



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police efficiency 2016

An inspection of Nottinghamshire Police



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Contents

Introduction	3
Force in numbers	4
Overview – How efficient is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?	6
How well does the force understand its current and likely future demand?	9
How well does the force understand the current demand for its services?	9
How well does the force understand potential future demand for its services?	13
Summary of findings	14
How well does the force use its resources to manage current demand?	15
How well does the force’s current allocation of resources match demand, organisational and financial requirements?	15
How well does the force improve the productivity of its workforce?	18
How well does the force work with others to improve how it manages demand for its services?	20
How well does the force understand how any changes made to improve efficiency have affected its ability to manage demand?	22
Summary of findings	23
How well is the force planning for demand in the future?	25
How well does the force identify and prioritise areas to invest in for the future? ...	25
How well does the force plan its investments?	27
To what extent does the force fund its investments sustainably?	29
Summary of findings	30
Next steps	32
Annex A – About the data	33

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/). This report sets out our findings for Nottinghamshire Police.

Reports on Nottinghamshire Police force's legitimacy and leadership inspections will be available on the HMIC website (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

	2016/17	2019/20	Percentage change
Forecast change in total gross revenue expenditure	£203m	£199m	-2%

Forecast savings:

	2016/17	2019/20
Amount of forecast savings	£12.0m	£0.0m

	2016/17	2019/20
Percentage of gross revenue expenditure	6%	0%



Workforce

	2015/16	2019/20	Percentage change
Planned change in officer numbers	1,973	1,669	-15%

	2015/16	2019/20	Percentage change
Planned change in total workforce	3,307	3,005	-9%

	Nottinghamshire Police	England and Wales force average
Officer cost per head of population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016	£95	£98

	Nottinghamshire Police	England and Wales force average
Workforce cost per head of population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016	£139	£143



Calls for assistance

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

Nottinghamshire Police

157

England and Wales force average

124



Recorded crime

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

2014/15

64

2015/16

64

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

Nottinghamshire Police

0%

England and Wales force average

+9%



Victim satisfaction

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

Nottinghamshire Police

85%

England and Wales force average

84%

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 judgment¹



Requires improvement

Nottinghamshire Police has been assessed as requires improvement in respect of the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime.

Its understanding of current demand is good and it is developing its understanding of potential future demand for services. It has a good understanding of the extent to which internal inefficiencies create demand and continues to remove inefficient ways of working from its internal processes. However, there are significant concerns about the way in which the force has managed its finances and HMIC concludes that the force is at serious financial risk. The force missed its own efficiency savings target by a sizeable margin. HMIC has limited confidence that future savings can be achieved at the pace and scale required while maintaining a good service to the communities of Nottinghamshire. In last year's efficiency inspection, Nottinghamshire Police was judged to be good.

Overall summary

Nottinghamshire Police's understanding of current demand is good and it is developing its understanding of potential future demand for services. It has a good understanding of the extent to which internal inefficiencies create demand and it continues to remove waste from its internal processes. The force does not fully understand its current workforce capabilities and skill gaps, although it acknowledges it needs people with financial investigator and digital skills. The force is only beginning to assess what will be required in its future operating model.

The force recognises its operating model – how it is currently organised and provides services – is not sustainable and this situation has not improved since HMIC's 2015 inspection. Its £12m efficiency programme for 2016/17 places additional reliance on the assurances needed from budget monitoring. Plans to cut the size of the workforce to affordable levels by 2019 are not advanced enough for the force to be able to understand fully the impact that reducing police officer and staff numbers will have on frontline policing for Nottinghamshire. The force's future operating model means that the present structure, in which there is a separate command team for Nottingham City and the county of Nottinghamshire, will change. Although the force

¹ HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

told partners about intended changes to the policing model, some city council partners feel that they were not properly involved or informed. This culminated in a public disagreement between the city council and the force that does little to bolster public confidence in policing. HMIC has limited confidence that future savings can be achieved at the pace and scale required while also maintaining a good service to the communities of Nottinghamshire.

The force is involved in a wide range of collaborative activity and demonstrates that this reduces cost and improves resilience. It works well with other forces to manage demand for services and continues to consider other options for further collaboration.

Nottinghamshire Police is at serious financial risk, which is a change from its apparently secure financial position in 2015. Its financial management has been inadequate because it did not have appropriate financial controls in place and failed to notice that substantial costs had been left out of its budgets until September 2015. These significant weaknesses in the force's financial management present a risk to its future plans. Although this situation is now improving, it is too early to be sure that new financial leadership has stabilised the situation. The force also missed its efficiencies savings target by a sizeable margin and its very recent track record in achieving savings is disappointing. It used £9.4m of reserves to meet the budget gap and as a result it now has depleted reserves. The force has had to make significant and unplanned further reductions to its workforce because of its failure to close the funding gap.

Areas for improvement

- By 31 May 2017, the force should ensure that it has a detailed understanding of its skill gaps and is implementing an action plan to address these gaps that aligns with the new way of working in the future operating model.
- By 28 February 2017, the force should ensure that there are credible and achievable plans in place for the new police operating model and provide clarity on the effect the new model will have on the service provided to the public.

Causes of concern

Nottinghamshire Police's financial management arrangements have significant weaknesses, which present a risk to the force's future plans. In 2015/16 it failed to account sufficiently for all its IT support costs when setting its budget. This omission was not spotted until September 2015. This led to a substantial overspend. In addition that year, the force failed to reduce its costs as planned and did not achieve its savings targets. These two issues resulted in the force having to take £9.4m from reserves in order to support the budget. The money held in reserves is now at the lowest level that might be considered prudent, leaving the police and crime commissioner (PCC) and the force with a limited cushion against any further unanticipated spending or any room for new future investment.

