

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00.01 ON THURSDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2016**



Promoting improvements  
in policing to make  
everyone safer

# **PEEL: Police efficiency 2016**

An inspection of Essex Police



November 2016

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## Introduction

As part of its annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), HMIC assesses the efficiency of police forces across England and Wales.

As with all public services, it is vital that the police service operates in a way that makes the most of all its available resources. Police forces need to make sure they understand the current demand for their services. This is to make sure that they use all the resources available to them to fight all types of crime and to protect communities. Also, forces need to be looking to the future to understand how that demand may change and to plan where they need to invest extra resources or change the ways they operate so that the public can continue to receive the policing it expects and deserves.

As part of the government's objectives to cut public spending, central funding to the police service in England and Wales has been reduced by around 20 percent since 2011. Police forces across England and Wales have faced a difficult challenge to sustain effective levels of policing in the face of significant budget cuts. Forces need to continue to make efficiencies and invest resources wisely in order to maintain a focus on reducing crime and keeping their communities safe. HMIC considers that a police force is efficient if it is making the best use of its resources to provide policing services that meet expectation and follow public priorities, and if it is planning and investing wisely for the future.

HMIC's efficiency inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/)). This report sets out our findings for Essex Police.

Reports on Essex Police's legitimacy and leadership inspections will be available on the HMIC website ([www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016)) in December 2016. Our reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2017.

## Force in numbers



### Financial position

	2016/17	2019/20	Percentage change
Forecast change in total gross revenue expenditure	<b>£285m</b>	<b>£289m</b>	<b>+1%</b>

Forecast savings:

	2016/17	2019/20
Amount of forecast savings	<b>£17.6m</b>	<b>£3.5m</b>

	2016/17	2019/20
Percentage of gross revenue expenditure	<b>6%</b>	<b>1%</b>



### Workforce

	2015/16	2019/20	Percentage change
Planned change in officer numbers	<b>2,894</b>	<b>2,792</b>	<b>-4%</b>

	2015/16	2019/20	Percentage change
Planned change in total workforce	<b>4,951</b>	<b>4,825</b>	<b>-3%</b>

	Essex Police	England and Wales force average
Officer cost per head of population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016	<b>£87</b>	<b>£98</b>

	Essex Police	England and Wales force average
Workforce cost per head of population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016	<b>£129</b>	<b>£143</b>



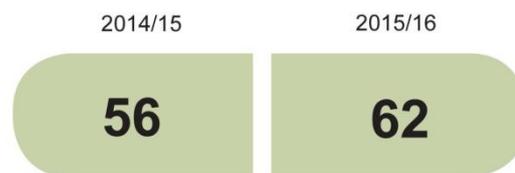
## Calls for assistance

999 calls per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016

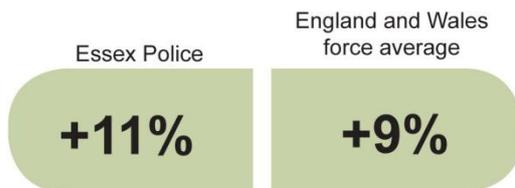


## Recorded crime

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016

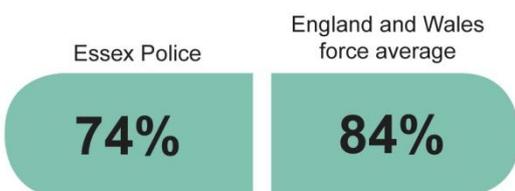


Percentage change in recorded crime (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016



## Victim satisfaction

Victim satisfaction with the overall service provided by the police 12 months to 31 March 2016



For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

## verview – How efficient is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

### Overall judgment<sup>1</sup>



Good

Essex Police has been assessed as good in respect of the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. The force has a detailed understanding of the demand on its services and is evaluating how demand may change in the future. It has improved how it uses its resources to manage current demand since last year, but the force could still do more. Essex Police has a good track record of delivering savings. It has an ambitious financial plan that should lead to savings and greater efficiency, while also improving services. In last year's efficiency inspection, Essex Police was judged to be good.

### Overall summary

Essex Police has maintained its efficiency in keeping people safe and reducing crime since HMIC's inspection in 2015. The force is good at understanding current demand through using an extensive range of management information. Its recent comprehensive mapping exercise to identify all current demand allows future demand to be modelled, based on local and national crime trends. The force has also developed a sophisticated understanding of new, emerging and hidden demand, including cybercrime, hate crime and female genital mutilation. It has developed a new strategy for tackling digital crime and is looking into disability hate crime and hate crime in sport. The force is working with the children's charity Barnardo's and local authorities to improve the identification and reporting of female genital mutilation. It is making good progress in evaluating likely future demand and the impact, scale and likelihood of future risk, and is working closely with partner organisations to understand how reducing resources may affect services and what action should be taken.

Essex Police is also good at making sure it has the right number of properly trained officers and staff in the right place to provide an effective service to the public. The force regularly looks for ways to identify inefficient activities and its transformation programme uses demand and process mapping to identify and resolve such inefficiencies. It has mature and effective processes to assess the cost of services in relation to the quality and level of outcomes. The force has improved its

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<sup>1</sup> HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

management of demand since HMIC's 2015 inspection, with good reductions in unresolved open incidents and suspects who have yet to be investigated, but needs to do more. It does have a comprehensive understanding of workforce skills. The force's detective capacity and capability was found to be low in last year's inspection and is now improving. Essex Police has an extensive, mature and expanding collaboration with Kent Police and they have ambitious joint plans for mobile devices later in 2016.

Essex Police is also good at planning for future demand. Its plans are ambitious but credible and realistic, and are informed by a good understanding of the force's future challenges. The medium-term financial plan is based on realistic and prudent assumptions about future income, costs and benefits and it links to the workforce plan and planned increase in digital capabilities. Future investment plans are designed to achieve greater efficiency and service improvement. The force has a good track record of delivering savings, despite being one of the lowest-funded forces. It has an ambitious plan to 2019/20 to deliver savings of £43.9m across a wide range of budgets, but mainly in the back and middle office functions. It is also aiming to realise major savings through changes to its estate. Essex Police has a strong track record of joint working, primarily with Kent Police but also as part of a seven-force strategic collaboration<sup>2</sup> that seeks to find efficiencies in operational, middle office and support services. The force is also part of the Athena programme, in which nine forces have jointly obtained a new integrated single policing system<sup>3</sup>. If the force successfully implements all of its plans, it will have a solid and sustainable base for the future.

### **Recommendations**

Essex Police is a good force. HMIC has not identified any causes of concern and therefore has made no specific recommendations.

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<sup>2</sup> The seven forces in the strategic collaboration are Bedfordshire, Essex, Kent, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

<sup>3</sup> The Athena forces are Kent, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia.

