

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL
00:01 TUESDAY 22 JULY 2014**



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Responding to austerity

Lancashire Constabulary

July 2014

© HMIC 2014

ISBN: 978-1-78246-436-5

www.hmic.gov.uk





Contents

How well does the constabulary provide value for money?	4
The constabulary in numbers	6
Introduction	8
To what extent is the constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position for the short and long term?	9
To what extent has the constabulary an affordable way of providing policing?	12
To what extent is the constabulary efficient?	21
Our judgments	27

How well does the constabulary provide value for money?

Overall judgment

Lancashire is on track to meet its financial challenge of the spending review period and also for the year beyond, 2015/16. Importantly, the constabulary is also looking beyond this period and is planning now for further funding reductions and financial pressures in the future.

Outstanding

Summary

Lancashire Constabulary has identified that it needs to save £54.3m over the four years of the spending review. It has plans in place to meet this requirement as well as preparing to meet future austerity. Overall, the constabulary understands the issues facing it, and it has a comprehensive and well-managed change programme in place to achieve the savings required, while minimising as far as possible the impact on frontline policing.

HMIC was reassured by the level of detail that underpins Lancashire's saving plans and also by the leadership's ability and determination to make changes while fighting crime and keeping its communities safe. The constabulary will, however, need to satisfy itself that recent increases in crime and reduction in satisfaction will not have a long-lasting impact on its performance.

There are innovative plans for working more closely across public services to manage demand better and to provide a more effective response. HMIC recognises the ambition of the constabulary in this work, which could transform how services are provided and the opportunity to achieve savings in the future.

To what extent is the constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position for the short and long term?

Outstanding

Lancashire Constabulary is in a secure financial position as a result of strong leadership and financial management.

The constabulary will achieve all of the savings it needs during the spending review and is expecting to make more savings than it needs in 2015/16, enabling it to set aside funds to invest in further change.

The approach to making savings has been both rigorous and professional, with financial plans closely aligned to workforce and change plans.

Future plans have been identified and are in the process of being explored in further detail. These include both continued efficiency savings internally and innovative and ambitious plans for wider public sector reform across Lancashire.

To what extent has the constabulary an affordable way of providing policing?

Outstanding

The constabulary has changed the way it provides policing to increase visibility, reduce costs and remain effective with fewer staff.

It has creative plans underway to make more effective use of the special constabulary, its cadet force and volunteers to support the work of neighbourhood policing teams.

Change is well led and managed. The constabulary maintains rigorous oversight of change projects and ensures that expected benefits are achieved.

Joint working with local partners in Lancashire is strong, particularly with the county council, and is set to improve still further through the public service reform initiative.

To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

Good

The constabulary has a good understanding of its demand; the assessment of risks in neighbourhoods is detailed and sophisticated.

There are constructive approaches to reducing unnecessary and wasteful demand and to making best use of police time.

Demand and risk information is used to ensure that, even with reduced staffing levels; officers are allocated according to where the demand and risk is greatest.

Recorded crime had continued to fall in Lancashire throughout the spending review period, although not as fast as elsewhere, and in the last twelve months there has been an overall increase in recorded crime compared with a small decrease nationally.

The constabulary in numbers



Financial position

The constabulary's savings requirement

Requirement Gap

£54.3m

£0.0m



Providing policing

Planned change in police officer numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15

Lancashire England and Wales

-17%

-11%

Planned change in total workforce numbers 2010/11 – 2014/15

Lancashire England and Wales

-16%

-14%

Planned proportion of police officers on the front line 2014/15 vs 2010/11 (percentage points)

Lancashire England and Wales

+4.7

+3.0

Planned proportion of total workforce on the front line 2014/15 vs 2010/11 (percentage points)

Lancashire England and Wales

+3.6

+3.7



Efficiency

Police officer cost per head of population
2013/14

Lancashire	England and Wales
£108.8	£117.7

Workforce cost per head of population
2013/14

Lancashire	England and Wales
£155.1	£168.1

Change in recorded crime
2010/11 – 2013/14

Lancashire	England and Wales
-6%	-14%

Victim satisfaction 2013/14*

Lancashire	England and Wales
84.0%	85.2%

*Confidence intervals: $\pm 0.7\%$ for Lancashire; $\pm 0.2\%$ for England and Wales.

Introduction

In October 2010, the Government announced that central funding to the Police Service in England and Wales would reduce by 20 percent in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.

HMIC's Valuing the Police Programme has tracked how forces are planning to make savings to meet this budget demand each year since summer 2011. This report identifies what we found in this, our fourth year.

