

PEEL: Police efficiency (including leadership) 2017

An inspection of Merseyside Police



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Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)¹ assesses the efficiency and leadership of forces in England and Wales.

What is police efficiency and why is it important?

As with all public services, the police service must operate in a way that makes the most of its available resources. To do this, police forces must understand what their demand is – by which we mean what work they can reasonably predict they will have on any given day – and ensure that they have the resources they need, in the right place, to meet that demand. To stay efficient they must have good, realistic and evidence-based plans for the future. Our efficiency inspection assessed all of these areas during 2017.

As part of the 2017 inspection, we also integrated aspects of leadership into our assessment of efficiency, as the two areas are closely linked. We assessed how police leaders are driving innovation in policing, within their own forces and further afield. We also inspected how well forces are planning for the future with regards to their leadership.

Between 2010/11 and 2015/16, central government funding for the police service in England and Wales fell by 19 percent, or £1.7 billion in cash terms. Police forces met the required budget reductions until November 2015, when the government announced that overall police spending would be protected from further cuts, to enable the police to continue to adapt to emerging crime threats while taking further steps to improve efficiency. While that was a more favourable funding settlement for policing than was expected, reductions in spending by other public services will still create additional pressure for police forces.

¹ This inspection was carried out before 19 July 2017, when HMIC also took on responsibility for fire & rescue service inspections and was renamed HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. The methodology underpinning our inspection findings is unaffected by this change. References to HMICFRS in this report may relate to an event that happened before 19 July 2017 when HMICFRS was HMIC. Citations of documents which HMIC published before 19 July 2017 will still cite HMIC as the publisher.

Our report on Merseyside Police's legitimacy inspection will be available on our website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/peel-2017/merseyside/) at the end of 2017. HMICFRS reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2018. Previous PEEL reports are also available on our website: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/peel-2016/merseyside/.

More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on our website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/).

Force in numbers



Financial position

Forecast change in total gross revenue expenditure

2017/18	2020/21	Percentage change
£315m	£312m	-1%



Workforce

Planned change in officer numbers

2016/17	2020/21	Percentage change
3,538	3,434	-3%

Planned change in total workforce

2016/17	2020/21	Percentage change
5,570	5,357	-4%



Calls for assistance

999 calls per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2017

Merseyside Police	England and Wales force average
167	135



Recorded crime

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2017

2015/16	2016/17
73	79

Percentage change in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2017

Merseyside Police	England and Wales force average
+7%	+11%

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 judgment²



Good

Merseyside Police is judged to be good in the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Our overall judgment this year is the same as last year. The force is judged to be good in its understanding of demand; its use of resources to manage demand is assessed to be good; and its planning for future demand is also judged to be good.

Overall summary

How well does the force understand demand?



Good

How well does the force use its resources?



Good

How well is the force planning for the future?



Good

Merseyside Police is a good and efficient force. It has strong leadership. Some senior officers have been appointed recently and they bring new experience, as well as providing stability and continued strength in leadership for the force. Its financial plans are based on sound assumptions and the force is on track to meet the savings required.

The force considers that leadership comes from its entire workforce. It invests in 'one team' events and is providing individual personality-profiling for the whole workforce. The force is developing its future leadership and has senior officers on externally-supported development schemes. We found that the force had carried out an analysis of skills, but that this did not include the entire workforce.

² HMICFRS judgments are outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

The force's assessment of demand for the services it provides is up-to-date and comprehensive. Also, it has processes in place to uncover the sort of demand that would be less likely to be reported. Through its force-wide operating model, the force has become more flexible in its deployment of resources across Merseyside, in order to meet demand for service. Its planning of major events, in particular sporting events, continues to make good use of resources, meeting both public expectations and safety.

The force leadership welcomes workforce ideas and feedback and ensures there is a response to suggestions. However, at the time of our inspection this was not reflected in the opinions of some uniformed officers. The force is improving its recognition of innovative ideas. The force is part of a tri-force collaboration with Cheshire Constabulary and North Wales Police. This collaboration is investing in IT solutions that enable efficient information-sharing between these forces.

Area for improvement

- The force 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 be efficient in meeting current and likely future demand.

How well does the force understand demand?

To be efficient, it is essential that police forces have a good understanding of the demand for their services. This means that they should not only understand what sort of incidents are likely to be reported on a normal day, but also what they need to do in advance to prevent crime. They should also understand the crimes and other activity in their area that are often hidden and are less likely to be reported, such as modern slavery or child sexual exploitation, and take action to uncover them.

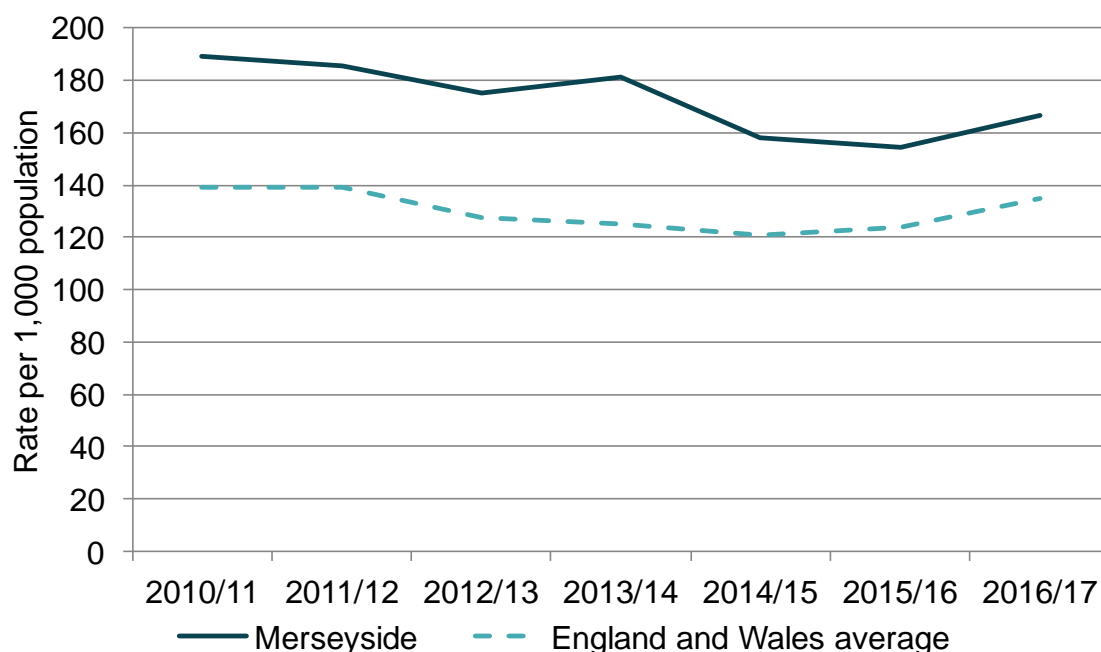
Forces should be able to identify and reduce work that is unnecessarily created internally through inefficient processes. Similarly, forces should be looking for ways to identify processes and ways of working that are more efficient. Forces also have to make decisions about how they prioritise and respond to the demand for their services and should be able to demonstrate that their approach to prioritisation does not cause them to overlook some of their demand.

How well does the force understand current demand?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police understands the demand for its services. These demands can range from answering and responding to 999 calls to protecting victims and uncovering crimes that would not otherwise be reported. It is important that police forces understand the work that they need to do so that they can ensure that they have resources in place.

Forces deal with much more than responding to emergencies and investigating reports of crime. However, the number of calls for service (999 calls and 101 calls) and the levels of recorded crime can nonetheless be used to make simple comparisons. In particular, they can give an indication of whether demand has changed or is particularly high or low. Figure 1 shows how the number of 999 calls has changed since 2010/11, while figure 2 illustrates how crime has changed since 2010/11.

