



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Responding to austerity

Surrey Police

July 2014

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ISBN: 978-1-78246-451-8

www.hmic.gov.uk





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How well does the force provide value for money?

Overall judgment

Surrey Police has made good progress, and through its widening collaboration with Sussex Police, is well placed to manage further austerity in the future.

Good

Summary

Surrey Police has identified that it needs to save £32.5m over the four years of the spending review. The force has a strong track record of achieving the savings and for 2013/14 has over achieved its savings target. Surrey Police has clear plans in place to achieve all of the £6.9m savings needed in 2014/15, which will mean that Surrey will meet its spending review challenge.

The force has a clear vision for the future and a well-established change programme to achieve this, with good chief officer oversight.

Surrey Police has an affordable and sustainable operating model, which has successfully supported it in achieving its savings early. It has a culture of reducing unnecessary costs at all levels and this is supported by sound financial management.

Collaborative working is a major part of the force's future way of working, and the force has reduced its estates, which has yielded considerable financial benefits.

The force continues to reduce crime, and victim satisfaction is high. HMIC's assessment is that the force is achieving the required savings today while planning for the future.

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

Good

Surrey Police has clear plans in place to achieve all of the £6.9m savings needed in 2014/15.

The force has a strong track record of achieving savings and for 2013/14 has over-achieved its savings target.

The force is developing its financial assumptions and plans beyond this spending review. It is already working on identifying savings required for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19, although these are not fully developed.

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

Good

The force has a clear vision and a well-established change programme with good chief officer oversight.

Following the review of the local policing model, the force has restructured from a functional model to a geographic model, with chief superintendent commanders in each of the divisions providing clear accountability and control.

Collaboration is a major part of the force's future way of working.

Despite having to make savings, the force is increasing police officer numbers, which is commendable.

Reduction of the force's estates has yielded considerable financial benefits.

To what extent is the force efficient?

Good

Demand has been assessed across many teams and areas as part of a number of reviews and change processes.

The force's resource allocation process is clearly articulated and effective; a formal organisational model is being developed with its partners.

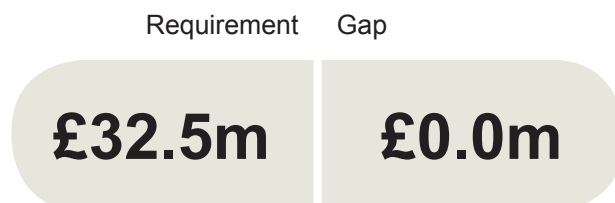
Crime is reducing and victim satisfaction is broadly in line with England and Wales.

Access to services is assured by a variety of means; social media is used well.

The force in numbers

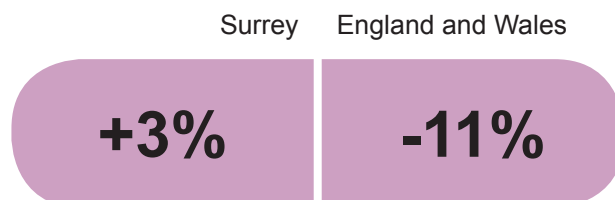
Financial position

The force's savings requirement

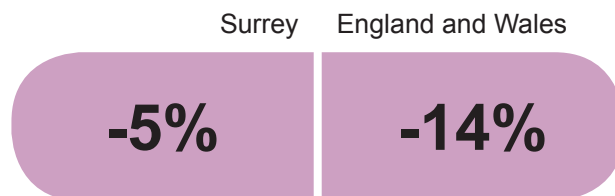


Providing policing

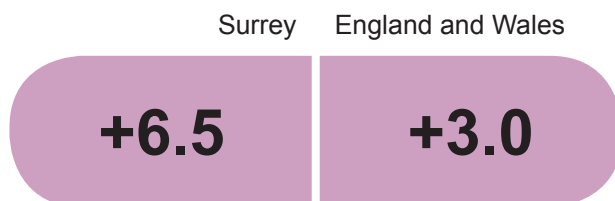
Planned change in police officer numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15



