



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Responding to austerity

Norfolk Constabulary

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How well does the constabulary provide value for money?

Overall judgment

Norfolk Constabulary's response to the financial challenge of the spending review is outstanding. The constabulary is determined to continue to provide a high quality policing service to the public. It is planning for the long-term, taking the necessary steps today, so it is ready to meet future funding challenges in this ongoing era of austerity.

Outstanding

Summary

Norfolk has clear plans to meet its financial challenge for the spending review period. Importantly the constabulary is looking beyond this period and has already developed outline plans to achieve two thirds of the £20m savings required over the next four years to 2017/18.

The constabulary has performed exceptionally well in the first three years of the spending review. It has achieved the required savings while maintaining police officer numbers and improving performance. This can be attributed in part to its achievements through its established collaboration with the constabulary's preferred policing partner, Suffolk Constabulary. Norfolk Constabulary's success is also due to its considerable understanding of the demand it faces and the way it analyses and assesses this to decide how to provide policing effectively.

The investment that the constabulary has made already to redesign the way it can provide local policing over the next four years, and the robust change programme it has in place – with a reputation for providing benefits – means Norfolk Constabulary is well placed to meet future financial challenges. It has healthy reserves that provides it with a level of financial security into the long-term.

Norfolk Constabulary continues to provide a high quality policing service to its communities. Crime has reduced over the spending review and the constabulary has maintained one of the lowest levels of crime in England and Wales, while levels of victim satisfaction is high.

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

Good

The constabulary has clear plans to achieve savings for 2014/15, and its plans are well underway for 2015/16. It will use reserves built up during the current spending review to meet any residual funding gap if required.

Current budget allocations support the police and crime commissioner’s priorities, with growth built into the budget to tackle prioritising vulnerability and to protect the number of local policing officers.

Of the £20.3m savings to be achieved by 2018 the force has already identified savings which reduces the funding gap to £6.4m and identified opportunities for further savings. It has healthy reserves in excess of £30m ensuring it is financially secure over the long term.

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

Outstanding

The workforce structure has successfully matched the needs of the organisation, while improving policing outcomes and is set to meet its savings requirement over the spending review.

To ensure it can provide local policing services effectively into the future the constabulary has developed a variety of options to achieve £2.5m to £8.5m of savings.

Norfolk’s successful collaboration with Suffolk continues to achieve financial and operational efficiencies. The robust change programme has driven out efficiencies and savings. This has enabled the constabulary to sustain its operational front line with minimal reductions in workforce numbers throughout the spending review. This is commendable.

To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

Outstanding

The constabulary has an extensive understanding of the demands and risks it faces and these are systematically assessed. The way the constabulary provides policing over the next four years has been designed based on this and future projections of demand. There is evidence of resources being allocated on the basis of priorities, both locally and against national demands.

The constabulary remains committed to local policing and partnership working to improve quality of the service and to reduce demand.

Victim-based crime has fallen by 14 percent, in line with the figure for England and Wales, while victims’ satisfaction continues to improve and is higher than most forces in England and Wales.

The constabulary in numbers



Financial position

The constabulary's savings requirement

Requirement Gap

£25.3m

£0.0m



Providing policing

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

Norfolk England and Wales

-5%

-11%

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

Norfolk England and Wales

-9%

-14%

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

Norfolk England and Wales

+1.1

+3.0

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

Norfolk England and Wales

+4.1

+3.7



Efficiency

Police officer cost per head of population
2013/14

Norfolk

England and Wales

£90.5

£117.7

Workforce cost per head of population
2013/14

Norfolk

England and Wales

£141.7

£168.1

Change in recorded crime
2010/11 – 2013/14

Norfolk

England and Wales

-11%

-14%

Victim satisfaction 2013/14*

Norfolk

England and Wales

88.3%

85.2%

*Confidence intervals: $\pm 1.4\%$ for Norfolk; $\pm 0.2\%$ 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 constabulary is achieving value for money. To answer this question we looked at three areas:

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

To what extent is the constabulary 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

Norfolk Constabulary has identified that it needs to save £25.3m over the four years of the spending review (i.e. between March 2011 and March 2015).

