrangements of other public sector organisations. Staff told us that other agencies were increasingly referring members of the public to the constabulary during evenings and weekends. Staff believe these could more properly be dealt with by another service provider, such as local authority social services or NHS services. The constabulary has recognised that some of this work is placing unnecessary demand on police services; but changes in joint working practices require re-negotiation at a senior level, and these discussions continue. The force is reviewing the requests for services it makes on other organisations, such as making requests for ambulances in minor injury cases, in an attempt to reduce demand across public sector organisations in Cumbria.

The constabulary has acknowledged that in future, the current arrangements of responding to all demand is untenable, and that service provision will be based on the best service that can be afforded. The force will need to progress discussions with partners rapidly to ensure they can demonstrate that they are reducing demand through effective joint working, before making decisions on service levels.

How well does the force match resources to demand?

The constabulary is currently able to match its resources to its demand. However, as previously mentioned, the force recognises that its current arrangements will not be sustainable when resources reduce in line with future budget cuts.

Work is underway through the constabulary change programme to restructure neighbourhood policing teams, and to change how Cumbria responds to calls for service from the public. This is designed to put resources where they are most needed, to use resources more efficiently, and to reduce demand for police services. Further details on this are included later in this report.

Cumbria Constabulary's review of demand suggested that it could make efficiency savings, especially at the first point of contact. It is addressing this through changes within the communications room, introducing experienced police officers who should be better placed to resolve incidents at first contact, without recourse to the deployment of an officer to the scene. The increased costs within the communications room should be less than savings from more effective officer deployment.

The communications centre knows what resources are available to be deployed to incidents, based on a duty sheet received from each of the three geographic policing areas. The communication room is divided into three sections to deploy patrols, one for each policing area. The constabulary has invested in technology which enables communications room staff to locate all vehicles and officers, so that they can ensure that the nearest available resource is sent to an incident. However, HMIC found that despite this, communications room staff still ask patrols whether there is "anyone available" to respond to calls.

HMIC found that the constabulary has little difficulty in providing resources to attend the most serious incidents. However, officers attend lower graded incidents as if they were an emergency, which has an impact on the resources available. This means that the communications staff cannot always guarantee that they will have available resources to respond to the next genuine emergency call in a timely way.

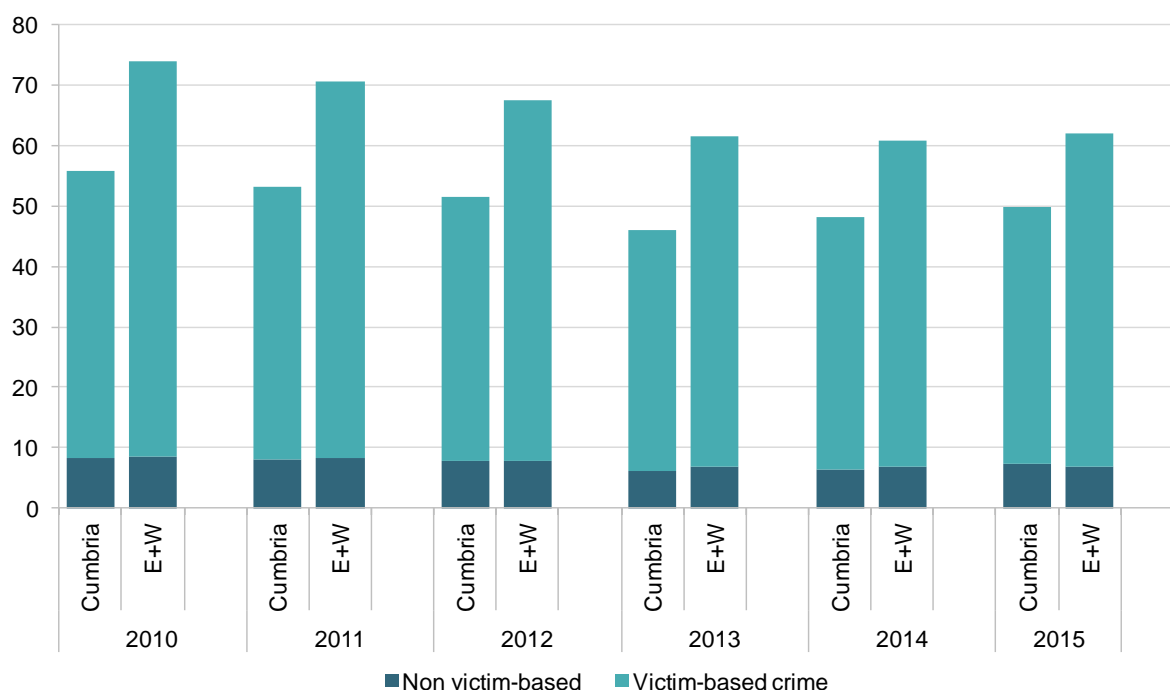
How well are the force's services meeting the demand from the public?

To assess the constabulary's response to public demand, HMIC considered crime figures and rates in Cumbria; victim satisfaction levels; and whether the constabulary is using different ways to communicate with and engage the public.

Although police recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand a force faces, it does provide a comparable performance indicator across all forces. Crime rates are reported as a number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (e.g. theft) and non victim-based crime (e.g. drug offences) Two thirds of forces showed an annual increase in total recorded crime in the year ending 31 March 2015. This increase in police recorded crime is likely to have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC carried out a national inspection of crime data integrity in 2014.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2015 Cumbria Constabulary, had a victim-based crime rate of 42.6 and a non-victim-based crime rate of 7.3 per 1,000 population. This represents a decrease (11 percent) in the victim-based crime rate and a decrease (11 percent) in the non-victim based crime rate since the start of the spending review in 2010. During the same time period England and Wales had a victim-based and non victim-based crime rate of 55.2 and 6.9 per 1,000 population respectively. This represents a decrease in both crime rates by 15 percent and 19 percent respectively since the start of the spending review. The scale of the change in crime rate can be seen in Figure 1 on the following page.

