



**Lancashire  
Constabulary**  
police and communities together

<b>REPORT TO : SCRUTINY MEETING</b>
<b>REPORT BY: CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT PETER LAWSON</b>
<b>TITLE: UPDATE ON CONTACT MANAGEMENT</b>

**1. Summary**

- i. This report sets out the update on Contact Management Department of the Constabulary for the reporting period October to December 2017.

**2. Decision Required**

- i. The Commissioner is requested to review the report and make comments as appropriate.

**3. Information**

- i. This report seeks to update on actions from the last scrutiny report and provide content on how Police Forces are operating nationally, regionally and locally.
- ii. Since the last scrutiny report, work continues to provide a business case to replicate the South Pod trial across all three BCU's in a way that maximises the benefits and opportunities identified by the recent systems thinking review of Contact Management. As previously stated evidence from the South Pod Trial indicates, the geographic alignment of work through the Force Control Room offers an enhanced level of public service and helps the department achieve the Force purpose. **It is anticipated that a fully costed business case will be ready for consideration by COT / the PCC in May 2018.**

**a. Proposed Future Model of Working – Pod**

- i. The following is a summary of the South Division POD trial, including the methodology employed to generate the improvements in call handling performance and benefits in terms of an improved quality of service to the public.
- ii. The demand analysis review piloted a new way of working for the South Division, which aligned the workload on a geographic basis:
  - Call Handlers, Radio Dispatchers, Team Supervisors, and Police Officers are co-located in a single Pod – there is one Pod per BCU.

- Calls for the Pod are geographically routed so they will predominantly be answered by an operator with the skillset and knowledge to answer that call – at peak times overspill demand will be shared to the other pods as required but the majority will remain within the geographic Pod area.
- The close proximity of staff, officers, and supervisors to each other means there is increased knowledge and expertise available at the first point of contact, which results in better decision making.
- New staff are spread amongst the Pod where they can learn and develop with the assistance of the more experienced staff.
- Because staff work aligned to a geographic Pod they have a better understanding of the needs of specific areas or communities and can identify hot spots or local issues quickly and effectively.
- Because staff in all roles are co-located they can interact easily to identify waste demand, repeat demand and high priority demand and target resources accordingly. This makes for an effective and efficient team both inside the FCR and outside in the BCU.
- One of the key benefits for the organisation is the working environment that Pod provides – staff feel aligned and engaged to a part of the county or community they know well resulting in better working relationships with colleagues and services outside of the Force Control Room. The single FCR carries a risk of detachment from operational policing which Pod working helps us overcome and strengthen relationships with departments out in the BCU areas.

**b. Results of the South Pod Pilot:**

- Over 3 quarters of callers were answered by the Pod either immediately or within 10 seconds
- 89.9% of all calls were answered by the Pod within 1 minute
- 95.1% of all calls were answered by the Pod within 2 minutes
- 97% of all calls were answered by the Pod within 3 minutes
- 98.1% of all calls were answered by the Pod within 4 minutes
- 98.6% of all calls were answered by the Pod within 5 minutes
- During the Pod Pilot, the average time to answer calls in the main room was 1 minute 48 seconds. The average time to answer for the South Pod during the same period was 22.5 seconds.

**c. Recent Operational Issues in Contact Management**

- i. During 2017 police forces throughout England and Wales have reported significant, and in some cases unprecedented demand on their call centres. Many forces are reporting an increase in 999 calls and this has been the case in Lancashire where for example on a number of days in June and July the force received well over 1000 emergency calls per day – levels exceeding even that experienced on New Year's Eve.
- ii. The NPCC (National Chief Constables Council) circulated concerns in December 2017 to all Forces nationally that there were a number of 999 calls across all forces

waiting over 2 minutes to get through to the Police service. The paper highlighted a significant increase in 999 demands since May this year. The increase in delays into the Police service over the summer months and into November nationally has been at an all-time high. T

- iii. The data for Lancashire would corroborate this report. Reporting our data for emergency calls on a monthly basis gives the following:

	May '17	Jun '17	Jul '17	Aug '17	Sep '17	Oct '17	Nov '17	Dec '17
Total 999's Offered	21425	22739	22296	23006	20980	21357	18906	19463
999's Answered at 120 or over	15	114	204	35	25	6	4	4
Percentage	0.070%	0.501%	0.915%	0.152%	0.119%	0.028%	0.021%	0.021%

- iv. For Lancashire, the volume has clearly increased since May '17. We saw a peak in July '17, this was a particularly difficult month for our 999 call handling performance. The volume of calls waiting over 2 minutes rose to its peak with almost 1 in every 100 calls waiting past this mark.
- v. A reduction in the overall volume of calls from the summer months and a gradual increase in staffing levels have seen an ever-improving picture since that time. In particular, **the last three complete months have seen the volume reduce to a level where only 1 in every 5000 calls waits 2 minutes or over for answer.**
- vi. Emergency call handling continues to be the number one priority for the Force Control Room and through work on recruitment and retention along with the realignment of some core functions within the FCR itself we are returning to a point of confidence with emergency calls. We will continue to review all call handling functions but will always maintain the focus on the emergency call handling first.