## **How well does the force understand its current and likely future demand?**

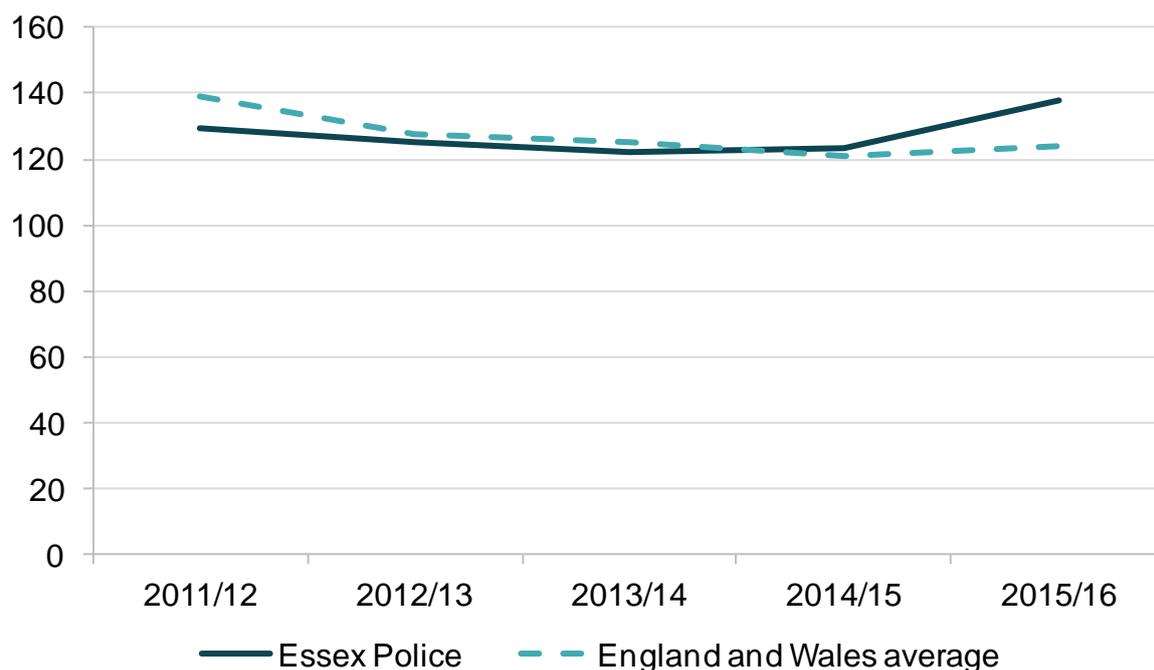
A good understanding of the demand for police services is vital in ensuring that forces have the right resources in the right place to provide the right level of policing now and in the future. This means not just an understanding of reported incidents but also how well a force proactively looks for demand that is less likely to be reported (e.g. incidents relating to modern slavery or child sexual exploitation) so that it can ensure that it protects the most vulnerable victims. Forces also need to understand how much resource to put into work that prevents crime and anti-social behaviour from occurring in the first place. It is important that forces continually review how they operate to ensure that they are not wasting police resources by operating inefficiently or responding to unnecessary demands.

Forces must understand how demand is changing and how they need to change in order to adapt to ensure that they can plan for the future and continue to respond effectively. As well as assessing likely future threats and risks from crime, this also means understanding and assessing the potential impact of wider societal and environmental changes on the demands they will face.

## **How well does the force understand the current demand for its services?**

Police services cover a wide spectrum of activities and go far beyond the most obvious demands for providing a response to 999 calls, protecting victims of crime and pursuing offenders. It is important that forces have a comprehensive understanding across the whole range of different demands they face, including early intervention work with other organisations to prevent crime and proactively seeking out 'hidden' crimes (e.g. domestic abuse, internet crime, fraud, modern slavery and crime in communities who are more reluctant to trust or engage with the police). Police forces also need to understand how efficiently they run their own operations in order to avoid wasted effort and to ensure that they make the best use possible of all available resources.

**Figure 1: Volume of 999 calls per 1,000 population received by Essex Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016**

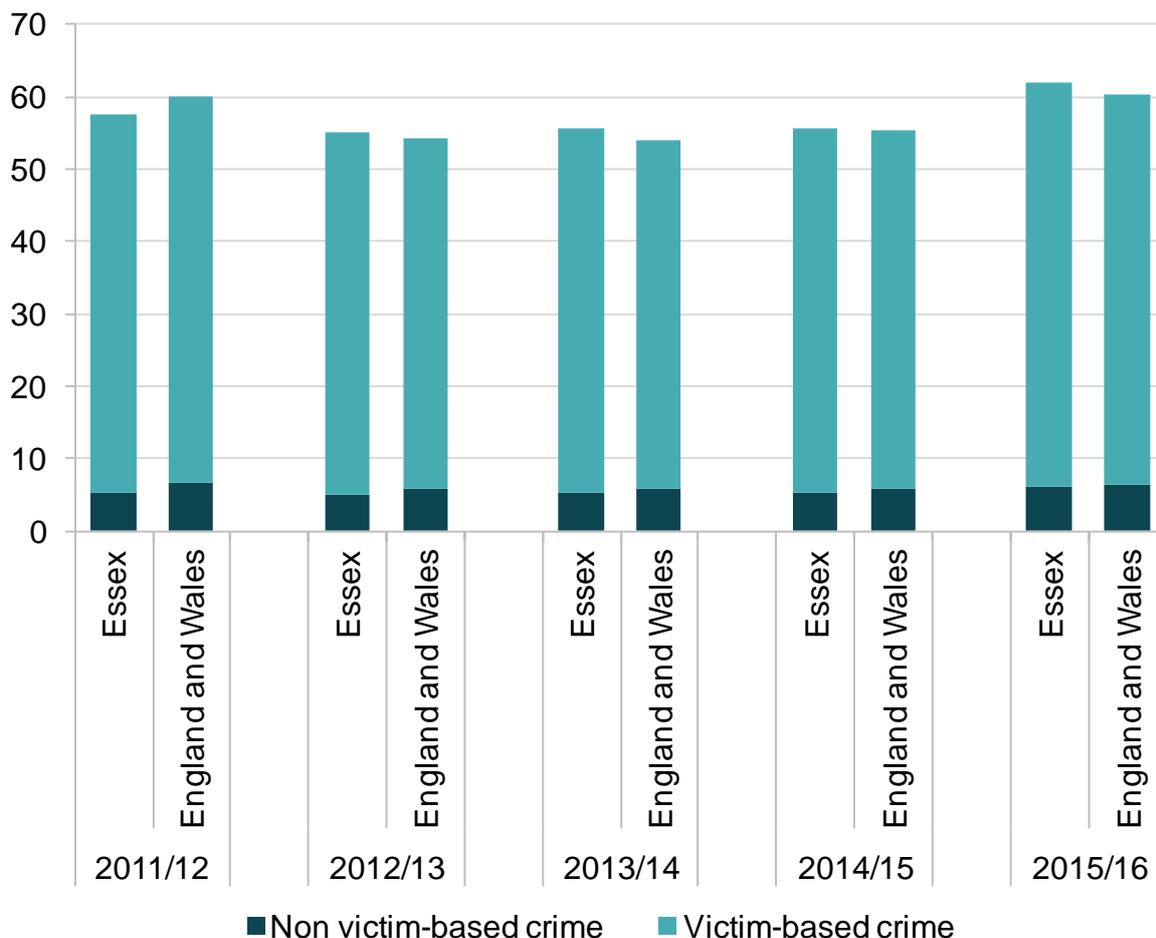


**Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement**

**For further information about the data in figure 1 please see annex A**

Essex Police received 138 '999' calls per 1,000 population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 124 calls per 1,000 population. In the 12 months to 31 March 2012, the force received 129 '999' calls per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 139 calls per 1,000 population.

**Figure 2: Police recorded crimes per 1,000 population in Essex Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016**



**Source: Home Office Police recorded crime data**  
**For further information about the data in figure 2 please see annex A**

In respect of police recorded crime for the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Essex Police recorded 55.9 victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 53.8 victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. Over the same period, Essex Police recorded 6.2 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 6.5 non victim-based crimes per 1,000 population. There has been an increase in the victim-based crime rate of 7 percent and an increase in the non victim-based crime rate of 16 percent since the 12 months to 31 March 2012.

Essex Police has a comprehensive understanding of the full range of its current demand based on a wide range of management information. In 2015, the force used software modelling undertook substantial demand modelling to understand what a typical day looks like in Essex Police. Decision making is now supported by rigorous and sophisticated analysis that goes beyond calls for service to include investigative demand and proactive, preventative work. Reports produced for the chief officer team demonstrate the depth of understanding the force has of both its current and predicted future demand. This analysis is based on local and national crime trends

and includes not just crime, but also harm generated by crime and non-crime incidents. It is graded in accordance with the 'Cambridge harm index'.<sup>4</sup> The force also has a detailed understanding of demand across both geographical areas and time frames and effectively uses a predictive calendar to identify anticipated peaks in demand and predict spikes in crime types at certain times of the year based on previous data.

