

Community safety

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU



Police use of resources 2006/07

Summary results

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1

Summary findings – police use of resources 2006/07

Purpose of assessing police use of resources

- 1 In the last ten years, there has been a 40 per cent real terms increase in police funding. In this period the proportion of total police funding raised through precept on council tax has risen from 13 per cent in 1997/98 to 26.9 per cent in 2007/08. The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) settlement will result in limited growth budgets for the police service over the next three years as well as a target for at least 3 per cent annual efficiency savings. The issue of police funding, efficiency and productivity is under close scrutiny at both a national and local level.
- 2 In July 2007 the Home Affairs Select Committee produced a report into police funding. The report states that there was a significant drop in overall crime as measured by the British Crime Survey between 1995 and 2001 but the downward trend has levelled off since then. In contrast, the bulk of additional police funding was provided between 2000/01 to 2004/05. The Committee concluded that the reduction in overall crime levels does not seem to have been directly related to additional resources (**Ref. 1**).
- 3 The police service is taking steps at a national level to address issues of efficiency and productivity. The Home Office, Association of Police Authorities and Association of Chief Police Officers are developing a tripartite efficiency and productivity strategy covering the 2008/2011 CSR period. *The Independent Review of Policing* will also provide recommendations for the police service to maximise its use of resources (**Ref. 2**).
- 4 New legislation has been introduced to support improvement in local public services in England. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (**Ref. 3**) requires local public service partners to agree and deliver on local priorities, including safer and stronger communities, through a Local Area Agreement. In addition, new community safety regulations have been introduced to support the delivery of the safer communities public service agreement (**Ref. 4**). For Wales, Making the Connections will see local service boards agreeing local community safety priorities. These changes are aimed at improving public confidence in how effective local public services are at addressing priorities for their areas, that will include crime and anti-social behaviour.

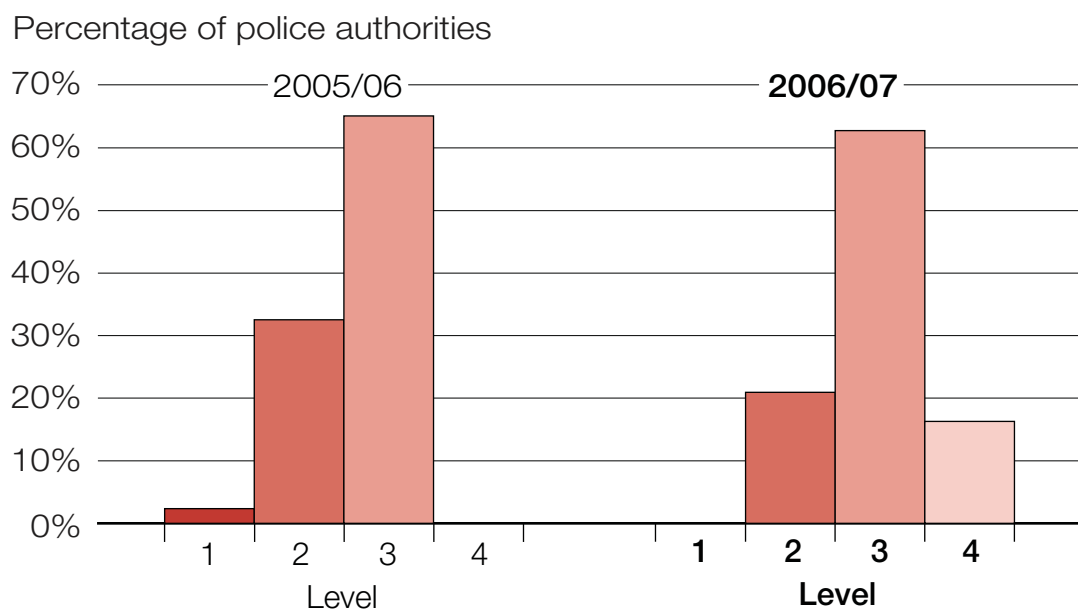
- 5 To deliver safer and stronger communities in local areas, resources need to be coordinated by police authorities and forces, councils, housing and health services. Crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) in England and community safety partnerships (CSPs) in Wales will be responsible for this.

