CONTACT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY: 2016 – 2020

"Protecting the public by obtaining and recording accurate information to enable the right decisions to be made to keep people safe"

Date	21 November 2016
Version	0.2
Author	T/Chief Superintendent Peter Lawson
Owner	ACC Tim Jacques

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1. Summary

1.1. Our strategy for the next four years is to outline, at a high level, the overarching expectations of the Contact Management Department with respect to its future contacts with the public. Central to retaining public consent and support is maintaining public confidence that, when they require assistance, the police will respond effectively and in a timely manner. This expectation goes to the heart of effective contact management.

1.2. Contact management should be seen in the context of contact that exists between citizens (the public) and the Constabulary. Whilst much of that contact continues to be via the telephone, contact management is much broader than this. It involves other access channels such as online reporting, email, through social media, and direct forms of face-to-face contact through front counters.

1.3. Ultimately, the purpose of Contact Management is "***to obtain and record accurate information to enable the right decisions to be made to keep people safe***". This supports the overall Constabulary mission of "***To keep people safe and feeling safe, especially the most vulnerable***".

1.4. The increasing use of digital and social media makes it crucial that the Constabulary continues to improve accessibility through the wider use of on-line channels that meet public expectations. Our people are key to dealing with more complex interactions, whilst shifting simpler tasks to self-service technologies.

2. Introduction

2.1. This strategy sets out how we will develop the Contact Management department to support the continued delivery of high quality policing in Lancashire in the operating context of increasingly complex demand and a financially constrained environment. The Contact Management department has a key role to play in ensuring the Constabulary remains consistently amongst the top performing police forces by providing high quality contact management at an affordable cost.

2.2. Over the next four years the strategic priorities will be to:

- *Deliver contact solutions that enable Lancashire Constabulary to be an accessible and accountable police service that is responsive to the needs of citizens.*

- *Optimise resources to meet demands for service; enhancing capability through technology and partnerships.*

- *Create a culture in Contact Management that promotes trust and confidence whereby leaders and managers involve staff in shaping and delivering service and people are equipped to do the right things.*

- *Achieve greater efficiency and value for money in the area of Contact Management.*

3. The Story So Far

3.1. In 2013 the Constabulary embarked on programme of work to move from 6 divisionally based Communications Rooms to a single Force Control Room at Hutton. This required substantial IT redesign together with structural change that resulted in a reduction from 30 to 20 Team Leaders and 317 to 275 Customer Contact Advisors (CCAs). In practice it was felt 275 CCAs represented excessive risk to service levels and 20 Temporary CCA Contracts were introduced to set establishment for the FCR at 275 permanent FTE posts together with 20 temporary FTE posts.

3.2. Since 2013 a number of other changes have been implemented. These have included establishment of the Demand Reduction Unit (DRU); later renamed to be the Demand Management Unit (DMU) – a team of sergeants whose role in the department was intended to support enhanced deployment decisions based on risk, threat, and vulnerability. An Initial Investigation Unit (IIU) comprised of 40 police constable posts was established to coincide with the change in NCRS that reduced the time permitted to record crimes from 72 hours to a maximum of 24.

3.3. Establishment of the single control room has been accompanied by a period of consolidation and stabilisation of the technology infrastructure and systems used in the department, in particular the Integrated Command and Control System (ICCS). The nature of a modern police control room means that technology is a fundamental and critical component of the department which, when not working properly, has the potential to impact severely on room performance. Following some particularly difficult experiences in 2013 and 2014 the room has latterly experienced relatively steady and stable operation of systems and infrastructure.

3.4. In 2016 it was recognised that the model of partially staffing the FCR using 20 temporary contracted FTE posts was a significant contributor to unsustainable levels of staff turnover in the department. It was agreed to revise the structure to be based on 295 permanent FTE posts which, together with a planned change of the name of CCAs to Police Control Room Operators, is intended to enhance approaches to recruitment and retention in the department.

3.5. 2016 was a year of particular stretch in the department when as a result of higher than expected call volumes and vacant PCRO posts resulted in some acute challenges delivering acceptable call handling performance especially around the 101 non-emergency number.

3.6. Throughout 2016 a demand analysis review conducted by staff from the FCR together with Futures Team explored in detail the processes in the department by using a Systems Thinking methodology. This is ongoing work that at the time of writing has begun the redesign phase, but which has already reported a series of far-reaching findings related to system waste and failure demand in the room which – if successfully redesigned – have the potential to realise significant improvements

4. Vision

"Protecting the public by obtaining and recording accurate information to enable the right decisions to be made to keep people safe"

4.1 Delivery of the strategic objectives will be guided by a set of principles:

4.2 **Principle 1: Public Focused**

Channel Shift – the channels through which policing services are delivered and by which the public has contact with the Constabulary are a critical part of service provision. We will develop current channels and those that may be used in future to meet public and organisation needs. This will mean increased use of online reporting and self-service and uploading of digital media. Many calls to police are complex and often require a human interaction; however for less complex transactional contact we will shift this demand to online services.