There is a jointly owned medium-term strategy with the PCC, but there is no plan that brings together projections of demand, workforce and assets (financial and otherwise), although the aim is to produce one. The plans to cut the size of the future workforce to affordable levels by 2019 are not advanced enough for the force to understand fully the impact that reducing police officer numbers will have on frontline policing for Nottinghamshire. Although there is a new management team, which is starting to provide stability, this work needs to be accelerated and appropriate resources put in place to achieve this.

Recommendations

- Immediately, the force should ensure that it has rigorous financial controls and robust governance arrangements in place to ensure effective financial management. This should include appropriate oversight by the leadership team and sufficient capacity and expertise within the finance team to ensure that improvements are implemented and sustained.
- Immediately, the force should build on the medium-term financial strategy and develop and work with an effective medium-term plan that aligns revenue and capital spending (over the next three years, as a minimum) with force priorities, taking into account future change and savings plans alongside prudent assumptions about anticipated income.
- By 28 February 2017, the force should ensure that there are credible and achievable plans in place for the new police operating model. The plans should make clear how the reductions in workforce numbers are to be achieved and provide costed options for service provision and clarity on the impact on services of each option.

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

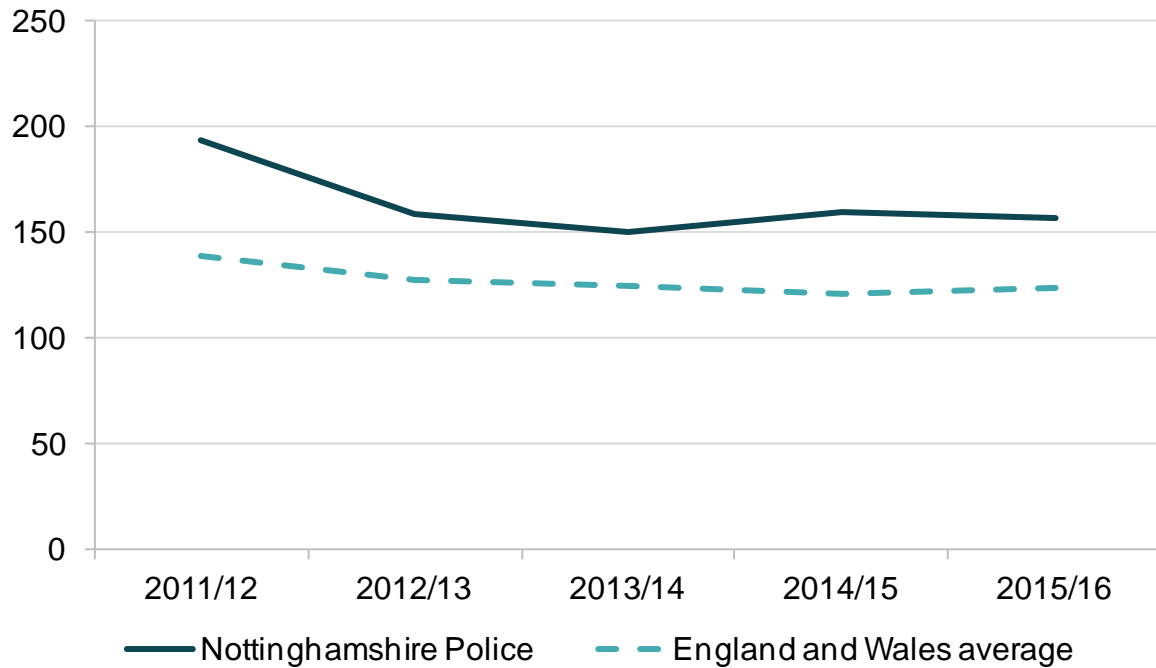
A good understanding of the demand for police services is vital in ensuring that forces have the right resources in the right place to provide the right level of policing now and in the future. This means not just an understanding of reported incidents but also how well a force proactively looks for 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 Nottinghamshire Police compared to England and Wales from 31 March 2011 to 31 March 2016



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

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

Nottinghamshire Police received 157 '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 194 '999' calls per 1,000 population, higher than the England and Wales average of 139 calls per 1,000 population.

Figure 2: Police recorded crimes per 1,000 population in Nottinghamshire Police compared to 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 2, please see annex A

With regard to police recorded crime for the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Nottinghamshire Police recorded 58.0 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, Nottinghamshire Police recorded 6.3 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 6.5 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. There has been a decrease in the victim-based crime rate of 6 percent and a decrease in the non victim-based crime rate of 7 percent since the 12 months to 31 March 2012.

The force understands the current demand for its services in contact, response, neighbourhood and investigative functions and uses police management information to plan its response to demand. This understanding of demand has informed how the force is currently organised and will help build a new operating model - based on considerably fewer police officers - which will be implemented by March 2019.

The College of Policing demand model is used, along with historical police performance data, to help identify when current demand is outside predicted levels

while also taking into account seasonal and annual trends. This information, together with more sensitive daily and weekly internal performance information, helps the force respond to trends which are outside predicted parameters and move resources to meet this increasing demand. The force recognises there is more work needed to understand demand fully and it aims to develop a demand profile under the broad areas of public, protective and internal demand.

The force has a contact resolution and incident management (CRIM) system. This includes a contact resolution team and telephone investigation bureau to filter, investigate and meet demand at the point of call. Since the CRIM system was introduced, the force reports that incidents attended have reduced considerably. Force analysis indicates that incidents are generally managed correctly and more than half require no further input from the resolution team. The force is also working to reduce the mistaken use of the emergency number. It is conducting research on this problem in collaboration with other blue light services across Nottinghamshire (which also report experiencing comparatively high rates of emergency calls) as well as publicising examples of inappropriate 999 calls.

The force takes part in a corporate planning cycle, which has recently been updated, that integrates a joint needs assessment with local partners such as local authorities and housing providers. Information and intelligence from national organisations such as the National Crime Agency and other police sources provide additional information and will help the force to use resources better once it has been completed.