The force's public contact programme was designed to modernise non-emergency public contact and improve the quality of service provided to victims and witnesses of crime and members of the public. The data generated by the programme has resulted in a series of changes, including the introduction of online crime reporting. This has increased rapidly from 81 online reports in March 2016 to 879 at the time of our inspection in July 2016. A total of 2011 crimes have been reported online since the facility went live in March. Other changes include a reduction in the number of police station front counters and the trial of networked information points where members of the public are able to go online to access police services and information at locations across the county.

In terms of new, emerging and hidden crime types, the force has taken a number of steps to develop its understanding. The force acknowledges that the number of estimated digital crimes is greater than the 108,200 recorded crimes reported to Essex Police in 2015 (Office for National Statistics). It has used the British crime survey estimates of the levels of digital crime nationally to estimate the likely true levels of digital crime in Essex to be 140,000 incidents and have used this figure as the basis for developing their new digital strategy - 'A holistic approach to digital policing'. The force also conducted a review of public protection and hidden harm in 2015, in part as a consequence of HMIC's inspection, this work helped inform the new model for the force's public protection and crime command.

The force is working with the children's charity, Barnardo's and all three local authorities in the county to improve the identification and reporting of female genital mutilation (FGM) and to enhance the service provided to victims, potential victims and their families. Barnardo's outreach workers have been commissioned to work with families and to provide education and advice to professionals and communities about FGM and the mandatory duty to report any such abuse. This has resulted in an increase in FGM reports to Essex Police. Further innovative work includes academic research into disability hate crime sponsored by the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC), in response to the suspected low level of reporting. The force is also evaluating hate crime within sport and in particular, county and local level football, to establish whether such crime is being dealt with under the football regulations rather than being reported to police.

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<sup>4</sup> The Cambridge harm index (CHI) applies a multiplier to a crime type to give a numerical harm score which enables forces to see the relative harm each crime has upon a victim.

The force regularly and effectively challenges itself to identify any inefficiencies that may increase unnecessary demand on the force. Its transformation programme team uses demand and process mapping to identify and resolve such inefficiencies, together with specific programmes. For example, an 'operation quarantine' initiative has been set up, where crimes are assessed first by a crime bureau using THRIVE (threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement) principles to determine whether police attendance is required.<sup>5</sup> Where it is decided that a police attendance is not needed, a desk-based investigation is undertaken and the victim informed of the outcome. The innovative and award winning implementation of telematics technology to monitor police vehicle usage has enabled the force to reduce the number of its fleet vehicles. The force has also commissioned consultants to review the work of the firearms, shotguns and explosives licensing department (FSEL), which has led to streamlining the work of the department and improved services to the public.

## **How well does the force understand potential future demand for its services?**

Demands for police services are continually evolving. Forces need to anticipate and understand likely future changes so that their plans keep pace with the public's needs and expectations. Potential future demand includes new and emerging types of crime, such as cyber-crime, modern-day slavery and human trafficking. Also, it includes changes to the communities that forces serve, developments in technology and environmental events, such as flooding.

The force is making good progress in evaluating future demand and in developing its understanding of the impact, scale and likelihood of future risk. For instance, the serious crime department (SCD) is working with partners and academics to develop a 'thematic early warning system' (TEWS) to help identify future trends and changing demand. The force has recently undertaken a comprehensive mapping exercise to identify all current demand (reactive, investigative and preventative) and model this demand into the future, based on local and national crime trends. This latest analysis not only maps crime, but also examines the harm generated by crime and non-crime incidents. For cyber-crime, the force has approached other forces to see what works well. In response to expected increases in reporting, a joint cyber unit with Kent Police has recently been agreed to provide a more efficient and resilient response for both forces. The force also works closely with local partner agencies and communities so that the force is better placed to understand the needs of victim in new and emerging crimes.

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<sup>5</sup> THRIVE – is a structured risk assessment tool used by police forces to inform decisions on the most appropriate response needed. Based on the: threat, harm, investigative opportunities, vulnerability of those involved, and opportunities to engage.

The force is also actively working with those partners to understand the impact of reducing resources. The strategic forum for this work is the Essex Partnership Board (EPB), which brings together senior leaders from public, private and voluntary sector partners aiming to provide better outcomes and improved public services including effective collaboration. HMIC found that police resources are being appropriately used to support emergency service partners. For example armed response officers who have received some medical training and carry new medical kits in their cars, will assist the ambulance service with 'red calls'<sup>6</sup> where the ambulance is unable to attend quickly enough and the officers are not required to attend a police emergency call. There are occasions where frontline officers spend long periods of time waiting in the accident and emergency department of hospital with vulnerable people who have been sectioned under the Mental Health Act because there were no available bed spaces within the mental health wards. The force is also working with health partners to support delivery of the crisis care concordat to manage the partnership response to reduced resource and increased demand, in particular the urgent and emergency access to crisis care. The aim of these developments is to help reduce the use of police resource in support of partners, whilst safeguarding the service to the public.

A key element of the force's response to reducing resource across the public sector is the development of community safety partnership hubs, set up across the county to provide a seamless service to tackle locally-agreed priorities. While some hubs are virtual, the most effective ones, such as those at Clacton and Southend, have community policing teams, partners from local authorities, health and other emergency services located together. The force's ambition is that all of the hubs will involve physical co-location of staff with shared technology and joint management, as it believes the public are more likely to receive a joined-up and therefore better level of service.

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<sup>6</sup> Red calls are the Ambulance Service means of grading calls for service. Red1 and Red2 being emergencies that require an 8 minute response time.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Essex Police is good at understanding its current and likely future demand. It has a detailed understanding of the full range of demand based on an extensive range of management information. The force has recently undertaken a comprehensive mapping exercise to identify all current demand (reactive, investigative and preventative) and predict (using software models) this demand into the future, based on local and national crime trends. It also has developed a sophisticated understanding of new, emerging and hidden demand. The force regularly and effectively challenges itself to identify inefficient activities. Its transformation programme team uses demand and process mapping to identify and resolve such inefficiencies. Good progress is being made to evaluate likely future demand and develop its understanding of the impact, scale and likelihood of future risk. It is working closely with partners to understand the impact of reducing resources and the potential impact on services, and take action. This means that Essex Police is well placed to match its plans to current and future demand in the most effective manner possible.

## **How well does the force use its resources to manage current demand?**

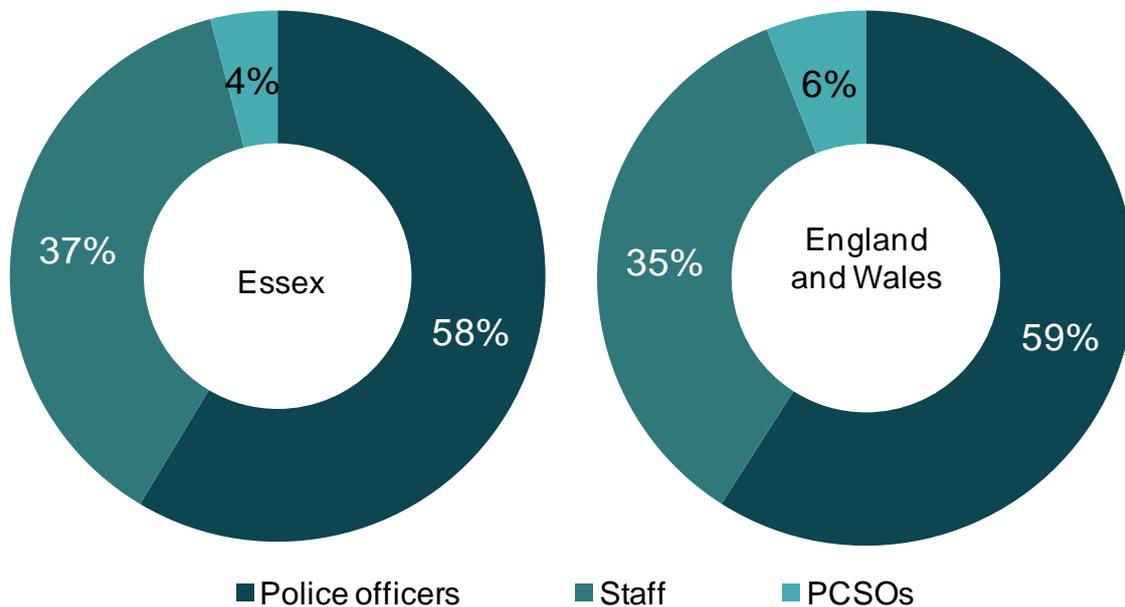
Police forces need to operate in a way that makes the best use of all available resources so that demand is met and public expectations are satisfied. We looked at the extent to which Essex Police has the right people with the right skills in the right place to protect the public and to fight crime. Police resources have been reducing continually over recent years. It is increasingly important that resources are aligned to priorities to provide value-for-money services that tackle priorities, manage demand and meet financial requirements. This not only involves a force using its own workforce as efficiently as possible; it also involves the police working in new ways with others to ensure the best possible service to the public, and using all available resources to improve efficiency.

