



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police efficiency 2016

An inspection of Dorset Police



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Contents

Introduction	3
Force in numbers	4
Overview – How efficient is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?	6
How well does the force understand its current and likely future demand?	8
How well does the force understand the current demand for its services?	8
How well does the force understand potential future demand for its services?	11
Summary of findings	12
How well does the force use its resources to manage current demand?	13
How well does the force’s current allocation of resources match demand, organisational and financial requirements?	13
How well does the force improve the productivity of its workforce?	17
How well does the force work with others to improve how it manages demand for its services?	18
How well does the force understand how any changes made to improve efficiency have affected its ability to manage demand?	21
Summary of findings	22
How well is the force planning for demand in the future?	24
How well does the force identify and prioritise areas to invest in for the future? ...	24
How well does the force plan its investments?	25
To what extent does the force fund its investments sustainably?	27
Summary of findings	28
Next steps	30
Annex A – About the data	31

Introduction

As part of its annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), HMIC assesses the efficiency of police forces across England and Wales.

As with all public services, it is vital that the police service operates in a way that makes the most of all its available resources. Police forces need to make sure they understand the current demand for their services. This is to make sure that they use all the resources available to them to fight all types of crime and to protect communities. Also, forces need to be looking to the future to understand how that demand may change and to plan where they need to invest extra resources or change the ways they operate so that the public can continue to receive the policing it expects and deserves.

As part of the government's objectives to cut public spending, central funding to the police service in England and Wales has been reduced by around 20 percent since 2011. Police forces across England and Wales have faced a difficult challenge to sustain effective levels of policing in the face of significant budget cuts. Forces need to continue to make efficiencies and invest resources wisely in order to maintain a focus on reducing crime and keeping their communities safe. HMIC considers that a police force is efficient if it is making the best use of its resources to provide policing services that meet expectation and follow public priorities, and if it is planning and investing wisely for the future.

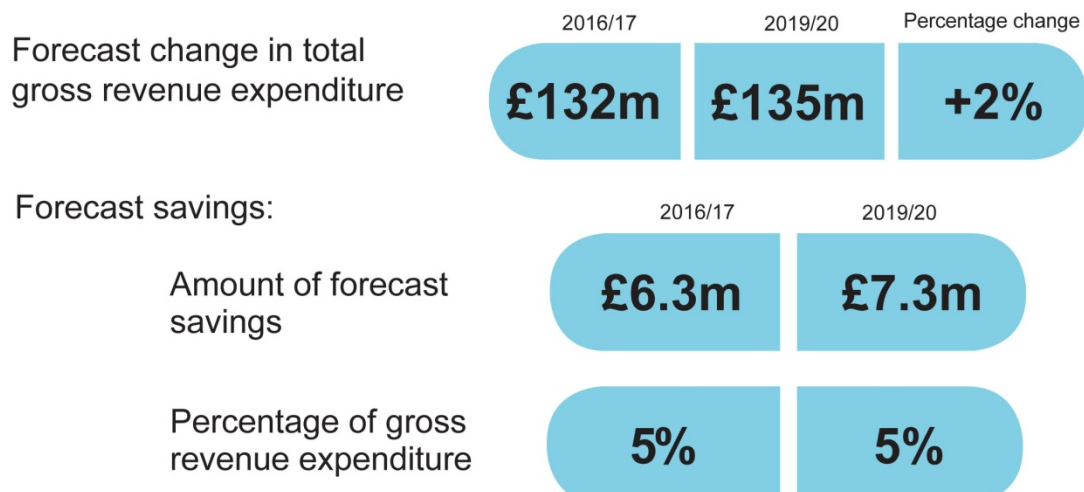
HMIC's efficiency inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/). This report sets out our findings for Dorset Police.

Reports on Dorset Police's legitimacy and leadership inspections will be available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016) in December 2016. Our reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2017.

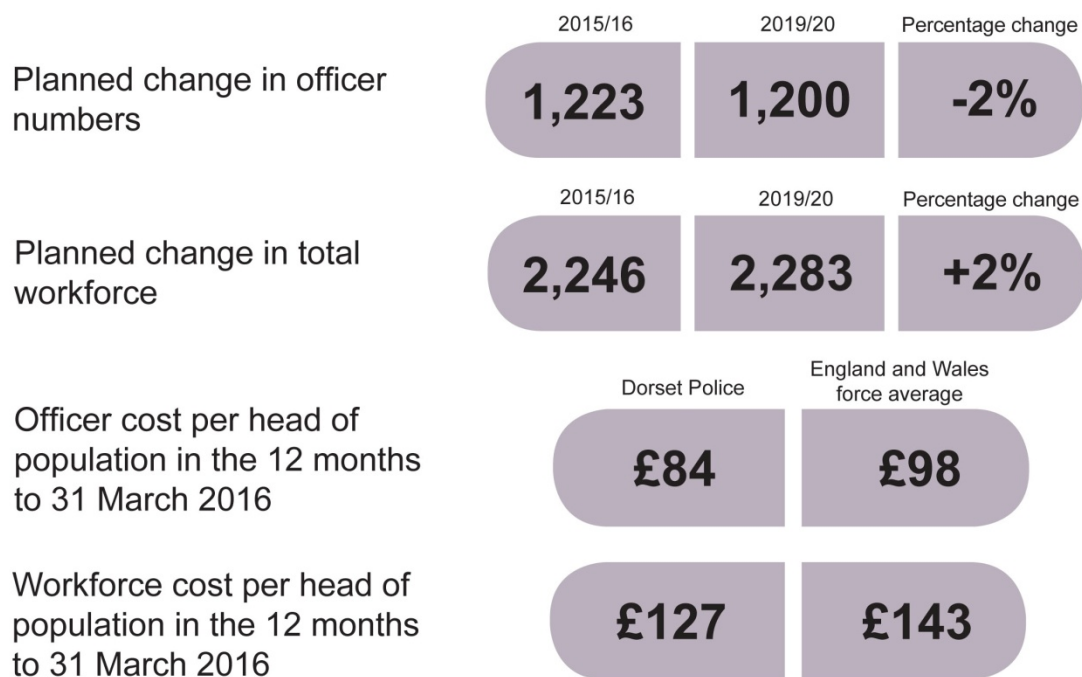
Force in numbers



Financial position



Workforce





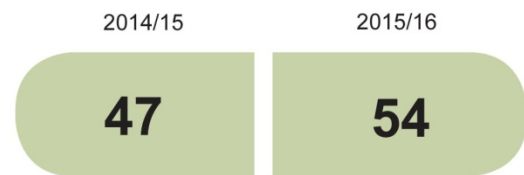
Calls for assistance

999 calls per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016

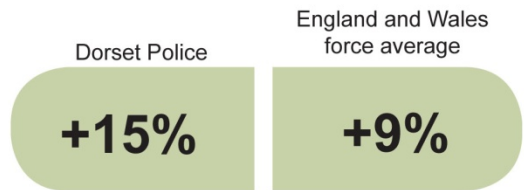


Recorded crime

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016

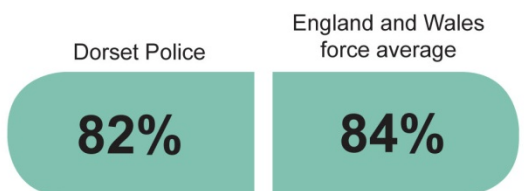


Percentage change in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016



Victim satisfaction

Victim satisfaction with the overall service provided by the police 12 months to 31 March 2016



For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

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

Overall judgment¹



Good

Dorset Police has been assessed as good in respect of the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. This compares favourably with the 2015 efficiency assessment, in which Dorset Police was judged to require improvement.

