



Promoting improvements  
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everyone safer

# PEEL: Police efficiency 2016

An inspection of Kent Police



November 2016

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## Introduction

As part of its annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), HMIC assesses the efficiency of police forces across England and Wales.

As with all public services, it is vital that the police service operates in a way that makes the most of all its available resources. Police forces need to make sure they understand the current demand for their services. This is to make sure that they use all the resources available to them to fight all types of crime and to protect communities. Also, forces need to be looking to the future to understand how that demand may change and to plan where they need to invest extra resources or change the ways they operate so that the public can continue to receive the policing it expects and deserves.

As part of the government's objectives to cut public spending, central funding to the police service in England and Wales has been reduced by around 20 percent since 2011. Police forces across England and Wales have faced a difficult challenge to sustain effective levels of policing in the face of significant budget cuts. Forces need to continue to make efficiencies and invest resources wisely in order to maintain a focus on reducing crime and keeping their communities safe. HMIC considers that a police force is efficient if it is making the best use of its resources to provide policing services that meet expectation and follow public priorities, and if it is planning and investing wisely for the future.

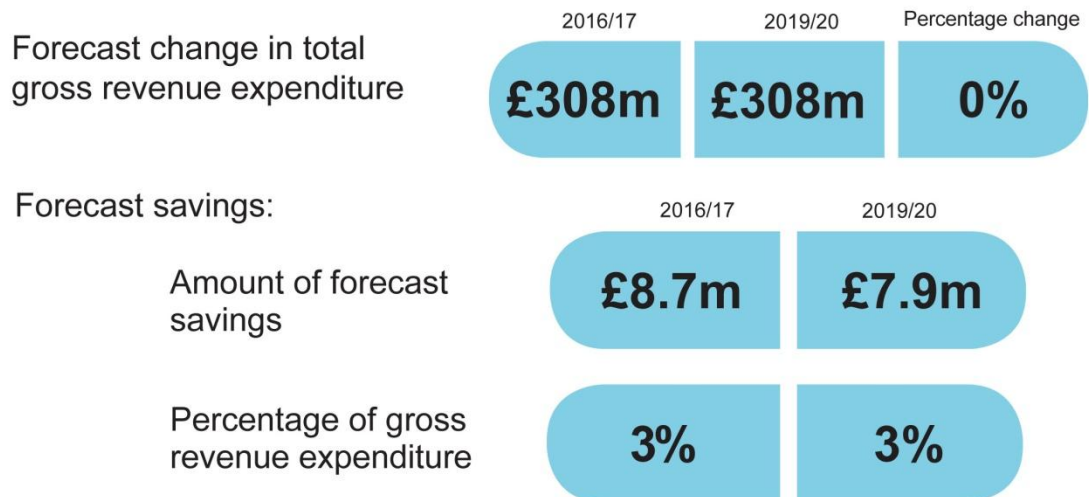
HMIC's efficiency inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/)). This report sets out our findings for Kent Police.

Reports on Kent Police's legitimacy and leadership inspections will be available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016)) in December 2016. Our reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2017.

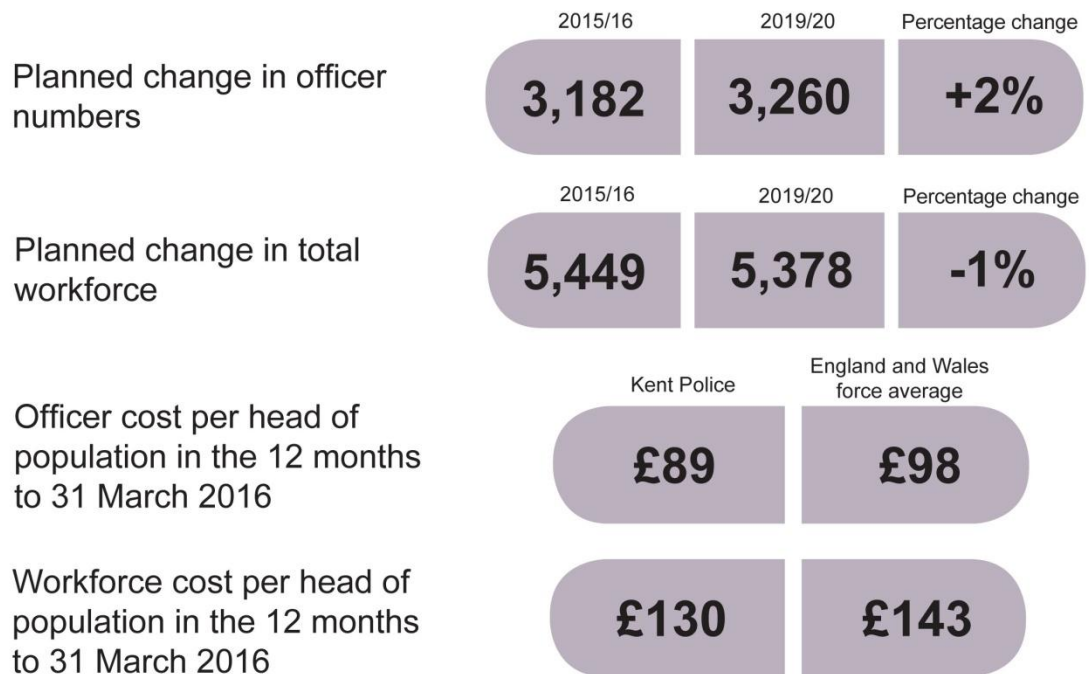
## Force in numbers



### Financial position



### Workforce





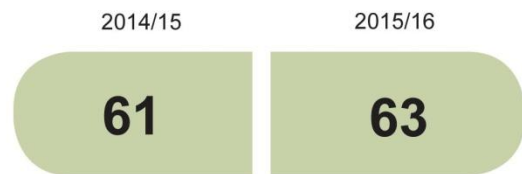
## Calls for assistance

999 calls per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016



## Recorded crime

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016

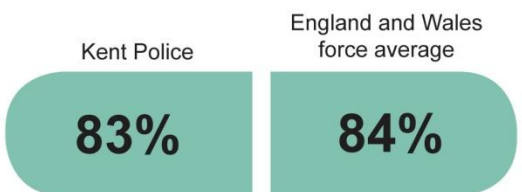


Percentage change in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016



## Victim satisfaction

Victim satisfaction with the overall service provided by the police 12 months to 31 March 2016



For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

## Overview – How efficient is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

### Overall judgment<sup>1</sup>



**Good**

Kent Police has been assessed as good in respect of the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. The force's understanding of current demand for its services is outstanding, and it is doing considerable work to evaluate future demand. It is good at using its resources to manage current demand and works well with other forces in the region, particularly Essex Police, to improve efficiency and make savings. The force continues to manage its finances successfully and meet its saving requirements. Future investment plans are based on realistic and prudent assumptions and are designed to achieve greater efficiency and service improvement. In last year's efficiency inspection, Kent Police was judged to be good.

### Overall summary

Since HMIC's 2015 inspection, Kent Police has continued to be efficient in how it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Its detailed understanding of current demand, local priorities, national requirements and public expectations is outstanding, and it is making good progress in evaluating future demand. It uses a comprehensive range of management information to understand current demand across geographical areas and time frames. It has held workshops with those who are less likely to report crime, including transgender, black and minority ethnic (BME) and women's groups. The force has done work to help identify and improve understanding of demand that is under-reported, such as cyber-crime, crimes against vulnerable people, gang activity and child sexual exploitation, and has drawn up specific plans to guide improvements in service in these areas. The force is aligning its change programme to meet likely future demand and has identified a number of areas of growing demand, including counter terrorism, cyber-crime, people trafficking and vulnerability. It continues to improve its analytical capability to help it to understand emerging crime types and demographic changes.

Kent Police is good at using its resources to manage current demand. The force assesses thematic areas of the organisation in order to identify priorities based on risk and vulnerability. It has a development programme that draws together demand management with resourcing and service delivery, for example, which enables

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<sup>1</sup> HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

effective resource prioritisation. The force has worked hard to understand the costs of its services and to ensure services provide value for money. It has a comprehensive understanding of workforce skills and their effect on capacity and capability. Using an IT profiling tool, the force can identify workforce skills capabilities, gaps and potential gaps, such as from people retiring. It uses this information to plan training and recruitment. Good use is being made of technology such as body-worn cameras, and it has ambitious plans for mobile devices later in 2016. The force has a strong commitment to joint working to manage demand efficiently and it works well with other emergency services, particularly Kent Fire and Rescue Service. It has collaborated with Essex Police extensively for a number of years and is also part of the seven-force strategic collaboration programme.

