



**Lancashire  
Constabulary**  
police and communities together

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Dear Colleague,

The Authority and Constabulary would like to take the opportunity to share with you the headlines relating to Lancashire Constabulary from a report published today by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies (HMIC) – **Policing in austerity: One year on.**

In Spring 2011, HMIC carried out an inspection into the preparedness of forces and authorities across England and Wales to make savings over the four years of the Comprehensive Spending Review period (2011/12 – 2014/15). The report published today examines whether forces and authorities have achieved their goals for the first year of the CSR, and on how they plan to meet the challenges as they enter the second year.

It is important that we point out from the outset that the Authority and Constabulary implemented a strategic financial review to identify and deliver savings from 2009, ahead of most other forces. The details contained in Lancashire's report from HMI use a starting point of March 2010.

We anticipate that there will be extensive media coverage relating to the report, both locally and nationally. The Chief Constable will be involved in that because he is the national spokesperson for the Association of Chief Police Officers for performance management.

The report shows that Lancashire Constabulary is in a good position to achieve its savings target of £43 million by 2015. It acknowledges that the Constabulary and Authority have a comprehensive change programme in place, and that we are examining every area of our business and assessing the impact on service delivery as well as the potential impact on public confidence levels. We are of course, pleased with this positive summary.

HMIC is reassured that the Constabulary is not only making the necessary savings, but that we are also taking the opportunity to transform our services in order to protect the frontline.

HMIC defines the 'frontline' as *those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law*, and this includes roles such as custody staff, public protection officers, call takers as well as uniformed



officers. According to the report, the Constabulary will have a higher proportion of staff working in all frontline roles by 2015, an 8% increase from 2010.

Lancashire will also have a higher proportion of staff working in **visible** frontline roles than other parts of England and Wales, accounting for 61% of the total workforce. The HMIC define 'visible' roles as *those staff that work in uniform and are seen by the public*, such as neighbourhood and response officers, traffic and firearms officers.

The Authority and the Constabulary have prioritised front line service provision. Notwithstanding this, there will be a reduction by 2015 of 190 staff in front line posts. The Chief Constable has consistently maintained that the overall reductions in staff will be around 550 police officer posts and 250 police staff posts. As highlighted the HMIC report uses a different starting point and therefore the numbers of reported staff reductions differ though neither are contradictory.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Northern region, Roger Baker has said:

*“Lancashire Constabulary has put in place a comprehensive change programme to manage the reductions in its budget. They are therefore in a good position to achieve their savings target by March 2015. Although the force is cutting more police officer posts than most other forces, it is increasing the proportion of officers in frontline roles. This will prove important if the force is to maintain its impressive crime reduction performance of this year”.*

The next 12 months will be the most difficult that we face during the CSR period. The Constabulary has taken the majority of the necessary reductions out of its annual budget as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 – £33 million. The reality of this reduction is being felt now with the Constabulary striving hard to maintain high quality services to the public with fewer staff and less money.

And whilst crime continues to reduce overall – there was a 4% reduction in all crime between December 2010 and December 2011 – there is a huge challenge for the force and Authority to continue consistently to reduce crime. Notwithstanding the financial situation, it would be extremely challenging to deliver continuing high levels of crime reduction as seen over the last several years. Whilst we are committed to working with partners to reduce crime, we need to be realistic about what that might look like in the current climate.

We want to be absolutely clear that the Authority and Constabulary are determined to keep crime levels low in the county and will work hard to tackle any consistent increases with all the resources available to us and in spite of the financial requirement.



You can access a copy of the Lancashire Constabulary report by following this web link – [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk) If there are particular issues that we have touched upon in this letter or that you find in the report that you would like further information on, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Yours faithfully

**Steve Finnigan**  
Chief Constable

**Bruce Jassi**  
Chair, Lancashire Police Authority