



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Responding to austerity

Wiltshire Police

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How well does the force provide value for money?

Overall judgment

Wiltshire will meet the financial challenge of the spending review and the year beyond. However, the plans to collaborate with Wiltshire Council need further work to turn the ambition into an effective model for providing policing for 2016 and beyond.

Good

Summary

Wiltshire is on track to meet its financial challenge for the spending review period and also for the following financial year of 2015/16. The force is also looking beyond this period and is planning now for further funding reductions and financial pressures in the future.

Overall, the force understands the immediate financial issues it faces and has a change programme in place to achieve the savings required, while minimising as far as possible, the impacts on frontline policing. The plans with Wiltshire Council are large scale and innovative and HMIC recognises the determination of the force to realise the ambition.

This developing work will form the basis of how the force will meet future financial challenges beyond 2016.

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

Good

There is a good track record of savings being achieved to date and there are plans in place to achieve all savings required for the spending review.

The force has plans to meet their savings requirement in both 2014/15 and 2015/16.

The force have yet to develop savings and workforce plans beyond 2015/16, introducing a risk that changes being made may not be sustainable in the longer term.

Plans for the future are being developed, which are ambitious and innovative. However, more work is necessary to develop the detail that will realise these ambitions and achieve the required savings.

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

Good

Benchmarking has been used for non-pay costs and savings have been made

People plans are well managed and hierarchy has been reduced by the reduction of chief inspector and chief superintendent ranks.

Plans for collaboration are advancing and include collaborating with regional police forces and a large scale transformation with Wiltshire Council.

While the force will reduce its workforce, in doing so it is protecting key crime-fighting roles. By the end of the spending review, the proportion of police officers on the frontline is planned to be higher than the figure of England and Wales.

To what extent is the force efficient?

Good

Demand was assessed in 2011 which has informed structural change so far. A comprehensive review of demand is in progress through a review of customer access and this will help shape the developing work with Wiltshire Council.

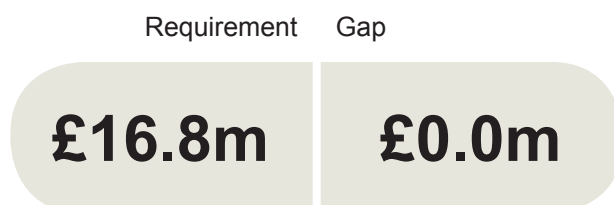
There is a resource management unit in place to manage demand on a daily basis and provide forecasts into the future.

There has been an overall reduction in crime over the spending review which has continued in the past 12 months. Victim satisfaction rates were above the figure for England and Wales for the 12 months to March 2014.

The force in numbers

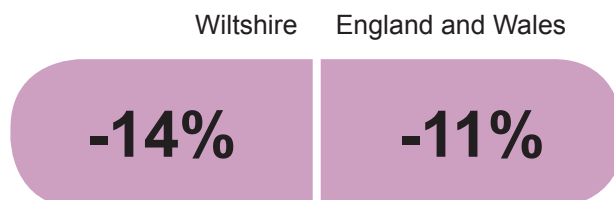
Financial position

The force's savings requirement

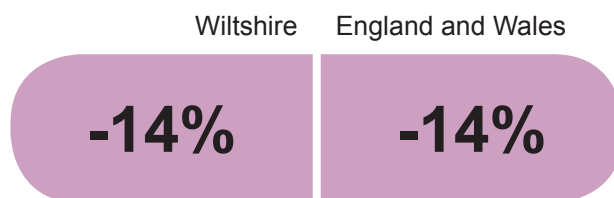


Providing policing

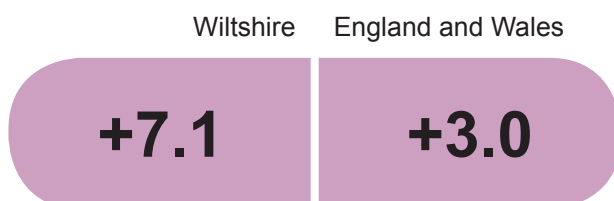
Planned change in police officer numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15



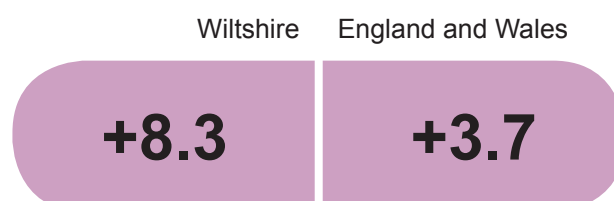
Planned change in total workforce numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15