Key findings – police use of resources 2006/07

- 6 This is the second year that the Audit Commission and the Wales Audit Office have assessed police use of resources (PURE). PURE involves auditors assessing whether police authorities and forces are achieving value for money, effective financial management and good standards of governance and accountability.
- 7 There has been an improvement in the use of police resources. **Figure 1 (overleaf)** shows the overall PURE assessment results for 2006/07 compared to 2005/06.
- 8 The key headlines from the 2006/07 PURE assessments are as follows:
 - all police authorities are now performing at least adequately (Level 2) in their use of resources;
 - seven police authorities (16 per cent) are now performing strongly (Level 4) compared to none in 2005/06; and
 - seventy-nine per cent of police authorities are performing well (Level 3) or strongly (Level 4), which is a significant improvement from 65 per cent in 2005/06.
- 9 In our report *Police Use of Resources 2005/06: Summary Results (Ref. 5)* we identified how police authorities and forces can improve value for money. The 2006/07 PURE overall assessment results indicate that the police authorities and forces with the best results are starting to address these improvement areas. Strongly performing police authorities and forces have:
 - worked with councils, housing, health and environmental services to share financial and performance data. They have directed resources to local priority activities in the best way to suit their local circumstances;
 - explored and taken forward collaborative arrangements with other police authorities and local partners, generating efficiency savings (**Case study 1**);

Figure 1**Overall PURE assessment for police authorities in 2006/07 and 2005/06**

There has been an improvement in the use of resources at police authorities and forces since 2005/06.



Source: Audit Commission and Wales Audit Office

- improved business processes, including workforce deployment and crime management, resulting in efficiency savings, increased productivity and front line policing (**Case study 2**);
- worked with local partners to ensure that assets such as police stations are fit for purpose, provide value for money and can deliver local policing and community safety priorities;
- used activity data to inform strategic and financial planning and the best allocation of resources to deliver local policing priorities;
- devolved budgets to ensure that resources are available and accounted for at basic command unit level where decisions about local priorities are made (**Case study 2**); and
- equipped police authority members with the skills to provide effective scrutiny and challenge in financial planning and budget monitoring (**Case study 2**).

- 10 Police authorities and forces will need to maximise their available resources if they are to deliver neighbourhood policing to all local areas by 2008 and to tackle national threats, such as serious and organised crime, including terrorism. The tighter financial settlement places a greater onus on police authorities to hold the force to account in making the best use of resources and delivering value for money outcomes for local people.

Key recommendations

- 11 **Police authorities** need to ensure that forces are making the best use of resources. They should ensure that value for money is a prime consideration when:
- setting priorities for safer and stronger communities; and
 - using their scrutiny role to ensure that the force works strategically and effectively with local service partners, directing resources to local priorities in the best way.
- 12 **Police authorities** need to ensure that internal controls for the authority and force are in place and effective. In particular, they need to review the effectiveness of audit committees and promote high standards of ethical conduct by members and officers.
- 13 **Police forces** need to maximise their available resources to deliver local priorities. They should:
- use performance and financial data to benchmark and challenge how resources are used to deliver policing priorities; and
 - work with partners to determine the best method for delivering safer and stronger communities within the force and local area.

Case study 1

Hertfordshire Police Authority

Maximising resources through partnerships and joint working

The Force has taken a proactive approach to maximising its available resources and delivering safer communities. It has managed its significant business risks by leading and working in partnership with the public and private sector to:

- implement one of the first protective service collaborations, with the Bedfordshire force, that aims to improve intelligence and understanding of serious crime patterns in both counties as well as to provide more specialist staff and improved responses to major crime investigations;

- introduce an incentivisation scheme which has contributed to generating over £2.2 million local authority partner funding to increase the establishment of police community support officers;
- make best use of estates and funding by working with councils, schools, businesses and victim support to meet the costs of community safety teams and increase front line policing to communities; and
- develop with Her Majesty’s Court Service a centralised county-wide system that will expand the capacity and efficiency of remand courts and custody cells.

