



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police efficiency 2016

An inspection of Suffolk Constabulary



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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/). This report sets out our findings for Suffolk Constabulary.

Reports on Suffolk Constabulary'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	£121m	£124m	+2%
Forecast savings:			
Amount of forecast savings	£5.0m	£0.01m	
Percentage of gross revenue expenditure	4%	0%	



Workforce

	2015/16	2019/20	Percentage change
Planned change in officer numbers	1,087	1,067	-2%
Planned change in total workforce	1,987	2,121	+7%
Officer cost per head of population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016	£78	£98	
Workforce cost per head of population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016	£127	£143	



Calls for assistance

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

Suffolk Constabulary

109

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

51

2015/16

60

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

Suffolk Constabulary

+18%

England and Wales force average

+9%



Victim satisfaction

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

Suffolk Constabulary

83%

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



Good

Suffolk Constabulary has been assessed as good in respect of the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. The force has a good understanding of its current and likely future demand for its services. It uses its resources well to manage demand and has an impressive record of collaborating with other forces and organisations to improve efficiency and make savings. The force is good at planning for demand in the future and has sound financial and organisational plans. The force needs to ensure it gets the most out of its investment in ICT² and that its workforce has the skills they need to meet future demand and changing crime trends. In last year's efficiency inspection, Suffolk Constabulary was judged to be good.

Overall summary

Suffolk Constabulary has continued to be good in the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime since HMIC's inspection in 2015. The force now has a good understanding of its current and future demand, and is improving its understanding of demand that is less likely to be reported. It has worked with a wide range of partners to uncover hidden harm within Suffolk communities, such as modern-day slavery within the traveller community and gang masters exploiting migrant workers. The force is involved in the Better Policing Collaborative, a joint venture involving a number of universities as well as the organisation Skills for Justice, which gives it a better understanding of what works and allows it to make future decisions based on strong evidence. The joint performance and analysis department with Norfolk Constabulary is undertaking research into specific areas of new and emerging demand. The force is working closely with partner organisations to understand and respond to any likely reduction in their resources that may affect demand for police services.

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

² Information and communications technology (ICT) encompasses both information technology (IT), such as computers and software, and wider electronic communications systems, such as phones and radios.

The force is good at using its resources to manage current demand. It has implemented a new policing model to help make sure it matches its resources to demand, its finances and the priorities of the police and crime commissioner's police and crime plan. However, it needs to ensure that it identifies and swiftly addresses skills and capability gaps in its workforce so that it can meet future demands and changes in crime trends such as cyber-crime. The force has an impressive record of collaborating with other police forces, emergency services and public-sector organisations such as local councils to improve efficiency and save money. The force, together with Norfolk Constabulary, has installed three large software platforms across both forces to improve interoperability, reduce costs and increase efficiencies. It shares some premises with Suffolk's fire service and is working closely with them to provide more co-ordinated fire and crime prevention services. It recently extended its pilot scheme of mental health professionals working alongside officers in Ipswich to having additional practitioners within its force contact and control room.

Suffolk Constabulary is good at planning for demand in the future. It has developed financial and organisational plans that are practicable, credible, based on sound planning assumptions and focused on transforming the way it provides and improves services for the public. The force continues to identify savings to invest for the future and has effective governance processes to manage change through the organisational change board. It collaborates with Norfolk Constabulary in operational policing services such as major crime investigation, armed policing and roads policing, as well as business support functions, such as human resources, finance and ICT. Its joint digital strategy with Norfolk Constabulary outlines how the force plans to use ICT to increase efficiency and change how it provides service to the public. It has piloted the use of body-worn video and mobile data and is seeking to address the issues the pilot raised, including the poor mobile reception across the county. Although it is good at realising the benefits of its investment in most areas, it needs to do more to realise fully the benefits from its investment in ICT. It will need to ensure the workforce has the skills it needs to carry out the force's plans.

Recommendations

Suffolk Constabulary is a good force. HMIC has not identified any causes of concern and therefore has made no specific recommendations.

Areas for improvement

- Suffolk Constabulary should develop a better understanding of how the benefits of investing and using ICT affect the force's ability to meet current and likely future demand efficiently, with a view to updating its ICT strategy.
- Suffolk Constabulary should undertake appropriate activities to fully understand its workforce's capabilities, in order to identify any gaps and put plans in place to address them. This will enable the force to be confident in its ability to efficiently meet current and likely future demand.

