



To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 28 August 2014

Response to HMIC Report – Valuing the Police

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report to the Business Co-ordination Board (“the Board”) Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s (“the Constabulary”) response to Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary’s (HMIC) Report ‘*Inspecting the Policing in the Public Interest – Responding to Austerity*’. This report will enable the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner to fulfil his statutory duty under Section 55 of the Police Act 1996 to comment on the HMIC report and send published comments to the Home Secretary, with a copy to HMIC.

2. Background

2.1 In the October 2010 spending review, the Government announced that central funding to the police service in England and Wales would be reduced in real terms by 20% in the four years from March 2011 to March 2015. HMIC’s Valuing the Police Inspection Programme has tracked how police forces have planned to make savings to meet this budget requirement. HMIC published findings on this in July 2011, June 2012 and July 2013.

2.2 The Constabulary identified that it needs to save £19.8m over the four years of the spending review (i.e., between March 2011 and March 2015).

2.3 The report for 2014-15 (Part 4) covers the final year of the spending review, concerned how forces have managed the considerable challenges to make savings so far. In order to consider this, HMIC asked three questions:

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

- To what extent is the Constabulary efficient?

3. National Context & Collaboration Perspective

3.1 HMIC inspected all 43 Home Office-funded forces in England and Wales, and made a judgment as to the extent to which each force provides value for money in the context of current spending constraints. Each force was rated in one of the following categories:

- Outstanding;
- Good;
- Requires improvement; or
- inadequate

3.2 HMIC found police forces have made good progress in implementing financial austerity and improvements have been made since last year. Five forces were judged to be 'outstanding' and 35 'good'. Only three forces 'require improvement' and there were no forces that were considered to be 'inadequate'.

3.3 In its overall judgement of "How well does the Constabulary provide value for money?", HMIC rated Cambridgeshire as 'good' in all three categories, and made specific reference to collaboration:

"Cambridgeshire Constabulary has impressive and well-established joint working arrangements with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary. The constabulary has bold ambitions to extend this collaboration even further through a transformational ICT programme. The constabulary is well placed to be able to continue to provide an effective service to the public while reducing its costs further."

4. Response to the HMIC Report

4.1 The response to the HMIC Report is broken down by the three main questions asked in the inspection, and is based on the findings of HMIC.

To what extent is the Constabulary taking the necessary steps to ensure a secure financial position for the short and long term? (rated 'Good')

Current Position

4.2 HMIC reported that the Constabulary has a strong track record of achieving planned savings. Over the last three years, budget savings have been achieved in advance of the year end and these have been transferred to reserves (either to be used for specific purposes or to assist with future budget gaps).

4.3 The Constabulary's current medium-term financial plan (MTFP) identifies the challenges and opportunities for meeting the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan over the next four years. HMIC found that the Constabulary's finance directorate and the Office of the PCC have a strong and constructive working relationship, underpinned by good governance arrangements and effective ways to scrutinise the plan.

Future Plans

- 4.4 The Constabulary has outlined the plans in place to achieve the £4.9m savings required in 2014/15, which were noted as “clear” by HMIC. The Constabulary predicts a further savings requirement of £4.1m for 2015/16 and although plans are still being refined, the Constabulary is planning to achieve savings of £4.6m in 2015/16, predominantly through collaboration with forces and Programme Metis.
- 4.5 The Constabulary set out some predictions about future savings that will be required through to 2017/18, based on assumptions about likely grant reductions, cost increases and council tax (precept) increases. HMIC described these assumptions as “prudent”. The plans for 2016/17 and beyond are being developed.
- 4.6 Cambridgeshire’s approach in terms of meeting future challenges is to develop further collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary. The three forces have worked hard to develop the tri-force MTFP. There is a clear commitment from all involved for much greater collaboration and to work together to generate over £26m savings across the three force areas over the next three years.
- 4.7 HMIC found no areas for improvement, and made no specific recommendations in relation to the Constabulary’s financial situation. The Constabulary notes HMIC’s observations and ‘Good’ rating of this area.