The Authority has demonstrated the benefits of collaborative and partnership working. By taking a lead on partnerships and joint working, the Force has been able to deliver efficiencies, increased funding and an improvement in the effectiveness of all public services partners in Hertfordshire in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

Case study 2

Staffordshire Police Authority

Delivering value for money through improved efficiency and productivity

The Authority and Force have a track record of working together to improve service efficiency, productivity and the delivery of value for money for local people. The Force is proactively addressing the competing and complex demands placed on its available resources to deliver neighbourhood policing as well as to tackle the threats from more serious and organised crime.

This has been achieved in a number of ways by:

- using the medium-term financial planning process to challenge all aspects of resource use and determine the best options for the provision of services. This has released additional resources for priority activities including the expansion of the Authority’s Community Beat Policing Strategy and neighbourhood policing;
- devolving budgets, financial reporting and monitoring to divisions, so that spending matches local priorities and provides better integration of financial, resource and performance management at a local level;

- greater ownership and accountability by the Authority in the use of resources through the appointment of link members who scrutinise and challenge expenditure and performance at a divisional level through divisional commanders and neighbourhood policing teams;
- using the volume crime management model to create more efficient working practices for recording and investigating crimes, reducing the administrative burden;
- introducing a new Crime Bureau which is improving the accuracy, timeliness and reliability of data used in decision making; and
- developing, through its Resource Strategy and Demand Management, a better understanding of how human resources are deployed, including the capacity and skills of officers and police community support officers needed at force, division and neighbourhood levels to deliver local policing and community safety priorities.

By focusing on improvements in efficiency and productivity, the front line policing measure has increased from 60 per cent in 2004/05 to over 70 per cent in 2006/07. Crime detections and victim satisfaction rates have also improved. By reducing administrative burdens, officers have up to 30 per cent more time for targeted patrol and visible front line policing. For one division, reduced paperwork and bureaucracy processes is realising savings of £8,000 per month.

Through investing in improved working practices and challenging existing methods for delivering services, the Authority and Force are well placed to maximise available resources to deliver on national and local priorities.

2

Introduction and approach to police use of resources

How police use of resources assessments are made

- 14 The Audit Commission assesses use of resources in local government, fire, health and police sectors. In Wales, use of resources assessments are only applied to police authorities. Auditors make scored judgements across five themes:
- financial reporting;
 - financial management;
 - financial standing;
 - internal control; and
 - value for money.
- 15 Auditors made judgements on 11 key lines of enquiry (KLOE) across these five themes. The KLOE are high-level questions underpinned by audit criteria which enable auditors to make their judgements. **Appendix 1** sets out more detail on each of the KLOE. The judgements on the five themes are used by the Audit Commission and the Wales Audit Office to calculate an overall PURE score for each police authority and force.
- 16 PURE judgements have been made using four scores (**Table 1**).

Table 1
PURE scoring scale

Score / level	
1	Below minimum requirements – inadequate performance
2	Only at minimum requirements – adequate performance
3	Consistently above minimum requirements – performing well
4	Well above minimum requirements – performing strongly

Source: Audit Commission and Wales Audit Office

- 17 The scores for each theme are calculated on the average of the scores for the KLOE within that theme. The overall PURE score is determined by the Audit Commission and the Wales Audit Office using a rules-based approach which is summarised in **Table 2**.

Table 2
Rules for determining overall PURE score

Score / level	
4	At least two 4s and no scores below 3 on any theme
3	At least three 3s, no scores below 2
2	At least three 2s
1	Any other combination

Source: Audit Commission and Wales Audit Office

- 18 Auditors provided each police authority with a summary report setting out the authority's score for each theme and an assessment of performance against each KLOE. The reports set out the areas that need to be addressed for the authority to improve its performance. The detailed scores for each authority are summarised at **Appendix 2**.
- 19 Auditors have collated examples of good practice across all of the PURE KLOE themes which they can share with police authorities and forces. The Audit Commission website will be updated in January 2008 with case studies drawn from police authorities and forces that have performed well or strongly across each theme of the PURE assessment.