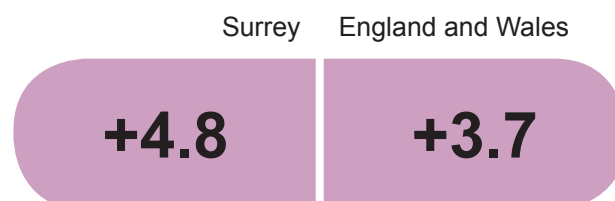
Planned change in total workforce numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15



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



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





Efficiency

Police officer cost per head of population
2013/14

Surrey England and Wales

£88.5

£117.7

Workforce cost per head of population
2013/14

Surrey England and Wales

£149.8

£168.1

Change in recorded crime
2010/11 – 2013/14

Surrey England and Wales

-24%

-14%

Victim satisfaction 2013/14*

Surrey England and Wales

86.0%

85.2%

*Confidence intervals: $\pm 1.0\%$ for Surrey; $\pm 0.2\%$ for England and Wales.

Introduction

In October 2010, the Government announced that central funding to the police service in England and Wales would reduce by 20 percent in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.

HMIC's Valuing the Police Programme has tracked how forces are planning to make savings to meet this budget demand each year since summer 2011. This report identifies what we found in this, our fourth year.

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

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

During our inspection we collected data and plans from forces, surveyed the public to see if they had noticed any changes in the service they receive from the police as a result of the cuts, and conducted in-force inspections. We also interviewed, where possible, the chief constable, police and crime commissioner and the chief officer leads for finance, change, human resources and performance in each force, and held focus groups with staff and other officers.

This provides the findings for Surrey Police.

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

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

Financial challenge

Surrey Police has identified that it needs to save £32.5m over the four years of the spending review (between March 2011 and March 2015). As a proportion of its overall budget, this savings requirement of 14 percent is lower than for most other forces.

The force worked very hard to limit the impact of the cuts on its frontline workforce in a way that very few forces have been able to achieve. It protected its crime-fighting capability by driving cost reductions and savings in other areas. Surrey is one of only three forces in England and Wales where the number of police officers in frontline roles were planned to increase, and the only force in which the total number of police officers would increase over the spending review period. This continues to be the case.

The scale of the challenge

Surrey Police's financial challenge is less difficult than for other forces. The force is considerably less reliant on central funding than most forces in England and Wales.

The force receives 47 percent of its funds from central grants compared with a national average of 70 percent. As a result, Surrey receives 48 percent of its funding from council tax compared with a national average of 23 percent (with the remainder from other earned income, for example, reimbursement for supporting other forces). This means that changes in the council tax precept level will have a proportionately greater impact on the force than most. The force is planning to make 54 percent of its total savings over the spending review from non-pay, which is considerably higher than the 29 percent figure for England and Wales. At the same time, it is increasing officer numbers, which is commendable.

Savings plans for 2014/15 and 2015/16

The force is in a secure financial position with plans as to how further savings will be achieved. It has a good track record of achieving savings and currently has a balanced budget. For 2013/14, it is projecting that it will overachieve its savings target by a considerable margin.

The force has clear plans in place to achieve all of the savings needed in 2014/15 (£6.9m) and most of those for 2015/16 (£6.1m). The force will, if necessary, make use of its reserves

to close funding gaps.

Savings derived from collaborative working are expected to amount to £6.7m. However, to avoid overstating the potential benefits of collaboration, the force will only account for savings when a business case relating to collaboration is approved and implemented.

Outlook for 2016 and beyond

While future reductions to central funding beyond 2016 have not been confirmed at this time, should the current approach continue, forces are likely to experience reductions of between 3 and 5 percent to their central funding year on year.

Surrey Police is developing its assumptions and plans beyond this spending review. The force is already working on identifying the savings required for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19, although these are not fully developed. The force is assuming that at least 5 percent of the savings will come from collaborating with Sussex Police.

The two forces and the two police and crime commissioners have established a 'policing together' board. This high-level board has responsibility for strategic decision-making and assessing the impact on local policing if proposals are agreed. Surrey Police is in the first stages of discussing options for a back-up plan in case collaboration does not achieve the anticipated savings.

The police and crime commissioner has healthy reserves and will use them, if needed, in certain priority areas and invest-to-save initiatives. For example, reserves were used to provide additional resources in support of the policing response to the areas affected by flooding following the winter storms in 2013/14.