Dorset Police has a comprehensive understanding of the full range of the current demand for its services and the force's evaluation of likely future demand is extensive. It has identified a number of areas of growing demand including child sexual exploitation, and paedophile and online investigation. A specialist unit to investigate cyber-crime has been set up. The force regularly surveys local residents to assess their level of satisfaction with policing services. Staffing levels are monitored and the number of officers who specifically investigate domestic abuse has increased. Dorset Police is continuing to collaborate with Devon and Cornwall Police, sharing services and reducing costs. This should continue to make its services more efficient. The force has improved the management of its finances since 2015 and future investment plans are designed to achieve greater efficiency and service improvement.

Overall summary

Dorset Police has a comprehensive understanding of current demand and local priorities, and the force's evaluation of likely future demand is extensive. The force predicts an increase in reported offences, such as child sexual exploitation, paedophile and online investigation, and missing person reports. These predictions inform the force's assessments of whether it has the capacity and capability to meet this demand, and influence workforce planning and investments in priority areas such as domestic abuse investigation.

The force gauges public expectations through surveys questioning residents, and the results enable the force to clarify what aspects of its service the public are happy with, what concerns they have and how it should provide policing services. Staffing levels are regularly monitored. However some difficulties exist. An incident resolution team (IRT) has been established and the number of officers who specifically investigate domestic abuse has increased. There is an innovative plan to include

¹ HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

responding to the top ten individuals or organisations that generate demand. Calls handled by the control room are prioritised but there is a risk that vulnerable people may not be given priority at times of high demand. The force has set up a dedicated unit to address the issue of cyber-crime and is taking measures to give more support to frontline officers and staff who are experiencing pressure. It is working with local mental health services to meet the needs of vulnerable people more effectively by avoiding the use of custody units as places of safety.

In our 2015 inspection, we noted that Dorset Police did not have clear plans in place to meet the spending cuts required. This situation has now improved because the force is building on its collaboration with Devon and Cornwall Police in a 'strategic alliance'. This is a formal agreement to share certain services and thereby reduce costs, rather than a merger, and the collaborative work is an emerging strength, with effective systems already in place. The alliance is projected to produce savings of up to £15m. Dorset Police has made investments in information and communications technology (ICT), which will bring efficiency benefits, and the two forces have a joint strategy to converge ICT. This is mostly proving effective. However, some mobile technology has not been introduced in an efficient way by Dorset Police and this has reduced the confidence of some of the workforce in future ICT developments. The force's financial position has improved since the 2015 inspection and this will allow it to meet future requirements. It is reliant on realising savings from its strategic alliance. Savings are currently being exceeded. These efficiencies should enable the force to continue to provide improving services. Dorset Police adopts a traditional approach to assessing crime levels, outcomes and victim satisfaction. However, it also examines quality of service. We look forward to learning what effect this will have on the quality of its services and the demands faced by the force's frontline officers and staff.

Recommendations

Dorset Police is a good force. HMIC has not identified any causes of concern and therefore has made no specific recommendations.

Area for improvement

- Within six months, Dorset Police should review how it assesses the impact of change across its workforce in critical business areas that fall outside the scope of its alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police.

How well does the force understand its current and likely future demand?

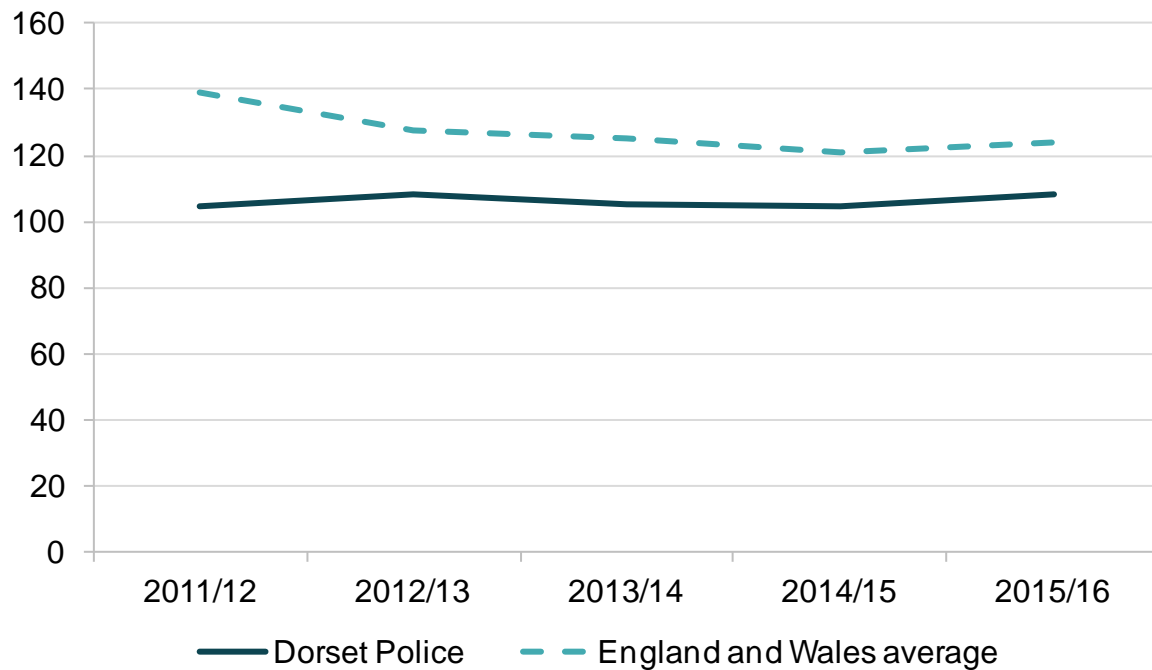
A good understanding of the demand for police services is vital in ensuring that forces have the right resources in the right place to provide the right level of policing now and in the future. This means not just an understanding of reported incidents but also how well a force proactively looks for demand that is less likely to be reported (e.g. incidents relating to modern slavery or child sexual exploitation) so that it can ensure that it protects the most vulnerable victims. Forces also need to understand how much resource to put into work that prevents crime and anti-social behaviour from occurring in the first place. It is important that forces continually review how they operate to ensure that they are not wasting police resources by operating inefficiently or responding to unnecessary demands.

Forces must understand how demand is changing and how they need to change in order to adapt to ensure that they can plan for the future and continue to respond effectively. As well as assessing likely future threats and risks from crime, this also means understanding and assessing the potential impact of wider societal and environmental changes on the demands they will face.

How well does the force understand the current demand for its services?

Police services cover a wide spectrum of activities and go far beyond the most obvious demands for providing a response to 999 calls, protecting victims of crime and pursuing offenders. It is important that forces have a comprehensive understanding across the whole range of different demands they face, including early intervention work with other organisations to prevent crime and proactively seeking out 'hidden' crimes (e.g. domestic abuse, internet crime, fraud, modern slavery and crime in communities who are more reluctant to trust or engage with the police). Police forces also need to understand how efficiently they run their own operations in order to avoid wasted effort and to ensure that they make the best use possible of all available resources.

