

Dorset Police has made good progress in achieving its savings for the comprehensive spending period but crime levels are some cause for concern

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has today published a report on Dorset Police's progress in meeting the challenges of the 2010 comprehensive spending review.

A thematic report, *Policing in Austerity: One Year On*, found that police forces across England and Wales have risen to the financial challenge of the spending review, cutting their spending while largely maintaining the service they provide to the public; but HMIC has some concerns about whether all forces have transformed their efficiency to the extent that this can be sustained through the next three years (and into future spending reviews).

Based on the data provided by the force, HMIC found that:

- Dorset Police needs to save £20 million between March 2011 and March 2015. By spring 2012 they had planned how to save 100% of this amount.
- The force is planning to cut its total workforce number (i.e. police officers, police staff and police community support officers) by 590 between March 2010 and March 2015.
- 310 of these will be police officer posts; this means there will be 21% fewer officers in Dorset (compared with a 10% officer reduction across England and Wales as a whole).
- The force plans to increase the proportion of its workforce in frontline roles, to 70% by 2015. However, this is a lower proportion than for England and Wales as a whole.
- The proportion of police officers on the frontline will also increase over the same period (from 84% to 87%), although again this is lower than the national figure.
- Crime levels rose in Dorset between December 2010 and December 2011. This is different to the overall national trend, which saw overall crime levels fall.
- 85% of victims in Dorset were satisfied with the service from Dorset Police. This is in line with national figures.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Western Region, Dru Sharpling, said:

"The force has a good history of bringing down costs whilst increasing efficiency; and this stood them in good stead as they worked to address the financial challenge of

the 2010 comprehensive spending review. As a result, they are in a good position to achieve their savings target by March 2015.

“Dorset Police’s plans include a significant reduction in police officer posts by 2015. As it makes these reductions the force should look for opportunities to increase the proportion of staff and officers in frontline, crime-fighting roles. This will help them to focus on reducing crime and making its communities feel safe.”

The full report for Dorset Police, along with the national thematic review ‘Policing in austerity: One year on’, can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk

Notes to editors

1. The full thematic report ‘Policing in austerity: One year on’ and supporting material can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk
2. The review ‘Adapting to Austerity’ published in July 2011 and the accompanying force reports can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk
3. 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.
4. Figures are rounded (financial figures to the nearest million and workforce figures to the nearest 10) and financial figures are in cash prices.
5. For further information, or to request an interview, HMIC’s press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
6. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the effectiveness of police forces and authorities to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects and regulates all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the British Transport Police and HMRC.
7. HMIC’s out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.
8. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out an inspection of all 43 police forces in England and Wales in spring 2011, to see how they were planning to meet this financial challenge. When the results were published in July 2011 (search for ‘Valuing the Police’ on www.hmic.gov.uk), we committed to returning one year later to report on progress, and to assess whether there had been any impact on the service provided to the public.