



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE

Norfolk 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
Norfolk 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.

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.

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.

FAIR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PLEDGE POINT 1

Police station opening times were mostly displayed with some stations extending opening hours at the weekend by using volunteers. Access to police stations was generally good. Some stations were fitted with ramps, automatic opening doors, low level counters for wheelchair users and hearing loops. Information about the Policing Pledge was available in languages other than English. **But** the public were not consulted about when they wanted police stations to be open.

PLEDGE POINT 2

Norfolk Constabulary refer to Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) as Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). The force expected Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) staff and supervisors to set up and maintain up to date contact details in the telephone directory. This included voicemail and team emails which were published on the website. Information on how the public could work with the police was also available on the website. **But** the advertising of SNTs in local communities was inconsistent with public notice boards and the website containing out of date information. The website was being upgraded, so this incorrect information should be removed.

PLEDGE POINT 3

A SNT briefing tool allowed all staff to view details about local priorities. SNT officers were not routinely removed from the community for other duties. **But** some SNTs had 50% vacancies and SNT visibility levels were not monitored.

PLEDGE POINT 4

The public were provided with a range of options to contact SNT staff, such as telephone, voicemail and email. Communications were supposed to be monitored by supervisors to ensure a response within 24 hours. **But** 21 out of 41 emails and letters sent were responded to within 24 hours, while 8 did not receive any form of reply.

PLEDGE POINT 5

The force aimed to answer 91% of emergency calls in under 10 seconds, to respond to 82% of emergency calls in urban areas within 10 minutes, and to respond to 88% of emergency calls in rural areas within 20 minutes. **But** local data provided by the force showed that only 79% of emergency calls were answered within 10 seconds with 5% of calls abandoned. 75% of emergency calls were attended in target time for urban areas and 90% for rural areas. Estimated times of arrival (ETAs) were not given to callers.

PLEDGE POINT 6

Local data suggested that non-emergency calls were answered in an average of 6.7 seconds. Call centre staff understood that 'vulnerable' and 'upset' callers should receive a response in 60 minutes. Call handlers could increase the priority of the response where necessary. Some non-emergency calls could be attended by appointment at times that suited the caller. **But** this service was not widely available. Information on neighbourhood priorities lacked detail and staff were not always able to identify whether a call related to a community priority. There was no monitoring of the force's performance against Pledge response times for local priorities or calls from 'vulnerable' and 'upset' callers.

PLEDGE POINT 7

Opportunities for people to meet local officers were advertised widely through the website and local media. Mobile police stations increased contact with the public. Meetings were held in communities every 8 weeks. **But** although community meetings should have been advertised at least monthly, 50% of the websites checked did not have a future meeting date published. Local priorities were decided on in different ways across the force.

PLEDGE POINT 8

Every household received a newsletter three times a year, providing detailed information on local crime and policing. Crime maps were available on the force website and some information was provided about how criminals had been brought to justice. **But** a solution is being developed to provide more detailed information on the website, such as how offenders make amends for their wrongdoing, resulting in safer neighbourhoods.

PLEDGE POINT 9

The force visited all victims of crime and used the “Victims’ Code of Practice” to guide officers. **But** victim care arrangements were not consistent across the county. Victims were not routinely asked how often and by what method they wished to be kept informed of progress on their case.

PLEDGE POINT 10

Ten recent dissatisfied callers were contacted and all had received a response within 24 hours; most within a few hours of complaining. Reports of incivility had reduced by 20% in the last 12 months. **But** the force needed to improve the quality of service by looking more closely at customer dissatisfaction. The public’s dissatisfaction was not recorded in a way that had allowed detailed analysis.

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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NORFOLK CONSTABULARY**

HMIC Inspection Findings



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Norfolk Constabulary is:

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1. THE POLICING PLEDGE POINTS

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.

GRADE: FAIR

Strengths

- a) Police station opening times are displayed at stations and a yellow telephone was clearly visible and available for callers to contact the headquarters (HQ) switchboard. Some stations were able to extend opening hours at the weekend by using volunteers. Reality testing found some police stations were fitted with ramps, automatic-opening doors, low level counters for wheelchair users and hearing loops.
- b) Information about the Policing Pledge and Safer Neighbourhood teams (SNTs) is available in languages other than English. Neighbourhood communication officers (NCOs) recently produced crime prevention posters in eastern European languages, which helped to reduce thefts from stores.
- c) An SNT has set up a confidence and satisfaction panel to act as a critical friend and sounding board for the local inspector. This panel does not agree priorities, but provides independent advice on issues such as accessibility of the police station. The panel was chosen from members of the community who had previously complained, and local business people.

Work in Progress

- a) The public enquiry office review includes representation from the Police Authority and aims to inform future opening hours for police stations. HQ and three other stations front-counter areas have also been upgraded with plasma screens, comfortable seats and a more welcoming environment; however, the public have not been consulted. Future roll-out will be determined on a priority basis – ie, the stations with most customers will be refurbished first. Chief officers accept that staffing and opening times of police stations are inconsistent; they have commissioned a customer access strategy with associated action plan in March 2009 to improve the face-to-face access requirements of customers.
- b) An action-based researcher has been employed to understand the diverse needs of communities and has conducted reality testing in the seven priority neighbourhoods, using one-to-one interviews and workshops on local delivery units. Initial research used too small sample sizes to be significant, so more research is planned using larger sample sizes. NCOs are building up the 52 SNT profiles to provide a richer understanding of the diverse needs of individuals and communities in order to improve service delivery.

