

## News release

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### Cleveland Police Authority is 'performing well'

Cleveland Police Authority is 'performing well', according to an independent new report released today by the Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC).

On a scale from one to four the joint inspection team assessed the Authority's performance as 'three', which represents good performance.

The Police Authority's job is to make sure that local people have an efficient and effective police force. It should hold the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police to account on behalf of the local community.

Cleveland Police Authority is performing well overall. It provides strong and visible leadership and works well with the Force. It listens to local communities and ensures their concerns are given equal weight with regional and national objectives in setting the Force's priorities and targets. This has helped Cleveland Police to become one of the top performing forces in the country over the past few years. In 2009 the Force recorded the lowest number of crimes for 19 years.

The report shows that the Authority is not afraid to take difficult decisions and is committed to securing value for money. Cleveland's spending on policing is high but the Authority has set challenging targets to release savings in coming years. It is too early to assess whether they are enough to meet future financial challenges.

Authority members challenge performance and hold the Chief Constable to account for most areas of policing. But scrutiny is limited in some more complex areas of policing, such as terrorism, serious crime and other major challenges to public safety – referred to as protective services.

The Audit Commission's Philippa Corner, spokesperson for the joint inspection team, said:

'Cleveland Police Authority has forged a strong, but independent, working relationship with the Chief Constable – supporting the Force and challenging it to improve. It has enjoyed much success in ensuring the Force focuses on residents' concerns, alongside many other regional and national priorities. As a result, it has helped to deliver real improvements to policing for all communities within Cleveland.'

Strengths include:

- Robust and effective leadership.
- Taking difficult decisions to drive improvement and secure the longer term transformation of services.
- Understanding local communities and vulnerable groups and listening to their views. Acting on local concerns to ensure policing priorities reflect locally identified needs.
- Actively promoting diversity and wider community engagement and ensuring that policing services are accessible to all.
- Holding the Chief Constable to account for delivery of objectives, priorities and results.

Areas for improvement include:

- Improving challenge to important areas of policing such as protective services.
- Ensuring the Executive Office has enough capacity to support members in the future.
- Achieving impact from plans to improve value for money.

Following today's report Cleveland Police Authority will plan what it needs to do to improve its services to meet the changing needs of its communities.

Copies of the report are available from Cleveland Police Authority or from the Audit Commission website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports) and the HMIC website <http://www.hmic.gov.uk/Inspections/Pages/PoliceAuthorityInspections.aspx>

**ENDS**

#### **Notes to editors**

*Cleveland Police Authority is an independent body responsible for overseeing the Force. It represents the community and, in partnership with the Chief Constable, ensures that an efficient and effective policing service is provided to the people of Cleveland.*

*Police authority inspection provides a simple report in a straightforward way about how well each police authority is performing. It encourages police authorities to focus on continuous improvement and provides a robust independent challenge to stimulate positive change. Ultimately it is about working to improve the quality of services police authorities provide to local people.*

*The Audit Commission is an independent watchdog, driving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in local public services to deliver better outcomes for everyone.*

*Our work across local government, health, housing, community safety and fire and rescue services means that we have a unique perspective. We promote value for money for taxpayers, auditing the £200 billion spent by 11,000 local public bodies.*

*As a force for improvement, we work in partnership to assess local public services and make practical recommendations for promoting a better quality of life for local people.*

*Further information about the Audit Commission: [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk)*

*HMIC is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest and rigorously examines the effectiveness of police forces and authorities to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. For further information about HMIC: <http://www.hmic.gov.uk>*

*For more information, or for an embargoed copy of the full report, contact David Rose, Communications Manager for Northern England at the Audit Commission on 0844 798 7149 or [d-rose@audit-commission.gov.uk](mailto:d-rose@audit-commission.gov.uk).*