Figure 1: Volume of 999 calls per 1,000 population received by Dorset Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016

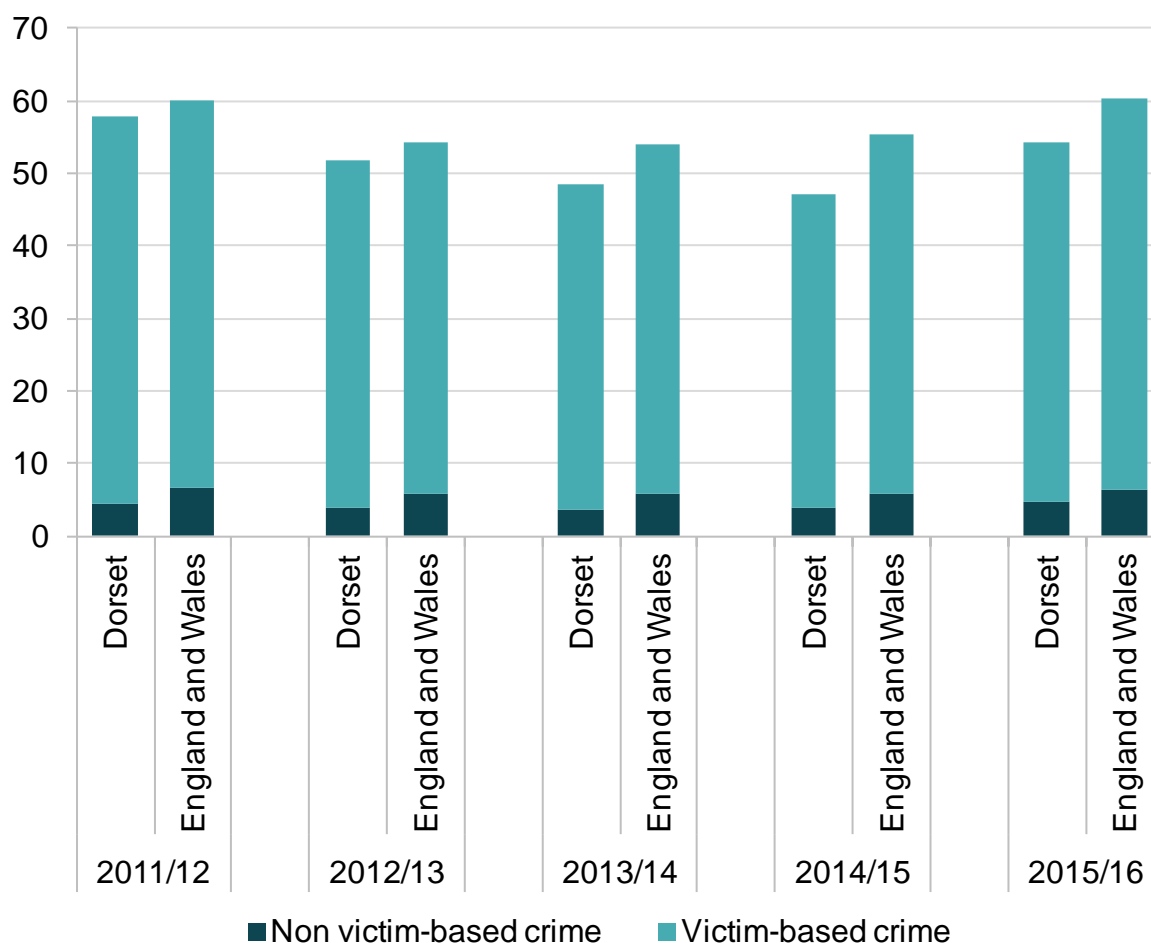


Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

For further information about the data in figure 1 please see annex A

Dorset Police received 108 '999' calls per 1,000 population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 124 calls per 1,000 population. In the 12 months to 31 March 2012, the force received 105 '999' calls per 1,000 population, lower than the England and Wales average of 139 calls per 1,000 population.

Figure 2: Police recorded crimes per 1,000 population in Dorset Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: Home Office Police recorded crime data

For further information about the data in figure 2 please see annex A

With regard to police recorded crime for the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Dorset Police recorded 49.4 victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 53.8 victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. Over the same period, Dorset Police recorded 4.8 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, lower than the England and Wales average of 6.5 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. There has been a decrease in the victim-based crime rate of 8 percent and an increase in the non victim-based crime rate of 10 percent since the 12 months to 31 March 2012.

Dorset Police understands and prioritises the current demand for its service well. It uses a range of information to obtain a comprehensive understanding of different types of demand and public expectations of its service. The force does, however, need to do more to understand hidden demand or demand less likely to be reported.

It conducts in-depth analysis of day-to-day current demand, which is reported to the force's strategic performance board on a quarterly basis. Critical issues affecting levels of demand are identified: for example, rolling 12-month trends in crime and

incidents are complemented by longer-term trends extending over ten years. The analysis has also enabled the force to improve its understanding of the scale and nature of the unnecessary demand it deals with, which should more properly be dealt with by other agencies. For example, of those calls received about non-police matters, the force has assessed that 1.6 percent of individuals or organisations contacting the police were responsible for 14 percent of its overall demand.

Through analysis, the force identifies the top five types of incidents it attends. They are: 'concern for safety'; anti-social behaviour; insecure premises or vehicles; assaults; and domestic incidents. It also analyses the amount of time officers and staff spend dealing with incidents, including the time spent travelling to and from them, which allows it to calculate the amount of resources that are needed. The force uses the Cambridge Crime Harm Index to assist it in further understanding its demand.

The force is also focused on demand that originates from its own internal processes and HMIC found that its analysis of demand on business support functions was similarly comprehensive. Examples of demand the force has examined include freedom of information requests, firearms licensing, complaints, disclosure requirements, custody and demand generated by external oversight bodies. Secondary forms of demand (demand that tends to be generated by other functions) includes multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), child protection plans and case conferences, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) and offender management. These have all been assessed with a view to reducing inefficiency and unnecessary demand. The force predicts likely areas of demand 12 months in advance. Examples include serious sexual offences and domestic abuse. It does this by referring to data over 3, 6, 12 and 18-month periods.

How well does the force understand potential future demand for its services?

Demands for police services are continually evolving. Forces need to anticipate and understand likely future changes so that their plans keep pace with the public's needs and expectations. Potential future demand includes new and emerging types of crime, such as cyber-crime, modern-day slavery and human trafficking. Also, it includes changes to the communities that forces serve, developments in technology and environmental events, such as flooding.

Dorset Police can clearly demonstrate that it has identified likely future sources of demand. A notable example is Dorset Police's analysis of protective demand, also referred to as 'secondary demand' or 'investigative demand'. The force referred to research performed by two other forces and guidance issued by the College of Policing, identifying the time taken to perform mainstream investigation work across a number of different crime types. Analysis revealed the top 20 crime types investigated by volume and the top 20 investigated by time taken.

As a result of this work, the force predicts a 20 percent increase in reported offences to its paedophile and online investigation team (POLIT) by 2017, each taking an average of more than 100 hours to complete; a 20 percent increase in reported offences of child sexual exploitation taking more than 100 hours to complete; a 35 percent increase in crime reporting as a result of safeguarding referrals; a 20 percent increase in investigation demands as a result of the implementation of a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH); and an increase in the number of missing person reports (rising from 800 to 2,000 per year) because of changes to recording practices and improvements in the way incidents involving missing people are handled. This analysis enables the force to assess whether it has the capacity and capability to meet this demand and, in turn, is influencing workforce planning and investments in priority areas, such as domestic abuse investigation.

The force also takes account of changes in public expectations. For instance, the police and crime commissioner's community safety survey (2015/16) is carried out quarterly and asks 12,000 randomly selected Dorset residents aged 16 and over about their experiences. The force also uses its 'Your Dorset, Your Police, Your View' survey to gauge opinions. It has allowed the force to clarify what aspects of its service the public are happy with, what concerns they have and how it should provide policing services. However, in terms of predicting the effects of partner agencies reducing resources, the force's analysis was not as extensive. Overall, HMIC found that Dorset Police's evaluation of likely future demand is good and means that the force is well-prepared to respond to future demands, although it could do more to assess the demand that is likely to be presented by partner agencies reducing their resources and the current level of services they provide.

Summary of findings



Good

Dorset Police has a good understanding of current and likely future demand. It understands and prioritises demands for its services well. It uses a wide range of information to obtain a comprehensive understanding of different types of demand and public expectations of its service. Importantly, this analysis is informing the force's assessment of its capability, which in turn is influencing workforce planning and investments in priority areas such as tackling domestic abuse. Across Dorset, different methods are used to identify changes in public expectations and to gauge opinions. Overall, HMIC found that Dorset Police's evaluation of likely future demand is extensive and means that the force is well-prepared to respond to future demands, but it could do more to assess the extra demand for police services that is likely to be presented as a consequence of partner agencies reducing their resources and the current level of services they provide.