Areas for improvement

a) Police station opening times are not displayed on the force website, with customers instead invited to ring for opening times. Some stations did not have external telephones or opening times displayed.

b) Although the switchboard conducts monthly test calls to SNT voicemails, no tests are conducted of voicemail responses by other departments.

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.

GRADE: FAIR

Strengths

- a) A range of community engagement opportunities, such as Voluntary Norfolk, joining a Homewatch scheme or joining the Special Constabulary, are published on SNT websites. Contact and Control Room (CCR) staff are encouraged to provide callers with wider information, such as neighbourhood priorities, and give details of SNT staff. Supervisors quality assure calls using passive active listening three times a month for all staff.
- b) A protocol is in place which sets out expectations for SNT staff and supervisors on setting up and maintaining up to date contact details on the internal telephone directory, including voicemail and team email accounts. SNT contact details are published on the website; 16 SNT sites were checked and all contained team email addresses and the single contact number for the force.
- c) Four NCOs currently cover all 52 SNTs and support district superintendents. Three more are being recruited, which will provide one NCO for each district.

Work in progress

- a) None identified.

Areas for improvement

- a) Marketing of SNTs in local communities is inconsistent; notice boards contained out of date information and forthcoming community engagement opportunities or current priorities are not always publicised in local community areas. The only posters found were in police stations.
- b) While NCOs are responsible for the quality assurance of website entries input by SNTs, reality testing identified many spelling mistakes and approximately 70% of photographs of staff are missing in those websites tested. This is attributed to force restructuring, with a lot of staff moving roles or being replaced by student officers, although Chief Officers do accept that some staff refuse to have their photograph published, which they are entitled to do.
- c) SNT information is published on the Safer Norfolk partnership website, which is accessed via the force website. The Safer Norfolk website is poorly branded and it is not clear to the customer that they have left the Norfolk Constabulary website. The website is old and costly to maintain and update; this was another reason given for SNT photographs not being updated. The force is upgrading its own website, which will incorporate new neighbourhood pages as a key component, and reviewing its connectivity to the partnership site.

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 your team are 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.

GRADE:

FAIR

Strengths

- a) The force briefing and tasking pages link to Sharepoint (SNT software package); this allows response and other staff to see details of neighbourhood priorities with read-only access.
- b) The expectation is that SNT staff will remain in post for a minimum of two years, with student officers being deployed to the role for their first four years' service. Special priority payments (SPPs) are paid to SNT officers who work in the seven priority areas, each receiving £1,000 a year from the £800,000 force SPP budget. SNT staff on other areas do not receive an SPP, but this is to be reviewed in the autumn. Police community support officers (PCSOs) are not contractually bound to complete two years before they are permitted to apply to become a regular constable but receive a letter on induction outlining this expectation. If they do become a constable, they are deployed to the same neighbourhood they patrolled as a PCSO for continuity.

c) An abstraction policy is in place which sets out the definition and the target of 80% of time to be spent in neighbourhoods. Abstractions are discussed at the fortnightly county delivery unit (CDU) tactical tasking and co-ordination group meeting, but abstractions are not recorded consistently (see AFI below).

d) Chief Officers do not support the current ACPO guidance that visibility should include SNT duties in plain clothes. SNT staff are not routinely deployed to grade A and B incidents; however, when they are used as a last resort, they will usually be deployed to such incidents on their own neighbourhood to minimise abstractions. There is no patrol strategy in place to assist CCR supervisors but they have not encountered problems or conflict with SNT supervisors when deploying SNT staff.

Work in progress

- a) The automatic person location system (APLS), to be introduced in September 2009, will improve monitoring of abstractions of SNTs from their neighbourhoods.

Areas for improvement

a) No system is in place to monitor SNT abstractions; historically, SNT staff recorded them on Sharepoint and some still do, but this was overly bureaucratic, leading to officers spending too much time in the station. Due to the inadequacy of monitoring systems, SNT supervisors maintain a visibility book to record abstractions of SNT staff.

b) SNT officers are not routinely abstracted to cover other duties; however, some teams have 50% vacancies following moves of SNT staff to response roles on a permanent basis following the force restructuring. This has led to a loss of experience, community intelligence, increased workloads for those remaining on the SNT and reduced visibility in communities. SNT vacancies are a problem following force reorganisation; out of an establishment of 370 (inspectors, sergeants and police constables), there are currently 59 vacancies (16%), and PCSOs are eight down from an establishment of 283.

c) During reality testing some SNTs were concerned that their base station was located outside of their neighbourhood area which meant they had to travel to reach their designated community; this limits the time spent visible and accessible to communities. The force is aware of this position, but believes stations are suitably close as not to adversely affect visibility/accessibility.

d) While problem-solving plans are established for SNT priorities on Sharepoint, the majority of tasks fall to SNT officers and little account taken of the potential contribution of other resources, such as CID and response. Operation Quest was introduced recently to improve the briefing and tasking process force-wide, incorporating SNT priorities into these processes. However, reality testing revealed that response staff were not aware of priorities and relied on tasking only.

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.