3

Performance by each of the police use of resources themes

Summary findings

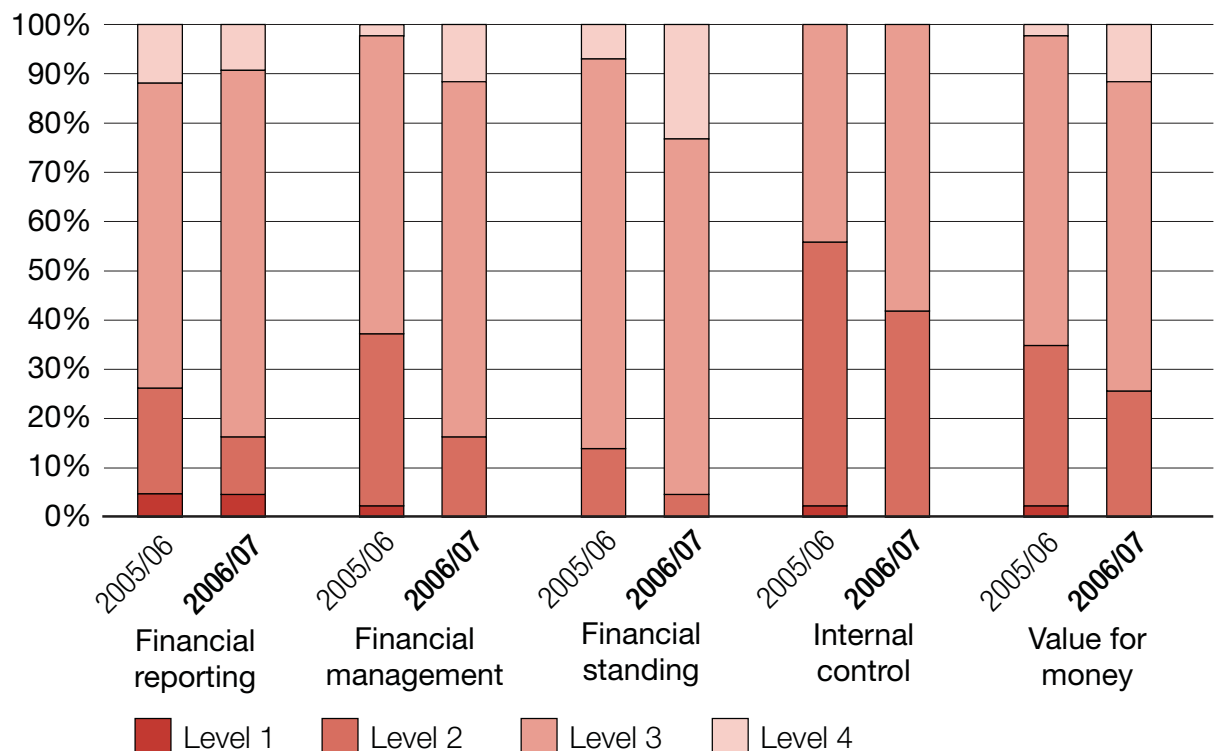
20 **Figure 2** provides an overview of the auditor scores across each of the five PURE themes for 2006/07 compared to 2005/06.

Figure 2

Police use of resources theme scores 2006/07 and 2005/06

There has been an improvement in the PURE scores across all of the five themes.

Percentage of police authorities



Source: Audit Commission and Wales Audit Office

21 The results from the 2006/07 PURE theme scores are:

- Financial standing is the highest scoring theme of the PURE review. Forty-one police authorities (95 per cent) are performing well or strongly which is an increase from 37 (86 per cent) in 2005/06. This year, ten police authorities (23 per cent) are performing strongly.
- Financial management is the theme showing most improvement. Thirty-six police authorities (84 per cent) are performing well or strongly, a significant improvement from 27 (63 per cent) in 2005/06.
- Financial reporting continues to be a strong and improving theme. Thirty-six police authorities (84 per cent) are performing well or strongly, an increase from 31 (72 per cent) in 2005/06.
- More police authorities are securing value for money. Thirty-two police authorities (74 per cent) are now performing well or strongly compared to 28 (65 per cent) in 2005/06. However, 11 police authorities (26 per cent) can do more to improve value for money for local people.
- Internal control continues to be the weakest scoring theme of the PURE review. Although there are now no police authorities with inadequate performance, none are performing strongly and 18 police authorities and forces (42 per cent) can still do more to achieve high standards of governance and accountability.

