

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES MEETING

MAKING SURE CRIMINAL JUSTICE WORKS FOR COMMUNITIES

19 December 2017

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE CALL HANDLING REPORT

Report of the Chief Constable

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report outlines the Force's current position in relation to the Police Customer Contact Centre.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Police and Crime Commissioner uses this report to scrutinise Force activity in respect of call handling.

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

3. The PCC regularly receives feedback on call handling both in informal and formal meetings and from members of the public and the press. The performance of the call centre impacts directly on victims and witnesses and is vital to ensure that victims get the high quality support and help they need, when they need it, in the way they need it from the right agency, call centre performance also has a direct positive or potentially negative impact on trust and confidence in policing.

KEY INFORMATION

4. The PCC has visited the call centre on a number of occasions to talk to the call centre manager and the staff who work there. Performance around the 101 continues to be a topic raised with the PCC both at partner and community meetings and is also routinely raised through casework.
5. The impact of 101 performance continues to be discussed in a delivery setting when looking at Force performance as part of the quarterly performance framework. The PCCs Youth Advisory Group and West Yorkshire Police Force Independent Advisory Group has also visited the call centre to observe how 999 calls and 101 calls are answered.
6. The PCC also launched a joint contact survey with West Yorkshire Police (December 2016), the survey was launched to learn more about how and why people contact the police, whether they have visited their local police station or other public enquiry counters recently and to establish whether they are aware of the new ways of contacting the police which are available. The results of the survey will enable the PCC and the Chief Constable to better understand the needs of communities. The survey closed on 19 January 2017 with 2,783 responses, the findings have been considered and a series of recommendations have been made and responded to. (February 2017).

Of note, the survey did highlight that the most commonly known form of contact for the police was 999 with 97.9% of respondents stating that they were aware of this although this awareness dropped to 90% for respondents from a BME background and that the most common way for respondents to contact West Yorkshire Police in the last year was by phoning 101 with 43% of the respondents stating that they used this method.

7. The PCC has also used engagement opportunities to promote the benefits of online reporting #ClickB4UCall Campaign which highlights to the public the different ways in which members of the public can now contact West Yorkshire Police, he has also used the opportunity to discuss levels of high demand taking the opportunity where possible to talk to individuals and groups about their experiences, he also provided a link on his own website to online reporting.



Title: Customer Contact Centre Call Handling report – update Nov 2017

CoT Sponsor: ACC Battle

Report Author: Tom Donohoe – CCC Head

Summary

This report is an update of one submitted to Chief Officer Team and the Police and Crime Commissioner in January 2017. Then updated in September 2017, it is intended as supplementary to the original report/s

REPORT DETAILS

1. WYPs Customer Contact Centre continues to improve on its 999 service with abandoned rates of 0% for the last 3 months and a current average queue time of 4 seconds. The yearly abandoned rate for 999 calls is less than 0.00007%. This at a point where many forces are reporting problems with delays in their critical service response and increases in queue times.
2. For example, we have assisted the Metropolitan Police with their 999 demand during a difficult summer for all forces and have also assisted South Yorkshire at points as recent as the weekend of 18/11/17, but still maintained a strong performance ourselves as we only assist when we have capacity to do so.
3. In this force 9s demand has increased around 9% overall on last year. Single Non-Emergency Number (SNEN) by around 3-4% (although in recent weeks this uplift in demand has decreased to 5.3% on 999 calls and -1.9% on 101 when measured against the same period last year) and online transactions are up 17%, nationally the demand increase overall is around 15%.
4. We achieve 95% of 999 calls answered in 10 seconds against an aspiration of 90% in 10 seconds.
5. We still continue to perform very strongly in the area of delays to 999 calls being answered, a position closely monitored by the NPCC.
6. Our current customer satisfaction for 999 calls is 97% for ease of contact and 93.6 % for ability of call handler.
7. We have also had some very positive acknowledgement of this performance in the Yorkshire Post and Telegraph and Argus in recent weeks.
8. We also continue to improve our 101 responses and we are starting to find the consistency that was an issue in the previous report. In essence we are having more good days than problem days and have isolated the queue issues to the busy tea time period.

