



Promoting improvements  
in policing to make  
everyone safer

# PEEL: Police efficiency 2016

An inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary



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## 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.

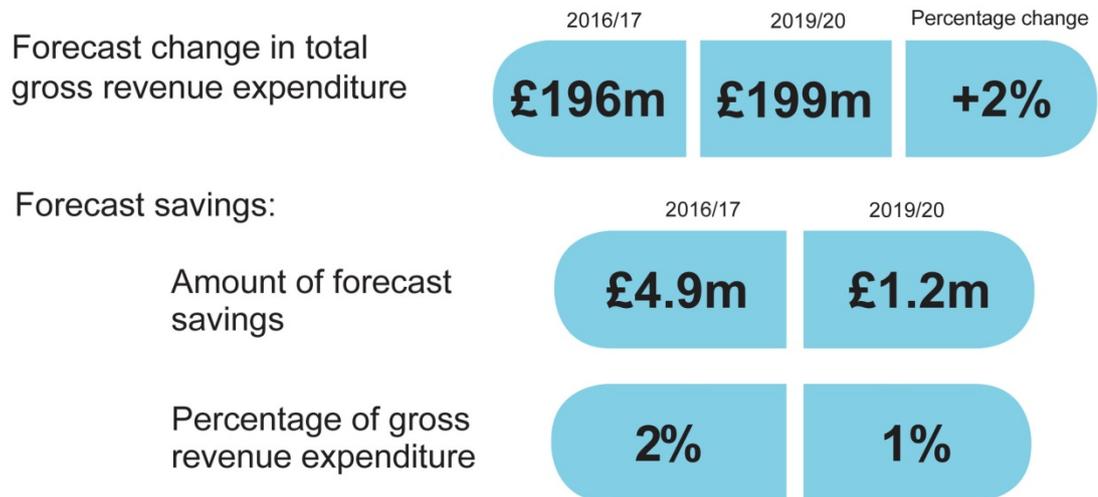
HMIC's efficiency inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/)).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

Reports on Hertfordshire Constabulary's legitimacy and leadership inspections will be available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016](http://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

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**110**

England and Wales force average

**124**



## Recorded crime

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

2014/15

**49**

2015/16

**55**

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

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**+13%**

England and Wales force average

**+9%**



## Victim satisfaction

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

Hertfordshire Constabulary

**89%**

England and Wales force average

**84%**

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 judgment<sup>1</sup>



**Good**

Hertfordshire Constabulary has been assessed as good in respect of the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. The force needs to do more to fully understand both current and likely future demand for its services. It is good at using its resources to meet demand, and works well with other forces and organisations to improve efficiency and save money. The force is in a strong financial position to plan for the future. In last year's efficiency inspection, Hertfordshire Constabulary was judged to be good.

### Overall summary

As in HMIC's 2015 inspection, this year Hertfordshire Constabulary has been assessed as good at working efficiently to keep people safe and reduce crime. However, it requires improvement in its understanding of all the sources of current demand and of likely future demand for its services. It recognises that this understanding requires improvement and that more work is needed to enable it to reduce demand, increase productivity and effectively plan for the future. The force has explored good practice nationally and worked with the College of Policing to improve its approach. It is at an early stage in developing its understanding of likely future demand. In a strategic alliance with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police, the tri-force 'futures team' has undertaken research to explore options for effective policing in the future.

The force uses its resources to respond to clear priorities; for example, it recognised growth in demand for protecting vulnerable people and has invested extra resources for domestic abuse and sexual offence investigations. However, it makes higher than average use of overtime and significant numbers of police officers are unable to use all their annual leave, suggesting that it is not always accurately matching its resources to the needs of the force. The force is seeking to increase workforce productivity using both external expertise and introducing new software to carry out demand assessment. It is also carefully monitoring the skills and composition of its

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<sup>1</sup> HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

workforce and has redistributed staff to better match demand following the reduction of custody centres.

The force has developed strong collaborative working arrangements, through the strategic alliance with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police. The forces in this strategic alliance have an ambitious and innovative plan to work collaboratively in all policing functions, except local policing, by 2017. Further partnership working is planned with a total of seven forces, and Hertfordshire is also developing strategic partnerships with other emergency services and local government organisations to share resources and manage future demand together. While Hertfordshire Constabulary can demonstrate how collaboration and joint working is improving outcomes for the public, reducing costs and building resilience, it does not yet have a comprehensive understanding of costed outcomes.

The force is in a strong financial position to plan well for future demand, although the lack of a comprehensive understanding of future demand and workforce capabilities limits its ability to plan for the future. It has a track record of careful financial management and achieving savings targets. The force has large financial reserves, some of which will be used in the next four years to support the revenue budget and ease immediate financial pressures. It will continue to meet savings requirements by increasing efficiency through collaboration and agile working, while also making a broad range of investments, improving ICT capabilities and increasing the size of teams that protect vulnerable people and assist victims of crime.

## **Recommendations**

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

### **Areas for improvement**

- Hertfordshire Constabulary should develop its understanding of current and likely future demand, ensuring that it has analysed appropriate information and intelligence from wider sources.
- Hertfordshire Constabulary should undertake appropriate activities to understand fully its workforce's capabilities, in order to identify any gaps and put plans in place to address them. This will enable the force to be confident in its ability to meet current and likely future demand efficiently. To achieve a consistent strategic alliance approach to all HR, workforce planning and leadership development, this work should be completed as part of the strategic alliance partnership work.

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

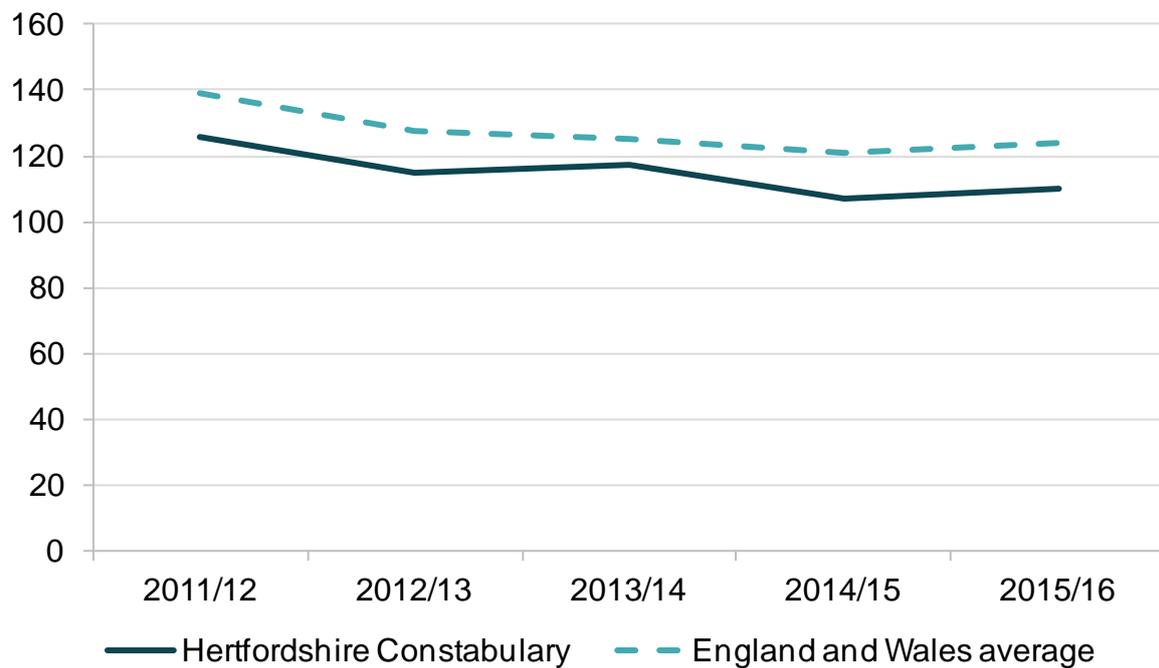
A good understanding of the demand for police services is vital in ensuring that forces have the right resources in the right place to provide the right level of policing now and in the future. This means not just an understanding of reported incidents but also how well a force proactively looks for 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.