22 Our report *Police Use of Resources 2005/06: Summary Results (Ref. 5)* summarised the first year of PURE assessments. Since then, most police authorities and forces have improved by:

- managing their significant business risks better. More police authorities now have an integrated risk management policy with the force and have aligned this to strategic, service and financial planning. This, together with training and guidance to members and staff, is creating a culture of risk management at all levels;
- developing and using cost and performance indicators to manage and challenge the use of assets in delivering local policing and community safety priorities;
- integrated financial planning. In most cases, medium-term financial plans now link resources to operational and strategic priorities. They are also more aligned to internal strategies and plans, such as risk and performance management to assess the achievement of priorities and to measure inputs and outcomes;

- using good quality performance and activity data in decision making and directing resources to priority areas; and
- enabling police authority members to provide effective scrutiny and take more informed decisions on financial planning as well as to interpret and question key areas of financial accounts before these are approved and reported.

23 Police authorities and forces that are performing less well across PURE themes this year can make improvements by:

- ensuring the opportunities from partnerships and joint working are reflected in financial, risk and performance management;
- evaluating how partnerships and joint working are contributing towards the achievement of value for money;
- delivering efficiencies through use of shared services, reducing bureaucratic processes and evaluating the capacity and skills of its workforce to deliver on strategic priorities;
- the authority monitoring the adequacy of its governance and systems of internal control throughout the year;
- reviewing the effectiveness of audit committees to ensure that there is strong leadership by members in setting the agenda and holding management to account;
- proactively embedding and monitoring high standards of ethical conduct for officers and members; and
- publishing timely and relevant summary financial information that enables a diverse range of stakeholders to hold the police authority to account in setting its budgets and delivering on local policing priorities.

4

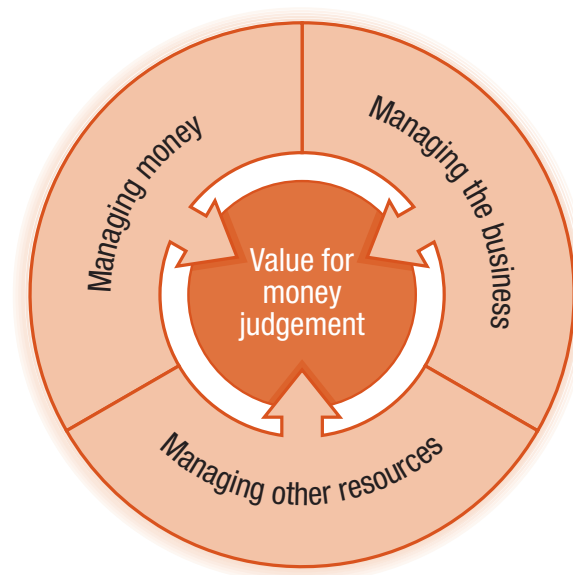
Taking police use of resources forward

- 24 Police authorities and forces should use the key messages identified in this summary together with their local reports to help improve value for money in the use of resources.
- 25 Over the next two years, the PURE assessment methodology will be developed and enhanced to focus more specifically on value for money outcomes. In November 2007, the Audit Commission published, and is currently consulting, on a proposed approach to assessing use of resources at police authorities, councils, fire and rescue authorities and primary care trusts in respect of the 2008/09 financial year (**Ref. 6**). The proposed framework for use of resources assessment in 2008/09 is illustrated in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3

Proposed use of resources framework for 2008/09

The proposed framework will apply to assessing police use of resources.