GRADE:

FAIR

Strengths

- a) Members of the public are offered a number of options on how to contact SNT officers; for example, through the force non-emergency number or by email. Team email accounts are used to ensure that emails are responded to within 24 hours (see AFI below). Supervisors are responsible for checking and allocating voicemail messages daily. Voicemails received between 10am and 8pm should be responded to during those hours, while other messages should be responded to within 24 hours. However, one supervisor reported that the answer phone messages were not timed and dated, which made it difficult to track responses.
- b) HMIC telephoned ten SNTs as a reality test; six responded immediately with an appropriate greeting, three went to voicemail, giving a corporate message and responding within 24 hours, but one failed to respond at all.
- c) All operational staff, including SNT officers, are provided with contact cards which are given to the public to enable them to contact the officer dealing with their matter. Mobile data terminals are issued to some SNT officers; the terminals

automatically divert to the switchboard if unanswered. Switchboard staff check and assess these calls, agree action and manage expectations. Callers clearly understand how their query will be handled and, if a team cannot be contacted, a voicemail message can be left.

- d) Non-emergency calls are received by a central switchboard on the local 0845 number. Switchboard staff give an appropriate greeting and check whether it should be routed to the control room as a crime or incident. The switchboard tests all 52 SNTs voicemails, leaving a message asking the SNT to reply within 24 hours. Although this does not capture the quality of the callbacks, it does measure timeliness and holds staff to account. Any issues raised, and subsequent action taken as a result of a voicemail or email message, should be recorded on an engagement issues form on Sharepoint.

Work in progress

- a) Reality testing revealed that one SNT was receiving training in how to access team email accounts; at present only four of the 18 officers can access them.

Areas for improvement

a) HMIC sent 21 letters to SNTs; seven responses were received within 24 hours, four within two days, one within three days, three within six days, four within eight days and two received no response.

b) In addition, HMIC sent 20 emails to SNTs which resulted in 14 responses being received within 24 hours, one within three days, one within five days and four without any response.

c) While emails and voicemail messages are automatically acknowledged, opportunities to provide key messages about the Policing Pledge are missed; however, the communications department is undertaking a review of internal marketing to introduce template responses (eg, letters of no further action regarding road traffic collision victims).

Pledge Point 5

Aim to answer 999 calls within 10 seconds, deploying to emergencies immediately giving an estimated time of arrival, 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.

GRADE:

FAIR

Strengths

a) Following reorganisation, the force has moved from three basic command units (BCUs) to one county delivery unit (CDU) which is divided into seven districts; 406 response officers are now based at six strategic sites known as response hubs. Orcon is the performance management system for command and control which can be used for real-time measurement or as a retrospective and searchable management tool. It shows average response times, but can also detail response times for individual incidents.

b) Response times are measured from the time the call is received. For A grade (emergency) calls, a maximum time of three minutes is set to deploy a resource. The CCR works to a ten-minute response time for urban emergency calls and staff argue that the differing standards are confusing, preferring to work to one standard only. Beat codes determine whether a call is recorded as rural or urban (see AFIs below). AVLS now monitors at least 90% of marked vehicles, and the remaining few will be fitted with Automatic Vehicle Location System (AVLS) equipment shortly. CCR supervisors have a good overview of all available resources.

c) Under the new force structure the CCR is empowered to direct and control resources instructing them to attend incidents rather than acting as a dispatch centre. The chief officer team is clear that staff must not, and do not, feel pressured into meeting response times – safety is an overriding consideration and CCR staff do not tell patrols attending emergencies that a response time may be missed.

Work in progress

a) ISOCHROME software takes information from AVLS, estimates average speed and combines the information to give an estimated time of arrival (ETA). This software is in development and is expected to be in place later this year.

b) The force has recently introduced a response policing deployment plan to manage more effectively the deployment of response resources. The plan takes into account the demand on response policing and the unique geographical features of the count; it is owned by the CDU and subject to bi-annual review.

Areas for improvement

a) The switchboard answers some 0845 calls which the caller should have made on the 999 system – these are immediately put through to the 999 desk. However, at least once a week no-one is available to answer and the caller is advised to ring back using 999.

b) The force target is to answer 91% of 999 calls in under ten seconds. In March 2009, 79% were answered within ten seconds, with 5% of calls abandoned. Performance information is supplied every 12 hours for supervisors, but the direction given to them is that all calls have to be answered. This means that 999 calls sometimes go unanswered if all call takers are busy. In May, only 62% were answered in under ten seconds; this may be as a result of changes in the CCR.

c) The force target to respond to 82% of grade A calls within ten minutes in urban areas has been in place for some years and is harder to meet than the Pledge target of 15 minutes. In April 2009, 75.2% of urban grade A incidents were attended within their target (10 minutes) and 77.9% for the year to date. The public are given performance information on the Pledge target of 15 minutes, but some CCR staff felt the two targets were confusing and represented a lowering of standards from the force target of 10 minutes.

d) Against a target to attend 88% of grade A calls to rural incidents within 20 minutes, in April 2009 90.4% were attended within the target, but year-to-date figures were outside the target at 86.8%.

e) Despite the availability of data from AVLS and Orcon, CCR staff do not routinely provide ETAs to callers; for A grades, they tend to give broad “*we’ll be with you as quickly as possible*” advice.