Figure 1: Rate of 999 calls recorded per 1,000 people in the local population in Merseyside Police compared with England and Wales as a whole, from 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

Merseyside Police recorded 167 '999' calls per 1,000 population in 2016/17. This was higher than the England and Wales force average of 135. The rate has decreased from the 189 calls per 1,000 population recorded in 2010/11; however, it has increased since 2015/16 when the rate was 154 calls per 1,000.

Figure 2: Police-recorded crimes per 1,000 population in Merseyside Police compared with England and Wales from 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Home Office Police-recorded crime data

Victim-based crimes (those where there is likely to be a specific victim) include violence against the person, sexual offences, robbery and other theft, criminal damage and arson. All other crime is considered non victim-based.

The rate of victim-based crime per 1,000 population in Merseyside in 2016/17 was 68.0 crimes. This is higher than the rate in 2010/11 of 55.5 crimes. The rate of victim-based crime decreased between 2010/11 and 2012/13 to 53.1 crimes per 1,000 population before increasing to the 2016/17 rate. The rate of victim-based crime per 1,000 population in England and Wales decreased from 55.8 to 48.1 crimes between 2010/11 and 2013/14 before increasing to 59.3 in 2016/17.

In the local population of Merseyside Police the rate of non victim-based crime per 1,000 population in 2016/17 (10.9 crimes) was lower than in 2010/11 (15.5 crimes). The rate of non victim-based crime per 1,000 population decreased to 9.4 crimes in 2015/16 before rising again to the 2016/17 rate. The rate of non victim-based crime per 1,000 population in England and Wales in 2016/17 was 7.9 crimes. This decreased from 7.1 in 2010/11 to 5.9 crimes in 2012/13 before increasing to the 2016/17 rate.

Understanding demand

In 2016 we reported that Merseyside Police was using historical data and mapping risk in order to identify current and future demand for resources, applying this information in the design of its new operating model under its 'community first' strategy. The new model was implemented on 29 January 2017. This has been the most significant change the force has ever undertaken, with policing now provided through a force-wide model of deploying officers across Merseyside.

HMICFRS was pleased to see that despite the continuing difficulties of this change, the force has retained a thorough and consistent understanding of demand for its services. We found that the force has an up-to-date, comprehensive demand-assessment document that demonstrates its understanding of demand. The force has looked at public demand (calls for service from the public) and protective demand (the work police are required to do to safeguard the public). The force identifies that this demand assessment needs to influence force activity in order to guide demand reduction, organisational change and resource allocation.

The assessment analyses Merseyside's demographics, including the effect of its transient tourist population, the significance of its sporting facilities (such as its high-profile football clubs and Aintree racecourse) and the protective demand these create for the force. It analyses a wide range of subjects, including:

- organised crime groups (these are a significant concern for the force);
- the effect of the new 'community first' operating model and force-wide (borderless) policing;

- its own monitoring data which shows a 14 percent increase in 999 call volume (2016 to 2017) and how this affects call handling; and
- crime types and volume, including HMICFRS' 2016 crime data integrity inspection³ findings.

As part of the assessment, the force undertook a 'day in the life' analysis of demand in an average day for Merseyside Police. This included continuing demand such as its work with families and offenders, and incoming demand from calls, visitors, social media and the proactive work of its officers.

We reviewed evidence that demonstrated that the force has a broad understanding of demand. Merseyside Police is part of the data-driven insight project with eight other forces and the National Crime Agency, which aims to improve cross-agency data searching as well as advanced predictive analysis. The benefits are anticipated to include improved ability to detect and prevent crime demand, particularly digitally-based crimes. The force has also worked with partner agencies and other forces, and together with the College of Policing has led a demand-reduction event to review the most significant problems that affect police demand nationally. This event focused on mental health, exploring policing responsibilities and options for better managing mental health demand. Additionally, data provided to HMICFRS shows that the force understands the effectiveness of the use of mental health triage cars in preventing section 136 detentions (Mental Health Act 1983).⁴ This should ensure that the force is in a better position when changes to the Mental Health Act powers are implemented from May 2017.

The recent 'day in the life of' project has made the force more aware of the wider demand it faces apart from incidents, such as detail of social media use and website access, incoming email volume and public visitors to enquiry offices.

Following HMICFRS' crime data integrity (CDI) inspection in 2016, the force reviewed the failures this inspection identified to evaluate their impact on its understanding of demand. The force's new investigation allocations model was introduced prior to the publication of the CDI inspection report. The force's review of the 'community first' operating model will also assess the impact of the CDI inspection on its overall demand.

³ *Merseyside Police: Crime Data Integrity inspection 2016*, HMIC, 2017. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/merseyside-crime-data-integrity-inspection-2016/

⁴ Under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983, where a person in a public place appears to be suffering from a mental disorder and to be in need of immediate care and control, a police officer may (in consultation with a specified health professional) remove them and take them to a place of safety – for example, a health or social care facility, or the home of a relative or friend. The triage car is staffed by specialist officers and psychiatric nurses and attends incidents of mental health concern in Merseyside.

More complex demand

In this year's inspection, we were pleased to see Merseyside Police has made progress with its understanding of some demand that is less likely to be reported or hidden demand.

The force has increased the awareness of hidden demand at first point of contact. Call handlers have received training regarding repeat callers and now ask additional probing questions about potential demand such as domestic abuse or mental health. When we spoke to call handlers, they said supervisors supported them in dealing with calls that could uncover hidden demand.

The force has taken steps to understand hidden demand in cyber-crime. The work group for cyber-crime has evolved and now looks at 12 months of data. The force now identifies vulnerable and repeat victims and high-value offences within cyber-crime. It has also developed a flagging process within its IT system to highlight problems with repeat offenders and victims which may indicate the existence of hidden crime. To ensure officers are not missing online crime, the force is doing keyword searches on all crimes through its IT system. The force examines how officers are improving the use of the flagging process as this addresses the risk of officers missing online crime. This is monitored monthly.

To raise the profile of hate crime and encourage its reporting, the force has recently introduced a rainbow-liveried Pride patrol car to be used on regular patrol and in response to incidents. This initiative aims to increase confidence in reporting hate crime within Merseyside's communities. A high-profile media launch was undertaken to raise awareness of the initiative. The force has identified that a priority for its digital and media strategy is to improve the process for identifying intelligence from social media sources. This should then inform its policing priorities and plans, to ensure that it records and deals with this demand effectively.

How well does the force understand things that affect demand?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police reduces the demand that inefficiency can create internally. Forces can do this by identifying and eliminating inefficient processes, by ensuring they monitor work to get the best outcomes and by encouraging officers and staff to suggest new and better ways of doing their jobs.

Managing, prioritising and filtering demand

In 2016 we reported that the force had an excellent understanding of how much internal inefficiency creates demand for the force. It had reviewed critical processes, victim-journey maps and data quality, and subsequently removed inefficiencies. This had reduced errors, omissions, duplication of effort and the transfer of investigations between officers. In this year's inspection we were impressed to see that the force has maintained this position.

The force has processes and governance in place to identify wasteful or inefficient activity. The focus of the last 18 months has been on ten critical processes within the force's new operating model, including: missing persons, scene management, constant observations of certain detained persons, arrest warrants and named suspects who have not yet been interviewed. The force has a clear governance structure through the 'community first' board, and senior responsible officer (SRO) priority meetings aim to ensure continuous improvements in effective demand management. Each of the force priorities is led by a SRO, who is responsible for bringing about improvements within their priority area. This includes improving the understanding of demand: what is causing that demand, whether it is at an acceptable level, and whether the force needs to act to reduce the demand (as prioritised by an assessment of threat, harm and risk).