For a number of years, police forces have been focused on changing the way they operate and finding ways to save money in order to manage reducing budgets. It is important that these savings are sustainable and forces can demonstrate that they have achieved efficiencies while continuing to have the capacity and capability to meet demand.

## **How well does the force's current allocation of resources match demand, organisational and financial requirements?**

Police forces need to consider many factors when deciding how to allocate their resources, including all elements of demand, local risks and priorities, and their national responsibilities. We look at how well Essex Police assesses these factors in making decisions about the level of service to provide and how to use its resources to best effect.

**Figure 3: Police officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs) as a proportion of total workforce in Essex Police compared with England and Wales as at 31 March 2016**



**Source: Home Office Police workforce statistics**

**Note: figures may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding of numbers. For further information about the data in figure 3 please see annex A**

As at 31 March 2016, police officers make up 58 percent of Essex Police's workforce. This was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 59 percent. The proportion of staff in Essex Police was 37 percent, broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 35 percent. The proportion of police community support officers in Essex Police was 4 percent, lower than the England and Wales average of 6 percent.

**Figure 4: Planned changes in full-time equivalent workforce from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for Essex Police compared with England and Wales**

	March 2010	Change from 2010 to 2016		March 2016	Change from 2016 to 2020		March 2020
		Force	England and Wales		Force	England and Wales	
Officers	3,606	-20%	-14%	2,894	-4%	-2%	2,792
Staff	2,152	-15%	-21%	1,838	5%	-5%	1,934
PCSOs	445	-51%	-35%	219	-55%	-6%	99
<b>Workforce total</b>	<b>6,202</b>	<b>-20%</b>	<b>-18%</b>	<b>4,951</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>4,825</b>

Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection

For further information about the data in figure 4 please see annex A

### **Managing demands for police services**

Essex Police’s decisions on the prioritisation and allocation of resources is underpinned by a clear rationale, based on an understanding of current and future demand, local priorities, national requirements and public expectations. This rationale is well understood within the organisation.

The force determines its priorities using a range of data, including partnership data, to inform the assessment of threat, risk and harm and consistently sets out its priorities via its ‘Plan on a Page’ graphic control strategy. Resources are assigned within the operating model and overseen by strong governance arrangements which include the demand management board, which focuses on making the best use of officer time and removing inefficiencies. The force has identified certain categories of incident that it no longer attends such as lost property, and it uses the THRIVE process to assess incidents more effectively.

The force has an established ‘business case’ based process to manage workforce change. Areas identified for inclusion are the subject of rigorous review by the transformation programme. This includes: consultation within the force and with partner organisations and a subject expert review process before being presented to chief officers for a decision. The establishment of the community safety hubs is an example of a change which went through this process.

The force responded well to the findings of HMIC’s vulnerability inspection of 2015 and has since moved a significant number of resources into the public protection business area to improve services to victims. The evidence base used included

HMIC findings, the force's own assessment of risk and resource requirements and external expert analysis. As a consequence however, resources have been reduced in other areas of the force, notably community safety policing where the numbers of PCSOs has been reduced by over 150 to 99. This reduction has affected the force's ability to provide a visible local policing presence. However, much of the demand pressure is found at the local policing team level, where HMIC inspectors found frontline response officers with 18 or more allocated crimes to investigate alongside their other duties. HMIC found that the overall allocation of crimes to frontline staff does not appear to be excessive, amounting to around an average of around 8 crimes per officer. Therefore, the inconsistencies found with some individuals carrying high numbers of crimes, suggests that the issue relates to how individual supervisors apply the crime allocation model. HMIC will review this matter in the Autumn 2016 PEEL effectiveness inspection.

### **Increasing efficiency**

Essex Police has a good understanding of the costs of services in relation to the quality and level of outcomes. The force's long term transformation plan is supported by a detailed 2020 change plan, which projects and tracks potential savings, additional costs and investment across future years. Governance is provided by the chief officer team and the OPCC who review in-year and full-year costs and savings against plans.

The force has recently moved to a new, more reflective, performance framework, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures, audit and governance activity and feedback, designed to encourage continuous improvements in force performance. Therefore, outcomes are monitored systematically and reviewed to ensure that the required level/quality of service is achieved. The 'balanced score card' approach has been successfully used by the support services directorate for several years and is now being rolled out to the entire force. The force submitted several entries to the iESE improvement and efficiency awards in 2016,<sup>7</sup> winning several prizes. One entry, the use of telematics in the fleet, was shortlisted for the Police Project of the Year. This initiative enabled the force to identify underused vehicles, opportunities to improve deployment of operational police resources, savings in maintenance and repair, and reduced mileage costs.

Another mechanism for improving efficiency is the introduction of the THRIVE process into the control room in mid-2015. This has reduced the need for officers and staff to attend lower priority incidents, with advice and guidance being offered over the phone instead, in many instances without any negative impact upon the service provided. Demand is now better managed by the force and unresolved open

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<sup>7</sup> The iESE awards, run by the national Improvement & Efficiency Social Enterprise (iESE), showcase the best in transformation and improvement from councils, police, fire services and public partnerships.

incidents<sup>8</sup> are now at 700, which is significantly lower than when this issue was first identified in our 2014 Crime Inspection. Two years on however, it could be expected that the force would be in a better position with this issue. Similarly, the numbers of suspects still to be investigated is now better managed and have reduced to around 300; but this level is still too high. The force needs to do more to reduce the numbers of unresolved incidents and outstanding suspects and keep these numbers at appropriate levels.

The force ensures that all improvement programmes are rigorously assessed through established systems and processes, to ensure continuous improvement. In addition, there are regular post-implementation reviews of changes to ensure planned outcomes and efficiencies have been achieved. Post-implementation reviews are occasionally completed with the support of external consultants or the College of Policing. Recent examples include reviews of the partnership hub structure, the change of shift pattern for local policing teams and changes to operational policing deployment in relation to local and roads policing. The force also has a good track record in achieving service improvements and generating efficiencies as a consequence of its use of the LEAN review programme.<sup>9</sup>

In terms of increasing efficiency through the use of IT, the force has agreed ambitious plans to introduce mobile devices for all frontline officers from September 2016. Its chosen device matches the force's requirements better and is cheaper than a more recent model. The aim is that officers will have a range of IT systems available from autumn 2016 onwards, with more systems added over the course of 2017. The force estimates the total capital investment in the mobile devices and associated items to be £8.6m, with spending of between £1.2m and £2.2m per year up to 2019/20.

## **How well does the force improve the productivity of its workforce?**

Finding ways to make police officers and staff more efficient when they are out in their communities and reducing time spent doing back office functions is essential to ensuring that police officers remain visible, on the beat and engaged in activities to reduce and fight crime. Police forces spend around 80 percent of their budget on staffing, so it is vital that the workforce is as productive as possible. This means

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<sup>8</sup> These are incidents where after the initial contact with the informant and or victim action is planned but not yet delivered for example where the force is struggling to contact the victim or where an appointment has been made to resolve the matter. Incidents are also unresolved and open where the attending officer has yet to write off the incident with the action they have taken and the results of that action.