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

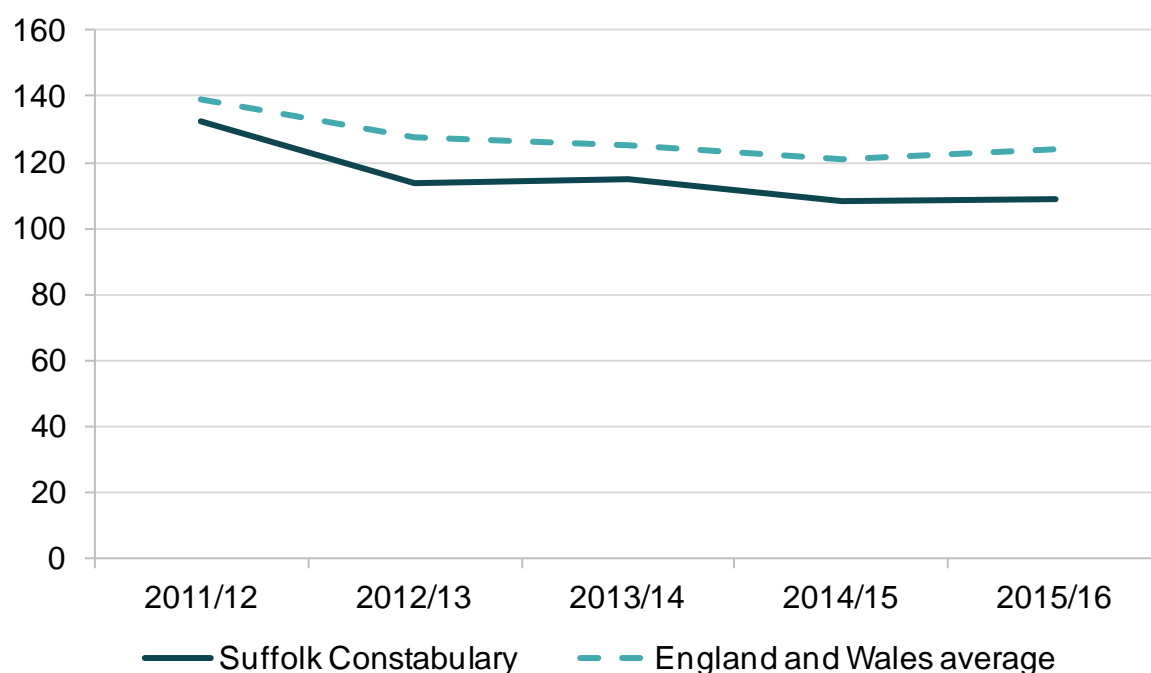
A good understanding of the demand for police services is vital in ensuring that forces have the right resources in the right place to provide the right level of policing now and in the future. This means not just an understanding of reported incidents but also how well a force proactively looks for 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 Suffolk Constabulary compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016

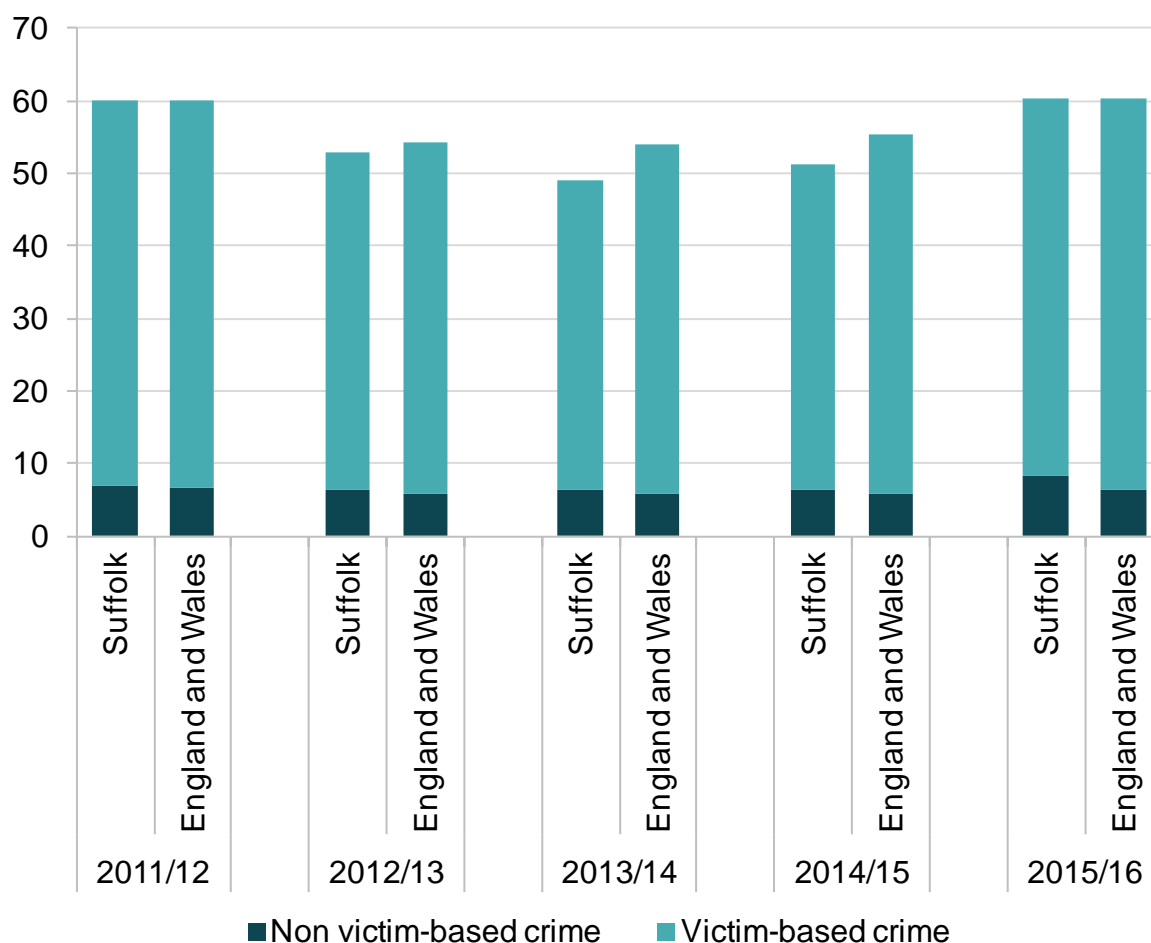


Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

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

Suffolk Constabulary received 109 '999' calls per 1,000 population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 124 calls per 1,000 population. In the 12 months to 31 March 2012, the constabulary received 132 '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 Suffolk Constabulary 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 2 please see annex A