The force has made more limited progress in understanding less obvious demand, including hidden demand. It is working with partners to develop and build on its existing knowledge of rape and violence offences as well as less well-known areas such as human slavery, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. This will improve its overall response as well as the safeguarding of victims.

Business cases are reviewed to check that new ways of working implemented last year are efficient and effective. When internal demand or waste is identified, the force takes action to address it. For example, a focus group looked at custody booking-in procedures and identified improvements to reduce waiting times. A review of the response hubs² put in place last year has shown two hubs where the response time to deal with priority calls is not always being met and there is work to improve how some incidents are graded and attended. Longer term programmes to reduce internal demand include improving how property and exhibits are stored and then how they are retrieved for court purposes or for destruction.

² Response teams are based in hubs across the force area and respond to emergency and priority calls.

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's understanding of potential future demand for services is developing. It uses its current understanding of demand to estimate its future demand, in addition to understanding the impact of calls, incidents and crime demand. It has also considered how digitalisation may shift its demand profile from reducing attendance by a police officer to spending more time to resolve an incident over the telephone.

The force has a broad understanding of external influences which include population growth, change in local communities in terms of ethnicity and indicators of deprivation, and the demographic make-up of communities. To increase this understanding there is a joint needs assessment, which is an analytical assessment of the most significant issues, risks and threats shared by respective crime, community safety and criminal justice agencies across Nottinghamshire and looks at the wider changing environment.

The force's own analysis scores cyber-crime as having the potential to increase considerably. As a result, the force is investing in a digital laboratory, using Home Office innovation funding³ of £3.5m, with other East Midlands forces, and is expanding its existing finance investigations team with two extra posts dedicated to fraud investigation.

The force has a good understanding of how the reducing resources of its partners affect its own demand and has a number of initiatives to improve overall service. For example, it continues to support 'street triage teams', consisting of a police officer and a community psychiatric nurse who attend or give advice for incidents where mental health is a concern. This has resulted in a substantial fall in the number of cases where people have had to be detained under the Mental Health Act. A force review has identified financial savings as well as an improved response to vulnerable persons. There is also a regional agreement between the ambulance and fire service on attending 'calls for concern' where entry to property is required to check on a person's welfare.

³ See: www.gov.uk/government/ for further information on the Police Innovation Fund.

The force has not conducted specific work to understand how public expectations may change the way it provides its services, particularly on technological advances and the digital preferences of its communities. It has, however, carried out consultation with focus groups in communities to understand their priorities. Among six key areas, they identified that increased investment and use of technology could be efficient if it reduces bureaucracy and saves money. The police and crime commissioner's (PCC's) county and city surveys also show that communities want to have a timely response to requests for service and for the police to be accessible and attend when needed. The force has made a commitment to keeping a neighbourhood presence, which is one of the PCC's and force's priorities, in line with public expectations.

The force has introduced several digital innovations, such as a virtual front counter office, online reporting for hate crimes and a 'track my crime' facility, but the force reports that these tools are not being used to their full potential. Social media, including Twitter and Facebook, are used, but there is no overall understanding of what the public expect.

Good involvement at meetings with partners, such as the Safer Nottingham Board, helps the force to discuss with partner agencies potential increases in demand as a consequence of reduced resources.

Summary of findings



Good

Nottinghamshire Police's understanding of current demand is good and this is helping to inform the way the force will organise itself and provide services in future. Its understanding of demand less likely to be reported is still developing. The force has a good understanding of the extent to which internal inefficiencies create demand and it continues to remove waste from its internal processes.

The force is developing its understanding of potential future demand for services and the effect of reduced resources in partner organisations. There are mechanisms which enable the force to discuss with partner agencies potential increases in demand as a consequence of reduced resources.

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

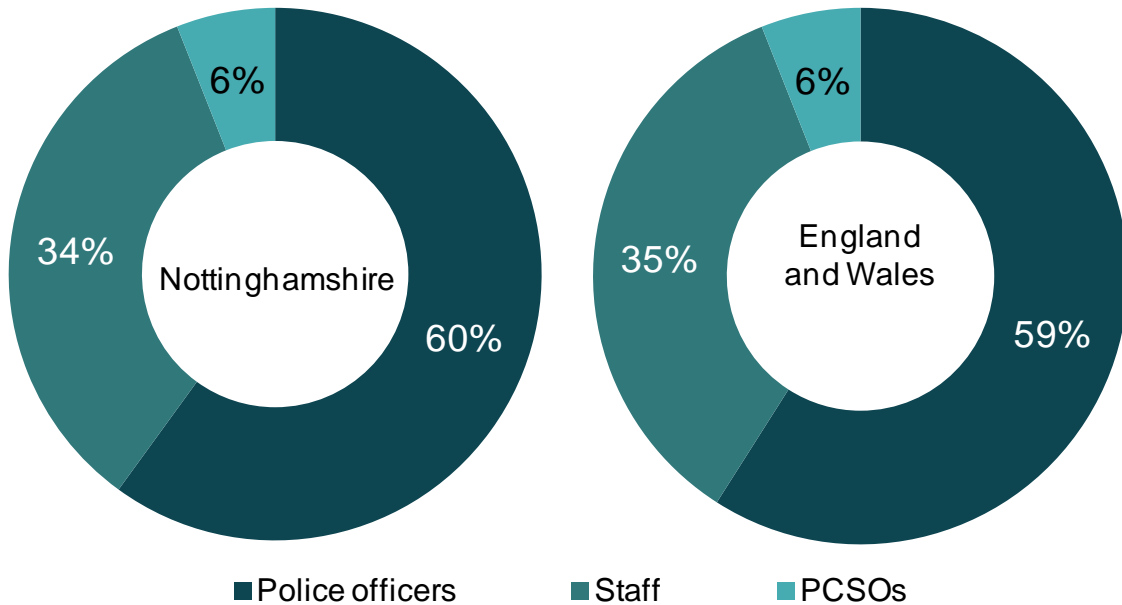
Police forces need to operate in a way that makes the best use of all available resources so that demand is met and public expectations are satisfied. We looked at the extent to which Nottinghamshire Police has the right people with the right skills in the right place to protect the public and to fight 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 Nottinghamshire 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 Nottinghamshire Police compared to 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 60 percent of Nottinghamshire Police's workforce. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 59 percent. The proportion of staff in Nottinghamshire Police was 34 percent, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 35 percent. The proportion of police community support officers in Nottinghamshire Police was 6 percent, in line with the England and Wales average of 6 percent.