As a proportion of its overall budget, this savings requirement of 15 percent is lower than the figure for England and Wales; but HMIC considers that achieving the savings is not without its challenge.

The scale of the challenge

Norfolk Constabulary faces a particular challenge in finding the same proportion of spending cuts. As a small constabulary, there are fewer opportunities to find the economies of scale from which larger forces benefit. Norfolk Constabulary has fewer numbers of police officers per head of population and has lower workforce costs than most other forces in England and Wales.

Savings plans for 2014/15 and 2015/16

The constabulary has a good record of achieving savings and in 2013/14 it achieved an additional £2.2m savings. These supplemented the constabulary's reserves and can be used to support future investment or funding gaps. The constabulary has sound plans to achieve its £25.3m savings requirement over this spending review period, largely achieved through a well established and wide-ranging collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary.

Of the £5.9m savings required in 2014/15 the constabulary has identified savings of £3.5m and already has projects underway to achieve a further £0.3m. Currently the constabulary plans to use £2.4m of reserves to bridge the gap, although it anticipates further savings identified through its scrutiny process will reduce this need.

The constabulary has a savings requirement in 2015/16 of £9.9m. It already has work underway to achieve £6.8m of the savings and currently plans to bridge the gap using reserves it has built up in earlier years.

As a result of the recent decision by Suffolk's police and crime commissioner not to proceed

with two collaboration business cases, the budget deficit for Norfolk Constabulary has increased by a further £1.3m, and will largely have an impact in 2015/16 and 2016/17. Norfolk Constabulary has already developed an alternative option to mitigate the additional cost pressure of this decision. It is also conducting a number of reviews to identify the savings required to address the developing gap for 2015/16 and beyond.

Outlook for 2016 and beyond

Based on a realistic set of assumptions about likely grant reductions, cost increases and precept increases Norfolk Constabulary has identified that it needs to make savings of £20.3m over the four years to 2017/18. The constabulary has identified 16 areas of business to achieve savings from over the four years with business cases and projects well underway. It has also conducted a review of the way it provides local policing. This review has concentrated on maximising financial savings within the current structure and providing options that are scalable to meet financial pressures.

The constabulary's financial plans set out a budget deficit of £9m with reserves being used to bridge this gap each year to 2017/18. However, as a result of the work undertaken through its change programme, the constabulary has outline plans to achieve two thirds of the savings required which reduces this outstanding budget deficit to £6.4m and the reliance on reserves.

The police and crime commissioner has a reserves strategy to invest in change and holds sufficient reserves to support the full budget deficit over the next four years. Although the constabulary's current medium term plans assume that it will use reserves for this purpose, the work that is already underway will substantially reduce this need.

Summary

Good

- The constabulary has clear plans to achieve savings for 2014/15, and its plans are well underway for 2015/16. It will use reserves built up during the current spending review to meet any residual funding gap if required.
- Current budget allocations support the police and crime commissioner's priorities, with growth built into the budget to tackle prioritising vulnerability and to safeguard the number of local policing officers.
- The constabulary has to achieve £20.3m of savings by 2018, and has already identified savings that reduce the funding gap to £6.4m while identifying opportunities for further savings. It has healthy reserves of £31.4m ensuring it is financially secure over the long term.

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

HMIC looks at how the constabulary is structured to provide policing. We ask if this is affordable as the constabulary responds to its financial challenge. We look at what the constabulary 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 constabulary provides policing

Local policing is the cornerstone of Norfolk Constabulary's service and over the spending review the constabulary has protected its frontline strength as much as possible. The constabulary provides local policing through a single county policing command with a structure that includes 49 safer neighbourhood teams feeding into 17 geographically aligned local policing commands and seven operational partnership teams, aligned to local authorities and districts.