<sup>9</sup> LEAN is a technique which reviews business processes and seeks to create more value from services or products using fewer resources and minimising waste.

forces need to ensure that all their staff have the skills and capabilities to provide the required level of service. We assessed how well Essex Police understands the skills its staff need, both now and in the future; where there are gaps in either capacity or capability, we looked at whether the steps it is taking are appropriate to ensure that its staff work as efficiently and effectively as possible. We looked in particular at whether the workforce has the right level of digital skills, both to make the most of current ICT systems and to investigate crime digitally.

The force has an improving understanding of its current workforce skills and how this relates to its capacity. The force has begun to use a profiling tool which enables it to identify workforce skills, capabilities, gaps and potential gaps, such as those caused by people retiring. It uses this information to plan both training and recruitment. In terms of digital skills, the force's 'digital vision' has identified resource and skills gaps which are being addressed through immediate, short term action as well as a longer term strategy. Staff have received e-based training in relation to cyber-crime and digital policing. However, the force recognises that there is more to be done if it is to successfully implement its digital strategy.

Another acknowledged workforce gap is in respect of its detective capacity and capability. This was identified by HMIC in last year's inspection, but the force has since made improvements. Currently the force has 690 trained detectives, which is around 65 percent of the total requirement. Many officers are on the detectives' pathway, in the process of being trained and accredited. The force expects that substantial numbers will complete the pathway over the next 12 months which will bring force capacity to or very near to, its required strength of detectives.

### **Tackling workforce gaps**

There are good plans in place to ensure the force can address gaps in capabilities and capacity, and the force's five-year recruitment and training plan predicts specialist courses requirements. The IT-based profiling tool is central to how the force is addressing identified gaps in skills across the ranks and how it is effectively managing succession plans. Staff recognise the value of this and can see the benefits from the force starting to better understand and tackle workforce gaps, for instance, in the work to increase the force's investigative capacity through the detective pathway. The learning and development department have been able to use the information from the profiling tool as a foundation for its five-year training plans. They are also future-proofing their work through environmental scanning and information from the College of Policing.

The force has a new lateral development scheme called 'Develop You' which provides officers and staff the opportunity to undertake short attachments to other departments, areas of business or projects. This scheme is intended to enhance the skills, ability and experiences of the workforce, leading to improvements in outputs as staff use their newly learned skills and experiences. We found that the workforce is mostly positive about access to and quality of the opportunities afforded.

Examples of how the scheme has been used include an inspector who completed an exchange with a peer in Kent Police, and staff who shadowed higher ranking officers have also attended short term attachments to specialist departments such as the traffic unit.

## **How well does the force work with others to improve how it manages demand for its services?**

We assessed how well Essex Police has explored all opportunities to work in collaboration with others to increase efficiency and provide better, more resilient services. This can include work with other police forces, local public sector organisations, the private sector and the voluntary sector. We looked at whether the force has a clear rationale for the decisions it has taken about how it works with others, and whether it has a good understanding of how successful its joint working has been in helping it to better meet demand for its services.

Essex Police has demonstrated a strong commitment to joint working over a number of years. The force's collaboration with Kent Police is extensive, mature and expanding. During our inspection, we found that significant savings are anticipated from shared services collaboration between Kent and Essex police through to 2018/19, with the rationale of improving services while reducing costs. Beyond these arrangements, the force is pursuing closer collaboration with the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS). A chief inspector has been seconded to ECFRS to help co-ordinate the development of projects and initiatives. These include sharing buildings, merging both organisations' community safety teams, shared training and control rooms; and streamlined command structures for incidents.

The force is a member of the seven-force strategic collaboration programme, and its extremely broad scope covers almost every key element of operational, 'middle office' and support services police service delivery. Essex Police also uses the Athena IT system. This programme has a long history stretching back to 2009 - the force was the first to go live with the system which is a fully integrated single policing database incorporating the principal policing functions of intelligence, investigation, custody and case file preparation. The system aims not only to provide an improved IT platform for each force; but also provide instant cross-border data access and so improve service to the public and in so doing set the foundations for future IT enabled cross-border efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Collaboration benefits**

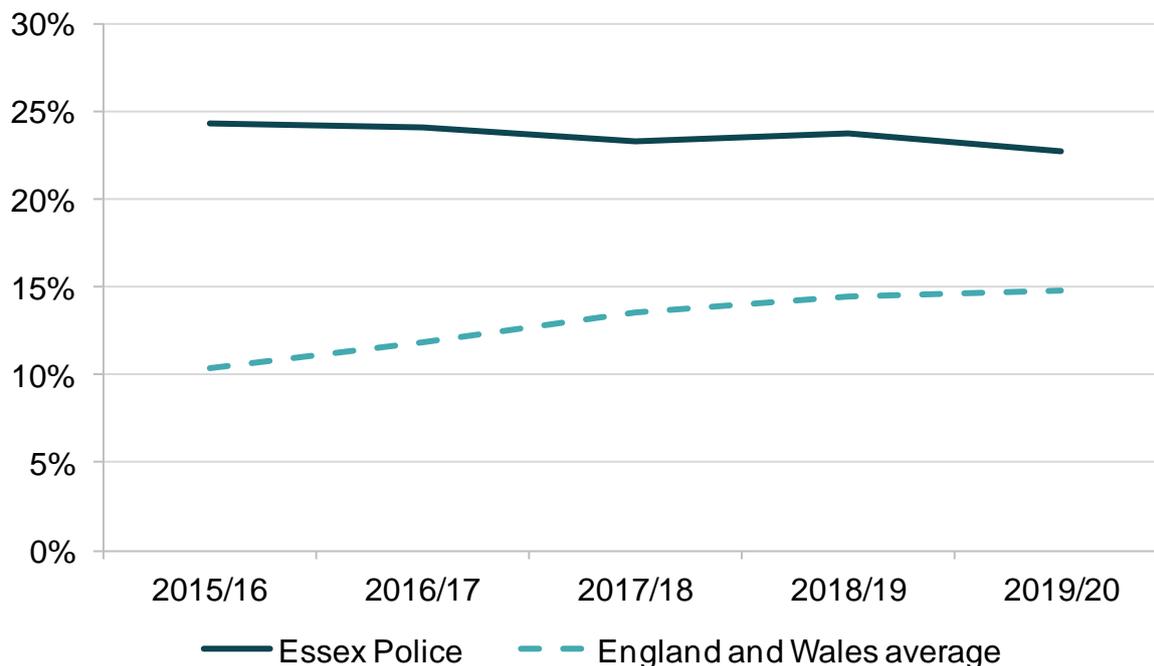
The benefits of collaboration between Essex and Kent police have been significant in terms of reduced costs and improved outcomes across a range of areas. For example, the serious crime directorate (SCD) has provided enhanced resilience at reduced costs to both forces since its inception in January 2010. At the time of our inspection, we found that the SCD had more than 1,100 officers and staff working

together providing a 24/7 intelligence capability, and a flexible surveillance and operational investigative capacity to target those causing the most harm to communities across Essex and Kent. The SCD has enjoyed significant successes since 2010. Independent auditors undertook a review of Essex and Kent police collaboration arrangements to provide assurance that the costs and benefits have been properly calculated and understood. The auditors confirmed that there were robust arrangements in place for the management of the costs and benefits of collaboration.

Essex Police was the first of the Athena forces to implement the shared IT system, meaning the force experienced a number of problems associated with being an early adopter, including reductions in performance across a range of business areas. Many, but not all of these issues are now resolved and other forces will reap the benefits of the Essex experience. Another collaboration relates to shared use of a seven-day week court with Kent, Norfolk, and Suffolk forces. This enables waiting times for court hearings to be reduced and means each force is able to manage its cell capacity better. As mentioned above, the force is also considering the opportunities in the Policing and Crime Bill to increase collaboration between blue light partners, building on existing arrangements.

