



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

Nottinghamshire Police

“Are the local police delivering for you?”

The ‘Policing Pledge’ sets out ten minimum standards that the police service promised to deliver from 31 December 2008.

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has reviewed how well the 43 forces in England and Wales are delivering the standards they promised the public.

This report provides members of the public with information on the performance of their local force.

Each Pledge standard and the three areas relating to how the force is working towards its delivery have been graded. HMIC has combined these assessments to give an overall grade for the force.

The overall grade for Nottingham Police is:

FAIR

The different grades

EXCELLENT

is awarded for exceptional performance which is consistently above and beyond the required standard.

GOOD

is defined as meeting the standard, although there may be minor dips in performance.

FAIR

is awarded where performance is variable and falls short of the required standard. Remedial action is needed.

POOR

is used when performance fails to meet an acceptable level. Immediate remedial action is needed.

THE POLICING PLEDGE POINTS

HMIC GRADING

PLEDGE POINT 1

Always treat you fairly with dignity and respect, ensuring you have fair access to our services at a time that is reasonable and suitable for you.

FAIR

PLEDGE POINT 2

Provide you with information so you know who your dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team are, where they are based, how to contact them and how to work with them.

GOOD

PLEDGE POINT 3

Ensure your Neighbourhood Policing Team and other police patrols are visible and on your patch at times when they will be most effective and when you tell us you most need them. We will ensure that your team is not taken away from neighbourhood business more than is absolutely necessary. Officers will spend at least 80% of their time visibly working in your neighbourhood, tackling your priorities. Staff turnover will be minimised.

FAIR

PLEDGE POINT 4

Respond to every message directed to your Neighbourhood Policing Team within 24 hours and, where necessary, provide a more detailed response as soon as we can.

POOR

PLEDGE POINT 5

Aim to answer 999 calls within 10 seconds, deploying to emergencies immediately, giving an estimated time of arrival (ETA), and getting to you safely, and as quickly as possible. In urban areas, we will aim to get to you within 15 minutes and in rural areas within 20 minutes.

FAIR

PLEDGE POINT 6

Answer all non-emergency calls promptly. If attendance is needed, send a patrol, giving you an ETA, and:

- if you are vulnerable or upset, we will aim to be with you within 60 minutes;
- if you are calling about an issue that we have agreed with your community will be a neighbourhood priority and attendance is required, we will aim to be with you within 60 minutes;
- alternatively, if appropriate, we will make an appointment to see you at a time that fits in with your life and within 48 hours;
- if agreed that attendance is not necessary, we will give you advice, answer your questions and/or put you in touch with someone who can help.

FAIR

PLEDGE POINT 7

Arrange regular public meetings to agree your priorities at least once a month, giving you a chance to meet your local team with other members of your community. These will include opportunities such as surgeries, street briefings and mobile police station visits, which will be arranged to meet local needs and requirements.

FAIR

PLEDGE POINT 8

Provide monthly updates on progress, and on local crime and policing issues. This will include the provision of crime maps, information on specific crimes and what happened to those brought to justice, details of what action we and our partners are taking to make your neighbourhood safer, and information on how your force is performing.

FAIR

PLEDGE POINT 9

If you have been a victim of crime, agree with you how often you would like to be kept informed of progress in your case and for how long. You have the right to be kept informed at least every month if you wish, and for as long as is reasonable.

FAIR

PLEDGE POINT 10

Acknowledge any dissatisfaction with the service you have received within 24 hours of reporting it to us. To help us fully resolve the matter, discuss with you how it will be handled, give you an opportunity to talk in person to someone about your concerns and agree with you what will be done about them and how quickly.

FAIR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PLEDGE POINT 1

Police stations were open during advertised times and were accessible to people with disabilities. Services were available for customers who did not speak English as a first language. The force asked the public how the service provided at front counters could be improved. **But** staff had limited knowledge of the services available for disabled customers and front counter staff had received little training around the Policing Pledge.

PLEDGE POINT 2

Nottinghamshire Police refer to Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) as Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). Information about SNTs was available in a variety of community venues, such as newsagents, medical centres, supermarkets, libraries, community centres, churches and on the force website. The information included photographs of and contact details for the local team, details of current neighbourhood priorities and how you can get involved with them. **But** some of the information is out of date and the quality of some website entries was poor.