Norfolk undertook an extensive and ambitious programme of collaboration with its preferred partner, Suffolk Constabulary. The collaboration programme between the two constabularies remains one of the most ambitious and well-planned in the country. One of the major elements of the collaboration saw the two constabularies introduce six police investigation centres (PICs) across their constabulary areas (where arrested people are detained and dedicated units complete the investigations). The partnership has already successfully achieved savings through shared services, such as areas of specialist policing and business support, while others have provided non-cashable benefits (e.g. PICs).

While the way that policing is currently provided has served Norfolk well over the spending review the constabulary has undertaken a detailed review of how it provides local policing in light of the requirement to reduce costs and save £20.3m by 2017/18. It recognises it will need to manage its resources in different ways, however the chief constable and the police and crime commissioner are clear that neighbourhood policing will continue to be the foundation for how policing is provided across the county. The review of local policing concluded in April 2014. At the time of the inspection, the review was undertaking consultation, however the constabulary is committed to retaining key aspects of the existing structure. As such, its preferred option retains the 49 safer neighbourhoods in 17 local policing commands. The operational partnership teams will be protected as far as possible, maintaining the one-to-one relationships with key partner agencies until such time as this becomes unaffordable.

The constabulary has identified substantial savings that can be achieved by extending its collaborative work with Suffolk Constabulary. This involves using a continuous improvement review to make existing collaboration more efficient, and by introducing new areas that would provide operational and financial benefits through collaboration. However, business

cases to develop a joint control room for the two constabularies and to extend the joint back office working have been stopped after the Suffolk police and crime commissioner decided he would no longer support them. This means that Norfolk will have to look at other opportunities to save £1.3m.

Collaboration

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

Norfolk Constabulary has worked with other forces across the eastern region to develop a more effective response to serious and organised crime. The Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) was set up in 2010 to tackle the harm caused by organised crime groups across the region. Agreement has been reached with the forces including Norfolk, primarily to extend the operational benefits with the potential for longer term savings.

Norfolk Constabulary has successfully undertaken extensive collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary to save money and increase effectiveness. The constabulary has continued to develop its close alliance and now has joint justice, specialist policing and business support services. Norfolk and Suffolk have 1,481 officers and staff working in joint units, which equates to £65m of spend across the two constabularies. Last year this achieved an additional £1.4m savings for Norfolk.

The constabulary has developed options to achieve further savings with its preferred partner in order to address its estimated funding gap. The joint areas where further savings opportunities are being progressed include specialist policing, custody and criminal investigation units.

Norfolk Constabulary has explored collaborative opportunities with other police forces and a number of local initiatives are progressing with local partners and other emergency services. However its preferred partnership with Suffolk Constabulary is still considered the best option to safeguard police resources in the future.

HMIC is particularly concerned that the latest collaboration business cases have been halted, but this is a matter that is out of the hands of Norfolk. Norfolk's planning suggests that if the collaboration had gone ahead, a further £1.3m of savings would have been achieved.

In 2013/14 the constabulary spent 33 percent of its net revenue expenditure on collaboration, which is considerably higher than the 15 percent figure for England and Wales.

Collaboration is expected to contribute to 34 percent of the constabulary's savings requirement, which is higher than the figure 10 percent 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.

As policing is provided in Norfolk through both local and collaborated policing teams. There are strong and highly effective working relationships between Norfolk and Suffolk chief officers.

Norfolk Constabulary has invested in a joint change programme team with Suffolk Constabulary; at the time of the inspection this team was led by a single chief officer who had responsibility to progress the way both constabularies responded to the reductions in funding. Over the first three years of the spending review the change programme has enabled the constabulary to achieve the majority of the savings required.

In 2012 the change programme team prepared an initial assessment, based on the challenges facing both constabularies, to identify opportunities to make savings to support each constabulary in meeting its funding gap. This resulted in the change team identifying 16 areas of business that met the criteria.