With regard to police recorded crime for the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Suffolk Constabulary recorded 51.9 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, Suffolk Constabulary recorded 8.4 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, higher than 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 3 percent and an increase in the non victim-based crime rate of 22 percent since the 12 months to 31 March 2012.

Suffolk Constabulary has a good understanding of the current demand for its services. The force has made good progress since HMIC's 2015 efficiency inspection, where we identified that the force could improve its understanding of current demand for its services. The force has undertaken activity-based assessments and consultation with staff. As a result, the force has a more comprehensive understanding of its current demand.

The force is improving its understanding of demand that is less likely to be reported. It has worked with a wide range of partners to uncover unreported offences within Suffolk communities, such as modern-day slavery within the traveller community and gang masters exploiting migrant workers. The force is also working to understand better the link between demand and vulnerability to identify gaps in its policing service. It is developing plans to address the gaps and increase reporting.

The Better Policing Collaborative (BPC) is Suffolk's (in conjunction with Norfolk) academic partner. It is a consortium of universities as well as the organisation Skills for Justice. The BPC enables the force to apply an academic evaluation of specific areas of policing, providing a better understanding of what does and does not work and allowing it to make decisions based on strong evidence. The force undertook research to identify such issues during its local policing review, and the assistant chief constable for local policing regularly meets with staff to discuss how things could be done better. During our inspection we found examples of the force drawing on evidence of good practice that has been evaluated independently and on ideas from outside policing to reduce inefficiencies.

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.

Suffolk Constabulary is making good progress in identifying new and emerging demand and is in the process of evaluating the impact on future policing services across the county. The joint performance and analysis department with Norfolk Constabulary is undertaking research into specific areas. These include an in-depth study of dementia and the effects it might have on police demand, malicious communications such as sexting, honour-based abuse, online fraud, property crime and child neglect. In total, 20 areas have already been analysed and five more areas are in progress. This analysis is based on firm academic principles incorporating academic evidence collected through evaluations and literature reviews undertaken by the BPC and by the force's improvement and evaluation department.

Suffolk Constabulary has extensive arrangements in place to respond to any likely reduction in the resources of its partner organisations that may affect demand for police services. It has effective links between chief officers, the police and crime commissioner (PCC) and senior leaders of partner agencies across Suffolk. The force has appointed a superintendent to work with partners to manage existing and

future demand and to identify and mitigate the effect of reduced resources in other organisations. The force considered these reductions when developing its new policing model.

The force has a good understanding of public expectations. While developing the new policing model, the force and the office of the PCC consulted the public to identify what they felt was important. It has used other sources of information to improve its understanding of public expectations, such as the community safety survey conducted in 2015, and academic research on changing public expectations.

The force recognises that it could improve its digital services so it has developed a strategy for this. The force has plans to change the way it uses its public website and is working with volunteers from the public to help with the design. At present, members of the public cannot report crimes online or monitor the progress of an investigation. The force is considering implementing a 'digital hub' to manage engagement with the public. It is also thinking about how it could absorb additional demand as a result of creating new ways for contact and communication, and from shifting existing channels such as an enhanced online or 101 phone number chat facility.

Summary of findings



Good

Suffolk Constabulary has a good understanding of the current and likely future demand for its services. It continues to develop its understanding of demand that is less likely to be reported. The force has effective processes in place to challenge itself continually to understand demand and inefficient activities through its continuous improvement programme and the work undertaken as part of the Suffolk local policing review. The force works with academic institutions and others to identify and evaluate good practice through the Better Policing Collaborative. Its understanding of the public's expectations of its service is good. It has comprehensive plans to identify and mitigate the effect on its service of reducing partner resources.

