



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

Gloucestershire Constabulary

“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 Gloucestershire Constabulary 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.

FAIR

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.

FAIR

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.

GOOD

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

Complaints of incivility and rudeness were dealt with effectively and lessons learnt were published and acted upon. An independent advisory group provided scrutiny of policing issues such as the development of neighbourhood policing. **But** an independent review of police enquiry offices will result in the closure of two offices and reduced opening hours in a third office. Staff surveys were not carried out and the force had missed an opportunity to ask how the service could be improved.

PLEDGE POINT 2

Gloucestershire Constabulary refer to Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) as Safer Community Teams (SCTs). Safer Community Teams (SCT) who fulfil this function were well established. Their contact details were up to date and publicised, as were events and meetings. **But** the force web pages were not user friendly and meeting details were unclear, uninviting and needed signposting. The approach to marketing SCTs varied and in some places there was a lack of information on SCTs and the Pledge in police enquiry offices.

PLEDGE POINT 3

The County Council had provided additional funds for 63 constables by 2010 and 46 were in post. SCTs were staffed with constables and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who were rarely taken away for other duties. **But** not all SCT spent at least 80% of their time in their neighbourhoods. There was also a need to ensure staff remained in post long enough to provide continuity of knowledge and build relationships with the communities they serve.

PLEDGE POINT 4

SCTs had group email accounts which were well used and there was not a reliance on automated responses. Group email accounts were assessed for compliance regularly, and the quality and timeliness of responses to messages was found to be good. **But** recording and tracking of correspondence was not consistent or robust, the use of voicemail was not standardised and staff did not understand the need to respond within 24 hours.

PLEDGE POINT 5

The call management process for 999 calls was good with 93.7% of calls answered within 10 seconds. Staff did not feel pressurised to meet target times with 91% of emergency incidents attended for both urban and rural areas were within the 15 and 20 minute levels. **But** estimated times of arrivals (ETAs) were not being given.

PLEDGE POINT 6

The force had good processes in place to identify 'vulnerable' and 'upset' callers and clear guidance for attending within 60 minutes. Neighbourhood priorities were readily available to call handlers and were given a 60 minute attendance time. A 48 hour appointments system had recently been introduced. **But** the 48 hour limit was not being met over weekend periods.

PLEDGE POINT 7

There were a variety of opportunities for the public to meet SCTs at least monthly. Investment was made in training the police and some partners in problem solving. **But** the training had not been renewed for two years. Also some plans to engage with the community needed to be reviewed and brought up to date to provide a more consistent approach by the force. Public meetings need to be quality assured to ensure that they met the Pledge standard.

PLEDGE POINT 8

The force had adopted the national crime mapping format on their website which provided a search facility and the ability to break down data into five crime types. Community meetings were provided with updates on crimes, problems solved, and local offenders. **But** the content of SCT web sites was variable and key messages in some cases were lost amongst the other information.

PLEDGE POINT 9

Some police divisions tasked officers with checking that victims had been kept informed as cases progressed. Staff had a general understanding of victim care arrangements. **But** it was not common practice across the force to check that victims were being kept informed. Furthermore, there were no formal processes for recording whether contact arrangements had been agreed with victims and so they did not know whether this Pledge point was being achieved.

PLEDGE POINT 10

The force had good procedures in place to respond to complaints and new processes to address dissatisfaction and response within 24 hours. Enquiry office staff knew how to deal with complaints and dissatisfaction. **But** there was a general lack of awareness of the need to respond within 24 hours. The recording, tracking and analysis of dissatisfaction reports was not yet being managed.

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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