Norfolk Constabulary has also undertaken a detailed review of how it provides local policing. To reduce costs and save £20m by 2017/2018, it recognised that in order to retain local policing as the cornerstone of its service, it needed to protect its frontline strength as far as possible. It has used a number of tools to assist in profiling its demand including the 'Strategic Direction' software it previously used to review its local policing model. The constabulary is identifying options to save between £2m and £8.5m from local policing. The constabulary has indicated that the most likely option is further reduction in PCSO posts.

The change team has undertaken a significant amount of work to align policies and processes across the two constabularies and is continuing to align the terms and conditions for all staff. The change programme has used a variety of methods and tools.

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

- collaboration with other forces;
- changing the way specialist police functions are provided;
- changing the way business support functions such as human resources and finance are provided;
- improving the way operational support is undertaken; and
- using IT to streamline processes and reducing bureaucracy.

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

- changing the way local policing is provided;
- changing the way business support functions such as human resources and finance are provided;
- further changes to the way specialist police functions are provided;
- improving the way operational support functions are provided and undertaken; and
- further collaboration with other forces.

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

In conjunction with Suffolk Constabulary, Norfolk has written a joint statement of missions, values and philosophy. This has been completed as a way of aligning cultures between the two constabularies, which is especially important for those officers and staff working in collaborating units.

While the constabulary has not undertaken a recent staff survey, HMIC found that the workforce is positive about how the constabulary is managing its change programme as well as the level of engagement with the chief officer team. There has been a good level of consultation with trade unions, heads of departments and staff associations throughout Norfolk Constabulary's change programme. The workforce is supportive of the regular updates it receives. Staff feel that they have been genuinely involved and consulted throughout the change programme. Led by the chief constable, Norfolk has comprehensive internal communication and engagement. With Suffolk, the constabulary is developing an overarching communication strategy to incorporate each portfolio and provide updates are provided at joint meetings.

Following success in Norfolk, the constabulary has recently collaborated with Suffolk to extend further the benefits of the performance improvement unit. The unit provides professional advice to managers to support the development of staff. The constabulary also has a wellbeing strategy and processes, which have assisted with reducing sickness levels.

How is the constabulary achieving the savings?

Because around 80 percent of a police budget (on average) is spent on staff costs, 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 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 constabulary plans to make 12 percent of its savings from non-pay over the spending review period. This is considerably lower than the 29 percent value for England and Wales.

The constabulary has, worked with Suffolk Constabulary to harmonise contract dates, bringing contracts together to benefit from the resulting economies of scale, for example the supply of uniforms. They have also collectively outsourced the two constabularies' facility management work, which has also reduced costs.

The constabulary has set an ambitious target of reducing variable year-on-year non-pay costs by 2.5 percent while also absorbing 1 percent inflation each year for the next three years to achieve £1.5m cost reductions. This will include a review of the estates strategy, fleet and other areas of non-pay.

There are plans to use a zero-based budget approach to evaluate the constabulary and its structure.

As with other forces, most of the savings come from reducing the workforce. Norfolk Constabulary made an early start on this in 2010 when it slowed its recruitment, and reduced the number of police staff. Despite the constabulary's work to reduce non-pay costs, 88 percent of its spending review savings requirement was made from its pay budget. This is higher than the proportion for England and Wales.

The following table shows the constabulary’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.