Our inspection focused on how well the constabulary is achieving value for money. To answer this question we looked at three areas:

- To what extent is the constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position in the short and long term?
- To what extent has the constabulary an affordable way of providing policing?
- To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

During our inspection we collected data and plans from forces, surveyed the public to see if they had noticed any changes in the service they receive from the police as a result of the cuts, and conducted in-force inspections. We also interviewed, where possible, the chief constable, police and crime commissioner and the chief officer leads for finance, change, human resources and performance in each force, and held focus groups with staff and other officers.

This provides the findings for Lancashire Constabulary.

To what extent is the constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position for the short and long term?

HMIC looked at the savings plans that forces have developed in order to meet the financial challenge of the spending review, and for the year after 2015/16. It is also important that forces look to the future beyond 2016 in their planning, so we also explored how they are starting to prepare for further financial challenges.

Financial challenge

Lancashire Constabulary has identified that it needs to save £54.3m over the four years of the spending review (i.e., between March 2011 and March 2015).

As a proportion of its overall budget, this savings requirement of 18 percent is in line with the figure of 18 percent for England and Wales.

The scale of the challenge

Although its savings requirement is in line the figure for England and Wales HMIC considers that Lancashire still faces a moderately difficult challenge. Its costs for police staff and PCSOs are broadly in line with other forces across England and Wales and its non-pay costs are already lower, which means there will less scope for achieving further efficiencies in these areas. However, it does have a higher number of police officers per head of population, which may provide an opportunity for achieving savings.

Savings plans for 2014/15 and 2015/16

Lancashire Constabulary, through strong leadership and financial management, has developed a secure financial position. The constabulary has taken a robust and professional approach to tackling its financial challenge. So far, the constabulary has saved £37.6m as planned through the three phases of its sustaining excellence programme, which is 69 percent of the total funding reduction required over the spending review period.

There are clear plans in place to achieve the savings required in 2014/15 (£16.7m), 2015/16 (£5.6m), and beyond. The constabulary is anticipating making more savings than it needs from these plans, and the extra savings will go into a reserve fund to be used for future investment that can lead to even greater efficiencies. Financial planning and management are strengths in Lancashire; financial services are provided by Lancashire County Council to both the police and crime commissioner and the constabulary. These services include financial modelling, sensitivity analysis and scenario planning using a range of assessment tools that provide comprehensive and detailed information, which is used intelligently to monitor progress and to inform future planning.

The sustaining excellence programme has now been developed into a futures programme to progress plans to deal with further austerity. The programme and savings plans are clear, realistic and achievable. The financial plans are closely aligned with the workforce plans, with detailed paths in place to track and forecast the reducing police officer numbers and staffing levels over time. This approach has meant that the constabulary has been able to control recruitment rigorously to ensure that the workforce plan is carried out in close alignment with the financial plans and the change programme.

The full impact of partnership funding reduction is still unclear as partners work through the detail of where cuts will be made. There is, however, a strong relationship with partner organisations and the constabulary is working constructively with them through an agreement that public services will combine across the agencies in Lancashire to reduce community risks.

Outlook for 2016 and beyond

The plans for 2016/17 and beyond are well developed and focus on working with partners to reduce demands for policing and public services as a whole across Lancashire. The approach is ambitious and innovative, attempting to transform the way the public sector works, using money differently across local agencies to remove the blockages that currently prevent them from working efficiently, and focusing on serving communities effectively and improving how the most vulnerable are supported. There are a number of early intervention schemes in place and being piloted to inform wider plans for the future.

Within the constabulary, there are further reviews planned until 2017/18 and the constabulary is continuing to look for further efficiencies. There is recognition that internal savings will not be a sustainable option for the longer term. During 2014/15, the constabulary will consolidate all the work completed so far, understand how the changes made are working in practice and then agree the future plans for collaboration. The constabulary has been successful in securing external funding to pursue collaboration ideas.

Summary



Outstanding

- Lancashire Constabulary is in a secure financial position as a result of strong leadership and financial management.
- The constabulary will achieve all of the savings it needs during the spending review and is expecting to make more savings than it needs in 2015/16, enabling it to set aside funds to invest in further change.
- The approach to making savings has been both rigorous and professional, with financial plans closely aligned to workforce and change plans.
- Future plans have been identified and are in the process of being explored in further detail. These include both continued efficiency savings internally and innovative and ambitious plans for wider public sector reform across Lancashire.

To what extent has the constabulary an affordable way of providing policing?

HMIC looks at how the constabulary is structured to provide policing. We ask if this is affordable as the constabulary responds to their financial challenge. We look at what the constabulary is doing to reduce its costs, how it is protecting officers and staff engaged in fighting crime and keeping communities safe, and how it is making the required changes through its change programme.