Summary



Good

- Surrey is in a secure financial position with plans as to how further savings will be achieved.
- It has a good track record of meeting financial challenges while at the same time reducing crime and increasing victim satisfaction.
- The force is planning to achieve a balanced budget in 2014/15. Plans are in place to achieve the savings needed in 2015/16, with the use of reserves.
- The force's planning extends to 2018/19 and the force's decisions over the next few years will be important in enabling Surrey to respond to its future savings requirement. Collaboration with other organisations will increasingly be important in identifying future savings for the force.

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

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

How the force provides policing

The force began to change the way it operates in 2009, before the 2010 comprehensive spending review. The force has restructured again to a new model based on divisions. It has increased the number of frontline officers, due in part to reductions in numbers of more senior officers. The force is also making further savings by sharing office space with local authorities and reducing the number of buildings it uses.

Surrey reviewed its demand in relation to crime type, incident type and volume and also across response, neighbourhood and investigation functions. The force then restructured its resources in order to meet this demand, changing its policing model to a locally-based model with central core functions (such as human resources, finance and specialist policing units). There are now three police areas, which are made up of smaller policing districts. This way of working has improved local accountability and oversight, and performance is improving as a result. This restructure did not produce savings but realigned existing resources.

The force is currently reviewing both its current and alternative operating models. This may lead to further changes in how policing is provided across the county and how the force will work with Sussex to provide more efficient services across the two counties.

Collaboration

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

In 2012, Surrey Police withdrew from a collaboration project involving the Home Office and West Midlands Police. However, it has ensured that planned savings from this source have been found elsewhere, and the force is now working closely with Sussex Police. The two forces aim to work together to enhance service, drive down costs, and maintain services to the public, while operationally and organisationally responding to local needs.

Surrey and Sussex already share a number of officers and staff who work in some specialised areas of policing (including major crime, firearms and scientific support).

The forces share a joint vision to work as one, operationally and organisationally, to enhance services for the public while driving down costs and responding to local needs. They are currently developing a series of large-scale change programmes to transform the way in which policing services are provided across both forces.

Working together, Surrey and Sussex's ultimate aim is a unified organisation. This will include, where practically possible, a unified approach to everything, including one vision and one set of values as the basis of a shared working culture, one set of employment terms and conditions, one set of policy and procedures across all activities, one business, information and ICT strategy, and one way of managing performance. This requires an agreed shared operating model that retains sufficient flexibility to reflect and respond to the local communities served.

Work has begun on designing this future operating model for the two forces. It has to be capable of meeting future challenges and changing demand. From this, a plan and timetable for change is to be developed alongside an agenda for business operations.

This collaboration, which operates under a shared leadership team, has yielded benefits in terms of operational resilience, and also considerable financial savings.

Surrey and Sussex are also exploring how they may collaborate with the fire and rescue services of each county. Although in its early stages both forces see that there are opportunities to achieve further efficiencies and savings through such a wider collaboration.

The potential move to an even closer collaboration with Sussex is tempered with an awareness of the areas of risk and difference, which include variations in levels of council tax precept and accumulated savings and gaps. Close attention is being paid to the management of non-pay costs, which has led to further savings. The potential use of a new approach, where budget holders are held to account for the rationale of their spending, is being considered to assist with further cost reduction.

In 2014/15, the force expects to spend 7 percent of its net revenue expenditure on collaboration, which is lower than the 11 percent figure for England and Wales. Collaboration is expected to contribute 20 percent of the force's savings requirement, which is higher than the 10 percent figure for England and Wales.

Managing change

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

The force started planning its change programme prior to the spending review announcement and was able to move rapidly from a geographical to a functional policing model in April 2010. During the last 12 months, it has gone back to a divisional or geographical way of working. As the collaborative work with Sussex has developed, three change teams (one in Sussex, one in Surrey and the joint team), have now been brought together to form one change programme with a strategic change board.

The force has made good use of external and business improvement methods. This includes, for example, the use of a professional reference group, a people's panel and a consultant's report on the opportunities for potential savings to be derived from joint services. A team of five business improvement consultants, with the appropriate expertise, provides support for force reviews. Areas reviewed include the coroner's process, specialist managers, occupational health, and mobile data.