How well does the force use its resources to manage current demand?

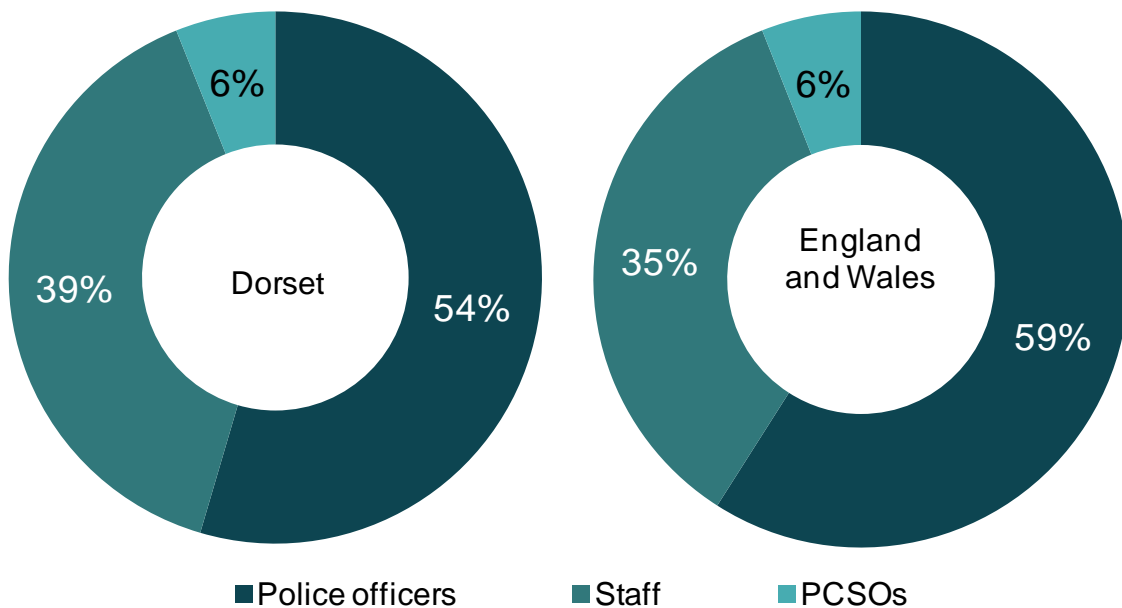
Police forces need to operate in a way that makes the best use of all available resources so that demand is met and public expectations are satisfied. We looked at the extent to which Dorset Police has the right people with the right skills in the right place to protect the public and to fight crime. Police resources have been reducing continually over recent years. It is increasingly important that resources are aligned to priorities to provide value-for-money services that tackle priorities, manage demand and meet financial requirements. This not only involves a force using its own workforce as efficiently as possible; it also involves the police working in new ways with others to ensure the best possible service to the public, and using all available resources to improve efficiency.

For a number of years, police forces have been focused on changing the way they operate and finding ways to save money in order to manage reducing budgets. It is important that these savings are sustainable and forces can demonstrate that they have achieved efficiencies while continuing to have the capacity and capability to meet demand.

How well does the force's current allocation of resources match demand, organisational and financial requirements?

Police forces need to consider many factors when deciding how to allocate their resources, including all elements of demand, local risks and priorities, and their national responsibilities. We looked at how well Dorset Police assesses these factors in making decisions about the level of service to provide and how to use its resources to best effect.

Figure 3: Police officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs) as a proportion of total workforce in Dorset Police compared with England and Wales as at 31 March 2016



Source: Home Office Police workforce statistics

Note: figures may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding of numbers. For further information about the data in figure 3 please see annex A

As at 31 March 2016, police officers made up 54 percent of Dorset Police’s workforce. This was lower than the England and Wales average of 59 percent. The proportion of staff in Dorset Police was 39 percent, higher than the England and Wales average of 35 percent. The proportion of police community support officers in Dorset Police was 6 percent, in line with the England and Wales average of 6 percent.

Figure 4: Planned changes in full-time equivalent workforce from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for Dorset Police compared with England and Wales

	March 2010	Change from 2010 to 2016		March 2016	Change from 2016 to 2020		March 2020
		Force	England and Wales		Force	England and Wales	
Officers	1,486	-18%	-14%	1,223	-2%	-2%	1,200
Staff	1,077	-18%	-21%	886	5%	-5%	928
PCSOs	164	-16%	-35%	137	13%	-6%	155
Workforce total	2,727	-18%	-18%	2,246	2%	-3%	2,283

Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection For further information about the data in figure 4 please see annex A

Managing demands for police services

HMIC considers that the force is well placed to align resources to the current demand it faces. The force uses detailed analysis to ensure that it allocates its budget in an efficient way. In doing so, it uses a model called the ‘force business cycle’. The force uses zero-based budgeting and takes account of threat, harm and risk when allocating resources. The workforce’s capabilities are also reviewed over the short, medium and longer term, and changes are made. Examples include the monitoring of staffing levels, an increase in resources allocated to domestic abuse investigation and the introduction of a missing persons’ unit.

We also found that the force is introducing different approaches to help manage demand. Its newly established ‘prevention department’ is a promising development that originates from its alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police. This aims to reduce victimisation, through early intervention and the reduction of re-offending.

However, we also found that some frontline officers and staff are experiencing pressures and that there are some tensions within the current approach to prioritisation. The management of demand is subject to robust governance arrangements. The force’s policing the demand board determines how it will manage the demand it faces. Some activity is considered mainstream: for example, establishing an incident resolution team (IRT) or increasing the number of officers who specifically investigate domestic abuse. Some is more innovative, including responding to the top ten Individuals or organisations that generate demand.

HMIC found that structured plans are in place to resource demand. However, difficulties exist. We noted that calls handled by the control room are prioritised using a THRIVE model. Those that are assessed as not needing an immediate response are allocated by duty supervisors to their teams. Officers and staff we spoke to claimed that frontline resources were often insufficient to handle the volume of tasks involved. This presents the risk that crimes involving vulnerable people may be given insufficient priority at times of high demand. It would be prudent for the force to review its allocation process to confirm that capacity exists among frontline supervisors to allow crimes and incidents to be assessed and allocated in a timely way.

The force effectively uses its understanding of demands to set service levels. It accurately identifies short-, medium- and longer-term pressures to workforce capabilities. We found clear, direct lines of accountability between the force's vision of policing for 2020 (which is informed by its strategic assessment), its capability to meet current demand, its analysis of exponential growth in demand in areas felt likely to bring pressure on the force, and its processes supporting workforce planning. An example of this in practice is that the force recently established an IRT, based on projections of workloads founded on a year's worth of data. Dorset Police determines the types of calls for service that can be dealt with by the IRT, allowing more crimes and incidents to be handled without the need to deploy officers and staff in each instance. Staffing levels are based on those findings. Planning also involves comparing the proposal with eight forces that have adopted similar units. It means that the force's IRT is affordable and capable of absorbing demand.

The analysis of demand is performed in depth and reported to the force's strategic performance board on a quarterly basis. Performance packs prepared by the force reveal that it adopts a traditional approach to assessing crime levels, outcomes and victim satisfaction. However, the force told us that it also examines themes relating to quality of service. HMIC's view is that Dorset Police is migrating from a traditional, statistically driven approach to performance to one that increasingly looks at qualitative outcomes. We look forward to learning what effect the IRT will have on service quality and the demands faced by the force's frontline officers and staff.

Increasing efficiency

The force demonstrates that in setting service levels it considers not only costs but also the value services bring to victims and communities. We noted that the force's initial assessments indicated that potential savings were likely to be significant. However, Dorset Police takes what it asserts to be a more realistic approach by seeking 10 percent cash reduction proposals from departments.