How the constabulary provides policing

Lancashire police has recently changed the way in which policing is provided. It has reduced its six geographically based basic command units (BCUs) to three much larger area-based units. For example, the newly formed Western BCU covers all policing requirements to Blackpool, Fleetwood, Lancaster and Morecambe. The specialist policing services, such as roads policing, have been absorbed into the new three-BCU structure, to provide resilience and increase officer numbers on the front line. This makes more efficient use of the specialist staff in multi-functional roles as response officers.

The constabulary has a good understanding of the workforce it requires to provide policing and achieves this through its Step Down model. This model predicts future leavers and fine tunes numbers and skills through a mix of voluntary redundancy programmes and recruitment drives. The constabulary has recently completed an officer recruitment drive which focused on recruiting staff with the required skills from within the constabulary, for example PCSOs and external candidates from other police forces.

There has been a complete review of the special constabulary, which has resulted in people leaving the programme to enable the constabulary to attract the right individuals. The constabulary has recently run a police cadet recruitment campaign, which received an overwhelming response, resulting in the recruitment of 250 cadets, coming from a wide range of areas throughout Lancashire. Cadets, along with volunteers and members of the special constabulary, will be involved in their own local communities, working in early intervention initiatives within those areas identified as having the greatest need and where additional resilience is required.

Collaboration

HMIC monitors forces' progress on collaboration because it offers the opportunity to provide efficient, effective policing and helps to achieve savings.

The constabulary has demonstrated that it actively seeks out and progresses opportunities to collaborate. The constabulary recognises that working collaboratively with others is essential in order to continue providing effective crime fighting and to protect its communities with considerably reduced resources. Regional collaboration is already in

place with other forces in the North West for specialist services. However, in comparison to other metropolitan forces such as Greater Manchester and Merseyside, the levels of risk and likely demand are not as great in Lancashire. Therefore, Lancashire needs to be assured of the benefits it gains from collaborating and that the officers it provides to the region will not be regularly used in other force areas to the detriment of Lancashire. The recent move to locate some specialist teams within the BCUs to support the front line has added to the complexity of making these officers available to work across the North West. The constabulary is also open to collaboration with the private sector; the existing custody contract with G4S is reviewed annually and renegotiated periodically to reflect changes to the structure, which has been effective in driving down costs.

Some initial work has been completed to identify where further collaboration for business support and operational policing is possible. The constabulary has considered proposals at a strategic level, and it is in the process of taking these proposals forward. At the time of our inspection, the preferred options were Cumbria Constabulary and Lancashire County Council. In developing its options, the constabulary is clear that there must be demonstrable benefits for Lancashire from any collaboration. The constabulary's principle is that the constabulary itself must be as efficient as possible prior to considering partnership arrangements with the private sector.

The constabulary already works effectively with the county council in a range of partnerships. Among the most successful have been the four multi-agency safeguarding hubs, which provide a much-improved and joined-up service to protect the most vulnerable people, by enabling all of the agencies involved to work better together. They also serve to reduce the demand on police time through the agreed lead officer approach, where the police and partner agencies collectively agree which of them is best suited to respond to a crisis incident, which means that it is not always a police officer who attends.

The approach offered through the reforming public service initiative will take this type of partnership approach to the next level and transform the way local agencies work together. This will involve placing a much stronger emphasis on agencies working together, locally, to intervene at a much earlier stage, in order to prevent the sorts of problems occurring that create the greatest demand on the public sector. Early intervention aims to start influencing people at a much earlier stage, helping them to make different choices, getting them help as soon as they need it, and avoiding crime being committed. For example, a joint £7m initiative with Lancashire County Council to provide early action response officers is being developed. The early action response officers will work alongside frontline police officers to intervene early for vulnerable individuals and groups.

In 2014/15, the constabulary expects to spend 4 percent of its net revenue expenditure on collaboration, which is lower than the 11 percent figure for England and Wales. Collaboration is expected to contribute to 6 percent of the constabulary's savings requirement, which is lower than the 10 percent figure for England and Wales.

Managing change

Reductions in police budgets have led to a shrinking workforce. HMIC expects forces to look at longer-term transformation, which can help maintain or improve the service they offer to the public and to prepare for future funding reductions.

The change programme in Lancashire has moved on from its sustaining excellence programme and it has now been developed into a futures programme. This development acknowledges that change is to be an ongoing process, rather than a programme with start and end dates. There is a rigorous and systematic approach to change and to project management. There are major principles in place to provide guidance to any project, and stringent overview and controls to ensure that projects are implemented as planned and that the expected benefits are achieved. Each review or project is well managed and has a clear financial starting point from which projects are measured; some projects also have linkages to officer productivity and performance improvement.