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

- reduction of non-staff costs;
- changes to the way business support functions are provided;
- changes to local policing;
- changes to the way in which functions that support the front line are provided; and
- leadership savings.

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

- further changes to the way business support functions are provided;
- changes to local policing;
- changes to the way in which functions that support the front line are provided;
- changes to the way specialist functions and services are provided; and
- collaboration with another part of the public sector.

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

Staff involvement is positive and the workforce has a good understanding of the challenges faced by Surrey Police. The force carries out quarterly staff surveys with feedback, staff forums, leadership events and road shows. The chief constable's blog is well received, keenly read and contributes to the strong sense of pride that is clearly evident from the workforce. The senior management team is visible and accessible, giving clear leadership.

The workforce described increasing pressure, which is leading to increased levels of stress that is largely arising from fewer people doing more work. This is also attributed to continual change over an extended period, although this is seen more as a result of financial pressures rather than lack of leadership.

The force's occupational health facility offers a high-quality service.

How is the force achieving the savings?

Because around 80 percent of a police budget (on average) is spent on staff costs, it is not surprising that forces across England and Wales plan to achieve most of their savings by reducing the number of police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and police staff employed.

However, we also expect forces to bear down on their other costs (non-pay) such as the equipment they buy, the accommodation and vehicles they use and the contracts they enter for services (e.g., for cleaning). The force plans to make 54 percent of its savings from non-pay, which is considerably more than for other forces.

The force has already changed the way human resources and finance functions are provided to achieve savings. Although this force has already achieved considerable savings (over 27 percent fewer resources), it is analysing the potential for further savings to be made by joining the business support and transactional functions for the two collaborating forces in to one single service. This work is still in its early stages and analysis by external consultants, engaged to help with this work, suggests that £17m savings could be achieved, although this plan would require some investment.

The force has a clear understanding of the benefits to be derived from reducing its estate. This has led to a number of building closures and disposals, which has released capital that has been reinvested into improved facilities elsewhere, such as the new custody facility. The two forces share an estates strategy and objectives.

The force introduced workforce modernisation early. This resulted in the force reviewing the roles undertaken by police officers and where they did not require warranted powers (or work could be done more effectively) replacing them with police staff. This led to large numbers of police officers being replaced by non-warranted support staff. This provided both efficiency and savings gains.

As with other forces, savings mostly come from reducing the workforce. Surrey Police made an early start on this in 2009/10 when it slowed its recruitment of new police officers and police staff, and reduced the number of police staff. The force plans to make 46 percent of its spending review savings requirement from its pay budget. This is a considerably lower proportion than that of other forces.

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

Please note, these figures are rounded.