Pledge Point 6

Answer all non-emergency calls promptly. If attendance is needed, send a patrol giving you an estimated time of arrival:

- If you are ‘vulnerable’ or ‘upset’ 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 (listed below) 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.

GRADE:

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Strengths

a) Calls to the 0845 number are assessed initially by the switchboard and routed into CCR on four levels, namely emergency call, priority call, general call or advice and guidance (when a call-back may be offered). On average, operators answer non-emergency calls in 6.7 seconds. CCR reality testing found that all calls were graded in accordance with the National Call Handling Standards (NCHS).

b) Information on what is meant by “vulnerable’ and ‘upset” is available in the CCR and this is a direct lift from the ACPO Pledge guidance. However, communication officers (NCOs) are encouraged to adopt a common-sense approach and are empowered to increase the call grading if necessary to support the caller and respond to their needs.

c) A wide range of information systems is available to CCR staff, including a contact list maintained through the Storm dashboard, which shows the SNT, priorities and the date of forthcoming

panel meetings. SNT email links can also be sent to callers via the force website.

d) Scheduled deployment officer (SDOs) visit callers by appointment in relation to grade C incidents. These are booked by the customer service desk (CSD) on an electronic diary, which covers three geographic areas and is co-ordinated at a district level. However, the CSD is only open from 0800-2200. Out of these times, callers are asked if they wish to be called back for an appointment to be made.

Work in progress

a) Enhancements are being made to Storm to improve service delivery; a disposal tag will soon be added which will identify when a grading has been increased to address customer needs and a separate tag to show “vulnerable’ and ‘upset” caller. This information is currently recorded in the text of the log; however, it cannot be searched without such a tag. There are also plans to increase the operating hours of the CSD.

b) Neighbourhood information is searched using postcodes on the website or Sharepoint and provides team details, priorities and dates of the next meetings, but this is time consuming. However, a technical solution has been developed by the IT department and when funding is agreed (date not known) it will provide an automated system with drop-down priorities.

c) In April 2009 an operating model was issued to CCR staff providing guidance on the grading of incidents, scheduled appointments and fixed police surgeries. This is a good document which, while not yet embedded, provides clear instructions, aides-memoire on how to respond at different incidents and the deployment of SDOs, including intelligence gathering during downtime.

Areas for improvement

a) The force is unable to identify what percentage of calls from 'vulnerable' and 'upset' callers or SNT priorities are responded to within the 60-minute time promised in the Pledge.

b) While the switchboard is able to measure and monitor the length of time it takes for extensions to be answered (secondary call handling), or voicemails to record, this information is not used to monitor performance. Switchboard supervisors only monitor the call quality of new staff and those who might be having problems.

c) Neighbourhood priorities on Sharepoint are either too broad in terms of location or lack detail about times (eg, evenings only) or description of

action needed; this makes it difficult for CCR staff to interpret. Response officers sometimes have to inform the CCR that they have been sent to an incident that is linked to SNT priorities, rather than the other way round.

d) SDOs are drawn from those on restrictive or recuperative duties, as are a number of staff on the CSD; this sometimes causes difficulties for CCR supervisors, as it is not always certain who is going to be available, and affects availability of appointments. The SDO appointments scheme was introduced about three months ago, without any guidance for CCR staff on what incidents were included. This has led to grade D calls (information only) being scheduled for an appointment, causing unnecessary backlogs (71 on the day of checking), and some having to be sent back for resourcing, as there are not enough appointments available. Staff described it as a 'dumping ground' for C and D grades.

e) HMIC contacted 11 customers who had received a scheduled appointment. All were notified of their appointments within 48 hours, as prescribed by the Policing Pledge. The general feeling among the customers was that the SDOs were not really interested; this may be result of officers being selected from restrictive or recuperative duties. One customer said *"As soon as he turned up I could tell he wasn't interested. He said he needed to go away and find out what needed to be done. Sure enough, nothing happened"*. Another said *"They turned up as promised but the officer said nothing could be done, though there was a witness"*. Several calls were referred back to the force for remedial action.

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.

GRADE:

FAIR

Strengths

a) SNTs use a wide range of communication methods, including local media and attending events to engage with communities; they use mobile police stations to hold surgeries, publishing the dates on the website. They have their own dedicated home page on Sharepoint, with quick launch links to neighbourhood profiles, engagement plans and problem-solving initiatives and are responsible for updating current priorities, which are transferred onto a template by the NCOs for uploading onto the force website. The aim is to populate the website within five days from priorities being set at neighbourhood meetings. Some 34 of the 40 websites reviewed contained current neighbourhood priorities (see AFI).

b) Community action group/PACT meetings are held every eight weeks, where priorities are agreed with communities. The chair is usually an SNT supervisor. Priorities are agreed at panel meetings, which are chaired by either partners or members of the public. Reality testing of a Safer Neighbourhood action panel revealed a well-run neighbourhood meeting, attended by 40+ members of the public and chaired by a local councillor. The meeting was

minuted and an update given by the SNT of offenders prosecuted.

c) Each SNT has an 'engagement plan', incorporating planned activity in a diary/calendar. SNTs have access to an 'engagement toolkit' for reference when preparing their engagement plan. SNTs use their neighbourhood profiles to help choose the most appropriate means of engagement with each community. Some SNTs engage community groups to carry out surveys of local residents, as they are well known locally and guarantee a non-police perspective. The information from these surveys forms part of the neighbourhood priority-setting process.