The force has governance arrangements in place to manage and monitor the implementation of change. During the recent implementation of a new operating model, daily chief officer meetings and members of the change implementation teams ensured that the implementation went to plan, by monitoring specific indicators, engaging with the workforce and making any necessary changes.

The force undertook an assessment of its demand, analysing a 'day in the life' of all existing and incoming demand for the force. This identified demand from care homes, prisons and solicitors that could be reported differently, resulting in a shift from calls to digital methods being used (such as email and online reporting). For example, a new system for care homes enables them to email the control room directly, with details of youths who are late home in low-risk circumstances;⁵ this is then prioritised accordingly. In addition, dispatchers within the control room are trained to be omnicompetent, meaning that at peak call-times they can initially handle calls as well as dispatch resources. This ensures that calls are dealt with efficiently, in particular emergency calls.

⁵ Care homes are aware that online reporting should not be used for the under 18s, those at risk of child sexual exploitation or in cases where they believe the individual may be in danger.

We found that as part of the 'community first' operating model there is a scheduled incidents response team (SIRT). The force's call handlers record details of incoming calls for service, then a THRIVE assessment⁶ is carried out to establish the level of risk and response required and ensure demand is not missed. Incidents not requiring a prompt response can then be scheduled for the SIRT to follow up. This has allowed the force to manage its demand better by delaying the response, where appropriate. As an added benefit, it provides the caller with a convenient time slot for when the police will attend, thus improving the customer experience. The force clarified that by increasing its capacity, the SIRT now manages 10 percent of the force's incidents through a team of 40 officers.

The force also has a process in place to monitor, assess and accurately record abandoned calls, in order to prevent the suppression of hidden demand. A daily performance report is produced to monitor this, with hourly data available to check control room performance and ensure there is intervention when required.

The force evaluates the benefits of all the changes it implements. Its model for evaluating change is based on 30, 60 and 90-day reviews and includes realisation of benefits to the organisation. All change business cases include the expected benefits, including savings and efficiencies. However, we found that benefit evaluation was being completed by the persons responsible for implementing the change. The force would benefit from independent evaluation of the new operating model and any other additional changes it implements.

The force has undertaken an internal post-implementation review of the 'community first' operating model. The operating model commenced on 29 January 2017 and by April 2017 the force had produced a comprehensive assessment of the benefits, performance effects and consequences of the change, with recommendations for adjustments. One unintended consequence identified was the number of response and resolution (R&R) officers now required for scene protection or constant observation duties. Demand on R&R officers increases when local policing teams and PCSOs finish duty, and this has increased overtime working. The force acknowledges that it had not understood fully this area of demand prior to implementation. It is now progressing the eight recommendations made by the review, including: examining alternative methods of dealing with suspects on a threat, harm and risk basis; assessing the necessity for keeping suspects under arrest at hospital; and exploring options for outsourcing scene protection resources.

⁶ THRIVE is a structured assessment based on the levels of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability faced by the victim, rather than simply on the type of incident or crime being reported, in order to help staff determine the appropriate level of response to a call.

We found that a small number of golden hour⁷ initial enquiries are not being undertaken and investigators are having to return to complete these initial essential enquiries. Some members of the workforce believe this has been exacerbated by team and supervisor shift patterns not being aligned under the new operating model.

The force achieved efficiencies through the rollout of handheld devices to officers. The devices save officers time in completing paperwork and remove the need to return to police stations. For example, the force has assessed it has saved an officer 38 minutes per stop and search form they complete. The force is working with Leeds University and also other forces to understand the full effect of handheld devices.

Leaders promoting innovative thinking

We are pleased to see that the force has a range of ways in which its workforce can influence the force leadership in respect of innovation and change. The force encourages feedback from several sources such as:

- 'challenge panels' that operate in every department;
- suggestion boxes;
- chief officer road shows;
- Yammer (an online discussion forum);
- staff surveys; and
- focus groups.

Suggestions have resulted in change. For example, distinct call signs for single/double-crewed vehicles to improve officer safety and appropriate deployment; and the establishment of a wellbeing zone in the contact centre. HMICFRS assessed progress in relation to the '100 little things' the force had identified as potential changes from the last staff survey. The force communicated its response in a 'you said, we did' format and a detailed update as well as providing explanation for any suggestions that could not be progressed. Members of the workforce we spoke to commented that there is an open culture and suggestions are taken seriously.

New ideas are welcomed. For example, the force has experimented with 'pulse policing', which is the influx of a large number of officers into a specific area for a short time – for example, within city centre retail areas, or for the night-time economy – to provide reassurance and deter criminals. The force is using 67 'one team'⁸

⁷ The golden hour is the term used to describe the short period immediately after an offence has been committed, when investigative material is most readily available in high volumes to the police.

⁸ Events attended by all members of the workforce to discuss a range of relevant subjects and information.

events over 2017 to get senior leaders and the workforce to feed-in their experience of the change programme. Suggestions and feedback are collated by the force and will be used to understand and shape the force's change process. However, when HMICFRS spoke to officers, some felt that suggestions were not listened to and they were not aware of progress. This was despite the significant effort being made by senior officers to communicate information about changes. The force holds award events for recognition of the achievements of its staff and officers. It is aware that the encouragement of more ideas from the workforce needs development and has planned a new innovator of the year award. At the time of our inspection, the first of these was due to take place at the September 2017 awards ceremony.

Summary of findings



Good

Merseyside Police has a good understanding of the demand for its services. The force has a comprehensive, up-to-date demand assessment which considers the wider effect of demand for the services it provides. The force has also developed processes and workforce skills in order to identify more of the demand that is less likely to be reported. Through the use of IT solutions, the force has made improvements to officer efficiency and in the understanding and monitoring of the increasing threat from cyber-crime.

The force has clear governance arrangements for its change processes. Its prompt assessment of the 'community first' operating model demonstrates the benefits and results of achieving organisational change. However, the force may benefit from some independent examination of its change programme.

Force leaders welcome ideas and feedback from the workforce and suggestions are progressed, but at the time of our inspection this was not reflected in the opinions of some of its uniformed officers. The force is improving the recognition it provides for innovative ideas from its workforce.

How well does the force use its resources?

Police forces have finite resources with which to do an increasingly complicated job, so must ensure that they deploy and use their resources in the best way possible. The biggest resource that policing has is its workforce and it is important that forces make sure that they have access to the skills needed to police effectively now and in the future.

It is also important that forces make sophisticated decisions about how to spend and invest their resources in order to get the best value for the public. This means forces need to have a good understanding of what they can achieve within a particular budget.