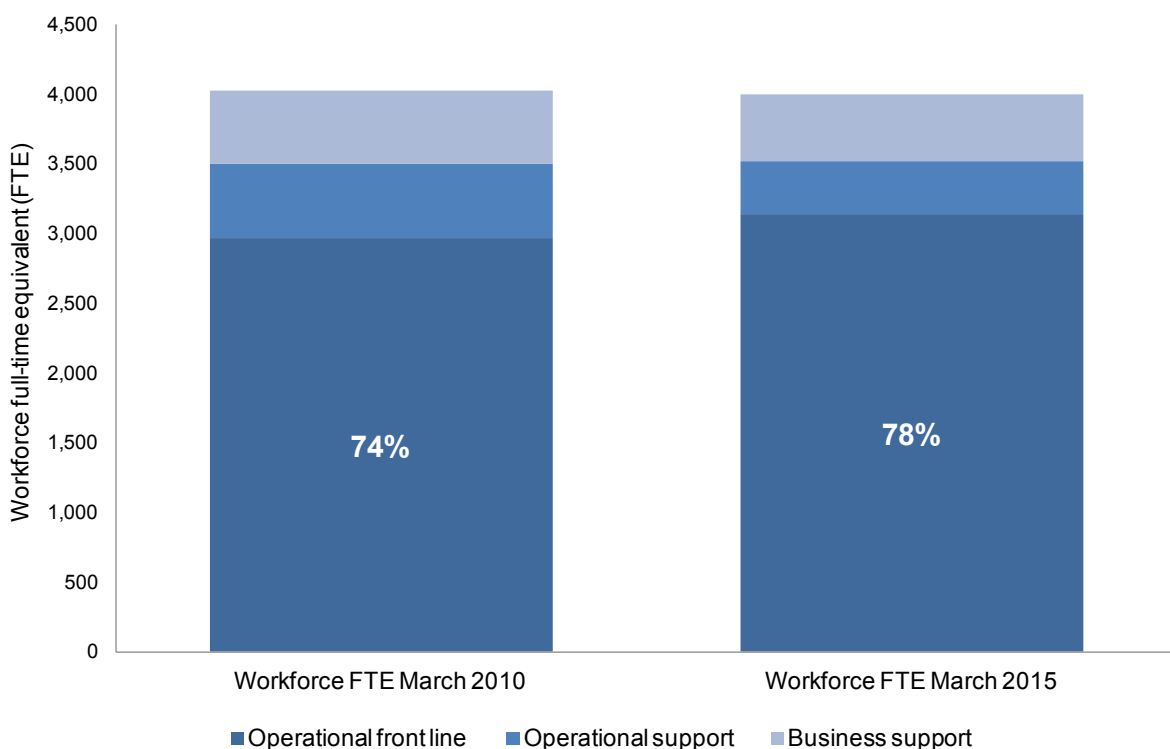
	31 March 2010 (baseline)	31 March 2015	Change	Force change %	Change for England and Wales %
Police officers	1,890	1,938	48	3%	-11%
Police staff	2,092	1,933	-159	-8%	-17%
PCSOs	224	124	-100	-45%	-22%
Total	4,205	3,995	-210	-5%	-14%
Specials	327	224	-103	-31%	44%

Surrey stands out in comparison to other forces in that it plans to increase the number of police officers over the spending review. HMIC commends Surrey’s ambition and the focus on achieving savings elsewhere to protect its crime-fighting capability.

It is important that as forces reconfigure their structures and reduce workforce numbers, they focus on maintaining (or, if possible, increasing) the proportion of people in frontline crime-fighting roles.

HMIC defines the people who work on the police front line as those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law.

The following chart shows the change in the workforce frontline profile in Surrey Police.



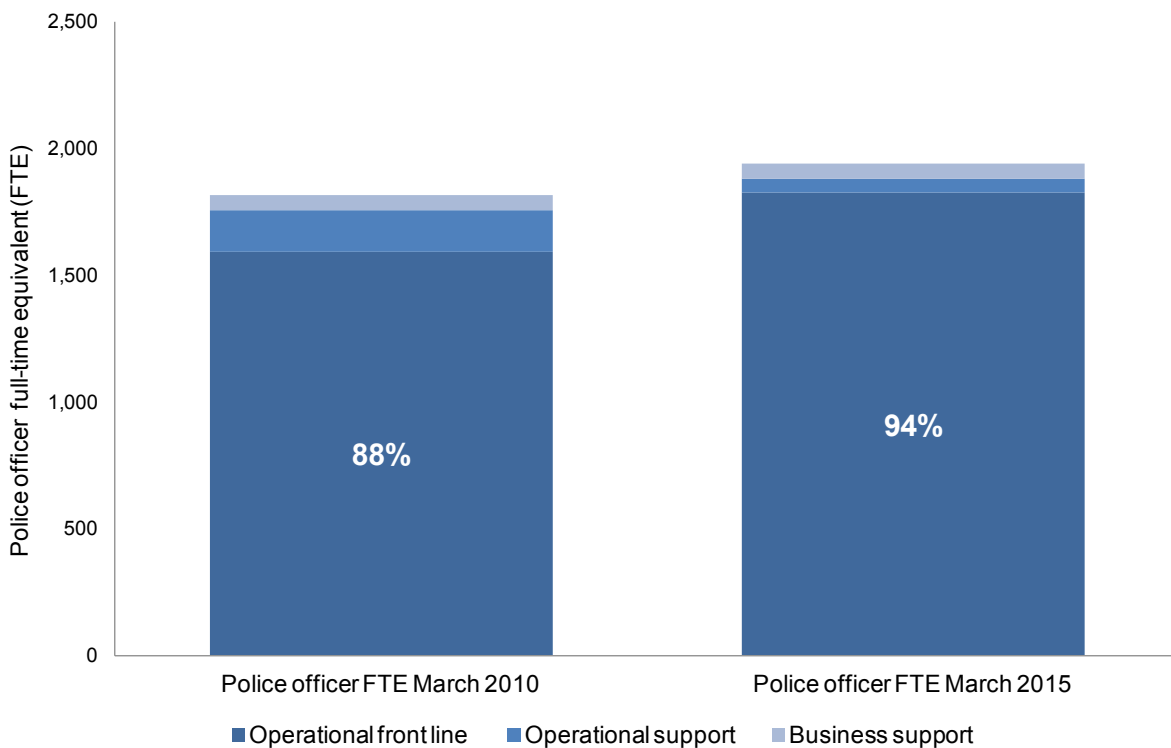
Note: England and Wales reports an increase in the proportion of workforce on the front line from 74 percent in March 2010 to 78 percent in March 2015.

