

# PEEL: Police efficiency (including leadership) 2017

An inspection of Bedfordshire Police



November 2017

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## Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)<sup>1</sup> assesses the efficiency and leadership of forces in England and Wales.

### **What is police efficiency and why is it important?**

As with all public services, the police service must operate in a way that makes the most of its available resources. To do this, police forces must understand what their demand is – by which we mean what work they can reasonably predict they will have on any given day – and ensure that they have the resources they need, in the right place, to meet that demand. To stay efficient they must have good, realistic and evidence-based plans for the future. Our efficiency inspection assessed all of these areas during 2017.

As part of the 2017 inspection, we also integrated aspects of leadership into our assessment of efficiency, as the two areas are closely linked. We assessed how police leaders are driving innovation in policing, within their own forces and further afield. We also inspected how well forces are planning for the future with regards to their leadership.

Between 2010/11 and 2015/16, central government funding for the police service in England and Wales fell by 19 percent, or £1.7 billion in cash terms. Police forces met the required budget reductions until November 2015, when the government announced that overall police spending would be protected from further cuts, to enable the police to continue to adapt to emerging crime threats while taking further steps to improve efficiency. While that was a more favourable funding settlement for policing than was expected, reductions in spending by other public services will still create additional pressure for police forces.

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<sup>1</sup> This inspection was carried out before 19 July 2017, when HMIC also took on responsibility for fire & rescue service inspections and was renamed HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. The methodology underpinning our inspection findings is unaffected by this change. References to HMICFRS in this report may relate to an event that happened before 19 July 2017 when HMICFRS was HMIC. Citations of documents which HMIC published before 19 July 2017 will still cite HMIC as the publisher.

Our report on Bedfordshire Police's legitimacy inspection will be available on our website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/peel-2017/bedfordshire/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/peel-2017/bedfordshire/)) at the end of 2017. HMICFRS reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2018. Previous PEEL reports are also available on our website: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/peel-2016/bedfordshire/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/peel-2016/bedfordshire/).

More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on our website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/)).

## Force in numbers



### Financial position

Forecast change in total gross revenue expenditure



### Workforce

Planned change in officer numbers



Planned change in total workforce



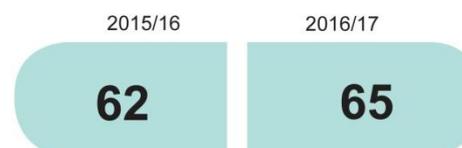
### Calls for assistance

999 calls per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2017



### Recorded crime

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2017



Percentage change in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2017



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>2</sup>



**Requires improvement**

Bedfordshire Police is judged to require improvement in the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Our overall judgment this year is consistent with last year. The force’s understanding of demand is judged to require improvement; it is judged to be good for its use of resources to manage demand; and its planning for future demand is judged to require improvement.

## Overall summary

How well does the force understand demand?



**Requires improvement**

How well does the force use its resources?



**Good**

How well is the force planning for the future?



**Requires improvement**

Bedfordshire Police is developing its understanding of demand for its services, although the force acknowledges that this still requires improvement in some important areas. Since 2016 it has been doing good work with the College of Policing, other forces and organisations such as the local authority and the health service to improve its assessment of current, complex and future demand. The force continues to work to improve its understanding of how demand may change. It demonstrates a good commitment to managing and prioritising how it responds to demand to increase its efficiency. However, it could improve its understanding of and response to anti-social behaviour as well as how it assures itself that its response to emergency incidents that require immediate police attendance is effective and timely.

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<sup>2</sup> HMICFRS judgments are outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

The force generally uses and allocates its resources well and has been increasing the resourcing of its policing model since June 2015, although the model is still not fully staffed. It has prioritised vulnerability and increased significantly resources in its public protection teams. However, it still does not have enough officers and staff within community policing to deal efficiently with demand, including crime and anti-social behaviour prevention. Progress is being made to increase local police constable and police community support officer numbers, including a new rural crime team, but the community teams will not be fully staffed until 2018.

We recognise that Bedfordshire Police continues to face significant financial challenges. The force does not currently have any clear plans beyond 2019/20 for how it will continue to provide the level of policing needed, within the resources that are likely to be available. Despite this fundamental issue, the force has done several positive things to improve its position. The force invests well and works constructively with others to manage demand for its services. It has some understanding of its current workforce's operational skills and capabilities, and it is identifying and making plans for future skills requirements appropriately. Leaders are being trained for the future. Building on Bedfordshire Police's pioneering methods to increase minority ethnic diversity in its workforce, joint work through the alliance with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary is expected to increase opportunities to improve diversity for under-represented groups and to identify and nurture talent.

HMICFRS is concerned that the force's future plans remain uncertain. The new policing model that was developed some years ago is not expected to be fully staffed until 2018. The force recognises that beyond 2019/20 even this level of resourcing will be unlikely to meet growing demand for services without further organisational change, plans for which have not yet been developed. The chief constable and the police and crime commissioner are working closely with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary and with local partner agencies to achieve greater efficiencies in an attempt to bridge the gap.

## Areas for improvement

- The force should develop its understanding of demand, ensuring that it has analysed appropriate information and intelligence from wider sources.
- The force should ensure that it has sufficient officers and staff available to fulfil its resourcing model and meet the demand on its services, while also taking into account the wellbeing of its workforce.
- The force should extend its skills and capability audit to allow it to understand leadership capacity and capability below the rank of chief inspector and police staff equivalent, including special constables and volunteers.
- The force should ensure that its assessment of emerging and likely demand for its services is fully developed and regularly updated.
- The force should ensure that the control room is correctly categorising anti-social behaviour and other incidents to enable it to understand current and future demand.
- The force should ensure that it fully resources and trains its community policing teams to identify demand at a local level and prevent crime.
- The force and the strategic alliance need to ensure that performance development reviews are quality assured and line managers supported to develop the skills and capability of their officers and staff effectively.
- The force should ensure it has adequate plans in place to show it can provide services, while also making necessary cost savings.

## **How well does the force understand demand?**

To be efficient, it is essential that police forces have a good understanding of the demand for their services. This means that they should not only understand what sort of incidents are likely to be reported on a normal day, but also what they need to do in advance to prevent crime. They should also understand the crimes and other activity in their area that are often hidden and are less likely to be reported, such as modern slavery or child sexual exploitation, and take action to uncover them.

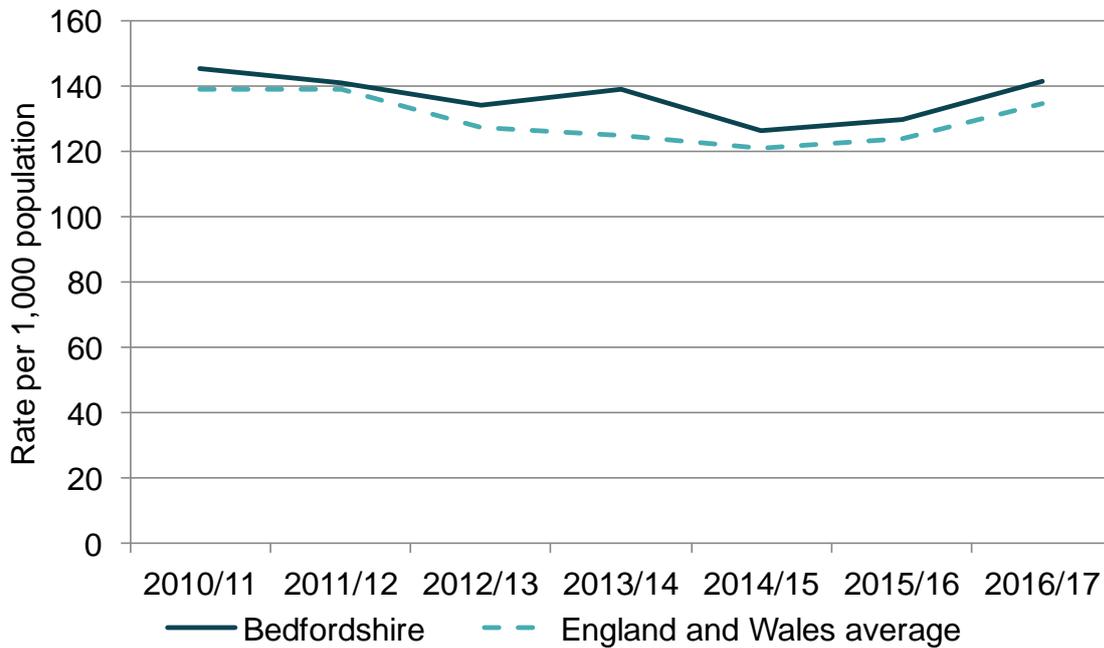
Forces should be able to identify and reduce work that is unnecessarily created internally through inefficient processes. Similarly, forces should be looking for ways to identify processes and ways of working that are more efficient. Forces also have to make decisions about how they prioritise and respond to the demand for their services and should be able to demonstrate that their approach to prioritisation does not cause them to overlook some of their demand.

