

18 July 2013

## **Gloucestershire Constabulary has made good progress in meeting its financial challenge, finds HMIC**

*HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is confident that Gloucestershire Constabulary is on track deliver savings on time and is well prepared to respond to future funding challenges. The constabulary is looking at increasing its commitment to collaboration to deliver savings in the future.*

In a report published today, HMIC has found:

### **Progress in making savings**

- Gloucestershire Constabulary has identified that it needs to save £19.4m over the four years of the spending review (i.e. between March 2011 and March 2015). The constabulary has planned how it will save £18.9m of the savings it needs to make by 2015, leaving a gap of £0.4m still to find.
- These savings represent 15% of its budget, which is less than most other forces and constabularies. However, it still faces a challenge because it already spends less on policing per head of population than most other forces; it has a lower number of staff so has a comparatively lower pay bill; and the amount it spends on each officer and staff member is also lower than most other forces. Therefore the scope to find savings is less than other forces.

### **Workforce changes and protecting the front line**

- Gloucestershire Constabulary is reducing police officer numbers by limiting recruitment into vacant posts; as a result, by the end of the spending review period, it is planned that there will be 131 fewer police officers. This means the number of police officers is planned to reduce by 10% between March 2010 and March 2015; this is a similar reduction to most other forces.
- The constabulary will be broadly protecting frontline posts as it makes these cuts. Between March 2010 and March 2015, the proportion of police officers in frontline crime-fighting roles is planned to increase from 91% to 92%. This compares to an overall increase across England and Wales from 89% to 93%.
- The constabulary has also made some police staff redundant and not replaced others as they have left (e.g. through retirements and resignations). As a result, by the end of the spending review period the number of police staff is planned to reduce by 154 or 21% between March 2010 and March 2015; this is more than most other forces. The constabulary plans to reduce the number of police community support officers (PCSOs) by 16%; a smaller reduction than most other forces.

### **Impact on the public**

- Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 17%, which is more than the figure for England and Wales (13%).
- Victim satisfaction at 80.6%, which is lower than that of most other forces.

### **Future challenges**

- The constabulary has made good progress in meeting its financial challenge and has developed a detailed change programme which will allow it to reduce costs while continuing to fight crime.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Wales and Western Region, Dru Sharpling, said:

*“Gloucestershire Constabulary needs to make over £19m in savings by 2015. Although this sum represents 15% of its overall budget, this is less than the average savings reduction. Nevertheless, it will find it harder to deliver these savings because it already spends less on policing and has lower costs than other forces.*

*“The constabulary began planning to restructure prior to the spending review. This placed it in a good position to implement the necessary changes early and start delivering savings. As a result, it is delivering what is required ahead of schedule, and has given itself time to pause and plan for future spending rounds. The constabulary is looking at increasing its commitment to collaboration to deliver savings in the future.*

*“HMIC has confidence the force is on track to deliver the required savings on time, while continuing to protect frontline policing and provide a good level of service to the public. HMIC will continue to monitor the force for the remainder of the spending review period.”*

The full report for Gloucestershire Constabulary, along with the national thematic review, can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)

#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. The thematic report ‘Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge’ can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
2. Victim satisfaction for this force has a confidence interval of  $\pm 1.8\%$
3. HMIC’s July 2012 report ‘Policing in austerity: One year on’ and July 2011 report ‘Adapting to Austerity’ along with supporting materials can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
4. In October 2010, the government announced that the central funding provided to the police service would reduce by 20% in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.
5. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies.
6. For further information, HMIC’s press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
7. HMIC’s out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.