Dorset Police is collaborating with Devon and Cornwall Police in what is known as a 'strategic alliance'. It is not a merger of the two forces: it is a formal agreement to share certain services to increase resilience and reduce costs. The convergence of records management systems is a longer-term consideration for both forces,

because at the time of the inspection they had different systems. The two alliance forces are now looking at the next generation of crime systems as they continue to collaborate. HMIC considers that this is a pragmatic approach.

How well does the force improve the productivity of its workforce?

Finding ways to make police officers and staff more efficient when they are out in their communities and reducing time spent doing back office functions is essential to ensuring that police officers remain visible, on the beat and engaged in activities to reduce and fight crime. Police forces spend around 80 percent of their budget on staffing, so it is vital that the workforce is as productive as possible. This means forces need to ensure that all their staff have the skills and capabilities to provide the required level of service. We assessed how well Dorset Police understands the skills its staff need, both now and in the future; where there are gaps in either capacity or capability, we looked at whether the steps it is taking are appropriate to ensure that its staff work as efficiently and effectively as possible. We looked in particular at whether the workforce has the right level of digital skills, both to make the most of current ICT systems and to investigate crime digitally.

Understanding current workforce capabilities and gaps

The force accurately identifies short-, medium- and longer-term pressures on workforce capabilities. It has performed a 'capability assessment' that takes into account staffing levels and current capabilities across the organisation. Priorities include investments in areas such as the protection of vulnerable adults, the formation of the IRT, the creation of a missing persons unit, and an increase in research capability relating to child abuse. These steps should ensure that the public protection unit (PPU) is more closely linked to mainstream policing through the co-ordinated targeting of offenders.

A clear theme from interviews during this inspection was the pressure frontline officers and staff said that they are experiencing. This included the reflection that the extent of change they encounter is having a negative effect on morale. The adoption of the force's records management system appears to be a particularly sensitive area. The force has recognised this and, although it is taking positive steps to support users of the system – for example, by increased investments in training and online support – HMIC considers that it could do more to ensure that they are fully trained, capable and aware of its benefits. The force has also identified the need to address the issue of cyber-crime and, as a consequence, has set up a dedicated unit with suitably trained investigators and additional guidance from the University of Portsmouth if needed.

Tackling workforce gaps

The force's future workforce plan is aligned to its current and likely future demand. The force has plans to address these priority areas. It recognises the issues presented by an overall reduction in resources and its effects on officers and staff working in remote locations. As a consequence, the force has moved to the use of hubs for briefing, supervision and welfare purposes. While the force has identified workforce gaps, the rationalisation and restructuring of the force has led to new pressures that some officers and staff said it has not addressed. HMIC acknowledges that the chief constable has personally met with every member of staff and officer, but the force would benefit if middle and senior managers engaged more directly with the workforce to consider and potentially alleviate workforce concerns.

In response to the force's commitment to ensure that staff have the capability to conduct new roles, training requirements are now subject to a stringent authorisation process, with training provision reflecting the force's strategic assessment. As the analysis of workforce and skills gaps flows from the same assessment, the force's training plans should, in theory, also align.

How well does the force work with others to improve how it manages demand for its services?

We assessed how well Dorset Police has explored all opportunities to work in collaboration with others to increase efficiency and provide better, more resilient services. This can include work with other police forces, local public sector organisations, the private sector and the voluntary sector. We looked at whether the force has a clear rationale for the decisions it has taken about how it works with others, and whether it has a good understanding of how successful its joint working has been in helping it to better meet demand for its services.

The force's collaboration with Devon and Cornwall Police is an emerging strength that will support it in sustaining efficient and effective policing services, while responding to financial challenges. A clear plan is in place that is being followed, reviewed and refined.

Dorset Police is supplementing its alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police through an agreement with Wiltshire Police to host finance and payroll services. Dorset Police is also a participant in the south-west region of forces. These forces collaborate across a number of different areas of police business including serious and organised crime and operational support (including forensic case management and back office functions).

The alliance is intended to increase resilience and reduce costs, but has ambitions to transform the way police services are provided in the region. Progress has been made in merging functions. Where reference is made to police or support functions that are now undertaken jointly by both forces, they will be referred to as 'alliance

forces'. There is a joint human resources function. It has served the alliance forces well in terms of planning staffing levels for shared functions: for example, armed policing and the investigation of major crime. This sharing of specialist resources means that both forces have access to greater specialist capacity than each could have provided individually. The alliance forces are well placed to address high-level threats, as well as being able to contribute to the national strategic policing requirement.

Collaboration benefits

The force is committed to extending its collaboration with Devon and Cornwall Police. There are effective systems in place to implement and review business cases aimed at sharing more services under the alliance arrangements. The commitment of both forces is to 'sustain local policing and other frontline services'. The sharing of more specialist and support services is deemed the best way of preserving the front line. Other incentives for increasing the number of services provided through collaboration include a strong financial imperative, resilience, interoperability and the ability to re-invest to tackle emerging threats effectively. Currently, there are 32 business areas for shared services under consideration. Of these, 22 business cases have been approved and 9 have been implemented. The overall programme has a clear plan that is being followed, reviewed and refined.

The alliance is projected to achieve savings of up to £15m (greater than the figure of £12m–£13m previously predicted).

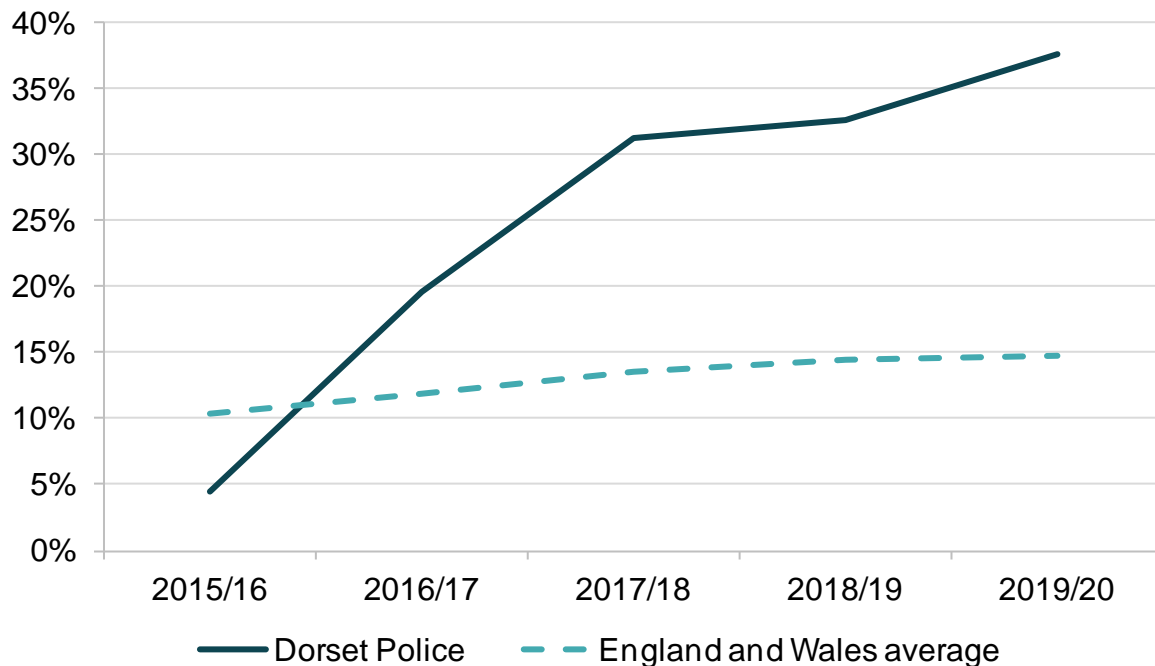
The procedure to realise benefits from functions entering the alliance is robust. We explored the route that business cases take, the role of portfolio leads and the anticipated savings. The force's collaboration with Devon and Cornwall Police is an emerging strength that will support it in sustaining efficient and effective policing services while responding to financial challenges.