Figure 4: Planned changes in workforce full-time equivalent (FTE) from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for Nottinghamshire Police compared to 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	2,409	-18%	-14%	1,973	-15%	-2%	1,669
Staff	1,658	-32%	-21%	1,119	2%	-5%	1,136
PCSOs	268	-20%	-35%	214	-7%	-6%	200
Workforce Total	4,335	-24%	-18%	3,307	-9%	-3%	3,005

Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

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

Managing demands for police services

The current structure of the force and the way it provides services, called the operating model, is built on plans that can be changed depending on various factors including financial constraints. There is a ‘borderless patrol’ ethos with response teams working from response hubs: the force is committed to investigating all reported crimes, but these may not be in the traditional mode of police attendance. The force reports that it continues to attend incidents where vulnerability is identified. This means that there is prioritisation of resources to meet demand in line with the PCC’s and force’s strategic priorities. These priorities inform resourcing at an operational level through further prioritisation and risk assessment on specific areas of threat, risk and harm to the public via a series of quarterly, monthly, weekly and daily meetings. The force uses a ‘day map’ to show a ‘typical day’ based on historical data and seasonal trends, which is supported by police management information.

The force recognises that the current operating model is not sustainable in the future. This is because the financial savings target required is not achievable based on the current number of officers and staff. The force still needs to provide a good level of service at significantly reduced costs, but it does not have a detailed understanding of what these service levels will look like in some important areas, for example, in public protection, intelligence and investigations, because these plans are not at an advanced stage. It is clear there will be a considerably smaller workforce in the organisation by March 2020 with fewer managers and supervisors. This means there will be challenges of managing across different teams based at multiple locations. It will require having the force’s resources where they are needed

most to ensure that those victims who are the most vulnerable will receive the right level of service.

Increasing efficiency

A capacity work stream in the change programme project team is focused on improving victim satisfaction. It uses a continuous improvement toolkit to identify efficiencies in the services it provides. The force reports increased efficiencies in a number of areas, including response hub working, the telephone investigation bureau, crime recording, the managed incident car and the use of technology to increase agile working for officers and staff on the frontline. However, there is a more limited understanding of the resulting reduced costs or non-cashable savings, for example in officer productivity and time saved.

The force has continued to invest in technology, for example by providing new mobile technology to its frontline and implementing a new case file, crime investigation, custody and intelligence system. This means that the five forces in the East Midlands region use the same software platform and this improves the efficiency of shared functions; for example, it enables easier and faster sharing of intelligence. There is a benefits realisation plan which has identified several benefits from using the same platform although it is too early to assess and quantify these.

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 Nottinghamshire 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 their 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 does not fully understand the capabilities and gaps in its workforce. When the force introduced its new shared service system it decided not to transfer skills data from its old system. Consequently, a force-wide training needs analysis is being conducted which prioritises some departments over others, for example identifying investigator skills, but there is no completion date for some other teams and departments.

The force has a training plan in place which is now aligned to the priority areas identified in the strategic threat and risk assessment, which means that requests for training and development will be prioritised according to threat, harm and risk. Training needs cannot be collated automatically through the performance review process, but when the skills analysis is completed any gaps in key skill areas will become clear.

Tackling workforce gaps

The force recognises that it needs to improve its digital and financial skills base while the training needs analysis work is being completed. Traditional investigators skills are being developed and enhanced to deal with cyber-crime and there is further training for response teams to improve their awareness and understanding of sexual offences.

The new operating model acknowledges that, although the funding arrangements mean the force can only afford a certain number of officers, there is flexibility to replace some of these officers with other specialists. However, the recruitment of these staff is suspended due to financial constraints.

At the end of March 2016 there were 1,973 officers, but by the end of March 2019 through officers retiring, it is planned that there will be 1,669 officers in the force. A workforce planning model shows when officers are due to retire, and the force reports that, for the first two months of the financial year, the current rate of reduction is faster than anticipated due to an above normal rate of officers leaving the force.

The strategic change team is working to understand and assess the skills lost from the organisation so that appropriate succession planning can take place. However, there are also over 80 officers who are temporarily promoted and some have been in these temporary roles for a number of years. This is a considerable number and means that succession plans are far more complex.

Due to the force missing its savings target, it stopped recruitment and is reviewing how it will provide some services to the public. It is now assembling options and determining the number of officers and staff and the skills required for a new way of working. Once completed, HMIC would expect to see a match of resources to skill requirements and a detailed understanding of the skills gaps and an action plan to address these.

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

We assessed how well Nottinghamshire 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 better meet demand for its services.