Source: Audit Commission

- 26 The key features of the proposed use of resources framework for police authorities and forces are that it:
- emphasises the importance of achieving improved value for money outcomes for local people by putting value for money at the heart of the assessment;
 - is a single, annual judgement on value for money in the use of police resources where the overall judgement will be based on auditors' scores on three themes of managing money, managing the business and managing other resources;
 - is wider in scope than PURE by assessing how financial, natural, physical and human resources are being used to achieve value for money;
 - has a particular emphasis on how partnership working, commissioning and procurement are used to improve efficiency, productivity and better outcomes for local people; and
 - focuses on the key issues that face authorities and forces in meeting strategic priorities and improving services.
- 27 The Commission will provide guidance on how the use of resources assessment should be interpreted in the context of the police sector. The use of resources assessment in 2008/09 will be a key component of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) being introduced in April 2009. In Wales, the use of resources assessment will also form part of the evidence for reviewing the progress being made by police authorities in implementing the Making the Connections agenda.
- 28 CAA is a new performance assessment framework for local authorities working alone or in partnership with others such as police authorities and forces. It will provide the first holistic independent assessment of the prospects for a local area and the quality of life for people living there. Its scope will include an assessment of the prospects for achieving safer and more cohesive communities at a Local Area Agreement and CDRP level. A joint inspectorate consultation on CAA was published in November 2007 (**Ref. 7**) and is available to view at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caaconsultation.
- 29 In addition to CAA, a new performance framework is being developed for the police service working alone and in partnership. The Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) will be introduced by the Home Office in April 2008 and will be used to assess and monitor performance during 2008/09. During December 2007, the Home Office will be consulting on the proposed APACS framework.

- 30 The introduction of CAA and APACS provides an opportunity to take an aligned approach to assessing use of resources for policing and community safety services. The Commission is working with the Home Office to ensure that the PURE judgements used in CAA are also incorporated fully into the APACS framework.
- 31 Before then auditors will be updating their PURE assessments at all police authorities and forces in England and Wales during 2007/08. Together with stakeholders, we have undertaken a post implementation review of PURE for 2006/07, which has informed the development of the approach for 2007/08, and we have consulted on revisions to the KLOE.
- 32 The revisions to the KLOE for 2007/08 are aimed at ensuring a smooth transition to the CAA and APACS frameworks. The KLOE has also been updated to take account of the latest legislative and professional developments as well as to remain relevant to the current priorities facing policing and community safety. The Commission will also involve stakeholders in developing its police value for money profiles for 2007/08 so that it can provide helpful information and tools to support comparative assessments of cost and performance.
- 33 The Commission and Wales Audit Office will issue a national summary of findings from 2007/08 PURE by December 2008 to provide police authorities and forces with key messages, direction of travel and an indication as to how PURE is contributing to performance improvement.
- 34 Finally, the Commission and Wales Audit Office would like to thank all those involved in PURE work at police authorities and forces.

Appendix 1

Key lines of enquiry summary

- 1 Further details on the KLOE and the assurances underpinning them can be found at www.audit-commission.gov.uk.

Table 3
KLOE summary

Key area	Key question	KLOE ref.	KLOE
Financial reporting	How good are the authority's and force's financial accounting and reporting arrangements?	1.1	The authority produces annual accounts in accordance with relevant standards and timetables, supported by comprehensive working papers.
		1.2	The authority promotes external accountability.
Financial management	How well does the authority and force plan and manage their finances?	2.1	The authority's medium-term financial strategy, budgets and capital programme are soundly based and designed to deliver its strategic priorities.
		2.2	The authority and force manage performance against budgets.
		2.3	The authority and force manage their asset base (including their estate and vehicle fleet) and their IM&T service.
Financial standing	How well does the authority safeguard its financial standing?	3.1	The authority manages its spending within the available resources.

Key area	Key question	KLOE ref.	KLOE
Internal control	How well does the authority's and force's internal control environment enable them to manage their significant business risks?	4.1	The authority and force manage their significant business risks.
		4.2	The authority and force have arrangements in place to maintain a sound system of internal control.
		4.3	The authority and force have arrangements in place that are designed to promote and ensure probity and propriety in the conduct of their business.
Value for money	How good are the authority's and force's arrangements for managing and improving value for money?	5.1	The authority and force currently achieve good value for money.
		5.2	The authority and force manage and improve value for money.