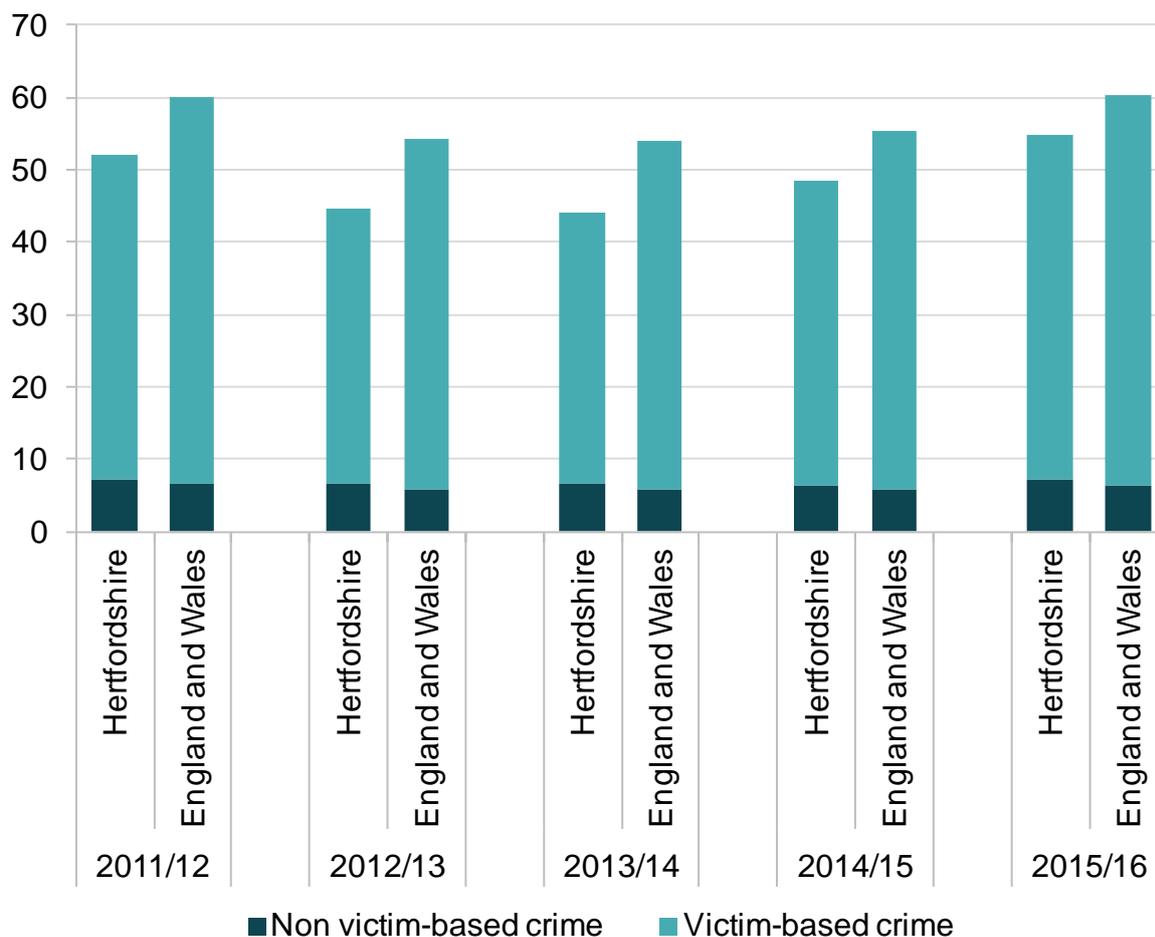
**Figure 1: Volume of 999 calls per 1,000 population received by Hertfordshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016**



**Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement**  
**For further information about the data in figure 1, please see annex A**

Hertfordshire Constabulary received 110 '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 constabulary received 126 '999' calls per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 139 calls per 1,000 population.

**Figure 2: Police recorded crimes per 1,000 population in Hertfordshire Constabulary 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, Hertfordshire Constabulary recorded 47.6 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, Hertfordshire Constabulary recorded 7.2 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 6.5 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. There has been an increase in the victim-based crime rate of 6 percent and a decrease in the non victim-based crime rate of 3 percent since the 12 months to 31 March 2012.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is at the early stages of developing a comprehensive understanding of the totality of the demand for its services; it does recognise that more work is needed to enable it to reduce demand and increase productivity.

The force has been exploring good practice nationally in understanding demand with visits to Lancashire Constabulary, the Metropolitan Police and the West Midlands Police. The force has joined the College of Policing understanding demand project reference group and attends national workshops exploring demand.

There has been practical activity to understand better the nature and composition of the demand faced by the force through the analysis of calls for service received by call-handling centres, in a review entitled 'Dark Matter'. All 3,894 calls received during two separate periods of seven days were categorised to identify the volume, and causes of calls, particularly those that were not about police business or were avoidable, such as internal callers seeking contact details for colleagues as opposed to searching the force directory themselves. The force judged that 8 percent of all calls were 'non-police matters' and 45 percent were neither incident nor crime related. Consequently, the force is introducing a number of schemes to manage that demand better by making information more easily accessible via the website, such as:

- piloting Webchat from June 2016 – this is a simple real-time method to communicate with call-handlers, similar to instant messaging;
- enabling a 'track my crime' option, allowing victims to monitor activity and contact investigating officers;
- better management of the website content: creating '3-click' access to services, adding links to the correct authority or service provider for non-police services, improved mobile-friendly website design; and
- a force-wide web-based staff directory, accessible by the public, enabling direct contact without a switchboard.

The force commissioned its Herts Demand Project in May 2015. Activity since that date has been mainly research and strategy development work, and the force does not appear to be significantly further forward in its detailed understanding of the various sources of both current and future demand across Hertfordshire.

A demand and productivity strategy was presented to chief officers in August 2015 followed by a 'resource/demand' review paper in September 2015. Ongoing activity is coordinated under the force's demand strategy, produced in February 2016, and has the overall aim: "to maximize the use of police resources by reducing demand and increasing productivity to efficiently and effectively deliver the PCC's Police and Crime Plan".