Projects are now (in the main) managed by commanders and heads of teams who are in the best position to review and develop their teams and working practices. To support managers to develop their skills, officers and staff are seconded into the central programme team and rotated during the year to learn change management techniques. By using this method, reviews are consistently undertaken and decisions are made using a strong evidence base. Through widely spreading the responsibility for managing and implementing change projects, the constabulary has successfully shared ownership and accountability throughout the constabulary.

The constabulary identified that the main elements of its change programme during the spending review were:

- use of business improvement methods;
- reviewing the way that local policing is provided;
- improved arrangements with other forces for protective services;
- better alignment of resources to demand; and
- changing the way business support services (such as human resources and finance) are provided.

The constabulary identifies that the main elements of its change programme as it responds to future financial pressures will include:

- partnership working;
- collaboration with other forces;
- collaboration with another part of the public sector;
- outsourcing or working with the private sector; and
- improved call management.

How is the constabulary supporting its workforce to manage change and effective service provision?

The constabulary is enthusiastic about involving its people in change. As a result, it has moved away from traditional ways of communicating, such as intranet messages and newsletters, as staff feedback confirmed that these were not effective. The constabulary has recognised that to reduce its costs and improve services for the public, officers and staff will need to learn how to work in different ways. As a result, there is an ongoing programme of support and communication to involve and develop the workforce.

The constabulary uses an online communication tool that has been designed to encourage openness from staff. Anyone can post a question on any topic and create an online discussion. These online discussions vary according to the interest of the workforce, for example, a discussion on wellbeing resulted in over 5,500 responses within three weeks.

Chief officers have committed time to involving staff in the change programme through roadshows and they also respond to online discussions. Both the deputy and the assistant chief constables monitor online discussions and provide responses on behalf of chief officers. This has been particularly useful in getting the leadership's message across to staff on a variety of matters relating to the change programme. We found that online discussions were well used and staff felt that issues raised were responded to.

Police federation and staff association representatives have been fully involved and consulted in relation to the change programmes, and there is some evidence that involvement and consultation has influenced the change programme.

Every review has a substantial challenge process that includes all ranks and grades, a formal consultation process, and the use of online discussion to determine how the implementation is going. In addition, there is a cultural assessment that accompanies all reviews to identify the behaviours that will be needed from staff and managers to make new ways of working sustainable. For those teams directly affected by any changes,

focus groups are run alongside individual one-to-one discussions. The constabulary have recognised that this cannot always be achieved and so engaged with 100 officers and staff from across the constabulary who managed staff affected by the change programme and assisted them to support their staff and manage change. A survey is also conducted to confirm how the changes are being received, and also to check officers and staff are receiving the right levels of support.

Focus groups are a major part of the change process and the constabulary has recognised from staff feedback that more involvement is needed at the early stages when plans are being developed. This also assists in helping staff to understand the rationale for change and provides clarity as to why a particular service or team is under review.

The constabulary is keen to maintain a focus on staff wellbeing throughout the change and is aware of the potential negative impacts there may be for staff affected. There is a mature way of dealing with absence as it is recognised that stress and workloads will increase as staff leave the organisation. This involves ways of supporting staff earlier in the process, picking up on signs of stress and making sure that managers take responsibility for checking to see if support is required (e.g., checking how a new shift pattern is affecting home life).

How is the constabulary achieving the savings?

Because around 80 percent of a police budget (on average) is spent on staff costs, it is not surprising that forces across England and Wales plan to achieve most of their savings by reducing the number of police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and police staff employed.

However, we also expect forces to bear down on their other costs (non-pay) such as the equipment they buy, the accommodation and vehicles they use and the contracts they enter for services (such as cleaning). The constabulary plans to make 22 percent of its savings from non-pay, which is lower than other forces. The constabulary has developed plans to target non-pay costs for the next three years as a way of saving as many future jobs as possible.

The overheads project has comprehensively reviewed all of the non-salary elements of its workforce costs. By comparing itself to others, Lancashire has identified £1m in savings, including reductions in overtime payments and travel costs. The constabulary has recognised that there are further savings to be made in procuring goods and services more effectively. Therefore, it has invested in additional staffing in its central procurement team to build its skills and capacity to get better value for money and to explore collaborative procurement arrangements with Cumbria Police and the county council. It is intended that the team will pay for itself through additional savings in procurement.

The full estate and fleet will be reviewed as part of the change programme. However, there have already been savings from a reduction in front counters open to the public after analysis revealed they were under used. This move also supports the constabulary's strategy of encouraging greater use of other less traditional means of accessing the police (for example, via the internet and using social media, such as Twitter or Facebook).