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

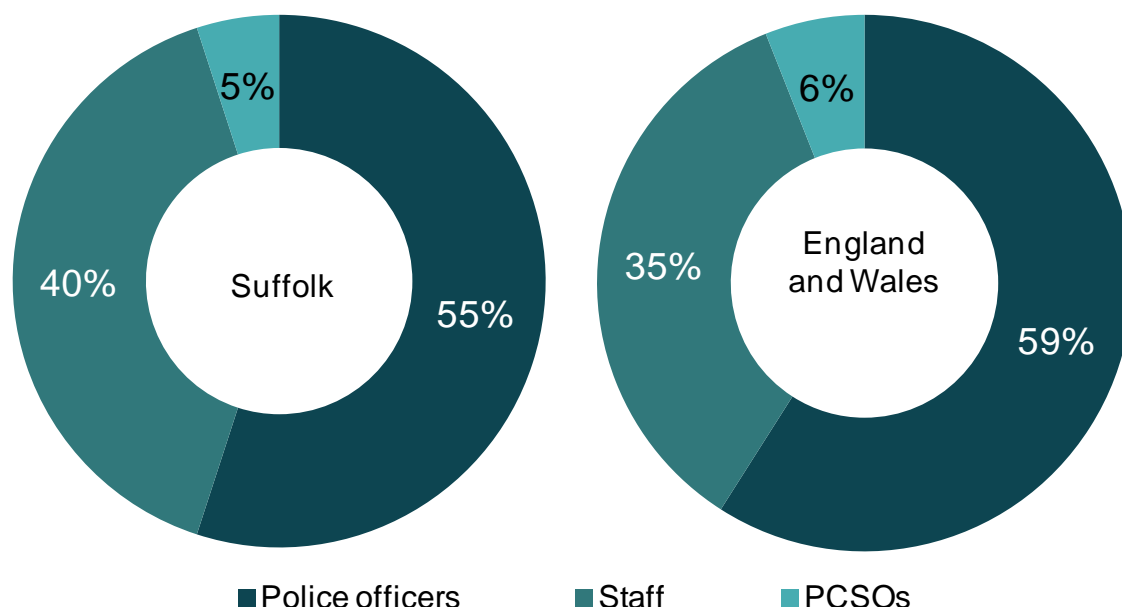
Police forces need to operate in a way that makes the best use of all available resources so that demand is met and public expectations are satisfied. We looked at the extent to which Suffolk Constabulary has the right people with the right skills in the right place to protect the public and to fight 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 Suffolk Constabulary 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 Suffolk Constabulary 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 55 percent of Suffolk Constabulary's workforce. This was lower than the England and Wales average of 59 percent. The proportion of staff in Suffolk Constabulary was 40 percent, higher than the England and Wales average of 35 percent. The proportion of police community support officers in Suffolk Constabulary was 5 percent, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 6 percent.

Figure 4: Planned changes in full-time equivalent workforce from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for Suffolk Constabulary 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	1,246	-13%	-14%	1,087	-2%	-2%	1,067
Staff	971	-18%	-21%	792	20%	-5%	948
PCSOs	173	-37%	-35%	108	-1%	-6%	107
Workforce total	2,390	-17%	-18%	1,987	7%	-3%	2,121

Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

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

Managing demands for police services

Suffolk Constabulary is good at prioritising its activities to manage demand for its services. The force aligns its resources with the PCC's police and crime plan and manages its budget to support this activity. The force sets its priorities using the strategic threat and risk assessment, and it has a control strategy outlining how the force proposes to minimise risk to the communities it serves. The force allocates its resources based on a sound analysis of current demand and a developing understanding of future demand together with a good understanding of public expectations.

The force continues to develop its understanding of how to measure the true impact of crime, by measuring the damage inflicted on victims rather than by simply counting the number of reported crimes. It is considering using the Cambridge Crime Harm Index³ as a way to develop performance measures for keeping the public safe that are more relevant and meaningful to the public. The force hopes to use an index of harm alongside outcome-based budgeting to allocate its resources more efficiently, to enable it to better protect the public.

Suffolk Constabulary sets clearly defined priorities and matches resources against them. Force priorities and standards of service are set out within the PCC's police and crime plan and performance is scrutinised at the public accountability and

³ The Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CHI) gives a numerical harm score that allows forces to see the relative harm each crime has on a victim. When added to the time taken and complexity for each crime the CHI grading allows forces to consider how it deploys resources.

performance panel. Examples of service standards include answering 999 calls within ten seconds and non-emergency calls within 20 seconds.

The force uses an assessment of threat, harm, risk, investigative opportunities, vulnerability and engagement (known as THRIVE), rather than the crime type, to decide the level of response it gives to each report made to the police. Recently the force introduced an incident crime management hub that allows staff at the force's headquarters to resolve some incidents over the phone instead of attending in person. The force has arranged for the Better Policing Collaborative to undertake an independent review in 2016 of its application of THRIVE to examine the effectiveness of this risk-assessment process.

Increasing efficiency

The force has a good understanding of the costs of its services and a proven track record of increasing efficiency.

While the force has a good understanding of the costs of its services, it has less understanding about what outcomes or results it has achieved beyond the standard management information. The force recognises this and has employed external consultants to help it to develop a new approach to allocating money internally, called outcome-based budgeting. This will help the force to better understand what is achieved as a result of spending, rather than how much something costs.

The force uses a robust and academically evaluated process for continuous improvement as part of the Better Policing Collaborative. This external scrutiny provides a structured way to evaluate change and support continuous improvement.

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 Suffolk Constabulary 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.

Suffolk Constabulary recognises it needs to do more to identify its current workforce capabilities and gaps and is working to address this. At present the force does not have a comprehensive picture of the skills of its workforce at the force level. Identifying current and future capability has been a concern for local command teams. In May 2016, the force produced a training needs analysis at the force level, which will be used to identify gaps in capabilities and training required. The workforce planning group, chaired by the deputy chief constable, will make decisions on commissioning and prioritising training.

Tackling workforce gaps

Suffolk Constabulary has made some progress in response to our findings in last year's efficiency inspection but recognises it needs to do more to identify and swiftly address gaps in capability across the force to ensure its workforce is adequately prepared to meet future demand and changing crime trends.