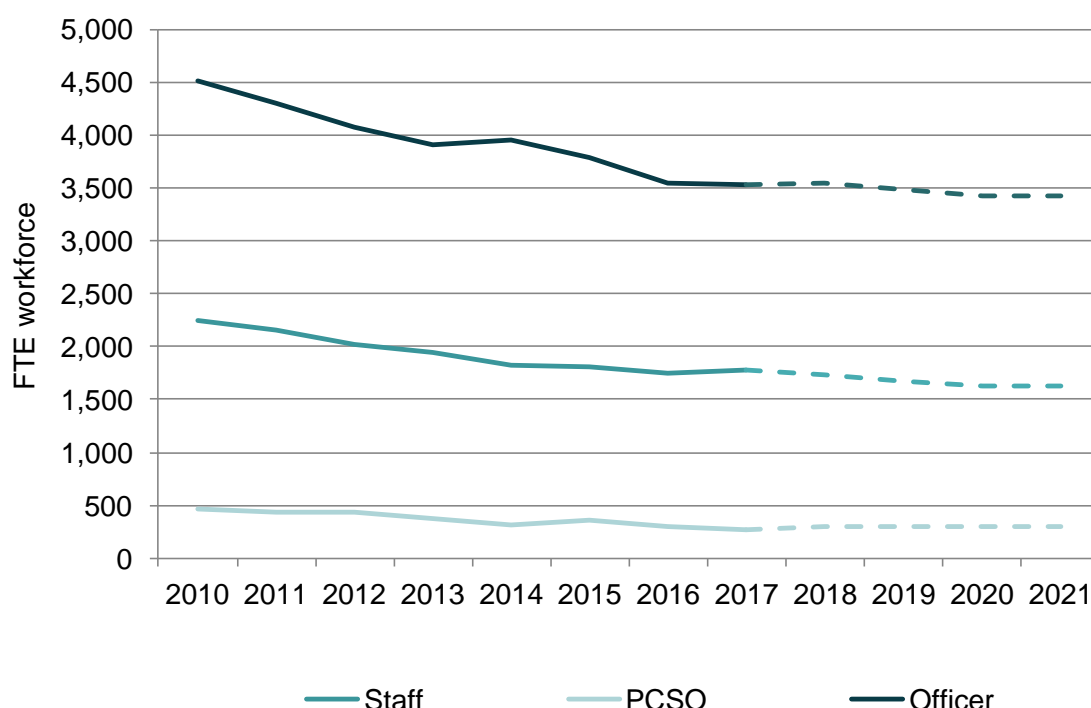
Forces cannot provide services efficiently in isolation, and must work with other police forces and local organisations to ensure they provide the best service to the public at the most appropriate cost.

How well does the force understand the capability of its workforce?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police understands the skills it needs, the skills it actually has in the workforce and what steps it is taking to ensure that they match. Police forces spend around 80 percent of their budget on staffing, so it is vital that the workforce is as productive as possible.

Figure 3 illustrates the workforce profile (the number of officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs)) since 2010 and projections to 2021. Between March 2017 and March 2021, it is projected that the number of officers will decrease by 104.0 FTE (3 percent) from 3,538 to 3,434. Similarly, the number of officers across England and Wales as a whole is projected to decrease by 2 percent.

Figure 3: Merseyside Police's planned full-time equivalent workforce (FTE) as on 31 March from 2010 to 2021



Source: Home Office Police workforce statistics and HMICFRS spring data collection

The number of staff working in Merseyside Police is projected to decrease by 149.9 FTE (8 percent) from 1,773 to 1,623 between March 2017 and March 2021. Staff numbers across England and Wales are projected to decrease by 2 percent. The number of PCSOs in Merseyside is projected to increase by 40.2 FTE (15 percent) from 260 to 300 over the same period. For England and Wales as a whole, PCSOs are projected to increase by 0.2 percent.

The force has a comprehensive understanding of its workforce capacity in terms of numbers of staff and officers and planned retirements, but this does not include all their skills. Its recent understanding of skills has focused on the requirements needed for the introduction of the new 'community first' operating model. For example, the review of skills required for the investigation strand of the model resulted in a three percent increase in permanent resources to address projected demand. The force further recognised that it still had gaps in its investigation capacity and introduced a centralised trainee investigator programme, to backfill current and projected vacancies and ensure that identified threats, harm and risk are dealt with. The force has taken the opportunity, created by the revised financial position, to promote officers into the investigation strand, aiming to ensure effective future supervision.

With regard to the 'community first' operating model, we found that the force has good awareness of the capacity and specific skills needed. However, the force (specifically its human resources department) acknowledges that it has not carried out an entire workforce skills analysis. We consider that until it does so, it cannot know the full capability of its workforce to meet future demand.

The force manages the expectations of its workforce, allowing them to make informed decisions about their future career. It notifies them about reductions in senior posts as a result of restructures, particularly where this means that there will not be a promotion process to the next rank within the next 12 months. This specifically relates to the superintendent and chief superintendent ranks of Merseyside Police.

While the force has not carried out a complete skills assessment, it is using a system to identify personality profiles to improve understanding of its workforce's wider capabilities of leadership, style of operating and qualities. HMICFRS observed a 'one team' event attended by an external speaker, who gave a presentation on personality profiles. The speaker explained how profiles can be used to:

- give the force an understanding of differences and the performance of its workforce;
- help the force and its workforce understand their strengths and weaknesses; and
- improve workforce engagement.

The whole workforce will be given the opportunity to attend a 'one team' event.

The force has been able to alter some roles previously held by police officers. For example, the force reviewed the role of firearms enquiry officers (responsible for renewal enquiries and inspections for registered keepers of legal firearms) and assessed it as suitable for police staff members to fulfil. This released police officer posts back to the operational establishment and provided greater opportunities and development for police staff members.

Merseyside Police has been analysing the effectiveness of its recruitment processes. This is to understand better how the entry qualifications affect the gender and ethnic diversity of successful applicants. During recent recruitment campaigns, the force advised that 81 new recruits had degrees, and there was an improved spread of gender and ethnic diversity of these recruits.

The force has improved the strategic oversight of its workforce and future planning to 2021. It has established a monthly workforce strategy board, chaired by the deputy chief constable. The focus of the group is to understand the high-level resourcing and capability risks across the force. This assists decision-making regarding

recruitment, selection and promotion processes, while considering change options, continuing to value difference and incorporating the NPCC 'workforce futures 2020'⁹ in professionalising the service.

The board is also considering further reviews of specific roles in order to establish opportunities to make best use of the skills it has. For example, in its early help hubs, which carry out partnership interventions and problem-solving to reduce demand, the force is assessing the feasibility of using the problem-solving skills of its PCSOs at this early stage of intervention. The force has invested in problem-solving training for officers and PCSOs. It has clear plans for its recruitment programme and the use of transferees to match skills gaps such as in firearms and prisoner-handling teams. As at 31 March 2017 the force has an establishment of 300 full-time equivalent PCSOs and is planning to fill its current vacancies. The last transferee process brought 15 officers into the force, and officer recruitment continues in line with projected retirements and vacancies of approximately 120 each year. The force anticipates six intakes of special constables in 2017/18.

How well does the force understand the capability of its leaders?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police understands the skills it needs and the skills its leaders have, and what steps it is taking to ensure that they match.

The force has a good understanding of the specialist leadership skills needed to manage the threats it faces in policing Merseyside. This includes accreditation for investigations as well as firearms and public order command. It identifies that it requires more supervisors in cyber-crime due to a 400 percent rise over three years in recorded crimes of this type, and through its workforce strategy is determining how to recruit these. Every supervisor in the force will receive individual personality-profiling to understand their own leadership capabilities, style and influence on others.

The force has recently recruited two members of the chief officer group from other forces, bringing skills and experience to the force. It is involved in the Police Now programme, with nine graduates due to join the force this year, and it continues to have consistently high numbers of officers on the high potential development scheme (HPDS) and fast track programme (eight and four respectively, at the time of

⁹ The NPCC (National Police Chiefs' Council) and APCC (Association of Police and Crime Commissioners), working with the College of Policing, staff associations and the National Crime Agency, have drafted a vision for policing in 2025 that sets out why and how the police service needs to transform. For more information, see:

www.npcc.police.uk/NPCCBusinessAreas/ReformandTransformation/PolicingVision2025.aspx

our inspection in April 2017).¹⁰ With the implementation of the 'community first' model, promotion boards were held for sergeants and inspectors, to ensure the force has the right skills and supervision across departments.

