



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

**Valuing the Police:
Preparedness Inspection**

**North Yorkshire Police
July 2011**

Purpose of the review

The Police Service, along with all other parts of the public sector, is facing its biggest financial challenge in a generation. This could be seen either as an opportunity to innovate and refresh – or as a reason to continue as is and see services cut back.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been heavily involved in monitoring the Service's reaction and preparedness for cutting crime while reducing costs. As part of this, in Spring 2011 we carried out an inspection of all 43 forces and authorities in England and Wales, to assess:

- how they are planning to meet the financial challenge; and
- what the impact will be on the service they provide to the public.

This report summarises the findings for North Yorkshire Police. A thematic report, *Adapting to Austerity*, which brings together findings from all 43 forces, is also available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

Findings for North Yorkshire Police

What is the financial challenge in North Yorkshire?

North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Police Authority reported that they are facing a **£28.4m** cash reduction to their budget over the four years of the comprehensive spending review period (2011/12–2014/15). In real terms (ie when inflation is taken into account), this equates to 17% of their gross revenue expenditure.

Are the force and authority prepared to meet this financial challenge?

North Yorkshire Police and Police Authority clearly understood the scale of the financial challenge facing them, and have considered a full range of options in developing an ambitious plan to meet it.

At time of inspection, a plan was in place to realise all required savings for the first two years of the comprehensive spending review period (although planning for future years required further development). The success of this challenging plan was dependent on structural, cultural and workforce changes being in place in 2011. The force and authority recognised that this rapid pace did pose some risks, and that it might be necessary to adjust the plan following the first year of implementation. However, at the time of inspection both force and authority were of the view that one big change was preferable to several disjointed adjustments drawn out over a longer period.

Due to the speed of progress and recent changes within the force leadership team, programme and project management structures for the change programme were still evolving. The force and authority recognised the risks around this, and were working to minimise them.

What will be the impact on the number of police officers and staff?

North Yorkshire Police planned to make the following changes to its workforce numbers.

	Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSO
31 March 2010 (actual)	1,486	1,158	198
31 March 2015 (proposed)	1,336	956	183

March 2010 figures have been used as the baseline, because most forces began a recruitment freeze in that year, and as a result workforce numbers started to fall. The proposed figures shown for March 2015 were provided to HMIC by the force in June 2011.

The force and authority's plans for the workforce will continue to be refined as the change programme progresses.

What will be the impact on service to the public?

The authority and force were planning to maintain or improve the service delivered to the public both during and after implementation of the proposed changes. They did not anticipate that any services would be reduced, but rather that the way the public interact with the police will change. However, the plan for later years had not yet been fully developed and may affect service delivery with a more noticeable impact for the public.

The force have a draft *Change Programme Communications Plan*, and regularly liaised with the police authority media office to ensure they gave out a consistent message. Because of the tight deadlines for achieving change, the public had not been specifically consulted about the proposed changes; however, feedback on what they said the policing priorities should be had been considered in developing the change plan.

Does the force have targets to reduce crime and ASB?

The first job of the police is to reduce crime and keep the peace; and in 2010, Theresa May, the Home Secretary, stated that she expects forces and authorities to make financial cuts while still reducing crime and without damaging the front line.

North Yorkshire's *Policing Plan* includes objectives to reduce crime and targets around ASB over the coming year.