To what extent has the Constabulary an affordable way of providing policing? (rated ‘Good’)

Current Situation

- 4.8 The HMIC report noted that the new way of providing policing introduced in Cambridgeshire in April 2012 has served the Constabulary well to date, and the changes have contributed towards its improved performance. However it did note that the Constabulary has not undertaken any further resource changes. In addition, calls for service have changed, particularly in respect of serious and organised crime (e.g., people trafficking and child sexual exploitation) and the Constabulary needs to be confident that the current structure remains fit for purpose.
- 4.9 HMIC reported on the extensive collaborative arrangements that are in place, aimed at improving efficiency and realising further savings. Programme Metis is planned to achieve transformational ICT change. It is being led by Cambridgeshire on behalf of the three forces. The Constabulary has piloted the use of one hundred and fifty four tablets for mobile working, which has freed up officer time by up to an hour each day.
- 4.10 During the current spending review the main elements of the Constabulary’s change programme have included:
- improved IT;
 - using IT to streamline processes and reduce bureaucracy;
 - collaboration with other Forces;
 - priority-based budgeting; and
 - borderless deployment.

Future Plans

- 4.11 The Constabulary's estate does not match the requirement for policing today, so the Constabulary will be conducting a full review. The Constabulary recognises that it is essential to ensure that the new estate matches the Constabulary's vision of improved ICT and a more collaborative approach. Currently, there are a number of buildings that are no longer used and a final decision about their disposal has not yet been made.
- 4.12 There is a clear drive to reduce non-pay costs. Savings in this area, along with those made through collaboration and procurement, will contribute to the overall savings requirement.
- 4.13 The Constabulary identifies that the main elements of its change programme as it responds to future financial pressures will include:
- improved IT;
 - improved call management;
 - collaboration with other forces;
 - priority-based budgeting; and
 - improving the way that operational support is undertaken.
- 4.14 The Constabulary notes HMIC's comments about the need for further review of its current structure to ensure that resourcing remains fit for purpose – especially in specialist departments dealing with serious and organised crime and public protection. This will be flagged to the Chief Officer Group for an appropriate response.

To what extent is the Constabulary efficient? (rated 'Good')

Current Position

- 4.15 Performance has improved, with reductions in crime and a higher number of victims satisfied with the service they received than for England and Wales as a whole.
- 4.16 HMIC noted that the Constabulary is working to improve understanding of the demand it faces, and plans to manage this demand through collaboration for its control room, custody and criminal justice functions (operational support) and its human resources, finance and IT functions (organisational support).

Future Plans

- 4.17 The Constabulary acknowledges that no work has been done at the current time to manage calls for service that should be dealt with by other public services (such as the health service or local councils). The Constabulary will be undertaking a survey of calls through the summer and will then be working with other public bodies on meeting better those areas of demand that do not require a police response.
- 4.18 For the future, collaborative working, Programme Metis, a review of the estates strategy, and more partnership working, will help the Constabulary to meet demand and ensure that provision remains affordable.

4.19 HMIC found no areas for improvement, and made no specific recommendations in relation to the Constabulary's efficiency. The Constabulary notes HMIC's observations and 'Good' rating of this area.

5. Action Plan

5.1 HMIC made no specific recommendations to the Constabulary, as a result of this inspection. No areas for improvement were identified, and HMIC was complementary about the existing auditing and monitoring systems that the Constabulary has in place.

5.2 At the current time there is no plan to create a specific action plan in response to the HMIC Report, and the continued efficiency of the Constabulary will continue to be monitored through existing processes.

6. Recommendation

6.1 It is recommended that the Board notes the contents of this paper.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document(s)	HMIC Report - Cambridgeshire - Responding to the funding challenge
Contact Officer	T/Chief Inspector Paul Ormerod, Corporate Development Department, Force Headquarters