Merseyside Police has carried out a detailed force leadership review. The force completed research with the College of Policing and HMICFRS to assess good practice, which included other forces. The force consulted widely to ensure the review took in the workforce's views through focus groups of all ranks and grades. To make progress with leadership development, 48 recommendations were made, which the force is working on. One of these was to implement a talent management programme for officers and police staff, to enable development of future leaders.

The force considers all its workforce to be leaders. It is making progress in its understanding of what leadership capabilities it needs within the workforce. It is aware of the potential risk at senior officer level in maintaining accreditation of investigators, firearms and public order commanders. These skills are subject to College of Policing national standards of qualification, professional development and reassessment. As stated earlier in this report, the entire workforce will attend a 'one team' event this year regarding personality profiles, with the aim of better understanding leadership skills and capability within the whole workforce. The force records events and training that people have attended and academic qualifications attained, using a specialist resource management ICT programme.

The force is actively providing development opportunities for its future leaders. Within the past 12 months, a new chief constable, deputy chief constable and assistant chief constable have been appointed. This potentially provides a wide range of skills and styles for the force and stability of leadership. We found that the force had recently supported seven senior officers to attend the Police National Assessment Centre selection procedure and provided support through this process.¹¹ The force has consistently high numbers of officers on College of Policing leadership programmes and is also making progress with the Police Now programme.

We found that the force is planning for the promotions required up to 2019 in all ranks. As part of its recent restructure the force has reduced its command structures from 22 to 12, resulting in insufficient posts for the number of qualified officers at the rank of superintendent. The force is communicating this message in order for officers to be able to manage their career expectations and choices as promotion opportunities at these ranks are limited.

¹⁰ For more information about these College of Policing leadership programmes, see: <http://recruit.college.police.uk/Officer/leadership-programmes/Pages/Fast-Track.aspx>

¹¹ The Senior Police National Assessment Centre (Senior PNAC) is a process to identify those officers who are capable of being an effective chief officer.

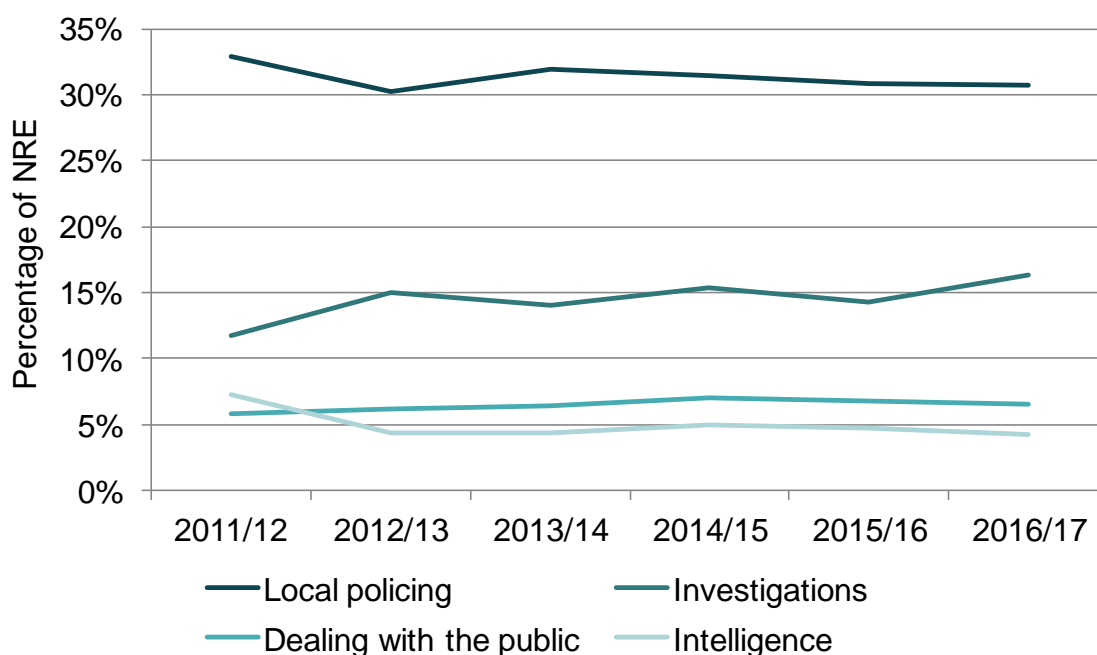
How well does the force allocate resources?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police uses its understanding of demand to prioritise its activities in order to provide the best service to the public. To assess this, we considered the extent to which the force understands what it can provide within a particular budget.

The level of spending on different police functions varies between forces, depending on the particular demands that each force must meet. Higher expenditure does not necessarily mean better services, but it can demonstrate how a force prioritises its resources.

Figure 4 shows how expenditure is distributed across the most common police functions. Local policing covers functions such as incident response, neighbourhood policing and local investigations. Investigation covers areas of specific proactive investigative functions, such as major crime, while dealing with the public includes front counter and control room activities. Intelligence covers the gathering and assessment of intelligence.

Figure 4: Estimated percentage of net revenue expenditure allocated across policing functions in Merseyside Police from 2011/12 to 2016/17



Source: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)

Note: Functions that have not been included as they are equivalent to back office functions or are only a small proportion of expenditure include operational support and road policing.

In Merseyside, the percentage of estimated expenditure on local policing in 2016/17 has decreased from 33 percent in 2011/12 to 31 percent in 2016/17. Estimated expenditure on investigation has increased from 12 percent to 16 percent, expenditure on 'dealing with the public' is similar to 2011/12 and expenditure on intelligence has decreased from 7 percent to 4 percent from 2011/12 to 2016/17.

Prioritisation and cost

Since HMICFRS' 2016 efficiency inspection, the force has implemented its 'community first' operating model. The new organisation (without internal boundaries) allows for the flexible deployment of resources across the force area to meet public demand. The force has demonstrated in this change that it has prepared for the future, including: reducing the required number of response officers through the introduction of more online reporting by the public; increasing officers in investigations to meet the expected rise in crime; and retaining local policing.

The force prioritises and resources this demand in line with:

- the police and crime commissioner's (PCC's) priorities;
- the force's operational priorities (within its control strategy); and
- an active assessment of daily risk and threat, based on current intelligence.

Governance of this resource prioritisation is maintained through daily management meetings, weekly local policing co-ordination, and force threat, harm and risk meetings.

The force's information management IT system supports resourcing decisions and planning through accurate information and has been further developed to align with the new operating model of the force and its departments.

Merseyside Police also has established and tested processes to meet the challenges of policing large-scale events. Significant high-profile locations within the force area include two premier league football clubs and Aintree racecourse. These require protective policing to: address public safety; provide reassurance through engagement; prevent crime and disorder; and respond to the national threat of terrorist activities at large-scale public events. The public has an expectation of safety at these events and their effective policing is a significant priority for the force.

Within the force operating model there are ten dedicated force duty officers (FDOs), whose role is to ensure the force is able to meet demand, by moving the response and resolution resources around the force as required. The FDO is supported in the control room by a dynamic resource officer, who maintains a real-time understanding of demand, balanced with information on patrol locations over the previous 24 hours and two weeks (through geographic mapping). This enables the force to deploy resources to areas of peak demand throughout the day, allowing for agile, intelligence-led deployments.

HMICFRS examined a business evaluation report of the force's mounted department (police horses). This had been completed to establish the required future level of service and the potential effect of any change. We found the force demonstrated a clear understanding of the effect of reduced funding on capability and the level of service that it could provide. The report identified £359k of savings through workforce reductions and more efficient ways of working, while still providing essential services to the force.