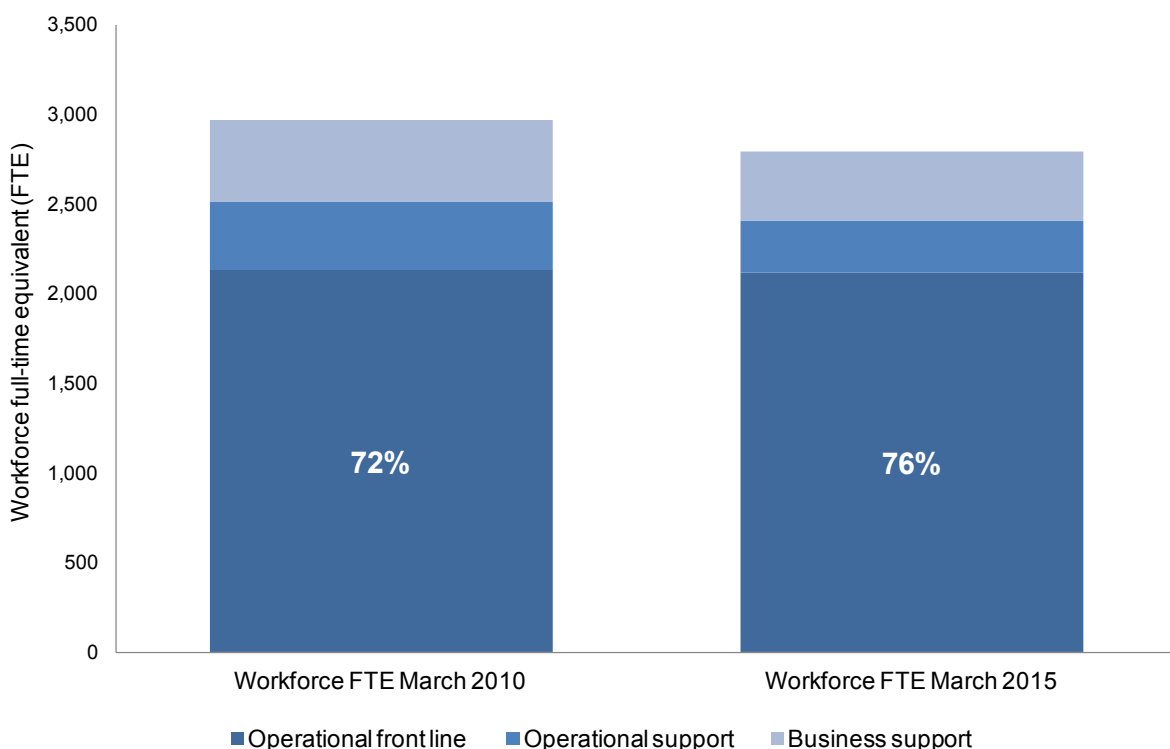
	31 March 2010 (baseline)	31 March 2015	Change	Constabulary change %	Change for England and Wales %
Police officers	1,662	1,574	-88	-5%	-11%
Police staff	1,119	999	-120	-11%	-17%
PCSOs	275	217	-58	-21%	-22%
Total	3,056	2,790	-266	-9%	-14%
Specials	266	350	84	32%	44%

Norfolk Constabulary plans to lose considerably fewer of its workforce proportionally than England and Wales, with smaller reductions in police officers and police staff. This is extremely positive and a credit to the constabulary that it has been able to maintain these numbers while achieving the required savings.

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 workforce frontline profile in Norfolk Constabulary.



