



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

Leicestershire 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
Leicestershire Constabulary is:

GOOD

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.

GOOD

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.

GOOD

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.

GOOD

PLEDGE POINT 5

Aim to answer 999 calls within ten 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, give you an ETA, and:

GOOD

- 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.

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.

GOOD

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.

GOOD

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.

GOOD

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PLEDGE POINT 1

Police stations were open as advertised on the website with opening times reflecting local needs. Enquiry offices provided for customers with physical disabilities or impairments and a telephone-based interpreting service were also available. Policing Pledge leaflets were available in the 12 most common languages in Leicestershire and there were plans to make these available to other forces. A recent local survey found that over 92% of people felt that the force treated them with respect.

PLEDGE POINT 2

A range of material was available to tell the public about its local Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) and could be found in front enquiry offices, and on the website, which had a user-friendly postcode finder option. Innovative ways of telling the public about the NPT included collecting “bingo cards”, and some officers used social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to engage with the public. **But** posters were not widely displayed in public places such as supermarkets to inform those without the internet who their NPT officers were.

PLEDGE POINT 3

NPT officers remained in their job for at least 12 months and local monitoring suggested 95% of their time was spent visibly in their neighbourhood, tackling local issues and patrolling key places at peak times. All radios and vehicles were to be fitted with a tracking device so that visits to local priority areas could be recorded. NPTs had Blackberrys® so they spent far less time in police stations doing paperwork. **But** some police cars were crewed by a team of two officers when this was not always necessary and NPTs received limited help from other officers to deal with neighbourhood priorities.

PLEDGE POINT 4

All NPT web pages contained information about how the public could contact an individual officer. If a telephone message was not replied to within 16 hours, it was sent to another staff member to deal with. Team email accounts were used to make sure a reply was sent within 24 hours and the force’s own customer service team regularly tested these systems. **But** some outgoing voicemail messages by individual staff were poor as only a small number gave their name and station.

PLEDGE POINT 5

In 2008/09, 94% of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds. The force did not differentiate between rural and urban locations so people living in rural areas received the same standard of response. **But** only 80% of emergencies were attended to within 15 minutes, which missed the target of 85%. Estimated times of arrival (ETAs) were not given to callers. Operators instead focused on giving verbal reassurance and support.

PLEDGE POINT 6

Most non-emergency calls were answered and responded to promptly, supported by a service delivery desk which addressed callers’ wishes. Phone operators were trained to identify ‘vulnerable’ or ‘upset’ callers. Operators were able to access the community’s local priorities online and also knew how to help deal with incidents that did not need police attendance. **But** information that staff had about local priorities often lacked enough detail to help staff decide if a call related to a particular priority. Callers were informed that a response would arrive within 60 minutes rather than being given a specific ETA.

PLEDGE POINT 7

Opportunities for people to meet their local officers were advertised widely; details were available on the force website, in police stations and via the local media. Local priorities were based on information from a wide range of sources and communities had a strong voice in influencing priorities. **But** it was unclear to what extent communities were actually involved in agreeing and finalising these priorities.

PLEDGE POINT 8

Quarterly newsletters were published in each area giving updates on local policing issues and action taken against offenders. Each NPT website showed actions taken to address local priorities and explained how local partners were also helping to solve local problems. All NPT websites linked to crime mapping information. **But** the circulation of newsletters was inconsistent across areas.

PLEDGE POINT 9

A force database ensured that victims, including those reporting anti-social behaviour, or those involved in a traffic accident, were kept informed of progress. Regular force audits were carried out to ensure victims were updated at least monthly. **But** officers did not always ask how often victims wished to be updated or the method of update. This information was not recorded on crime reports.

PLEDGE POINT 10

Public dissatisfaction reports were replied to within 24 hours and recorded on an online form. Once acknowledged, reports were sent to the relevant department to be resolved. Regular meetings of heads of force departments helped to identify where things could have been improved. **But** the force was unable to provide details of dissatisfied callers who could be contacted to check how they had been dealt with.

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.

GOOD

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

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 the public.

GOOD



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

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