



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

South Wales 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 South Wales 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.

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.

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.

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

The force had a mission to 'make every contact count'. Work by Cardiff University had commenced to assess the impact on the public of language used by staff. The Policing Pledge was available in 11 languages and Braille. The neighbourhood policing website – www.ourbobby.com – was accessible in different formats, including an auditory option. Police stations were well signed. **But** the public had not been consulted about police station opening hours and not all stations were accessible to the disabled.

PLEDGE POINT 2

South Wales Police refer to Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) as Neighbourhood Beat Managers (NHBM) or Police Community Support Officer (PCSOs). All 247 wards had a named NHBM or PCSO contact. Up-to-date photos and direct dial telephone numbers were displayed on the website and widely publicised in the community. Information about how the public could work with the police was also available. **But** a check of internet pages found email addresses were not consistently displayed in all Basic Command Units.

PLEDGE POINT 3

The minimum time NHBM and PCSOs should spend in their areas, tackling local issues and patrolling key locations, was 80% and 90% respectively. Information collected locally indicated that NHBM spent 90% of their time in their local areas, while PCSOs spent 93% of their time visible in the community. An audit to check the accuracy of this information was planned for September 2009. **But** in the Cardiff area, significantly less time was dedicated to tackling priorities. The amount of time local sergeants, officers, and Neighbourhood Support Teams leave their communities to do other tasks was not monitored.

PLEDGE POINT 4

All NHBM and PCSOs carried mobile phones, and clear voicemail messages were left advising alternative numbers when staff were not at work. Email messages to NHBM and PCSOs received an automated response. **But** testing showed that only 7 out of 20 emails and 13 out of 21 phone messages received a response in 24 hours. A small number of letters and emails did not receive any reply.

PLEDGE POINT 5

In 2008/09, 90% of 999 calls were answered in 10 seconds. In cases where officers were sent to incidents, an estimated time of arrival was given to the caller. If officers were delayed, updates were given. **But** local monitoring from April – July 2009, showed that only 84% of incidents were attended in the target time for urban areas and 86% for rural areas. The force considered this information might be inaccurate as in 30% of cases officers did not inform the control room of the time they arrived.

PLEDGE POINT 6

The non-emergency call centre dealt well with non-emergency calls. Call handlers were knowledgeable on who to direct callers to in non-police matters. Staff were trained to recognise 'vulnerable' or 'upset' callers' needs. Local priorities were checked on the website and when calls related to these, officers were directed to attend in 60 minutes. **But** there was no appointments system in place.

PLEDGE POINT 7

Opportunities for people to meet local officers were advertised widely; details were available on www.ourbobby.com, in police stations, through the local media, on posters and newsletters. Some meetings were scheduled to fit local need. **But** some 22% of 50 ward internet sites checked did not have a future date for a meeting. Local priorities were decided on in different ways, according to ward areas. Some wards only considered issues that had been raised at formal meetings. The force was looking at ways to ensure that priorities reflected community views.

PLEDGE POINT 8

Progress on local issues was reported on at public meetings and in newsletters (some of these were produced in partnership with other agencies and local authorities), through www.ourbobby.com, by the local press and personally through officer contacts. All neighbourhood pages on the internet were linked to current crime mapping information. **But** force partners, such as councils and social services, did not attend public meetings on a regular basis, and so information about the action that local partnerships had taken was inconsistent.

PLEDGE POINT 9

Arrangements for how victims of crime should be informed of their case's progress were set up. **But** not all officers were aware that victims should be updated to meet their particular needs and of the importance of follow-up contact with victims on their satisfaction with the service received.

PLEDGE POINT 10

The force was looking at how dissatisfaction had been handled, and were considering ways of improving records and making their response to the complainant speedier. Specialist staff who managed complaints worked seven days a week to provide a response in 24 hours. An analyst was to be appointed to see how services could be improved. A trial to record all the public dissatisfaction reported at one area's front desks had been set up. **But** reports of dissatisfaction to other front desks and those received by telephone, were not recorded. No direct email or telephone number for complaints was published.

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:

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

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

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.

HMIC GRADING

FAIR

GOOD

GOOD



50% recycled
This publication is printed
on 50% recycled paper

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

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