## **How well does the force understand current demand?**

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police understands the demand for its services. These demands can range from answering and responding to 999 calls to protecting victims and uncovering crimes that would not otherwise be reported. It is important that police forces understand the work that they need to do so that they can ensure that they have resources in place.

Forces deal with much more than responding to emergencies and investigating reports of crime. However, the number of calls for service (999 calls and 101 calls) and the levels of recorded crime can nonetheless be used to make simple comparisons. In particular, they can give an indication of whether demand has changed or is particularly high or low. Figure 1 shows how the number of 999 calls has changed since 2010/11, while figure 2 illustrates how crime has changed since 2010/11.

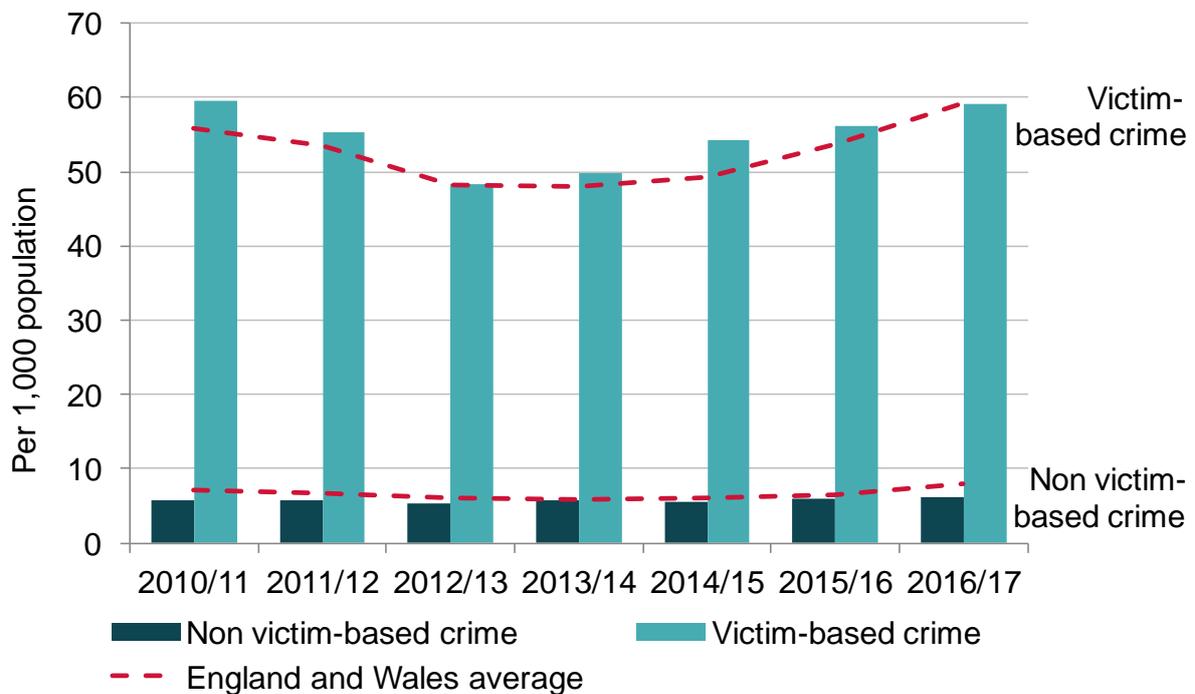
**Figure 1: Rate of 999 calls recorded per 1,000 people in the local population in Bedfordshire Police compared with England and Wales as a whole, from 2010/11 to 2016/17**



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

Bedfordshire Police recorded 141 999 calls per 1,000 population in 2016/17. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales force average of 135. The rate has decreased from the 146 calls per 1,000 population recorded in 2010/11 however, it has increased since 2015/16 when the rate was 130 calls per 1,000.

**Figure 2: Police-recorded crimes per 1,000 population in Bedfordshire Police compared with England and Wales from 2010/11 to 2016/17**



Source: Home Office Police-recorded crime data

Victim-based crimes (those where there is likely to be a specific victim) include violence against the person, sexual offences, robbery and other theft, criminal damage and arson. All other crime is considered non victim-based.

The rate of victim-based crime per 1,000 population in Bedfordshire in 2016/17 was 59.1 crimes. This is similar to the rate in 2010/11 of 59.6 crimes. The rate of victim-based crime decreased between 2010/11 and 2012/13 to 48.4 crimes per 1,000 population before increasing to the 2016/17 rate. The rate of victim-based crime per 1,000 population in England and Wales decreased from 55.8 to 48.1 crimes before increasing to 59.3 in 2016/17.

In the local population of Bedfordshire Police the rate of non victim-based crime per 1,000 population in 2016/17 (6.2 crimes) was similar to 2010/11 (5.8 crimes). The rate of non victim-based crime per 1,000 population decreased to 5.3 crimes in 2012/13 before rising again to the 2016/17 rate. The rate of non victim-based crime per 1,000 population in England and Wales in 2016/17 was 7.9 crimes. This decreased from 7.1 in 2010/11 to 5.9 crimes in 2012/13 before increasing to the 2016/17 rate.

### **Understanding demand**

Bedfordshire Police is making good progress in understanding the demand for its services. It has completed consultation with other organisations, including the College of Policing, other forces and partner agencies such as the local authority and health service. In 2016, HMICFRS reported that Bedfordshire Police should develop its understanding of current and likely future demand, ensuring that it has analysed appropriate information and intelligence from wider sources. This year, the force has completed a new demand assessment and although the underlying data still need development, this is positive progress. The force is also increasing its analytical capability, recruiting two analysts and working more closely with local authority analysts to share information and data, with a focus on joint priorities.

The force is making good progress at bringing together information to improve its understanding and the way it responds to demand at a local level. It is developing local community profiles, so that it can have a better understanding of the nature of threats and risks to each local community. It is using existing information drawn from its performance information system and overlaid with open source information,<sup>3</sup> for example, for care homes and places of worship, which is transferred onto maps. This means it will be able to provide officers and staff with a street-level view of detailed information about past and continuing crimes, areas of high demand, and areas where vulnerability is higher; this will provide an informed basis for decision making

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<sup>3</sup> Open source is intelligence from publicly available sources that is used to predict, prevent, investigate, prosecute crime.

about assigning work and deploying the workforce. The development trial begins in the Queens Park area of Bedford and the plan is to produce profiles for all areas by September 2017.

The force does not yet have a full understanding of current reactive demand. In 2016, HMICFRS identified that the force was incorrectly categorising incidents as anti-social behaviour, which meant that it did not understand this area of demand and, as a result incidents were not always being dealt with by the right partner agency or police team. Bedfordshire continues to record high levels of anti-social behaviour compared with other forces, the force is not clear as to the reasons why. This year, it has partially completed work to improve its understanding, but it has more work to do to ensure that it correctly categorises anti-social behaviour incidents. HMICFRS will assess progress in our autumn 2017 effectiveness inspection.

The force has expanded last year's narrow MoRiLE<sup>4</sup> strategic assessment approach by employing an analyst to focus specifically on a force-wide strategic threat and risk assessment (STRA). The STRA uses information from partner agencies (health, fire & rescue, MARAC<sup>5</sup> referrals, JSNA,<sup>6</sup> and demographics) as well as national data, such as the Office of National Statistics (ONS) harm index work. This year, the force has taken time to build up this assessment. It should be fully complete by late autumn 2017 to inform the force demand assessment, control strategy and to facilitate setting the budget and priorities for the force. The force recognises it has not been able to meet these obligations this year and knows it must do so for 2017/18.

The force has developed a strategic demand assessment framework, with reference to good practice in other police forces, which includes data and information from the force STRA, serious and organised crime local profile,<sup>7</sup> police performance data and

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<sup>4</sup> MoRiLE: the 'management of risk in law enforcement' process developed by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This tool assesses the types of crimes, which most threaten communities, and highlights where the force does not currently have the capacity or capability to tackle them effectively.

<sup>5</sup> Multi-agency risk assessment conferences are local meetings where information about high-risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies.

<sup>6</sup> Joint strategic needs analysis (JSNA) assesses the current and future health and care needs of local populations to inform and guide the planning and commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services within a local authority area.