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

Wiltshire	England and Wales
£79.8	£117.7

Workforce cost per head of population
2013/14

Wiltshire	England and Wales
£125.4	£168.1

Change in recorded crime
2010/11 – 2013/14

Wiltshire	England and Wales
-11%	-14%

Victim satisfaction 2013/14*

Wiltshire	England and Wales
90.0%	85.2%

*Confidence intervals: $\pm 1.8\%$ for Wiltshire; $\pm 0.2\%$ 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 providing 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 Wiltshire 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

Wiltshire Police has identified that it needs to save £16.8m over the four years of the spending review (between March 2011 and March 2015). The force must save 14 percent of the total budget, which is lower than the 18 percent figure for England and Wales.

The scale of the challenge

Although Wiltshire Police has a smaller financial challenge it does nonetheless face challenges in identifying efficiencies. As a small force which already has relatively low costs it does not have same opportunities for achieving economies of scale and there is less scope for internal efficiencies because:

- it spends less per head of population than most other forces in England and Wales;
- it has fewer police officers per head of population than most other forces in England and Wales; and
- the cost of police officers is lower than most other forces in England and Wales.

Savings plans for 2014/15 and 2015/16

The force has a savings requirement of £4.1m in 2014/15 and in 2015/16, a further £3.3m. The force has developed savings plans to balance the budget in 2014/15 and in doing so, meet the financial challenge of the spending review. For 2015/16 Wiltshire Police also has a plan in place to meet the savings requirement.

Outlook for 2016 and beyond

The force's future financial planning extends to 2016/17 and identifies the expected budget deficit based on a number of funding assumptions, including that austerity will continue beyond 2015/16. Currently, savings and workforce plans do not extend beyond 2015/16, although this was being progressed at the time of HMIC's inspection.

While developing work for 2016 and beyond the force will achieve savings mainly through a large scale and ambitious collaboration with Wiltshire Council. The Joint Service Transformation Project aims to reduce back office costs from 25 percent of the overall

budget to match the council's current level of nine percent with a further reduction to six percent in the longer term. There is an aspiration for communities to access all public sector services through Campus premises which are to be located within communities and accommodate a range of local partners to provide care and support.

The opportunities associated with the partnership are significant and the enthusiasm to progress this is evident within the force. However, considerably more work is necessary in order to realise these ambitions, including putting in place the new model designed to provide policing services and save money. Until more detailed plans are developed, including implementation timelines and the identification of benefits, costs and risks, HMIC is less confident of the longer term position beyond 2016.

Summary

Good

- There is a good track record of achieving savings to date and there are plans in place to achieve all savings required for the spending review period.
- The force has plans to meet their savings requirement in both 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- The force has assessed their future financial challenges but have yet to develop savings and workforce plans beyond 2015/16. There is a risk that the changes being made may not be sustainable in the longer term.
- Plans for the future are being developed which are ambitious and innovative. However, more work is necessary to develop the detail that will realise these ambitions and achieve the required savings.

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 their 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

At the time of inspection the force was implementing a new operating model for providing policing. Within this new structure Wiltshire Police will provide policing through departments that are managed centrally but provide a service to local areas, for example, the local policing and crime team both have a superintendent in charge who direct officers and staff across the whole of Wiltshire. This provides flexibility to move resources to the areas of greatest need.

The force has moved away from previous structures where policing was provided through basic command units (BCUs). BCU's aimed at providing all types of policing for one specific location such as Swindon. While generally effective, the force identified that the previous approach presented inconsistencies in how policing was provided to communities.

These changes provide the force with a much better understanding of what is happening over the whole county. This ensures force-wide decision making on the allocation of resources and not just based on what is happening in one area.

Collaboration

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

The force has demonstrated that collaboration with other services is crucial in providing the majority of the savings required in the next two years. This will be achieved through integration with other forces and Wiltshire Council.

The scope of the work with Wiltshire Council is significant, encompassing all back office functions and shared estate for the majority of policing services. Should this be progressed to the scale planned, it will significantly transform public service provision for Wiltshire.

The collaboration will include further development of the newly implemented multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) at Trowbridge. Teams from across public sector organisations work within the same location, sharing information and problem solving to improve how the most vulnerable children and adults are supported.