Investment

Merseyside Police is currently investing in mobile working, planning to spend £11.7m over three years in order to secure efficiencies and increase productivity of staff/officers. It is working with Leeds University and other forces to understand the true effect of this investment in both financial and behavioural improvements through the use of handheld devices.

The force is also investing in an estates strategy, planning to spend £49m over one year in order to introduce new command facilities. Other projects include a new fleet and property management facility and community police stations which will be shared with other public service providers. From the 2017/18 revenue budget £5.63m has been allocated for spend-to-save programmes. Additional work has begun with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service with a view to the joint procurement of enterprise resource planning software to increase efficiencies in back office functions.

The force has robust governance arrangements for ensuring that responsible individuals are held to account for benefits realisation and ensuring that savings are achieved in line with the mid-term financial plan. During our inspection, we found that a business case for establishing a wellbeing unit with additional resources had been approved and additional staff had been recruited, including employee relations advisers, nurses, physiotherapists and psychologists, costing £500k over two years. It is clear that the force expects to review the implementation of the unit, assessing the expected benefits put forward in the business case and that this will be presented to the chief officer team to review. HMICFRS viewed the business case and established that it included a section where anticipated benefits (not just cash savings) had to be explained.

How well does the force work with others?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police has explored all opportunities to work in collaboration with others to increase efficiency and provide better, more resilient services. This can include working jointly 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 other organisations and other forces, and whether it has a good understanding of how successful its joint working is.

How the force works with other organisations and other forces

The force continues to work with local mental health services in the provision of mental health triage cars, each crewed by a police officer alongside a mental health practitioner. Under the force's new 'community first' operating model it has been agreed with partners that this service will continue. This is supported by the success of the triage cars to date, the availability of nurses and the proactive and preventative capacity of the triage cars. This provision is across three different NHS trusts (Cheshire and Wirral Partnerships, MerseyCare, and Five Boroughs Partnership Trust). The triage cars are available between 3.00pm and 1.00am daily. The force now has 52 trained triage officers who can crew the cars in partnership with a mental health nurse to provide a thorough problem-solving approach to mental health which reduces demand on police, NHS and local authority mental health services.

We found that Merseyside Police is working with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) to reduce demand on ambulance resources. This is as a result of analysis which showed that one of the most frequent callers for their services was the force themselves. A paramedic now works in the force control room; they can provide direct advice to officers dealing with operational incidents and assess the actual requirements for ambulance deployments or other means of medical referral.

At the time of our inspection, the force was trialling two early help hubs in Knowsley and the Wirral. These use officers with problem-solving skills, working in the same office as the local authority and partner organisations to provide prompt interventions to high-demand callers. By doing this, the force aims to provide, through the partnership, the correct help and support required to improve quality of life issues and reduce demand on all the partner organisations.

The benefits of joint working

The force's guiding principles on collaborative working are that it will embark on joint ventures with other forces and organisations provided that discernible benefits are clear. We found that the force carries out a review of the realisation of benefits to the organisation for the implementation of all change and initiatives.

The force is able to demonstrate that its collaborative work reduces demand. For example, we found that analysis of the mental health triage car project showed reductions in the use of section 136 detentions in: St Helens and Knowsley (by 54 percent; Wirral (by 29 percent); and Liverpool and Sefton (by 42 percent). Each detention uses police, local authority and NHS time and resources so these reductions are of significance.

The force is working with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and NWAS through its blue light collaboration. This is expected to result in efficiency savings rather than financial savings. The collaboration is focused initially on the fire and police services, which share geographical areas. The areas being assessed for collaboration are: operational planning; training provision; community risk management; operational response; shared estates; and joint capabilities. Each business case for the blue light collaboration demonstrates a shared awareness of the capabilities of each other's organisation and includes a range of benefits, from having a multi-disciplinary team to overall savings of workforce and equipment.

Leadership driving innovation

The chief officer group of Merseyside Police has led the force through a period of significant change with the introduction of the 'community first' operating model. The changes to deployment methods, resource allocation and investigation management demonstrate the leadership's willingness to use new and sustainable approaches, that still provide the local policing that the communities of Merseyside expect. This has altered decades of tradition in switching to a pan-Merseyside operating model without boundaries. Changes have been made at the point of initial call for service, its assessment, risk management and allocation. Investigations are allocated based on complexity, seriousness and threat; with the aim of ensuring the officer with the correct skills is identified. The anticipated cashable savings are expected to be £8.9m.

We found clear leadership and support for innovative future ways of working. The force is in a tri-force collaboration which includes Cheshire Constabulary and North Wales Police. The programme vision is:

“a two-year programme delivering a shared version of a record management system ... between Cheshire Constabulary, Merseyside Police and North Wales Police enabling more effective working through common business processes whilst providing richer information to enhance the assessment of threat, risk and harm.”

Phase one centres on establishing a single record management system for the tri-force (scheduled for February 2018). Phase two is the development of joint services covering intelligence, criminal justice, custody, property, forensics and support for the shared IT system.

During our inspection, we spoke to a senior officer who explained how the force was addressing the dangerous and criminal use of motorbikes, which has become a problem in Merseyside. The force uses social media to send out clear advisory messages and gain public support and intelligence to address the problem. Funding for preventative work had been obtained from the proceeds of crime; at the time of inspection this was scheduled to take place in schools across Merseyside before the summer holidays, to prevent offences and keep young people safe. Arrests had already taken place using innovative tracking tactics to safely locate offenders.

Summary of findings



Good

Merseyside Police is good in how it uses its resources to manage demand. The force is developing its future leadership skills and has senior officers on supported development schemes, with another nine graduates entering the force this year as part of the Police Now programme.

We found that the force reviews the benefits realised by the investments it makes and is prepared to trial and implement innovative ideas across the force, including partnership working. We found that a skills analysis had been undertaken in preparation for the 'community first' operating model, but that it did not extend across the workforce. The force can demonstrate a very accurate assessment of its capacity, but needs to extend this to its capability in preparation for future workforce planning. The force has become more flexible in deploying its resources through the new operating model which has no set boundaries, allowing it to move resources across Merseyside to meet demand. Its planning of major events, in particular sporting events, continues to make the best use of its resources and meet public expectations and safety.

Area for improvement

- The force 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 be efficient in meeting current and likely future demand.

How well is the force planning for the future?

To be efficient, a police force needs not only to understand the present, but also to be able to make reasonable predictions about the future in terms of how its demand will change, how its workforce will change and how its partners will be affected. It needs to have adequate, realistic and innovative plans to meet the operational and financial challenges of the future.

How well does the force predict likely future demand?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police analyses trends in its current demand in order to predict likely future demand. We also assessed the extent to which it has taken account of changing public expectations and technology. In addition, we expect forces to be considering how they will work with other organisations and other forces in the future.

Predicting future demand

The force is good at predicting demand. During our inspection in April 2017, the force had just made the transition to a new operating model under the 'community first' strategy. Within ten weeks of this transition, the force had already produced a detailed analysis of the effect of the new model. This included the demand for services, with clear recommendations for adjustments to meet anticipated demand.

The force also published its latest demand assessment in April 2017. This assessment showed a clear understanding of the current demand and future challenges. The data considered public and protective demand and included population changes and rates of reported incidents and offending, in particular violent crime, cyber-crime, serious and organised crime and sexual crime.

The force demonstrates a good understanding of potential future demand. It has considered how digitalisation will shift demand, for example, reducing direct contact with officers but increasing the need for personnel to process reports. It has a broad understanding of external influences, which include Merseyside's changing demographics such as population growth and changes in local communities.