9. On 12/11/17 we achieved a 0% abandoned rate on both call groups, which I believe has never been achieved before in this force and I am unaware of another force achieving this milestone.
10. We continue to recruit and train new staff, but a lack of experienced staff in the room (and having to utilise experienced staff to monitor/train and coach them) is still an issue due to the natural movement of staff within the organisation.
11. Nationally forces continue to report increases in demand as we have seen and as a unit we are busy tackling the two areas that affect us most, namely staffing levels versus experience and increasing demand. To this end we are currently recruiting for courses running in January and February of next year and have scheduled courses throughout 2018.
12. These will not only allow CCC to increase and maintain staffing numbers above compliment, but also to release staff to other units within the force, who rely on the excellent pool of staff we have within CCC.
13. The latest HMICFCRS (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services) inspection identified a solid understanding of risk and vulnerability by call handlers. They recognised we are managing an increase in the volume of calls, but also that we are dealing with an increase in the complexity of calls to the police.
14. In terms of non-emergency contact, we have halved the 101 abandoned rate against last years' performance and this is on an improving trend with 8.5% abandoned rate in November to date, with queue times outside peak demand periods often being less than 60 seconds, and peak queue times are also coming down.
15. During the last year we have also seen an increase in non-police calls of between 15%-20%, often due to partners facing the same challenges that we do. We have carried out some analysis of this non-police demand on 999 calls and are planning the same for 101, knowing the issues will help us to address them more effectively.
16. Our current customer satisfaction for 101 calls is 93.2% for ease of contact and 94% for ability of call handler, but we appreciate that ringing at peak times can be frustrating and we are working on educating callers as to the best time to ring to get through easily.
17. We also continue to utilise attendance at Neighbourhood Watch Meetings, Council Meetings, IAG's and Tenant Association's to get this message across, as well as hosting community meetings and visits within the unit to the same end. We are utilising publicity to get the message across in terms of how callers can help us to help them.
18. CCC staff try to resolve as many calls as possible on initial contact, currently about 60-65% of contact to the unit is dealt with at that point. This means we free up valuable Officer resource and also offer a better service to callers, we have maintained this despite the large number of new inexperienced staff.
19. We are utilising social media to publicise alternative contact options, as well as highlighting road traffic issues, we still lead the way in terms of non-emergency contact options.
20. CCC are recognised nationally by other forces as a lead force in this area with a large number of forces benchmark visiting us to copy what we are doing.
21. The demands of call handling coupled with the training staff receive means that when applying for other front facing roles the CCC staff have an advantage. Our staff initially trained at CCC

continue to move into new roles including Police Officer, PCSO, Detention Officer, Force Crime Management Unit, Regional Scientific Support, HMET, Safeguarding, IT, Training, Dispatch and Force Command. Our new policy which requires a member of staff has to complete their probation with us before moving to another post has assisted greatly, as has the support from the Chief Officer Team in terms of “phased releases” of CCC staff to other roles.

22. However, the acknowledged benefit to the Organisation from the recruiting/training we provide staff, who then move on to other key roles within the force and are at least part trained for their new role with a good understanding of how the force works, is significant.
23. We are continuing with our recruitment campaigns at a pace, including focusing recruitment on staff able to work during peak demand hours. We are also conducting interview processes for ex- Dispatch staff to fill vacancies within District’s and so alleviating the pressures on CCC to backfill. We have also worked with existing staff within CCC to align their hours to peak demand in a more effective way
24. We continue utilising our training Hub which allows new staff to complete calls in a safe environment, but with a reduced ratio of experienced staff to new recruits which eases pressure on the CCC and has been acknowledged as best practice within police forces and outside industry.
25. Finally, in an area that has traditionally seen high sickness rates, we continue to have a low sickness level, currently less than 3.5% and this has been as low as 2.5% during the 12 months.

ONGOING WORK AND DEVELOPMENTS

- Recruitment remains a focus, as does training and auditing
- Working with partners such as WMDC on managing shared demand more effectively and improvement of sharing of information as well as reporting into the Force Demand Management Board
- Working with North Yorkshire as part of a two force group redesigning the National Call Handling Standards document which is used by all forces.
- Working with College of Policing and a number of forces on understanding demand
- Working with APD (contact solutions) on the National Call Handler awards
- Looking to improve our on-line facilities
- Working on a “keep safe” based pilot to assist vulnerable members of the community
- Working with community groups (for example a PCC funded video on helping young people to contact the Police)
- Working with Central Resourcing on a modern apprenticeships proposal

STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS

These are included on the force strategic risk register and have moved from red to amber due to the processes/plans already in place.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

As covered within the recruiting elements of the current processes as well as a consideration in terms of changes to contact options (we worked with disability groups on the on-line options). We also work closely with Simon Philips the Force Community engagement Officer.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

None at this stage