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness inspection⁴ we found a significant number of staff and supervisors who had been waiting for up to 19 months for their Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme course (which focuses on the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to conduct professional and objective investigations, while taking into consideration the concerns and needs of all parties involved). The force has made progress in resolving this issue: it has recruited a course trainer and one course has already been given, with further courses scheduled through to December 2016.

The force has identified a staff skills gap for the effective investigation of cyber-crime. As well as recruiting ten cyber-crime investigators the force is liaising with universities to identify suitable candidates for further recruitment in the near future.

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

We assessed how well Suffolk Constabulary 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.

⁴ PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 – An inspection of Suffolk Constabulary, HMIC, 2016. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-2015-suffolk/

Suffolk Constabulary has a good record of collaborating with other police forces and other public-sector organisations to reduce costs, manage demand and provide a more co-ordinated service. The force has an established approach to working with others and recognises that this is not just about savings but should also focus on better public services.

The force works extensively with Norfolk Constabulary in a mature and effective collaboration that covers operational policing services, such as major crime investigation, armed policing and roads policing, as well as business support functions, such as human resources, finance and ICT. The force is looking into additional collaborative arrangements with the other police forces across the region (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Kent) to improve savings, efficiency, value for money and public service even further.

The force already works alongside staff from other agencies to improve information sharing to protect the vulnerable, most notably in the multi-agency safeguarding hub.⁵ The PCC and the chief constable are keen to expand the concept of working together with a wide range of public-sector organisations to provide a more co-ordinated service to the people of Suffolk. Leaders have discussed centralising multi-agency teams, notably in health and social care, to more effectively manage issues such as substance misuse and dementia that affect demand for policing services. The ambition is to integrate teams and locate them together so that they can provide a more comprehensive service to the public. Potential locations for these multi-agency hubs have already been identified across Suffolk.

Collaboration benefits

Suffolk Constabulary can demonstrate how it works with others to transform how it provides services to the public to build resilience, reduce costs and improve services.

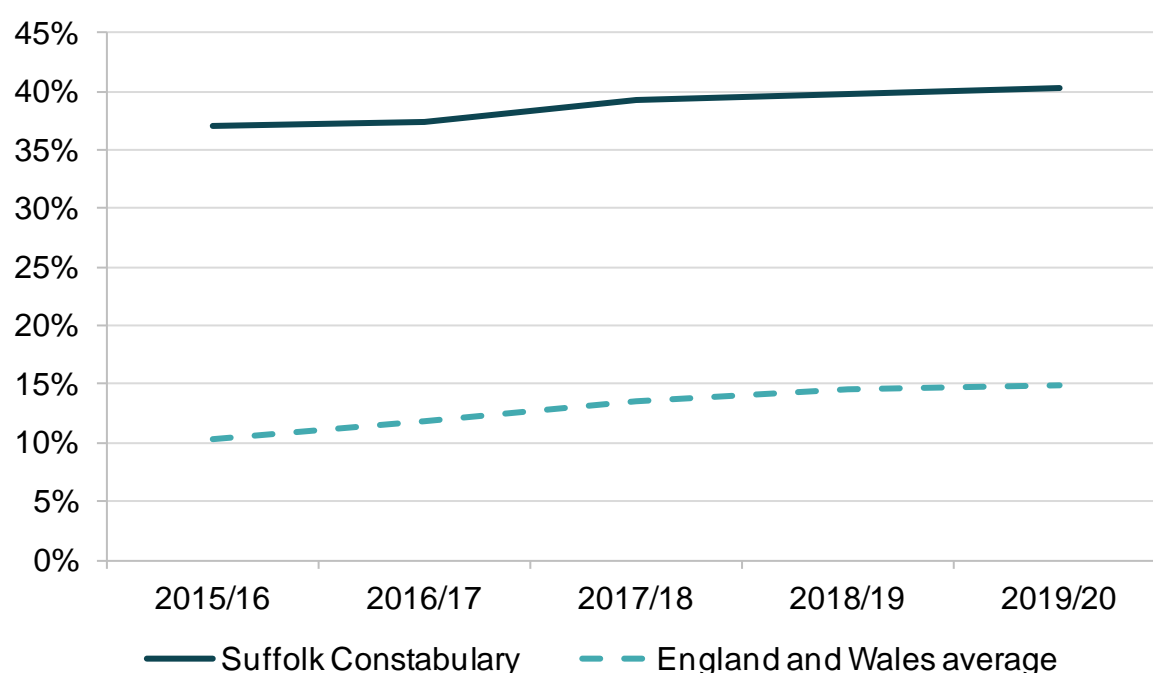
Suffolk Constabulary is already in a mature and effective collaboration with Norfolk Constabulary, which has helped the force to reduce its costs by operating more efficiently and sharing its resources to provide a better and more effective service across both forces. The force has a strong record of achieving savings through collaboration and stated that jointly with Norfolk Constabulary it saved £15m over the last spending review period through collaborative working. Both constabularies are now actively working with other police forces within the region to identify greater economies of scale in the areas of staff vetting, procurement of goods and services, and specialist units to identify and deal with corruption.

⁵ A multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) brings together into a single location key safeguarding agencies to better identify risks to children (and in some areas, vulnerable adults), and improve decision-making, interventions and outcomes. The MASH enables the multi-agency team to share all appropriate information in a secure environment, and ensure that the most appropriate response is provided to effectively safeguard and protect the individual.