Work in progress

a) A review of the neighbourhood meeting process has been launched to identify local and national good practice, including the Casey report, with the aim of improving consistency in priority setting.

Areas for improvement

a) Only 50 % of SNT websites checked contained details of community engagement opportunities in the forthcoming month.

b) Some SNTs reported that neighbourhood meetings and priority setting was not corporate; the approach depended on where you worked. In some areas priorities are agreed monthly with the community and in others three monthly and closed to the public. One SNT had difficulties finalising priorities agreed in February 2009 due to delays in filling team vacancies.

c) Response officers and SNT staff are not briefed together and, while the electronic briefing and tasking system is linked to Sharepoint, there is little awareness of locally agreed priorities or links to tasking.

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.

GRADE: **GOOD**

Strengths

- a) The heads of communications and criminal justice, as members of the Policing Pledge steering group, have developed a matrix on the SNT website which explains criminal justice disposals to the public.
- b) A number of the more complex or involved neighbourhood priorities are managed by the district-based partnership tasking and co-ordination groups. Part of this process involves the use of results analysis to examine the impact of problem-solving activity. The groups meet on a monthly basis, chaired by a district superintendent, and attended by partners such as council, housing, education and environmental health officers. SNTs can escalate issues from their problem-solving plans into this group for assistance.
- c) Dr Janet Foster and Professor Clare Jones have been working for the Norfolk Constabulary for 18 months to improve engagement with harder to reach groups including the young, old and emerging communities. In depth research and consultation has been completed in five of the seven identified priority neighbourhoods which included face to face interviews with SNTs and members

of the community with lessons learnt promulgated at a number of SNT development days with partners.

- d) Crime maps are provided using the national crime mapping solution with the latest crime information at a neighbourhood level via the force website.
- e) A bespoke newsletter has been prepared for each of the 52 SNTs including details of the team members and the current priorities. Sufficient have been produced for each and every household in the county. These newsletters will be republished and distributed three times a year with part funding secured through an agreement with a home improvement company.

Work in progress

- a) The force plans to upload crime outcome results to help gauge progress in tackling crime at a local level.
- b) The criminal justice unit is currently working on technical solutions to provide more detailed information to the public on offender disposals, including restorative justice and disruption tactics.

Area for improvement

- a) None identified.

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.

GRADE: FAIR

Strengths

- a) While force policy is to attend all crimes, this is achieved mainly by PCSOs offering follow-up reassurance and crime prevention advice, which does not necessarily entail a visit at the time of the offence. Victims will often be given such a visit even if they do not request this service. However, this process has improved satisfaction levels and led to a number of crimes being detected as a result of new information coming to light.
- b) CDC staff contact all victims of crime, identify service recovery opportunities, examine letters alleging service failure and resolve lower-grade incidents by making early contact with victims/callers to arrange appointments for officers to visit.

Work in progress

- a) None identified.

Areas for improvement

- a) The crime recording system is a paper-free system which records details of action, directions and updates. Although it includes a generic task menu, including one for victim contact, this has not been enhanced to meet the Pledge requirements. As a result, entries are inconsistent and at best meet the Code of Practice for Victims standards only.

- b) The concept of victim care contracts (VCCs) is not in place and reality checking found that current arrangements are not victim-led; the question of reasonable length of time for follow-up information does not arise.

- c) None of the 15 callers contacted had VCCs and most noted an absence of monthly updates; however, ten victims felt satisfied with the overall service. The other five were dissatisfied due to lack of updates on court results, missing property etc. Quotes from victims included: *“I was pleased with how quickly they responded and I don’t think they could have done any more. But no-one has told me what has happened”*, and *“I did not hear anything afterwards but based on past experience I did not expect to.”*

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.

GRADE:

FAIR

Strengths

- a) Every complaint received by the CCR is recorded on Storm, with a flowchart for staff; where a complaint is received for a live incident, a linked record is created to deal with the dissatisfaction. To enable poor service to be recovered all complaints are immediately passed to supervisors for action. All inspectors and sergeants receive an input from the PSD on how to deal with local resolution of complaints as part of their training.
- b) HMIC contacted ten recent dissatisfied callers; all had received a response within 24 hours and most within a few hours of complaining.
- c) Incivility has been reduced by over 20% in the last 12 months. The PSD monitors trends, including hotspots, in district, departments and individuals. For example, a problem profile was raised in relation to roads policing officers because of a disproportionate rate of incivility complaints. An individual was identified and given an action plan to address the issue.
- d) The PSD has engaged with a number of partners, including citizen advice bureaux, to provide a gateway to make a complaint, and works with young offenders, to produce a leaflet, sponsored

by the IPCC, to improve communication channels with young adults.

- e) The Police Authority Professional Standards & Human Resources (PS & HR) committee exercises the Police Authority's powers and duties in respect of PS & HR matters and holds the Constabulary to account in this respect. The Committee has assigned specific Members to focus on areas under its remit and currently the Vice-Chairman provides oversight of PSD work, meeting regularly with appropriate staff for this purpose. The Committee itself meets quarterly. Members of the Committee also dip sample completed complaints files. This dip sampling monitors and tests practice in the handling of complaints, and ensures that lessons learnt are identified.