As with other forces, savings mostly come from a reduced workforce. The constabulary plans to make 78 percent of its spending review savings requirement from its pay budget. This is a higher percentage compared with other forces.

The following table shows the constabulary's planned changes to workforce numbers over the spending review period, and compares these to the change for England and Wales.

Please note, these figures are rounded.

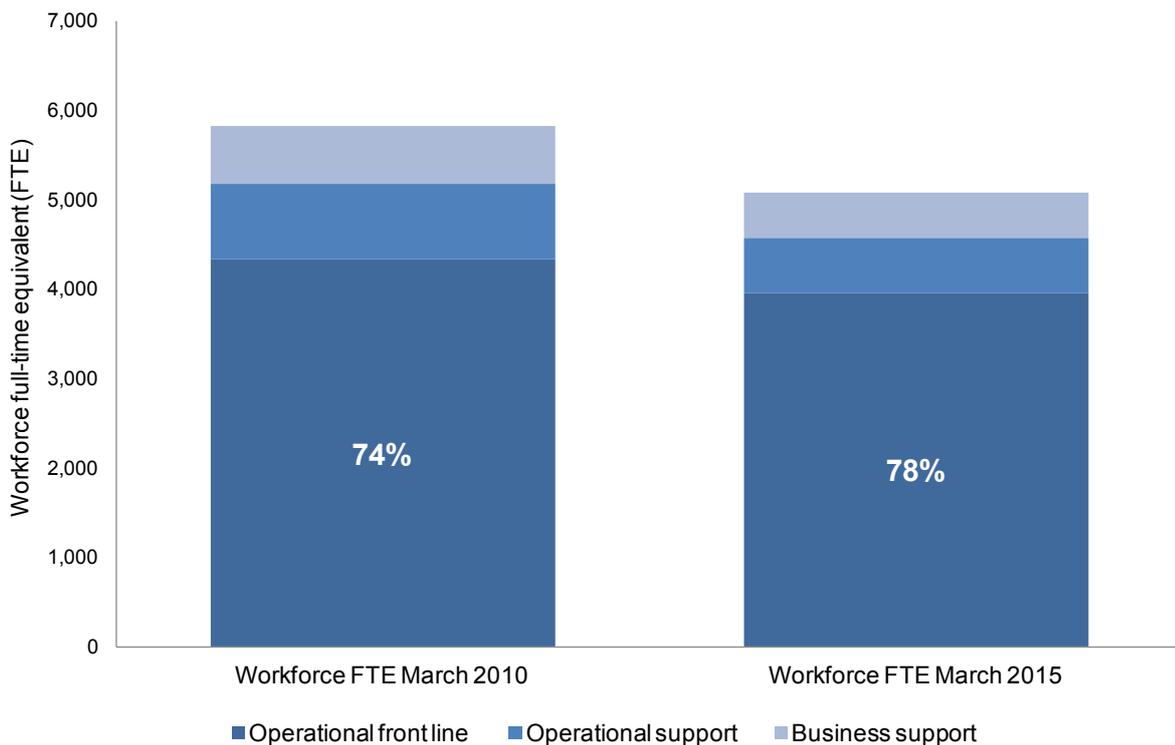
	31 March 2010 (baseline)	31 March 2015	Change	Constabulary change %	Change for England and Wales %
Police officers	3,649	3,023	-626	-17%	-11%
Police staff	1,957	1,719	-238	-12%	-17%
PCSOs	428	335	-93	-22%	-22%
Total	6,034	5,077	-957	-16%	-14%
Specials	470	508	38	8%	44%

The constabulary has very detailed and well-managed plans for how the workforce will change over the spending review. Its regular oversight and tight control of these plans has enabled savings to be made ahead of schedule. These are linked to change and finance plans, which are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

It is important that as forces reconfigure their structures and reduce workforce numbers, they focus on maintaining (or if possible increasing) the proportion of people in frontline crime-fighting roles.

HMIC defines the people who work on the police front line as those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law.

The following chart shows the planned change in the overall workforce frontline profile between March 2010 and March 2015.