The strategy sets six objectives, including to "establish a demand baseline for Hertfordshire Constabulary" and three goals including to "develop a new operating model that creates efficiencies as well as maintains a good service to the public". These nine outcomes are far reaching, spanning the measurement of current

demand across the force, identification of how the force can improve business processes, and work with partner organisations.

Demand has been segmented into five types: public demand; protective demand; internal demand; failure demand; and non-statutory demand. Under each type of demand, potential causes are listed and strategies outlined to mitigate their impact. However, action plans have not yet been developed.

The force does not fully understand the detail and composition of the demand that it faces. The broad perspective taken by the force to look across all areas of business and development of plans shows a desire to understand demand fully, but there is little detail about how tasks will be prioritised and what benefits will be realised. A working group has been set up to take this forward, reporting via a chief officer to the organisational development board. The force is also considering whether to bring in further external expertise and will be introducing new software to help its local change team measure and predict demand.

## **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.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has only a limited understanding of future demand. Its work so far to assess future demand is based upon changes in local demographics, along with crime, incident and stop and search data. However, there is not a comprehensive understanding of the combined impact of these elements at the moment. It does recognise it needs to improve its understanding of future demand and is making progress.

Hertfordshire Constabulary, as part of its strategic alliance with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, is seeking to understand what policing of the three counties will look like by 2020. The forces are taking an innovative approach to determining how to adapt to the future environment, with reference to three key questions: What sort of organisation would the public expect us to be by 2020? Where do the future threat, harm and risk lie? Where are the opportunities to improve the service and remove barriers?

Since March 2015, the alliance futures team (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire) has been conducting a project to support this work. The first research phase explored seven issues for the future: the political landscape; the economic

landscape; the technological environment; legitimacy; justice; the environment; and keeping people safe. The project then assessed what this could mean for service delivery, resourcing mix and performance outcomes and frameworks over the next five years. The second phase of the project identified the strategic and tactical options for chief officers to consider and offered a menu of options that could be selected collectively or individually. This work has led to the development of a model in which joint working with blue-light services and local authorities within existing county boundaries is highly likely to increase.<sup>2</sup>

Hertfordshire Constabulary already works in partnership with many public sector organisations, although there is little diagnostic work underway by the force to understand fully and alleviate the impact on police services from possible cuts in partner organisations services. It has recognised a vulnerability for frontline services from district councils' reduced contribution towards police community support officer (PCSO) costs. In the financial year 2015/16, a net investment of £61,000 was made by the force to offset local authority funding for PCSOs that had been withdrawn. Sustaining frontline staff is a priority for the force and, in this case, the costs were alleviated by the higher than anticipated income from council tax collection.

In early 2016, the force identified increased demand when the East of England Ambulance Service stopped conveying patients to hospital when detained under the Mental Health Act 1983. This was in contrast to an existing agreement which was based on the ambulance service being the most appropriate service to provide the correct level of care for the patient. This reintroduced demand for frontline officers to transport patients. It has been raised at the executive level of both organisations and a swift resolution is expected. The force has also stepped in to lead on honour-based violence in Hertfordshire's Community Safety Unit, a multi-agency safeguarding facility, in the absence of resources available within the local health service. The force is committed to closer blue-light working and a superintendent is identifying both operational and demand overlaps with Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The sources for new and emerging demand identified by the force include: a continuing growth in the local resident population, which is of an ageing profile; increasing ethnic diversity, above the current 12.4 percent of the population that are of black, Asian and minority ethnic background; expanding student communities; and a rise in foreign nationals taken into police custody, with force figures indicating this group comprises 20 percent of detainees.

Crimes reported to Hertfordshire Constabulary have risen overall and changed in composition. The Home Office police recorded crime figures are shown in Figure 2. However, force figures show a 12 percent increase in total for crimes reported in the year to April 2016, driven by increases in assault without injury, malicious communications and public order offences. There is no forecasting or research to

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<sup>2</sup> Blue-light services refer to emergency services such as police, fire and ambulance.

understand whether this demand is likely to increase or can be reduced. Increases in reported crimes related to sexual offences, up by 31.9 percent, and domestic abuse, up by 36.4 percent, have been attributed by the force in part to improved recording practices and victim confidence revealing previously hidden or unreported demand.

To meet this emerging demand, the force has taken steps to increase resources in the teams that work with partner agencies to protect, and investigate crimes against, vulnerable people. The teams are known collectively as the safeguarding command. Chief officers at the strategic performance board give regular detailed scrutiny to report trends and investigators' decision making and analyse outcomes, all of which helps to develop a better understanding of the scale of vulnerability, harm and risk presented by these crime types.

Reports of so-called 'honour-based' violence are also subject to this degree of attention. The force is providing funds for a specialist female genital mutilation (FGM) caseworker to assure provision of services for these highly vulnerable victims. The force's Strategic Assessment 2016 outlines the harm, impact and forms this crime can take along, with the distribution of people across Hertfordshire whose country of birth has a high prevalence of FGM. The document recommends targeted development of KINs<sup>3</sup> within these communities and more general work to develop understanding about them. Taken together, this approach enriches the force's appreciation of the future impact and scale of this relatively new but growing area of demand.

Developments to public contact services that followed the "Dark Matter" survey are indicative of the force's appetite for and capability to make changes in line with both technological advances and public expectation.

## Summary of findings



**Requires improvement**

Hertfordshire Constabulary does not yet have a comprehensive understanding of demand; it does recognise that more work is needed to enable it to reduce demand, increase productivity and effectively plan for the future. It fully recognises that it needs to improve in this area and some positive progress is evident, but more work is needed.

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<sup>3</sup> Key individual networks – consisting of particular people within a community who are opinion formers or who have good community networks. KINs are used by police to gauge opinions on issues or disseminate messages.

The force is committed to developing a more sophisticated understanding of all sources of current demand. The force has explored good practice nationally and worked with the College of Policing to improve its approach.

A demand and productivity strategy was presented to chief officers in August 2015 followed by a 'Resource/Demand' review paper produced in September. However, action plans have not yet been developed. The force's high-level approach demonstrates a desire to understand demand fully but there is little detail about how tasks will be prioritised and what benefits will be realised.

The force is at an early stage in developing its understanding of likely future demand. It is in a partnership with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police, and the tri-force 'futures team' has undertaken research to explore a range of options open to the three forces to provide effective policing in the future. This research has led to a proposed model in which future change will be weighted heavily in favour of joint working with blue-light service providers and local authorities within existing county boundaries.

Hertfordshire Constabulary's own work to assess how demand may change in the future is based upon changes in local demographics along with crime, incident and stop-and-search data. However, there is not a comprehensive understanding of the combined impact of these elements at the moment. There has been little impact from reduced resources amongst partner agencies, but diagnostic work is not underway to understand fully or alleviate possible future reductions across all partnerships

The force has explored demand in terms of call-handling and taken steps to improve services as a result. The mobile devices used by frontline staff have been improved, giving them greater access to information and force systems to support agile working and match public expectations.

