



Suffolk Constabulary

PRESS RELEASE

2nd March 2010

QUALITY OF SERVICE IMPROVES – WHILE CRIME FALLS

Suffolk Constabulary has been praised after improving the quality of service it offers local people.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) – the independent body responsible for monitoring police performance nationwide – has upgraded the Constabulary for the way it delivers against the ten standards of the Policing Pledge.

The news comes as overall crime in the county has shown a decrease, compared with the same period last year.

HMIC graded the Constabulary as “poor” following an inspection last summer, which examined performance against the 10 points of the Pledge.

As a result, the Constabulary was one of nine forces to be re-inspected earlier this year.

The force is now assessed overall as “fair” and was upgraded in all four of the areas re-inspected by HMIC, including a “good” for delivery of Pledge Point 8 which covers keeping local people informed about progress on local crime and policing issues.

Suffolk's Chief Constable Simon Ash said: “This is excellent news – and underlines how our officers and staff are committed to providing local people with a quality policing service.

“I am particularly pleased that we have seen an improvement in the way we keep local people informed about the work we are doing to keep their communities safe, whether through the local media, our websites or newsletters.

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“And I am delighted that our Safer Neighbourhood Team tasking meetings are now open to the public, giving local people more opportunity to tell us their views, influence our priorities and get involved.

“If people know who their officers are, what is being done to make their community safer and how they can influence what is dealt with, it will go a long way to further raising their confidence that the police and local councils are tackling concerns at a local level.

“However, there are still areas where we can improve. In the year ahead, we will continue to further embed the ethos of excellent customer service into all areas of our work while concentrating on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour with local councils and other partners.”

In their conclusion, HMIC inspectors said that the Constabulary had improved its delivery of Pledge points 8 and 10.

They added: “... much progress has been made in identifying areas where more work is needed to fulfil their Pledge commitments; this is driven by the strong leadership of chief officers, the police authority and senior managers. HMIC also considers that further improvements are highly likely.”

Suffolk Police Authority Chair Gulshan Kayembe said: “We are delighted with the decision of HMIC to re-grade Suffolk Constabulary in relation to their performance against the National Policing Pledge.

“The Authority has worked alongside the Constabulary, monitoring the work of the Pledge Taskforce, and we are delighted that their excellent work in improving service has been formally recognised.

“The Authority commends the work of staff and officers across all departments for their dedication and commitment to improving performance. We will continue to monitor this, working with the Constabulary to ensure that the improvements that have been made are lasting, resulting in a more effective and efficient police force for Suffolk.”

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Note to Editors:

The Chief Constable is available for interview today. If you would like to speak to him, please contact the press office on 01473 782722 to arrange.

HMIC re-inspected four areas in relation to the policing pledge, including delivery of Pledge points 8 and 10, which were graded 'poor' at the last inspection.

*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 just, details of what action we and our partners are taking to make your neighbourhood safer and information on how your force is performing.

Previous Grade: Poor

New Grade: Good

*Pledge point 10: Acknowledge any dissatisfaction with the service you have received within 24 hours or 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."

Previous Grade: Poor

New Grade: Fair

*Improving performance: The force had identified gaps in its delivery of the Pledge and was taking action in those areas.

Previous Grade: Fair

New Grade: Good

*Improving performance: the force's senior team led Implementation, the police authority was involved, staffs were being trained and the Pledge was communicated to staff and public.

Previous Grade: Fair

New Grade: Good

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*Taking pride
in keeping
Suffolk safe*