We found some evidence of the force working with partner agencies to manage demand more efficiently. A positive example is the reduction of people detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act. This is as a consequence of the force working with local mental health services to manage demand. A mental health triage system operates in the force control room to assist in managing the response to incidents where there are mental health concerns. In Bournemouth, mental health practitioners are based alongside custody staff. This helps the force ensure that it meets the needs of vulnerable people more effectively by avoiding the unnecessary and unwarranted use of custody units as places of safety.

The force is in the process of implementing a countywide multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), bringing together three separate local authorities and health partners into a single unit to identify and address issues that are traditionally less likely to be reported. The force also physically hosts the multi-agency civil contingency unit and the chief constable is the chair of the local resilience forum.

We noted the force’s work with other agencies to manage demand better in responding to incidents involving mental health concerns, and there was some evidence of other aspects of partnership work and engagement. However, HMIC believes the force could do more in ensuring that demand is met by the most appropriate agency.

Figure 5: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure in Dorset Police, compared with England and Wales, on collaboration with other forces in the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020

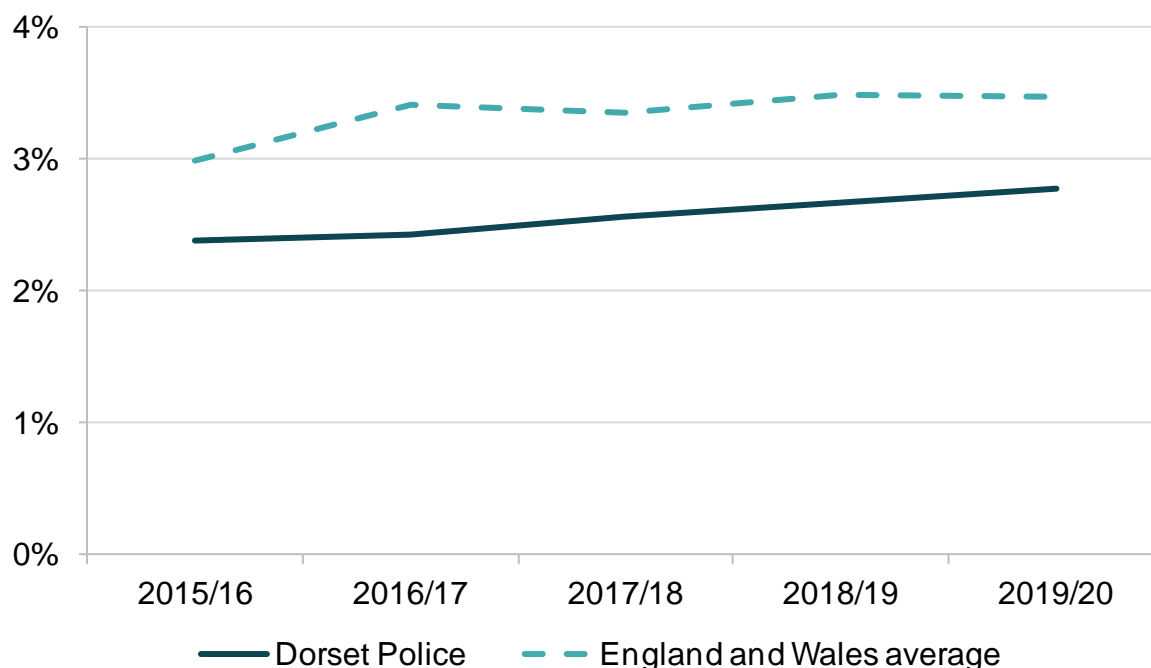


Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

Note: some forces could not provide data for all years. These forces have been excluded from the England and Wales average in those years only. West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police stated that all of their net revenue expenditure is spent in collaboration. To avoid distorting the distribution of forces, these have been removed from the England and Wales average for this figure. For further information about the data in figure 5 please see annex A

Dorset Police has forecast that it will spend £23.3m in 2016/17 on collaboration with other police forces. This is 19.6 percent of its net revenue expenditure (NRE), which is higher than the England and Wales average of 11.9 percent. For 2019/20, the force has forecast that it will spend £45.7m (37.7 percent of NRE) on collaboration with other police forces. This is higher than the England and Wales average of 14.8 percent.

Figure 6: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure in Dorset Police, compared with England and Wales, on collaboration with non-police organisations in the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020



Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

Note: some forces could not provide data for all years. These forces have been excluded from the England and Wales average in those years only. For further information about the data in figure 6 please see annex A

Dorset Police has forecast that it will spend £2.9m in 2016/17 on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is 2.4 percent of its net revenue expenditure (NRE), which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 3.4 percent. For 2019/20, the force has forecast that it will spend £3.4m (2.8 percent of NRE) on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 3.5 percent.

How well does the force understand how any changes made to improve efficiency have affected its ability to manage demand?

As resources reduce and demands on police services become ever more complex, it is increasingly important that forces understand fully the benefits that are realised from any investment and the impact of any new ways of working. This understanding enables them to learn from what works and to take swift action to mitigate any negative results.

Dorset Police has set up a 'smarter systems programme', allowing it to review the effects of new ICT systems. It conducts reviews during both the development and implementation phases of projects. It has made a considerable investment in its records management system and is confident that it will bring efficiencies through

improved information management processes. The force is reacting to critical feedback from users by helping them become more conversant with the records management system, including the introduction of a new interface and the provision of a team of 'super users'.

The force reviews the impact of change programmes on service provision, but reviews appear mainly limited to areas falling within the scope of its alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police. For example, the force expects to complete a contract for smartphones before the end of 2016 and has purchased 300 tablet devices that will allow remote access to the records management system. These will enable crimes to be recorded directly onto the system, allowing frontline officers to spend more time on patrol rather than having to return to police stations to complete reports. During the inspection, the force was working to address issues arising from implementation and it could not yet quantify the anticipated benefits to be realised by its investment. The force will wish to review how it assesses the impact of change across its workforce in business areas that fall outside the scope of the alliance.

Summary of findings



Good

Dorset Police prioritises resources to meet demands for service well and it has structured plans in place. However, pressures are being experienced in some areas by frontline officers and staff. The force's future workforce plan is aligned to its current and likely future demand, and it has a real opportunity to develop its operating model to reflect priorities that include risk to vulnerable people. In setting service levels, the force considers the value services may bring to victims and communities.

We found evidence of the force working with partner agencies to manage demand more efficiently. A positive example is the reduction of people detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act. The force has made investments in ICT and it is reacting to feedback by helping users become more conversant with its records management system. The force's performance management system is also changing so that it increasingly looks at qualitative outcomes. Its collaboration with Devon and Cornwall Police is an emerging strength. However, Dorset Police may wish to review how consistently it assesses the impact of change across its workforce in business areas that fall outside the alliance's scope.

Area for improvement

- Within six months, Dorset Police should review how it assesses the impact of change across its workforce in critical business areas that fall outside the scope of its alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police.

How well is the force planning for demand in the future?

HMIC examined how well forces are using their understanding of current and future demand on their services to develop more efficient ways of operating that balance ambition, realism, innovation and risk. Our assessment examined the extent to which Dorset Police's plans are credible and achievable while at the same time are creative and ambitious. This included how far it is aiming to improve efficiency through its workforce plans, collaboration plans, financial plans, ICT plans and approaches to risk.

How well does the force identify and prioritise areas to invest in for the future?

It is important that forces have good plans in place which take account of future demands for their services as well as the likely future funding available to them. They need to invest wisely for the future in order to ensure that they have the right capabilities to meet future demand. HMIC examined the force's financial plans and workforce plans to assess how far it is set to meet future changes in demand and local priorities. We looked in particular at how well Dorset Police has considered its future ICT capabilities as well as any wider changes to the communities it serves.