The force analyses the trends in demand for calls for service. The contact centre resource-mapping tool can project anticipated levels of demand for service. It provides the duty responsible officer within the contact centre with a projection of what they can expect to happen in an area based on incident and call data from the last 24 hours and 2 weeks. This allows contact centre staff to determine where they need to position policing resources. The force also analyses statistical projections based on five years' data, including seasonality, probability, times of day and day of

week. Projected demand is provided to the response and resolution command team. Crime patterns are shared with the force crime leads, so that further targeted work can be planned.

Future considerations

The force put significant planning into its new 'community first' operating model. An important aspect of the strategy was to use the police estate more efficiently, through a ten-year £130m modernisation investment plan. Merseyside's PCC held an open consultation with the public on the proposals of the plan. As a result, the PCC and the force were informed of public concerns and any changes in expectations. This allowed them to make effective decisions regarding locations and access to police stations in the development of the 'community first' model.

Following development of the operating model, the force and the PCC carried out briefings with communities and councillors to explain the model and demonstrate the force's continuing commitment to communities through local policing. Initially the change in branding from neighbourhood to local policing had caused concern, but through prior consultation and good communications, the force provided reassurance. The force is continuing to measure the impact on public confidence and the effectiveness of the operating model through localised engagement and feedback, via its newly-formed community actions groups. The force has also adapted to how the public expects to interact with it. It has made good progress with social media development for engagement and now has a process of online identification and setting of community priorities for the public to digitally influence policing activities in their area.

In HMICFRS' 2016 efficiency report, we noted that Merseyside Police had a comprehensive IT strategy. It was aligned with the 'community first' programme and included a vision of IT development alongside an understanding of technical opportunities and challenges ahead. The strategy considered innovative approaches to increasing efficiency and to working practices in the force, including a plan to provide handheld devices to operational officers. This year we found that this had been implemented and all frontline officers had mobile data access, improving visibility and efficiency. The force is using a specialist policing IT application for its handheld devices which includes stop and search recording. In addition to being more efficient, this should increase the data-recording quality and therefore assist the force's analysis of stop and search.

We found a clear focus and leadership on cyber-crime and the risks it presents. Through its analysis, the force recognised that recorded cyber-crime has risen notably in the past 36 months and introduced improvements to its response and management of this crime type. By reviewing 12 months of cyber-crime data on a continuing basis, the force is making further improvements to its response. The force is now focusing on identifying vulnerable and repeat victims of cyber-crime and

anticipating future problems. The force is also examining information on emerging cyber-threats as well as previous crime reports, and this is circulated to officers to keep them fully informed.

Internally the force has introduced the use of Yammer. This is an online communications application that allows group discussions and debates. The force is using it to inform and seek feedback and challenge from its workforce, with already 1,800 users.

The force continues to include options for collaboration and partnership working in its plans and vision of the future. An example of this is how Merseyside Police has developed 'early help hubs'. These hubs are being trialled in Knowsley and the Wirral authority areas. The force envisages them being developed in all Merseyside's local authority areas. The principle is to harmonise and integrate policing resources with other statutory and local partner agencies for a co-ordinated approach to problem-solving. The hubs look at frequent callers in the areas, understand the threat, harm and risks created and provide prompt co-ordinated early interventions.

Merseyside Police is part of the tri-force collaboration with Cheshire Constabulary and North Wales Police. Its shared information management ICT platform is scheduled for implementation in early 2018. This will provide operational benefits through access to data held by all three forces, enabling enhanced decision-making in areas of threat, harm and risk. The platform aims to provide regional resilience and improve co-ordinated working, with combined savings for all three forces of an anticipated £3.5m by 2019.

Blue light collaboration forms an essential part of Merseyside Police's vision for the future and the force continues to develop joined-up working practices through collaborations with fire and ambulance services. Paramedics now work in the force communications centre to assess calls for service and reduce demand on both NWAS and the force by providing advice to officers at scenes. The growth in demand for the force in dealing with mental health incidents has seen the introduction of mental health triage cars operating in the force area.

How well is the force planning for the future, in terms of workforce?

HMICFRS inspected how well Merseyside Police has plans in place to recruit, develop and nurture the leaders of tomorrow to ensure it has the right skills and talent in the right roles.

Succession planning

In HMICFRS' 2016 leadership inspection report we highlighted that Merseyside Police did not have a force-wide talent management process. During this year's inspection we found that the force now has plans in place to select and develop high potential officers and staff to be future leaders through talent management, although at the time of our inspection the scheme was not yet in place.

Within the force's recruitment, retention and progression pillar there is a focus on ensuring consistency in the selection of high potential staff and officers, including internal selection, promotion processes and talent management. The force's performance development review (PDR) process is expected to enable talented individuals to be identified and put forward for consideration by the force talent management programme. A 360-degree feedback process for peer assessment is recommended as part of this programme. Candidates on this programme will be provided with a mentor. Importantly, the force recognises that talent management is for both lateral and vertical progression in a reducing organisation. While still at the planning stage, the force initially hopes to have a cohort of people from any rank, grade or role (including police staff) identified this summer.

The force has identified gaps in its investigative leadership capability. It has taken advantage of the situation created by the revised financial position to promote people into the investigation department of the force, aiming to ensure effective future supervision of this critical area of business.

The force continues to have a successful CID career pathway for all investigators, which has been in place for several years. It has introduced a centralised trainee investigator programme to fill current and future gaps in investigations to ensure identified areas of risk are met.

We found that within the superintending ranks for example there is a knowledge of succession planning for retirements. These ranks are higher risk areas for Merseyside Police as superintendents manage the force's firearms threats, public order command and strategic portfolios of work within the force. Recent superintendent promotion boards created a larger pool of successful candidates than initially required, with the aim of future-proofing anticipated retirements and promotions. For example, a chief inspector could be on this list and already have carried out a period of temporary promotion in development of the skills required for the next rank.

The force recently supported seven senior officers for the Police National Assessment Centre process, which selects officers to be future assistant chief constables. Support provided by the force included a one-day assessment process to help their development in preparation for the national assessments.

Recruitment

In 2016 we reported that Merseyside Police had recruited officers to its chief officer team who have the leadership skills and experience which the force believes that it needs. It has also recruited skilled and experienced officers for other senior leadership teams across the force. At the time of this year's inspection (in April 2017) the force had just recruited a new assistant chief constable on promotion from another force.

The force fully participates in the Police Now scheme and nine graduates are due to commence the initial stage in July 2017 of their two-year programme. The force plans to place these graduates in challenging areas to provide them with development opportunities in leadership, problem-solving, decision-making and resilience. The force continues to have more Fast Track students each year than other forces in England and Wales and a large number of these are on the high potential development scheme.

Merseyside Police continues to make good use of volunteer schemes to bring in complementary leadership skills to the force, as shown by students working as volunteers in the high-tech crime unit. Police volunteer cadets bring in greater diversity, while the citizens in policing cadet scheme brings in younger leadership skills and ideas.

How well does the force plan for likely future demand?

HMICFRS inspected how adequate, realistic and innovative Merseyside Police's plans for the future are, and to what extent it is planning to make savings in the future, including saving to invest in new systems and approaches.

Plans

Merseyside Police's plans for the future are comprehensive and aim to meet its vision for the future while providing the financial savings required. We found that the force's financial plans are well integrated with its workforce and ICT plans. Of particular relevance is the advanced work underway to make the most of ICT contractual savings through tri-force collaboration, and the integration of the estates and ICT transformational programmes which will support a new command and control facility.