Figure 1: Police recorded crimes per 1,000 population from Cumbria in the 12 months to 31 March 2010 to the 12 months to 31 March 2015, compared to England and Wales



Source: Home Office crime statistics and ONS mid-2013 population estimates (2013 population data are used across multiple years to reveal actual change in recorded crimes, rather than changes due to population change)

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Cumbria, 89 percent² were satisfied with their whole experience with the police in the 12 months to 31 March 2015. This is higher than the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 percent³ over the same period. There was no significant change in victim satisfaction between the 12 months to 31 March 2011 and the 12 months to 31 March 2015 in Cumbria.

Cumbria Constabulary is currently able to meet demand for service from the public. As mentioned above, a major change programme is being implemented to improve the way it responds to calls for its service from the public, and to reduce costs in the future. The constabulary expects that the introduction of digital technology will increase the time officers spend on patrol away from the police station, and will enhance their visibility. It is providing frontline officers with mobile devices with access to police information and systems, so that they can carry out their duties without the need to return to police stations to file reports or access information.

The constabulary has maintained a commitment to neighbourhood policing, but intends to restructure neighbourhood policing teams, while retaining police and community support officer (PCSO) numbers at their current level.

² Cumbria, confidence interval +/- 2.7 percent.

³ England and Wales, confidence interval +/- 0.2 percent.

This means that some neighbourhood areas which are being merged will be mainly staffed by PCSOs.

After these changes to its structure and to the ways it responds to calls from the public, Cumbria Constabulary intends to evaluate the impact fully, to ensure that the anticipated benefits have been realised.

There are opportunities to improve how Cumbria identifies which officers are available to respond to incidents. Radio sets used by officers carry ARLS⁴ software which identifies where each officer is located, and whether he or she is available to respond to incidents. However, communications centre staff are not confident that the information this software returns is accurate, due to known technical issues. In addition, HMIC's inspection showed that there was no expectation placed on patrolling officers and other staff to update the system routinely to show their current availability for deployment. This means that staff working within the communications centre did not always have a full and accurate picture of the true extent of resources which may be available to respond to incidents.

HMIC monitored how a force engages with the public as part of the inspection. Figure 2 below shows that Cumbria Constabulary uses a range of methods (including Facebook, Twitter and email) to engage with the public.

Figure 2: Methods of public engagement used by Cumbria Constabulary in the 12 months to 31 December 2014

Are the following communication channels being used by the Force?	
Facebook	Yes
Twitter	Yes
Email	Yes
Text message	Yes
Web forum	Yes
Instagram	No
Local phone (not 999 or 101)	Yes

Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

The constabulary has an established presence on Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms. These allow direct engagement with communities at a

⁴ ARLS - automatic resource location software

constabulary and neighbourhood policing level. Neighbourhood policing teams are encouraged to use their dedicated pages for more informal local engagement. The constabulary monitors its social media platforms for 'chatter' and, by counting the number of followers on each platform, is able to tailor messages to different local communities across the county.

How well is the force managing demand?

The constabulary has sufficient staff resources available to meet current demand and is therefore able to deploy resources to deal with incidents. As a result, it has not considered alternative ways of resolving calls in order to manage demand in a more efficient way.

The constabulary has recognised that a change in culture is needed to better manage demand in the future, as the workforce reduces and resources become stretched. The change of culture in terms of how the constabulary responds to calls for service from the public will be based on an effective initial risk assessment at the first point of contact. The constabulary is planning to introduce the widely used risk assessment tool for threat, harm, risk, investigative opportunities, vulnerability and engagement opportunities (THRIVE). The nature of the police response will then be based on the individual circumstances of the incident and those involved. The constabulary aims to better prioritise protecting people from harm at the same time as providing a service that can be afforded within the reduced budget.

Staff working within the communications room are able to manage all the demand via calls from the public to the constabulary. There is a good understanding of the various other routes by which demand can come into the force, and where within the communications room these would be managed (for example, letters and internet enquiries are dealt with by officers on a helpdesk, which is also used by the communications centre to deal with those calls that can be resolved over the telephone and which do not require an officer to be deployed to the scene).

A daily morning meeting is held in each geographic policing area chaired by a senior officer. It is used to consider activities and align resources with identified risks. At the beginning of each week, there is a constabulary-level meeting to plan the week's activities and review critical incidents. Should there be a peak in demand anywhere, the respective geographic policing area command leads agree priorities and support one another with resources when required. This ensures resources are made available for peaks in demand for police services.

Community policing continues to be the cornerstone of how the constabulary organises its resources. The constabulary has done some work on crime prevention activity, problem solving and improving public confidence. Within each of the three geographic policing areas dedicated officers perform a role as 'problem solvers' and work with local public sector organisations to tackle the issues that place the most

demand on police resources. These issues include the recurring topics of licensing, anti-social behaviour and repeat callers to the constabulary, which are addressed to reduce further demand on local services.

The constabulary recognises the value of effective joint working with local public sector organisations. This is both in terms of improving efficiency through all services working together to intervene earlier to tackle the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour, and of providing better outcomes for the public and improved public confidence. The constabulary has established a joint chief officer group with public service partners to identify potential opportunities for improved joint working, and achieve the future anticipated savings requirements. This group will consider the provision of overlapping statutory duties on the different agencies and how services can be commissioned more efficiently by working together. The chief officer team is aware that achieving this will involve persuading other local public sector organisations of the benefits of working together to make better use of all resources and improve how services are jointly provided to the public, and has introduced a new chief superintendent post to support this. While these initiatives are welcome, as noted above, the constabulary will need to progress this work rapidly in order to demonstrate tangible demand reduction as a result.