**d. Call Performance - Emergency Calls Summary**

- i. Emergency calls are the primary focus of staff within the FCR. Whilst we recognise that there is a correlation between 101 call performance and the demand on the 999 service we remain focussed on answering 999 emergency calls above any other type of demand. What is significant in both types of demand is the increase in average call length (now added to the table) and whilst on the face of it this may appear to be a marginal increase when you count the number of calls involved this starts to add up to a significant impact (bearing in mind we have the same issue with 101 calls).
- ii. Very simply for 999 calls, December 2016 had an average talk time of 03:59 and December 2017 had a time of 04:13. That is an average increase of 14 seconds per call. Which equates to a 5.9% increase in the time spent on each 999 call.
- iii. During December 2017, we answered 19,316 emergency calls. The 5.9% increase in talk time amounts to just over 75 extra hours spent on the phone to callers on 999. Taking this into account you will see that despite the increased demand on the 999 system both in numbers of calls and increased average call length we have managed

to maintain similar service levels from 2016 to 2017 – this can be directly attributed to the increase in staffing within the FCR.

	999 : 2017					Average Call Length
	Offered	Achieved	Service Level	Average Speed to Answer	Abandonment Rate	
<b>OCT</b>	21357	14694	68.80%	10.0	1.3%	04:23
<b>NOV</b>	18906	15199	80.39%	6.7	0.9%	04:10
<b>DEC</b>	19463	15355	78.89%	7.5	0.8%	04:13

	999 : 2016					Average Call Length
	Offered	Achieved	Service Level	Average Speed to Answer	Abandonment Rate	
<b>OCT</b>	20236	14457	71.44%	9.7	1.3%	03:48
<b>NOV</b>	17079	13629	79.80%	6.8	0.8%	03:44
<b>DEC</b>	18184	13592	74.75%	7.9	0.6%	03:59

**e. Call Performance - Non Emergency Calls**

- i. Non-emergency calls remain a challenge for the room and again, some of this can be attributed to the nature of demand coming into the FCR, research by the demand analysis team supports the anecdotal view that the complexity of the issues within calls combined with the safeguarding / vulnerability work done by FCR staff has pushed up the average call handling time from that seen in previous years. Similar to the 999 calls the increases may appear marginal but the volumes mean that the impact is significant. We are currently seeing an average 9.5% increase in call length from 2016 to 2017, which translates to around 300 additional hours on the telephone per month.
- ii. 2017 has been a particularly challenging year for the 101 call performance and whilst the trend is showing a gradual improvement, we continue to monitor this closely and recruitment will be a key factor in managing this down to a reasonable level (more on recruitment below). There is a direct impact on both repeat demand and emergency call demand from us not being able to answer the 101 service effectively so whilst it does not take priority over emergency call handling we do remain focussed on trying to improve our non-emergency call handling.

	Non-Emergency : 2017					Average Call Length
	Offered	Achieved	Service Level	Average Speed to Answer	Abandonment Rate	
<b>OCT</b>	72530	27916	38.49%	174.4	38.8%	04:51
<b>NOV</b>	63896	34546	54.07%	95.1	25.8%	04:49
<b>DEC</b>	58107	32415	55.79%	95.3	26.1%	04:49

	Non-Emergency : 2016					Average call length
	Offered	Achieved	Service Level	Average Speed to Answer	Abandonment Rate	
<b>OCT</b>	70057	32530	46.43%	106.5	26.6%	04:27
<b>NOV</b>	61157	39252	64.18%	58.6	15.5%	04:38
<b>DEC</b>	59734	34149	57.17%	73.2	19.0%	04:24

**f. Recruitment**

- i. FCR Staffing levels have been very much in the spotlight during 2017 and work to establish the baseline FTE staffing requirement has shown that we require uplift from 295 FTE to 345 FTE to meet current demand. This sum was initially reached following analysis of raw data obtained from the Demand Analysis team and subsequently supported by the Process Evolution software and we are pleased to report the Chief Officer Team has agreed the temporary uplift of 50 FTE staff. It is anticipated that the POD business case, which is due for submission in May 2018 will make a formal case to increase the staffing establishment to around 345 FTE on a permanent basis.
- ii. Recruitment picked up significantly in the latter end of 2017 and 2018 will see the introduction of a large number of new staff into the department. Given the level of demand we are currently dealing with this is a very encouraging move – the details are as follows:
  - September 2017 – 19 new recruits started training course – They commenced duties in the room in November
  - February 2018 – 40 new recruits will start their training course – They will commence duties in the room in April
  - April 2018 – 30/40 new recruits (dependent how many are successful for PC recruitment) will start their training course – They will commence duties in room late June