#### **Area for improvement**

- Hertfordshire Constabulary should develop its understanding of current and likely future demand, ensuring that it has analysed appropriate information and intelligence from wider sources.

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

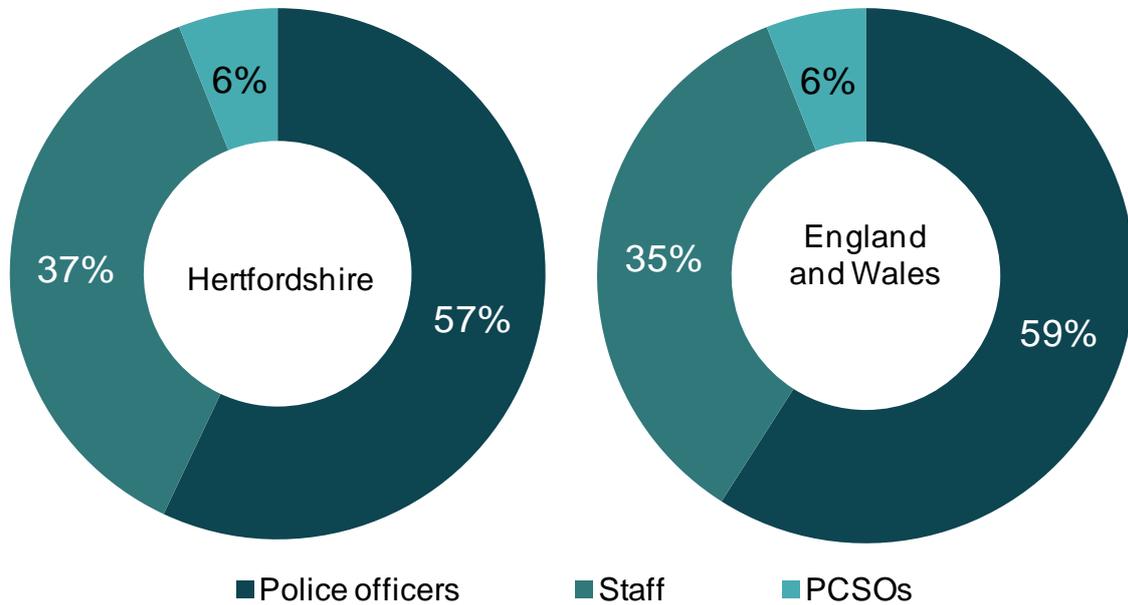
Police forces need to operate in a way that makes the best use of all available resources so that demand is met and public expectations are satisfied. We looked at the extent to which Hertfordshire Constabulary has the right people with the right skills in the right place to protect the public and to 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 Hertfordshire Constabulary 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 PCSOs as a proportion of total workforce in Hertfordshire Constabulary 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 make up 57 percent of Hertfordshire Constabulary's workforce. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 59 percent. The proportion of staff in Hertfordshire Constabulary was 37 percent, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 35 percent. The proportion of police community support officers in Hertfordshire Constabulary 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 Hertfordshire Constabulary 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	2,130	-9%	-14%	1,929	-2%	-2%	1,896
Staff	1,677	-26%	-21%	1,247	3%	-5%	1,288
PCSOs	262	-16%	-35%	221	4%	-6%	229
<b>Workforce total</b>	<b>4,069</b>	<b>-17%</b>	<b>-18%</b>	<b>3,396</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>3,413</b>

Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

For further information about the data in figure 4, please see annex A

### Managing demands for police services

Hertfordshire Constabulary’s demand management strategy has a single aim: “to maximise the use of police resources by reducing demand and increasing productivity to efficiently and effectively deliver the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan”. This aim provides clarity of purpose for its efforts to understand and then reduce demand, while also aligning resources to meet operational priorities.

To sustain frontline policing in the most efficient and effective way, the force introduced a single Local Policing Command in 2010, comprising ten local police areas that matched the boundaries of the community safety partnership areas. This model was gradually refined and then the subject of a review by external experts and the local change team in late 2014. Based on detailed analysis and forecasting of demand in one police area compared to the resources allocated to it, the review reported in Spring 2015 that resourcing was very close to optimal. This outcome reassured the force about the validity of the understanding and analysis which had been used across all ten of the force’s local police areas.

In recognition of the growing demands faced by the force in the high priority areas of domestic abuse and sexual offences, business cases were commissioned to support re-investment of resources in a new domestic abuse investigation unit (DAISU) and an increase in investment for the sexual offences investigation team.

The DAISU takes responsibility for all domestic abuse investigations involving intimate relationships, which represent about 80 percent of domestic abuse cases. The intention of consolidating this type of investigation in one unit is to provide a

holistic, end-to-end service that improves outcomes for victims, reduces repeat victimisation and deals more effectively with perpetrators. Investigations had previously been distributed among three units, dependent upon the degree of risk. Detailed analysis of demand across all measurable indicators was used to support the rationale for the investment of £2.4m. These costs were met by reallocation of all resources from the harm reduction unit and the transfer of case intervention team officers.

The increased reporting of sexual offences in Hertfordshire, in common with many other forces, has been considerable. Force figures for increased demand in 2016 show a 26 percent higher reporting rate than in 2015. Capacity within the safeguarding command was considered to be already stretched, and in April 2016 an internal review in conjunction with the local change team presented a recommendation for making a provisionally agreed budget increase of £0.45m permanent. Research and analysis combined with techniques drawn from the College of Policing toolkit produced detailed recommendations about the improvement to services that could be achieved and how new staff would be best allocated.

The force, together with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, is developing a performance framework for the collaborative work of the joint protected services.<sup>4</sup> This will help each force understand the cost benefit of having these joint resources and identify futures savings and investments.

The force is doing well in meeting the demand it faces for services but could improve the way it is using resources. It has allocated resources towards areas of business it recognises to be highest risk, such as protection of vulnerable people, but data regarding the use of overtime and annual leave suggests that resources are not accurately matched to the needs of the force. Officers are working more overtime than average and many are unable to take their full allocation of annual leave due to workload pressures. Hertfordshire Constabulary's estimate of expenditure per officer for 2015/16 is £1,979 per annum – higher than the average £1,695 across forces in England and Wales. Similarly, information supplied by the force regarding annual leave shows that at the end of the 2015/16 financial year 1,323 officers from an establishment of 1,929 held in excess of five unused annual leave days. We asked officers about being able to take their annual leave and were told by some that it was common for leave requests to be refused on the basis that cover for their absence could not be found.

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<sup>4</sup> Joint Protected Services – a strategic alliance (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire) collaborative unit that covers roads policing, dogs, firearms and major crime.

## **Increasing efficiency**

The strategic alliance with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary is an important element of Hertfordshire's plans to increase efficiency. Organisational change and increased use of ICT to increase productivity are the principal mechanisms. The amalgamation of the ICT budgets of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire from 1 April 2016 should increase the scope to produce savings.

All three of the strategic alliance forces are committed to maximise the joint use of ICT to improve service efficiency and are actively looking to expand the ICT collaboration to include a further four forces in the region. The alliance operates strong and effective ICT programme management, staff collaborate well together and it has a clear understanding that ICT development must demonstrate value for money and produce the planned benefits and efficiencies.