Work has already commenced with the partnership as a number of staff from IT and projects have been moved over to the council, and feedback has confirmed that services have improved. Other back office teams are in the process of specifying their requirements and producing business cases for how services can be shared at reduced costs.

The force has identified the potential of collaboration, choosing to develop its capability with a public sector partner. Collaboration with the private sector could be considered in the future when the force has developed the necessary skills to clarify the requirements and determined the nature and extent of the partnership requirements that may be necessary.

Although the force is looking mainly towards the public sector locally as a partner, it does nonetheless collaborate with other forces. Wiltshire Police collaborates with Avon and Somerset and Gloucestershire Constabularies in specialist areas such as roads policing, firearms and dogs. Further areas of collaboration are being explored such as shared training, forensic provision, and protective or specialist services such as cyber-crime. Wiltshire Police are part of the four force regional procurement department. The work they have undertaken has helped contribute towards the force's overall savings target.

In 2014/15 the force expects to spend 20 percent of its net revenue expenditure on collaboration, which is significantly higher than the 11 percent figure for England and Wales. Collaboration is expected to contribute to 13 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 which can help maintain or improve the service they offer to the public and prepare for future funding reductions.

The Visions programme is overseen by the strategic improvement board. This reviews performance, areas for improvement, risks, key changes and projects, including the strategic partnership with Wiltshire Council. There is a force plan that supports the objectives of the police and crime plan linking change and projects to its implementation.

Central to the force's approach to change is the strategic partnership with Wiltshire Council. Programmes that will be developed include:

- a shared HR team including a discrete team to deal with police regulations;
- a shared approach to payroll, recruitment and selection, and accounts;
- shared communications on both strategic and tactical levels;
- shared marketing and events; and

- shared fleet management and maintenance.

The force is now beginning to use the business analysis approach of 'systems thinking' to improve the effectiveness of how staff work and how future savings will be achieved. To help managers develop their skills a number of senior and middle managers have been trained in this approach so that they can apply a step-by-step method of understanding demand and how this is managed, not just within their team, but across the whole organisation (or system). An example of this is the customer access project which analysed calls coming into the force. The project identified how these calls are managed within the force, for example, highlighting where there is duplication and waste in processes. At the time of inspection the project was in progress and preparing to present its findings.

The force has made a number of changes to the way it manages change applying a more rigorous approach. Business cases now include a clear rationale for chosen solutions, why other options have been discounted, the identification of benefits and the savings expected. Finance, efficiency and the links to achieving force objectives are now much more clearly set out, and provide a better basis for decisions. This rigour will be important as the force progresses work on the strategic partnership.

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

- collaboration with another part of the public sector;
- collaboration with other forces;
- targeted patrols;
- introducing borderless deployment of resources in the force area; and
- improved procurement and contract negotiation.

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

- further collaboration with another part of the public sector;
- further collaboration with other forces;
- further work to better align services to demand;
- the use of business improvement methodology to drive continuous improvement; and
- estate rationalisation.

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

Important to the force's approach to providing policing are the behaviours and values displayed by officers and staff. Since 2012 the force has been developing a People Strategy based on a vision where staff demonstrate consistent values in the way they police communities.

The chief constable has conducted presentations to the workforce with local authority senior leaders about the values of the organisation and these have also been published in the force plan. Communication approaches such as the chief constable's online question time and email bulletin have also been used and were recognised by staff in communicating change. As a result of the range of communications and support in place, relationships with staff associations are positive and productive.

For senior officers and staff there has been an extensive training programme to understand how behaviours can impact on the performance of the force and the people who make up the workforce. Training is now being provided to sergeants across the force. Any cultural change takes time, and the force recognises this is a long term programme. Staff seen by HMIC have yet to feel fully involved in change, but were nonetheless willing to contribute by identifying improvements and testing out potential solutions.

Indicators for welfare and morale are used and a staff survey conducted each year. Sickness has reduced for police staff as a result of the values being used to manage absence, although the force recognise that further work can be done to manage officers on long-term sick and restricted duties.

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 do expect forces to also 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 such as cleaning. The force plans to make 18 percent of its savings from non-pay; this is lower than figure of 29 percent for forces in England and Wales.

To date, the force has achieved the bulk of the required savings through reducing pay costs and has developed plans to target non-pay costs as a way of saving as many jobs as possible.