<sup>7</sup> Local profiles should be produced by each police force area. Forces should use them to develop a common understanding among local partners of the threats, vulnerabilities and risks, provide information on which to base local response and local action plans, support the integration of serious and organised crime activity into day-to-day policing, local government and partnership work, and allow a targeted and proportionate use of resources. For further information see [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/371602/Serious\\_and\\_Organised\\_Crime\\_local\\_profiles.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371602/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_local_profiles.pdf)

knowledge from business leads. The framework includes an assessment of the impact of future legislative changes and potential changes from partner resourcing and funding. It makes three recommendations and identifies information and data gaps for the next updated version of the document. It judges resource capacity and capability (described as asset shortfall) and future trends, using a five-point scale with greater weighting placed to current demand asset shortfall. The assessment is a useful overview so force leaders can have a better understanding of the total demand on different areas of work and assess opportunities for re-directing resources from areas that are identified as lower risk. Parts of the assessment are very detailed and make comparisons between this year and last year, showing trends for the future. The assessment lacks detail on using partner resources to mitigate problems, but informs the use of force and partner resources to meet demands.

### **More complex demand**

Bedfordshire Police is aware that this is an area for improvement, and is taking steps to gain a better understanding of hidden<sup>8</sup> and under-reported demand. It has not yet developed problem profiles<sup>9</sup> in all hidden crime areas on which to base its allocation of resources. The STRA highlighted intelligence gaps, but it has only been completed recently. Work is now under way to develop problem profiles for missing and absent children and female genital mutilation, which should be completed by October 2017. Profiles for problems that are more complex are also being developed for child sexual exploitation and the county's drug profile, but these will take longer. As a result, until this work is completed, the force does not have a good understanding of hidden demand and is unable to respond in a focused way to these problems.

The force has a limited understanding of domestic abuse trends. The domestic abuse problem profile has not been updated for over 12 months. This is partly due to the operational impact of setting up the new team to deal with public protection, known as the 'emerald team'. A large amount of data are available and work must be completed in order to understand current and future demand, for example on repeat victims. Workshops have taken place involving partner agencies that are part of the MARAC process, and this work will feed into a problem profile. The domestic abuse engagement officers who make early contact with victims – an idea from Leicestershire Police – are having a positive effect and victims are coming forward.

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<sup>8</sup> Hidden demand can often be described as incidents or crimes that are less likely to be reported. Victims are often vulnerable and less likely to contact the police, which may result in under-reporting of these crimes and the victims then remain 'hidden' in the community.

<sup>9</sup> A problem profile is intended to provide the force with greater understanding of established and emerging crime or incident series, priority locations or other identified high-risk issues. It should be based on the research and analysis of a wide range of information sources, including information from partner organisations. It should contain recommendations for making decisions and options for action.

However, the lack of a problem profile means that the force does not have a complete picture of the trends and opportunities that would be provided by a profile.

Bedfordshire Police recognises that there is gang-related activity it needs to investigate in the north of the county and it is developing a county drug profile potentially linked to the traveller community. The issue of net immigration into the county means that the force's work on identifying foreign-national offenders and making sure criminal record checks take place is improving; this is now better supported through more stable leadership in the intelligence function. However, this is all work in progress and it means that until the work is complete the force's understanding of hidden and emerging crime will only be partial.

## **How well does the force understand things that affect demand?**

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police reduces the demand that inefficiency can create internally. Forces can do this by identifying and eliminating inefficient processes, by ensuring they monitor work to get the best outcomes and by encouraging officers and staff to suggest new and better ways of doing their jobs.

### **Managing, prioritising and filtering demand**

The strong commitment from the chief officer team and scrutiny from the police and crime commissioner (PCC) both focus on improving how the force manages and prioritises demand in order to be more efficient. Demand is prioritised and filtered through a daily management meeting (in the morning) and an evening management meeting, with close scrutiny by the monthly force performance board, which is chaired by the assistant chief constable. At the time of the inspection the assistant chief officer was responsible for demand, overseeing its development and a temporary assistant chief constable chairs the strategic alliance<sup>10</sup> control room performance board. The PCC also scrutinises the efficiency of the force and attends the alliance summit, together with her counterparts from Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, where the alliance efficiency plans are discussed. A new monthly alliance demand meeting exchanges ideas and discusses best practice.

The force needs to develop its understanding of internal demand and inefficiencies. The force's review and inspections team has mapped out the different meetings which take place both internally and with partner organisations and has specifically started to look at the results of these meetings; it may decide not to attend or support some of the meetings. This work is not complete and no changes have yet been

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<sup>10</sup> The strategic alliance is a collaboration of three forces: Bedfordshire Police, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary. Major areas of collaboration include joint protective services, such as roads policing, firearms, the major crime unit and dogs. Recently collaborated departments include human resources, the professional standards department and criminal justice.

made. The force also recognises there is some duplication in how it produces environmental scanning documents<sup>11</sup> and plans to work with the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC) and local authorities to produce one version and pool resources.

The strength of the alliance and the achievements in the collaboration of operational and organisational departments are extensive. It is continuing to develop throughout the eastern region and into a seven-force<sup>12</sup> collaboration for some areas, such as vetting, firearms and procurement. New systems have been identified to amalgamate information such as custody, crime and intelligence, as well as an enterprise resource planning (ERP - human resources, finance and duties management) system, to enable these efficiencies to be implemented. It is disappointing that both systems have been delayed, but there remains a keen commitment to ensure that they are implemented to support the alliance aim of making further efficiencies and reinvesting in priority areas such as safeguarding, cyber-crime and protecting frontline policing.

Bedfordshire Police's approach to prioritising and filtering demand requires improvement. In HMICFRS' 2016 effectiveness inspection, we judged the force to be inadequate in the way it risk-assessed public calls at the first point of contact in the force control room. This meant that it was not providing the right response and not safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, specifically missing and absent children. During our re-visit in April 2017, we found the force had improved its response and more children are now being classified as missing rather than absent, which should improve the way it addresses this type of demand. However, specialist teams that deal with missing children are being overwhelmed (because demand outstrips resources), causing delays in safeguarding taking place.

The force uses the THRIVE<sup>13</sup> risk assessment model to ensure members of the public receive the right response and, this year, we were pleased to find it has invested in further training for control room staff and other frontline teams. Between April 2016 and March 2017 more than 1,000 Bedfordshire Police officers and staff received updated, face-to-face THRIVE training. There are daily management meetings and within the alliance, the senior member of staff who is responsible for

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<sup>11</sup> Environmental scanning is the process of gathering information about events and their relationships within an organisations internal and external environments. The purpose of environmental scanning is to help management determine the future direction of the organisation.

<sup>12</sup> The seven forces in the strategic collaboration are Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Kent, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

<sup>13</sup> The threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE) model is used to assess the appropriate initial police response to a call for service. It allows a judgment to be made of the relative risk posed by the call and places the individual needs of the victim at the centre of that decision.

contact with the public oversees the force's effectiveness in answering emergency 999 and non-emergency 101 calls to ensure that demand is not being suppressed (preventing it from being reported) through the public abandoning calls. Bedfordshire Police's new policing model established a different approach to responding to calls for service, in order to make most efficient use of its response staff. Previously the force operated a traditional two-tiered response for urgent calls, either requiring attendance within 15 minutes or within one hour, depending on the degree of urgency and risk. Now, all calls requiring police attendance are dealt with as either 'fast' or 'fixed'. Fast are the urgent calls with a one-hour attendance target; and the remainder are fixed, which means an appointment will be made for an officer to visit the caller at an appropriate and convenient time. THRIVE risk assessments are used to determine the appropriate response. The other two forces in the alliance still operate to a 15 minute target, therefore all three forces continue to be measured against this target. Bedfordshire Police currently responds to 33 percent of all its fast calls within 15 minutes. However, the force has no way of knowing whether this is an acceptable level of response. The force needs to assure itself that its response to emergency incidents that require immediate police attendance is effective and timely. HMICFRS will review the progress of the force's response to incidents in the autumn 2017 effectiveness inspection.

Bedfordshire Police has good processes in place to ensure benefits are realised from change programmes, including the identification of unintended negative consequences. The established force quality improvement programme (FQIP) produces benefits realisation reports every four months and monitors outputs and outcomes for the fortnightly implementation meeting, which is chaired by the assistant chief constable. The robust and mature monitoring and evaluation arrangements established through the alliance have enabled the force to develop sophisticated programme management systems and expertise which serve it well. Bedfordshire Police is the lead force for the alliance joint protective services (JPS), which is currently subject of a full review using external consultants to identify demand patterns and trends and realign resources where necessary.