There is already a multi-agency children's safeguarding hub in Penrith, where the constabulary works with partner agencies to share information, jointly assess referrals and implement a co-ordinated approach with a nominated lead agency to safeguard and protect vulnerable children.

The constabulary also looks to manage demand using crime prevention approaches, such as the management of more persistent offenders through an integrated offender management scheme. The constabulary has allocated additional officers to manage offenders who create repeated demand through their criminal behaviour. In making an additional investment of staff to monitor people within the scheme, the constabulary expects there to be a reduction in reoffending, and therefore in the risk they pose to the public.

How well does the force monitor and understand outputs, outcomes and costs?

The constabulary has a good understanding of how its costs compare with others, and focuses improvement activity in areas where costs appear high. There is a full benchmarking analysis undertaken each year against HMIC's value for money profiles to assess where the constabulary might be able to make savings. The analysis is published and used to inform the change plans within the constabulary's change programme, including a value for money (VFM) profile linked to a cost/benefits analysis for each change plan.

While the projected workforce model⁵ is based on financial requirements to 2018/19, the constabulary intends to continue to monitor and evaluate whether the model is providing what is needed, through continuing reviews by the change team and the chief officer group.

The constabulary has set an objective of reducing overall demand by 30 percent by 2018; progress against this will be monitored, and balanced with ensuring protection of the public. This will include an assessment of how well the service is responding to demand following the roll out of the mobile technology devices that allow more flexible working. It will further consider the progress made through work with partners to prevent crime and reduce demand placed on the constabulary (such as through the joint programme board, which is developing the plan for supporting people experiencing mental health issues in the county).

There is an arrangement in place with Lancaster University to undertake research to understand the impact of the use of mobile devices in improving efficiency. However, evidence on the progress achieved will not be known until the constabulary carry out a benefits realisation and impact assessment exercise in 2016/17.

Its comprehensive performance management framework enables the constabulary to monitor and review its performance; reports are also considered by the police and crime commissioner. Each business area in the constabulary is subject to a performance development conference chaired by chief officers every four months. This meeting considers the progress of each business area against constabulary objectives and highlights any emerging issues, raising actions where appropriate. Additionally, there is a financial reporting framework which supports monitoring of fleet, expenses, overtime costs and other expenditure.

How well is the force using new working methods to improve services?

The constabulary is rolling out new technology for officers to allow them to work more flexibly, away from police stations. The constabulary is issuing hand-held smart phones for frontline staff, which synchronise with constabulary IT systems. Every member of staff will be contactable by telephone through these devices and they contain a number of applications that allow users to complete forms and submit information remotely, without the requirement to return to the police station to complete paperwork. A further benefit of the devices is their potential to integrate the devices with new constabulary systems as they come on line. This will reduce the requirement for staff to re-enter similar information into a number of different systems

⁵ Workforce model - the way in which the workforce is organised; in the case of the police, it includes police officers, even though they are holders of the office of constable and therefore not employees of their police forces; it also includes police community support officers and police staff.

which will save time. HMIC learned that 1400 mobile devices have been rolled out to all police officers, PCSOs and the Special Constabulary. In addition there are a small number of police staff roles which have been issued with a device. The roll out was completed by 30 June 2015 as planned.

In addition, senior managers have been issued with tablet computers that allow remote access to the force's systems. This enables senior managers to carry out their duties at any location with full access to constabulary systems.

The constabulary has worked hard to overcome significant network coverage issues, which have presented a challenge given the size and geography of the county. Lessons have been learned from the previous difficulties experienced during the introduction of technology in constabulary vehicles. There is a process in place to allow for feedback and continued assessment to ensure that devices are as effective as possible.

The feedback from staff so far regarding the new devices has been positive. The constabulary anticipates that by issuing smart phones, officers will be on patrol for longer. This will mean that the constabulary can better deploy officers and increase the local visibility of frontline staff, in order to reassure the community.

The next planned IT development is a new custody and case file system. This will provide a digital solution for the electronic transfer of all custody and prosecution files, and is expected to improve the quality of prosecution files, eliminating bureaucracy and leading to more offenders being brought successfully to justice. As part of this change, the constabulary's two criminal justice units will be reduced to one site from November 2015.

The constabulary is considering alternative approaches to tackling offending where alcohol is a factor, and has introduced an 'alcohol awareness scheme' within custody suites. Participation in the scheme is offered to anyone who is in custody for an alcohol-related issue (such as being drunk and disorderly). Detainees receive the offer of a drink awareness course, at a cost to them, as an alternative to prosecution. The scheme is privately operated by an external company at no cost to the constabulary. Although only introduced at the beginning of April 2015, the scheme has already secured the attendance of 20 people on courses. The constabulary intends to carry out an evaluation in due course to ensure the course reduces re-offending and discourages problematic drinking. The scheme has also attracted interest from public health sector partners. Ultimately, the constabulary expects to see a reduction in drink related arrests, which will reduce the demand this creates on custody suites and officer time.

The constabulary is engaged in a range of activities with other organisations to improve its services:

- learning and development programmes are jointly provided with Lancashire Constabulary;
- there is an agreement with the Isle of Man Constabulary to provide fingerprint analysis for forensic submissions;
- the constabulary is collaborating with Durham Constabulary on the introduction of a new IT system (called red sigma) to incorporate crime, intelligence and staff briefings on one platform; and
- there is support for the constabulary through the 'Titan' regional organised crime unit as well as limited air support through the national police air service.

Summary of findings



Good

Cumbria Constabulary has a good understanding of the current demand on its services, and has sufficient resources to be able to respond to calls for service. However, the constabulary recognises that its current arrangements will not be sustainable when resources reduce in line with future budget cuts.