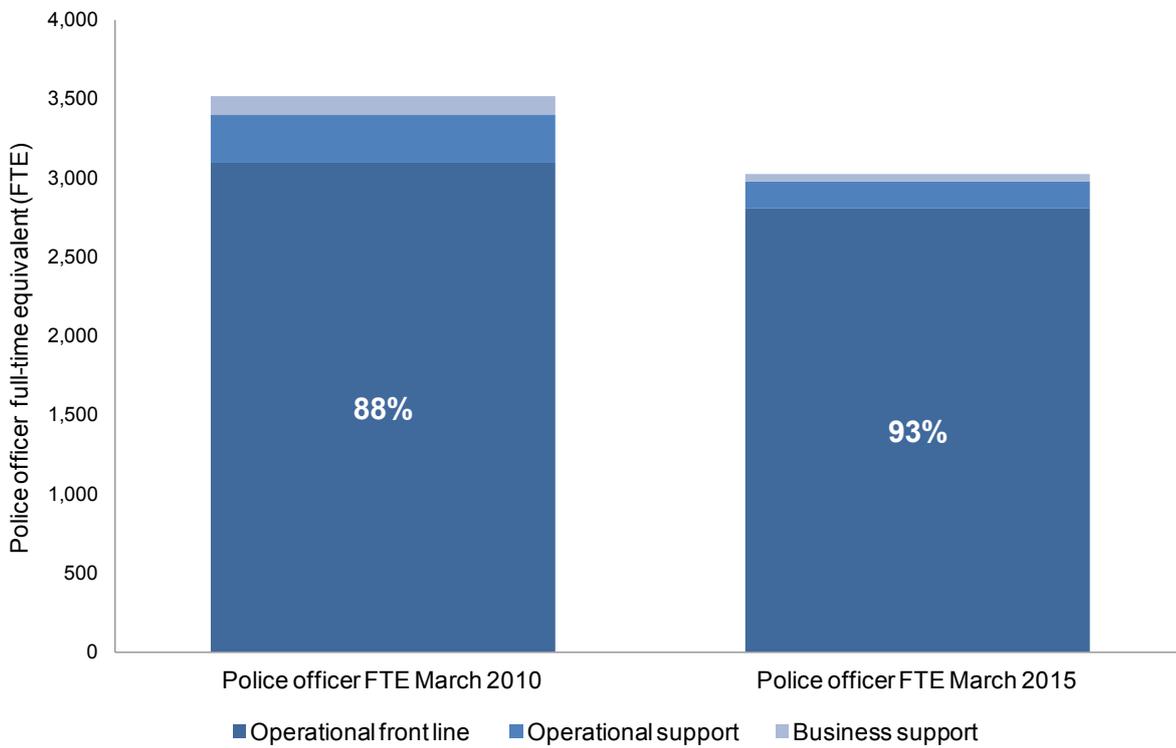
Note: England and Wales reports an increase in the proportion of workforce on the front line from 74 percent in March 2010 to 78 percent in March 2015.

The number of officers, PCSOs and staff working on Lancashire’s front line is projected to decrease by 376 between March 2010 and March 2015 (from 4,333 to 3,957).

Over the same period, the proportion of Lancashire’s total workforce allocated to frontline roles is projected to increase from 74 percent to 78 percent. This is in line with an overall increase across England and Wales from 74 percent to 78 percent.

The second chart below shows the number of Lancashire’s police officers in frontline roles, this is planned to reduce by 291 from 3,097 in March 2010 to 2,806 by March 2015. The proportion of those remaining on the front line is projected to increase from 88 percent to 93 percent. This compares with an overall increase across England and Wales from 89 percent to 92 percent.

The following chart shows the planned change in police officers' frontline profile.



Note: England and Wales reports an increase in the proportion of police officers on the front line from 89 percent in March 2010 to 92 percent in March 2015.

Summary

Outstanding

- The constabulary has changed the way it provides policing to increase visibility, reduce costs and remain effective with fewer staff.
- It has creative plans underway to make more effective use of the special constabulary, its cadet force and volunteers to support the work of neighbourhood policing teams.
- Change is well led and managed. The constabulary maintains rigorous oversight of change projects and ensures that expected benefits are achieved.
- Joint working with local partners in Lancashire is strong, particularly with the county council, and this is set to improve still further through the public service reform initiative.

To what extent is the constabulary efficient?

HMIC looks at how the constabulary understands the demands that it faces and how it allocates both financial resources and staff to meet these demands. We look at how these decisions are leading to effective results for the public; in particular, that police are visible and that they attend promptly when called, that they are fighting crime and keeping communities safe, and that victims are satisfied with the service they receive.

How well does the constabulary understand and manage demand?

Lancashire has a detailed and comprehensive understanding of its demand. It has used an informed and scientific approach to assessing demand and aligning resources to the policing areas based upon the levels of risk they pose. It considers information from a wide variety of sources to get a full picture. This has included consideration of demands from the public, partner agencies, from within the organisation itself and from other forces. It uses a neighbourhood needs index for each local neighbourhood, which includes police and partners' data about an area and its communities. The index helps the constabulary to assess the threats and risks present in each locality and to develop an appropriate response. A systematic approach has been applied to the analysis of demand to clarify how much can be reduced, removed or responded to in a more efficient way, for example, by increasing investigation over the phone rather than sending a police officer for some low-level issues.