Plans with other local partners include working with Essex County Council to co-locate services and work in a smarter way with partners, such as the police. These Community Plans (Strengthening Communities) sit very well with the force's own move to create partnership hubs. The assistant chief constable responsible for partnerships is working to bring these arrangements closer to fruition. Collaboration with partners from the health service has led to the introduction of a mental health triage car, where a mental health practitioner works alongside a police officer to attend incidents involving people with mental health problems. In 2015/16 this enabled 192 individuals, to be assessed and appropriately treated and supported. Without this facility, all could have been inappropriately detained in police custody under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act. The OPCC commissioned an independent evaluation of the force's mental health triage car scheme, which concluded that it is cost effective, achieves improved outcomes for service users and has a positive impact on staff.

**Figure 5: Projected percentage of net revenue expenditure in Essex Police, compared with England and Wales, on collaboration with other forces in the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020**



**Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection**

**Note: some forces could not provide data for all years. These forces have been excluded from the England and Wales average in those years only. West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police stated that all of their net revenue expenditure is spent in collaboration. To avoid distorting the distribution of forces, these have been removed from the England and Wales average for this figure. For further information about the data in figure 5 please see annex A**

Essex Police has forecast that it will spend £63.4m in 2016/17 on collaboration with other police forces. This is 24.2 percent of its net revenue expenditure (NRE), which is higher than the England and Wales average of 11.9 percent. For 2019/20, the force has forecast that it will spend £60.6m (22.8 percent of NRE) on collaboration with other police forces. This is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 14.8 percent.

Essex Police is actively engaged in a range of operational and support partnership activities with local authority and other organisations. However, neither these initiatives nor its emerging work programme with Essex Community Fire and Rescue Service do not yet have formal financial plans available.

## **How well does the force understand how any changes made to improve efficiency have affected its ability to manage demand?**

As resources reduce and demands on police services become ever more complex, it is increasingly important that forces understand fully the benefits that are realised from any investment and the impact of any new ways of working. This understanding enables them to learn from what works and to take swift action to mitigate any negative results.

Essex Police has ambitious investment plans, which include the continued implementation of both the new integrated single policing database and the provision of mobile devices. The roll out of mobile devices is planned for September 2016, following an extensive trial of several types of device and in collaboration with Kent Police. The trial was subject to a review from independent external assessors who advised the forces on the levels of likely efficiency savings in officer hours. The force is now researching the best use of these savings. The force's investment plans to 2019/20 include a total capital spend of £8.6m for the introduction of mobile smart phone devices and related items.

To ensure that the benefits of the new devices are realised as soon as possible, the force issued them to officers before all the planned systems had been loaded. This avoided significant delays, while providing considerable improvements compared with what officers had available to them before. The force has also invested in body-worn video cameras, as well as having recently received additional older body-worn video cameras from Kent Police which is replacing them with newer models.

The force has strong governance processes in place to routinely review change programmes and gain a good understanding of the impact on the workforce, partner agencies, and to some extent the public, who are typically consulted both before and after change has taken place. These changes are evaluated and a significant proportion of this evaluation is on the change brought about by collaboration; often this involves commissioning independent sources of expertise. Ultimately, the chief constable is held to account by the PCC through the transformation board.

## Summary of findings



**Good**

Essex Police is good at matching resource to current demand. It has mature and effective processes to assess the cost of services in relation to the quality and level of outcomes. The force has improved its management of demand since HMIC's 2015 inspection, with reductions in unresolved open incidents, and suspects still to be investigated. However, the numbers of both are still too high and more needs to be done to reduce them and keep them at more appropriate levels to minimise any risk to the public. However, the force does have a comprehensive understanding of workforce skills and the impact on capacity and capability. The detective capacity and capability of the force which was identified as low in last year's inspection, continues to improve. Essex Police has demonstrated a strong commitment to joint working over a number of years; the force's collaboration with Kent Police is extensive, mature and expanding, and the two forces have ambitious joint plans for mobile devices later in 2016. Wider collaboration is evident through its membership of the seven force strategic collaboration programme, the Athena programme and with partners through a variety of programmes and activities. This means that the force is well placed to match its resource to current and likely future demand, and to make the most of technological opportunities and efficiencies in the future.

## **How well is the force planning for demand in the future?**

HMIC examined how well forces are using their understanding of current and future demand on their services to develop more efficient ways of operating that balance ambition, realism, innovation and risk. Our assessment examined the extent to which Essex Police's plans are credible and achievable while at the same time are creative and ambitious. This included how far it is aiming to improve efficiency through its workforce plans, collaboration plans, financial plans, ICT plans and approaches to risk.

## **How well does the force identify and prioritise areas to invest in for the future?**

It is important that forces have good plans in place which take account of future demands for their services as well as the likely future funding available to them. They need to invest wisely for the future in order to ensure that they have the right capabilities to meet future demand. HMIC examined the force's financial plans and workforce plans to assess how far it is set to meet future changes in demand and local priorities. We looked in particular at how well Essex Police has considered its future ICT capabilities as well as any wider changes to the communities it serves.

### **Matching resources to demand, organisational priorities and financial requirements**

Essex Police has developed solid future plans based on realistic and prudent assumptions about future income, costs and benefits, making good use of information on future demand and workforce capabilities. The medium-term financial plan is discussed every month between the OPCC and the force. The force's ambition is to protect police officer numbers at around 2,800. Drawing on national research, demand modelling and professional judgment, the force has developed a future resource forecast which identifies those areas of business that will require additional resource to be effective over the next five years.<sup>10</sup> As a consequence, the force anticipates that it will need an increase of 200 posts. As the medium-term financial plans are based on no increase in funding or overall establishment, the additional 200 posts required will need to come from reallocating resources within the force and through technological efficiencies. Following the Autumn Statement on police funding, the force revisited previous decisions regarding establishment levels,

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<sup>10</sup> The force identifies the following areas as requiring additional resource up to 2020. Child abuse and child sexual exploitation – 50 investigators, serious sexual offences – 40 investigators, domestic abuse – 40 investigators, urban street gangs – 30 investigators, fraud and cyber crime – 35 investigators, human trafficking and slavery – 5 investigators.

in particular its decision to reduce PCSO numbers. As a consequence the number of PCSOs planned was increased to 99. This decision to maintain the PCSO establishment at 99 from April 2016 onwards reflects the force's desire to retain a viable community safety policing element in order that the vital crime prevention and community engagement work continues at a community level.

Medium and long-term financial plans and demand analysis are considered in the workforce development and training plans. The force's HR department works closely with both the transformation programme team and the learning and development team, to identify current and predicted skills gaps arising from implementing the force's workforce model. The force's understanding of what digital skills it will need in the medium and long term is at an early stage of development, but the force is working with universities to help identify the relevant skills set that will be needed to tackle this growing area of crime.