Work in progress

- a) The survey unit intends to work more closely with PSD staff to co-ordinate and collect reports of dissatisfaction onto a central database to identify trends.
- b) The Authority's Professional Standards & HR committee are working with the PSD to identify and implement a reporting mechanism to ensure that an appropriate audit trail is in place for organisational learning.

Areas for improvement

a) The flowchart in the CCR provides clear guidance on how to deal with a complaint, but it does not ensure that a reply is given within 24 hours; on occasions, this causes problems when the supervisor identified for service recovery has finished duty.

b) While PSD staff are on call at weekends, the department does not monitor email or voicemail messages. Complaints can be made via email and the website during weekend periods, but complainants will only receive a simple electronic acknowledgement which does not carry information on Pledge standards or key messages. Urgent matters are directed to the control room, otherwise the PSD will respond within office hours. Four of the ten complainants contacted felt officers had not taken ownership of their concerns, which made them even more dissatisfied. Some quotes recorded

were: “The sergeant was a bit blunt and rude. He wasn’t interested”, and “The inspector washed his hands of the problem and said there was nothing he could do, it was in CPS hands. I want to know where I stand in the future”.

c) Dissatisfaction data from a wide range of sources is not routinely recorded or analysed to inform organisational learning; however, the PSD has a broad appreciation of dissatisfaction issues and randomly dip-samples control room incidents to check quality of service. They analyse complaints data but this does not include dissatisfaction in its wider context.

d) There is an expectation that supervisors will locally resolve dissatisfaction issues quickly; however, an example was found where a problem had been raised in a letter and has taken nearly one month to resolve.

Final Summary

We want to do our best for you, but if we fail to meet our Pledge we will always explain why it has not been possible on that occasion to deliver the high standards to which we aspire and you deserve.

Strengths

- a) Customer satisfaction surveys are conducted using the Swift consortium and an internal attitude and behaviours telephone survey (70 a day), overseen by the CCR and citizen focus department. Dissatisfied responses are emailed to supervisors within 24 hours for service recovery. Satisfied customers are contacted to identify precisely what aspects of the service they found positive; this in turn is fed back to officers and police staff.
- b) The PSD has established an action plan to deal with any issues that arise from the attitude and satisfaction call-back survey. To date, no problems have been directed to this department.

Work in progress

- a) A quality of service unit was established in the PSD in May 2009. The objectives of the unit, comprising one sergeant and one full-time police staff member are to develop and maintain community contact, particularly among the hard-to-reach, to facilitate access to the complaints system. The sergeant role will be responsible for supporting the force, managers and Police Authority in this function.

Area for improvement

- a) While inspectors and sergeants receive an input on dealing with complaints, there is no service recovery policy to provide an overview of expectations to minimise the adverse impact.

2. PERFORMANCE, RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

Overall public confidence and satisfaction of the public in Norfolk Constabulary is fair taking into account the relevant performance data.

GRADE: **FAIR**

Grade Summary

The grades for Norfolk on the basis of public survey data are **fair** for public confidence and **fair** for satisfaction of victims of crime and other users of the police service. A fuller explanation is given below.

Confidence

- The assessment for public confidence is taken from responses to a question that asks whether the police in this area are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community. The latest British Crime Survey data for the financial year (FY) 2008/09 reports that 58.7% (Confidence Interval (CI) +/- 4.2%) of the public in Norfolk either tend to agree or strongly agree that the police are dealing with things that matter to people in this community.

Performance against peers:

- Norfolk's performance on this measure of confidence is **fair** relative to its most similar group (average is 55.8%, CI +/-1.5%).

Change over time:

- Performance on this measure of confidence remains stable compared FY 2007/08 (57.1%, CI +/-3.5%) and improving against FY 2006/07 (52.6%,

CI +/-4.2%). The change is not statistically significant for FY 2008/09 compared to 2007/08, but was statistically significant for 2008/09 compared to 2006/07.

Satisfaction

- Satisfaction by victims of crime and other users of the police service is 85% (CI +/-0.9%) for FY 2008/09.

Performance against peers:

- Norfolk's performance on this measure is **fair** relative to its most similar group (average 83.6%, CI +/-0.5%).

Change over time:

- Performance on this measure of overall satisfaction remains stable compared to both FY 2007/08 (85.6%, CI +/-1.3%) and FY 2006/07 (83.8%, CI +/-1.4%). There were no statistically significant differences.

* See endnote for explanation of interpretation of data and methodology used

Strengths

- a) Norfolk Constabulary outsources its public confidence and perceptions surveys to a market research company, Swift. Some 4,200 people (600 per

district) are surveyed each year and updated results are provided on a monthly basis, providing data which is statistically significant to district level.

b) Confidence and satisfaction data is provided to the CDU and is available at district and SNT level. The attitudes and behaviours survey has been piloted for six months and is now being adopted force-wide. Two good things and two not so good from these surveys are published on the daily briefing and are discussed at the daily management/tactical co-ordination group meetings.

c) A series of mystery shopper activities has been undertaken to check public enquiry offices, voicemail, email and websites and the results fed back to the SNT sergeant for action.