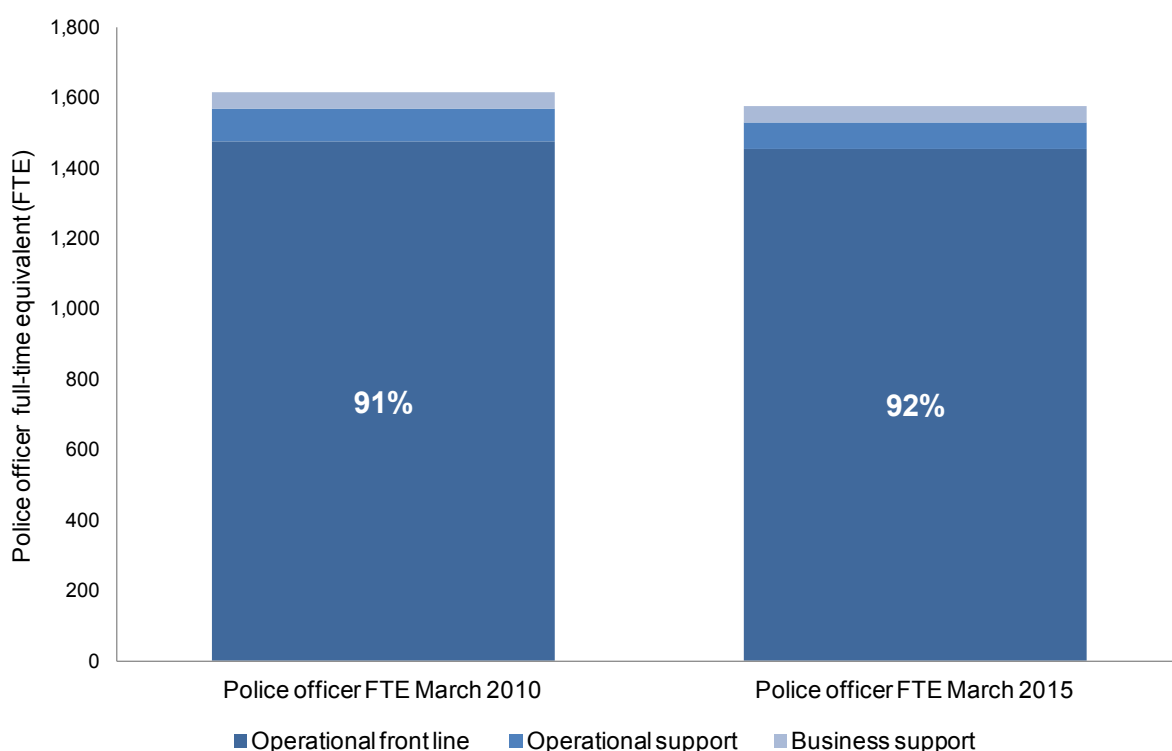
Note: England and Wales reports an increase in the proportion of workforce on the front line from 74 percent in March 2010 to 78 percent in March 2015.

The number of officers, PCSOs and staff, of the constabulary's total workforce, working on the front line is projected to reduce slightly by 14 between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 2,129 to 2,115).

Over the same period, the proportion of Norfolk's total workforce allocated to frontline roles is projected to increase from 72 percent to 76 percent. This compares with an overall increase across England and Wales from 74 percent to 78 percent.

The number of Norfolk's police officers in frontline roles is planned to reduce by 19 from 1,474 in March 2010 to 1,455 by March 2015, as the following chart shows. The proportion of those remaining on the front line is projected to increase from 91 percent to 92 percent. This compares to an overall increase across England and Wales from 89 percent to 92 percent and shows Norfolk Constabulary is successfully protecting frontline crime-fighting roles as it makes these cuts.

The following chart shows the planned change in the profile of police officers on the front line.



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

Outstanding

- The constabulary’s workforce structure has successfully matched the needs of the organisation, improving policing outcomes, and is set to meet its savings requirement over the spending review.
- The constabulary has a well-established structure, which not only provides effective services but is scalable, enabling Norfolk Constabulary to respond to future funding challenges.
- To ensure it can provide local policing services effectively into the future the constabulary has developed risk assessed options to achieve £2.5m to £8.5m of savings to meet future requirements. The chosen options would include a recruitment freeze to reduce

PCSO numbers.

- Norfolk's established and successful collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary continues to secure financial and operational efficiencies. By extending this work it has identified or is developing projects to achieve over 33 percent of the savings planned opportunities. Further opportunities have been identified.
- The robust change programme, using business improvement tools, has driven out efficiencies and savings, and ensured benefits are realised. This has enabled the constabulary to sustain its operational front line with minimal reductions in workforce numbers throughout the spending review.
- Norfolk Constabulary has been able to maintain workforce numbers, seeing considerably fewer reductions than most other forces, as well as protecting the front line. This is commendable.

To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

HMIC looks at how the constabulary 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 achieving 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 constabulary understand and manage demand?

Norfolk Constabulary has undertaken extensive analysis of the demand it experiences through calls for service. The constabulary uses a number of tools to profile demand across all areas of its business. It is through this analysis that the constabulary has remodelled the way it provides policing during the spending review. The latest review of demand, with recommendations on continuing policing services efficiently and effectively, was concluded in April 2014 and at the time of the inspection was undergoing consultation.