While many of the benefits from the joint ICT plans are yet to be realised fully, there are examples of improvements. Within the roads police unit, standardised ICT enables staff to work in stations across all three counties, which increases their efficiency especially when posted to or dealing with incidents outside their home force. Equally, all three forces use the same automated number plate recognition system within their police vehicles, enabling drivers to use cars from all three forces without further training.

The strategic alliance is using the concept of customer relationship management to make the most of the benefits of ICT development, especially when working with partner organisations. This includes ensuring ICT applications are as flexible as possible to promote interconnection between agencies, such as in the Victims' Hub in Cambridgeshire and Project Beacon in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has demonstrated a detailed, considered and evidence-based approach to addressing priority issues, using resources carefully to meet that type of demand. Scrutiny of sexual offence and domestic abuse investigations is considerable, specifically through the strategic performance board, which means that the force will track the impact of these changes. The force has targeted critical areas of service which have a direct effect on public confidence and satisfaction to be the subject of review and investment.

The local change team's use of external expertise and the College of Policing toolkit is to be supplemented by the introduction of new software for demand assessment. This gives us confidence that continuous improvement activity is becoming well established and is growing in impact.

## **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 Hertfordshire Constabulary 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**

Senior leaders do have a clear grasp of the workforce position in terms of high demand skills, such as for investigators and firearms officers. The bi-monthly establishment board identifies, manages and makes projections for gaps within the workforce, by rank, role and location. The board decides when gaps are to be filled, and where those resources will be drawn from, while the matching of people to posts is delegated to unit heads. The force monitors the skills of the workforce and the current system it uses will be replaced by a new, more sophisticated enterprise resource planning system by August 2017. The system will be shared by all three forces in the alliance and will better align finance and workforce monitoring and planning within each force and across the collaborative functions.

The force is still developing its understanding of future demand, and therefore the alignment of finances, resources, capabilities and gaps is currently limited to the relatively short term. The new collaborative HR and learning and development functions are expected to be able to support the development of this understanding when all three forces have clarity over current and future demand.

HMIC found that the approach to training within collaborative units is effective in enabling officers to maintain and develop some specialist skills needed by the force. Staff were actively involved in the process that identified training gaps and needs.

### **Tackling workforce gaps**

A new strategic head of human resources and learning and development works across the three forces. The priority is to assess what workforce gaps currently exist and to develop a plan to ensure that training and development is focused on the current and anticipated priority areas. This planning is at a very early stage.

Frontline staff we spoke to felt confident that they had sufficient skills to use the available ICT systems and to carry out their role. The force has an appetite for increasing ICT support across the workforce. For example, the criminal justice collaboration programme features efficiencies achieved through: the digital administration of case files; improved digital media storage capability; CCTV convergence, which centralises storage and improves ease of access by staff; and greater use of the electronic witness statement system.

Recent technical developments to the mobile devices used by frontline staff mean they will be able to operate with the planned shared ICT system. This will bring the force in line with their collaboration partners, who are already using it. A training schedule is planned to ensure that the workforce will be ready in time.

The force acknowledges two significant issues in relation to workforce capability in its 2016 strategic assessment. The first issue is the growing incidence of cyber-dependent and cyber-enabled crime, ranging from online fraud to so-called revenge porn. The second is the gaps in workforce knowledge about digital investigations and policing of social media. Analysis by the force has found that crimes which should be considered as either cyber-dependent or enabled are frequently not flagged as such in the recording system. This failure means that accurate profiling of the scale and nature of offender behaviour is not possible, and the composition of people that are victims cannot be understood fully. In recognition of this, the force has listed cyber-crime as an objective within the policing plan and stated that a review of workforce capability will be carried out to understand and fill the gaps in workforce skills.

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

We assessed how well Hertfordshire Constabulary 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 meet demand for its services better.

Hertfordshire Constabulary, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police have developed strong collaborative working arrangements over a number of years. The strategic alliance is among the most extensive police collaborations in England and Wales. Figure 5 shows the proportion of net revenue spending on collaboration in Hertfordshire Constabulary compared to the national picture. There are plans in place which will see the alliance extend still further over the coming year. The alliance has enabled each force to realise savings through greater efficiencies, rationalising resources and strengthening its purchasing power. In doing so, each force has been able to re-invest savings in priority areas. These savings are detailed

in each police force's medium-term financial plan. While not all the collaborative functions can show clear benefits realisation, the forces are aiming to do this. They have committed resources to identify improvements to the quality and cost of services, the impact of cultural change on police employees and partner organisations and a change in the nature of services provided to the public.

The rationale for the strategic alliance is to enable each of the collaborating forces to protect local policing, and review this function in the context of changing demand on its services. The greater resilience achieved through sharing resources helps the force to discharge effectively their responsibilities under the Strategic Policing Requirement and will provide value for money.

The forces are keen to extend the strategic alliance to include collaboration with a total of seven forces; discussions are taking place to explore the potential for even greater efficiency from the procurement of goods and services and the vetting of employees, volunteers and contractors through the seven forces working together.

The strategic alliance has adopted a shared-service model, with one force leading and co-ordinating on a specific business area. For example, Hertfordshire is responsible for providing operational support, which incorporates public contact, custody, criminal justice, and firearms and explosive licensing; Cambridgeshire is responsible for providing organisational support and Bedfordshire is responsible for providing joint protective services.

Hertfordshire Constabulary works closely with its partner organisations to share resources, taking a co-operative approach towards neighbourhood policing. Staff from local authorities and the police work together at shared locations on problem-solving activity to meet policing priorities that have been agreed with the local community for that area.

### **Collaboration plans**

The shared vision for the strategic alliance is for each force to have its own frontline local policing services that will be provided by the best people, processes, technology and culture, with all protective, operational support and organisational support being provided jointly by the three forces in a shared services model with increased automation, self-service and economies of scale. This is intended to enable all three forces to reduce costs to meet their individual financial challenges in a co-ordinated manner, as documented in their medium-term financial strategies.