Work in progress

a) The survey unit is developing a survey programme to understand the drivers of satisfaction and confidence and recruit a dedicated analyst. From June, the Swift

survey questions will include the new Home Office discretionary questions on the Policing Pledge plus some additional Norfolk Pledge questions. A new survey aimed at victims of hate crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is also being introduced.

b) The communications and public affairs department is building up a database of people who are willing to be contacted to establish their levels of satisfaction and identify how services can be improved.

c) The CCR is developing a suite of performance measures which focus on confidence and satisfaction, to inform progress on delivery against the Pledge.

Area for improvement

a) The corporate operational performance system uses a data warehouse system to provide performance output data at district, team and individual level; however, it does not include quality of service issues, such as letters of thanks or complaints.

3. ACTION BEING TAKEN TO ADDRESS DEFICIENCIES

Recognition of deficiencies in delivering the Policing Pledge is fair with action to address these deficiencies as fair.

GRADE: FAIR

Strengths

- a) The assistant chief constable (customer services) chairs the strategic citizen focus group quarterly and the Policing Pledge steering group monthly. The steering group is responsible for delivering the Policing Pledge action plan as part of the overall citizen focus agenda. The Police Authority member who attends the group is also a member of the authority's citizen focus committee. The chair of the Police Authority's Citizens Focus Committee is a member of the Constabulary's Citizens Focus Steering Group and the Policing Pledge monthly group.
- b) The Pledge steering group, which reports to the chief officer group, is attended by senior managers and heads of department (including the PSD), who are all held accountable for delivering relevant elements of the Policing Pledge. The group is likely to be disbanded in six months time once the Pledge is embedded.
- c) The CDU holds monthly performance and team-building meetings, chaired by the chief superintendent and attended by district superintendents and other heads of departments. A clear action plan, with owners and timescales, is produced at every meeting and includes actions relating to the Policing Pledge.

Work in progress

- a) Since April 2009, the control room function has changed from a dispatch centre to the CCR, which has a more intrusive role with authority to deploy resources to incidents using the vehicle location system.
- b) Resource management has recently been centralised, together with the introduction of a new duty management system; once embedded, this should address current challenges around duties management and abstractions.
- c) Reorganisation led to six response hubs being set up at strategic locations across the county, with staff redeployed from other stations and roles, including SNT, to increase response capacity. In addition, the shift pattern for response officers has changed from a 12-hour (four on, four off) to a six-on, two-off pattern, with teams split to maximise the availability of staff. These changes are not universally supported by staff and in particular the shift pattern is not considered by some to be welfare-orientated. However, it is too early to say whether or how these changes will affect performance and overall morale.

Areas for improvement

a) A number of senior managers raised concerns regarding the resilience of the ICT department to deliver all the interdependent projects supporting the implementation of the Policing Pledge – for example, Automatic Person Location System (APLS), VCC and the new website.

b) King's Lynn district has produced a Policing Pledge action plan 2009/10 to identify how it will improve performance, under the headings of confidence, satisfaction, reducing crime, reducing ASB, appropriate outcomes and reducing the fear of crime. While this initiative is welcome and might usefully be introduced on all districts, the King's Lynn plan does not identify owners or timescales.

4. CONTEXT

To enable its delivery of the Policing Pledge the force has systems in place of a fair standard. There are fair accountable governance and oversight arrangements with fair standards of ACPO and Police Authority engagement. Communication is fair with fair development of resources, including people.

GRADE: FAIR

Strengths

a) The Chief Constable's leadership is clear and visible; he jointly signed the Norfolk Pledge with the Police Authority, mirroring the national Policing Pledge and communicating regularly on the force intranet site. The 'Vision, Pledge and our principles' were introduced in April 2007, underpinned by the national Policing Pledge and known locally as the Pledge standards. Reality testing found that staff understood the links between the Norfolk Pledge and the national Pledge, although it is less clear that the public understand the difference.

b) The three-year strategic plan (2009-12) and the annual policing plan 2009-10 outline the commitment as follows:

Our Vision

Our Vision is a new model for policing that will deliver excellent local services, where people are our priority.

Our Pledge

We will enhance the quality of life for everyone in Norfolk by striving to continually:

- Improve people's confidence in us;

- Increase the satisfaction of our customers, achieving the outcomes that matter most to them;
- Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.

Our Principles

- Working in partnership with the community to identify and resolve problems;
- Developing a professional, skilled and flexible team;
- Delivering high quality services;
- Being proactive and intelligence-led; and
- Improving performance yet driving down costs.

c) The Norfolk policing model was introduced in April 2009 and sets out clear expectations for SNT and response officers. SNTs will spend equal amounts of their time on crime issues, problem-solving and community engagement; response officers will deal with grade A and B incidents, including 'golden hour' scene management. Response officers and detectives are expected to visit SNTs daily to be briefed on local issues/priorities.

d) Restructuring – dismantling the three BCUs to create the CDU – has released £1.2 million savings annually, which has been re-invested in an extra 16 inspectors and sergeants at the operational level, 200 additional constables into SNTs and 100 additional posts through growth.

e) The communications strategy sets out a range of methods to embed the Norfolk Policing Pledge internally, including a DVD message by the chief constable, computer screensavers, internal publications and items attached to payslips. The Police Authority is satisfied that the force has implemented the Policing Pledge well and it will only get involved if performance drops. Members speak informally to the project lead on a monthly basis to monitor progress.

f) The Policing Pledge has been marketed and communicated to all residents via a newsletter published in spring 2009 called ‘Changing Times’. This external publication went to 350,000 homes in the county and only one email of complaint has been received regarding the content; this may be due in part to 1,400 advance copies that were sent to partners as part of the consultation process. The publication contains a full page on the national Policing Pledge. As a follow-up, SNTs are speaking to people on their doorsteps to seek feedback.

g) Survey data is sent to Learning and Development as lessons learnt and to identify future training needs. Training plans have been reviewed to reflect the Norfolk vision, Pledge and principles. A skills matrix is used to track Pledge inputs

against courses. However, due to increased recruiting, Pledge training is being delivered only to student officers and those transferring to SNTs.