The force has taken the learning from the alliance to ensure benefits are identified at the start of change programmes and their related projects. A member of staff on the alliance change programme is responsible for ensuring benefits are identified at the beginning of a change programme and tracked; where unintended consequences are identified, they are addressed early. This has included the provision of mobile devices and remote access to police IT systems to enable agile working; this allows officers to remain on patrol rather than returning to the station to complete desk-based administration.

## Leaders promoting innovative thinking

The force is good at seeking and responding to ideas from the workforce. In January 2017, staff in the force control room and crime bureau were surveyed about the force change programme and asked for their views. They are sent regular emails on progress, with examples such as moving to another location with breakout areas, new computer screens and IT equipment. The next step is to display the plans for the layout in the new location and invite suggestions from staff. Members of the new emerald team, which deals with public protection, have been consulted on the implementation of their new way of working and additional resources have been allocated, including domestic abuse victim engagement officers to provide additional support.

Although the force suggestion scheme 'ask the exec' was only re-introduced six weeks before our inspection, officers and staff told us that they could give feedback or suggest ideas through line managers at the Better 4 Bedfordshire seminars, and at the chief officer leadership sessions. The force has also recently introduced the 100 little things scheme, where staff identify things that have been requested or which would improve the workplace, with examples such as a quiet room within the crime community hub, new victim-care leaflets and house-to-house calling cards.

## Summary of findings



**Requires improvement**

Bedfordshire Police does not yet have a full understanding of current reactive demand. Its understanding of demand is developing and it recognises that it still has more to do. The force has made positive progress since 2016 in developing a new system for assessing demand. It has increased its analytical capacity, identified intelligence gaps and commissioned work to improve its assessment of current, complex and future demand. The force is working on internal demand and inefficiencies to identify improvements including the number of meetings attended. Bedfordshire continues to record high levels of anti-social behaviour compared with other forces, but the force is not clear as to the reasons why. The force is developing how it records and categorises anti-social behaviour and further work is being done on its understanding of hidden demand and emerging crime, but these areas of work are incomplete and so its understanding of demand can only be partial.

Bedfordshire Police's approach to prioritising and filtering demand requires improvement although it has improved since our last inspection. Officers and staff have received additional training and fewer missing children are being identified as absent. However, it still does not have sufficient resources in place to respond effectively.

The force has taken positive steps to strengthen how it ensures it achieves all the benefits possible from its change projects. Members of the workforce are encouraged to make suggestions and put forward their ideas, and they are listened to by leaders.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should develop its understanding of demand, ensuring that it has analysed appropriate information and intelligence from wider sources.

## How well does the force use its resources?

Police forces have finite resources with which to do an increasingly complicated job, so must ensure that they deploy and use their resources in the best way possible. The biggest resource that policing has is its workforce and it is important that forces make sure that they have access to the skills needed to police effectively now and in the future.

It is also important that forces make sophisticated decisions about how to spend and invest their resources in order to get the best value for the public. This means forces need to have a good understanding of what they can achieve within a particular budget.

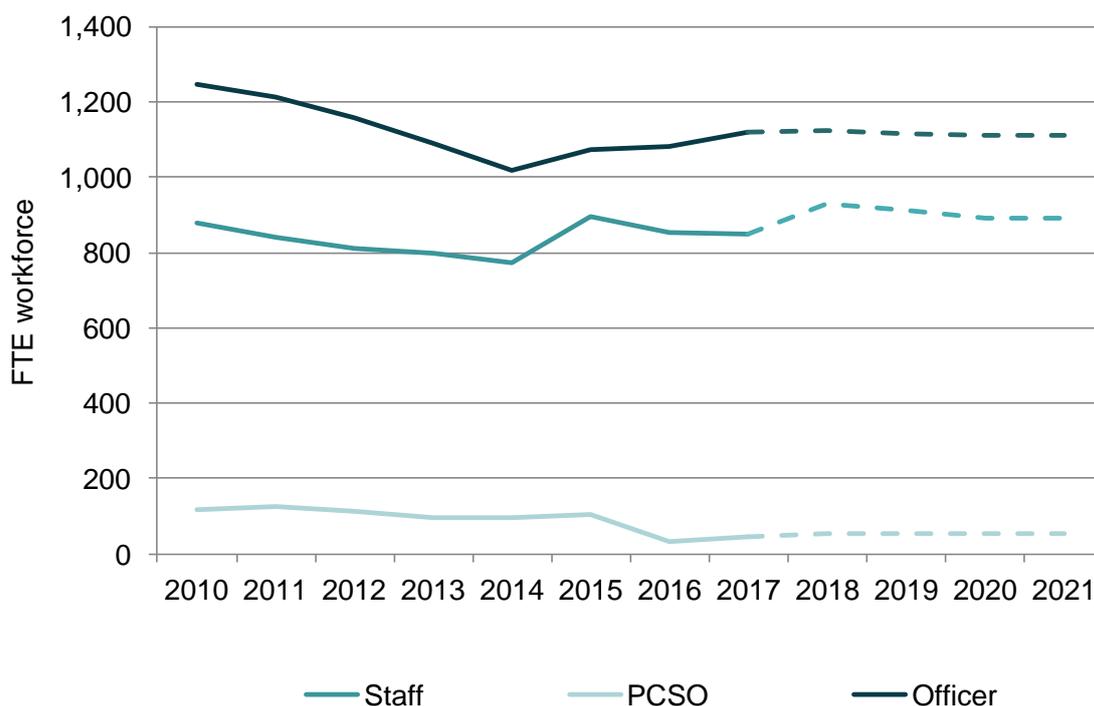
Forces cannot provide services efficiently in isolation, and must work with other police forces and local organisations to ensure they provide the best service to the public at the most appropriate cost.

## How well does the force understand the capability of its workforce?

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police understands the skills it needs, the skills it actually has in the workforce and what steps it is taking to ensure that they match. Police forces spend around 80 percent of their budget on staffing, so it is vital that the workforce is as productive as possible.

Figure 3 illustrates the workforce profile (the number of officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs)) since 2010 and projections to 2021. Between March 2017 and March 2021, it is projected that the number of officers will decrease by 7.1 FTE (1 percent) from 1,119 to 1,112. Similarly, the number of officers across England and Wales as a whole is projected to decrease by 2 percent.

**Figure 3: Bedfordshire Police’s planned full-time equivalent workforce (FTE) as on 31 March from 2010 to 2021**



**Source: Home Office Police workforce statistics and HMICFRS spring data collection**

The number of staff working in Bedfordshire Police is projected to increase by 42.3 FTE (5 percent) from 849 to 891 between March 2017 and March 2021. Staff numbers across England and Wales, however, are projected to decrease by 2 percent. The number of PCSOs in Bedfordshire is projected to increase by 7.3 FTE (16 percent) from 46 to 53 over the same period. For England and Wales as a whole, PCSOs are projected to increase by 0.2 percent.

Bedfordshire Police has a growing understanding of the skills and capabilities it needs, including how required skills and capabilities will change in the future. It is specifically recruiting people who have the mix of skills needed, for example the specialist skills required for community posts include working with schools and traveller communities and tackling anti-social behaviour. There are plans in place for ten police officers to join the force through the Police Now scheme,<sup>14</sup> recruited to apply their academic skills to high-crime neighbourhoods to reduce and prevent demand. It is also using volunteers, an internship programme and police staff recruitment into high-tech crime areas. There is a good understanding of the operational skills that each member of the workforce has and when these are due to be updated, and the force uses needs analysis to develop a business case for this training. However, it has yet to broaden this understanding across all levels to record the skills and capabilities of its workforce fully, for example via its individual

<sup>14</sup> For more information, see: [www.policenow.org.uk/the-programme/about-the-programme/](http://www.policenow.org.uk/the-programme/about-the-programme/)

performance assessment process (referred to as PDR). The force envisages that a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system will enable this to be provided across the alliance. However, the implementation of ERP has been delayed to enable the new seven-force case, custody, intelligence and crime system to be prioritised, and it will not be in place in August 2017 as originally planned. This is disappointing as it is designed to provide a more efficient method of dealing with all human resources (HR) services, and align finance, workforce monitoring and planning. The alliance has a clear determination to ensure that there are no further delays.

The alliance has taken steps to understand the skills it has in its workforce down to the rank of chief inspector and police staff equivalent. In 2016, we found that the alliance HR and learning and development capability was stretched because of a reduction in resources. In addition, a more favourable spending review outcome for all three forces led to increased recruitment of police officers, which resulted in more work for HR and learning and development departments. A new business plan was approved by the alliance supporting additional resources and reversing some of the cutbacks that had previously been made in anticipation of more severe financial cuts.