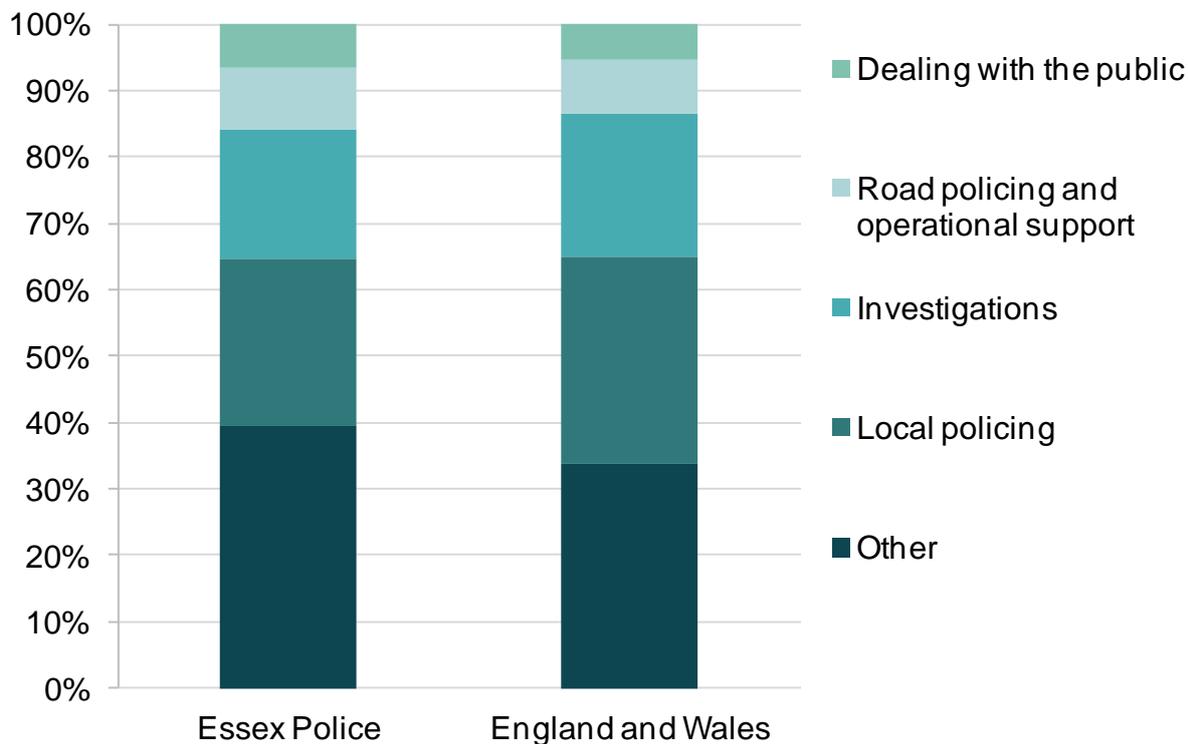
### **Investing in ICT**

Essex Police has considered how its workforce and digital capabilities will integrate in the future. The force's digital strategy has three key strands: public contact; digital intelligence and investigation capability; and digital connection across the criminal justice sector. The ambition is for an operating model in which a suitably trained workforce undertakes mainstream activity, with support from specialists and advisors. As stated above, this is still at a relatively early stage of development. As the digital strategy is a collaborative arrangement with Kent Police, the overall governance of this is provided by a joint chief officers' group. The investments in the new shared IT platform and the use of mobile technology are key elements of the force's approach to IT in the future. The introduction of mobile devices from September 2016 will provide frontline staff with remote access to the intranet, e-mail, and some search capacity of current force systems and databases. It is intended that the devices will ultimately offer greater functionality and interfaces between systems, including crime reporting and statement taking.

### **How well does the force plan its investments?**

A force's plans for investment and savings need to be credible, realistic and informed by a full understanding of the future challenges (both financial and operational) that it is likely to face. HMIC assessed the extent to which Essex Police's future plans are prudent, robust and based on sound assumptions about future demands and costs, while at the same time being ambitious enough to meet public expectations, including identifying new ways of working and providing services in the future.

**Figure 6: Estimated percentage of gross revenue expenditure allocated across different policing functions in Essex Police compared with England and Wales in the 12 months to 31 March 2016**



**Source: HMIC Efficiency data collection**

**For further information about the data in figure 7 please see annex A**

Essex Police’s plans are credible, realistic and they are informed by a good understanding of the future challenges. The successful implementation of the plans will however be challenging. The force has a five-year financial forecast, which makes assumptions about pay and price increases and reductions to central police grant reductions that are reasonable and in line with those forecast by other forces. The force has not built in to the forecast any assumptions about changes to the funding formula for the central police grant. There are indications that the allocation may increase under a revised formula, but the force is awaiting confirmation of this before changing any assumptions. The finance department works closely with the HR and change management departments, ensuring a sound base for the force’s planning assumptions, with evidence of the successful development of capacity and capability such as in detectives and the use of external expertise used within the IT area of business. Moreover, the force uses external experts in developing and implementing its plans, including to challenge and to verify the assumptions made within the force investment plans, including those relating to its investment in IT.

## **Planning for the future**

A new police and crime commissioner (PCC) has been elected to Essex in 2016. The force is having early discussions with the PCC about the possibility of future increases to the precept. Essex is one of the lowest funded forces in England and Wales, is in the bottom ten forces nationally for levels of precept and, under government rules, and could increase its precept by up to 3.36 percent without the need for a referendum. At the request of the PCC, the force is developing a business case, based on three different funding scenarios which have differing levels of precept increase; 0 percent, 2 percent and 3.36 percent. Each option will generate a different savings requirement and add to those already planned for. All of these options are based on clear principles and sound planning assumptions.

Should the PCC choose to increase precept to the full 3.36 percent permitted, the force anticipates it will reach a breakeven point by 2020/21, based upon an assumption of no further reduction in central funding. Given the pressure on resourcing which was apparent during this inspection, particularly in frontline policing, the force faces major challenge to the delivery of its plans and the potential of substantial impact upon service delivery should there be no annual precept increases.

The force's plans are innovative and, dependent upon the levels of future funding, discussed above, are achievable. They clearly align analysis of future demand to the identification of new ways of operating and providing services in the future. Provision of service to the public will change as the police estate is substantially reduced and the force works more closely with partners in hubs across the county. The use of mobile data, digital engagement and more agile working arrangements will mean a more efficient service but a very different one. The new force website, which went live during our inspection, is expected to change in a positive way how the public interact with the force and enable it to manage demand more effectively, clearly directing the public to the most appropriate assistance, which will not always be the police. Workforce plans recognise the need to broaden the range of skills required by frontline staff, as well as the need for new and more specialist skills in some roles to meet future and emerging demand. The workforce plans reflect these needs.

## **To what extent does the force fund its investments sustainably?**

Police forces have made significant financial savings over recent years which have enabled them to reduce their costs and protect frontline policing. They continue to face financial challenges and it is vital to their ability to sustain effective policing that they continue to seek improved efficiencies and drive down costs so that they can not only balance their budgets but also invest in improving their capability in the future. Forces need to consider different ways of transforming the way they work in order to secure effective policing in the longer term. This may include plans to

establish different joint working arrangements with other organisations or investing in ICT to improve operational efficiency.

### **Saving to invest for the future**

Essex Police has a good track record of achieving savings, despite being one of the lowest funded forces. There is an ambitious plan from 2016/17 to 2019/20 to deliver further savings of £34.9m across a wide range of force budgets, but mainly in the back and middle office functions in line with the force's future plans and to meet increases in staffing costs. The force is required to save £17.6m and is on track to save all but £1.4m within the year. Savings planned for 2017/18 are £4.8m, mainly from reductions to estate running costs and support services costs. In 2018/19, £9m savings are planned and in 2019/20, £3.5m. If realised, this would provide a balanced budget by 2020/21.

At 9 percent of net revenue expenditure in 2013-14, Essex Police had the lowest reported revenue reserves (general reserves plus earmarked reserves) of all forces in England and Wales. Total revenue reserves at the end of 2016-17 are forecast to be £14.4m, which is equivalent to 5 percent of net revenue expenditure. This level of reserves would ensure that in future years, working capital requirements are met and a minimal contingency is available for unforeseen events which gives the force limited flexibility.

The force estate comprises 80 buildings, most of which are inefficient and ill-suited for modern policing. Bringing the entire estate up to modern standards would cost £30m, while maintaining them in their current condition is costing almost £2m a year. The force's estate plan, which forms part of its transformation programme, is to reduce the number of buildings to 30. A number of capital funding sources are available to the force, including an annual Home Office grant and its own capital reserves. The force predicts that it will need to borrow a total of £35.5m over the first three years of its transformation programme implementation, which it will borrow through the Prudential Code. After that stage, the capital receipts from the planned disposals are expected to exceed the investment costs required.

Overall, the force forecasts that a gross capital investment of £75.2m is required in order to implement the proposed estates development costs and technological improvements associated with its mobile policing and public contact programmes. This is partially offset by forecast capital receipts totalling £63.0m from the proposed estate disposals. The force predicts that these changes will significantly reduce annual operating costs and release net saving of £157.9m over the first five years of the programme.