The force is good at planning for future demand. It continues to manage its finances successfully and to meet its saving requirements. It is exploiting many opportunities to drive down costs and make savings so that it can invest in its change programmes. Future plans and investments are based on realistic and prudent assumptions about future income, costs and benefits and link directly to the workforce plan. The force has well-developed plans that identify future workforce capabilities aligned to current priorities. Ambitious plans to roll out mobile devices are well advanced. The use of technology to produce further efficiencies and meet the digital challenges is a fundamental part of the force's plans, and should enable it to continue to improve the services it provides.

### **Recommendations**

Kent Police is a good force. HMIC has not identified any causes of concern and therefore has made no recommendations.

## **How well does the force understand its current and likely future demand?**

A good understanding of the demand for police services is vital in ensuring that forces have the right resources in the right place to provide the right level of policing now and in the future. This means not just an understanding of reported incidents but also how well a force proactively looks for demand that is less likely to be reported (e.g. incidents relating to modern slavery or child sexual exploitation) so that it can ensure that it protects the most vulnerable victims. Forces also need to understand how much resource to put into work that prevents crime and anti-social behaviour from occurring in the first place. It is important that forces continually review how they operate to ensure that they are not wasting police resources by operating inefficiently or responding to unnecessary demands.

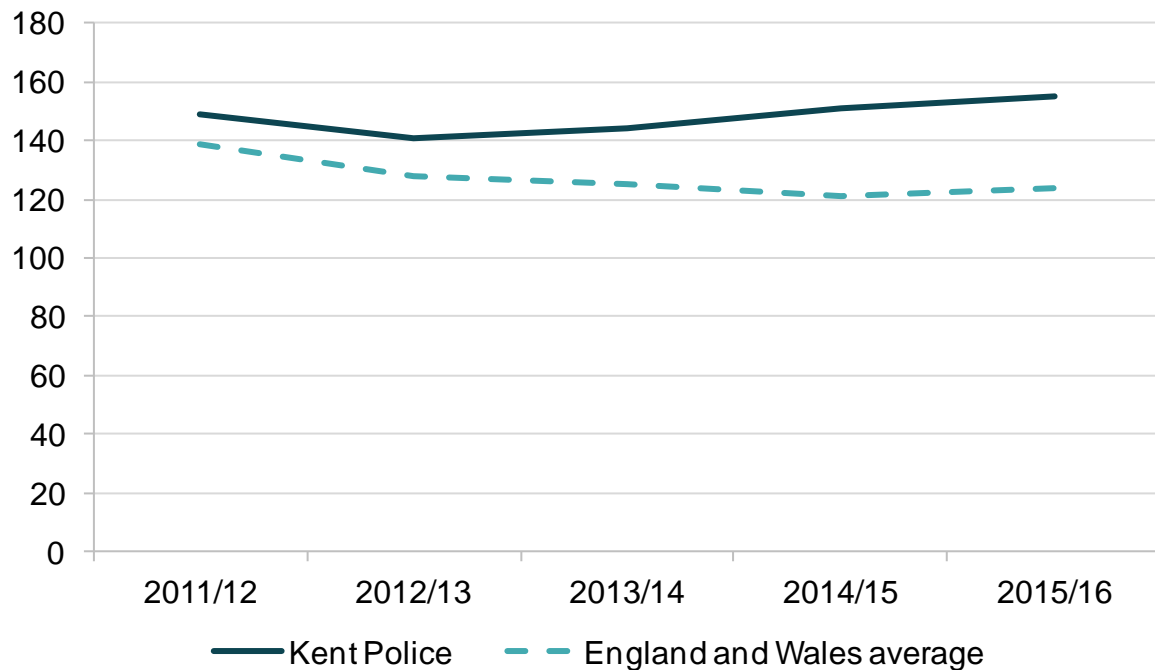
Forces must understand how demand is changing and how they need to change in order to adapt to ensure that they can plan for the future and continue to respond effectively. As well as assessing likely future threats and risks from crime, this also means understanding and assessing the potential impact of wider societal and environmental changes on the demands they will face.

## **How well does the force understand the current demand for its services?**

Police services cover a wide spectrum of activities and go far beyond the most obvious demands for providing a response to 999 calls, protecting victims of crime and pursuing offenders. It is important that forces have a comprehensive understanding across the whole range of different demands they face, including early intervention work with other organisations to prevent crime and proactively seeking out 'hidden' crimes (e.g. domestic abuse, internet crime, fraud, modern slavery and crime in communities who are more reluctant to trust or engage with the police). Police forces also need to understand how efficiently they run their own operations in order to avoid wasted effort and to ensure that they make the best use possible of all available resources.



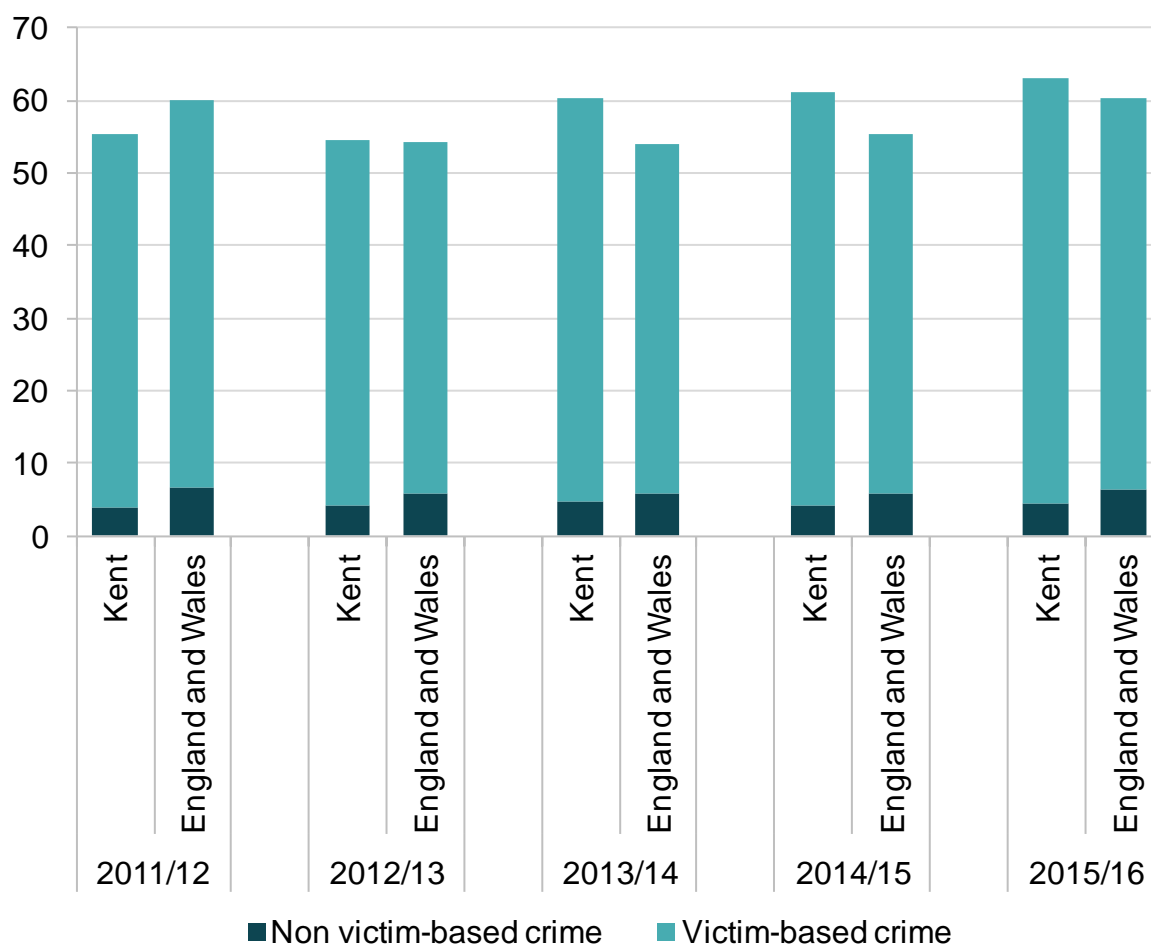
**Figure 1: Volume of 999 calls per 1,000 population received by Kent Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016**



**Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement**  
**For further information about the data in figure 1, please see annex A**

Kent Police received 155 '999' calls per 1,000 population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016. This was higher than the England and Wales average of 124 calls per 1,000 population. In the 12 months to 31 March 2012, the force received 149 '999' calls per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 139 calls per 1,000 population.