This assessment is reviewed every three months as part of a wider review that informs operational priorities and enables resources to be moved to where they are required to keep the public protected. The constabulary has developed an IT solution to help them quantify and map demand across the area. This involved a full and detailed review of how officers and PCSOs spend their time in their neighbourhoods, when out on patrol, and when responding to incidents. The resulting information has been used to develop shift patterns that make more staff available during peaks in demand.

National policing requirements have also been considered as the constabulary regularly responds to provide support to other forces. This was demonstrated by requests for assistance from the mounted team as other forces have either reduced or removed these teams. This results in Lancashire often going beyond their required commitment to support national demands.

There is a clear understanding of, and priority given to, demand that will always require a police response (e.g., emergency calls). There is also an understanding of the sorts of demand that can be reduced by, for example, working differently with partners. This was demonstrated by the use of early action response officers who work with patrol officers to provide alternative courses of action for dealing with the most vulnerable (e.g., missing persons, children at risk and vulnerable adults). This has resulted in a quicker

assessment that provides the right support from the appropriate agency in the fastest time. This approach will be developed further to consider how teams across the council and neighbourhood policing can work differently to support families that demonstrate signs or characteristics of needing specialist help.

How efficiently does the constabulary allocate its resources?

Lancashire has used the assessment of demand, and the analysis of threat, harm and risk, and then allocated the workforce to respond to this in the most cost-effective way that results in a better service to the public. The recent decision to reduce from six to three BCUs was informed by the demand and risk analysis, and the constabulary was able to allocate numbers and skills of staff accordingly to ensure that an appropriate response could be provided in each neighbourhood.

One of the more considerable changes within the constabulary has been the newly formed corporate communications centre based at the constabulary headquarters. This deals with all forms of communication from the public and deploys the police response and replaces the former six separate control rooms. The central team arrangement has been complemented by a new IT system that helps to improve the speed with which officers are deployed. This will be completed using automatic resource locators, which automatically show the location of all staff available to respond on a geographical map, the location of the caller, and the nearest and most appropriate person they can send. This technology is dependent on officers confirming that they are available for work; therefore, checking mechanisms are in place to make sure this is completed across the constabulary.

The demand reduction unit and telephone investigation unit are examples of where the constabulary has redirected some of its demand. Callers can be dealt with efficiently by providing advice or guidance for queries that do not need an officer to be sent. This has included redirecting calls to partner agencies that are better equipped and are staffed by the appropriate professionals for the type of service required. For example, the ambulance service is often more appropriate for dealing with mental health patients.

How does the constabulary respond and keep its communities safe?

The challenge for forces is not just to save money and reduce their workforce numbers, but also to ensure the choices they make do not have a negative impact on the service they provide to their communities. HMIC looked for evidence that keeping the communities safe is at the heart of the constabulary's decision.

The constabulary considers neighbourhood policing is the foundation of its approach to policing and confirmed that where possible, resources will continue to be provided to all

communities to support crime prevention and local problem solving. There is, however, recognition that further funding cuts could begin to impact on these services.

There has been a recent change in emphasis within the constabulary, involving a move away from setting targets for performance, such as numbers of arrests. The police and crime plan has the requirement for reducing crime and offending as its major objective. Crime type data and other performance information are still collected and trends are analysed, but this is not what the leadership wants to drive performance. Instead, staff are encouraged to use their discretion and judgement when dealing with the public, to provide a high quality of service and to do the right thing rather than achieving a target for its own sake. We found that staff understood that targets had been removed, and that the leadership saw responding to risks as the most important measure.

Calls for service

HMIC examined whether Lancashire was taking longer to respond to calls for help as a result of its workforce reductions and other changes designed to save money. Forces are not required to set response times or targets and are free to determine their own arrangements for monitoring attendance to calls, so information between forces is not comparable.

We found that over the four years since 2010, Lancashire had maintained the same target response times of 15 minutes for calls classed as 'emergency' (also known as Grade 1). Over the same period, calls classed as a 'priority' (also known as Grade 2) had a target response time of within 60 minutes.

The following table compares the constabulary's performance in 2010/11 to 2013/14.

Calls for service	2010/11	2013/14
Percentage of emergency calls on target	93.0	93.6
Percentage of priority calls on target	77.0	93.7

Over the spending review the number of emergency calls responded within target is stable and for priority calls has improved. With reducing staff numbers the continued focus in responding to the public at times of need is positive.

