



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

North Yorkshire 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
North Yorkshire 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.

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.

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.

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

Enquiry counters were accessible and a range of information was available for visitors. Stations were accessible to visitors with disabilities. Staff had received training in customer service. A free telephone was provided for enquiries during times when stations were closed. Consulting with the public had resulted in the rearrangement of public meetings, discussion of suitable building locations and a wider range of ways to contact the police.

But the force did not always learn lessons from public complaints and did not do enough to assure the public that rural communities do not receive a lesser service because they had fewer incidents of crime.

PLEDGE POINT 2

Information about Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) was available through the website, newsletters, local information packs and posters displayed in key locations. Public meeting details were also widely available. Minutes of meetings clearly set out local priorities that mattered to the public and showed how they were being dealt with. **But** the Pledge information displayed in police stations was not always of a high quality and more was needed to be done to encourage the public to work with NPTs.

PLEDGE POINT 3

The force made efforts to ensure that staff spent 80% of their time in their local areas. Staff were rarely taken away from their local communities. The force also ensured that staff were in urban and rural locations 80% of the time. **But** in cases where new NPT staff joined the team, they were not always given sufficient time to settle into their new role.

PLEDGE POINT 4

Telephone lines and email addresses had recently been installed for each NPT, with guidelines in place to respond to voicemail and email messages within 24 hours. In higher demand areas, officers had additional administrative support. **But** testing identified a small number of telephone calls and email messages were not responded to within time limits. The force had plans to introduce new training and more administrative support.

PLEDGE POINT 5

Performance for answering 999 calls within 10 seconds was good. The force used the national call handling guidelines for urban and rural locations. The latest quarterly performance figures showed 81% of urban calls and 72% of rural calls had been answered within 10 seconds. Operators had access to officer/vehicle tracking systems and were able to provide an estimated time of arrival for callers. The time of arrival is recorded, so that late arrivals were noted and analysed. **But** the information that call handlers had about what staff were doing was often wrong. This was because the computer system was not updated accurately.

PLEDGE POINT 6

Response to non-emergency calls was good and the force aimed for an answering time of 10 seconds – the same response time as emergency calls. Staff had been trained to identify ‘vulnerable’ callers and there was a system in place (command and control) that provided information on local problems and priorities in the caller’s area. Staff gave callers an estimated time of arrival (ETA). Performance varied across the force, but there were plans to partner up with North Yorkshire County Council to offer customers a one-stop service for local concerns.

PLEDGE POINT 7

Many meetings were advertised offering the chance to meet NPTs; 70 were available during the inspection month. Advertisements appeared in a wide variety of formats and innovative ideas, such as “virtual meetings”, were developed. “Police specific” post boxes were set up and church-goers were approached after services. **But** some meetings did not take place as advertised; the force should have notified residents of changes when this was possible.

PLEDGE POINT 8

A broad range of information was provided for the public. This included what action would be taken to meet community priorities and how individual concerns would be addressed. Crime mapping was available on the website and was provided in hard copy to key locations on a monthly basis. The force was working with other agencies to get a better understanding of its communities and the kind of the information the public wanted. **But** there was no consistent approach as to whether or not criminals were identified to the public, particularly when they are young people.

PLEDGE POINT 9

All crime victims, including vulnerable and intimidated victims, were monitored and supported. Feedback from victims was gathered to ensure lessons were learned. A small sample group of victims were positive about the quality of service they had received. **But** the force did not look at how long police officers should remain in contact with victims, once other criminal justice and support agencies became involved.

PLEDGE POINT 10

Formal complaints received a timely response. The force had reviewed whether it recorded all reports of dissatisfaction, particularly those cases that were dealt with on a one to one basis. This was to ensure that lessons were widely learned across the entire force. The Neighbourhood Policing website provided a summary of the Policing Pledge but the summary did not clearly explain that the public may complain if the force failed to meet a Pledge promise. There was no plan on what to do when the force failed to meet a Pledge promise; these complaints were left to each Area Chief Inspector to manage.

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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2 Monck Street
London SW1P 2BQ

This report is also available from the HMIC website
<http://inspectors.justice.gov.uk/hmic>

Published in October 2009.

Printed by the Central Office of Information.

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ISBN: 978-1-84987-006-1

Ref: 297705