

18 July 2013

## **West Yorkshire Police has more work to do in response to its financial challenge, finds HMIC**

*HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) considers that West Yorkshire Police faces a larger financial challenge than most other forces, with the added complexity of policing major cities with highly diverse communities. However, given its higher expenditure on pay and other costs, there are opportunities to deliver cost savings.*

In a report published today, HMIC has found:

### **Progress in making savings**

- West Yorkshire Police has identified that it needs to save £112.6m over the four years of the spending review (i.e. between March 2011 and March 2015). The force has planned how it will save £103.1m. It therefore still has to find £9.4m. Most other forces have developed plans working out how they will make all the required savings - West Yorkshire Police's funding gap is therefore a concern.
- As a proportion of its overall budget (22%), this savings requirement is considerably higher than most other forces. HMIC considers that West Yorkshire Police faces a particularly difficult challenge.

### **Workforce changes and protecting the front line**

- The force is reducing police officer numbers by limiting recruitment and holding vacancies. As a result, by the end of the spending review period, there will be 988 fewer police officers in the West Yorkshire Police. This means the number of police officers will reduce by 17% between March 2010 and March 2015 which is a greater reduction than in most other forces.
- West Yorkshire Police will be broadly protecting frontline posts as it makes these cuts. Between March 2010 and March 2015, the proportion of police officers in frontline crime-fighting is planned to increase from 92% to 94%. This compares to an overall increase across England and Wales from 89% to 93%.
- The force has also made some police staff redundant and not replaced others as they have left (e.g. through retirements and resignations). As a result, by the end of the spending review period, there will be 892 fewer police staff in the West Yorkshire Police. This means the number of police staff will reduce by 25% between March 2010 and March 2015; this is greater than in most other forces.
- With an outstanding funding gap the force may need to make more workforce reductions than it is currently planning.

### **Impact on the public**

- Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 14%, which is broadly in line with the figure for England and Wales (13%).
- Victim satisfaction remains high at 87.3%, which is greater than in other forces.

### **Future challenges**

- HMIC is concerned that West Yorkshire Police has not embraced the level of change or achieved the savings seen elsewhere. With an outstanding financial gap to close

the force will find it much more difficult to make any further savings required in the future.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Northern Region, Roger Baker, said:

*“West Yorkshire Police has a more difficult financial challenge than many other forces, but with higher spending on policing, higher workforce numbers and costs, there are opportunities to deliver savings.*

*“In HMIC’s assessment, the force has not grasped the same opportunities to transform and to deliver savings as other forces, and has left large elements of its business untouched. It now has less time in which to implement the changes it needs to close the gap and be in a strong position to respond to further funding reductions. It is imperative that detailed plans are rapidly developed and implemented.*

*“Given the short time frame, strong and effective leadership will be essential if this is to be achieved alongside delivering improved performance. The new Chief Constable recognises the challenge the force faces and is rapidly working towards developing such plans.*

*“HMIC will continue to monitor the force for the remainder of the spending review period.”*

The full report for West Yorkshire Police, along with the national thematic review, can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)

#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. The thematic report ‘Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge’ can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
2. Victim satisfaction for this force has a confidence interval of  $\pm 0.8\%$
3. HMIC’s July 2012 report ‘Policing in austerity: One year on’ and July 2011 report ‘Adapting to Austerity’ along with supporting materials can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
4. In October 2010, the government announced that the central funding provided to the police service would reduce by 20% in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.
5. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies.
6. For further information, HMIC’s press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
7. HMIC’s out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.