Merseyside Police is in a good position to sustain services which meet public expectations, organisational requirements and financial constraints. The force has invested in a robust business change programme; this aims to make the most of efficient working practices through the newly-implemented 'community first' model which runs without internal boundaries as well as capitalising on new investment in

digital working methods and a more cost-efficient use of the force's estate. This supports a vision of the future which has been set, and will be refined, as part of a targeted operating model which is itself subject to effective scrutiny and review.

The force's plans are built on sound assumptions and are subject to informed challenge. It is clear that the force is also considering the expected adverse outcome of the introduction of the new police grant funding formula in 2018/19. Financial forecasts are based on the assumption that:

- grant levels will be maintained at 2015/16 cash levels;
- council tax precept increases at 1.95 percent per annum with an increase in tax base of 0.5 percent; and
- pay inflation remains at 1 percent and non-pay inflation assumed at 2–2.5 percent (in line with Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts).

Scrutiny of force projects is through an independent audit committee. This is attended by the PCC's internal auditors and chief finance officer, the chief constable's chief finance officer and other regular members from the force and PCC's office, as well as independent members.

The context of change is important to any organisation and throughout this report we have referred to the new force operating model. In January 2017 the force implemented its 'community first' operating model. This was a significant change process, completely altering how it operates across the whole force area. This has involved cultural change for all its officers and staff with new, modern ways of working in a borderless model that provides economies of scale through deployment hubs. It has successfully introduced a new investigations allocation model to improve both efficiency and service to the victim, by ensuring investigations are allocated to the person with the right skills based on the complexity, seriousness and threat presented by the crime. Additional, more efficient ways of working are already identified for implementation in 2018, such as the new intelligence model and the mounted department restructure, which are estimated to result in combined savings in excess of £1.5m.

The IT changes through the tri-force collaboration of Merseyside Police, Cheshire Constabulary and North Wales Police will also alter how the force operates. This will allow for shared processes through an innovative IT platform, which will include intelligence data-sharing. Combined savings for all three forces of up to £3.5m are expected.

We found evidence of clear consideration of business benefits realisation for the force's change programme, to ensure that efficiencies in finance and working practices are achieved.

Savings

In our 2016 inspection, we found that Merseyside Police's track record of financial savings is good. That finding was reflected in this year's inspection.

Merseyside Police is on track to meet its planned savings. The force has saved £64.9m over the last spending review period and plans to save the following amount by upcoming financial years:

- £9.6m over 2016/17;
- £6.8m over 2017/18;
- £6.9m over 2018/19;
- £4.5m over 2019/20; and
- £4.9m over 2020/21.

The majority of these savings over the next four years are ascribed to the 'community first' programme and the estates strategy. The force is in a good position and has already made its financial savings for this year; as a result it is now able to evaluate the further savings requirement for 2018.

The force has invested in its future through new equipment and IT such as body-worn video cameras and handheld devices, and also intends to invest in the future emergency services network to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The force has access to the PCC's financial reserves, which provide sufficient funds for investing in change. The restructure reserve has existed since the start of the spending review and stands at £8m, and the estate strategy reserve supports the transformational estates capital programme. In addition, a new reserve is to be established from the underspend of 2016/17, to support the migration to the emergency services mobile support network.

Summary of findings



Good

Merseyside Police is good at planning for the future. The force has assessed its future demand for its services and carries out assessments of the impact of change on demand as shown through the prompt review of the 'community first' operating model. The force has identified the advantages and threats from technology. It has responded by investing in mobile working to improve efficiency and by putting in place more robust processes for cyber-crime analysis. The force is part of an innovative tri-force collaboration and is investing in IT software and equipment to enable efficient information-sharing with these forces.

The force leadership has changed and new senior officers have been appointed. The Police Now scheme has progressed and nine graduates are due to enter the force this year. Merseyside Police considers that leadership is from its entire workforce not just the senior managers and the force is investing in 'one team' events with individual personality-profiling for all its employees.

The financial plans of the force are based on sound planning assumptions. The force has reserves of capital and these are replenished through its ongoing workforce vacancy underspends. The force is on track to meet expected savings.

Next steps

HMICFRS will assess progress on any recommendations and areas for improvement identified within our reports in several ways. We either revisit those forces where we have identified a serious cause of concern, go back to assess them as part of our annual PEEL inspection programme or receive updates on their progress through regular conversations with forces.

HMICFRS highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national thematic reports on police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and leadership (see: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/national-peel-reports/). These reports identify those problems that are reflected across England and Wales. They may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements need to be made nationally.

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', 'higher' 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.

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 within the average in this publication.

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 gross revenue expenditure

These data show estimated gross revenue expenditure (GRE) for the force in 2017/18 and 2020/21. This was gathered from forces by HMIC staff prior to fieldwork (April 2017). Some of the data provided will have been subject to revisions after this time but figures should represent the picture as at the time of inspection. Future forecasts of expenditure are estimates for which forces use different methodologies. As these are estimates care should be taken in interpreting changes.

Workforce figures (FTE) for 2016/17 and 2020/21

These data were 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 investigation, detention or escort officers, but does not include section 39-designated detention or escort staff.¹² The data are the actual full-time equivalent figures (or FTE), and figures for 2016/17 are the figures as at 31 March 2017.

For FTE, these data include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence, and excludes those seconded to other forces. Projections for 2020/21 are budget-based and therefore 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 high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Calls for assistance

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

Recorded crime

These data are obtained from Home Office police-recorded crime and outcomes data tables (available from www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crimeopen-data-tables).

¹² See sections 38 and 39 of the Police Reform Act 2002. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/30/section/38

Figures throughout the report

Figure 1: Rate of 999 calls recorded per 1,000 people in the local population in the force area compared with England and Wales as a whole, from 2010/11 to 2016/17

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 441. City of London Police does not submit 999 calls data to the Home Office as these are included in figures provided by the Metropolitan Police Service.

Figure 2: Police-recorded crimes per 1,000 population compared with England and Wales from 2010/11 to 2016/17

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 HMICFRS inspection. The England and Wales rate given in this figure is a simple average of all forces' rates to reduce the effect of large forces on the average.

Figure 3: Planned full-time equivalent (FTE) workforce as on 31 March from 2010 to 2021

Data from 2010 to 2017 are obtained from the Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' FTE figure. 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. Data from 2018 onwards are budget-based projections, therefore depending on a force's planning strategy may not include a projection for absences.

Due to the complex and continually evolving picture of workforce collaboration between 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 need to be considered with caution as they may simply represent accounting changes related to how staff are allocated to forces and 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 are in many instances unconfirmed estimates provided to assist HMICFRS in our inspection programme and should not be seen as a concrete plan for the future workforce available for policing.

Figure 4: Estimated percentage of net revenue expenditure allocated across policing functions from 2011/12 to 2016/17

These data were obtained from data collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) for use in the HMICFRS Value for Money profiles (available from www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/value-for-money-inspections/value-for-money-profiles/#2016). The data define policing functions using the Police Objective Analysis categories.

We have made some adjustments to the original POA data in order to provide valid historical comparisons. For instance, in 2011/12 the POA category "Local policing" included the sub-category "local investigation and prisoner processing", however, from 2012/13 onwards this moved to the "Investigations" category. We have therefore removed "local investigation and prisoner processing" from the 2011/12 figure to provide a historical comparison and not create misleading percentage changes.

For the same reason above, for the 2011/12 "Investigations" figure we have included "local investigations and prisoner processing" for historical comparison.

Furthermore, in 2016/17 "Public Protection" became its own level two category, whereas in previous years it had been included as a sub-category under "Investigations". Therefore for historical comparisons, we have included public protection in "Investigations" for 2016/17.