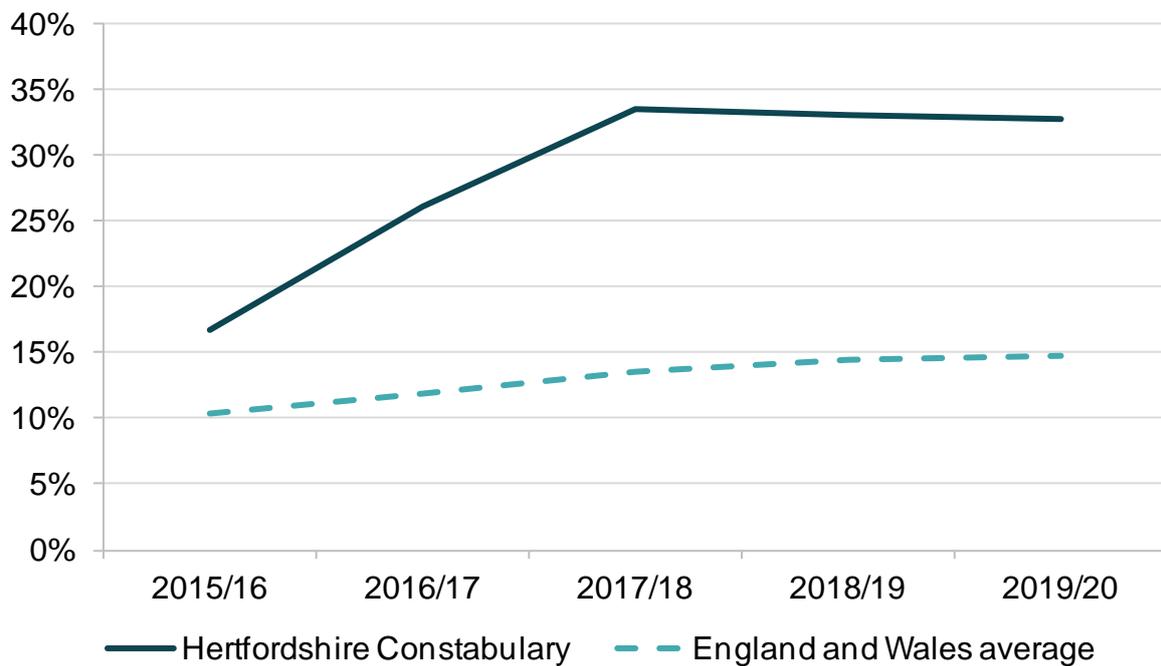
Each force will remain committed to local policing, supporting communities to be able to deal appropriately with local anti-social behaviour issues and volume crime, while recognising the principal policing responsibility for preventing crime. This will be supported by officers and staff across the collaborative functions, within the tri-force strategic alliance and with some support from the regional level to deal with more serious or complex threats as well as other administrative organisational support

functions. The alliance seeks to improve access to policing services remotely through technology, as described earlier following the 'Dark Matter' review. This will give communities greater personal responsibility for, as well as easier access to, reporting and tracking their crime online, and accessing other services and information electronically.

The strategic alliance aim is to have more remote and agile working for staff, supported by common terms and conditions, and an effective mobile services ICT platform, with fewer police stations and buildings and more shared bases across the alliance. It is aiming to cut leadership and command functions across force borders within the alliance. An example of this is Hertfordshire's work to develop collaborative units for custody, public contact and criminal justice. Some functions will be provided at the regional level.

The force has achieved efficiencies through collaboration, while improving or at least sustaining the level of service to the local community. Budget forecasts have identified savings from collaboration of £2.73m in the financial year 2016/17, including savings from joint protective services (JPS) and the eastern region specialist operations unit. The reductions in JPS has not affected the armed policing capability and instead the force is preparing to strengthen activity following an announcement in the Government's 2015 spending review of central funding to be made available for that purpose.

**Figure 5: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure (NRE) in Hertfordshire Constabulary, 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**

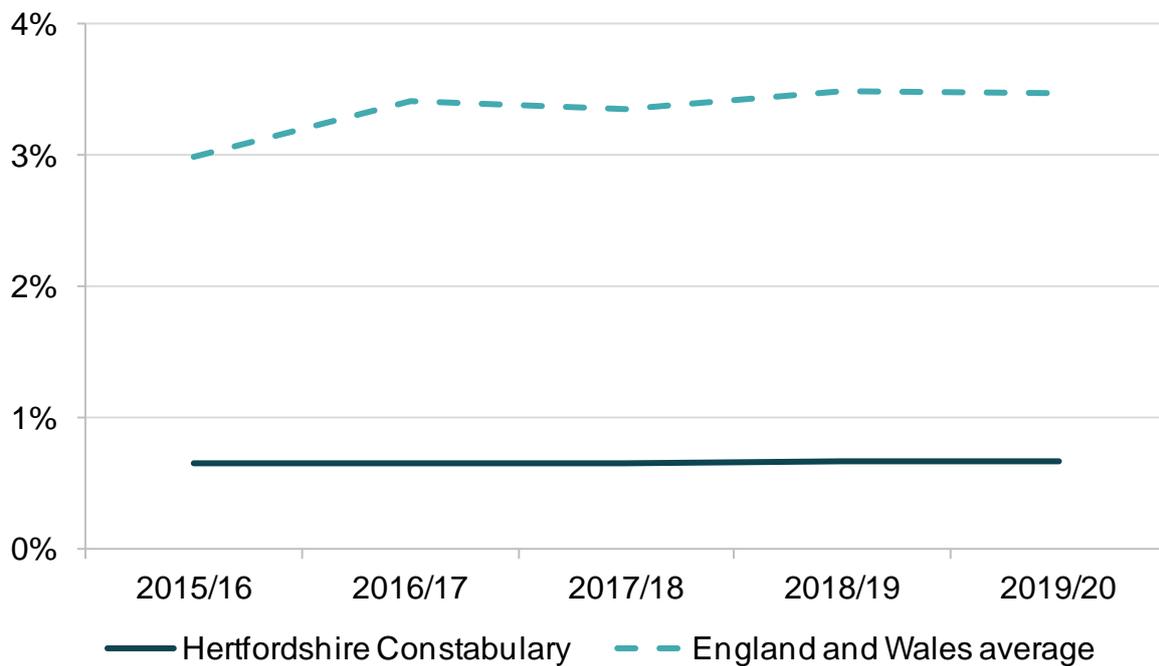


**Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection**

**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**

Hertfordshire Constabulary has forecast that it will spend £48.8m in 2016/17 on collaboration with other police forces. This is 26.1 percent of its 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 £62.3m (32.8 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 NRE in Hertfordshire Constabulary, 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

Hertfordshire Constabulary has forecast that it will spend £1.2m in 2016/17 on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is 0.6 percent of its 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 £1.3m (0.7 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.

Hertfordshire Constabulary takes care to identify and track the benefits realised from all change programmes, irrespective of scale. An efficiency measure to make better use of ICT and officer time relates to the system introduced for officers to give evidence at court via video link as opposed to attending in person. From January to March 2016, force figures report a total of 267 officers used the video link, saving the equivalent of 792 officer hours through less travel, the avoidance of lost time when the officer is stood down from giving evidence after arriving at court, and being available for other work directly after the evidence was heard.

Comprehensive benefits realisation plans are prominent in the business cases supporting change programmes, such as custody, criminal justice, ICT and human resources. The benefits realisation element in the business case for public contact is particularly prescriptive about who is responsible for evidencing the benefit realisation, the financial value of the benefits and the milestones towards benefits arising, and for mapping the inter-relationship between the programme objectives, actions to achieve them and how that achieves a benefit.

The scale of the change programmes supporting collaboration are such that benefits in terms of cash savings arise across several financial years and are projected into future budgets. The force has reported a total of £0.7m of savings realised from the organisational support (HR, ICT, information management and estates) collaborations. This was added to their budget in 2015/16, with an expected further contribution of £0.5m in the year 2016/17. Changes to the number of custody centres, down to two from four during 2015, has allowed case investigation teams to be re-distributed to match demand at the remaining centres better. Significantly, it has also allowed for resources to be released to create the DAISU, enhancing the end-to-end service provided for victims of domestic abuse.