Suffolk Constabulary works with a wide range of partner agencies to manage demand more effectively. These include both force-led and local initiatives to reduce demand in areas such as street drinking and managing the night-time economy. The force identified that approximately 30 percent of its calls for assistance involve individuals with mental health problems. In response, it recently extended its pilot scheme of mental health professionals working alongside officers in Ipswich. There are now additional practitioners within its force contact and control room. This ensures that those in need receive the most appropriate care provided by the most appropriate agency.

The force shares premises with the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service to reduce costs and provide more co-ordinated fire and crime prevention services. The force already shares seven locations with the fire service and hopes to share four more by the end of 2016. It is also trying to move the responsibility for parking enforcement from the police to the local authority, as well as making changes to how lost and found property is dealt with.

Figure 5: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure in Suffolk Constabulary, 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

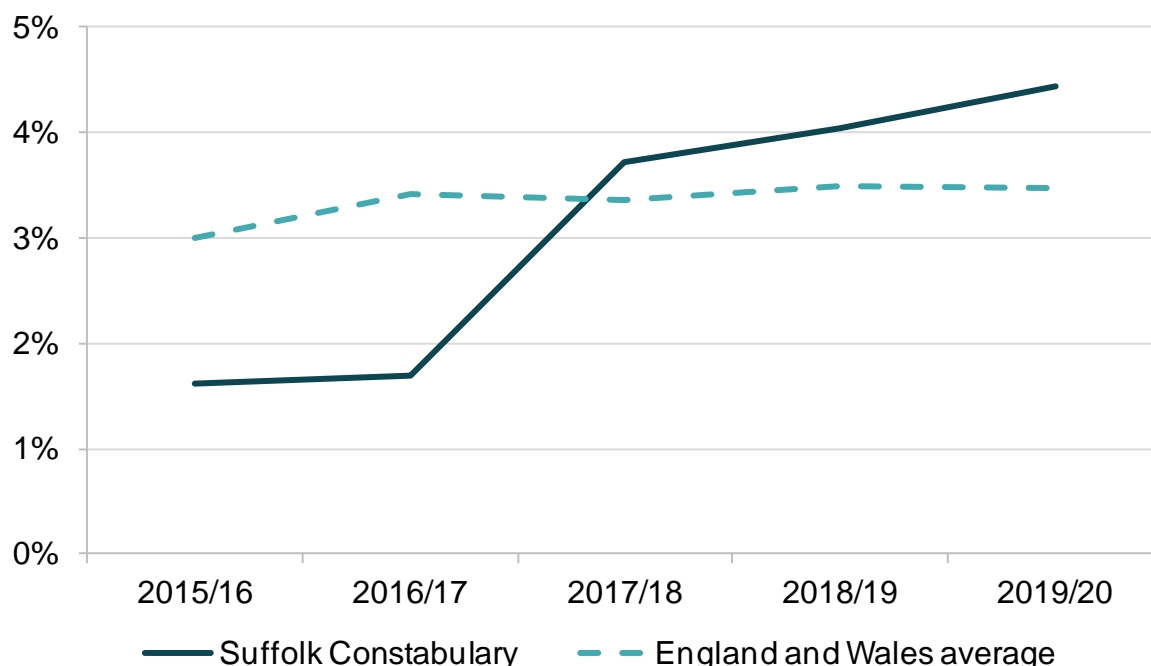


Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

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

Suffolk Constabulary has forecast that it will spend £42.0m in 2016/17 on collaboration with other police forces. This is 37.5 percent of its net revenue expenditure (NRE), which is higher than the England and Wales average of 11.9 percent. For 2019/20, the constabulary has forecast that it will spend £46.2m (40.3 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 Suffolk Constabulary, 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

Suffolk Constabulary has forecast that it will spend £1.9m in 2016/17 on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is 1.7 percent of its net revenue expenditure (NRE), which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 3.4 percent. For 2019/20, the constabulary has forecast that it will spend £5.1m (4.4 percent of NRE) on collaboration with non-police organisations. This is broadly in line with 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.

Suffolk Constabulary is good at realising the benefits it has achieved through changing how it delivers its services and by working with others, but needs to do more to fully realise the benefits from its investment in ICT systems.

With Norfolk Constabulary, the force has installed three large software platforms to improve interoperability, reduce costs and increase efficiencies. These software applications include a joint command and control system, HR and finance package and crime and intelligence system. The force is also working to provide mobile data to its staff to allow them to perform their functions while out of the station, increasing their time in their communities as well as providing efficiencies in how they work.

While HMIC recognises that the implementation of large ICT projects takes time, Suffolk Constabulary needs to ensure that it is getting the most out of this investment. Staff we spoke with expressed frustration about the increased time taken to complete routine tasks and the additional bureaucracy resulting from some ICT platforms not being fully implemented. We will look for the force to demonstrate the benefits of its ICT investment in our 2017 inspection.