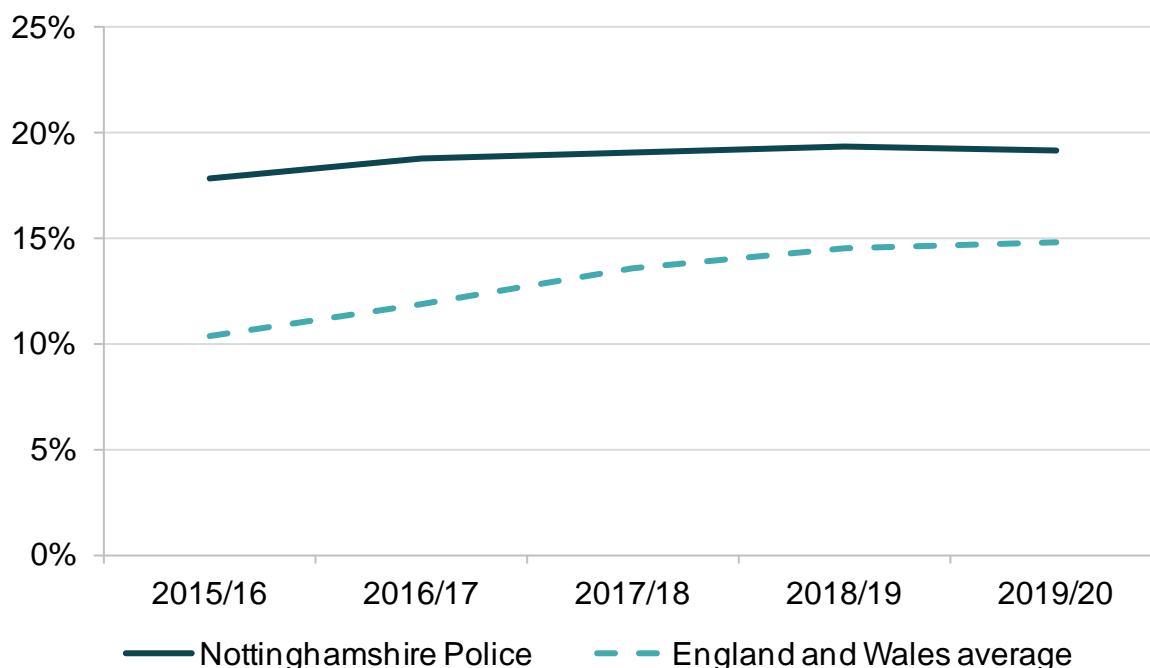
The force has a strong history of collaboration and is involved in many inter-force collaborations which have reduced costs and improved services and overall resilience. It is working well with other forces to manage demand for services and continues to consider other options for further collaboration. Working with forces on a regional level provides increased resilience and capacity and includes operational functions such as roads policing, firearms, dog handlers, as well as tackling serious and organised crime and major crime. A regional criminal justice service also handles crime file preparation, victims and witnesses and police-led prosecutions. Forensic science services and legal services are also provided.

The force's reasons for collaborating with others are to improve services for local communities, improve the effectiveness of services and make efficiencies where possible. The force continues to look at opportunities to use its existing police estate more effectively, or to rationalise it. There are collaborative arrangements with local partners which includes substantial co-location and working arrangements with city council partners as well as close working relationships in the county area.

Collaboration benefits

The force generally works well with local partners to manage demand. A number of teams are co-located at local authority buildings and this helps ensure decisions are made with partners and enables closer working relationships. For example, city council and police resources are co-located at Byron House to form a community protection directorate dealing with problems jointly. Although the force told partners about intended changes to the policing model, some city council partners feel that they were not properly involved. This culminated in a public disagreement between the city council and the force. The force reports it is fully committed to this new model but at the time of inspection there is no detailed business case to examine.

Figure 5: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure (NRE) spent in Nottinghamshire Police, compared to England and Wales, on collaboration with other forces from 31 March 2015 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

Nottinghamshire Police has forecast that it will spend £35.8m in 2016/17 on collaboration with other police forces. This is 18.8 percent of its net revenue expenditure (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 £35.8m (19.2 percent of NRE) on collaboration with other police forces. This is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 14.8 percent.

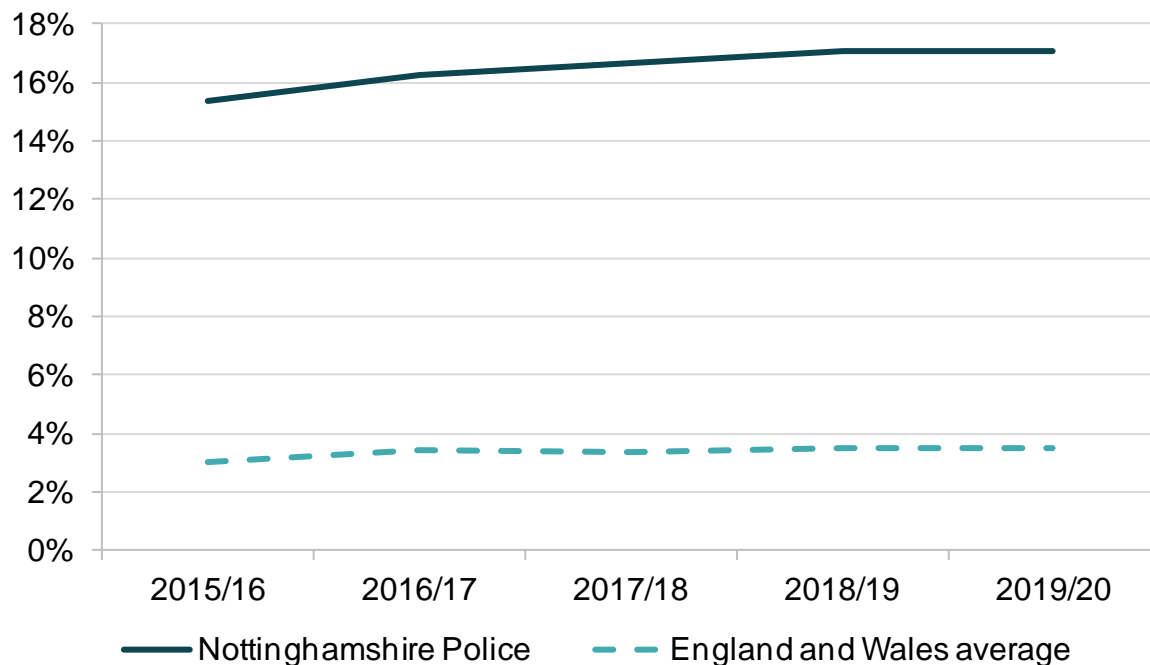
The force’s future tri-force collaboration with Leicestershire and Northamptonshire forces is developing positively. There are advanced plans for services such as finance, human resources and IT to better share information, make efficiencies and reduce internal demand.