## Summary of findings



Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at using its resources to manage current demand. Hertfordshire Constabulary is meeting this demand but could improve the way it is using resources. The force makes a higher than average use of overtime and police officers are carrying significant amounts of unused annual leave. This is not sustainable and indicates that resources are not accurately matched to the needs of the force.

The force recognises the importance of continuing to improve its understanding of demand and it is taking steps to do so. It is developing a more evidence-based approach to meeting growing demand, for example with the re-investment of

resources to the new DAISU and an increase in investment for the sexual offences investigation team to reflect the growing demand in these areas.

The force is seeking to increase workforce productivity, using both external expertise and introducing new software to carry out demand assessment. Frontline staff we spoke to felt confident that they had sufficient skills to use ICT systems to carry out their role. The force has also demonstrated an appetite for increasing ICT capability and support across the workforce and acknowledges that frontline staff skills to recognise and investigate cyber-crime need to be improved.

Hertfordshire Constabulary carefully monitors the skills and composition of its workforce. A new, collaborative HR unit is developing a sophisticated employee resource planning system and is aimed at achieving a consistent strategic alliance approach to all HR, workforce planning and leadership development.

The force is strongly committed to joint working and this is demonstrated clearly by the mature and well-established collaborative work already in place through the strategic alliance of three forces. It aims to develop this partnership working further with a total of seven forces as well as developing its working arrangements with blue-light and local government organisations.

Comprehensive benefits realisation plans are prominent in the business cases supporting change programmes, such as custody, criminal justice, ICT and human resources, and the force has redistributed staff to match demand better following the reduction in custody centres.

While Hertfordshire Constabulary can demonstrate how collaboration and joint working is improving outcomes for the public, reducing costs and building resilience, it does not yet have a comprehensive understanding of the cost of each outcome. This is also true for all of the strategic alliance partners. However, the constabulary is committed to making sure that the costs are fully understood and that it dedicates resources to develop this understanding further.

#### **Area for improvement**

- Hertfordshire Constabulary should undertake appropriate activities to understand fully its workforce's capabilities, in order to identify any gaps and put plans in place to address them. This will enable the force to be confident in its ability to meet current and likely future demand efficiently. To achieve a consistent strategic alliance approach to all HR, workforce planning and leadership development, this work should be completed as part of the strategic alliance partnership work.

## 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 Hertfordshire Constabulary'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 Hertfordshire Constabulary 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**

Hertfordshire Constabulary has a track record of careful financial management and achievement of savings targets. Since 2011/12, the force has reduced its net spending by £36m and has built up reserves of £48.3m as at the end of 2015/16. The reserves position provides opportunity for the force to meet short-term spending pressures and develop comprehensive plans for investment. These plans run alongside the ambitious collaboration programme and both are aimed at managing demand better and achieving operational priorities in the future.

Understanding of current and future demand across the force is only slowly developing following the adoption of a high-level demand strategy. A detailed picture of how future demand will affect the general workforce composition and the skills the workforce will require has yet to be developed. Demand analysis and forecasting have taken place to support reviews of and investment in local policing, safeguarding and public contact. Planned investments in 2016/17 total £4.16m in the high priority areas of cyber-crime including online fraud, data forensics, DAISU safeguarding units that protect vulnerable people and public contact, including the victim services team who contact victims to assess their vulnerability and ensure that the correct

support and services are being offered. Other areas include improved bail management, integrated offender management, the virtual court system and technology for dealing with foreign national offenders.

## **Investing in ICT**

Making best use of ICT has been a key part of the force's investment plans and is pivotal to the future plans of the force and the strategic alliance. Hertfordshire Constabulary is following a robust ICT investment strategy in collaboration with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, which will consolidate and enhance what is already a strong position compared to other forces. There is now a pooled ICT budget between all three forces and a single ICT lead. The final costed business case sets out the tri-force structure which is being implemented during 2016/17 and is expected to be fully in place by April 2017. Research and development continues across the strategic alliance and ICT functions are now carried out tri-force, including ICT development and procurement.

The alliance has ambitious plans to replace the main police operating systems of all three forces, and is involving the four other regional forces so that all seven operate the same system, to increase purchasing power and improve interoperability.

We found a widely held positive view of ICT provision amongst the frontline staff we spoke to during reality testing visits and in focus groups. Toughbooks and other mobile devices have been supplied to all frontline staff, providing access to a broad range of applications to support their work. The planned roll-out of the bespoke software system for force mobile devices and the new operating system during 2016 will bring even greater functionality, along with the benefits of the shared platform for case preparation, custody handling, intelligence storage and investigation management.

A significant ICT investment programme encompassing improvements to information systems, ICT infrastructure, and communication systems along with funding for collaborated workstreams has a total value of £11m over the four financial years to 2019/20. The scale of investment shows the force's appetite to improve its efficiency and enhance methods of digital working. A wide range of activity is planned for the current financial year, including improved mobile data systems in vehicles, enhancements to automatic number plate recognition capability, increased computer systems capacity, new network servers and continued work to converge the ICT infrastructure of the three collaborative forces.

## **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 Hertfordshire Constabulary'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.

Hertfordshire Constabulary was unable to provide a complete set of data prior to inspection on the percentage of their expenditure on policing functions for 2015/16 so this data has not been included in this report.

### **Planning for the future**

The force can demonstrate credible plans, built on sound assumptions, for the future. The comprehensive business cases in support of collaboration and investments made in priority areas of policing are developed in-house and the subject of scrutiny by chief officers. There is also a specific budget of £0.6m within the collaboration change programme to cover costs associated with contract staff, specialist consultancy and assurance reviews.

The force's strong financial position and high level of reserves allows it to plan investments for the future and set aside funding to deal with short-term financial pressures via the phased use of an earmarked reserve, known as the base-budget support reserve, currently standing at £25.3m. The medium-term financial plan for the financial years 2016/17 to 2019/20 outlines the intention to use £17.8m of that reserve over the next four years "to mitigate higher standstill costs and reductions in grant funding", meaning that £4.45m each year will be used to bridge the gap between income and expenditure. The decision by the force and the police and crime commissioner (PCC) to use reserves to support the revenue budget in this way over the next four years is an acceptable risk given the high level of reserves. It is not a sustainable way to maintain a balanced budget over the longer term, with the costs of running the force exceeding income. Hertfordshire Constabulary is currently one of the ten lowest precept-level police forces in England and Wales. This means households in the county pay a lesser proportion of their council tax to policing than in other areas. Therefore the PCC does retain the ability to increase the policing precept by more than the cap placed on other forces. The PCC may choose to raise extra income by increasing the council tax precept by £5 per band D household in 2017/18 and 2018/19. The force estimates that, if the PCC were to increase the precept by this amount, it would provide an additional £2.1m in income for policing. Furthermore, £9.7m of reserves is earmarked for funding "specific change" plans to improve efficiency and service quality, whether that is in a collaborative arrangement or confined to the force itself.