Bedfordshire Police has completed a strategic assessment for the force. Together with the serious and organised crime local profile and assessment of new demand it is starting to obtain a better overview of its areas of high demand as well as an understanding of its skill gaps. The force plans to use this analysis in workforce planning to provide it with a better understanding of the workforce skills and mix and how these are aligned with its finances. The alliance has invested in ICT and provided equipment and training. However, the force recognises that the collaborative training allocation does not meet all the needs it has identified; for example, it wants to offer a community policing qualification to its PCSOs and has seconded a sergeant to learning and development to develop this training course. The force's student officer development programme has been expanded, to introduce students to a much wider range of skills and experience during their tutorship and probationary periods. This is positive work.

## **How well does the force understand the capability of its leaders?**

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police understands the skills it needs and the skills its leaders have, and what steps it is taking to ensure that they match.

Bedfordshire Police has a developing understanding of the leadership skills, capabilities and gaps within its workforce but it is not complete. The force has a growing appreciation of how changing demand will affect the skills the workforce needs. It has conducted an audit at chief inspector level and above and has started to invest in reducing the leadership skill gaps identified. For example, in recent promotion boards, the force looked specifically at those officers and staff who had a

good ability and awareness of working with and across different external organisations, to effect change through well-developed influencing and negotiating skills. The force has introduced leadership workshops and continuous professional development days which seek to address some skills and capability gaps, for example by practising having difficult conversations and dealing with partnership, public and private organisations more effectively. In addition, the force has supported training for officers and staff to become mentors, and 40 people in the force are now qualified to support the workforce, not just those aspiring to be future leaders. There is access to 360-degree feedback and leadership-style psychometric testing.

The director of HR for the alliance is continuing work on the alliance people plan, which includes developing leadership capability through coaching and mentoring as well as some structured leadership training. The people plan includes an undertaking to assess leadership capability and determine a way forward; this has been partly achieved for senior ranks. The collaborative promotion process aims to be fairer to candidates and also allow the three forces to become more efficient and ensure that leadership gaps can be filled from across the three forces for the collaborating departments. The alliance has also advertised externally for senior posts to attract different types of leaders with different skills. This year, there are plans to extend the leadership skills audit to sergeant and inspector level and police staff equivalent, which should provide the force with a more comprehensive understanding of the skills it has and those it needs to develop further. A 'good leadership' video on the force intranet identifies the leadership qualities the force expects from its supervisors and managers, and leadership workshops have been filmed so they can be put on the force intranet.

The force does not have a formal talent management programme for aspiring leaders, but there are a number of ways people can improve their leadership skills, with an informative web page on the force intranet that signposts this. This year, the force invited staff and officers to put themselves forward to form part of a development programme, and all those who expressed an interest were accepted. This cohort of 64 officers and staff has been split into four groups to examine particular elements of workforce development and seek out improvement opportunities. The elements are: the mentoring programme; performance review; continuous professional development; and completing a cultural audit (workforce attitude and behaviour). The force is working with a specialist training provider to develop the skills of the leadership cohort and also plans to conduct an evaluation of how well people have progressed.

An alliance talent management team is working on plans for how to identify and develop future leaders. It will include the PDR system and the introduction of the College of Policing's new competency and values framework, which sets out the national standards concerning workforce skills. The alliance is currently recruiting a

superintendent through the Direct Entry scheme,<sup>15</sup> and the force continues to promote different styles of leadership through the internal fast-track promotion scheme. There are regular business meetings between the director of HR and senior leaders to review leadership skills gaps and to discuss plans to fill those gaps.

## **How well does the force allocate resources?**

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police uses its understanding of demand to prioritise its activities in order to provide the best service to the public. To assess this, we considered the extent to which the force understands what it can provide within a particular budget.

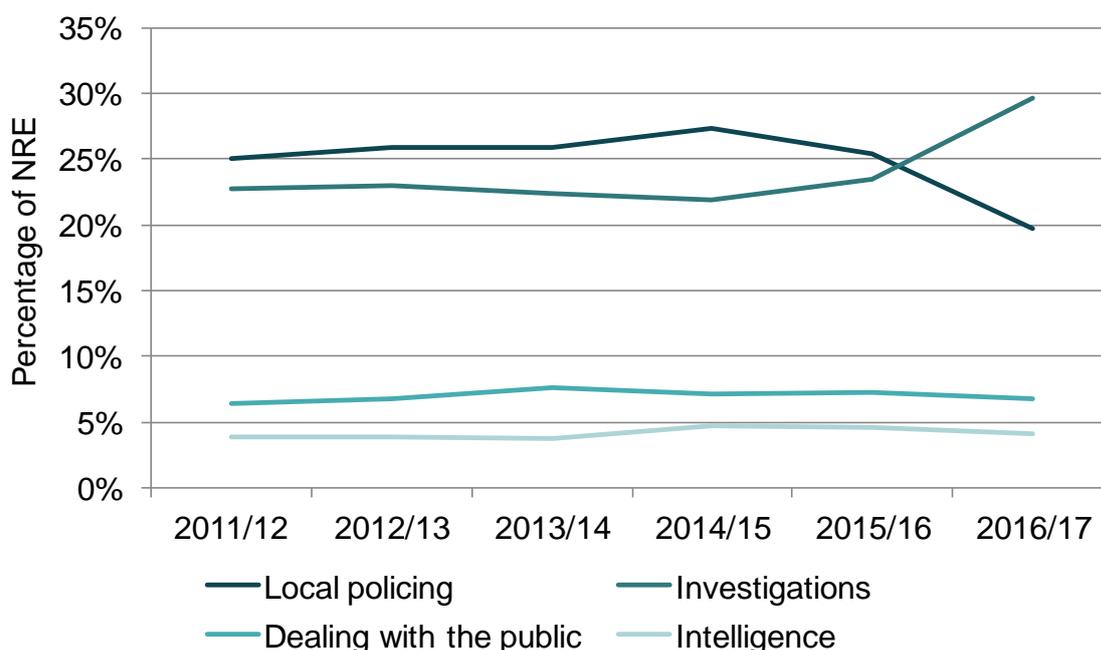
The level of spending on different police functions varies between forces, depending on the particular demands that each force must meet. Higher expenditure does not necessarily mean better services, but it can demonstrate how a force prioritises its resources.

Figure 4 shows how expenditure is distributed across the most common police functions. Local policing covers functions such as incident response, neighbourhood policing and local investigations. Investigation covers areas of specific proactive investigative functions, such as major crime, while dealing with the public includes front counter and control room activities. Intelligence covers the gathering and assessment of intelligence.

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<sup>15</sup> More information on the national Direct Entry and Fast Track schemes can be found at: [www.college.police.uk](http://www.college.police.uk)

**Figure 4: Estimated percentage of net revenue expenditure allocated across policing functions in Bedfordshire Police from 2011/12 to 2016/17**



**Source: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)**

**Note: Functions that have not been included as they are equivalent to back office functions or are only a small proportion of expenditure include operational support and road policing.**

In Bedfordshire, the percentage of estimated expenditure on local policing in 2016/17 has decreased from 25 percent in 2011/12 to 20 percent in 2016/17. Estimated expenditure on investigation has increased from 23 percent to 30 percent and both 'dealing with the public' and intelligence functions have a similar proportion of expenditure in 2016/17 as they did in 2010/11.

### **Prioritisation and cost**

Bedfordshire Police has made good progress since 2016 on prioritising how it meets different types of demand at both operational and force level. A force-level strategic assessment has been completed and this guides a control strategy which is reviewed on a six-monthly basis. This year, the assessment did not directly inform the budget-setting process but it will be updated in autumn 2017. The demand assessment derived from it will then inform the allocation of resources through the budget process and the PCC's priority plan (together with public survey work) in February/March 2018. The demand assessment provides an opportunity to reassess resourcing levels in the future, but while the 96 new police recruits are still in training and not yet ready for independent patrol, it is difficult to quantify their impact until their postings into community and response policing are fully established. Currently, the force is spending a considerable amount of time responding to demand rather than preventing it.

The force continues to apply the THRIVE model of assessment at the first point of contact and this affects how resources are allocated. It has experienced an increase in call volume and an increase in the length of calls as the more detailed assessment is completed. The number of fast response incidents has increased, and the number of fixed (including scheduled) appointments is reducing. Additional staff are being recruited into the control room, and the force responded to the needs of the under-resourced emerald team (which had a high volume of demand), by moving 12 officers from the serious and organised crime surveillance team for four weeks to clear the backlog of public protection cases and assist investigators with workloads. This appears to have been successful and the adverse effect on serious and organised crime investigations has been managed, but the force recognises this has resulted in a cost to the serious and organised crime function.