The constabulary is introducing new arrangements to be more efficient in how it allocates its resources. In the future, it will seek to focus resources according to risk rather than responding to all requests for service. The priority for the constabulary is the daily consideration and management of threat, harm and risk that assesses vulnerability with the aim of keeping people safe. Officers in local policing areas will focus on tackling the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour, which should reduce demand on the constabulary's services.

The constabulary has a good understanding of how its costs compare with others, and focuses improvement activity in areas where costs appear high.

The constabulary is rolling out new technology for officers to allow them to work more flexibly, away from police stations. In addition, high-level discussions continue between the constabulary and partner agencies, aimed at reducing the unnecessary demand passed on to the police and improving together crime prevention arrangements.

How sustainable and affordable is the workforce model?

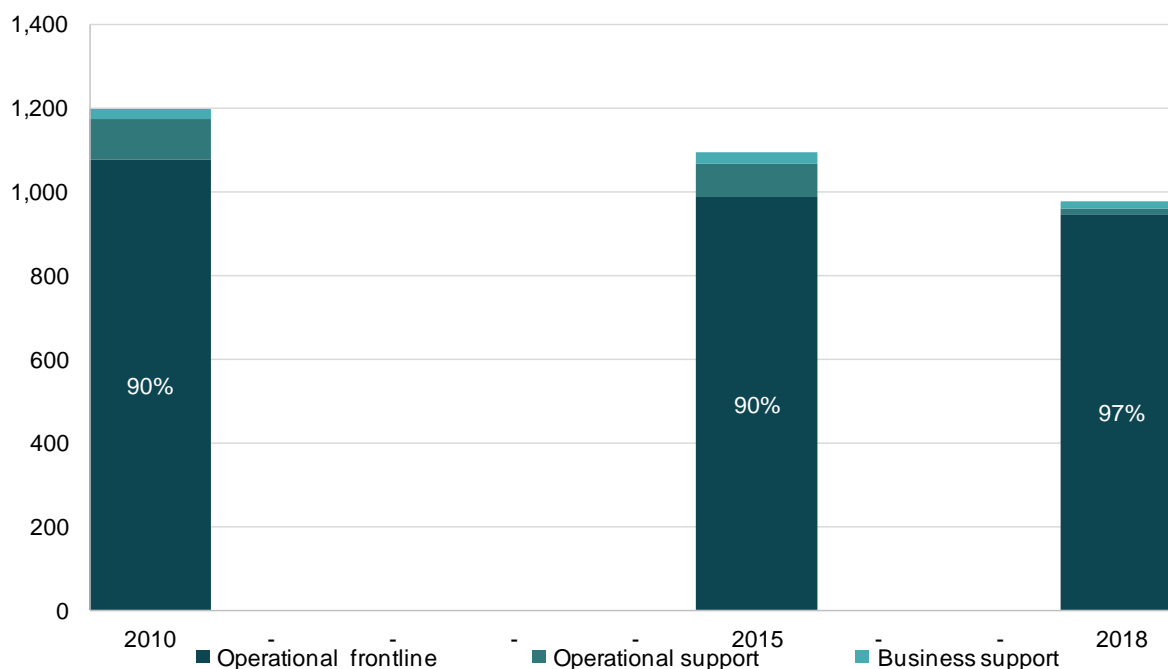
HMIC examined how Cumbria Constabulary has structured its workforce (i.e. its mix of police officers, staff and PCSOs, and the proportion of all these groups working in frontline positions), and assessed whether this was affordable and sustainable as the constabulary responds to its financial challenge. We also considered what the constabulary is doing to ensure the workforce has the right skills and capacity to fight crime and keep communities safe now and in the future.

How well does the force's current workforce model match demand, organisational and financial requirements?

Cumbria Constabulary forecasted a total savings requirement over the first four years of the spending review as part of the Valuing the Police programme (2011/12 to 2014/15) of £16.55m, the equivalent of 15 percent of the 2010/11 gross revenue expenditure for the constabulary. Savings were made in both the pay and non-pay budgets. Since 2010, Cumbria Constabulary has seen a reduction of 95 police officers, 204 staff and 25 PCSO full time equivalents (FTE).

In Cumbria, there have been falls in the total number of police officer FTE over the period 2010 to 2015, as shown in figure 3 on the following page. During this period the proportion in frontline roles has remained at 90 percent in 2010 and 2015. The constabulary expects to increase this proportion looking forward to 2018.

Figure 3: Actual and planned changes to police officer full time equivalents (FTE) in operational frontline, operational support and business support roles in Cumbria Constabulary, from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2018



Source: Home Office annual data return and HMIC efficiency data collection

For further information about the data for figure 3 please see Annex B

At the time of HMIC's Efficiency inspection, the future financial climate was uncertain. Several forces were in a position where they did not have confirmed/signed-off plans for workforce projections. It is important to note that figures provided are in many instances unconfirmed estimates provided to assist HMIC in its inspection programme, and should not be seen as a concrete plan for the future landscape of policing. The comments above are applicable for the data within figures 3 and 4.

The current workforce model is able to respond effectively to most areas of demand, and in some instances a better service than might be expected is being provided. For example, incidents which are assessed as lower priority often get an immediate response, because officers have the capacity to attend quickly. However the constabulary recognises that with changing demands for its services and reduced budgets, this is neither sustainable nor affordable going forward. The type and complexity of crimes are changing and the constabulary is undertaking more analysis to identify the different skills and expertise that will be needed in its workforce to provide an effective service. The financial plans also require further reductions to be made in workforce numbers.

The change programme is seeking to ensure that more efficient working practices and better joined-up working with partner agencies are in place so that effective services can be maintained with fewer police officers. The change programme will see police officer numbers reduce from 1,143 at the end of March 2015 to 977 by the end of March 2018.