The number of officers, PCSOs and staff working on the front line is projected to increase by 172 between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 2,964 to 3,136).

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

The number of Surrey’s police officers in frontline roles is planned to increase by 232 from 1,591 in March 2010 to 1,823 by March 2015, as the following chart shows. The proportion of those remaining on the front line is projected to increase from 88 percent to 94 percent. This compares with an overall increase across England and Wales from 89 percent to 92 percent and shows Surrey Police is successfully protecting frontline crime-fighting roles as it makes these cuts.

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



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

Summary



Good

- Surrey Police has an affordable and sustainable operating model, which has successfully supported achievement of savings early. It has a culture of reducing unnecessary costs at all levels.
- The force has a clear vision and a well-established change programme with good chief officer oversight.
- Following the review of the local policing model, the force has restructured from a functional model to a geographic model, with chief superintendent commanders in each of the divisions providing clear accountability and control.
- Surrey stands out in comparison with other forces in that it plans to increase the number of police officers over the spending review period of 2010/14. HMIC commends Surrey's ambition and the focus on achieving savings elsewhere to protect its crime-fighting capability.
- Collaboration is a major part of the force's future way of working.

To what extent is the force efficient?

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

How well does the force understand and manage demand?

The force reviewed its demand in relation to crime type, incident type and volume, and also across response, neighbourhood and investigation functions. The force then restructured its resources in order to meet this demand, changing its policing model to a geographic locally based model with central core functions such as HR, finance and specialist policing units.

The force is developing its understanding of demand. Accordingly, demand profiles have been analysed, and as a result, officers' shift patterns have been changed to ensure more resources at times of peak demand. New shift patterns were introduced for investigation teams and response officers. The firearms teams, custody centres and control room shifts also align to the same shift pattern. This is aimed at improving the working between teams, and at leading to improved service to the public.

The force is also working with Sussex Police to analyse the demands facing both forces with the intention of harmonising the performance structure between the two forces. Because of their proximity to London, the two forces are working jointly to map and manage organised crime groups.

The force has worked with Surrey County Council to agree and publish a joint strategic assessment that reviews the threat, risk and harm posed by crime and social issues. The intention for the next year is to have a joint Surrey and Sussex police strategic assessment, which will cover both counties.

How efficiently does the force allocate its resources?

The force has a clearly articulated and effective process to consider threat, risk and harm on a regular and dynamic basis. This is then assessed through force tasking and coordinating meetings and refreshed on a daily basis at locally based and central management meetings. The process allows the force to consider incidents and people who are at greatest risk.

Where a problem is identified that cannot be managed locally, for example a cross-border crime, this can be escalated to the force-level meeting for additional resources to be brought in from force or regional teams. Managers can make decisions about which resources will be deployed to manage and minimise identified risks and threats. Where it is predicted that

demand will be high, resources can also be moved around the force through this process. Fortnightly neighbourhood management meetings look at overall trends for a two-week period, reviewing and looking ahead over the two weeks. This allows local managers to respond to emerging issues appropriately and proportionately.