Benchmarking has been used by the force to identify where non-pay costs can be further reduced in line with other forces. This has been achieved by use of HMIC’s value for money profiles, and challenging managers to justify and make plans to reduce costs.

The strategic collaboration with Wiltshire Council is expected to achieve significant non-pay savings by sharing back office teams such as IT, human resources and finance, and sharing accommodation through the Campus project which will help reduce estate and facilities costs as a result of fewer buildings. Where existing police stations are retained these will also be shared with partners and investment will be made to provide flexible working with desk space being allocated based on the responsibilities of the job rather than rank.

As with other forces most of the savings come from reducing the workforce. The force plans to make 82 percent of its spending review savings requirement from its pay budget. This is a higher than in 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	1,181	1,020	-161	-14%	-11%
Police staff	1,013	845	-168	-17%	-17%
PCSOs	126	137	11	8%	-22%
Total	2,320	2,002	-318	-14%	-14%
Specials	250	208	-42	-17%	44%

Over the spending review the force plans to lose the same proportion of its workforce in comparison with the figure for England and Wales. The force plans to lose a greater number of its police officers but will maintain the number of PCSOs. The above table reflects that in 2010 vacancies existed for PCSOs.

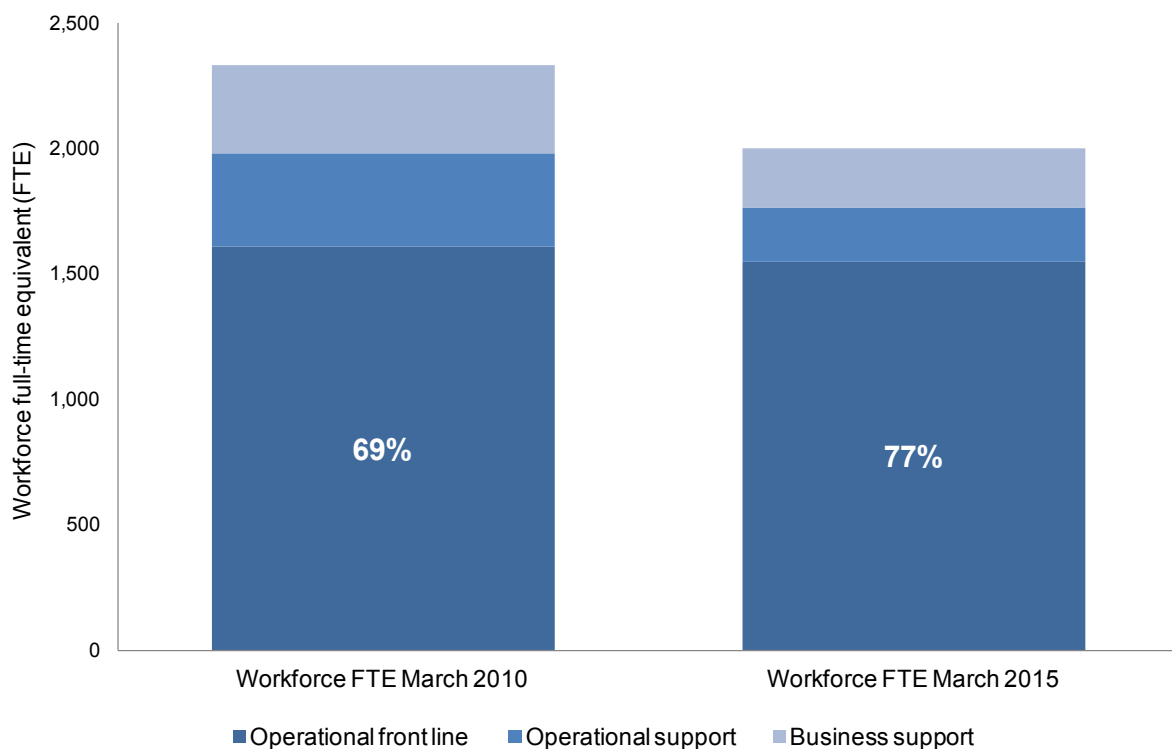
The force has well-managed plans for how the workforce will change over the spending

review. These are linked to change and finance plans and reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The force has worked closely with the PCC to review management structures as the previous hierarchy was considered too costly, and had too many levels. This resulted in a range of issues being escalated rather than managed at the lower, more appropriate level. As a result the force will no longer promote officers into the rank of chief superintendent or chief inspector. These ranks will be removed as current post holders are promoted or retire.