PLEDGE POINT 3

Police officers on SNTs remained in post for around 2 ½ years and provided consistency and continuity for the public. A number of initiatives to improve how visible and accessible teams were included “Lobby Bobby”; an initiative with Tesco and Asda supermarkets where SNT staff set up a stall in the entrance area of the store to meet customers and identify local priorities. Life-sized cardboard pictures of team members were displayed in key community locations and the use of the Facebook social networking site had resulted in increased contact in some areas, particularly amongst young people. **But** methods used to identify the amount of time teams were visible and spend working in their local communities were ineffective. Many Police Community Support Officers leave to become police officers. SNTs get limited help from other staff to address neighbourhood priorities.

PLEDGE POINT 4

Messages were not responded to within 24 hours. The force said this was a concern and new procedures were planned for Autumn 2009 to improve the quality of service provided.

PLEDGE POINT 5

Local monitoring shows that 94% of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds during 2008/09 and the average time taken to answer calls was less than 3 seconds. **But** prior to implementing the Policing Pledge, the force aimed to respond to all 999 calls within 15 minutes. The revised response time (within 20 minutes in rural areas) therefore means a drop in service. In 2008/09, the force responded to 75% of emergencies within 15 minutes falling short of the 85% target set by the Police Authority. ETAs were not given to callers.

PLEDGE POINT 6

82% of non-emergency calls were answered in 30 seconds during 2008/09. Arrangements to identify ‘vulnerable’ or ‘distressed’ callers and to provide a 48 hour response when required were effective. Staff knew who callers could contact when help was required beyond policing matters. Plans were in place to try to ensure that incidents could be resolved without attendance of a police officer or a Police Community Support Officer. **But** In 2008/09, the force responded to 65% of non-emergencies within 60 minutes; falling short of the 80% target set by the Police Authority. Neighbourhood priorities were not clear and so whether a particular call related to a neighbourhood priority was hard to determine. The force could not show if it responded to ‘vulnerable’ and ‘upset’ individuals within 60 minutes.

PLEDGE POINT 7

A wide range of opportunities were available for communities to meet their SNT regularly and influence the choice of local priorities, **but** advertising varied across the force. Research identified that the public found the variety of names given to different sorts of community meetings confusing, such as “Beatwalk”, and “Mobile Surgery”. The force recognised that local communities were not consistently involved in agreeing priorities and the force was committed to improving this.

PLEDGE POINT 8

Each SNT web page contained current local crime mapping information as well as information about any other neighbourhoods covered by the five forces in the East Midlands. The force had recently undertaken public consultation to find out how communities wanted to hear about policing in their local area. The preferred method was leaflets, publications or newsletters delivered to their door. The internet was the sixth choice after local media, council magazines, direct contact with the police, and community events/meetings organised by the police. **But** information about what action had been taken against offenders, how the force and its partners were making neighbourhoods safer and force performance was not provided in a way individuals could easily understand.

PLEDGE POINT 9

Supervisors contacted five victims of crime per month to review the quality of service provided and the results are used to improve performance. A new initiative offered certain victims of crime the opportunity for an officer to attend the scene to improve the level of service but victim care arrangements were not consistent across the force. Details of what victims had specifically asked to be kept updated on were not recorded and inspection checks confirmed that these issues were not routinely discussed with victims.

PLEDGE POINT 10

Dealing with and learning from reports of dissatisfaction was improving **but** the force still needs to improve its quality of service by looking more closely at what caused customer dissatisfaction in the first place. There were no procedures in place to capture dissatisfaction and the force did not have a sufficient way to identify where there were failures to deliver its Pledge commitments.

WHAT THE FORCE WAS DOING TO IMPROVE ITS PERFORMANCE

As well as reporting on the force’s delivery of each Pledge standard, HMIC has also assessed and graded the efforts it was making to improve performance:

HMIC GRADING

Surveys and management meetings were being used to improve performance; public satisfaction and confidence data were taken into account.

FAIR

The force had identified deficiencies in its delivery of the Pledge and was taking action in those areas.

FAIR

Implementation was led by the force’s senior team, the Police Authority was involved, staff were being trained and the Pledge was communicated to staff and the public.

FAIR



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