How well does the force's projected workforce model match demand, organisational and financial requirements?

Figure 4: Actual and planned changes in workforce FTE from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2018 for Cumbria Constabulary compared to England and Wales

	March 2010	Difference between 2010 and 2015		March 2015	Difference between 2015 and 2018		March 2018
		Force	England and Wales		Force	England and Wales	
Police Officers	1,238	-8%	-12%	1,143	-15%	-6%	977
Police Staff	826	-25%	-19%	622	-20%	-6%	500
PCSOs	111	-23%	-27%	86	11%	-11%	95
Workforce total	2,175	-15%	-15%	1,851	-15%	-6%	1,572

Source: HMIC Efficiency inspection data collection and Home Office workforce statistics

For further information about the data for figure 4 please see Annex B

The constabulary has implemented a change programme to oversee a significant re-organisation of how policing will be provided across the county. There is a plan to streamline and improve frontline policing services whilst making substantial cuts to the budget. There is an appreciation that the workforce will become smaller, with a renewed emphasis on working more effectively with partners to better integrate services and reduce crime through more prevention activity, though as noted above this still needs to progress.

The constabulary is in a strong position financially as a result of prudent management of its budgets to date. It has determined future workforce numbers that will be affordable. It has also identified where savings can be made through reducing the cost of police buildings. This is to ensure the savings it needs to make are secured and that the constabulary has the necessary funds to further develop a more flexible policing approach supported by investment in new technology.

The constabulary has detailed plans for its new workforce model up to 2018/19, including staffing numbers, which align well with financial plans. The model is largely driven by the need to reduce spending by a further £10m by 2019. Workforce plans up to 2021 are being developed, but are at an early stage.

The planned workforce is aligned with the anticipated funding available. The constabulary anticipates that the fall in police officer numbers to 977 will largely be achieved through not replacing all the officers who leave and retire.

The key challenge to the constabulary from introducing the new workforce model will be the response of the public to the change from attending all incidents to not attending some, as the constabulary aims to provide the best service it can afford with a reduced workforce. The constabulary is aware of this risk and is developing a public engagement plan to help manage public expectations from police services.

The force has undertaken initial analysis of the skills likely to be required by officers in the future but this work will need to be fully integrated into its future workforce plans. This should ensure that the force is focused on ensuring it has the right workforce capabilities, not just aligning the number of staff with financial plans.

Summary of findings



Good

The current workforce model is able to respond effectively to most areas of demand, and in some instances a better service than might be expected is being provided, because officers have the capacity to attend quickly.

However, the financial plans require further reductions to be made in workforce numbers. The constabulary has a change programme which will oversee a significant re-organisation of how policing will be provided across the county in future. While there is an appreciation that the workforce will become smaller, there is a renewed emphasis on working more effectively with partners to better integrate services and reduce crime through more prevention activity.

The constabulary plans to provide the best service it can afford with a reduced workforce. It has detailed plans for how the new workforce model will work up to 2018/19, including staffing numbers, which align well with financial plans.

The type and complexity of crimes are changing, and the constabulary is undertaking more analysis to identify the different skills and expertise its workforce needs in order to provide an effective service.

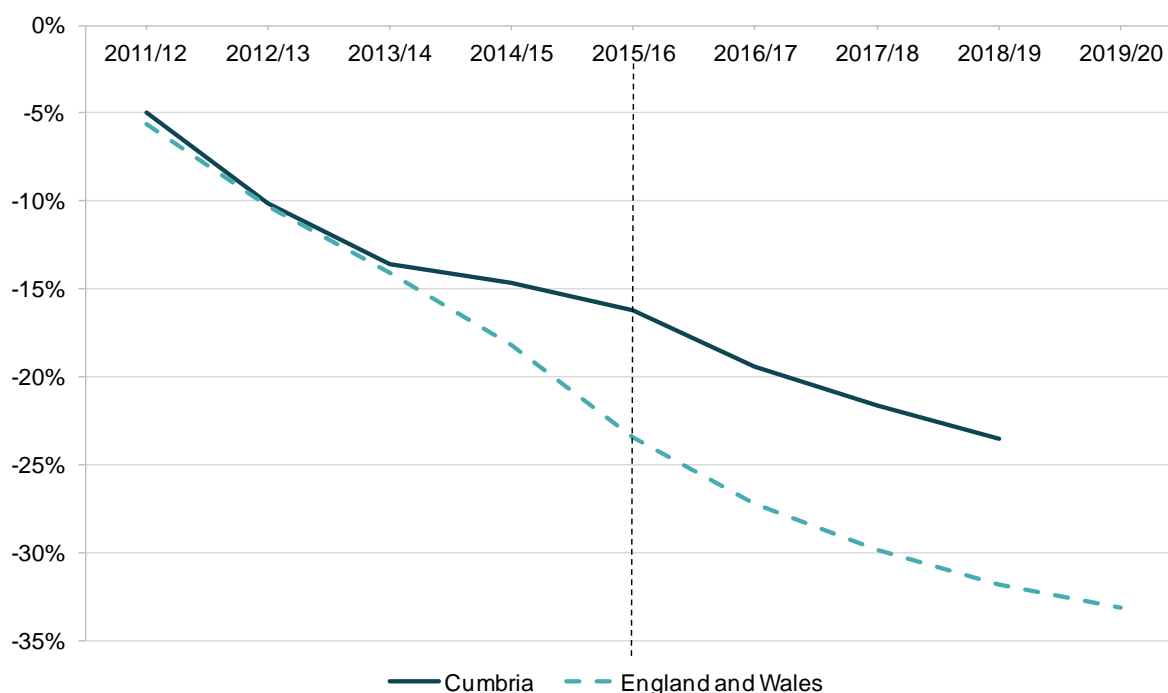
How sustainable is the force's financial position for the short and long term?