**Figure 2: Police recorded crimes per 1,000 population in Kent Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016**



**Source: Home Office Police recorded crime data**

**For further information about the data in figure 1, please see annex A**

With regard to police recorded crime for the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Kent Police recorded 58.7 victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 53.8 victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. Over the same period, Kent Police recorded 4.4 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, lower than the England and Wales average of 6.5 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. There has been an increase in the victim-based crime rate of 14 percent and an increase in the non victim-based crime rate of 9 percent since the 12 months to 31 March 2012.

Kent Police has its own research and development staff, which include analysts, social researchers and statisticians who use the MoRiLE<sup>2</sup> strategic matrix to assess thematic areas of business and identify the priorities based on risk and vulnerability. This has helped it to gain a comprehensive understanding of the full scope of its current demand based on an extensive range of management information. The force understands demand across geographical areas and time frames, and it uses a predictive calendar effectively. This identifies anticipated peaks in demand and expected spikes in crime types at certain times of the year, based on previous data. The use of PredPol<sup>3</sup> by the force is now well established.

Kent Police seeks the views of the local community through the Kent crime and victimisation survey. This helps to inform parts of the force's performance governance which is based on six themes: community; victim; offenders; threat, risk and harm (vulnerability); a supported work force; and standards and integrity. Established in 2014, the performance framework is fully embedded. The breadth and detail of information available remains impressive and includes both qualitative and quantitative data. Enhancements to the understanding of demand include work with recognised external experts to refine further the understanding of that demand which does not result in an incident being raised.

The force has carried out work to identify and understand better demand that is under reported. Workshops have been run with those communities less likely to report crime including transgender, black, Asian and minority ethnic and women's groups. The force development programme has identified cyber-crime, crimes against vulnerable people, gang activity and child sexual exploitation as areas of under-reported demand. It has established bespoke plans to guide improvements in service in these areas. The force has agreed operational guidelines with health and other statutory agencies for the reporting and management of female genital mutilation. This means that the force has an improved understanding of the extent of the problem and any issues relating to reporting and safeguarding.

The force regularly and effectively challenges itself to identify inefficient activities. A continuous improvement team is in place that finds better ways of working and commissions pilots to test these out. The force has a well-established tradition of using LEAN thinking in adapting its processes to drive out waste and inefficiencies.<sup>4</sup> For example, the force reports that over £600,000 efficiency savings have been

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<sup>2</sup> The MoRiLE (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement) is a national project that is developing a suite of risk prioritisation models and processes that all law enforcement agencies can use to understand their risks better. It is being delivered on behalf of the National Police Chiefs' Council.

<sup>3</sup> PredPol is an analytical tool that allows the force to map more accurately where officers should patrol in order to prevent and reduce crime.

<sup>4</sup> Lean process seeks to create more value for customers with fewer resources. A lean organisation understands what customers value and focuses its main processes to continuously increase this.

made from improvements to insurance and civil claims processes, and £800,000 from tactical operations including road policing.

## **How well does the force understand potential future demand for its services?**

Demands for police services are continually evolving. Forces need to anticipate and understand likely future changes so that their plans keep pace with the public's needs and expectations. Potential future demand includes new and emerging types of crime, such as cyber-crime, modern-day slavery and human trafficking. Also, it includes changes to the communities that forces serve, developments in technology and environmental events, such as flooding.

The force is making good progress in evaluating future demand and has a developing appreciation of the impact, scale and likelihood of future risk. It is investing considerable effort in aligning its change programme to meet future demand predictions and has identified a number of areas of growing demand: counter terrorism, cyber-crime, people trafficking and vulnerability, including child sexual exploitation. It continues to invest in analytical capability to enable it to understand emerging crime types and demographic changes and therefore has moved beyond assessing crime data alone in this work. Much use is made of trend analysis to understand emerging themes and demand profiles. These in turn are used to inform the force's operational model for service delivery. For cyber-crime, the force has approached other forces to see what works well. They have also engaged with partner agencies and local communities so that the force is better placed to understand the needs of victims. A joint cyber unit in collaboration with Essex Police has recently been agreed, with Kent providing 20 staff. Opportunities for investing more in prevention are being explored in order to manage demand better; and some arrangements are being put in place with local universities to use the expertise of their graduates. A Kent officer is the national police lead for the managing demand workstream.<sup>5</sup> This workstream is evaluating models of predictive demand and means that the force is well placed to take advantage of new and innovative ideas.

The force has analysed the impact on partners of their reducing resources and the potential impact on police services. One area is the provision of CCTV. The force has contributed to discussions that have led to local authorities considering joining together in hubs to provide centralised CCTV in order to provide a better, more efficient service. Public expectations are identified through the consultation process which informs community safety plans. This involves both the public for each district

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<sup>5</sup> A College of Policing-led review of the national picture of the breadth and complexity of the work undertaken by the police.

policing area and the district independent advisory groups which meet with the force monthly. The force is also active on social media, seeking views through Twitter. PACT meetings are held where there is a public appetite for them.<sup>6</sup>

## Summary of findings



**Outstanding**

Kent Police is outstanding at understanding its current and likely future demand. It has a detailed understanding of the full extent of its current demand based on a comprehensive range of management information, which includes that relating to demand across both geographical areas and time frames. It has carried out work, including workshops with groups less likely to report crime, to help identify and better understand under-reported demand. It is making good progress in evaluating future demand and has a developing appreciation of the impact, scale and likelihood of future risk. The force is investing considerable effort in aligning its change programme to meet future demand predictions and has identified a number of areas of growing demand: counter terrorism, cyber-crime, people trafficking, and vulnerability. This means that the force has a detailed understanding of its current demand and is making good progress to gain an equally detailed understanding of its likely future demand.

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<sup>6</sup> Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings are where Safer Neighbourhood Teams, members of the public and other local agencies discuss issues within the local neighbourhood. The meetings give members of the public the chance to raise issues for the authorities to tackle.

## How well does the force use its resources to manage current demand?

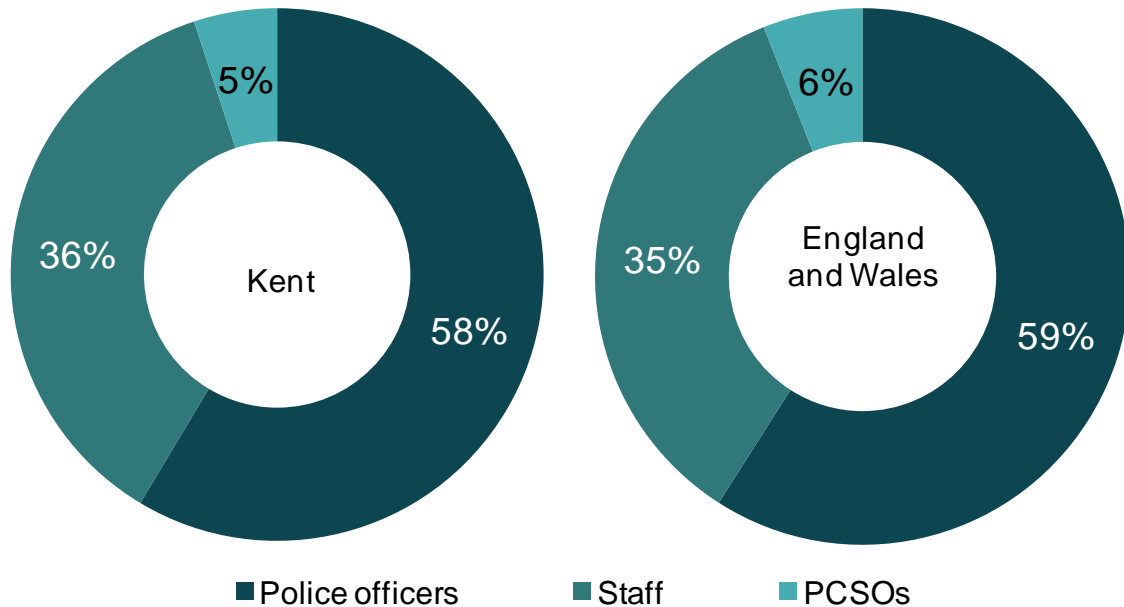
Police forces need to operate in a way that makes the best use of all available resources so that demand is met and public expectations are satisfied. We looked at the extent to which Kent Police has the right people with the right skills in the right place to protect the public and to fight crime. Police resources have been reducing continually over recent years. It is increasingly important that resources are aligned to priorities to provide value-for-money services that tackle priorities, manage demand and meet financial requirements. This not only involves a force using its own workforce as efficiently as possible; it also involves the police working in new ways with others to ensure the best possible service to the public, and using all available resources to improve efficiency.