Matching resources to demand, organisational priorities and financial requirements

Dorset Police has published its strategic assessment (2016–26) that supports its vision for policing. This promotes neighbourhood policing teams that are aligned to other local policing services, effective digital access for the public, the standardisation and aggregation of specialist policing services, a more representative workforce with the right skills and powers, and the integration of business support functions. Environmental scanning has led to over 30 measures being planned. They range from the redesign of the estates strategy to ensure that different police units work together, integration with the fire service and a whole-system performance management framework that is more representative of outcomes. A ten-year scan gives the force a real opportunity to develop its operating model.

The force's medium- and long-term financial plans support its future vision of policing. Its medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) was completed in September 2015 and reviewed after the comprehensive spending review (CSR) announcement in November 2015. The force's expected deficit in 2019/20 is expected to be approximately £1m. We found that changes to workforce numbers are balanced against prudent assumptions about future funding.

In supporting its considerations of future workforce planning, the force has conducted a ten-year assessment to try to determine what the future population will look like. For example, it predicts that the percentage of people aged 65 and over will rise from 27 percent to around 40 percent. The force understands that its policing model will have to reflect future changes in demography.

The force uses analysis to assess and predict likely future demand, and workforce planning and investments in priority areas. These systems are robust and place the force in a good position to respond in a timely way to issues such as recruitment, and training and development needs, in the medium and long term. The fact that a number of services will be provided in collaboration with other forces means that arrangements for planning for future demand will also be a collaborative process.

Investing in ICT

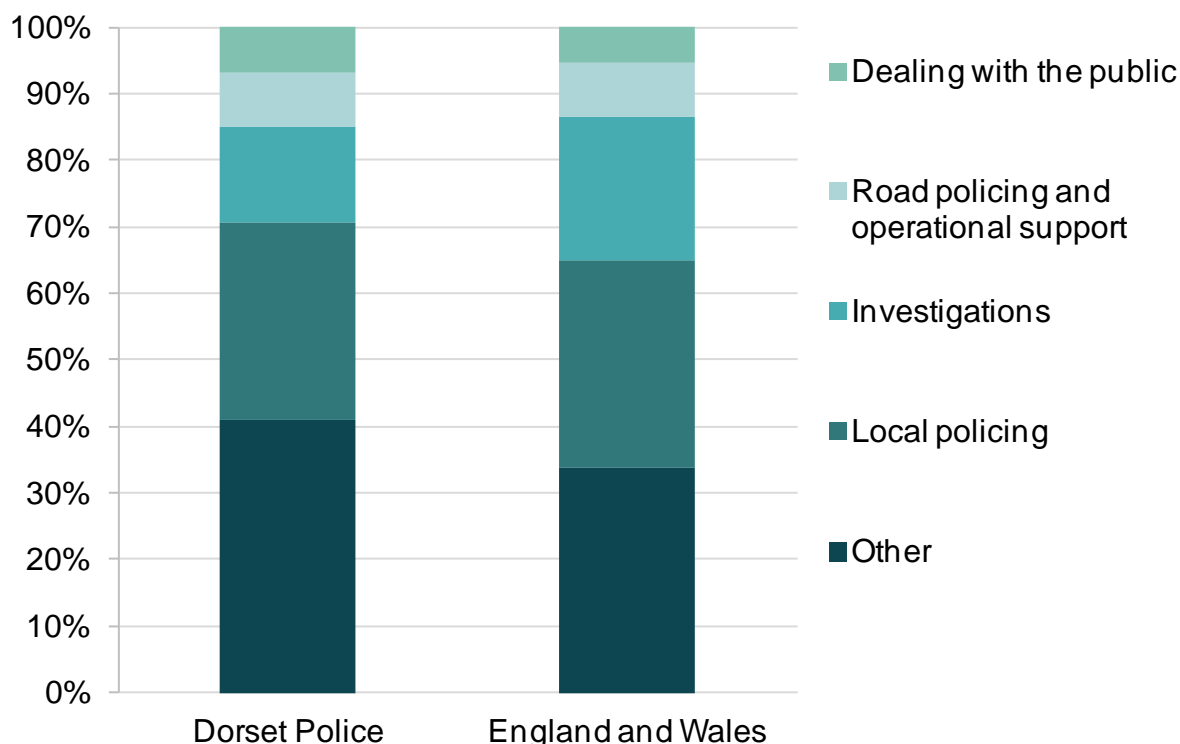
The force has actively considered developments in ICT or digital working in its multi-year plans. Much of this will occur in collaboration with Devon and Cornwall Police. It aims to balance the legacy of its existing systems with the advantage to be gained by achieving a convergence of ICT with its alliance partner.

We were reassured of the resilience of the governance arrangements in place for alliance projects. An assistant chief constable leads this work and the implementation process includes an assessment of each element for each force before being signed-off by the governance board. As more systems fall within the scope of the alliance arrangements, they will be subject to this effective programme management.

How well does the force plan its investments?

A force's plans for investment and savings need to be credible, realistic and informed by a full understanding of the future challenges (both financial and operational) that it is likely to face. HMIC assessed the extent to which Dorset Police's future plans are prudent, robust and based on sound assumptions about future demands and costs, while at the same time being ambitious enough to meet public expectations, including identifying new ways of working and providing services in the future.

Figure 7: Estimated percentage of gross revenue expenditure allocated across different policing functions in Dorset Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

For further information about the data in figure 7 please see annex A

For the period to 2019/20, unallocated reserves are scheduled to remain at around 4 percent of gross revenue expenditure. Allocated reserves, together with finance in the capital programme, are budgeted to address ICT, estate and digitalised policing initiatives. This approach has been validated by external independent auditors. The force has responded to HMIC’s previous comments to justify and validate its position on reserves and is now investing to save in line with its priorities and anticipated future challenges. The force has sought validation from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC’s) treasurers, the Home Office, the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) and regional checks. It assumes a 7 percent year-on-year reduction in reserves (assuming a precept rise of 2 percent). HMIC considers that its plans are realistic and will enable it to meet future demand.

Planning for the future

The force’s financial and organisational plans are practical and credible. Its financial position (based on information supplied by the force) indicates that between 2015/16 and 2019/20, the force’s net revenue expenditure will vary from £116.7m (2015/16 outturn) to £121.3m (2019/20 forecast). The current funding formula means that it receives a higher proportion of precept to central grant funding, with the precept due to rise by around 2 percent each year to 2019/20. Other government grants and income amount to an additional £12m in revenue per year.

In line with other forces, pressures include inflation and the pay settlement. The force has projected pay and non-pay savings over the spending review period to establish a balanced forecast budget for each year. The savings in pay are projected to increase from £4.2m in 16/17 to £5.2m in 19/20. Non-pay savings are projected to amount to £2m per year over the same period. The majority of the planned pay savings are expected to be derived from the strategic alliance resulting in reduced workforce numbers. The force is anticipating achieving more savings in its medium term financial strategy than it needs to balance its budget. This will enable investment in priority areas. Over the next four years, the proportion of net revenue budget allocated to collaboration with other police forces is anticipated to rise from 20 percent to 38 percent between 2016/17 and 2019/20. The majority of pay savings are likely to come from police staff savings, associated with a reduction in budgeted staff posts.

Dorset Police has clear plans, based on sound analysis, that will allow it to determine changes to how it operates and provides services in the future. Its plans centre on its developing strategic alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police, and its position as part of the south-west region of forces. It demonstrates an understanding of how likely future environmental changes will affect demand and how those changes will influence its target operating model.

We found that its assessment of future workforce capabilities was soundly based. Its requirements are reflected in its strategic assessment and there is a clear link between its assessment, priorities and training plans. The force's financial position allows it to meet future expectations of its service.

To what extent does the force fund its investments sustainably?