Source: Audit Commission and Wales Audit Office

Appendix 2

2006/07 PURE scores

This analysis reflects the overall use of resources score and scores by KLOE themes

Police authority	Overall PURE score		Financial reporting		Financial management		Financial standing		Internal control		Value for money	
Avon and Somerset	3	↑	3	↑	3	↑	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔
Bedfordshire	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↑
Cambridgeshire	2	↑	3	↑↑	2	↑	2	↔	2	↔	2	↑
Cheshire	3	↑	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔	2	↔	3	↑
City of London	4	↑	3	N/A	4	↑↑	4	↑	3	↔	3	↔
Cleveland	3	↔	3	↔	3	↑	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔
Cumbria	2	↔	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔	2	↔	2	↔
Derbyshire	3	↔	4	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
Devon and Cornwall	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
Dorset	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
Durham	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
Dyfed-Powys	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	4	↑	3	↔	3	↔
Essex	2	↓	1	↓	4	↑	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔
Gloucestershire	3	↔	3	↔	3	↑	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
Greater Manchester	3	↔	3	↑	3	↔	4	↑	3	↔	3	↔
Gwent	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↑	3	↑
Hampshire	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔
Hertfordshire	3	↔	3	↓	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	4	↑
Humberside	2	↔	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔	2	↔	2	↔
Kent	3	↔	3	↔	4	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
Lancashire	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	4	↑
Leicestershire	3	↑	3	↔	3	↑	3	↑	2	↔	3	↔

Police authority	Overall PURE score		Financial reporting		Financial management		Financial standing		Internal control		Value for money	
	Score	Trend	Score	Trend	Score	Trend	Score	Trend	Score	Trend	Score	Trend
Lincolnshire	3	↑	3	↔	3	↑	2	↔	2	↔	3	↑
Merseyside	3	↑	3	↔	3	↑	3	↑	2	↔	3	↑
Metropolitan	2	↔	3	↑	2	↔	3	↔	2	↔	2	↔
Norfolk	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↑	2	↔
North Wales	4	↑	4	↑	3	↔	4	↔	3	↔	3	↔
North Yorkshire	2	↔	2	↔	3	↑	4	↑↑	2	↑	2	↔
Northamptonshire	3	↑	2	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↑	2	↔
Northumbria	4	↑	3	↓	3	↔	4	↑	3	↔	4	↑
Nottinghamshire	2	↔	2	↔	3	↔	3	↔	2	↔	2	↔
South Wales	3	↑	2	↑	3	↑	3	↔	3	↔	2	↔
South Yorkshire	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔
Staffordshire	4	↑	4	↑	4	↑	4	↑	3	↔	4	↑
Suffolk	2	↔	2	↔	2	↔	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔
Surrey	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	2	↔	3	↔
Sussex	4	↑	3	↓	4	↑	4	↔	3	↑	3	↔
Thames Valley	4	↑	4	↔	3	↔	4	↔	3	↑	3	↔
Warwickshire	2	↔	1	↓	2	↔	3	↑	2	↔	2	↔
West Mercia	4	↑	3	↔	3	↔	4	↑	3	↑	4	↔
West Midlands	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
West Yorkshire	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔
Wiltshire	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	3	↔	2	↓

Source: Audit Commission and Wales Audit Office

Glossary of terms

Association of Chief Police Officers

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) develops policy on behalf of all police forces. ACPO's members include chief constables, deputy chief constables, assistant chief constables or their equivalents in the 43 police forces of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, national police agencies and certain other forces in the UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands plus senior non-police staff.

www.acpo.police.uk

Basic command units

Basic command units cover over 300 geographically defined areas in England and Wales, variously named as districts, areas, operational command units and divisions. Varying in size between 100 to 1,000 officers and covering densely populated, ethnically diverse inner cities or vast tracts of sparsely populated countryside.

(HMIC, [Going Local – the BCU Inspection Handbook](http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/docs/going-local-3-handbook.pdf), Home Office - <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/docs/going-local-3-handbook.pdf>)

Crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRP) / Community safety partnerships (CSP)

These statutory partnerships are known as crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) or community safety partnerships (CSPs) in Wales. The responsible authorities as set out in section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002) are police; police authorities; local authorities; fire and rescue authorities; local health boards in Wales; and primary care trusts in England. The Police and Justice Act 2006 extends the duties of CDRPs to include anti-social behaviour adversely affecting the environment. It has also been introduced to combat substance misuse, which includes misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, in the area.

(Audit Commission, [Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-social Behaviour: Making Places Safer through Improved Local Working](#), Audit Commission, 2006)

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Audit Commission
1st Floor, Millbank Tower,
Millbank, London SW1P 4HQ
Tel: 0844 798 1212 Fax: 0844 798 2945
Textphone (minicom): 0844 798 2946
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