For a number of years, police forces have been focused on changing the way they operate and finding ways to save money in order to manage reducing budgets. It is important that these savings are sustainable and forces can demonstrate that they have achieved efficiencies while continuing to have the capacity and capability to meet demand.

## How well does the force's current allocation of resources match demand, organisational and financial requirements?

Police forces need to consider many factors when deciding how to allocate their resources, including all elements of demand, local risks and priorities, and their national responsibilities. We looked at how well Kent Police assesses these factors in making decisions about the level of service to provide and how to use its resources to best effect.

**Figure 3: Police officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs) as a proportion of total workforce in Kent Police compared with England and Wales as at 31 March 2016**



**Source: Home Office Police workforce statistics**

**Note: figures may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding of numbers. For further information about the data in figure 3, please see annex A.**

As at 31 March 2016, police officers make up 58 percent of Kent Police's workforce. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 59 percent. The proportion of staff in Kent Police was 36 percent, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 35 percent. The proportion of police community support officers in Kent Police was five percent, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of six percent.

**Figure 4: Planned changes in full-time equivalent workforce from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for Kent Police compared with England and Wales**

	March 2010	Change from 2010 to 2016		March 2016	Change from 2016 to 2020		March 2020
		Force	England and Wales		Force	England and Wales	
Officers	3,787	-16%	-14%	3,182	2%	-2%	3,260
Staff	2,673	-26%	-21%	1,978	-8%	-5%	1,817
PCSOs	387	-25%	-35%	289	4%	-6%	300
<b>Workforce total</b>	<b>6,847</b>	<b>-20%</b>	<b>-18%</b>	<b>5,449</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>5,378</b>

Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

For further information about the data in figure 4, please see annex A

### Managing demands for police services

The force has an outstanding understanding of current demand, local priorities, national requirements and public expectations and is making good progress in evaluating future demand. The force's use of the MoRiLE strategic matrix to assess the thematic areas of business in order to identify priorities based on risk and vulnerability gives it a very strong evidence base from which to work. The force development programme supports the chief constable's and police and crime commissioner's joint vision and priorities. This programme draws together demand management with resourcing and service delivery among other themes, which enables effective resource prioritisation. Governance of the programme is strong and well defined and includes chief officer oversight and sign-off of strategic decisions. The programme, although relatively new (December 2015), is well understood within the organisation.

The force consistently sets clearly defined strategic priorities in its one-page, graphic control strategy. Resources are directed towards these priorities within the operating model and resource allocation is overseen by the strong governance arrangements evident within the force. Recent strategically significant decisions about redirecting resources and the restructuring of local policing areas were the subject of considerable research and review before debate at the force change board and sign-off by the chief officers. Senior officers are very well informed about the details of issues upon which they are required to make decisions. A recent example concerned both the need to increase the number of firearms officers and the need to develop greater cyber capability. Senior officers agreed to recruit new officers to undertake



firearms duties and to the release of experienced staff to new cyber-crime roles. In doing so, they took into account detailed information about the time it would take to complete the recruitment of staff, training costs and the impact on other areas of business which were losing staff to these new roles.

The force's quality performance framework has six themes. The force assesses each against a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures, as well as information from audit, inspection and customer feedback. This ensures that outcomes are systematically monitored and reviewed and that the required level/quality of service is achieved. For a number of years, the force has worked hard to understand the costs of its services and ensure these provide value for money by using LEAN process reviews. The force submitted several entries to the national Improvement & Efficiency Social Enterprise awards 2016. These showcase the best in transformation and improvement from councils, police, fire services and public partnerships. The force won several prizes, and one entry – the implementation of telematics across the car fleet – was shortlisted for the Police Project of the Year. This initiative enabled the force to identify underused vehicles, opportunities to improve deployment of operational police resources and opportunities for savings in maintenance and repair and reduced mileage costs.

### **Increasing efficiency**

The force has set up an internal efficiencies working group chaired by the director of corporate services to ensure that the force regularly assesses and considers the cost of services in relation to the quality and level of outcomes. Further oversight is provided by the demand and innovation management board. The force has been examining 85 different types of demand to assess whether any changes could be made either to working practices or to policies to reduce the demand and release savings. At the time of our inspection, the force had agreed or implemented proposals for 25 of the identified demand types, had decided against change in 31 cases and was still considering the remaining 29. Changes in practice include, for example, for non-injury road traffic collisions, where attendance of officers has been significantly reduced and accident case files eliminated. When no officer attends, the accident is recorded on a police incident log, and when they do, the record is made in the officer's pocket book. This reduces administration costs for cases that are mostly finalised by insurance companies, without any requirement for police involvement. Other examples include those relating to people making off without payment for fuel at petrol stations, loose horses, lost and found dogs and lost property. In these cases, practices have been changed after assessment of the cost, quality of service provided, and appropriateness of police intervention to reduce demand and cost on the force.

The force has agreed ambitious plans to introduce mobile devices for all frontline officers from September 2016. The device chosen is a better fit for the force's requirements and is at a lower cost than a more recent model. The aim is that the

devices will have the full range of all the available systems by April 2017. The force estimates the total capital investment in the mobile devices and associated items to be £8.6m, with spending of between £1.2m and £2.2m per year up to 2019/20.

The force has well-established systems and processes to ensure continuous improvement, including review and evaluation of change programmes. The strategic change board commissions and evaluates initiatives, reporting to the chief officer strategic group or to the joint chief officer group meeting, if, as in the case with the mobile device programme, the initiative involves collaboration with Essex Police. The force has a good track record in achieving service improvements and generating efficiencies, not least as a consequence of its LEAN programme.

## **How well does the force improve the productivity of its workforce?**

Finding ways to make police officers and staff more efficient when they are out in their communities and reducing time spent doing back-office functions is essential to ensuring that police officers remain visible, on the beat and engaged in activities to reduce and fight crime. Police forces spend around 80 percent of their budget on staffing, so it is vital that the workforce is as productive as possible. This means forces need to ensure that all their staff have the skills and capabilities to provide the required level of service. We assessed how well Kent Police understands the skills its staff need, both now and in the future; where there are gaps in either capacity or capability, we looked at whether the steps it is taking are appropriate to ensure that its staff work as efficiently and effectively as possible. We looked in particular at whether the workforce has the right level of digital skills, both to make the most of current ICT systems and to investigate crime digitally.

### **Understanding current workforce capabilities and gaps**

The force has a comprehensive understanding of its current workforce skills and how this relates to its capacity. Using an IT profiling tool, the force is able to identify workforce skills capabilities, gaps and potential gaps, such as due to people retiring. It uses this information to plan training and recruitment. For example, a roads policing skills gap was identified, so the force has been able to anticipate and address it even before it becomes an issue. The broader impact of using this methodology is that the force should have balanced teams with a good mixture of expertise to complement a way of working that serves the public best. Staff have received e-based learning in relation to cyber-crime and digital policing; however, the force recognises that there is more to be done if it is to implement its digital strategy successfully. The force is working with the University of Kent and Christchurch Canterbury University to identify the digitisation skill sets required in the future.