The force plans are ambitious and challenging and are largely dependent upon the successful downsizing of its estate. HMIC will revisit the progress of the transformation programme, the associated savings and the use of the predicted savings to enhance the service the force provides in future inspections.

## **Working together to improve future efficiency**

Essex Police has a strong track record of working collaboratively with others, primarily with Kent Police, but also as part of the seven force strategic collaboration where almost every key element of operational, 'middle office' and support services police service delivery are being considered. This includes vetting, anti-corruption work and procurement with interoperability being the key success factor that will bring with it savings in non pay costs. The force is also part of the Athena programme where nine forces have come together to increase their combined purchasing power for a new integrated single policing system.

With its preferred collaborative partner, Kent Police, the force has invested in mobile devices that will increase efficiencies in both forces and both forces continue to identify further such opportunities. As previously mentioned, Kent Police has also recently given some older body-worn cameras to Essex Police, having bought newer cameras which made the older ones surplus to requirements. In addition to police service collaborative working, the force is exploring, with the support of the PCC, collaboration opportunities with the Essex Fire and Rescue Service.

## **Summary of findings**



**Good**

Essex Police is good at planning for future demand and its plans are ambitious but credible and realistic, yet while they are informed by a good understanding of its future challenges they are not without risk. The capital investment programme is heavily reliant upon the successful downsizing and disposal of the force's estate and as such the successful implementation of its plans will be challenging. The medium term financial plan is based on realistic and prudent assumptions about future income, costs and benefits and it links to the workforce plan and planned increase in digital capabilities. Future investment plans are designed to achieve greater efficiency and service improvement. Essex has a good track record of delivering savings, despite being one of the lowest-funded forces. There is an ambitious plan to 2019/20 to achieve a further savings requirement of £34.9m across a wide range of budgets, but mainly in the back and middle office functions. It is also aiming to realise major savings through changes to its estate. Essex Police has a strong track record of joint working, primarily with Kent Police but also as part of the seven-force strategic collaboration. If the force successfully implements all of its plans, it will have a solid and sustainable financial base for the future.

## **Next steps**

HMIC will assess progress on any recommendations and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We may re-visit those forces where we have identified a serious cause of concern, go back to assess as part of our annual PEEL inspection programme or receive updates through regular conversations with forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy, and also leadership. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across the country and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements need to be made at a national level.

## **Annex A – About the data**

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is set out in more detail in this annex. The source of Force in numbers data is also set out below.

### **Methodology**

Please note the following for the methodology applied to the data.

#### **Comparisons with England and Wales average figures**

For some data sets, the report states whether the force's value is 'lower' than, 'higher' than or 'broadly in line with' the England and Wales average. This is calculated by using the difference from the mean average, as a proportion, for all forces. After standardising this distribution, forces that are more than 0.675 standard deviations from the mean average are determined to be above or below the average, with all other forces being broadly in line.

In practice this means that approximately a quarter of forces are lower, a quarter are higher, and the remaining half are in line with the England and Wales average for each measure. For this reason, the distance from the average required to make a force's value above or below the average is different for each measure so may not appear to be consistent.

#### **Statistical significance**

When commenting on statistical differences, a significance level of 5 percent is used.

For some forces, numbers described in the text may be identical to the England and Wales average due to decimal place rounding, but the bars in the chart will appear different as they use the full unrounded value.

#### **Population**

For all uses of population as a denominator, unless otherwise noted, we use the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2015 population estimates.

### **Force in numbers**

#### **Forecast change in expenditure**

These data show estimated gross revenue expenditure (GRE) for the force in 2016/17 and 2019/20, calculated using total GRE pay and total GRE non-pay budgets provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), excluding expenditure on the office of police and crime commissioner.

## **Forecast savings**

These data show planned savings (including use of reserves to bridge an in-year funding gap) in future years, calculated using the planned savings for pay and non-pay budgets provided to HMIC at the time of the data collection (April 2016). Some forces only provided figures for savings that they had formally signed off at that point, while others provided estimates for the whole period. Therefore a force with only a small savings requirement is not necessarily faced with only a small savings challenge for the future.

## **Workforce figures (based on full-time equivalents) for 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2020**

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data are available from the Home Office's published Police workforce England and Wales statistics (available from [www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales)), or the Home Office police workforce open data tables (available from [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables)). Figures may have been updated since the publication. Workforce includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort), but does not include section 39 staff.

Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy. In some instances therefore an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Workforce costs per head of population are obtained from calculations in HMIC Value for Money Profiles 2015, which use the ONS mid-2014 population estimates. The England and Wales averages will differ slightly from the Value for Money Profiles because we have included City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police Service.

## **Figures throughout the report**

### **Figure 1: Volume of 999 calls from the 12 months to 31 March 2012 to 12 months to 31 March 2016**

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 441.

### **Figure 2: Police recorded crime in 12 months to 31 March 2015 to 12 months to 31 March 2016**

These data are obtained from Home Office Police recorded crime and outcomes data tables (available from [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables)). Total police recorded crime includes all crime (excluding fraud

offences) recorded by police forces in England and Wales. Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime include British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMIC inspection. Therefore England and Wales averages in this report will differ slightly from those published by the Home Office.

**Figure 3: Percentage of officers, staff and PCSOs in force workforce on 31 March 2016 compared to England and Wales**

Data as at 31 March 2016 are obtained from the Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' full-time equivalents (FTE). The percentages used in figure 3 are derived from the total FTEs within forces, and therefore may differ slightly from the exact figures quoted within the report.

**Figure 4: Planned changes in workforce FTE from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020 for the force compared to England and Wales**

The figures in figure 4 are rounded to the nearest whole person, full-time equivalents (FTEs), and therefore may differ slightly from the exact figures quoted within the report. Police staff includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort).

Data as at 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2016 are obtained from Home Office annual data return (as set out in the Force in numbers section) which is an 'actual' FTE. These data include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence, and those seconded to forces. Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy, but may not include a projection for absences. In some instances therefore an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Due to the complex and continually evolving picture of workforce collaboration between neighbouring forces, not all changes in workforce figures reflect the workforce that is available to forces. Involvement in strategic alliances and/or regional organised crime units would be an example of where changes over time are likely to be skewed. Therefore sharp increases or decreases over time need to be considered with caution as they may simply represent accounting changes related to how staff are allocated to forces, not real changes in staffing levels.

At the time of the inspection, the future financial climate was uncertain. Several forces did not have confirmed plans for workforce projections. It is important to note that figures provided are in many instances unconfirmed estimates provided to assist HMIC in our inspection programme and should not be seen as a concrete plan for the future workforce landscape of policing.

**Figure 5: Projected net revenue expenditure on collaboration with other police forces for the 12 months to 31 March 2016 to the 12 months to 31 March 2020**

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection.

These data cover the level of expenditure by forces on collaboration-related activity. Collaboration can include a variety of different types of activity, some of which may not incur specific expenditure, but may still generate benefits such as savings or improved services the public. Therefore these data should be seen as only one aspect of potential collaboration activity.

West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police have a highly-developed integrated relationship and have stated that all of their net revenue expenditure is through collaboration. To avoid distorting the distribution of forces around the average, West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police have been removed from the England and Wales average for this figure.

**Figure 6: The percentage of gross revenue expenditure allocated to different policing functions in 12 months to March 2016**

These data were provided to HMIC by individual forces at the time of data collection (April 2016), prior to inspection. These data define policing functions using the Policing Objective Analysis categories which we have grouped. The grouping is illustrated in the table below.

Figure 6 policing functions	POA categories
Local policing	Local policing
Investigations	Specialist Investigations Investigative Support Public Protection
Road policing and operational support	Roads Policing Operations Support
Dealing with the public	Dealing with the Public
Other	Intelligence Criminal Justice Arrangements Support Functions National policing Office of PCC Central Costs