- September 2018 – to be confirmed based on current risks to FCR staffing levels and loss of staff to other functions / departments, or resignation from Lancashire Constabulary
- iii. Current risks to our FTE staffing levels are the Police Officer recruitment process, the PCSO recruitment process and the Connect Linking Team process scheduled for autumn 2018. It is important to note that even with the substantial intakes this year we will need to closely monitor the FTE staffing level and have a provisional plan for a September intake if required. We do retain the 2-year tenure for our current staff joining Lancashire Police but do continue to lose staff into the regional forces on a regular basis.
- iv. Current recruitment levels will greatly assist the call-handling capabilities of the FCR but will need careful management to prevent the skills gap risk with the number of new and inexperienced members of staff in the room. We have changed some of the key processes, for example for the first time in department we now have an established team of tutor's who are trained, briefed and ready to deal with the intakes when they arrive. We have changed the rota that they will work so that it aligns to the tutor team - this also gets them used to their own teams and supervisors prior to leaving the tutoring hubs. Workbooks have been updated with clear progress plans to allow them to consolidate their training and move onto new areas as soon as possible and we are in negotiation with staff associations and HR to lengthen the probationary assessment period to ensure new staff are meeting the demands of the role before completing probation.
- v. In terms of recruitment from the county, and particularly in respect of the Pod working on the horizon we can report that the recruitment per BCU area is as follows:

BCU Area	South	East	West	Misc
Recruits in last 12 months	36	29	24	13

- vi. Misc refers to recruits from outside the county area.
- vii. This is an encouraging sign as there was a fear that we would recruit from the Preston area only but clearly we are still attracting recruits from all parts of the county (and in some circumstances beyond).

#### **4. Implications**

##### **a. Other Impacts**

- i. Over the next 12 months, we are conscious that there are also some additional systems changes, which we will monitor closely as they all, have the potential to affect our staffing and performance – they are:

- SMARTSTORM – a replacement of our current Command and Control system – it is anticipated that this will be a low-impact introduction as this is an upgraded version of our current system – this is due for testing in March with very little training requirement – **very little impact on staff and performance**
- Connect Phase 2 – the replacement of the SLEUTH system – this will potentially have an impact on our call handling/data handling time within the FCR – this requires 2 days training which is programmed into the current plan and scheduled to go live in November – we will be watching this closely as it develops – **this has potential to impact on both staff and performance**
- Workforce Management – the replacement of the Planet WFM system – the version we are taking looks and feels very similar to our current product and we do not anticipate any major impact on staff with its introduction. **Some impact on staff and performance**
- Capita Upgrades on ICCS for ESN – there will be patching work over the next 12 months to bring us up to spec for ESN readiness. This will also stabilise the telephone interface and should give us a more resilient system within the FCR. There will be some service interruptions for the patching but staff will not notice any significant difference with the system being used (supervisors will require training as they will see a substantial difference) – **very little impact on staff and performance**

*Please note that all the above is separate to the Pod implementation.*

## 5. Background Papers

- i. There are further details on the Consolidated Action Plan (appendix A) below in relation to the systems being introduced but it is important to emphasise the impact on staff and performance with every change of system that we bring in.

## CONSOLIDATED ACTION PLAN

## Appendix A

### New and On-going Actions

		Completion Date	Progress	Comments
2016/7	To upgrade systems to be ready for the national Airwave replacement, ESN (Emergency Service Network).	2018	On-going	<p>The department have begun to host demonstrations from suppliers of integrated control room systems to understand what products are available on the market and as a pre-cursor to establishing a formal landscape review of the systems and with a view to longer-term upgrade or replacement with a highly stable and function rich integrated solution.</p> <p>Update Sept 17: a Statement of Requirements has been sent to Capita with a view to upgrading the Capita ICCS to be ESN ready in line with timeframes required by the national ESN programme. Progress is on track but with little room for slippage.</p> <p>Update Oct17: Statement of requirements is now with Capita following functional and technical workshops to refine requirements and ensure they support Pod method of operating. Capita will shortly be issuing the costed proposal, which will also address the long-standing weaknesses in our current ICCS/Telephony configuration.</p>



2016/9b Introduce new planning system – replacement for the current product, 'Planet' 2018

Ongoing

The introduction of this system will enable duties planning for staff in the control room to be more accurately matched to predicted demand, and to accommodate future planning requirements related to multi-channel access to the FCR such as Web-Chat and Online reporting.