Norfolk Constabulary undertakes regular reviews to ensure it understands the challenges it faces. The constabulary has a joint performance and analysis department (with Suffolk Constabulary), which has undertaken assessment of the demands and constabulary profile for the next five years.

The constabulary is using its analysis and assessments to proactively reduce demand. The constabulary has recently undertaken an evaluation to establish areas where there are significant deployments of resources, for example hospitals and retail stores. Each area has been assigned a plan owner to work in partnership to develop opportunities to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB), thereby reducing future demand. The constabulary has also put in place a resolution team within the control team with the intention of providing a satisfactory outcome at an earlier stage. An area in which Norfolk is working with another force is the scanning of social media, with the intention of reducing demand by being proactive and working in partnership, for example in relation to raves.

The constabulary is keen to develop evidence-based policing further and, together with Suffolk, is identifying a suitable academic partner. The work that the constabulary has planned in this area, along with the recent reviews and assessments, is developing the constabulary's understanding of the totality of its demand. This in turn will enhance the constabulary's understanding of need when allocating its resources.

Norfolk's understanding and managing of demand is evident; it is one of four forces working with the College of Policing to develop ways of profiling demand and redesigning the way policing is provided.

How efficiently does the constabulary allocate its resources?

The assessment of the policing challenges to allocate resources is embedded at all levels of the organisation. At a strategic level, the constabulary uses various assessments to allocate resources. As a result there are clear examples of how resources have been realigned, including increasing investigative resources in public protection, (the unit deals with domestic abuse and managing risk offenders such as sex offenders). The constabulary has put resources into the child abuse unit and has built closer working relationships with partner agencies. The constabulary can identify trends and there is evidence of resulting action taken to deal with the underlying issues. Within policing areas managers align resources against more local policing challenges and on a daily basis the constabulary has processes in place which focus resources on immediate concerns and issues.

The constabulary has recently set up an investigations directorate, aligning specialist investigators and safeguarding experts to reflect the local and national priorities. The directorate will prioritise investigations according to threat, risk and harm, in particular supporting those that are vulnerable. The constabulary has increased staffing in specialist units, such as adult abuse and rape investigation, as well as making appropriate arrangements to respond to the increased levels of threat and demand from cybercrime.

The constabulary has continued to work closely with partner agencies. There is a countywide multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) introduced nearly two years ago. Through its joint work, improved information sharing has allowed for more informed decisions, and a better quality of service has resulted.

The constabulary has maintained a strong focus on prevention activity. The constabulary has co-located multi-agency teams who have responsibility to jointly manage ASB problems in communities. The constabulary also has a good integrated offender management team which allows it to better manage priority offenders. A focus on mental health as a means of reducing demand has seen the constabulary piloting an initiative whereby mental health professionals work alongside the police in the control room to provide advice. This means that officers and staff attending incidents where mental health is a factor are able to provide a better service. The constabulary is applying for funding to extend this work and is also exploring similar initiatives to work more closely with health, for example in relation to dementia.

The constabulary has end-to-end process improvement reviews as an element of its change management process with specialists in the change team. There are examples of initiatives and full business cases developed to reduce bureaucracy and ultimately free up officer and staff time. This is also a key feature of collaboration and partnership working. HMIC has previously reported on the constabulary's successful working with neighbouring Suffolk

Constabulary to provide a wide range of operational policing and support services together. These were found to have achieved excellent efficiencies while limiting the impact of funding reductions on service provision.

While the constabulary has done a lot to improve the use of IT for officers and staff it does not currently benefit from the effective use of mobile data. The constabulary had introduced mobile data terminals, but these were subsequently withdrawn as they were inefficient. The constabulary is due to re-launch mobile data terminals in early summer 2014. Through its IT strategy, the constabulary has managed to increase access to Norfolk's and Suffolk's databases across both counties. The underlying infrastructure is in place which will enable the constabulary to work more effectively when it implements significant new systems next year.