## **Tackling workforce gaps**

We found that good plans are in place to ensure that the force can address gaps in capabilities and capacity. The IT-based profiling tool is central to how the force is addressing identified gaps in skills/rank mix/supervision levels and how it is effectively managing succession plans, including in specialist areas. The learning and development department have been able to use the information from the profiling tool as a foundation for their training plans. Using a five-year timescale, it is using the force data alongside environmental scanning and information from the College of Policing, to future-proof its work. One example currently under consideration is to use computer specialists to improve the response to technology-related crime.

The force has a new lateral development scheme for staff called 'Develop You' which provides officers and staff with the opportunity to undertake short attachments to other departments, areas of business or projects. We found that the workforce is mostly positive about the access to and quality of the opportunities afforded by 'Develop You'. Examples of how the scheme has been used include: an inspector who completed an exchange with a peer in Essex Police; a member of staff who worked in the chief officers' support team for a short time; and an officer who is working on a short project looking at the disparity in anti-social behaviour satisfaction levels across different policing areas.

## **How well does the force work with others to improve how it manages demand for its services?**

We assessed how well Kent Police has explored all opportunities to work in collaboration with others to increase efficiency and provide better, more resilient services. This can include work with other police forces, local public sector organisations, the private sector and the voluntary sector. We looked at whether the force has a clear rationale for the decisions it has taken about how it works with others, and whether it has a good understanding of how successful its joint working has been in helping it to meet demand for its services better.

Kent Police has demonstrated a strong commitment to joint working over a number of years. The force's collaboration with Essex Police is extensive, mature and expanding. During our inspection, we found that savings arising from collaboration are projected to be £5.4m up to 2018/19. A considerable proportion of the savings is expected to be achieved from shared-services collaboration between Kent and Essex police through to 2018/19, with the rationale of improving services while reducing costs. Beyond the extensive collaboration arrangements with Essex Police, the force shares a control room with Kent Fire and Rescue Service. This co-location not only saves on premises costs but also enables the sharing of essential information, particularly during major emergencies, in order to improve inter-operability. The project to merge the police and fire service control rooms won a

national improvement and efficiency award for the fire service project in 2016.<sup>7</sup> The collaboration with the Kent Fire and Rescue Service is developing further, underpinned by the rationale of making common-sense, cost-effective collaborative arrangements that provide the most effective service to the people of Kent. In another cost-effective approach, the force has introduced NHS clinicians and MIND<sup>8</sup> counsellors into the control room, supporting the triage of incidents and decision-making at peak demand times. This is helping to ensure that the right decisions are made from a medical perspective. This has been particularly beneficial in incidents that have involved mental health concerns. The implementation of this joint working has not only improved the service to the public; it has also led to reduced demand on the police, as the health professional is able to deal with a number of matters over the phone without the need for police attendance.

Kent Police is a member of a seven-force strategic collaboration programme, whose extremely broad scope covers almost every principal element of operational, 'middle office' and support services police service provision.<sup>9</sup> The force is also part of the Athena IT system collaborative, but has yet to go live with this system. Athena is a fully integrated single policing database incorporating the key policing functions of intelligence, investigation, custody and case file preparation. This system aims not only to provide an improved IT platform for each force but also to provide instant cross-border data access and so improve service to the public. In so doing, it sets the foundations for future IT-enabled cross-border efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Collaboration benefits**

The benefits of collaboration between Kent and Essex police forces have been significant in terms of reduced costs and improved outcomes across a range of areas. So, for example, the serious crime directorate (SCD) has provided enhanced resilience at reduced costs to both forces since its inception in January 2010. At the time of our inspection, we found that the SCD had more than 1,100 officers and staff working together, providing a 24/7 intelligence capability, and a flexible surveillance and operational investigative capacity to target those causing the most harm to communities across Essex and Kent. The SCD has enjoyed significant successes since 2010. Independent auditors undertook a review of Kent and Essex police forces' collaboration arrangements to provide assurance that the costs and benefits have been properly calculated and understood. The auditors confirmed that there

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<sup>7</sup> The award was part of the Improvement & Efficiency Social Enterprise scheme for 2016 and recognised the extent of collaboration between the two services in amalgamating their control rooms

<sup>8</sup> MIND is a mental health charity in England and Wales. MIND offers information and advice to people with mental health problems and lobbies government and local authorities on their behalf.

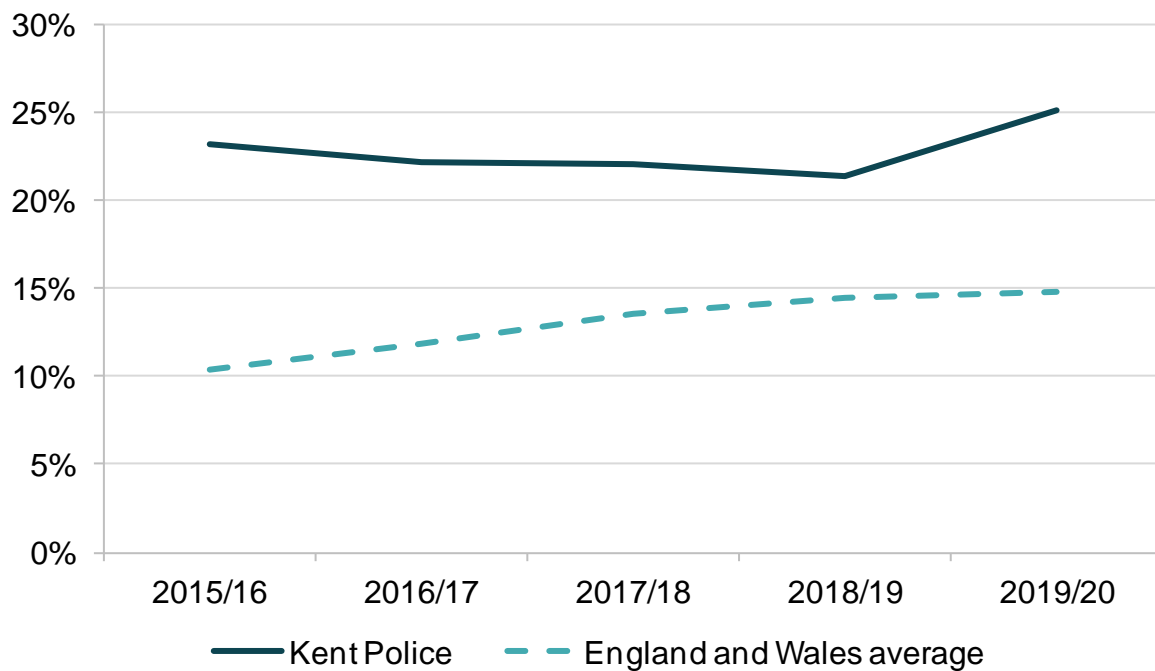
<sup>9</sup> The seven forces in the strategic collaboration are Bedfordshire, Essex, Kent, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

were robust arrangements in place for the management of the costs and benefits of collaboration.

The force is fully engaged in the seven-force strategic collaboration programme. It has not, at the time of our inspection, begun to use the integrated single policing database. It is expected that the force will move to the new system over the coming 12 months, as soon as some problems identified with the system are resolved. The force has also announced its intention to move from the south-east region organised crime unit to join the eastern region special operations unit (ERSOU) by 2017; this move should strengthen further the seven-force strategic collaboration programme, as all the other forces are part of ERSOU.

The force is able to demonstrate that it works with partner agencies to ensure that both demand from each other and from the public is managed efficiently. The chief constable leads a strategic engagement programme with all the local authorities. A mental health concordat is in place which seeks, among other things, to ensure that the most appropriate place of safety is found for an individual with suspected mental health concerns, the preference being that this is a hospital, rather than a police cell. Beyond the advanced blue light collaboration with the Kent fire and rescue service, discussions continue with other blue light services to assess what opportunities there might be for closer working. Within the criminal justice system, the force already makes use of electronic case files, and there have been occasions when victims who are vulnerable have given their evidence to court via a link to a tablet. Recently the force has been making use of a seven-day-week court with Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk which reduces waiting time for a court appearance and allows the force to manage better its cell capacity. The force has recognised and is considering the opportunities in the Policing and Crime Bill, which is passing through parliament during 2016, to increase collaboration between blue light partners, building on existing arrangements.