The force does not assess its resource allocation routinely each year. Any reassessment is as a result of other work, such as the review of neighbourhood policing or the change programme itself. The joint workforce planning board reviews resource allocation and identifies some critical posts; not all have been agreed. Major leadership roles have been flagged, and the human resources team will try to predict gaps for these to anticipate lead time for training. However, the force is working on developing a formal resource allocation model through the collaboration opportunities with Sussex Police and through the workforce planning board.

How does the force respond and keep its communities safe?

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

The force has a strong focus on neighbourhood policing. It has ensured that it has protected its local policing resources from staffing reductions. A review of neighbourhood policing led to staffing changes in the neighbourhood teams to provide a better mix of police powers, skills and experience. As a result, 60 police constables have replaced 60 police community support officers. This means that the force has maintained the number of police resources, but changed the capability of its teams in order to provide neighbourhood policing more effectively.

A resource-to-demand review has led to shift patterns being changed, which provides better alignment of resources to the times when there is greater demand. Resources have been allocated to ensuring the priorities in the police and crime plan are met, with officers being reinvested into neighbourhoods, cyber-crime and public protection.

The force is working on analysis of the demand on its services with other agencies to identify and address those tasks that are not the sole responsibility of the police. This included reviewing the venues to which police are repeatedly called. The analysis has shown that the locations are principally hospitals and that for many of the calls a police response is not necessary. The force is working with its partners to reduce this demand so it does not have to respond to as many calls. Demand analysis has also revealed 53,000 hours were used on non-police calls where other agencies have some responsibility to respond; for these, the force has identified the potential to make considerable savings in

terms of time and cost. Some examples include mental health deployments, problems with noisy parties, or forcing entry to find people who may be injured or vulnerable. The force is working on a protocol with the fire and rescue service for them to force entry to premises where life may be at risk. This approach will save police time, as well as reducing the risk of injury to officers who are less well trained.

The force is working with the fire and ambulance services to introduce a system to link the IT systems for recording calls (called computed-aided despatch data) to enable immediate exchange of call details, which will reduce both delay and costs.

The force has actively improved the way it uses and develops the volunteering scheme across the force. The Special Constabulary has been reviewed and the aim is to achieve a smaller but more stable and productive team with a more integrated management model. As a result, numbers have fallen sharply through the loss of those who were not sufficiently committed, or through individuals who have gone on to become regular police constables. This new approach has increased the Special Constabulary's contribution and makes best use of its patrols.

To ensure the force can meet its national policing commitment, it regularly reviews the number of trained officers who can respond to large-scale incidents (such as public order, major crime or chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incidents). Operational plans are used if the force is required to deploy officers to another force area, and the force has mapped where the organisation is able to meet these plans or where there are gaps.

A monthly strategic performance meeting allows the force to assess its position against the police and crime commissioner's people's priorities, which are set out in the police and crime plan. The meeting also assesses any other areas of threat, harm and risk, and it focuses on particular themes (such as the force's response to domestic abuse and domestic burglaries).

The force does not set or use performance targets to measure individual success. It is continuing to develop a broader view of good performance that encompasses quality, including the care of victims. An initiative in one of the force areas is the use of a qualitative assessment as well as performance data to allow managers to see who is performing and who is not. An innovation fund bid to the Home Office has been submitted to support this performance reporting.

Calls for service

HMIC examined whether Surrey was taking longer to respond to calls for help as a result of its workforce reductions and other changes designed to save money. Forces are not required to set response times or targets and are free to determine their own arrangements for monitoring attendance to calls, so information between forces is not comparable.

Surrey Police, in line with its PCC's approach, does not set a target for the number of 'emergency' calls or those classed as a 'prompt'. However, the force does record the average attendance times in both these categories.

For 2013/14, the average time taken to attend 'emergency' calls was 11 minutes and 37 seconds and for 'prompt' calls 51 minutes and 40 seconds. As there is no comparative data HMIC is unable to comment on how this has changed over the spending review.

Visibility

The work done by police officers and staff in visible roles (such as officers who respond to 999 calls, deal with serious road traffic collisions or patrol in neighbourhoods) represents only a part of the policing picture. Chief constables need to allocate resources to many other functions in order to protect the public, such as counter terrorism, serious and organised crime, and child protection (to name just three).