Suffolk Constabulary has adequate arrangements in place to understand the consequences of change, including how this affects the services it provides to the public. Change is monitored through the Suffolk change board, chaired by the deputy chief constable and with wide representation of senior managers across the organisation. Representatives of the office of the PCC attend meetings to understand and challenge the force on the effects of any change on the public and to ensure that the proposed change supports the PCC's police and crime plan. These changes are also scrutinised at the joint chief officers meeting across both Suffolk and Norfolk constabularies to understand fully any inter-dependencies across each force's change programmes.

The force implemented its new policing model in April 2016. It regularly reviews this to identify any unintended consequences of change and to take appropriate action swiftly. The force has also employed an external company to run a survey of the public.

Summary of findings



Good

Suffolk Constabulary is good at using its resources to manage current demand. It makes effective decisions about how to use its resources in line with the PCC's and force's strategic priorities.

The force has revised how it responds to calls from the public to improve its service and become more efficient. It has a good understanding of the costs of its services, and is developing its understanding of how its resources contribute to successful outcomes. Suffolk Constabulary has a good record of collaborating with other police forces and other public-sector organisations to improve services, reduce costs and manage demand. It has adequate arrangements in place to understand the consequences of change on the services it delivers to the public but could do more to ensure it realises the benefits of its investment in ICT.

The force needs to continue to develop its understanding of the current capabilities of its workforce. It should also identify and swiftly address any gaps to ensure it retains sufficient capacity and capability within its workforce to manage demand.

Areas for improvement

- Suffolk Constabulary should develop a better understanding of how the benefits of investing and using ICT affect the force's ability to meet current and likely future demand efficiently, with a view to updating its ICT strategy.
- Suffolk Constabulary should undertake appropriate activities to fully understand its workforce's capabilities, in order to identify any gaps and put plans in place to address them. This will enable the force to be confident in its ability to efficiently meet current and likely future demand.

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 Suffolk Constabulary'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 Suffolk Constabulary 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

Suffolk Constabulary is good at identifying and prioritising areas to invest in the future and has made good progress since last year's efficiency inspection. In 2015 we identified that the force needed to develop a future workforce plan that is aligned with its overall demand and budget. The force undertook detailed analysis of its current demand and has gained a good understanding of likely future demand. Its improved understanding helped in developing and implementing its new policing model in April 2016. This model aligns resources better against the force's overall demand and budget, ensuring that staff are in the right place at the right time, and is focused on addressing the priorities set in the PCC's police and crime plan.

In 2015 we also found that the force's future plans should include the mix of skills required by the workforce. The force needs to do more to develop its understanding of the future skills required by its workforce to ensure it is adequately prepared to respond effectively to changing demand and emerging crime types; for example, higher-level skills in technology are in greater need for tackling cyber-crime.

Investing in ICT

Suffolk Constabulary's joint ICT strategy with Norfolk Constabulary outlines how the force plans to use ICT to enable its workforce to do things more efficiently and change how it provides service to the public.

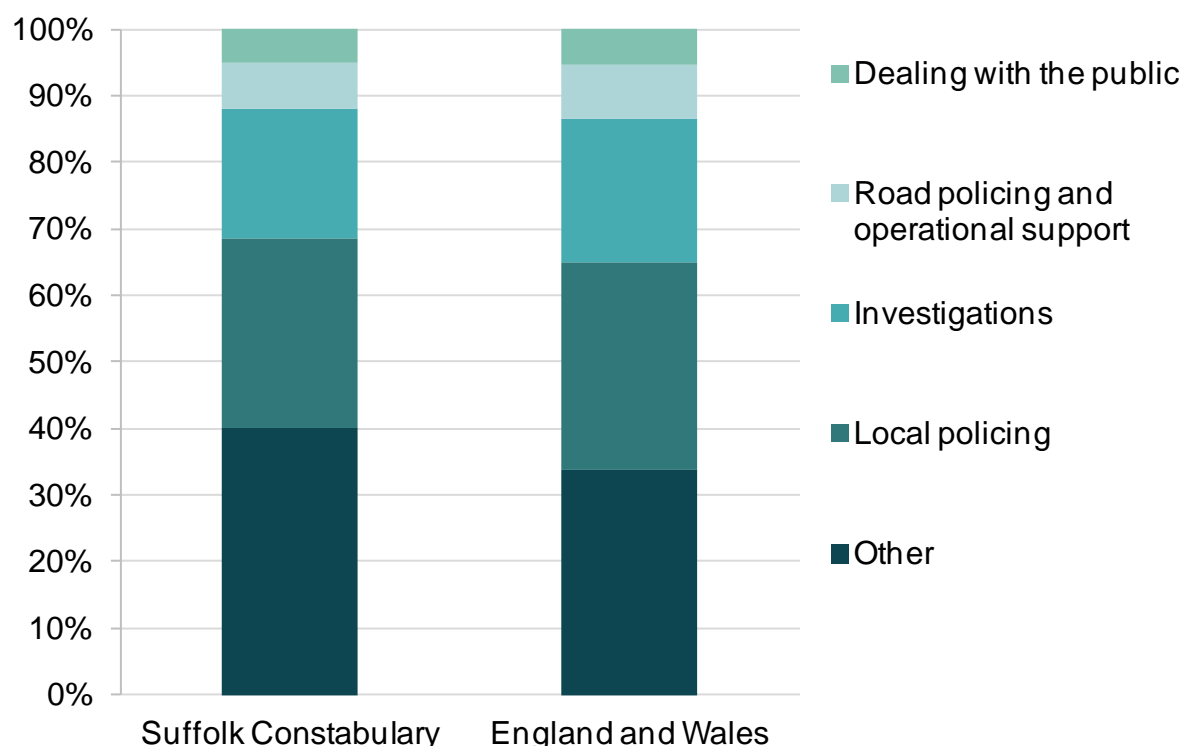
The force recognises the need to use new technology to support operational policing, respond to changes in crime trends and meet changing public expectations. It has developed a joint digital strategy with Norfolk Constabulary and has engaged the services of an external company to help prepare how it can adapt its services to meet the shift in society to a more digital service.