Visibility

The work done by police officers and staff in visible roles (such as officers who respond to 999 calls, deal with serious road traffic collisions or patrol in neighbourhoods) represents only a part of the policing picture. Chief constables need to allocate resources to many other

functions in order to protect the public, such as counter terrorism, serious and organised crime, and child protection (to name just three).

That said, research shows that the public value seeing visible police officers on patrol in the streets, and that those who see police in uniform at least once a week are more likely to have confidence in their local force. HMIC therefore examined how far the changes being implemented by the constabulary had affected the visibility of the police in the Lancashire area.

In 2014, Lancashire allocated 58 percent of its police officers to visible roles. This is 0.4 of a percentage point higher than the number allocated in 2010 and is higher than in most other forces (which was 56 percent across England and Wales for 2014).

Police visibility is further enhanced by PCSOs, who principally support community policing. Looking at the proportion of police officers and PCSOs, Lancashire allocated 61 percent of these staff to visible roles. This is 0.5 percentage points lower than it allocated in 2010, and broadly in line with the 60 percent figure for England and Wales in 2014.

HMIC conducted a survey¹ of the public across England and Wales to assess whether the public had noticed any difference in the way their area is being policed. Of those people surveyed in Lancashire, 7 percent said that they have seen a police officer more often than they had 12 months ago; this compares to 12 percent of respondents in England and Wales.

Furthermore, 81 percent of respondents in Lancashire said they felt safe from crime where they lived, compared to 84 percent of respondents in England and Wales. Finally, 5 percent said they felt safer from crime than they did two years ago, compared to 9 percent of respondents in England and Wales.

Crime

In 2010, the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to reduce crime. Between 2010/11 and 2013/14 (which includes the first three years of the spending review), Lancashire reduced recorded crime (excluding fraud) by 6 percent, which is a smaller reduction than the 14 percent reduction in other forces in England and Wales. Over this period, victim-based crime (that is, crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) reduced by 3 percent, compared with 14 percent in England and Wales.

Looking just at the last 12 months, recorded crime (excluding fraud) rose by 3 percent,

¹ Sample sizes for each force were chosen to produce a confidence interval of no more than ± 6 percent and for England and Wales, no more than ± 1 percent. Forces' differences to the England and Wales value may not be statistically significant.

compared with a reduction of 1 percent across England and Wales.

By looking at how many crimes occur per head of population, we can get an indication of how safe it is for the public in that police area. The table below shows recorded crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Lancashire (per head of population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

12 months to March 2014	Rate per 1,000 population	England and Wales rate per 1,000 population
Crimes (excluding fraud)	65.1	61.1
Victim-based crime	59.9	54.3
Sexual offences	1.3	1.1
Burglary	8.5	7.8
Violence against the person	13.7	11.1
ASB incidents	57.2	37.2

It is important that crimes are effectively investigated and that the perpetrator is identified and brought to justice. When sufficient evidence is available to identify who has committed a crime, it can be described as detected. Lancashire's detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to March 2014 was 29 percent. This is higher than the England and Wales detection rate of 26 percent.

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the constabulary area. For information on the frequency of other kinds of crimes in your area, go to www.hmic.gov.uk/crime-and-policing-comparator.

Victim satisfaction surveys

An important measure of the impact of changes on service provision for the public is how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance.

In the 12 months to March 2014, 84.0 percent (± 0.7 percent) of victims were satisfied with the overall service provided by Lancashire. This is slightly lower than the England and Wales figure (85.2 percent (± 0.2 percent)).

Changes to how the public can access services

Forces are changing the ways in which the public can access policing services. In Lancashire, the public can email officers and staff directly. There is also an online application where the public can report and access information about crime to help themselves. The constabulary regularly uses social media sites (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) to communicate with the public. Social media is also used so that the public can access information about what is occurring within their individual neighbourhoods.

Across the spending review period, the constabulary intends to reduce the number of police stations from 47 to 12 and to reduce the number of front counters from 41 to 24.

Summary

Good

- The constabulary has a good understanding of its demand, and the assessment of risks in neighbourhoods is detailed and sophisticated.
- There are constructive approaches to reducing unnecessary and wasteful demand and to making best use of police time.
- Demand and risk information is used intelligently to ensure that even with reduced staffing levels; officers are allocated according to where the demand and risk is greatest.
- Crime had continued to fall in Lancashire, although not as fast as elsewhere, and in the last twelve months there has been an overall increase in crime compared to a small decrease nationally.

Our judgments

HMIC uses four categories for making judgments, two are positive and two are negative. The categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how well the constabulary achieves value for money, it is not an assessment of the overall effectiveness of policing. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the way the constabulary is achieving value for money is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the constabulary requires improvement in the way it achieves value for money, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the constabulary's provision of value for money is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.