



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

South 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
South 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.

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.

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

The majority of stations visited clearly displayed their opening hours, which were also advertised on the force website and in a booklet available in enquiry offices. Details of how to contact the force outside of opening hours was also displayed. The force had a diversity and equality plan, which focused on service delivery to all communities. **But** the way information was made available to the public was inconsistent, with some areas doing less to ensure that the public had access to information.

PLEDGE POINT 2

South Yorkshire Police refer to Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) as Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). An extensive marketing campaign was launched in 2006 to raise the public's awareness of Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). Examples of the marketing that has taken place include the development of a SNT website, promotional posters, postcards, community newsletters, various partnership publications, and the force's annual publication, "Serving You". **But** the way information was displayed across the county was not consistent. Information was mostly available in public buildings such as libraries and community centres.

PLEDGE POINT 3

SNT officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) were visible and accessible to the public. The teams got involved with different community groups and minority communities, and also interacted with different age groups within those communities. There was some flexibility in working hours to meet community needs. Local priorities had influenced how policing resources were allocated. **But** staff reported that sometimes SNT officers were used for operations that took them away from their neighbourhoods.

PLEDGE POINT 4

To ensure a 24 hour response each Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) was supported by a Safer Neighbourhood Unit. The Unit managed messages from the public on behalf of the SNT, and received calls and emails from the force's Communications Centre and directly from the public. **But** the force had no guidance for staff about messages received by voicemail or about the need to monitor messages

PLEDGE POINT 5

The force answered over 86% of 999 calls within 10 seconds. Call handlers were trained to provide estimated times of arrival (ETAs) to callers. Staff were aware of the importance of deploying police safely. Response times were monitored centrally. **But** the force did not meet the target of answering 90% of 999 within 10 seconds and the force is looking at how to improve this.

PLEDGE POINT 6

Performance of answering and responding to non-emergency calls was good. Staff recognised 'vulnerable' or 'upset' callers' needs and could check what the local priorities were. During the inspection the force responded to such calls within 60 minutes and provided callers with an ETA. Staff also knew how to direct callers to other services when necessary. There was an appointments system that ensured requests for appointments were met within 48 hours.

PLEDGE POINT 7

A range of opportunities were available for the public to meet with their SNT. Details of meetings were publicised in a number of ways including displays of posters at community venues and newsletters. Partners And Communities Together (PACT) meetings took place once a month, and the community determined the local priorities. In addition to these meetings, area panels, forums, surgeries, tenants' and residents' associations were taking place.

PLEDGE POINT 8

There was effective problem-solving in partnership with the local community and partner agencies. Regular updates on activity were provided at community meetings. The community were asked about their thoughts on police activity, and this information was used when deciding on future police activity. The force published up to date crime information which could be found on the force or Police Authority websites. **But** the force was working on a number of ways that more information could be made available to the public. A newly appointed Media and Marketing Manager was researching the kind of information the public in South Yorkshire wanted and how they wanted to receive it.

PLEDGE POINT 9

The force had guidelines ensuring that all crime victims were kept informed of progress. The force received feedback from victims to improve the quality of service offered, and to learn lessons. A small sample of victims reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality of service provided. **But** victim's contracts of care were not recorded anywhere. Having details of victim care arrangements on file would have helped to ensure consistency of service was provided to the victim.

PLEDGE POINT 10 AND FINAL SUMMARY:

All expressions of dissatisfaction, received by the force were received by the Communications Centre or the Safer Neighbourhood Units for a response within 24 hours. Staff knew how important it was to resolve dissatisfaction of the complainant quickly. **But** there were no records kept of dissatisfaction, and in particular, dissatisfaction about failure to deliver the Policing Pledge.

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.

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.

FAIR



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

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

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
Ashley House
2 Monck Street
London SW1P 2BQ

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

Published in October 2009.

Printed by the Central Office of Information.

© Crown copyright 2009

ISBN: 978-1-84987-012-2

Ref: 297705