The force has piloted the use of mobile data to enable officers and staff to work remotely, increasing the time they spend in the community and making it easier for staff to conduct their duties. The pilot recognised a significant issue with the level of mobile reception across the county; a solution has been identified that is being tested to ensure it meets the necessary security requirements. The force has also piloted the use of body-worn video and identified the need to enhance substantially its digital storage facilities and to implement a system that allows video footage to be retrieved easily. The force is keen to do more, but – mindful of a potential national solution being developed for all police forces – is reluctant to conduct work on its own in case of duplication and waste of local taxpayers' money.

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 Suffolk Constabulary'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 Suffolk Constabulary 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

Suffolk Constabulary is good at developing credible future plans built on sound planning assumptions. The force's plans are based on sound evidence supported by robust academic scrutiny through the Better Policing Collaborative. The force has invested in training some staff on the principles of evidence-based policing.

The force's financial plans have been independently audited by an accredited external body, which found they were built on sound financial planning assumptions. HMIC has reviewed the force's plans and considers them to be credible and aligned to its assessment of current and future demand, organisational and financial requirements.

Planning for the future

Suffolk Constabulary has developed financial and organisational plans that are practicable, credible, based on sound planning assumptions and focused on transforming the way the force provides and improves services for the public. The force needs to ensure that it has identified the skills required by the workforce, in order to implement these plans.

The force has developed a long-term budget forecast to ensure it meets the required savings for the financial period ending 2019/20 and HMIC considers the assumptions

underpinning this plan to be reasonable. The force introduced its new policing model in April 2016, which it informed us will provide the majority of the £6.2m savings identified by 2019/20. The force has projected that it will find a further £1.2m in the financial year 2019/20 through a programme of continuous improvement to identify efficiencies in how it provides its services.

The force recently introduced outcome-based budgeting to help it manage how it spends its money. This will help it to gain a greater understanding of how it currently allocates its money and uses its resources, and what it achieves as a result. The force will be able to compare itself with other forces and organisations to see if it is spending more or less than expected and so identify savings or provide evidence to increase existing levels of investment. External consultants are currently working with the force to support outcome-based budgeting which will be used to set its 2017/18 budgets. This approach, together with its existing change programmes and increased collaboration, means the force will be prepared to meet the savings required by 2019/20.

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 systems to improve operational efficiency.

Saving to invest for the future

Suffolk Constabulary is good at exploring opportunities to drive down costs and make savings to invest for the future. It continues to identify ways to meet existing and future savings and to invest in the future. The force has effective governance processes to manage change through the organisational change board. Proposed savings plans are scrutinised by representatives from human resources, finance, senior leaders from across the organisation, performance and operational teams to ensure plans are credible and achievable.

The force is confident that it will identify sufficient savings to meet its savings requirement by 2019/20 without the need to use its financial reserves, but it will use them if necessary. For example, reserves were used to support the successful implementation of the new policing model.

Working together to improve future efficiency

Suffolk Constabulary has a strong track record of working together with other police forces and agencies to improve its current and future efficiency through increased ICT interoperability, maximising its purchasing power and sharing premises.

In addition to its existing mature collaboration with Norfolk Constabulary, the force is working with other police forces in the region to identify greater economies of scale in: staff vetting, procurement of goods and services and specialist units to identify and deal with corruption.

The force continues to explore how to reduce its costs by purchasing in conjunction with other agencies. Examples include purchasing its uniform and equipment through the national uniform procurement process and its ICT through the combined law enforcement purchasing collaboration.

The force is partner in a successful bid for funding to the Department for Communities and Local Government through the transformational challenge award. This bid, led by Suffolk County Council, includes Suffolk Constabulary together with eight district and borough councils, with the intention to reduce costs and improve services to the people of Suffolk through a more co-ordinated approach.

Summary of findings



Good

Suffolk Constabulary is good at planning for demand in the future. The force has made good progress since HMIC's 2015 efficiency inspection in understanding its current and future demand. It has implemented a new policing model that aligns its resources better against demand, finances and the priorities of the PCC's police and crime plan. However, the force needs to continue its work in ensuring it understands the capabilities of its workforce and that staff have the necessary skills to respond adequately to changes in demand and emerging crime types.

The force has a sound approach to implementing new technology with Norfolk Constabulary, but it needs to do more to ensure it realises the benefits of its ICT systems, enabling its staff to become more efficient. It collaborates well with Norfolk Constabulary and is now investigating extending this by working with other forces in the region to reduce costs and improve joint services. It has a strong focus on working with other public sector organisations to provide more efficient and co-ordinated services to the people of Suffolk.

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