Digital Inclusion – there is no doubt that may services can be delivered online more efficiently and effectively from the point of view of both the public and the Constabulary. However a portion of the public remains digitally excluded or are uncomfortable with the technology and we will consider this group and cater for their needs.

Customer Experience Mapping – is a qualitative approach, focused on 'emotional' insights about a customer, in order to tell his or her story with a passion and narrative. It is a powerful way of engaging both staff and customers. We will develop this approach to better inform how we operate.

Keeping People Informed – one of the key influencers on satisfaction and confidence is the provision of information to the public on the progress of their investigation – be it crime, anti-social behaviour or public safety issues. We will design services for keeping people informed to enable officers and staff throughout the force to take responsibility for updating customers about investigations for which they are responsible. These services will take account of:
- The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime
- The Witness Charter

4.3 **Principle 2: Leadership**

Leadership and Culture - The importance of contact management in delivering policing services needs to be valued and recognised at chief officer level. There is a lead chief officer for contact management supported by joined up decision making across portfolios. To create the right culture and promote trust and confidence within the department leaders at every level will involve staff in shaping and delivering services. The Constabulary's mission and the purpose of Contact Management will be communicated well to staff at all levels.

Principle 3: People

The right people, empowered and equipped to do the right things - Our people are our most valuable asset and it is critical that they are equipped and empowered to use their knowledge and skill to deliver the best. Recruitment, retention, development, talent management, engagement, and attendance management

processes will be kept under review to ensure they remain fit for purpose. They are key to shaping and delivering effective contact management.

Principle 4: Demand

Transforming Demand - An analysis of demand received by the Force Control Room commenced in 2016 using systems thinking methodology that is expected to transform the way we work; to improve customer service; and create a continuous improvement culture.

The work has identified areas of demand that place a significant burden on the organisation which in turn inform our understanding of value and failure demand:

- **Value** – demand from the customer that we are here to deal with.

- **System Failure** – when we fail to do something right, or right in the eyes of the customer.

- **Preventable** – a demand made to us when we are not the most appropriate organisation to deal with it.

By understanding value and failure demand together with system conditions we can build a system that deals more effectively, reducing bureaucracy, working smarter, and enabling us to become more efficient in the future.

Demand Forecasting – is critical to supporting our ability to respond effectively to threat, risk, vulnerability, and public safety issues. It is also key to ensuring that public expectations are met and that they are satisfied with the service they receive. We will develop our understanding of the measures derived from our purpose, for example:

- Call volumes and types
- Service Levels
- Abandonment Behaviour
- Number of contact management staff and work schedules

We will ensure bespoke Workforce Management Solutions are fit for our business needs, supported by a robust approach to the management of attendance and overtime.

Principle 5: Early Action & Partners

Early Action Public Service Lancashire Project – Contact Management is the public facing point of access to policing services and has a critical role to play in recognising threat, risk, harm, and vulnerability; signposting and directing demand to the most appropriate resource or multi-agency response. A natural extension of the development of integrated teams and case management in the Place Based policing model being developed in BCUs is a determination to develop an integrated team within the Force Control Room to enable enhanced coordinated service delivery.

Principle 6: Resources

Systems & Infrastructure – we will have a structured and forward looking approach to maintenance, development, and replacement of information technology in the department.   Technology is fundamental to a modern contact centre and critical to our approach will be managing strong and effective relationships with the ICT department, together with third party suppliers.

Satisfying demand for contact - through the most efficient and effective use of resources we will work closely with divisions and other departments to ensure best use is made of force resources. Effective management of officer and staff availability across Contact Management and divisions is vital to responding to calls for service.

Continuous Improvement – we will sustain a culture of continuous improvement by creating a positive organisational environment where every individual understands the end-to-end organisational process within which they operate, as well as the value of their individual contribution to the process.

Systems Thinking – We will build on the demand analysis review by training more members of staff in this approach in order to continually seek to improve services.

Collaboration – Collaboration is increasing amongst police forces and the wider public sector. Collaboration can be a key strategy to deliver value for money services for the public with shrinking budgets, as well as delivering greater resilience and service standards. We will remain open minded to opportunities that may add value to our strategic aims.

5. What Success Will Look Like

5.1. We will have a clear understanding of the demand for services received by the department and the role the department has in managing that demand to balance public expectations with organisational objectives and capability. Our people will be empowered and equipped with the right skills and confidence to make the right decisions to keep people safe.

5.2. We will be less reliant on telephony as a means of receiving less complex calls for service. For more simple transactions we will deal with them via other online channels such as direct reporting or other alternatives such as web-chat.

5.3. We will achieve our service standards for the handling of 999/112 public emergency calls, and will deal with non-emergency enquiries through 101 and other channels to meet the expectations of the public.

5.4. We will have a set of measures that better test whether we are achieving our purpose.

5.5. IT Systems and Infrastructure in the department will enable our staff to be productive and deliver high quality contact management. The systems will be resilient and stable and the department will work with ICT and suppliers to establish a structured approach to development and replacement of systems.