The force takes part in some good collaborative working. This includes working with local authorities on developing the community safety plan, well-established work with the alliance, and regional collaboration and preliminary work in the seven-force collaboration. Part of the public contact work completed for the alliance included public consultation, and as a result, a range of new services has been introduced online. Recognising that the public expect to have traditional means of contact in addition to online services, the force and the PCC have ensured that this expectation is met. Additional online options are planned so the public can identify which organisation they require, and have quick and easy access to services such as environmental health and noise abatement.

Overall, the force does not have a strongly developed understanding of the effect of varying the levels of service it provides in order to reduce costs and/or meet changes in demand across each area and department of the whole force. Analysis planned for later in 2017 is expected to provide the force with a broader understanding of how changes in its services affect costs elsewhere. In contrast, all business cases for the alliance collaborative functions include elements of the level of service, resources and financial savings options; for example, the joint protective services (JPS)<sup>16</sup> have produced a reduction in costs of 5 percent.

## **Investment**

Bedfordshire Police can show it makes investment decisions to best effect. An evaluation of the benefits of investing in body-worn video cameras and mobile data technology showed officers and staff are using the technology well and improving how efficiently they deal with the administrative aspect of policing service to improve outcomes for victims. Other operational examples include: the success of the mental health triage team in finding more appropriate ways of dealing with people with

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<sup>16</sup> JPS is the collaborated unit providing a range of policing services across all three force areas, including: armed policing, major crime, roads policing, camera, tickets and collisions, scientific services, emergency planning.

mental health problems; and estates rationalisation (in relation to the buildings the force owns and needs in the future) and co-location with other blue light organisations and local authorities. These examples reduce costs and improve working relationships. The use of the online case management system means that information on community problems, including organised crime group activity, can be shared and joint work co-ordinated to help tackle criminality.

Bedfordshire Police, together with the alliance, is currently investing in a new force IT system. The system should make joint working across the alliance easier and will facilitate better regional working through infrastructure upgrades and infrastructure convergence. The force is also investing in the national ESMCP (emergency services mobile communications programme); it has plans for a new custody suite on the police headquarters site; and it is continuing to assess the options for a combined police and fire and rescue service headquarters, as well as a combined finance, HR, payroll and duties system (with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary).

## **How well does the force work with others?**

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police has explored all opportunities to work in collaboration with others to increase efficiency and provide better, more resilient services. This can include working jointly 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 other organisations and other forces, and whether it has a good understanding of how successful its joint working is.

### **How the force works with other organisations and other forces**

Bedfordshire Police works well with other organisations to manage some types of demand collectively. There are many operational examples of working with local authority partners to solve problems jointly, such as street drinking in Luton town centre and the off-street prostitution problem. There are now three multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASHs)<sup>17</sup> across the force area, which also amalgamate resources to manage vulnerable domestic abuse victims and their families collectively. The trial of the community profile, beginning in the Queens Park area of Bedford, is an exciting development. HMICFRS looks forward to assessing how this is used with partner agencies to focus police and partner resources on particular problem areas, offenders and victims.

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<sup>17</sup> A multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) brings together into a single location key safeguarding agencies to better identify risks to children (and in some areas, vulnerable adults), and improve decision making, interventions and outcomes. The MASH enables the multi-agency team to share all appropriate information in a secure environment, and ensure that the most appropriate response is provided to safeguard and protect the individual effectively.

The force understands well the benefits of joint working, and work with local authorities and blue light services continues to make progress in 2017. Joint police and local authority priority anti-social behaviour teams are well-established, tackling high-risk anti-social behaviour in the three unitary authorities. The force has multi-agency teams who are working more closely with children's care homes to ensure that reports are made to the police when the basic checks to locate the missing child or young person have been completed by care home employees. There is close contact with the local authority and home providers to ensure that standards are met. To assist local care home staff, the force has a dedicated missing persons unit who are in regular contact to discuss any problems or concerns. There has been some additional work with care home managers and staff to increase the understanding of each agency of the impact of demand on one another. Currently, the dedicated team that deals with missing children has too few resources to deal with the high level of demand effectively.

### **The benefits of joint working**

Bedfordshire Police is good at identifying the benefits of collaborative work and it has a strong spend and saving plan in place up until 2020/21. The PCC provides strong support to the force, identifying opportunities for savings through the eastern region seven-force collaboration and work with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The alliance's JPS command has also set cashable efficiency targets of 2.5 percent per annum for the period 2018/19 and 2019/20; this reflects the additional efficiencies arising from improving the allocation of officers and staff resources against demand and risk. The seven-force change programme plans to extend collaboration in specialist operational areas such as firearms and procurement. In February 2017, the alliance criminal justice collaboration agreed to collaborate the witness care service and Crown Court liaison officers for Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and the administration of justice for all three forces. At the time of our inspection, a new unit for the administration of justice was scheduled for June 2017. The most recent phase of collaboration is expected to save around £654,000, which should help close the funding gap faced by the three forces and protect frontline policing.

### **Leadership driving innovation**

Senior leaders in Bedfordshire Police work closely with local authority leaders to understand how their transformation plans might affect the demand on police services. Agreed joint priorities and joint delivery plans deal with problems such as youth violence, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, on- and off-street sex trade and labour exploitation. However, it is not clear how the force is planning to deal with increased demand as a result of partner resources being reduced.

The alliance is at the leading edge of innovation in the extent to which the three forces collaborate and share learning at a regional and national level. This is evident in: the JPS; professional standards and vetting; procurement and criminal justice; HR, learning and development; and ICT. The alliance has been successful in advancing the collaboration work and it has secured police transformation funding from the government. Bedfordshire Police leads on the seven-force integrated covert authorities bureau responsible for the management of covert policing techniques; this will further strengthen and underpin the strong collaboration work being undertaken locally, regionally and within the new seven-force arrangement. The force remains committed to further collaboration in the force control room, and is gearing itself towards implementing the new force IT system so it aligns with the alliance's various systems.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Bedfordshire Police has a good understanding of its current workforce's operational skills and capabilities. It understands future requirements and has plans to allocate resources appropriately. The force could benefit from a more formal understanding of the softer skills held by the workforce and from a better understanding of leadership skills, particularly below the rank of chief inspector and police staff equivalent.

The force is prioritising demand effectively and is putting the resources it has in the right place to manage the threats identified, but this is not sufficient to deal with all the demand it faces. It is developing its understanding of the cost and quality of current service levels to meet demand. The force has prioritised its resources to deal with the high level of vulnerability, but this has been at the cost of not resourcing its community policing function adequately, which affects its ability to deal with current demand efficiently. It is building its PCSO and PC community policing strength.

Bedfordshire Police has good investment plans and it is working well with other agencies to manage demand for services. It continues to develop the strong and well-established alliance, regional and seven-force collaborations. It is able to demonstrate that its collaboration with other agencies reduces cost, and increases resilience and capacity.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that it has sufficient officers and staff available to fulfil its resourcing model and meet the demand on its services, while also taking into account the wellbeing of its workforce.
- The force should extend its skills and capability audit to allow it to understand leadership capacity and capability below the rank of chief inspector and police staff equivalent, including special constables and volunteers.

## How well is the force planning for the future?

To be efficient, a police force needs not only to understand the present, but also to be able to make reasonable predictions about the future in terms of how its demand will change, how its workforce will change and how its partners will be affected. It needs to have adequate, realistic and innovative plans to meet the operational and financial challenges of the future.

### How well does the force predict likely future demand?

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police analyses trends in its current demand in order to predict likely future demand. We also assessed the extent to which it has taken account of changing public expectations and technology. In addition, we expect forces to be considering how they will work with other organisations and other forces in the future.

#### Predicting future demand

Bedfordshire Police has made some progress in understanding likely future demand, although there is still more work to do to evaluate fully what the probable demand will be in the future. The force is continuing to monitor demand and assess resource requirements using analysis tools provided by an external consultancy. It is also using an element of predictive analysis and future crime trend analysis, incorporating data on demographic changes into its analysis to gain a better understanding of likely future changes in demand for police services from a changing community. To improve understanding of future demand further, it has started to develop an approach to community profiling so it can increase its understanding of demand across localities. It should also ensure that to predict likely future demand effectively, it correctly identifies and categorises incidents to ensure it has an accurate picture of changing risks and trends. For example, the force needs to improve how it categorises anti-social behaviour. It currently estimates that as many as 40 percent of incidents recorded as anti-social behaviour could be categorised wrongly. This represents a significant volume of police work. The impact of this is that any future demand planning is potentially based upon incorrect data, resulting in resources not being directed to the areas where the public need them the most. The force is currently developing its understanding and should carry out further analysis of current practices in the control room to ensure other categories, such as suspicious incidents and malicious communication, are identified correctly.