Nottinghamshire’s spend on policing collaborative areas with non-police organisations is higher than the England and Wales average. The force has collaborated with other blue light services such as fire and ambulance to improve efficiencies and the effectiveness of each agency’s service offering, for example by determining that the fire and ambulance service are the best service to primarily deal with calls on ‘concerns for welfare’.⁴ There is a commitment to closer working with

⁴ Calls for ‘concerns for welfare’ deal with people at risk of harming themselves or others

local authority partners and the force plans to increase its co-location of neighbourhood teams in Mansfield and Ashfield.

Figure 6: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure (NRE) spent in Nottinghamshire Police, compared to England and Wales, on collaboration with non-police organisations from 31 March 2015 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

Nottinghamshire Police has forecast that it will spend £30.9m in 2016/17 on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is 16.3 percent of its net revenue expenditure (NRE), which is higher than the England and Wales average of 3.4 percent. For 2019/20, the force has forecast that it will spend £31.9m (17.1 percent of NRE) on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is higher 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's understanding of benefits realised from some investment, particularly relating to IT, is anecdotal and has not been evaluated. For example, Nottinghamshire Police has introduced new software that it can demonstrate will save officer time in searching for information and will give access to force systems while away from the station. This new way of working is being implemented and but is not yet evaluated to determine the overall benefits of the investment.

The introduction of a new shared service finance and human resources system has not worked as well as first envisaged. The implementation was less than ideal and independent internal auditors have identified weaknesses within financial systems operated through the shared service in the production of financial information. There is now better governance and scrutiny in place and an independent review of the system commissioned. There have been some improvements in running reports, but these successes need to be rapidly built on to ensure the system is trusted and valued.

The force has identified that a convergence of IT systems and infrastructure within the tri-force collaboration could provide significant and effective benefits. It reports that large-scale business efficiencies can be found in consolidated and centralised infrastructure and systems and benchmarking indicates that there could be a 20 percent saving on existing contracts of £11.7m.

The force aims to evaluate the benefits of all changes implemented. The force has a set model for introducing and evaluating change and all business cases include the benefits to be realised and the expected staff savings. There has been no external feedback in evaluating the impact of change to date.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

Nottinghamshire Police uses its resources to manage the current demand it experiences and makes clear decisions on the prioritisation of resources in line with public expectations.

The force recognises that the way it is currently organised and provides services – its operating model – is not sustainable. The force's future operating model means that the geographic structure is to be replaced with a different way of working. The force reports it is fully committed to this new model but at the time of inspection there is no detailed business case to examine. Although the force told partners about intended changes to the policing model, some city council partners feel that they were not properly involved. This culminated in a public disagreement between the city council and the force that does little to bolster public confidence in policing.

The force does not fully understand the capabilities and gaps in its workforce and does not fully understand the mix of officers and staff, with the right skills, which will be needed in the new operating model. The force has a better understanding in some areas, for example in investigations and armed policing, but it is only beginning to assemble these options in other teams and departments.

The force is able to demonstrate that its collaboration with other forces reduces cost and improves resilience. It generally works well with others to manage demand for services and continues to consider other options for further collaboration. The force works well with blue light services in the area and continues to be involved with the East Midlands collaboration and is developing further opportunities in its tri-force collaboration with Northamptonshire and Leicestershire forces.

Areas for improvement

- By 31 May 2017, the force should ensure that it has a detailed understanding of its skill gaps and is implementing an action plan to address these gaps that aligns with the new way of working in the future operating model.
- By 28 February 2017, the force should ensure that there are credible and achievable plans in place for the new police operating model and provide clarity on the effect the new model will have on the service provided to the public.

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 Nottinghamshire 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 Nottinghamshire 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's financial and workforce plans are being developed to align with its organisational plans and the level of service it intends to provide in the future.

The force is developing business plans which incorporate considerably reduced numbers of officers. The force's central grant for 2016/17 has been reduced by £0.7m in cash terms. In addition, other budget pressures from pay and prices and, in particular, increased national insurance costs have resulted in a savings requirement for the year of £12.0m. This is being addressed through savings plans from pay (£9.3m) and non-pay (£2.7m). Most of the pay savings will come from savings from police officer pay, with the rest from pay savings following police staff voluntary and compulsory redundancies.

Work is in progress to develop the new operating model fully. The aim is to reduce the number of officers to 1,669 by the end of March 2019 through retirement and then keep this number level using planned recruitment through to 2020. The force reports this will mean a total of 1,337 officers in local policing functions and 332 officers assigned to collaborative teams, for example in homicide, counter-terrorism and firearms teams. However, the figures are based on the position at the end of

April 2016, so the trend in retirements and resignations for the remainder of the year will be critical to the success of balancing the budget. Similarly, the force has reduced police staff numbers to 1,119 by March 2016 using compulsory and voluntary redundancy processes, and then keeping fairly close to this figure or increasing slightly using targeted recruitment by 2020. It is envisaged that the tri-force collaboration will identify these savings across the three forces in services like finance, human resources and ICT.

The force intends to build its business cases with different levels of service provision and it intends to use a priority-based budgeting or similar exercise. At the time of the inspection, the plans were not at enough of an advanced stage to be examined, but the force anticipates assessing different options as part of the tri-force collaboration work with Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. However, without this type of modelling work it is difficult to see what frontline services the force will plan to reduce, increase or stay the same.

