



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

Cumbria Constabulary
February 2010

“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.

In August 2009 HMIC inspected Cumbria Constabulary to assess how well it was delivering these ten standards. It combined the results with assessments in three further areas (which looked at the effort the force had made to introduce the Pledge) to produce a final grade. The full report is available from the HMIC website (www.hmic.gov.uk).

Cumbria Constabulary was found to be POOR overall, with particular weaknesses in delivery of Pledge Points 7 and 10.

HMIC revisited Cumbria Constabulary in February 2010 to check progress in these weak areas. It also re-examined two of the three further areas: how well the force could identify (and fix) gaps in meeting their Pledge commitments, and the strength of leadership on the Pledge. The details are shown on the next page.

Conclusion

HMIC has found that Cumbria Constabulary has improved its delivery of Pledge points 7 and 10. It has also made progress in strengthening its leadership and its ability to identify and address gaps in meeting its Pledge commitments.

The overall grade for Cumbria Constabulary has therefore been regraded, and is now:

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

2009

2010

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.”

POOR

GOOD

In August 2009 the force was graded poor in this area.

In February 2010 HMIC found that monthly Safer and Stronger Community meetings are held throughout Cumbria. These ensure that the public are better consulted, have an opportunity to help set policing priorities and can receive updates on local policing. Local crime and policing information and the naming of offenders is now publicised through a range of media.

But the force needs to make sure that local policing information is kept up to date. Cumbria Constabulary’s delivery in this area has been regraded as GOOD.

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.”

POOR

FAIR

In August 2009 the force was graded poor in this area.

In February 2010 HMIC found that all reports of dissatisfaction are recorded and the force has just established a new, force-wide computer database, making it possible to analyse common problems. A new scheme in the south of Cumbria aims to improve the response to public reports of dissatisfaction; it is hoped this will be in place across the force by the summer of 2010.

But these systems are new and the benefits have yet to be fully realised. The current response to initial reports of dissatisfaction remains inconsistent and can be slow.

Cumbria Constabulary’s delivery in this area has been regraded as FAIR.

WHAT THE FORCE WAS DOING TO IMPROVE ITS PERFORMANCE

HMIC GRADING

2009

2010

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

POOR

GOOD

In August 2009 the force was graded poor in this area.

In February 2010 HMIC found that the force has taken swift and robust action to address identified shortfalls in performance, and much progress is evident.

But the force needs to maintain its progress and continue to monitor the Pledge standards in order to ensure that it is delivering the Pledge consistently.

Cumbria Constabulary’s delivery in this area has been regraded as GOOD.

“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 public.”

FAIR

GOOD

In August 2009 the force was graded fair in this area.

In February 2010 HMIC found that a senior police officer is now in charge of improvements, and has sought best practice from elsewhere. A management team, which includes members of the police authority, monitors progress of delivery and conducts mystery shopping exercises to test fulfilment of the Pledge. In addition, training and development of staff is more focused on delivering the Pledge.

But the force and police authority need to decide how current progress will be maintained so they can ensure that the Pledge is delivered over the longer term.

Cumbria Constabulary’s delivery in this area has been regraded as GOOD.

The report is available in alternative languages and formats on request.

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This report is also available from the HMIC website:
www.hmic.gov.uk

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