Bedfordshire Police is continuing to improve its approach to assessing the most pressing risks from criminality that communities throughout Bedfordshire and in Luton are facing. The 2017 strategic assessment represents a much more comprehensive review than the force has previously had access to. It uses the MoRiLE risk assessment model to assist its decision makers in identifying and

prioritising risks and allocating resources accordingly. This approach intrinsically links threat, risk and harm assessments to the organisational capacity and capability to respond. The strategic assessment has been further refined with a specific assessment of the likely demands from serious and organised crime in the force area. Further work is planned to develop a more detailed understanding of the scale, nature and likely future changes of priority areas, such as tackling child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and human trafficking. There has been some interesting and innovative work to begin to map the complete demand against the force's current capability to meet the demands. The strategic demand assessment and the one page heat map summary identifying the high-risk policing priorities, provide a useful foundation for future resource allocation and, as this work develops, they should provide robust evidence to inform future prioritisation decisions. HMICFRS will monitor the development of this approach with interest.

A significant weakness for Bedfordshire Police is that the model for policing that the force designed in 2014 to enable it to meet demand, has still not been fully staffed and is not expected to be so until 2018. Until the force fully resources its policing model and ensures that it has a functioning community policing service, it cannot understand totally the demands that are likely to come from local communities, nor can it begin to assess properly how much future demand may be reduced by earlier intervention and prevention activities. Although the force recognises the value of having more officers and staff working in prevention activities and is committed to achieving this, it does not have enough frontline staff who are trained in preventative policing and joint problem solving or who have the capacity to put time into this. The force is aware that this is undermining its performance and has taken steps to mitigate these issues, such as enabling 203 frontline officers and staff to attend problem-solving training and introduction of the 'have your say' community priorities survey which should improve the understanding of community issues and concerns.

### **Future considerations**

The chief constable and the PCC work closely together to ensure that public expectations are taken into account when devising and implementing the police and crime plan. This includes the force's plans for strengthening the local policing function, with more officers being made available to support the community hubs. The PCC and the chief constable regularly scrutinise the alliance change programme and the local force quality improvement programme. Through this scrutiny they ensure that these programmes will aid the implementation of the police and crime plan and the agreed vision for policing in Bedfordshire.

Effective consultation has taken place with the public about different methods of contacting the police. As a result, the force has implemented a range of methods to ensure the public have a good choice in how they contact the police service and other support organisations. For example, the availability of online non-urgent crime reporting reflects the public's desire to see more online reporting options. The force

is actively seeking out opportunities to work more effectively with communities through the re-energised community forums. The role of independent advisory groups (IAGs)<sup>18</sup> is positive and constructive in Bedfordshire.

Making good use of developments in ICT is an area of strength, and the alliance's early focus on using new technology to increase visibility and productivity through the use of mobile data technology is a positive step. The new ICT strategy provides a clear vision and direction for the three forces. The digital capabilities board monitors and makes decisions effectively in order to continue making progress. The force responds proactively to the growing risks of cyber-crime and the opportunities for digital investigations, and has invested in additional cyber capabilities within the high-tech crime unit. As a result of the strategic assessment, the force has recognised that it needs to strengthen the IT capabilities within the workforce and has taken the opportunity to increase workforce ICT skills through recent police officer recruitment, which has specifically sought to recruit ICT and business skills. It has also developed mobile apps to enable the rural community to access police information quickly.

The chief officer team is committed to working more closely with blue light services as well as Luton, Bedford and Central Bedfordshire unitary authorities, supported by the PCC. The force and Luton Borough Council are piloting a community safety accreditation scheme, under which local council officers are granted specific community safety powers. The alliance is strong and the seven-force collaboration is making promising progress in important areas such as ICT, procurement, vetting and firearms. Plans are progressing well with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to increase the existing joint work to promote greater efficiency and make best use of collective resources wherever possible. For example, frontline teams of police officers and PCSOs will co-locate with fire officers based in fire stations at Bedford, Ampthill and Leighton Buzzard. The force is also exploring opportunities for better joint work with the ambulance service and other NHS partners. There is a plan to rationalise estates (in relation to the buildings the force owns), and to consider sharing additional buildings with the local authority. In addition, the multi-agency safeguarding hubs have expanded, and there is now one for each local authority in the force area.

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<sup>18</sup> The role of an IAG is to help the police to understand better the groups who are under-represented in normal police decision-making processes. IAG members are volunteers drawn from local communities, with varied backgrounds, who have an interest in policing and its effect on their communities and offer independent advice.

## **How well is the force planning for the future, in terms of workforce?**

HMICFRS inspected how well Bedfordshire Police has plans in place to recruit, develop and nurture the leaders of tomorrow to ensure it has the right skills and talent in the right roles.

### **Succession planning**

Bedfordshire Police is ensuring its succession planning through its leadership development approach. An agreed number of staff and officers is identified in the workforce establishment in line with the budget strategy, as well as a profile of the deployment of the workforce to meet policing priorities. The alliance is making progress with its ambitious joint people plan which sets out plans for recruiting, selecting and promoting to meet identified force needs for officers, PCSOs, staff and special constables. This includes all collaborated officer promotion processes, to be aligned and run in accordance with the identified demand for officers at that rank; the effect of this will be to minimise the use of temporary and acting arrangements. Although this has not yet been achieved fully, there has been progress at superintendent and chief inspector level.

Through its joint HR function, the alliance aims to develop an apprenticeship scheme in order to gain the benefit from the levy that will be paid from April 2017.<sup>19</sup> In addition, it aims to align succession planning and talent management schemes for officers and staff, with a focus on middle management, and address any requirements of the College of Policing review of leadership. It has reviewed the arrangements for performance appraisal as a basis for achieving the reform led by the College of Policing, and for supporting the identification of talent and potential, and considering the most effective profile of qualifications for new officer recruits. It has amended the alliance recruitment and selection policy and procedure to include the revised procedure for selection to roles in collaborated units, and to emphasise the requirements for fairness and transparency more effectively. In Bedfordshire Police, the recruitment of new officers and staff targets selection criteria which include IT (business) skills and community skills which reflect the diversity of the force area.

The people plan ensures that where specialist roles and skills are identified and future skills such as digital or cyber skills are required, the alliance builds its capability in these areas through more effective use of the PDRs and talent management, and attracts external candidates to specialist roles as well as providing more appropriate career opportunities. Progress is being made with this work and, in

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<sup>19</sup> Any employer with an annual pay bill of more than £3m each year must pay the apprenticeship levy each month from 6 April 2017. It is set at 0.5 percent of the total pay bill. The levy is designed to encourage employers to support apprenticeships.

2017, the focus on aligning the PDRs across the alliance has been achieved. The force has improved the quality and completion rate for PDRs, though it acknowledges that more can be done to ensure PDRs are quality assured and that line managers are supported to ensure they are developing their officers and staff effectively. Workforce development is facilitated through mentoring and talent management, as well as PDRs.

## **Recruitment**

Bedfordshire Police continues to make good use of schemes such as Direct Entry and, together with other forces in the alliance, it is currently recruiting a Direct Entry police superintendent. The force advertises for specialist roles externally and aims to diversify its workforce. As a result of working through the Police Now scheme, ten new recruits will be put into community policing roles. The collaborative recruitment, selection and promotion processes should provide greater opportunity for each force to identify the right skills and capabilities in the future as well as increasing diversity in Bedfordshire Police and across the alliance. The force is leading the alliance in the recruitment of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) officers. It has actively sought to increase the number of BAME candidates in its recent police officer recruitment, and 33 percent of its newest recruits, including those recruited since the end of the end of the 2016/17 financial year, are from BAME backgrounds. HMICFRS commends the force for its success and looks forward to seeing how this positive approach progresses.

## **How well does the force plan for likely future demand?**

HMICFRS inspected how adequate, realistic and innovative Bedfordshire Police's plans for the future are, and to what extent it is planning to make savings in the future, including saving to invest in new systems and approaches.