HMIC examined how forces have achieved savings over the period of the spending review, the saving plans that forces have developed for the future, and the assumptions forces have made in the understanding of the financial challenges ahead. We also assessed whether forces have good financial controls and governance, and if spending reflects the priorities outlined in the police and crime plan.

Has the force achieved its saving requirements and balanced the budget for the spending review period and 2014/15?

Cumbria Constabulary forecasted savings of £16.55m over the first four years of the spending review (2011/12 to 2014/15), the equivalent of 15 percent of the 2010/11 gross revenue expenditure for the constabulary. Over the period, savings were made in both the pay and non-pay budgets, so as to balance budgets by 2014/15. Over the same period all forces across England and Wales forecasted a total savings requirement of £2.53bn, the equivalent of 18.2 percent of the 2010/11 gross revenue expenditure for England and Wales.

Figure 5: Estimated change in expenditure from 2011/12 to 2014/15, and forecasted planned savings for 2015/16 to 2018/19, against the 2010 gross revenue expenditure baseline for Cumbria and England and Wales



Source: HMIC policing in austerity data, HMIC efficiency data collection and The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) Police Objective Analysis data

For further information about the data for figure 5 please see Annex B

The constabulary’s line on figure 5 above stops at 2018/19 as it was only able to provide data on its financial plans to this point in time.

Cumbria has successfully reduced its spending by £16.6m since 2010 and balanced its budget every year to 2014/15. The total reserves at 31 March 2015 stood at £21.2m. General reserves have been maintained at between £5m and £6m throughout this period and there are no current plans to reduce them below this level.

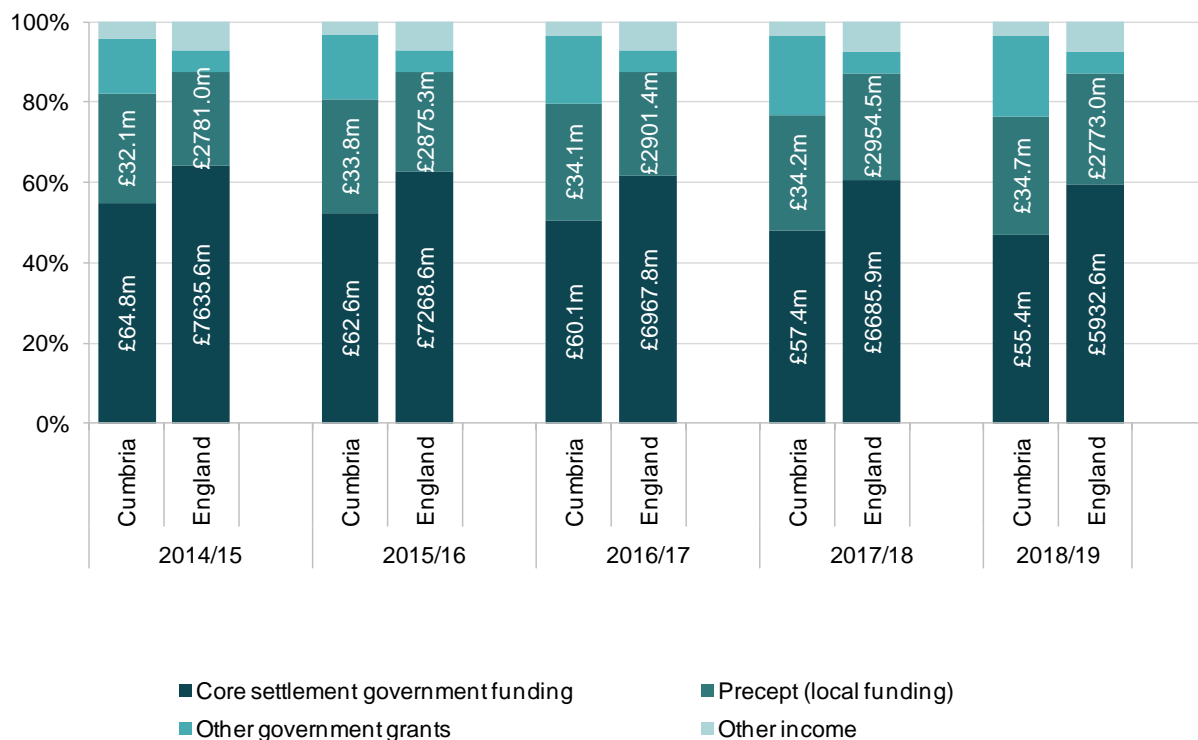
Has the force achieved a balanced budget for 2015/16?

Cumbria Constabulary has planned a balanced budget of £119.5m for 2015/16, which includes a cut in spending of £1.8m. It is forecast that the £1.8m reduction will be entirely from the pay budget (100 percent) and none will be from the non-pay budget in this year's savings. The constabulary plans to meet its reduction in spend without using reserves as a bridge. Since the 2010 baseline, at the start of the spending review, this represents savings of 16 percent.

How well has the force maximised other funding opportunities?

Figure 6 demonstrates the amount of funding that the force received from a central government grant, as precept from local councils through council tax, and from other sources, such as Home Office special grants. Cumbria Constabulary is expecting the proportion of their funding that comes from core settlement government funding to decline over the coming years, whilst anticipating the proportion of their funding that comes from precept (council tax funding) to increase over the same time period. It should be noted that the core settlement government funding, both monetary values and proportions of total funding, detailed in figure 6, are from force estimates collected as part of HMIC's efficiency inspection data collection. This data should not be considered as an official projection. The Home Office is currently consulting on changes to the forces funding formula and therefore any current projections may change over the time period highlighted.

