



Inspecting policing  
in the public interest

## **Valuing the Police: Preparedness Inspection**

**Lancashire Constabulary  
July 2011**

## Purpose of the review

The Police Service, along with all other parts of the public sector, is facing its biggest financial challenge in a generation. This could be seen either as an opportunity to innovate and refresh – or as a reason to continue as is and see services cut back.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been heavily involved in monitoring the Service's reaction and preparedness for cutting crime while reducing costs. As part of this, in Spring 2011 we carried out an inspection of all 43 forces and authorities in England and Wales, to assess:

- how they are planning to meet the financial challenge; and
- what the impact will be on the service they provide to the public.

This report summarises the findings for Lancashire Constabulary. A thematic report, *Adapting to Austerity*, which brings together findings from all 43 forces, is also available from [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk).

## Findings for Lancashire Constabulary

### What is the financial challenge in Lancashire?

Lancashire Constabulary and Lancashire Police Authority reported that they are facing a **£41.8m** cash reduction to their budget over the four years of the comprehensive spending review period (2011/12–2014/15). In real terms (ie when inflation is taken into account), this equates to 12% of their gross revenue expenditure.

### Are the force and authority prepared to meet this financial challenge?

The force and authority clearly understood the scale of the challenge facing them, and had considered a full range of options in developing a strategic four-year plan to meet it. This was supported by a change programme comprising a number of workstreams (known as organisational reviews). The force was ahead of where it needed to be, and has prepared well. Governance, programme and project management structures were in place and roles and responsibilities were well defined.

Authority members have been actively involved in the development, agreement and governance of the plan, through involvement in both the overarching change programme and individual organisational reviews.

## What will be the impact on the number of police officers and staff?

Lancashire Constabulary planned to make the following changes to its workforce numbers.

	Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSO
31 March 2010 (actual)	3,649	1,957	428
31 March 2015 (proposed)	3,108	1,836	427

March 2010 figures have been used as the baseline, because most forces began a recruitment freeze in that year, and as a result workforce numbers started to fall. The proposed figures shown for March 2015 were provided to HMIC by the force in June 2011.

The force and authority's plans for the workforce will continue to be refined as the change programme progresses.

## What will be the impact on service to the public?

Every organisational review included an assessment of the potential impact of its proposed changes on the service that the public receive from the force. There was also a requirement in place to monitor any effects on the force's performance, and on public confidence levels in the police.

Local public consultation had taken place and there was evidence that this feedback has influenced the change programme. The authority developed and used LOOP (Lancashire Opinions On Policing) to help with this, which is an award-winning and nationally recognised way of engaging with local communities.

The force and authority had developed a clear joint communications strategy to inform the public and other key stakeholders about the changes to policing.

## Does the force have targets to reduce crime and ASB?

The first job of the police is to reduce crime and keep the peace; and in 2010, Theresa May, the Home Secretary, stated that she expects forces and authorities to make financial cuts while still reducing crime and without damaging the front line.

Lancashire's *Policing Plan* includes objectives to reduce crime and targets around ASB in the coming year.