**Figure 5: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure (NRE) in Kent Police, compared with England and Wales, on collaboration with other forces in the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020**

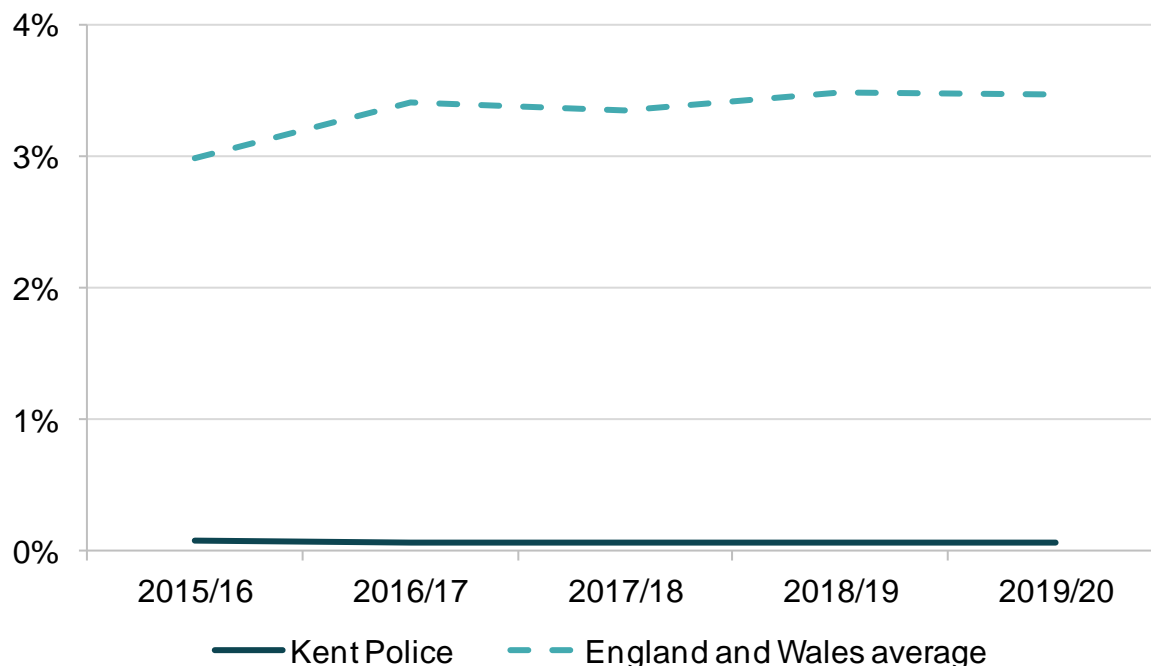


**Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection**

**Note: some forces could not provide data for all years. These forces have been excluded from the England and Wales average in those years only. West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police stated that all of their net revenue expenditure is spent in collaboration. To avoid distorting the distribution of forces, these have been removed from the England and Wales average for this figure. For further information about the data in figure 5, please see annex A.**

Kent Police has forecast that it will spend £61.7m in 2016/17 on collaboration with other police forces. This is 22.2 percent of its NRE, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 11.9 percent. For 2019/20, the force has forecast that it will spend £70.2m (25.1 percent of NRE) on collaboration with other police forces. This is higher than the England and Wales average of 14.8 percent.

**Figure 6: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure in Kent Police, compared with England and Wales, on collaboration with non-police organisations in the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020**



Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

Note: some forces could not provide data for all years. These forces have been excluded from the England and Wales average in those years only. For further information about the data in figure 6 please see annex A.

Kent Police has forecast that it will spend £0.2m in 2016/17 on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is 0.1 percent of its net revenue expenditure (NRE), which is lower than the England and Wales average of 3.4 percent. For 2019/20, the force has forecast that it will spend £0.2m (0.1 percent of NRE) on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is lower than the England and Wales average of 3.5 percent.

## **How well does the force understand how any changes made to improve efficiency have affected its ability to manage demand?**

As resources reduce and demands on police services become ever more complex, it is increasingly important that forces understand fully the benefits that are realised from any investment and the impact of any new ways of working. This understanding enables them to learn from what works and to take swift action to mitigate any negative results.

The force has ambitious investment plans, which include the new integrated single policing database and body-worn video cameras which are improving evidential quality. The force provided evidence that it had 900 body-worn cameras at the time of our inspection. The force concludes that a reduction in complaints against officers

and in numbers of officers being called to court is a direct result of the introduction of body-worn cameras. The implementation of the use of mobile devices is planned for September 2016, after an extensive trial of several types of device and in collaboration with Essex Police. The force's investment plans to 2019/20 include a total capital spend of £8.6m for the introduction of mobile smart phone devices and related items. To ensure the earliest availability of the devices, the force decided to release them before all the systems were loaded onto each device. This avoids significant delays and provides considerable improvement compared with what officers had available to them before.

The force routinely reviews its change programmes to gain a good understanding of the impact. This often relates to changes brought about by collaboration. Engagement with partner agencies, and to some extent the public, is undertaken before and after changes take place. Examples include the decision to close some police station front offices and changes to the local policing model and police community support officer (PCSO) numbers.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Kent Police is good at matching resource to current demand. The force has an outstanding understanding of current demand, local priorities, national requirements and public expectations, and is making good progress in evaluating future demand. It has mature processes to assess and consider the cost of services in relation to the quality and level of outcomes. It is making good use of technology such as body-worn cameras, and has ambitious plans for the use of mobile devices by frontline officers later in 2016.

The force has a comprehensive understanding of workforce skills and the impact on capacity and capability. Kent Police has demonstrated a strong commitment to joint working over a number of years; the force's collaboration with Essex Police is extensive, mature and expanding. Wider collaboration is evident through its membership of the seven-force strategic collaboration programme. The force is also working well with other blue light services, particularly with Kent Fire and Rescue Service. It is able to demonstrate that it works with partner agencies to ensure that demand from each other and the public is managed efficiently. This means that the force is well placed to match its resource to current and likely future demand, and to make the most of technological opportunities and efficiencies in the future.



## How well is the force planning for demand in the future?

HMIC examined how well forces are using their understanding of current and future demand on their services to develop more efficient ways of operating that balance ambition, realism, innovation and risk. Our assessment examined the extent to which Kent Police's plans are credible and achievable while at the same time are creative and ambitious. This included how far it is aiming to improve efficiency through its workforce plans, collaboration plans, financial plans, ICT plans and approaches to risk.

## How well does the force identify and prioritise areas to invest in for the future?

It is important that forces have good plans in place which take account of future demands for their services as well as the likely future funding available to them. They need to invest wisely for the future in order to ensure that they have the right capabilities to meet future demand. HMIC examined the force's financial plans and workforce plans to assess how far it is set to meet future changes in demand and local priorities. We looked in particular at how well Kent Police has considered its future ICT capabilities as well as any wider changes to the communities it serves.

### **Matching resources to demand, organisational priorities and financial requirements**

The force continues to manage its finances successfully and meet its saving requirements. The medium-term financial plan is based on realistic and prudent assumptions about future income, costs and benefits. Future savings requirements are estimated to be £33.3m from 2016/17 to 2019/20; this includes a 10 percent margin for contingency.

The medium-term financial plan is subject to monthly discussions at meetings between the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC) and the force. The force's ambition is to protect the front line, retaining the officer level at 3,260, which will require the recruitment of around 400 new officers to allow for projected leavers and retirees. It also plans to maintain the PCSO complement at about 300. The substantial work to understand better current and future demand, completed by the force, has allowed it to consider within its recruitment plans the need to redirect experienced officers into new and challenging areas. This includes growth in the number of firearms officers and the need to increase the capability to deal with cyber-crime. The decision to retain the PCSO establishment at about 300 is in keeping with the desire to maintain visibility and close engagement with communities in response to the challenges that the force has identified for the future. These

challenges include changing demographics, fuelled partly by refugee and migrant activity, the growing numbers of children in care and the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

The force's HR department has identified skills gaps in detectives, firearms and public protection roles. It has engaged with the force development programme to develop a resourcing plan for each skills gap which shows what skills are required and when. The force's understanding of what digitisation skills it might need is at an early stage of development, but the force is working with universities to identify its skill-set requirements.