Figure 6: Forecast mix of funding for Cumbria Constabulary from the 12 months to 31 March 2015 to the 12 months to 31 March 2019, compared to English forces



Source: HMIC efficiency data collection

The constabulary is trying to generate more income through the police and crime commissioner's additional services funding and through bids from national funds. For example the force stated that it has secured £0.8m over five initiatives with other agencies from the Police Innovation Fund. The biggest single partnership income source for Cumbria Constabulary is from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority which the force stated is funding 18 police officer posts at Sellafield.

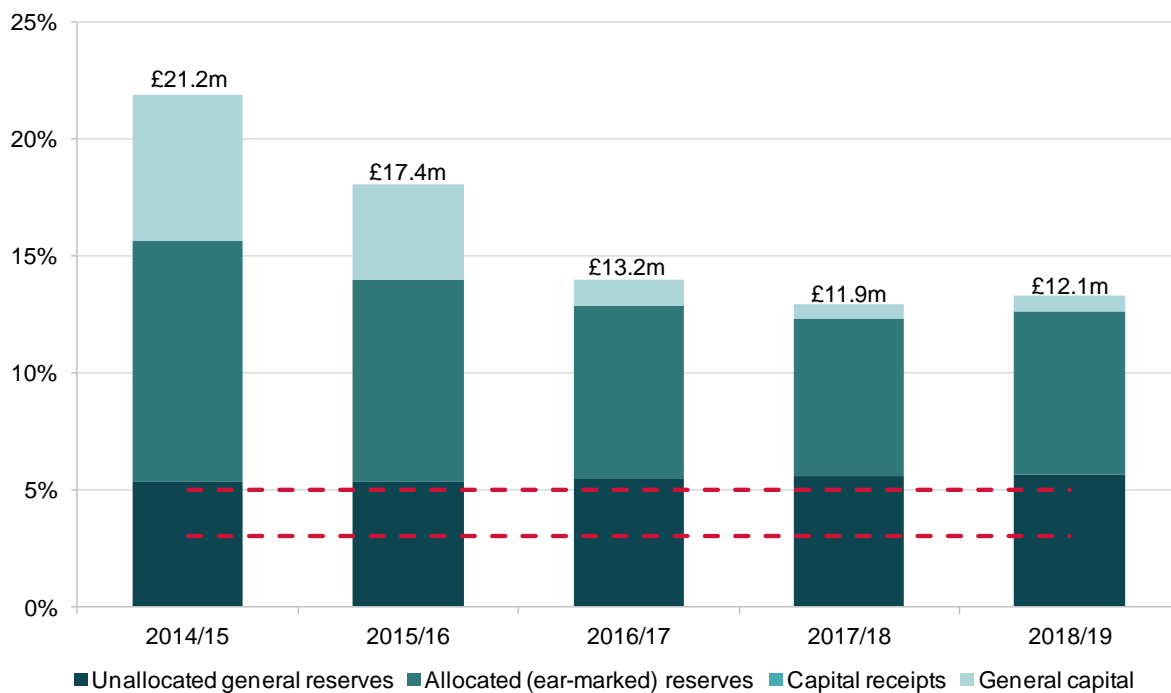
There are also a number of developing partnership arrangements with health agencies and the county council to reduce demand through prevention including for tackling alcohol issues and mental health. The constabulary has identified that it needs to strengthen current arrangements for generating income and getting the maximum benefit from partnership arrangements.

How well does the force control expenditure?

The constabulary’s level of reserves and how these are forecast to change is shown in figure 7. Cumbria Constabulary reported that its total reserves were £21.2m in 2014/15. These are broken down into several categories:

- unallocated general reserves – a sum to cushion the impact of unexpected events or smooth uneven cash flows;
- allocated (ear-marked) reserves – these are reserves set aside for specific capital purposes;
- capital receipts reserves – these are proceeds from the sale of assets which can only be used for specific capital purposes; and
- general capital to support future planned capital expenditure.

Figure 7: Breakdown of reserves remaining as a proportion of in-year net revenue expenditure, and total reserves remaining (£), for 2014/15 to 2018/19



Source: HMIC efficiency data collection

For further information about the data for figure 7 please see Annex B

The medium term financial strategy to 2018/19 is based on prudent assumptions. There is a strategy for the planned use of earmarked reserves. This will see total reserves reduce over the next three years to 31 March 2018. Finance plans are closely aligned to workforce plans and there is confidence that staff numbers can be reduced to affordable levels through planned retirements and leavers.

How well do the force's financial plans reflect the objectives set out in the PCC's police and crime plan?

The constabulary's plans reflect the objectives set out in the PCC's police and crime plan. The constabulary recently updated its vision for "Keeping Cumbria Safe". The PCC is committed to a neighbourhood policing approach and is retaining current numbers of police and community support officers to continue to provide local policing, in line with the change programme, as part of the revised neighbourhood policing structure. The constabulary is planning police officer reductions of 166, but are planning to increase the number of PSCOs from 86 to 95 over the next three years.

There is a prevention fund set aside in the PCC's medium-term financial strategy, which is a ring-fenced fund for tackling offending, re-offending and anti-social behaviour. The fund will be used to develop a three-year plan, including a range of perpetrator and education programmes. There will be funding for restorative justice; which includes interventions to tackle youth offending and improve outcomes for young people at risk of offending. This is in line with the constabulary's plan to prevent crime and reduce demand on its services in partnership with other organisations.

How well does the force provide timely and relevant financial information to the office of police and crime commissioner (OPCC), and are shared assumptions used to develop current and future plans?

The constabulary has strong governance arrangements in place. These include processes at the budget-setting stage where budgets are closely scrutinised by senior leaders. There is continuing liaison between the treasurer in the PCC's office and the constabulary finance director. The constabulary finance and human resources (HR) departments are also involved in all change and decision making groups.

