



To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 20 January 2015

CALL HANDLING UPDATE

1. Purpose

1.1 To update the Business Coordination Board (“the Board”) on current performance in relation to Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s (“the Constabulary”) Call Handling and Contact Management.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Board note the contents of this paper.

3. Call Handling Performance

3.1 Emergency call handling performance has remained strong throughout the year, with the target of 90% of calls being answered within 10 seconds (excluding those abandoned before the threshold) exceeded in every month, as shown in the table below. The average wait time for December 2014 was five seconds.

999 Emergency Call Handling Performance

	Dec 2013	Jan 2014	Feb 2014	Mar 2014	Apr 2014	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	August 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014
Call Volume	9129	7596	8256	8304	8203	9090	8980	10215	9308	8413	9257	8761	8335
% answer in 10 sec	96.99	98.00	96.30	96.10	96.30	96.05	96.01	93.44	93.41	93.78	93.30	94.92	94.28

(Call Volume and % of Emergency Calls answered with 10 seconds with FCR)

101 Non-Emergency Calls

	Dec 2013	Jan 2014	Feb 2014	Mar 2014	Apr 2014	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	August 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014
Call Vol	26439	27297	26085	29369	27003	29753	31336	33400	29303	30331	30010	27836	25466
% ans in 30 sec	95.74	95.46	95.18	94.44	94.55	94.25	91.35	92.50	94.82	93.71	94.91	95.52	95.68

(% calls within PSC answered in under 30 seconds)

- 3.2 The above table sets out the sustained improvement in call handling performance with in excess of 90% of calls answered in less than 30 seconds which remains in line with the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan.
- 3.3 The average wait time for initial response to the 101 call has ranged between six and eight seconds during the last six months. In December 2014 the average wait time was five seconds. This means that the vast majority of calls are answered and subject to an initial triage very quickly, allowing calls of an emergency nature to be prioritised and routed accordingly.

4. Secondary Call Handling

- 4.1 Every 101 call that comes into the Constabulary is subject to an initial triage assessment which assesses threat, risk and harm and prioritises accordingly as outlined above. Any calls which are deemed urgent are routed to the Force Control Room (FCR) for immediate action. Any call that needs putting through to a department or extension number is routed accordingly. It is then calls that are of a general or crime recording nature that get routed through to separate staff within the PSC and it is here that a caller can experience some delay.
- 4.2 Approximately 50% of all calls get put through to this secondary number. Secondary call handling performance has experienced pressure over recent months. The average and longest wait times peaked in June and July 2014 however average wait times have reduced from these peak levels and to some extent stabilised as a result of additional measures put in place.
- 4.3 The following table sets out secondary call handling performance since March 2014, with improvements and stabilisation in performance noticeable since the peak periods of pressure in June and July 2014.

Secondary Call Handling

	Mar 2014	Apr 2014	May 2014	Jun 2014	Jul 2014	Aug 2014	Sep 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014
% Abandoned after 30 secs	13.35	13.42	16.74	19.79	21.27	16.68	16.47	13.49	12.39	10.81
Average Wait Time (minutes & seconds)	1.42	2.19	3.47	4.34	5.1	3.31	3.25	3.16	3.36	3.40
Longest Wait Time (minutes & seconds)	16.43	40.46	54.54	52.12	54.29	39.27	59.18	56.42	47.38	41.25

(% calls abandoned after 30 secs, Average Wait Time (minutes and seconds) and Longest Wait Time (minutes and seconds))

5. Action Taken

- 5.1 As a result of investment in the FCR, many of the secondary 101 calls can now be routed through from the PSC to the FCR at times of peak demand. This has improved performance albeit this has now stabilised with performance now broadly consistent during recent months. Whilst December 2014 saw the longest wait time reduce and average wait times broadly consistent, it is unlikely that performance will significantly improve any further pending any increase in resource, demand reduction through increased self-service options or the provision of any new technological solution.
- 5.2 A business case for additional resources in the form of additional staff, new Interactive Voice Response technology and ring back facility has been submitted and the technology element approved and is projected to be installed and operational by the end of February 2015. There will be no system down time or erosion in service during installation.
- 5.3 The additional staffing element is still under consideration as it is recognised that any increase to staffing within Contact Management will come as a direct result of reducing a budget elsewhere, which is recognised to be challenging given the predicted financial pressures moving forward. Similarly, the bid must be cognisant of the current discussions and draft outline business case in relation to Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire collaboration plans which aim to deliver a collaborated Contact Management function, providing a high standard of performance but at a reduced cost. Plans are likely to include offering options to the public for more direct contact with officers and staff, more self-service options, all of which is likely to reduce initial phone demand.
- 5.4 At the last Board meeting the Chief Constable stated that more than one element is needed to provide the solution to call handling. He reported that significant work was being undertaken to look at other communication channels to enable members of the public to communicate with the Constabulary.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Overall, call handling performance remains excellent in the context of 999 emergency calls and initial 101 responses and triage. The pressure point remains the secondary call handling as outlined above. The Constabulary is addressing this issue with the measures outlined above which will seek to further improve performance and also the caller experience. As outlined above, it is recognised that any bid to increase resources for 101 and Contact Management will need to be identified from elsewhere, at a time where, going forward, significant savings are necessary and collaboration plans are developing.

7. Recommendation

7.1 That the Board note the contents of this paper.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document	
Contact Officer	Supt Chris Mead, Head of Contact Management, Cambridgeshire Constabulary