Police forces have made significant financial savings over recent years which have enabled them to reduce their costs and protect frontline policing. They continue to face financial challenges and it is vital to their ability to sustain effective policing that they continue to seek improved efficiencies and drive down costs so that they can not only balance their budgets but also invest in improving their capability in the future. Forces need to consider different ways of transforming the way they work in order to secure effective policing in the longer term. This may include plans to establish different joint working arrangements with other organisations or investing in ICT to improve operational efficiency.

Saving to invest for the future

Dorset Police is one of the forces experiencing a low central grant but high council tax contributions. It is reliant on realising its strategic alliance savings and is currently exceeding its predictions. The overall target is £12m, but this may increase to £15m.

We noted that it is using the extra funding for investments in high-risk areas, such as public protection units, child sexual exploitation and cyber-crime. This is based on clear objectives including maintaining resilience, providing sufficient resources and tackling new and emerging threats. The force's reserves amount to approximately £10.6m (2015/16 projected outturn) and will provide sufficient resilience for the next four years. The force appears determined to continue to drive efficiencies following the CSR announcement and will use the extra money available to ensure that the changes it makes are transformational.

Working together to improve future efficiency

Although HMIC found evidence of Dorset Police working with other organisations, its principal arrangements are with its strategic alliance partner, Devon and Cornwall Police. The alliance brings with it different workforce structures and lines of accountability. For example, there are merged functions for both forces, including professional standards and human resources departments.

Dorset Police and Devon and Cornwall Police have a joint strategy to converge ICT. For example, the forces use a joint ICT system for pay and expenses. HMIC was told that both forces have made recent investments in ICT, in anticipation of further merged systems and indicating that they are both taking a longer-term view of their arrangement. Other opportunities to collaborate on digital systems are being taken: for example, the introduction of body-worn video cameras is starting to take place.

Despite these promising developments, HMIC was told that some aspects of Dorset Police's ICT had been introduced in an inefficient way. We were given examples of laptops that were unable to connect reliably to mobile networks. As a result, they are not being used and the situation is reducing the confidence of some of the workforce in future ICT developments.

Summary of findings



Good

Dorset Police has clear plans, based on sound analysis, allowing it to determine changes to how it operates and provides services in the future. It demonstrates an understanding of how likely future environmental changes will affect demand and how those changes will influence its target operating model. HMIC found evidence of the force working with other organisations to improve future efficiency. Its principal arrangements are with its strategic alliance partner, Devon and Cornwall Police. We were reassured by the degree of governance in place for alliance projects.

It has actively considered developments in ICT or digital working in its multi-year plans. The two alliance forces have a joint strategy to converge ICT and it is proving mostly effective. However, mobile technology has not been introduced in an efficient way by Dorset Police and the situation is reducing the confidence of some of the workforce in future ICT developments.

The force has projected the savings it expects to achieve from the alliance on a conservative basis. Dorset Police adheres to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)'s best-practice guidelines for the maintenance of its reserves. The force experiences a low central grant but high council tax contributions. It is reliant on realising its alliance savings and is currently exceeding its predictions.

Next steps

HMIC will assess progress on any recommendations and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We may re-visit those forces where we have identified a serious cause of concern, go back to assess as part of our annual PEEL inspection programme or receive updates through regular conversations with forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy, and also leadership. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across the country and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements need to be made at a national level.

Annex A – About the data

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is set out in more detail in this annex. The source of Force in numbers data is also set out below.

Methodology

Please note the following for the methodology applied to the data.

Comparisons with England and Wales average figures

For some data sets, the report states whether the force's value is 'lower' than, 'higher' than or 'broadly in line with' the England and Wales average. This is calculated by using the difference from the mean average, as a proportion, for all forces. After standardising this distribution, forces that are more than 0.675 standard deviations from the mean average are determined to be above or below the average, with all other forces being broadly in line.

In practice this means that approximately a quarter of forces are lower, a quarter are higher, and the remaining half are in line with the England and Wales average for each measure. For this reason, the distance from the average required to make a force's value above or below the average is different for each measure so may not appear to be consistent.

Statistical significance

When commenting on statistical differences, a significance level of 5 percent is used.

For some forces, numbers described in the text may be identical to the England and Wales average due to decimal place rounding, but the bars in the chart will appear different as they use the full unrounded value.

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator, unless otherwise noted, we use the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2015 population estimates.

Force in numbers

Forecast change in expenditure

These data show estimated gross revenue expenditure (GRE) for the force in 2016/17 and 2019/20, calculated using total GRE pay and total GRE non-pay budgets provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), excluding expenditure on the office of police and crime commissioner.

Forecast savings

These data show 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 (April 2016). Some forces only provided figures for savings that they had formally signed off at that point, while others provided estimates for the whole period. Therefore a force with only a small savings requirement is not necessarily faced with only a small savings challenge for the future.

Workforce figures (based on full-time equivalents) for 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2020

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data are available from the Home Office's published Police workforce England and Wales statistics (available from www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales), or the Home Office police workforce open data tables (available from www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables). Figures may have been updated since the publication. Workforce includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort), but does not include section 39 staff.

Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy. In some instances therefore an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force 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.

Workforce costs per head of population are obtained from calculations in HMIC Value for Money Profiles 2015, which use the ONS mid-2014 population estimates. The England and Wales averages will differ slightly from the Value for Money Profiles because we have included City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police Service.

Figures throughout the report

Figure 1: Volume of 999 calls from the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to 12 months to 31 March 2016

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 441.

Figure 2: Police recorded crime in 12 months to 31 March 2015 to 12 months to 31 March 2016

These data are obtained from Home Office Police recorded crime and outcomes data tables (available from www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables). Total police recorded crime includes all crime (excluding fraud

offences) recorded by police forces in England and Wales. Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime include British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMIC inspection. Therefore England and Wales averages in this report will differ slightly from those published by the Home Office.

Figure 3: Percentage of officers, staff and PCSOs in force workforce on 31 March 2016 compared to England and Wales

Data as at 31 March 2016 are obtained from the Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' full-time equivalents (FTE). The percentages used in figure 3 are derived from the total FTEs within forces, and therefore may differ slightly from the exact figures quoted within the report.

Figure 4: Planned changes in workforce FTE from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for the force compared to England and Wales

The figures in figure 4 are rounded to the nearest whole person, full-time equivalents (FTEs), and therefore may differ slightly from the exact figures quoted within the report. Police staff includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort).

Data as at 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2016 are obtained from Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' FTE. These data include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence, and those seconded to forces. Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy, but may not include a projection for absences. In some instances therefore an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force 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 reflect the workforce that is available to forces. Involvement in strategic alliances and/or regional organised crime units 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 did not have confirmed plans for workforce projections. It is important to note that figures provided are in many instances unconfirmed estimates provided to assist HMIC in our inspection programme and should not be seen as a concrete plan for the future workforce landscape of policing.

Figure 5: Projected net revenue expenditure on collaboration with other police forces for the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection.

These data cover the level of expenditure by forces on collaboration-related activity. Collaboration can include a variety of different types of activity, some of which may not incur specific expenditure, but may still generate benefits such as savings or improved services the public. Therefore these data should be seen as only one aspect of potential collaboration activity.

West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police have a highly-developed integrated relationship and have stated that all of their net revenue expenditure is through collaboration. To avoid distorting the distribution of forces around the average, West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police have been removed from the England and Wales average for this figure.

Figure 6: Projected net revenue expenditure on collaboration with non-police organisations for the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection. As suggested above, these data should be seen as only one aspect of potential collaboration activity.

Figure 7: The percentage of gross revenue expenditure allocated to different policing functions in the 12 months to March 2016

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection. These data define policing functions using the Policing Objective Analysis categories which we have grouped. The grouping is illustrated in the table below.

Figure 7 policing functions	POA categories
Local policing	Local policing
Investigations	Specialist Investigations Investigative Support Public Protection
Road policing and operational support	Roads Policing Operations Support
Dealing with the public	Dealing with the Public
Other	Intelligence Criminal Justice Arrangements Support Functions National policing Office of PCC Central Costs