Investing in ICT

Nottinghamshire Police has plans for the development and implementation of its information systems. It has a comprehensive information systems strategy, which is aligned to its current change programme, the financial constraints of the force and national developments, for example in the Ministry of Justice plans for digital working (digital evidence to the Crown Prosecution Service and courts, and digital case files) and regional collaboration.

There is a tri-force collaboration 2015-20 ICT strategy which explains that public access services will be improved to make it easier and more intuitive for members of the public to engage with the police service in line with the government's digital strategy. There are plans to improve the public website to make it easier to use, including for people with disabilities, and to improve access to policing services.

The force has considered how its future workforce and ICT capabilities will integrate, to help the force do things it is already doing more efficiently and to improve the way it provides a service. The force has identified that a convergence of IT systems and infrastructure between the forces involved in the tri-force collaboration can provide significant and effective benefits to the forces.

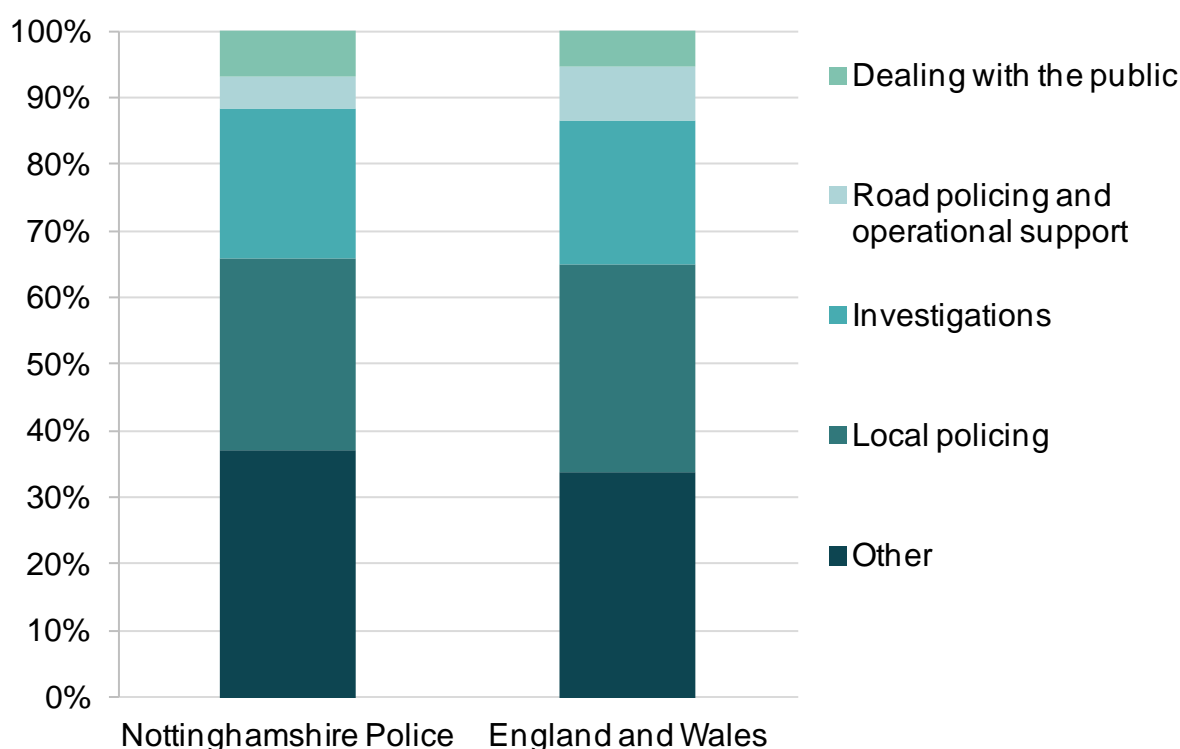
The force's IT department takes a proactive approach to new IT developments and engages with the workforce to influence and shape what technology it uses. It is currently issuing hand-held mobile devices alongside new IT software which will allow officers to receive messages from force systems and deal with incidents without having to return to the station to complete paperwork.

The force's IT department ensures it has the right skills through in-house IT staff who understand the business needs of the force, complemented by employing contractors with additional skills for the period required.

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 Nottinghamshire 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 Nottinghamshire 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

After the spending review period, for the four-year period from 2015/16 to 2018/19, forces across England and Wales forecast a total savings requirement of £1.9bn, which equates to 15 percent of estimated 2014/15 gross revenue expenditure. Nottinghamshire Police forecasts a total savings requirement for the same four-year period of £34m, which equates to 17 percent of its estimated 2014/15 gross revenue expenditure.

The force planned a balanced budget of £191.2m gross revenue expenditure (with savings applied) for 2015/16, which included a cut in spending of £11m. It forecast that the reduction would be split between £8.8m from the pay budget (80 percent) and £2.2m (20 percent) from the non-pay budget in 2015/16 savings. Meeting its

savings target depended on the timely implementation of the force's action plan for efficiencies and savings and on the effective management of the underlying cost base. However, it was not until September 2015 that the force identified a serious problem with its financial controls. It found that the costs of the new shared services system and recurring Home Office IT costs had not been put into the budget. The omitted costs amounted to £3.7m. The force also missed its savings target by a sizeable amount and achieved £7.5m savings against a target of £11.0m, which meant a shortfall of £3.5m. This overspend together with other additional unforeseen costs and charges and an already approved use of £1.6m⁵ from reserves when the original budget was set meant that it needed to use £9.4m from reserves to bridge the budget gap. This has had a considerable effect on the reserves position. As a result of the force's failure to close its funding gap it has speeded up plans to reduce the workforce by limiting officer recruitment and make police staff redundant.