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 planned change in the overall workforce frontline profile between March 2010 and March 2015.



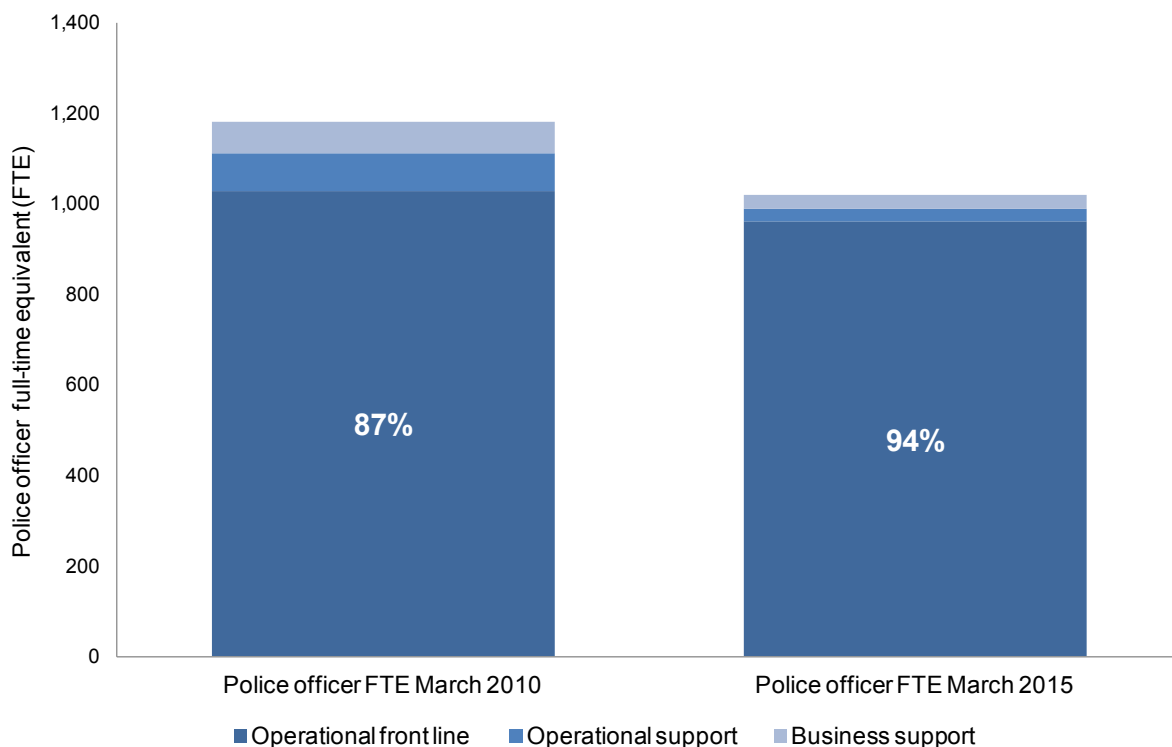
Note: England and Wales reports an increase in the proportion of workforce on the front line from 74 percent in March 2010 to 78 percent in March 2015.

The number of officers, PCSOs and staff (i.e. of the force's total workforce) working on Wiltshire's front line is projected to decrease by 59 between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 1,608 to 1,549).

Over the same period, the proportion of Wiltshire's total workforce allocated to frontline roles is projected to increase from 69 percent to 77 percent. This compares with an overall increase across England and Wales from 74 percent to 78 percent.

The second chart below shows the number of Wiltshire's police officers in frontline roles, this is planned to reduce from 1,028 in March 2010 to 960 by March 2015. The proportion of those remaining on the front line is projected to increase from 87 percent to 94 percent. This compares to an overall increase across England and Wales from 89 percent to 92 percent and shows Wiltshire is successfully protecting frontline crime-fighting roles as it makes these cuts.

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



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

- Benchmarking has been used for non-pay costs and savings have been made.
- Plans for collaboration are advancing and include regional police forces and a large scale transformation with Wiltshire Council.
- While the force will reduce its workforce, it is protecting key crime-fighting roles. By the end of the spending review, the proportion of police officers on the frontline is planned to be higher than the figure of England and Wales.

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 last conducted an assessment of demand in 2011, which has informed decisions as to how policing is provided in Wiltshire.