How does the constabulary 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 constabulary's decision.

Calls for service

HMIC examined whether Norfolk 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 from 2010 to present, Norfolk Constabulary had maintained the same target response times of within 15 minutes for calls classed as 'emergency' (also known as Grade 1) in urban settings and 20 minutes in rural settings. Over the same period, calls classed as 'urgent' (also known as Grade 2) had a target response time of within 60 minutes.

Over the spending review, attendance for emergency and for priority calls has improved. This demonstrates the constabulary's continued focus on providing effective services to the public at time of need, this commitment and achievement is extremely positive.

The following table compares the constabulary's performance in 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Calls for service	2010/11	2013/14
Percentage of urban emergency calls on target	93.0	94.1
Percentage of rural emergency calls on target	88.0	91.3
Percentage of priority calls on target	77.0	88.0

Over the spending review period, the constabulary has been able to improve its response to both emergency and 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 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 constabulary. HMIC therefore examined how far the changes being implemented by the constabulary had affected the visibility of the police in the Norfolk area.

In 2014, Norfolk Constabulary allocated 62 percent of its police officers to visible roles. This is 1.5 percentage points lower than the number allocated in 2010, but above the figure for England and Wales (56 percent).

Police visibility is further enhanced by PCSOs, who principally support community policing. Looking at the proportion of police officers and PCSOs, Norfolk Constabulary allocated 67 percent to visible roles. This is 2.0 percentage points lower than it allocated in 2010, but considerably above 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.

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.

Of those people surveyed in Norfolk, 6 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, 89 percent of respondents in Norfolk 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 Norfolk 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 2011/12 and 2013/14 (which includes the first three years of the spending review), Norfolk Constabulary reduced recorded crime (excluding fraud) by 11 percent, compared with 14 percent in England and Wales. Over this period, victim-based crime (crimes where there is a direct victim – an individual, a group, or an organisation) reduced by 14 percent, compared with 14 percent in England and Wales.

Looking just at the last 12 months, recorded crime (excluding fraud) increased by 1 percent compared to the 1 percent reduction for all of 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 Norfolk (per head of population) compared with the rest of England and Wales. Norfolk continues to be one of lowest crime areas compared to all other forces.

12 months to March 2014	Rate per 1,000 population	England and Wales rate per 1,000 population
Crimes (excluding fraud)	44.0	61.1
Victim-based crime	38.1	54.3
Sexual offences	1.1	1.1
Burglary	4.2	7.8
Violence against the person	10.1	11.1
ASB incidents	32.6	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.

Norfolk Constabulary's investigative detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to March 2014 was 37 percent. This is higher than the England and Wales sanction detection rate of 26 percent.

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the Norfolk Constabulary 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, 88.3 percent (± 1.4 percent) of victims were satisfied with the overall service provided by Norfolk Constabulary. This is higher than the England and Wales figure of 85.2 percent (± 0.2 percent).

Changes to how the public can access services

Forces are exploring different ways in which the public can access policing services. Over the spending review period, the constabulary will reduce the number of police stations and police buildings it operates to achieve savings. As part of the constabulary's Public Access Strategy, a review of demand has been used to categorise police stations to inform decisions on future service levels and the need to offer alternative means of accessing services.

Summary

Outstanding

- The constabulary has an extensive understanding of the demands and challenges it faces. The way the constabulary provides local policing over the next four years has been designed based on these assessments, which include projections of future demands.
- There is clear evidence of resources being allocated on priorities and greatest need, both locally and against national demands. Crime and demand profiles are analysed and staffing levels reviewed to ensure that its workforce is in the right place.
- The constabulary remains committed to local policing and partnership working as a means of improving the quality of the service it provides to the public and reducing demand.
- According to the constabulary's own recorded crime figures, it continues to achieve high crime reduction, maintenance of some of the lowest levels of crime in England and Wales, high levels of victim satisfaction and effective service provision such as responding to need.

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.