Sept 17: The dept. is procuring the latest Verint workforce scheduling system. Timescales have slipped because of delays in finding an appropriate route to market to procure the solution. It is expected to be in place early 2018, but in the interim, a license extension has been secured for the current system.

2016/9c Development of a 'public engagement' platform Dec-17

Complete

The procurement of a 'Public Engagement' platform that will allow the Constabulary to provide an improved service to the public of Lancashire who wish to report incidents or crimes on line and allow a more effective service to victims and witnesses. It will allow members of the public to create an account, and after doing so, to view their online reporting history and to seek an update on the progress of their investigation.

September 2017: Implementation of the PE module is progressing in line with timescales set in the programme plan. The

2017/1 Pod Rollout

End 2018

phased adoption of the system in November 2017 and April 2018 is progressing to plan.

November 2017: User acceptance testing has progressed well and training has commenced for Force Mailbox staff (cohort of 39). Excepted go-live for the online reporting via PE is early December 17. (NB. Full functionality not available until full CONNECT Phase 2 rollout of Crime & Intelligence modules).

Feb 2018 – PE is scheduled to go live within the FCR - this will be monitored for impact.

On-going

An evaluation of the South Pod pilot demonstrated performance enhancements that, if scaled across the whole force, would significantly improve the service offer to the public using 101 and 999. Work is on going to develop a detailed business case to enable Chief Officer and PCC decision making about the investment that is likely to be required to enable the full rollout.

In order to develop the detailed business plan and prepare to commence works if the programme is approved, full project management support is now in place to manage risks, interdependencies, and govern progress.

November 2017: Inaugural Programme Board is set for 22nd November, as is a separate initial briefing to the PCP Task and Finish Group. Work is progressing to the agreed timescales and a business case with 90% accuracy will be submitted for the Chief Officer/PCC considerations in May 2018.

## Completed Actions

		Completion Date	Progress	Comments
2016 / 1	Subject to vetting checks, 45 new Police Control Room Operators (PCROs) are scheduled to start in the control room with effect from Monday 23rd January	23-Jan-17	Complete	<p>Training of a PCRO takes 9 weeks. Completion of actions 1 and 3 will move the room from an understrength position that has been experienced throughout 2016 to an over-strength position in a deliberate move to make the room as resilient as possible for raised demand in summer 2017.</p> <p>Complete. 45 recruits started and there have been 2 further intakes of around 25 since.</p>
2016 / 2	An analyst to be recruited to the FCR	23-Jan-17	Complete	<p>This appointment will help to optimise workforce scheduling and plan staff according to predicted demand. The analyst was recruited in 2016 and has been developing the understanding of demand and staffing levels working with the Systems team.</p>

2016 / 3	A further intake of PCROS is planned during the Spring to ensure the FCR remains at or above	30-Apr-17	Complete	<p>As action 1 above</p> <p>Complete – Current Establishment is 305 (11 over strength - includes abstractions for sickness, maternity etc.)</p>
2016 / 4	To undertake a Peer Review of the FCR	01-May-17	Complete	<p>The terms of reference and parameters, will be agreed with the Police and Crime Commissioner before the review commences and the findings will be reported to the Police and Crime Panel in due course. Complete as described in the report by Jane Larkin North Yorkshire Police.</p>
2016/5	Reconfiguring the Initial Investigation Unit (IIU)	01-Apr-17	Pended	<p>Shift pattern being reviewed. This will improve customer experience by dealing with more calls at the first point of contact.</p> <p>The South Pod pilot places IIU police officers within the pod next to PCROs. Because the decision has been made to roll out Pod working more widely this action has been superseded.</p>
2016/6	Streamline Question Sets used by PCROs	01-Apr-17	Complete	<p>The following question sets were removed:</p> <p>Arson ASB Burglary Criminal Damage</p>

			<p>Vehicle Damage Personal or Environment Nuisance</p> <p>MFH and Concern for Safety was retained along with bomb threats and kidnap. The questions sets were removed and replaced with SOPs that staff can pull on if required.</p>
2016/9	Review and Develop ICT provision	2018	<p><b>Complete</b></p> <p>Discussions ongoing with ICT following findings of the Peer Review.</p> <p>Monthly management meeting established between ICT and Contact Management to drive fault resolution, identify planned maintenance and developments and strengthen links between the 2 departments.</p>
2016/9a	Develop the telephony platform	2018	<p><b>Superseded by the ICCS Upgrade</b></p> <p>The FCR also aspires to maximise technology developments related to the telephony platform used by the Constabulary to develop solutions that for example inform callers how long they are waiting, their position in a queue, or to request a call back when they reach the front of the queue.</p> <p>Sept 17: A reconfiguration of telephony functionality has been included in development of configuration of the upgraded ICCS.</p>