That said, research shows that the public value seeing visible police officers on patrol in the streets, and that those who see police in uniform at least once a week are more likely to have confidence in their local force. HMIC therefore examined how far the changes being implemented by the force had affected the visibility of the police in the Surrey area.

In 2014, Surrey Police allocated 54 percent of its police officers to visible roles. This is 6.9 percentage points higher than the number allocated in 2010, but lower than the figure for most other forces (which was 56 percent across England and Wales).

Police visibility is further enhanced by PCSOs, who principally support community policing. Looking at the proportion of police officers and PCSOs, Surrey Police force allocated 57 percent of these staff to visible roles. This is 4.9 percentage points higher than it allocated in 2010, but lower than the 60 percent figure for England and Wales.

HMIC conducted a survey¹ of the public across England and Wales to assess whether the public had noticed any difference in the way their area is being policed. Of those people surveyed in Surrey, 14 percent said that they have seen a police officer more often than

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

they had 12 months ago; this compares to 12 percent of respondents in England and Wales.

Furthermore, 90 percent of respondents in Surrey said they felt safe from crime where they lived, compared to 84 percent of respondents in England and Wales. Finally, 6 percent of respondents in Surrey said they felt safer from crime than they did two years ago, compared to 9 percent of respondents in England and Wales.

Crime

In 2010, the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to reduce crime. Between 2010/11 and 2013/14 (which includes the first three years of the spending review), Surrey Police reduced recorded crime (excluding fraud) by 24 percent, compared with a reduction of 14 percent in England and Wales. Over this period, victim-based crime (that is, crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 24 percent, compared with a reduction of 14 percent in England and Wales.

Looking just at the last 12 months, recorded crime (excluding fraud) reduced by 6 percent, which is a greater reduction than for England and Wales where it reduced by 1 percent.

By looking at how many crimes occur per head of population, we can get an indication of how safe it is for the public in that police area.

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

12 months to March 2014	Rate per 1,000 population	England and Wales rate per 1,000 population
Crimes (excluding fraud)	42.4	61.1
Victim-based crime	36.8	54.3
Sexual offences	0.6	1.1
Burglary	6.0	7.8
Violence against the person	7.7	11.1
ASB incidents	32.4	37.2

It is important that crimes are investigated effectively and that the perpetrator is identified and brought to justice. When sufficient evidence is available to identify who has committed a crime, it can be described as detected. Surrey Police's detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to March 2014 was 24 percent. This is lower than the England and Wales detection rate of 26 percent.

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the Surrey force area. For information on the frequency of other kinds of crimes in your area, go to www.hmic.gov.uk/crime-and-policing-comparator.

Victim satisfaction surveys

An important measure of the impact of changes to service provision for the public is how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance.

In the 12 months to March 2014, 86.0 percent (\pm 1.0 percent) of victims were satisfied with the overall service provided by Surrey Police. This is broadly in line with the England and Wales figure of 85.2 percent (\pm 0.2 percent).

Changes to how the public can access services

Forces are exploring different ways in which the public can access policing services. The force has closed two police stations since 2010/11, and now has eight in total. It has reduced the number of front counters from twenty-five to five since 2010/11, but has introduced five more shared access points.

Surrey has a range of ways for the public to contact the force or to seek information. It has actively embraced social media as a means of communication, with nearly 40,000 followers

on Twitter and Facebook pages for the force and its neighbourhood teams. The force regularly seeks the public's help through social media and receives a good response.

The force tests the quality of policing services that it provides through customer satisfaction surveys and by contacting victims and callers. This allows the force to assess the level of service that victims and callers received so that improvements can be made where required, or so that positive comments can be fed back to staff.

Summary

Good

- The force has a good understanding of the demand it faces. Understandably, this is being further developed as part of continuing links with Sussex Police. It will help inform how Surrey and Sussex will provide policing services by collaborating together.
- Crime is reducing and victim satisfaction is broadly in line with England and Wales.
- Access to policing services is assured by a variety of means.
- Social media is used well.

Our judgments

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

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

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

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