



Nottinghamshire

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) Responding to Austerity: Meeting the Challenge.

The report can be found [here](#)

As per my statutory responsibility to prepare comments on any of HMIC's published reports, Section 55(5) of the 1996 Police Act, I have read the report and have noted that the HMIC's Valuing the Police Programme has identified that the Force's preparations to meet the financial challenges in both the short and long-term require improvement.

There are robust efficiency plans in place to protect the Force's financial future in response to the severe cuts to its funding. The Chief Constable and I have been working to develop a new approach to delivering policing across Nottinghamshire which puts prevention at the heart of a strategy to reduce crime and keep people safe.

HMIC said that the Force had already achieved 73% (£34.3m) of the savings required over the spending review period (March 2011 to March 2015) and had even exceeded its target in 2013/14, allowing for a contribution to its reserves. Much of the savings for 2014/15 and 2015/16 are dependent on the Force redesigning the way it delivers policing including further collaboration with other forces and changes to its operating model. However, HMIC was concerned that the Force had not made timely decisions about these structures and said any further delay in decision-making or implementation would have an impact on the Force's ability to meet its savings targets in the future.

In response, the Force acknowledged that, at the time of the inspection, its plan to meet the funding challenge was still in the final stages of development and had not therefore been finalised. Since the inspection, the plan has been agreed and is already being implemented. HMIC has been kept informed of the progress made.

This plan is vital to the long-term health of the Force. Both the Chief Constable and I are determined that it will deliver an enhanced policing service, which protects the aims and priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan whilst finding the necessary savings to the police budget.

HMIC also said the Force needed to make improvements to its affordable policing strategy. It said that the Force had shown "strong commitment" to regional collaboration but there were delays in the time taken to reach agreement with other forces. However, the report added there was now 'great energy and momentum' going forward with new shared services partnership arrangements in place.

This inspection took place a few months ago and we are already much further ahead in our preparations to meet future financial difficulties. Although some of the findings were fair at the time they were written, I reject the notion that we have been slow to implement change. The challenges we face are significant and require careful consideration. We have been determined not to make any rash decisions that we later regret.

That said, it is a thought-provoking report which recognises the achievements we have made thus far, whilst also warning of some major challenges which could impact on police services and our ability to meet our savings targets if left unaddressed.

But things have moved on. Progress has been made. We now have a new operating model that gives us a clear direction for policing and community safety. We have briefed staff, partners, stakeholders and the public on our plans. A survey available through both websites will elicit public feedback.

And things are changing. The critical phase for the implementation plan is over the next two years and we have plans up to 2020 as you would expect, which anticipate further future cuts. However, certain elements of the plan are already underway, such as changes within the Control Room, while other elements have been carefully designed to be scalable as we await both the settlement in December 2014 and the next CSR in 2015.

I am committed, together with the Chief Constable, to delivering an excellent local service in conjunction with our partners and communities. We are moving away from 100% attendance as we now have a more sophisticated approach which takes into account the new operating model and the opportunity for other key partners to deal with the issues that the public are calling about e.g. mental health, noise, littering etc. There are a large number of incidents where a police response is not necessary but a different agency with a different response may be required.

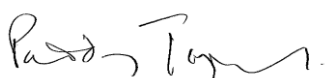
Contact Resolution Incident Management (CRIM) aims to improve the quality of service provided to the public at the first point of contact. Training has been provided to all control room staff in the use of the National Decision Making Model. Their training provides them with greater responsibility and discretion to resolve as many calls as possible over the telephone. This will benefit the public by providing an improved service, with many calls being dealt with at the first point of contact. This will also help reduce response officers attending incidents they may have wrongly attended previously, enabling them to focus on emergencies and high priority calls or investigation opportunities, and dispatch the most appropriate resource at the right time.

Importantly, we have a balanced budget this year, indications show that will remain the case next year and we are achieving our savings. Let me be clear – it's tough out there, but we are not in a precarious financial position. HMIC is fully aware of our position and the progress that has been made since this inspection.

The report recognises the hard work that Nottinghamshire Police has invested in improving efficiency, saying it has developed a good understanding of the demand for its services and has taken measures to reduce this at the first point of contact to ease pressures on response and neighbourhood teams. It also highlighted the Force's commitment to protecting key crime-fighting roles and maintaining visible policing with a higher proportion of police officers and PCSOs.

Public satisfaction, a critical measure of police service delivery, remains high. We want to keep it that way.

Yours sincerely



Paddy Tipping
Police and Crime Commissioner