## **Plans**

The improved strategic assessment and police and crime plan have provided more solid evidence and clarity of vision for the force. Financial plans are prudent and match workforce plans until 2019/20. The force's financial health has improved, but it is a small force and it has a funding gap of £10.9m over the medium term, from 2017/18–2020/21. The force has plans in place to find £6.8m of these savings and can balance its budget until 2019/20, but it is still facing significant difficulty in bridging the budget gaps that it anticipates from 2019/20 onwards. It currently has no clear plans in place as to how it will reduce its spending and continue to provide an effective policing service. However, it recognises that the current operating model, although not yet fully resourced, is affordable until 2019/20, and knows it will not meet growing demand for services without further organisational change. The medium-term financial plan is realistic and is based on sound planning assumptions, for example it assumes 2 percent growth each year in council tax precept as well as

expected growth year on year in the overall council tax base. The increasing local funding from council tax goes some way to offsetting expected real-terms cuts in government grants. The force is not assuming there will be any additional savings from extending collaborative working beyond the current alliance plans. Plans for extending alliance collaboration have a recent record of delays in the implementation of a number of systems. It is critical that the force and alliance maintain firm control of the implementation of these plans in order for the benefits to be realised and efficiencies achieved.

The force has undergone significant organisational change over recent years in its move towards a more sustainable and efficient operating model; further major organisational change is likely to be required to meet the financial gaps from 2019/20 onwards. Investments in ICT are also set to change the way the force operates. For example, the new force IT system is amalgamating information currently held on separate systems, such as intelligence, investigation management, case preparation, and custody data. A new resource planning system and public contact collaboration will enable greater productivity and more consistent quality services. The resource planning system is expected to lead to greater self-service by officers and staff, improvements in efficiency, better alignment of finance and HR planning, with a more consistent approach to workforce performance management, and the opportunity to gain a better understanding of workforce skills and capabilities.

## **Savings**

Despite having significant financial constraints, Bedfordshire Police is continuing to invest for the future. Having saved more than it needed to, it has been able to invest in additional workforce numbers in order to increase its capacity and capability in providing priority services such as safeguarding and tackling cyber-crime. It is also rationalising estates (in relation to the buildings it owns and needs in the future), providing opportunities to invest capital receipts from the disposal of redundant buildings. Together with its alliance partners, it is making a significant investment in its ICT infrastructure to ensure it can future-proof its services and improve efficiency. The force has access to the PCC's financial reserves for both capital investment and, as a contingency, to cope with unforeseen in-year expenditure. The PCC plans to retain a general unallocated reserve of £3m throughout the medium-term financial plan period, which is at the lower end of what is usually considered prudent. Earmarked reserves are set to fall from £10.2m at the start of 2017/18 to £4.8m by the beginning of 2020/21. Even if there are no other unforeseen calls on reserves over this period, this level of reserves provides only limited opportunity for investment. However, in addition to making its required savings in 2016/17 the force also underspent at the end of the year by around £2m; some of this saving is being used to replenish reserves and, again, the force is anticipating a small underspend in 2017/18.

Across the alliance and the wider region, there is strong police collaborative effort aimed at operating as efficiently as possible in order to achieve savings. The alliance has put in place joint provision of the main organisational and operational support services. In addition, regional and wider collaboration arrangements have been put in place for counter-terrorism, serious and organised crime and police vehicles and these continue to generate continuing and increasing cashable efficiencies. For the future, the region is advancing the regional procurement business case, with the aim of generating regional savings of £6.0m to £19.5m.

## Summary of findings



### Requires improvement

Bedfordshire Police has made some good progress in its assessment of emerging and likely demand for its services. It has improved its strategic assessment and recently developed a new strategic demand assessment; both of these steps are promising. However, it needs to improve the way it categorises incidents to enable better analysis of current demand and future trends. It is working hard to understand local community demand better and it is increasing resources to develop effective preventative work but recognises it has more work to do.

Leaders are being developed for the future. The collaborative approach within the alliance to recruiting and developing officers and staff should ensure greater opportunities to increase the diversity of teams and to recruit talented individuals from outside the force. Bedfordshire Police continues to face significant financial challenges, there are currently no clear plans beyond 2019/20 for how the force will continue to provide the level of policing needed, within the resources that are likely to be available. The force has yet to be able to fully staff its new policing model, as it lacks the resources to do so. It has developed a detailed plan of how it intends to implement change up to 2019/20, but it recognises that to be viable beyond this date it will need to review its operating model again. HMICFRS remains concerned at the level of uncertainty in Bedfordshire's plans beyond 2019/20. The chief constable and the police and crime commissioner are working closely with their counterparts in the alliance and with local partner agencies to achieve greater efficiencies. The force invests well in ICT and technology; there is good commitment for invest-to-save projects, which should increase its capacity and capability.

## **Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that its assessment of emerging and likely demand for its services is fully developed and regularly updated.
- The force should ensure that the control room is correctly categorising anti-social behaviour and other incidents to enable it to understand current and future demand.
- The force should ensure that it fully resources and trains its community policing teams to identify demand at a local level and prevent crime.
- The force and the strategic alliance need to ensure that performance development reviews are quality assured and line managers supported to develop the skills and capability of their officers and staff effectively.
- The force should ensure it has adequate plans in place to show it can provide services, while also making necessary cost savings.

## Next steps

HMICFRS will assess progress on any recommendations and areas for improvement identified within our reports in several ways. We either revisit those forces where we have identified a serious cause of concern, go back to assess them as part of our annual PEEL inspection programme or receive updates on their progress through regular conversations with forces.

HMICFRS highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national thematic reports on police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and leadership (see: [www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/national-peel-reports/](http://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/national-peel-reports/)). These reports identify those problems that are reflected across England and Wales. They may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements need to be made nationally.

## 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.

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 within the average in this publication.

#### 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 gross revenue expenditure**

These data show estimated gross revenue expenditure (GRE) for the force in 2017/18 and 2020/21. This was gathered from forces by HMIC staff prior to fieldwork (April 2017). Some of the data provided will have been subject to revisions after this time but figures should represent the picture as at the time of inspection. Future forecasts of expenditure are estimates for which forces use different methodologies. As these are estimates care should be taken in interpreting changes.

### **Workforce figures (FTE) for 2016/17 and 2020/21**

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 the publication. Workforce includes section 38-designated investigation, detention or escort officers, but does not include section 39-designated detention or escort staff.<sup>20</sup> The data are the actual full-time equivalent figures (or FTE), and figures for 2016/17 are the figures as at 31 March 2017.

For FTE, these data include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence, and excludes those seconded to other forces. Projections for 2020/21 are budget-based and therefore 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 high vacancy rate which masks this change.

### **Calls for assistance**

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

### **Recorded crime**

These data are obtained from Home Office police-recorded crime and outcomes data tables (available from [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crimeopen-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crimeopen-data-tables)).

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<sup>20</sup> See sections 38 and 39 of the Police Reform Act 2002. Available at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/30/section/38](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/30/section/38)

## Figures throughout the report

### **Figure 1: Rate of 999 calls recorded per 1,000 people in the local population in the force area compared with England and Wales as a whole, from 2010/11 to 2016/17**

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 441. City of London Police does not submit 999 calls data to the Home Office as these are included in figures provided by the Metropolitan Police Service.

### **Figure 2: Police-recorded crimes per 1,000 population compared with England and Wales from 2010/11 to 2016/17**

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 British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMICFRS inspection. The England and Wales rate given in this figure is a simple average of all forces' rates to reduce the effect of large forces on the average.

### **Figure 3: Planned full-time equivalent (FTE) workforce as on 31 March from 2010 to 2021**

Data from 2010 to 2017 are obtained from the Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' FTE figure. 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. Data from 2018 onwards are budget-based projections, therefore depending on a force's planning strategy may not include a projection for absences.

Due to the complex and continually evolving picture of workforce collaboration between 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 need to be considered with caution as they may simply represent accounting changes related to how staff are allocated to forces and 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 are in many instances unconfirmed estimates provided to assist HMICFRS in our inspection programme and should not be seen as a concrete plan for the future workforce available for policing.

#### **Figure 4: Estimated percentage of net revenue expenditure allocated across policing functions from 2011/12 to 2016/17**

These data were obtained from data collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) for use in the HMICFRS Value for Money profiles (available from [www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/value-for-money-inspections/value-for-money-profiles/#2016](http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/value-for-money-inspections/value-for-money-profiles/#2016)). The data define policing functions using the Police Objective Analysis categories.

We have made some adjustments to the original POA data in order to provide valid historical comparisons. For instance, in 2011/12 the POA category "Local policing" included the sub-category "local investigation and prisoner processing", however, from 2012/13 onwards this moved to the "Investigations" category. We have therefore removed "local investigation and prisoner processing" from the 2011/12 figure to provide a historical comparison and not create misleading percentage changes.

For the same reason above, for the 2011/12 "Investigations" figure we have included "local investigations and prisoner processing" for historical comparison.

Furthermore, in 2016/17 "Public Protection" became its own level two category, whereas in previous years it had been included as a sub-category under "Investigations". Therefore for historical comparisons, we have included public protection in "Investigations" for 2016/17.