An in-depth review to understand demand and how it is managed, including where improvements can be made, has been initiated. Once completed the force will have a detailed understanding of how processes work across the organisation and will therefore be able to identify where resources, skills, process or technology will need to change to provide better value for money. This information is critical in being able to clarify what the force will look like in the future including how this may change as a result of the planned collaboration with Wiltshire Council.

In addition, the force analyses a range of information from local authorities (Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council) and from internal systems to assess demands and challenges. This contributes to a multi-agency assessment and identifies priorities for policing across the county and informs the force, the 'One Swindon' public and voluntary services partnership, and the Wiltshire public service board. Resources across the various organisations are then allocated to manage the areas of priority such as neighbourhood policing and the location of PCSOs.

How efficiently does the force allocate its resources?

As a result of work conducted in understanding demand, the force has recently changed the way that policing is provided. The force has flattened the management structures by no longer promoting into the chief superintendent and chief inspector ranks.

The force has also introduced a resource management unit to make decisions on a real-time basis to make sure resources respond to critical areas of risk now, and in the future. The intention is to develop this team and enabling them to make decisions on overtime, rest days and annual leave requirements. Daily meetings are also in place, attended by superintendents to consider key issues and agree if resources need to be moved across the county.

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.

Calls for service

HMIC examined whether Wiltshire 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.

We found that over the four years since 2010, Wiltshire had maintained the same target response times of 15 minutes for calls classed as 'emergency' (also known as Grade 1). Over the same period, calls classed as a 'priority' (also known as Grade 2) had a target response time of within 60 minutes.

The following table compares the forces performance in 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Calls for service	2010/11	2013/14
Percentage of emergency calls on target	93.0	92.7
Percentage of priority calls on target	77.0	86.8

Over the spending review, attendance within the target time for emergency calls has broadly stayed the same and has improved for priority calls.

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 being 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 Wiltshire area.

In 2014, Wiltshire allocated 59 percent of its police officers to visible roles. This is 6.4

percentage points higher than the number allocated in 2010, and higher than the 56 percent figure for England and Wales.

Police visibility is further enhanced by PCSOs, who principally support community policing. Looking at the proportion of police officers and PCSOs, Wiltshire allocated 63 percent to visible roles. This is 5.7 percentage points higher than it allocated in 2010 and higher 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 Wiltshire, 7 percent said that they have seen a police officer more often than they had 12 months ago; this compares to 12 percent of respondents in England and Wales.

Furthermore, 90 percent of respondents in Wiltshire said they felt safe from crime where they lived, compared to 84 percent of respondents in England and Wales. Finally, 4 percent 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 (the first three years of the spending review), Wiltshire reduced recorded crime (excluding fraud) by 11 percent, which is lower compared with 14 percent in England and Wales. Over this period, victim-based crime (that is, crimes where there is a direct victim – an individual, a group, or an organisation) reduced by 13 percent, compared with 14 percent in England and Wales.

Looking just at the last 12 months, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 2 percent, compared with the 1 percent reduction for England and Wales.

By looking at how many crimes occur per head of population, we 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 Wiltshire (per head of population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

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.

12 months to March 2014	Rate per 1,000 population	England and Wales rate per 1,000 population
Crimes (excluding fraud)	47.7	61.1
Victim-based crime	43.3	54.3
Sexual offences	1.1	1.1
Burglary	5.7	7.8
Violence against the person	9.9	11.1
ASB incidents	25.7	37.2

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

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the Wiltshire 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, 90.0 percent (± 1.8 percent) of victims were satisfied with the overall service provided by Wiltshire Police force. This is higher than the 85.2 (± 0.2 percent) percent figure for England and Wales figure.

Changes to how the public can access services

Forces are changing the way the public can access policing services and Wiltshire has begun to provide alternative methods of accessing its services and communicating, such as local community web sites and social media, although this is limited in its use.

The force are developing wider plans to transform the way by which the public access services through front desks and shared access points with other local partners. This has begun to take place and over the spending review the number of stations will reduce by six to 18. Over the same period the force plans to increase the number of front counters from six to seven as well as introducing two shared access points in the community.

Summary



Good

- Demand was assessed in 2011 which has informed structural change so far. A comprehensive review of demand is in progress through a review of customer access and this will help shape the work with Wiltshire Council.
- There is a resource management unit in place to manage demand on a daily and predictive basis.
- There has been an overall reduction in crime over the spending review which has continued in the past 12 months. Victim satisfaction rates were above the figure for England and Wales for the 12 months to March 2014.

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 achievement of value for money is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.