The force's approach to making investments in areas of operational need, specifically safeguarding, is based on the sound rationale of increasing the quality of service experienced by victims, improving outcomes and reducing reoffending. Similarly, investment in less obvious business areas such as the investigations management unit, (IMU) amounting to £0.37m, is a pragmatic one. It was recognised that the quality of data migrating to the new ICT system from current force systems

was of insufficient quality to make the best use of the new systems key benefit: linking information across all of its distinct modules. The IMU will carry out the necessary data cleansing for the force to achieve maximum benefit from the investment in the new system.

The force makes realistic and prudent assumptions about future income and risks to savings plans. As the implementation of collaboration plans continue, savings estimates have been revised. Most recently, the forecasted savings for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20 has reduced from £6.1m to £5.3m. This initial estimate was envisaged ahead of the 2015/16 budget, which was at the outset of the collaboration programme's four-year efficiency programme. The complexity of the tasks involved has caused savings to be released more slowly than expected, albeit progress is clearly being made. The revised forecast reflects a more prudent projection and remains subject to later revision from regular reviews of implementation plans, changes in demand and further efficiency opportunities coming to light.

The force's medium-term financial forecasting takes suitable account of potential future risks to income and costs. Hertfordshire Constabulary is the seventh lowest precept force in England and Wales and is one of only two forces nationally not to have seen any increase in precept over the last five years. The PCC actually reduced the amount of council tax precept for the force by 0.55 percent for 2016/17 resulting in a decreased income to the force of £0.346m. However, this will be offset by an overall increase in income from council tax of £0.524m, as the number of households in the county paying council tax increased, reflecting the buoyant local economy.

Hertfordshire Constabulary already operates in a collaborative environment, with increasing numbers of services shared and delivered across the strategic alliance, such as joint protective services, HR and professional standards. Work on drawing together and releasing efficiencies from collaboration programmes for ICT, finance and resource management is taking place across 2016/17. Having remodelled the custody provision in force, Hertfordshire Constabulary is leading work to establish a common management structure and shift pattern to be used across the strategic alliance. The purpose is to permit the easier sharing of resources across the three forces and give rise to savings for all forces in 2017/18. A similar approach of shared resources is also being introduced by Hertfordshire across the alliance forces for the way criminal justice units work – harmonising processes, making better use of technology and brigading staff to improve resilience.

Public contact is being re-shaped via collaboration, with plans aimed at enabling better management of demand, the goal being to migrate the equivalent of 5 percent of current telephone call volume received at the force control rooms to online and self-service functions within force websites. Operating models are being developed

that draw together staff from each force to work together in a borderless way, meaning receiving calls or carrying out command and control of frontline resources across all of the three forces.

The scale of these changes is such that the force describes its status as being “50 percent” collaborated by the end of 2016/17, essentially retaining autonomy over local policing only, i.e., the response, neighbourhood and local investigations functions. While this is not sophisticated or scientific, it evidences the journey the force has followed to achieve innovation, efficiency and effectiveness in the best interests of the local community.

## **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**

Hertfordshire Constabulary’s joint working arrangements are centred around the strategic alliance collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, which gives rise to projected savings of £5.3m across the medium term (up to 2019/20), and contributes close to half of the current year’s overall savings proposal of £4.9m. The strength of the financial reserves position permits contributions to balance the budget, as described above. There is also the provision of ring-fenced funding of £9.7m to meet one-off costs associated with collaboration, such as match-funding for police innovation fund bids for the next three years. This use of reserves represents an approach that is sustainable in the medium term, but options to increase funding or reduce costs will be necessary in the longer term to balance the budget.

### **Working together to improve future efficiency**

The strategic alliance is making plans to extend its reach and ambition up to and beyond 2020. It is exploring different workforce structures and lines of accountability within joint working arrangements and including how local authorities and the police as well as other blue-light services can increase efficiency through greater sharing of resources. An agreement was signed in January 2016 between the police and fire services across Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire which establishes

joint working protocols for arson investigation across the three counties. This means that responsibilities are clear and shared equitably across the services to deliver a more efficient service to the public.

The current alliance aims to maximise purchasing power. The joint head of ICT and the shared budget assist in achieving this aim. A key objective is to ensure systems across the three forces are aligned so that interoperability increases the efficiency of accessing systems and sharing information to deliver improved services to the public. The strategic alliance will be implementing a new information sharing system that is designed to harmonise information systems and processes across the three forces. The proposals to extend collaboration across the seven forces in the region are expected to enhance these benefits.

Discussions are underway to consider the strategic alliance estate as a whole and completely rationalise the use of buildings among the three forces. The discussions include partnership organisations such as the local authorities and fire and rescue services and included consideration of effective response bases, ICT connectivity and public expectations.

The strategic alliance aims to have continuous improvement embedded within it, continually driving out inefficiencies and improving services to the public. Leadership and command functions will cut across force borders within the alliance, supported by some functions provided at the regional level. Some non-frontline bespoke services will potentially be provided by external companies, through partnering and out-sourcing, and by 2018 the regional shared-service functions will be tested against the market for efficiency and effectiveness.

In terms of procurement, a collaborative exercise with West Midlands Police has seen the award of a new fleet contract with a revised pricing structure, giving a 5.5 percent saving in the capital programme. In addition, by being a member of the Chiltern Travel Consortium, a saving of £0.15m has been achieved through decreased motor insurance costs for the current financial year.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Hertfordshire Constabulary is in a strong financial position to plan well for future demand, although the lack of a comprehensive understanding of future demand and workforce capabilities limits its ability to plan for the future. It has a track record of careful financial management and achievement of savings targets. Since 2011/12, the force has reduced its net spending by £36m and has built up reserves of £48.3m to the end of 2015/16. The strong reserves position provides opportunity for the force to meet immediate spending pressures and develop comprehensive plans for investment.

Demand analysis and forecasting has taken place to support reviews of, and investment in, local policing, safeguarding and public contact, leading to planned investments of £4.2m in these high priority areas during 2016/17.

Hertfordshire Constabulary, together with its strategic alliance partners, has a strong track record of joint working arrangements that bring about efficiencies, although not all of the cost benefits are fully understood. It has considered a range of approaches, working collaboratively to maximise purchasing power, increase ICT interoperability and share systems and infrastructure. The alliance forces have an ambitious and innovative plan to work collaboratively in all policing functions, except local policing, across the whole alliance by 2017.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is following a robust ICT investment strategy in collaboration with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, to consolidate what is already a strong position compared to other forces. The alliance forces need to ensure that, as the understanding of future demand improves, the ICT strategy needs to be aligned better to workforce and service plans.

The strong financial context of the force allows it to plan investments on the basis that immediate financial pressures are eased via the phased use of earmarked reserves. The force and PCC are using reserves to support the revenue budget, which is not sustainable over the longer term but is considered to be an acceptable risk given the high level of reserves, the plans to increase efficiency through collaboration and agile working, and the PCC's option to raise extra income from an increase to the council tax precept.

## 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', 'higher' 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 were 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](http://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](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables)). Figures may have been updated since 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 that 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.

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](http://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 the 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. This data includes 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 that 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 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/signed-off plans for workforce projections. It is important to note that the 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**

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

The data covers 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 this 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**

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