The force and PCC recognise the seriousness of the situation but it is too early to be sure there is now adequate financial assurance. Since quarter 3 of 2015, despite some funding respite in the level of police grant, the risk has increased further; for example, with likely delays in making changes in the tri-force collaboration, and there are also challenges in ensuring accurate information for planning and reporting, for tracking any savings and managing effectively the strategic finances of the force. The recently appointed temporary head of finance has presented a report to the chief officer team on improving budget monitoring and forecasting but it needs capacity to progress rapidly; timescales for actions; and support to put into practice.

Planning for the future

The force's £12.0m savings programme for 2016/17 places additional reliance on the assurances needed from budget monitoring. The force jointly owns a medium-term financial strategy with the PCC, and recognises it needs to develop a five-year plan which is directly linked to the PCC's police and crime plan to ensure there is 'one version of the truth'. There is no multi-year plan that brings together projections of demand, the workforce and assets (financial and otherwise), although the aim is to produce one.

Over the last six to eight months communication between teams has been poor, meaning that the force workforce budget does not take account of workforce planning information and payroll data to ensure accurate forecasting. In addition, changes in the operating model mean the finance team cannot track how the funding allocations between different force functions would change over the medium term. There is now some progress in implementing better financial controls and more clarity is being provided by a new finance director and head of finance.

⁵ The £1.6m approved use of reserves is money to fund the change programme team whose role it is to identify future efficiency savings for the force.

The force is deliberately cautious about the level of savings to be achieved from non-staff savings. These include procurement and contract management savings with a substantial part in a private finance initiative arrangement. There is a monthly meeting where monitoring of progress on all savings targets is discussed and any variance from projections is examined carefully.

To what extent does the force fund its investments sustainably?

Police forces have made significant financial savings over recent years which has 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.

Working together to improve future efficiency

The force aims to put in place an operating model by March 2019 which has considerably fewer officers and staff than in the beginning of the 2010 comprehensive spending review period. However, this structure and way of working is still being developed and plans are not advanced enough to examine

The PCC has stated that the low levels of reserves held are becoming a risk to the financial viability of the organisation and there is no plan to use reserves in 2016/17. General reserves as a total of gross revenue expenditure are at 3 percent, which is the minimum level recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The tri-force collaboration business case is being developed with Leicestershire and Northamptonshire police forces and shows the majority of savings coming from pay rather than non-pay. There is an agreement to look at specific areas where the forces can make efficiencies, for example in support services like ICT, finance and human resources. Although there may be some non-pay savings the three forces have already achieved most savings from this area.

Summary of findings



Inadequate

HMIC is concerned that Nottinghamshire Police has inadequate plans for the future. The force is facing serious financial risk. Inadequate financial management in 2015 meant that the force did not have appropriate financial controls in place and did not spot substantial cost omissions from budgets until September 2015. This situation is now improving but it is too early to ascertain if new financial leadership has stabilised the situation. The force also missed its efficiencies savings target by a sizeable amount and its very recent track record in achieving savings is disappointing. It was forced to draw on £9.4m from reserves to meet the budget shortfall and as a result has depleted its reserves.

The effect of the force having to make rapid further reductions in its workforce as a consequence of its financial position is particularly concerning, as these measures may affect the level of service the force is able to provide to local communities.

The force recognises that the way it is currently organised and provides services – its operating model- is not sustainable. It has a jointly owned medium-term financial strategy with the PCC, but needs to develop a medium-term plan linked to the PCC's police and crime plan that brings together projections of demand, the workforce and assets (financial and otherwise) over a five year period.

The force's £12.0m efficiency programme for 2016/17 places additional reliance on the assurances needed from budget monitoring but the force's financial and workforce plans are not yet developed to understand the level of service it intends to provide in the future. The force do not have sufficiently accurate information to support good financial management, which means there are also challenges in ensuring accurate information for planning and reporting, for tracking any savings and managing effectively the strategic finances of the force. There is limited confidence that future savings can be achieved at the pace and scale required while maintaining a good service to the communities of Nottinghamshire.

Causes of concern

Nottinghamshire Police's financial management arrangements have significant weaknesses, which present a risk to the force's future plans. In 2015/16 it failed to account sufficiently for all its IT support costs when setting its budget. This omission was not spotted until September 2015. This led to a substantial overspend. In addition that year, the force failed to reduce its costs as planned and did not achieve its savings targets. These two issues resulted in the force having to take £9.4m from reserves in order to support the budget. The money held in reserves is now at the lowest level that might be considered prudent, leaving the police and crime commissioner (PCC) and the force with a limited cushion against any further unanticipated spending or any room for new future investment.

There is a jointly owned medium-term strategy with the PCC, but there is no plan that brings together projections of demand, workforce and assets (financial and otherwise), although the aim is to produce one. The plans to cut the size of the future workforce to affordable levels by 2019 are not advanced enough for the force to understand fully the impact that reducing police officer numbers will have on frontline policing for Nottinghamshire. Although there is a new management team, which is starting to provide stability, this work needs to be accelerated and appropriate resources put in place to achieve this.

Recommendations

- Immediately, the force should ensure that it has rigorous financial controls and robust governance arrangements in place to ensure effective financial management. This should include appropriate oversight by the leadership team and sufficient capacity and expertise within the finance team to ensure that improvements are implemented and sustained.
- Immediately, the force should build on the medium-term financial strategy and develop and work with an effective medium-term plan that aligns revenue and capital spending (over the next three years, as a minimum) with force priorities, taking into account future change and savings plans alongside prudent assumptions about anticipated income.
- By 28 February 2017, the force should ensure that there are credible and achievable plans in place for the new police operating model. The plans should make clear how the reductions in workforce numbers are to be achieved and provide costed options for service provision and clarity on the impact on services of each option.

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), or the Home Office police workforce open data tables (available from 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). 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