6. Specifics: Turning the Vision into Reality
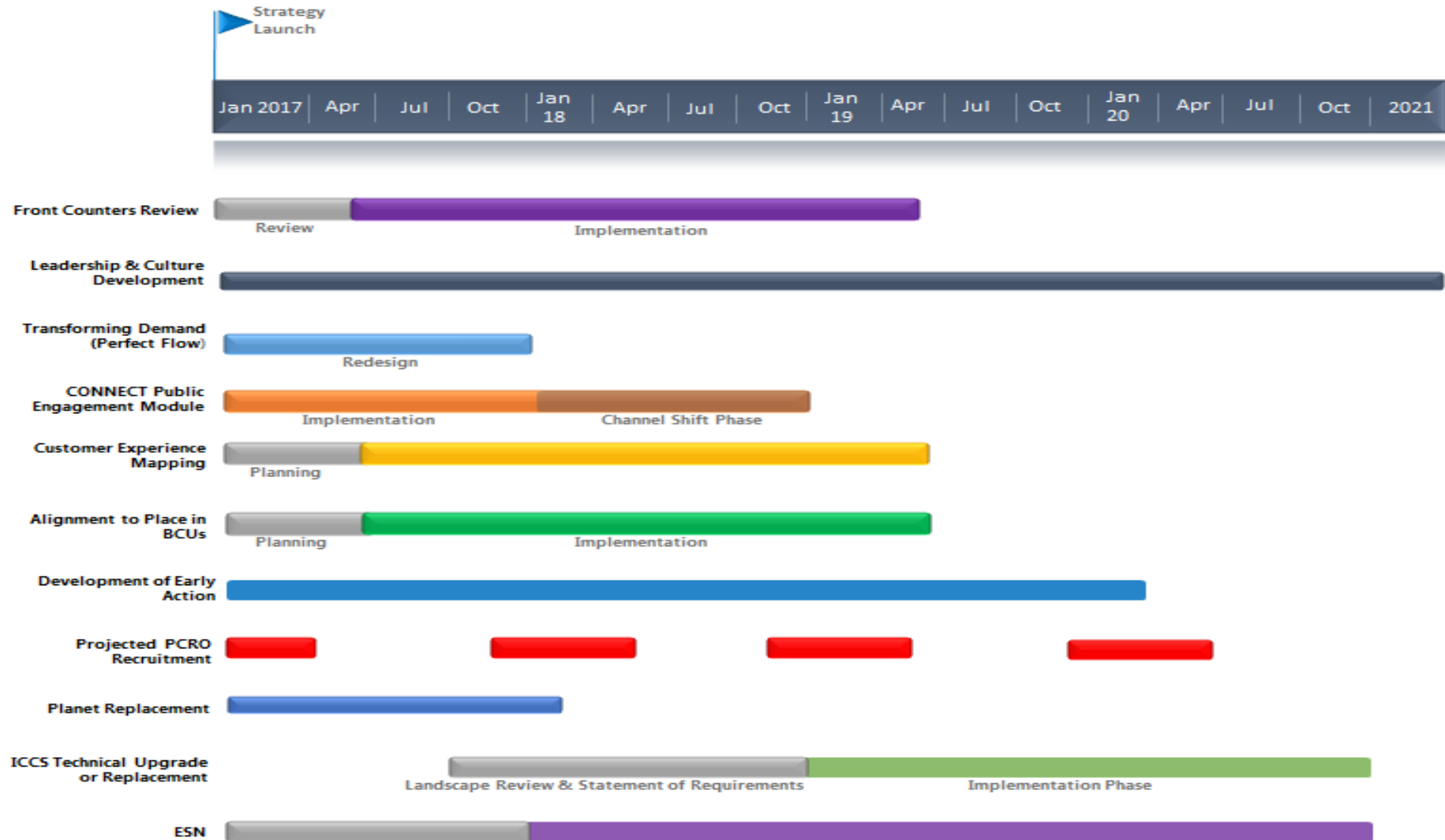
7. Conclusion

7.1. This strategy is focussed on delivering as much benefit as possible from the Contact Management department. As the demands placed upon policing become more complicated and the resources more stretched, it is critical that contact management interactions deliver best use of resources and provide value for money services, whilst consistently meeting the needs and expectations of the public.

7.2. In developing the systems thinking work already started, the department will consider the whole 'end to end' processes before implementing changes. This will require a clear understanding of the publics' needs and expectations at the first point of contact through to dispatch and deployment. The follow-up aspect of police service is critical to public satisfaction and in this regard the department has a key role to influence a culture change across the wider force to keeping people informed.

7.3. The Contact Management department is an integral part of the process whereby most demand enters the Constabulary. It is critical that the department continues to strengthen links with divisions and that each understand the others' role in providing high quality service delivery.

7.4. This strategy compliments the following standards/codes of practice all of which have at their core a focus on public service and a strong service delivery improvement emphasis:

- The Police and Crime Plan
- The Constabulary's Ambition, Mission, and Values
- The Witness Charter
- Code of Practice for Victims of Crime
- The National Crime Recording Standard
- The National Standard for Incident Recording