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Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
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3rd September 2020

Dear *Priti*

Response to HMICFRS report – “A call for help – Police contact management through call handling and control rooms”

Under Section 55(5) of the Police Act 1996, as Acting Police and Crime Commissioner I am pleased to provide my formal response to HMICFRS’s report entitled “**A call for help – Police contact management through call handling and control rooms**”.

Both the Chief Constable and I welcome the publication of HMICFRS’ report, examining the effectiveness of the Police control room, the impact this can have on demand management and thereafter the constabulary’s ability to respond to calls and investigate crimes effectively.

I will take further reassurance from the Chief Constable via my Board meeting in due course once the recommendations are in place given that it is for police forces themselves to implement the changes.

The HMICFRS recommendations are attached in Appendix 1

Yours sincerely

Ray Bisby
Acting Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
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HMICFRS recommendations and constabulary response

- 1.1 Each force must be sure it effectively assesses risk at all points of contact with the public and the community. It should use this assessment to provide the best response to vulnerability.**

Force response: The Constabulary assesses calls for service using the National Decision Model and College of Policing APP Risk Principles. All incidents are risk assessed against the THRIVE+ (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigative Opportunities, Vulnerability of the victim and the Engagement Level required to resolve the issue) model to support decision making in the Demand Hub, to consistently and accurately grade incidents, and ensure an appropriate initial police response.

- 1.2 Each force where there is a vulnerability desk should make sure it makes a positive contribution to initial safeguarding.**

Force response: The Constabulary does not have a vulnerability desk within the Demand Hub. However, staff are able to access specialist advice for initial safeguarding. Mental health professionals work within the Demand Hub to provide expert support to staff dealing with mental health related incidents, ensuring the best outcome for the caller. Staff can also access guidance from the Protecting Vulnerable People investigation teams in relation to Rape, Serious Sexual Offences and Child Abuse through recently introduced duty contact numbers.

- 1.3 Each force should make sure its staff are trained, supervised and supported to be effective in their control room roles; this should include assessing the effect of better terms and conditions and career development for control room staff.**

Force response: The Constabulary is committed to ensuring that staff have the correct skills, supervision and support to fulfil their duties. An internal review of the Demand Hub was recently undertaken, which included an assessment of the capacity, capability and wellbeing of staff, and culture, within the department. A working group is seeking to address the recommendations, which include improving initial training and continuous professional development for contact management staff.

- 1.4 We expect forces to invest in technology and work with each other to use it to inform and improve their risk assessments, their responses and their investigations to keep the public safe.**

Force response: The Constabulary is investing in making better use of technology within the Demand Hub to become more efficient. Examples include “What3Words” a location finding app used to help pinpoint a caller’s exact location; and “GoodSAM” a video streaming platform that allows colleagues and members of the public to share live and recorded video from the scene of an incident, and location data, with the control room.

- 1.5 **We expect all forces to make sure the service they provide to their communities meets the new national contact management strategy. We will assess how well forces adopt the contact management principles and practice as well as the learning standards during out 2020/21 inspections.**

Force response: The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Principles and Practice of Contact Management will be incorporated into the recommendations from the review of the Demand Hub to ensure that the improvements are cognisant of the National Contact Management Strategy.

- 1.6 **We expect to see all 43 forces get involved in the single online home and the social media projects.**

Force response: The Constabulary has confirmed its intention to use the national Single Online Home platform. It is anticipated that the facility will be implemented once integration with the Athena system has been completed. The BCH Digital Innovation Team are also developing a new operating model for social media contact what will give the public the choice and confidence to engage, report and interact with the force using the digital channels that most suit their needs. The force has commenced a local project to ensure compliance with the European Electronics Communications Code, working with the collaborated 7 Force procurement team to secure appropriate software to support implementation.

- 1.7 **We expect the police service during 2020 to make sure it has effective national guidelines, quality assurance and assessment in place for resolution without deployment.**

Force response: The Constabulary uses resolution without deployment. The Incident Resolution Team is a desk-based unit within the Demand Hub that resolves incidents without the need for an officer to attend, this is assisting in reducing demand on frontline officers and the Force Control Room where appropriate. The force will await further information on the national guidelines, quality assurance and assessment.

- 1.8 **We expect the police service during 2020 to make sure that it has agreed a standard for how quickly forces must respond to 999 calls. The absence of a national set of agreed response times for emergency calls means it is hard to make meaningful comparisons.**

Force response: The Constabulary will await further information on a national set of agreed response times for emergency calls.