There are budget and outturn reports to monthly chief officer group meetings and quarterly reports to the PCC. The constabulary has good and timely management information available for these forums, but is working to improve them further through more integration of financial and performance information.

How well developed are the force's plans for possible further savings?

The constabulary has a sustainable short and medium term financial position until 2018/19. There are clear plans in place to achieve the reductions in spending needed by 2018/9. The savings required will be found from the continued implementation of the change programme, with most of the savings to come from the reduction in police officer numbers between now and 2017/18. The new workforce model and the increasing use of new technology aim to ensure that the constabulary can continue to provide effective policing with fewer resources. The work to improve local partnership working aims to provide a better approach to ensure that demand is better managed with a more joined-up response across all agencies. The position after 2021 has yet to be developed.

The constabulary is already planning for beyond 2018/19, although there are many uncertainties about anticipated cuts and likely income. Beyond 2018/19 to 2020/21, the constabulary is projecting that savings of another £10m may be needed. Scenario planning is currently being done to manage the potential impact of grant damping⁶ being removed, as well as necessary increases to pay costs and capital spending. These additional savings, if required, will need to be found from further police officer and staff reductions.

Summary of findings



Good

The constabulary has successfully balanced its budget every year from 2010/11 to 2014/15. It has planned a balanced budget for 2015/16, which includes a cut in spending of £1.8m.

The constabulary has exercised prudent management. Finance plans are closely aligned to workforce plans and there is confidence that staff numbers can be reduced to affordable levels through planned retirements and people choosing to leave.

The constabulary's plans reflect the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan, which is committed to a neighbourhood policing approach. The constabulary has strong governance arrangements in place, and there is ongoing liaison between the treasurer in the police and crime commissioner's office and the constabulary finance director.

⁶ Grant damping is an additional government grant that has been given to some forces to offset the impact of the full reduction in central grant from applying the police funding formula.

The constabulary has clear plans in place to achieve the reductions in spending needed by 2018/19 through continued implementation of its change programme. The new workforce model, improved local partnership working and increasing use of technology aim to ensure that the constabulary can work more efficiently, and continue to provide effective policing with fewer resources.

The constabulary is planning for beyond 2018/19.

Annex A – HMIC judgments

The categories are:

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

Judgment is made against how efficient the force is at keeping people safe and reducing crime. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the efficiency of the force is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the efficiency of the force requires improvement because it is not yet performing at a good level, and/or there are some weaknesses in the organisation; or
- the efficiency of the force is inadequate because it is considerably lower than might reasonably be expected.

Annex B – Further information about the data

Figure 3

Planned changes to police officer full time equivalents (FTE) in operational frontline, operational support and business support roles in the force/constabulary, 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2018.

The data used in figure 3, for March 2010 and March 2015 is taken from the Home Office annual data return 601 and does not include workforce allocated under category '62 other' whereas the data used in figure 4 for March 2010 and March 2015 is taken from the Home Office annual data return 502 and is inclusive of this category. Therefore totals data may not match exactly.

Figure 4

Planned changes in workforce FTE from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2018 for the force/constabulary compared to England and Wales. The figures in table 4 are rounded to the nearest whole person, full time equivalents (FTEs), and therefore may differ slightly to the exact figures quoted within the report.

For data as at 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2015 we have used Home Office annual data return data which is an 'actual' FTE, whereas for projections for March 2018 are budget based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's/constabulary's planning strategy. In some instances therefore an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force/constabulary is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Due to the complex and continually evolving picture of workforce collaboration between neighbouring forces, not all changes in workforce figures are real in terms of the workforce available. Involvement in strategic alliances and/or regional organised crime units (ROCU) would be an example of where changes over time are likely to be skewed. Therefore sharp increases or decreases over time need to be considered with caution as they may simply represent accounting changes related to how staff are allocated to forces, not real changes in staffing levels.

At the time of the inspection, the future financial climate was uncertain. Several forces were in a position where they did not have confirmed/signed-off plans for workforce projections. It is important to note that figures provided are in many instances unconfirmed estimates provided to assist HMIC in its inspection programme and should not be seen as a concrete plan for the future landscape of policing. These comments apply to figure 3 and figure 4.

Figure 5

Estimated change in expenditure from 2011/12 to 2014/15, and forecast change in expenditure for 2015/16 to 2019/20, against the 2010 GRE baseline for the force and England and Wales.

Figure 5 shows how force expenditure has changed over the period of the spending review, relative to the total change in expenditure for all forces across England and Wales. For 2015/16 onwards there has been a change in methodology in comparison to the value for money inspection. The savings requirement is no longer inflated gross revenue expenditure (GRE) minus expenditure but the sum of planned savings and use of reserves to bridge an in-year funding gap. This change is indicated by the vertical dashed line on the chart. The chart shows planned savings (including use of reserves to bridge an in-year funding gap) in future years, calculated using the planned savings for pay and non-pay budgets provided to HMIC at the time of the data collection (February 2015). Some forces only provided figures for savings they had formally signed off at that point, while others provided estimates for the whole period. Therefore small savings requirements do not necessarily equate to a small savings challenge for the future.

Figure 7

Breakdown of reserves remaining as a proportion of in-year net revenue expenditure, and total reserves remaining (£), for 2014/15 to 2018/19.

According to a survey of financial directors conducted by the Audit Commission,⁷ it is commonly considered that three percent to five percent of net revenue expenditure is a prudent level of unallocated general reserves for risk-based planning purposes. This range is shown on the graph by the two horizontal red dotted lines.

Please note that all categories of reserves for the force/constabulary are held by the PCC apart from City of London and the Metropolitan Police Service where reserves are held by the City of London Corporation and MOPAC respectively.

⁷ *Striking a balance: Improving councils' decision making on reserves*, Audit Commission, December 2012. Available from <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk>