

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP18/54**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL -  
19 OCTOBER 2018**

**SUBJECT: CONTACT AND CONTROL ROOM (CCR) AND PUBLIC ACCESS**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This report provides an update on the Contact and Control Room (CCR) and website projects (Police and Crime Plan Objective 2, action points 19 & 20).
2. This report details the project work which is ongoing to ensure a more effective and efficient CCR including Public Access and Websites projects updates.

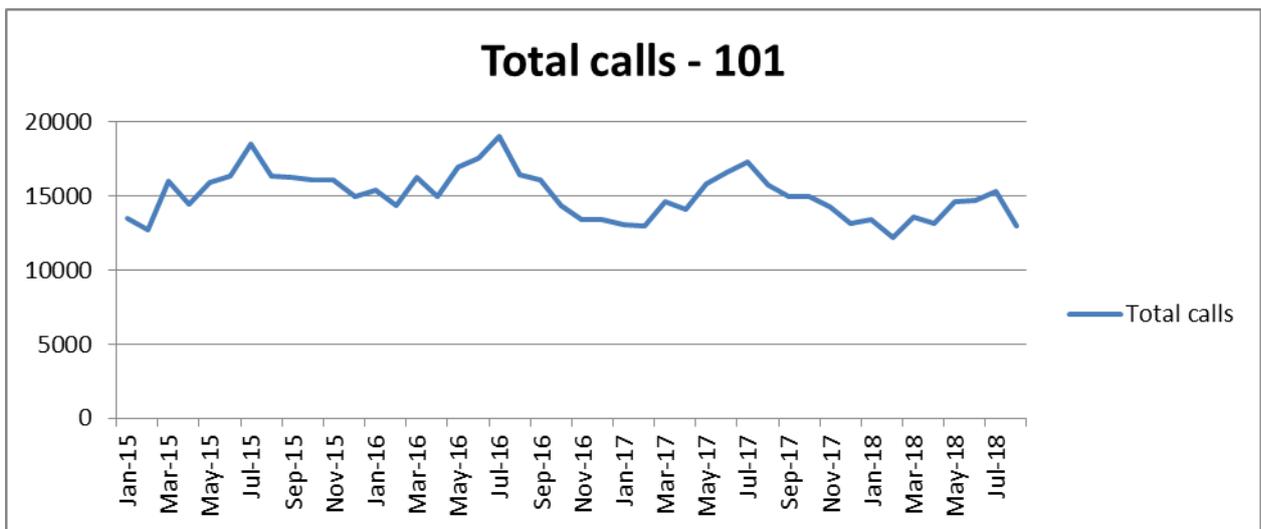
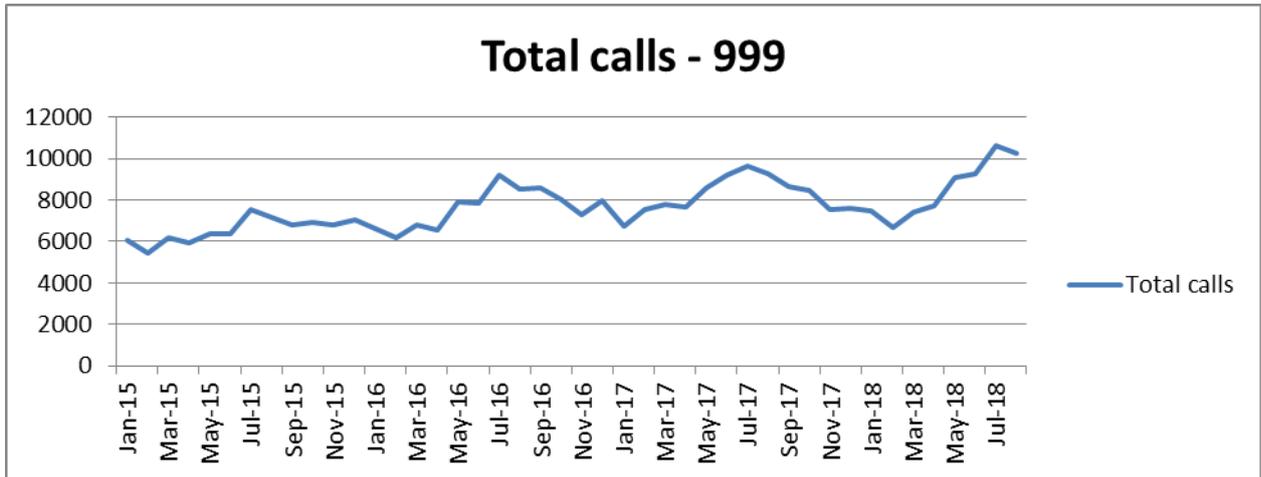
**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the content of this report.

## SECTION ONE: SUFFOLK CONTACT AND CONTROL ROOM (CCR) UPDATE

### 1. OVERVIEW

1.1 The Constabulary continues to experience heightened demand for emergency calls, with the rolling 12 month figures to August showing an increase of 11% (9,244 calls) against the 3 year average. Research on the conversion of those emergency calls to emergency incidents, suggests that this is a rise in genuine emergency calls. However, overall call volume has reduced, with fewer people calling 101.



1.2 In May 2018 the Constabulary introduced an innovative new digital telephony system. The system, thought to be the first of its kind in a UK Police Force, was developed specifically to meet our needs, from our own specifications. Following months of preparation and testing, the switchover to the new system was seamless, with no loss of service. Even as CCR staff became used to the new system, the average time to answer a 999 call was always less than 10 seconds. During August 2018, one of the peak demand months, the average time to answer a 999 call was just 5 seconds.

1.3 The new system has a range of benefits. It provides the flexibility to take advantage of future technology, it gives CCR staff options to manage unexpected spikes in demand and it has significantly increased the clarity of the calls. However, the biggest improvement from a Constabulary and customer perspective is the ability to prioritise calls.

- 1.4 Once a non-urgent call has been assessed by the Central Call Answering (CCA) Team, it is placed in one of a number of different call priority queues. Each of these callers receives tailored messages whilst on hold. For example, those reporting non-urgent road related incidents are given advice about collision reporting options and directed towards the Constabulary website. However, callers wishing to report domestic abuse are asked to continue to hold and reassured about the importance of their call.
- 1.5 Rather than reporting a single Average Time to Answer (ATTA) figure for non-emergency calls, the Constabulary is now able to provide more of a narrative about the customer experience and focus on our most vulnerable callers. As an example, currently the average time of answer lower priority "Advice and Administration" calls (the majority of which could have been dealt with on-line) is currently 5.5 minutes, and higher priority "Domestic Abuse" calls are being answered in just 41 seconds.
- 1.6 Now the initial implementation phase is complete, work is underway to test and implement the next phase of the project. This includes the newest version of the software to resolve some minor issues, introduction of a new workforce management system, which allows the ability to better forecast demand and maximise resources, and the implementation of the "super directory" which will reduce the manual intervention required to keep the internal Constabulary phone directory updated.
- 1.7 Current partnership work in the CCR includes working closely with the Ambulance (EEAST) and Fire (SFRS) Services to reduce unnecessary calls between organisations. Also, learning from the lessons of the Manchester Arena bomb, the Suffolk CCR is leading on regional work to ensure that in the event of a terrorist incident an inter-emergency service control room communication link is established and maintained to ensure an effective joint response.

## **2. RESOURCING**

- 2.1 A total of 10 FTE recruitment was agreed for October 2018. The agreed changes to the recruiting process have continued successfully to ensure all new recruits fully understand the nature of the role, including shift work, prior to application. This included hosting guided tours for at risk staff, a new and improved assessment centre and a more robust paper sifting process. 10 candidates were successful, including two at risk PCSOs, and begin their training on 15 October 2018 (subject to successful vetting, which has been given priority 1 status in order to ensure all applicants have been cleared for the required start date).
- 2.2 The CCR trainer continues to train existing CCR staff in the use of the new switchboard console, using scheduled training time to minimise the abstraction of staff as far as possible. This additional switchboard capability gives flexibility to managing inbound 101 call volumes when required.
- 2.3 An application has been made to fill two held Supervisor vacancies and one held vacancy within the CCR Support Team. One Supervisor position has already been offered to an internal CCR staff member following a successful interview process, subject to vetting clearance.

### **3. TECHNOLOGY**

#### **SmartSTORM**

- 3.1 A new version of the Constabulary Command and Control System, known as SmartSTORM, is currently undergoing testing. This system provides an enhanced web interface for staff outside the CCR and on mobile devices; as well as several benefits for CCR staff, such as the ability to interrogate two incidents simultaneously and configuration of the system to suit personal preferences. The new system can be run in parallel during implementation, meaning no loss of service and staff can be trained gradually to minimise abstraction.

#### **What Three Words**

- 3.2 The Constabulary continues to work in partnership with an application developer and the National Police Technology Council to explore the use of this innovative addressing system. The system overlays existing maps, allowing the CCR to narrow down a location to a three metre square very quickly and provides an easier way to share locations than more traditional methods. This will be of particular use in rural areas, or at large events where locations can be difficult to establish.

#### **Satnav/Storm Integration**

- 3.3 Funding has been secured to provide a direct link between the CCR Storm Command and Control system and the satnavs fitted to response vehicles. This link will mean that upon being deployed to an incident, the location will go direct to the responding officer's satnav by data transfer, saving valuable time in responding. A supplier has been identified and the software is currently being tested.

### **4. OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

- 4.1 Taking the learning from Exercise Blue Sentinel (a regional counter terrorism exercise) the CCR is developing its own terrorist incident training package. Designed to be an immersive experience, staff will be put through their paces in challenging scenarios; testing them and the CCR infrastructure and plans.
- 4.2 Following a pioneering idea from one of the CCR staff, the CCR is vetting and training a team of volunteers, known as "Lay Listeners". They will listen to recordings of calls into the CCR and feedback on the "softer skills", such as empathy and tone. The pilot scheme starts in October and is part of the CCR's recently revised quality assurance processes. This feedback will be developed into staff training. Anyone interested in becoming a Lay Listener should search for "Police Support Volunteers" on the Constabulary website.

## **SECTION TWO: WEBSITE UPDATE**

### **1. WEBSITE PROJECT UPDATE**

- 1.1 The Website Project has now been completed and the project team dissolved. The new website is in full operation for business as usual by the Joint Corporate Communications Team. The website is continually being developed to meet business and public needs. The most recent update was development of the "Is it a police matter" facility. The content, designed by Suffolk staff, based on the NPCC's Ask the Police website ([www.askthepolice.co.uk](http://www.askthepolice.co.uk)). The latest development is an improved crime reporting facility that will be available to the public by October 2018.

## 2. **CHANNEL SHIFT**

- 2.1 The website has had an increase of online crime reporting since the launch of the new telephony system in May 2018.

# Crimes submitted

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Crimes submitted	453	394	468	495	457	570	651
ASB	58	57	68	65	64	129	142
Dashboard Camera	95	142	213	329	230	169	330
Road Collisions	94	101	103	81	102	99	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>1,243</b>

- 2.2 Although comparative data for the old website is not available, data from the new website shows that a good percentage of the 'contact us to report' page views relate to reports of lost and found property, which would indicate a channel shift away from both front counters and the CCR.
- 2.3 When viewed on an hour by hour basis, the demand curve for reporting crimes online is very similar to that of the CCR demand curve, supporting the theory that members of the public will channel shift when CCR lines are busy.
- 2.4 Interactions on social media have increased with the demand becoming greater. Currently, there is a national social media survey which the Constabulary is supporting in understanding how the public want to interact with police on social media.

## 3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no additional financial implications that are not already managed through existing governance structures.

## 4. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

- 4.1 No new risks have been identified. Risks relating to specific projects continued to be recorded in the project specific risk register. Ongoing risks related to the increase in call volume remain.

<b>ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)</b>	<b>PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	NO
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	NO
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	YES
Have human resource implications been considered?	YES
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	YES
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	N/A
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	NO
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	YES