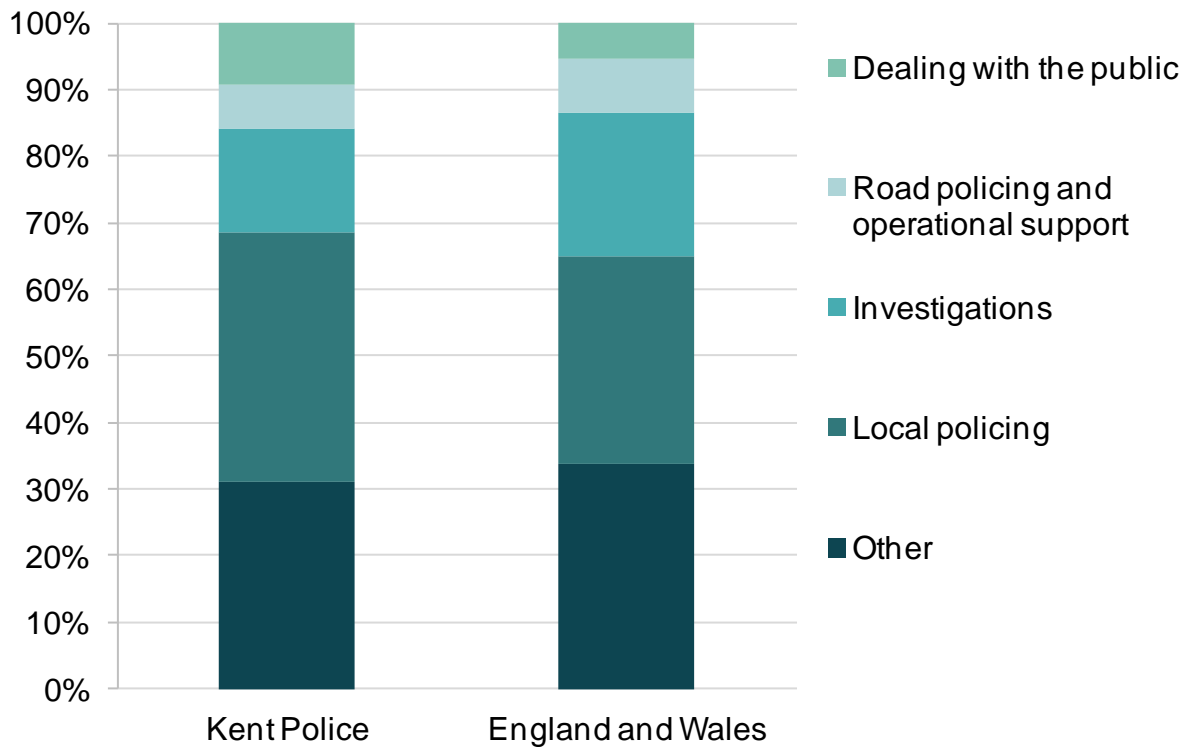
### **Investing in ICT**

The force has considered very carefully how its workforce and digital capabilities will integrate in the future. The force's digital strategy has three key strands: public contact; digital intelligence and investigation capability; and digital connection across the criminal justice sector. The ambition is for an operating model in which a suitably trained workforce assigned to generalist policing activity is supported by specialists and advisors. The governance of the digital strategy is conducted through the IT strategy board and overseen by the Kent/Essex joint chief officers' group, as this is a collaborative programme with Essex Police. The force, as previously mentioned, is part of the seven-force strategic collaboration programme and the associated integrated single policing database. The force has moved to digital case files managed through its current IT system. These interface with the Crown Prosecution Service and are stored digitally. The new system is expected to enhance this process further. The introduction of mobile devices from September 2016 will provide remote access by frontline staff to the intranet and email, and some search capability of current force systems and databases. It is intended that the devices will ultimately offer greater functionality and interfaces between systems, including for crime reporting and statement taking.

### **How well does the force plan its investments?**

A force's plans for investment and savings need to be credible, realistic and informed by a full understanding of the future challenges (both financial and operational) that it is likely to face. HMIC assessed the extent to which Kent Police's future plans are prudent, robust and based on sound assumptions about future demands and costs, while at the same time being ambitious enough to meet public expectations, including identifying new ways of working and providing services in the future.

**Figure 7: Estimated percentage of gross revenue expenditure allocated across different policing functions in Kent Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2016**



**Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection**  
**For further information about the data in figure 7, please see annex A**

The force has credible plans based on sound planning assumptions. The capital plan is based on some key themes which include: using technology and innovation to reduce demand; increasing the time and focus officers can devote to core activities; and ensuring sound and reliable equipment and facilities for officers. The investment in the IT system is part of the seven-force strategic collaboration that includes appropriate experts, and the mobile device business case was subject to external review by a consultancy firm. Regular monitoring and review of delivery plans and active risk management, including through the independent joint audit committee, are vital parts of the governance arrangements.

**Planning for the future**

Future investment plans are designed to achieve greater efficiency and service improvement. We found that the force’s plans are rational, based on sound information and good understanding. Assumptions about future income and costs are prudent and based on an assessment of likely issues including: precept

increases; saving requirements of £33.3m for 2016/17 to 2019/20; assumed loss in central grant of £1m each year from 2017/18 onwards; and an assumed cost for the new apprenticeship levy of £1.3m.<sup>10</sup>

The force has well-developed plans that identify future workforce capabilities aligned to current priorities. Its workforce resourcing plan is designed so that the force will be at full strength by August 2017 and able to release experienced staff to areas of future demand and risk. Skills gaps have been identified in certain skill sets and the HR department has been working with the future demand group to ensure each identified area has a resourcing plan which shows what skills are required and when. The force has agreed an increase of 28 officers in its armed response capability in light of the current and anticipated terrorist threat. This increase is being met by an increase in the precept and from force finances to cover the wage increase. In terms of provision of the required training and all associated equipment costs, the force has received £1.05 million from the new government firearms grant to assist in covering the first year's costs. The uplift in firearms officers matches the force assessment of the increase required against its threat assessment.

The force's plans are innovative and achievable, and clearly align analysis of future demand to the identification of new ways of operating and providing services in the future. At a strategic level, the force is part of the seven-force strategic alliance that aims to significantly improve cross-border efficiency and effectiveness. The change strategy sets out the force's ambition for future policing in Kent. This includes seeking alternative methods of service delivery, including by the private sector. A specific development includes the website 'channel shift' work. This directs the public who use the website to the appropriate part of the organisation or partner agency. It is expected to improve the way the public interact online with the force and reduce unnecessary demand.

The introduction of mobile devices and the continued creative and innovative use of IT solutions, such as those supporting the force's interactions with court processes, should continue to change the way the force operates. Workforce plans recognise the need to broaden the range of skills required by frontline staff, as well as the need for new and more specialist skills in some roles to meet future and emerging demand. The workforce plans reflect these needs, and plans are in place to address identified gaps.

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<sup>10</sup> The government has confirmed the introduction of an apprenticeship levy from April 2017 - a fundamental change to the way apprenticeships in England are funded. Employers with a UK pay bill of over £3m from both the private and public sectors will be required to pay 0.5 percent of that into a levy. The levy payment will then be ring-fenced in the form of an electronic voucher that can be used to purchase apprenticeship training.

## **To what extent does the force fund its investments sustainably?**

Police forces have made significant financial savings over recent years which have enabled them to reduce their costs and protect frontline policing. They continue to face financial challenges, and it is vital to their ability to sustain effective policing that they continue to seek improved efficiencies and drive down costs so that they can not only balance their budgets but also invest in improving their capability in the future. Forces need to consider different ways of transforming the way they work in order to secure effective policing in the longer term. This may include plans to establish different joint working arrangements with other organisations or investing in ICT to improve operational efficiency.

### **Saving to invest for the future**

The force is exploiting many opportunities to drive down costs and make savings, in order to be able to make investments. The force has successfully achieved all its saving requirements from 2010 to date. The savings requirement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 is estimated at a further £33.3m. For the year 2015/16, the force achieved £900,000 more savings than was required from its plan, which places them in a good position. The force and the OPCC fully recognise the cost pressures they face, including expected pay awards, national changes to employer's national insurance costs from 2016/17 onwards and general price inflation. They have made arrangements to cover these pressures and also to invest in future improvements.