Work in progress

a) The communications and public affairs department uses the force’s Facebook page to communicate the Norfolk Policing Pledge to a younger generation and is exploring Twitter as another communication tool.

Areas for improvement

a) The force and Police Authority share the risk register; extracts which impact on confidence and satisfaction were dated 1 June 2009, indicating that the process is not yet embedded in respect of the Policing Pledge.

b) The Policing Pledge has not been explicitly incorporated into performance development review (PDR) processes and only limited evidence was found during reality testing of its inclusion in a broad range of staff PDR reports.

c) Only SNT staff and student officers have received any form of Policing Pledge training. Some SNTs only became aware of the national Pledge about a month ago and reported new posters arriving on 29 May.

d) Learning and Development regards the high volume of student officers currently being recruited and the loss of experienced officers as a barrier to delivering the Pledge.

5. ENDNOTE

Confidence and Satisfaction survey data used in SGC2 (Performance and Outcomes)

As part of the Policing Pledge Inspection, all forces have been assessed on public confidence and satisfaction with the level of service received from the police. This information is taken from two established, large-scale surveys. This endnote provides more information about the survey questions used. A brief overview of what is meant by confidence and satisfaction is provided alongside brief information about the surveys from which the questions are taken. This section also provides a brief summary of how information from these surveys is interpreted and used.

Confidence

The question about public confidence is taken from the British Crime Survey (BCS). The BCS is a large face to face survey of a representative sample of people aged 16 or over, who live in England and Wales. The survey asks people about their experience of crime for the 12 month period prior to their interview. It also asks about their attitudes to issues including anti-social behaviour, the police and the criminal justice system. Respondents are asked to say to what extent they agree or disagree with these statements. The statement used here is:

- *'The police in this area are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community'*

The percentage of respondents who tended to agree or strongly agree with this statement is reported in the SGC2 assessment.

Satisfaction

Public satisfaction with the service received from the police is taken from User Satisfaction surveys. This indicator is included within of the Analysis of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) framework which assists the performance management of crime and community safety (<http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/apacs>). The surveys, which each force carries out, ask a large number of people who have had contact with the police how satisfied they were with the service they received. Respondents are victims of burglary, road traffic collisions, vehicle crime and violent crime, who are contacted following initial contact with the police and asked how satisfied they were with the overall service provided by the police. Results are published annually on the Home Office website (for example, see statement 1e 'Satisfaction with overall service' <http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/performance-assessment/assessments-2007-2008/avon-and-somerset?view=Indicator#satisfaction>).

Use of data

In order to interpret how well an individual force has performed on these questions, their performance is compared to that of similar forces. All forces in England and Wales are grouped with up

to 7 other forces into what are called most similar groups (MSGs). The exception is the City of London, for whom it was not possible to identify any similar forces. Most similar groups allow meaningful comparison of forces with peers on crime rates and public perceptions. MSGs are created on the basis of areas which have similar geographic, demographic and socio-economic backgrounds.

The method for the comparison with the most similar group is that used by the Police Performance Steering Group (PPSG), which HMIC now runs. This methodology is well-established, having been developed as part of APACS's precursor (the Police Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF)).

For the user satisfaction question, PPSG uses discrete and fixed boundaries in analysing performance. Force performance is compared to the MSG average. Grades are assigned on the basis of percentage point difference from the MSG average, and use a 4 point scale as set out below.

- Poor is used when a force's performance is more than **5% below** the MSG average;
- Fair is used where a force's performance lies between **5% below** the MSG average and up to **2% above** the MSG average. A fair grade is also assigned if the difference between the force performance and the MSG average is not statistically significant at the 95%

level. As the confidence intervals for user satisfaction are around 1%, this is almost always forces that would have been graded as fair by their fixed boundaries;

- Good is used when a force's performance is more than **2% to 5%** above the MSG average and
- Excellent is used where performance is more than **5% above** MSG average.

For the confidence question, grades cannot be assigned using fixed boundaries, as the confidence intervals are large (around 4%) and vary between forces. This means that the confidence intervals are often larger than the fixed boundaries used for user satisfaction. The grades therefore are assigned on the basis of whether the performance is statistically significantly different from the MSG average, and a 3 point scale is used, as set out below.

- Poor is used when a force's performance is statistically significantly below the MSG average, at the 95% confidence level.
- Fair is used where the difference between the force performance and the MSG average is not statistically significant at the 95% level.
- Good/Excellent is used where a force's performance is statistically significantly above the MSG average, at the 95% confidence level.



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