The medium-term financial plan includes the investment of £44m from reserves over the four years to 2019/20 for major transformational projects in mobile devices and other innovations, as well as for ensuring proper facilities and equipment for the force. This includes a total capital spend of £8.6m on the roll-out of mobile smart phone devices and related items. In order to close the 2014/15 accounts, £9.8m of reserves had to be used. This was due to a coding error that resulted in the force over-claiming from the government pension top-up grant in each year since the 2006 pension reforms. Once this came to light, it was dealt with promptly, in conjunction with the external auditor, enabling the appropriate amount to be set aside to repay the Home Office. However, while the prudent reserves strategy has meant that the impact of this repayment has not affected the medium-term financial plan, it has reduced reserves and may have an impact upon capital investment plans in the next spending review period 2020/21 to 2023/24.

### **Working together to improve future efficiency**

Kent Police has a strong track record of joint working arrangements, primarily with Essex Police, but also as part of the seven-force strategic collaboration. With its preferred collaborative partner, Essex Police, the force has invested in mobile devices that will increase efficiencies in both forces and they continue to identify further opportunities to make the most of efficiencies.

The force is in discussion with local authority partners about sharing systems and infrastructure in the future. This includes the impact of new communities and housing developments on the demand for police and other public services with a view to identifying any opportunities to share resources and service delivery. The force already enjoys good joint working arrangements with the Kent Fire and Rescue Service, including a joint control room, joint training, joint procurement of medical equipment and the shared use of estate.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Kent Police is good at planning for future demand. The force continues to manage its finances successfully and meet its saving requirements. The medium-term financial plan is based on realistic and prudent assumptions about future income, costs and benefits and it links to the workforce plan and planned increase in digital capabilities.

Future investment plans are designed to achieve greater efficiency and service improvement. These are rational plans, based upon sound information and understanding. The force is exploiting many opportunities to drive down costs and make savings in order to be able to make investments. It is planned to invest £44m from reserves over the four years to 2019/20 to support the change programme, including the provision of mobile devices and other innovations, as well as fit-for-purpose facilities and other equipment for the force. In order to close the 2014/15 accounts, an unanticipated £9.8m of reserves had to be used. This was because of an accounting error that had gone unnoticed over a number of years.

Kent Police has a strong track record of joint working, primarily with Essex Police but also as part of the wider seven-force strategic collaboration. This has provided both efficiency savings and resilience and means that the force is very well placed financially and that its plans are appropriate and affordable. The use of technology to produce further efficiencies and meet the digital challenges is a fundamental part of the force's plans and should enable it to continue to provide improving services.

## Next steps

HMIC will assess progress on any recommendations and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We may re-visit those forces where we have identified a serious cause of concern, go back to assess as part of our annual PEEL inspection programme or receive updates through regular conversations with forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and also leadership. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across the country and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements need to be made at a national level.

## Annex A – About the data

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is set out in more detail in this annex. The source of Force in numbers data is also set out below.

### Methodology

Please note the following for the methodology applied to the data.

#### Comparisons with England and Wales average figures

For some data sets, the report states whether the force's value is 'lower' than, 'higher' than or 'broadly in line with' the England and Wales average. This is calculated by using the difference from the mean average, as a proportion, for all forces. After standardising this distribution, forces that are more than 0.675 standard deviations from the mean average are determined to be above or below the average, with all other forces being broadly in line.

In practice this means that approximately a quarter of forces are lower, a quarter are higher, and the remaining half are in line with the England and Wales average for each measure. For this reason, the distance from the average required to make a force's value above or below the average is different for each measure so may not appear to be consistent.

#### Statistical significance

When commenting on statistical differences, a significance level of 5 percent is used.

For some forces, numbers described in the text may be identical to the England and Wales average due to decimal place rounding, but the bars in the chart will appear different as they use the full unrounded value.

#### Population

For all uses of population as a denominator, unless otherwise noted, we use the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2015 population estimates.

### Force in numbers

#### Forecast change in expenditure

These data show estimated gross revenue expenditure (GRE) for the force in 2016/17 and 2019/20, calculated using total GRE pay and total GRE non-pay budgets provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), excluding expenditure on the office of police and crime commissioner.



## Forecast savings

These data show planned savings (including use of reserves to bridge an in-year funding gap) in future years, calculated using the planned savings for pay and non-pay budgets provided to HMIC at the time of the data collection (April 2016). Some forces only provided figures for savings that they had formally signed off at that point, while others provided estimates for the whole period. Therefore a force with only a small savings requirement is not necessarily faced with only a small savings challenge for the future.

## Workforce figures (based on full-time equivalents) for 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2020

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data are available from the Home Office's published Police workforce England and Wales statistics (available from [www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales)), or the Home Office police workforce open data tables (available from [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables)). Figures may have been updated since the publication. Workforce includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort), but does not include section 39 staff.

Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy. In some instances therefore an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Workforce costs per head of population are obtained from calculations in HMIC Value for Money Profiles 2015, which use the ONS mid-2014 population estimates. The England and Wales averages will differ slightly from the Value for Money Profiles because we have included City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police Service.

## Figures throughout the report

### Figure 1: Volume of 999 calls from the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to 12 months to 31 March 2016

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 441.

### Figure 2: Police recorded crime in 12 months to 31 March 2015 to 12 months to 31 March 2016

These data are obtained from Home Office Police recorded crime and outcomes data tables (available from [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables)). Total police recorded crime includes all crime (excluding fraud

offences) recorded by police forces in England and Wales. Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime include British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMIC inspection. Therefore England and Wales averages in this report will differ slightly from those published by the Home Office.

**Figure 3: Percentage of officers, staff and PCSOs in force workforce on 31 March 2016 compared to England and Wales**

Data as at 31 March 2016 are obtained from the Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' full-time equivalents (FTE). The percentages used in figure 3 are derived from the total FTEs within forces, and therefore may differ slightly from the exact figures quoted within the report.

**Figure 4: Planned changes in workforce FTE from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for the force compared to England and Wales**

The figures in figure 4 are rounded to the nearest whole person, full-time equivalents (FTEs), and therefore may differ slightly from the exact figures quoted within the report. Police staff includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort).

Data as at 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2016 are obtained from Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' FTE. These data include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence, and those seconded to forces. Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy, but may not include a projection for absences. In some instances therefore an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Due to the complex and continually evolving picture of workforce collaboration between neighbouring forces, not all changes in workforce figures reflect the workforce that is available to forces. Involvement in strategic alliances and/or regional organised crime units would be an example of where changes over time are likely to be skewed. Therefore sharp increases or decreases over time need to be considered with caution as they may simply represent accounting changes related to how staff are allocated to forces, not real changes in staffing levels.

At the time of the inspection, the future financial climate was uncertain. Several forces did not have confirmed plans for workforce projections. It is important to note that figures provided are in many instances unconfirmed estimates provided to assist HMIC in our inspection programme and should not be seen as a concrete plan for the future workforce landscape of policing.

**Figure 5: Projected net revenue expenditure on collaboration with other police forces for the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020**

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection.

These data cover the level of expenditure by forces on collaboration-related activity. Collaboration can include a variety of different types of activity, some of which may not incur specific expenditure, but may still generate benefits such as savings or improved services the public. Therefore these data should be seen as only one aspect of potential collaboration activity.

West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police have a highly-developed integrated relationship and have stated that all of their net revenue expenditure is through collaboration. To avoid distorting the distribution of forces around the average, West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police have been removed from the England and Wales average for this figure.

**Figure 6: Projected net revenue expenditure on collaboration with non-police organisations for the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020**

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection. As suggested above, these data should be seen as only one aspect of potential collaboration activity.

**Figure 7: The percentage of gross revenue expenditure allocated to different policing functions in the 12 months to March 2016**

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection. These data define policing functions using the Policing Objective Analysis categories which we have grouped. The grouping is illustrated in the table below.

Figure 7 policing functions	POA categories
Local policing	Local policing
Investigations	Specialist Investigations Investigative Support Public Protection
Road policing and operational support	Roads Policing Operations Support
Dealing with the public	Dealing with the Public
Other	Intelligence Criminal Justice Arrangements Support Functions National policing Office of PCC Central Costs