Police, Fire & Crime Panel Report
September 2019

North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner

Force Control Room performance update

An update on Force Control Room performance and change.

Changes as a result of Transform 2020

As part of the Transform 2020 Programme, a series of changes were approved to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Force Control Room (FCR) in order to ensure that it delivers the best service to the public of North Yorkshire.

In designing the business case for the FCR, it was found that the shift pattern worked by staff wasn't well aligned to the demand for service. Analysis of call data showed that 101 call volumes peak at midday and decrease from 4pm to midnight, while 999 call volumes steadily increase throughout the day until 11pm. However the previous shift pattern didn't facilitate the right number of staff being available at the right time to most efficiently manage these call volumes.

In order to address this, the main change implemented in the FCR through Transform 2020 was a new shift pattern to better align staffing to demand and allow increased flexibility to staff the peaks in demand across hours of the day and days of the week. The move from a five to a four band pattern allows for better distribution of staff across the bands and availability of more of the total pool of staff and any one time. The shift durations, start and finish times and flexible or part-time patterns have also been designed to ensure maximum staffing during peak periods whilst ensuring that the FCR still represents good value for money.

In addition to the new shift pattern, further changes were also implemented to improve performance. Firstly, an upskilling programme was run for all FCR staff on the use of THRIVE in order to improve consistency and staff confidence in making the right decision the first time when managing calls and grading incidents reported by the public. Secondly, changes were implemented to improve the visibility of management and supervision in order to better support call handling and dispatch staff and increase the focus on wellbeing. The aim of these additional changes was to ensure that staff are fully skilled and supported in order for them to provide the best service to members of the public contacting the FCR.

Alongside the changes already made in the FCR, there is further work still ongoing. In order to improve performance management and reporting, a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) are being developed to expand monitoring beyond call handling statistics. In order to support the introduction of new KPIs, changes to incident gradings are being explored to facilitate better understanding of resolution over the telephone (by both Communications Officers and the Neighbourhood Service Desk) and resolution through appointments. These changes are expected to be introduced later this year.

Performance pre- and post-T2020 changes

The new shift pattern went live on 12 August 2019, and so has had very little time to fully embed. With only four weeks of call handling performance data available after the shift change, it isn't possible to fully understand the impact on performance and service delivery to the public. However data for the month prior to the shift change (12 July – 11 August) and the month after (12 August – 12 September) is included below to give an indication of the early impact on performance.

999	Volume	Average time to answer (seconds)
12 July – 11 August	10,106	17.8
12 August – 12 September	8,746	14.3

101	Volume	Average time to answer (seconds)	Average abandonment rate
12 July – 11 August	19,061	308.5	26.9%
12 August – 12 September	18,239	185.4	16.3%

The data above demonstrates an improvement in both 999 and 101 call handling performance, with a significant reduction in the answering time and abandonment rates for 101 calls achieved despite a similar volume of calls across the two periods. The impact of the shift changes on performance will continue to be monitored as the new shift pattern fully embeds.

FCR performance to July 2019

Emergency calls

999	Volume	Average time to answer (seconds)	Transferred to secondary /alternate lines
May 2019	7598	10	1.15%
June 2019	8218	14	1.24%
July 2019	9832	16	2.05%

- 19% increase in 999 calls since June 2019
- Highest volume of 999 calls since August 2009
- Transfers to secondary and alternate lines are slightly outside 2% guideline.
- 2% rise in 999 calls since July 2018 nationally
- 6% increase in 999s since June 2019 nationally

The table below indicates an increase in volumes compared to same months 2017 and 2018.

999	July 2017	July 2018	July 2019
Volume	8189	8401	9832

- 17% increase in 999 calls since July 2018

Non-emergency calls (Option 1, Operator and Queue Buster)

101 Option 1	Volume	Average time to answer	Abandonment rate
May 2019	18182	2 min 12 sec	16.50%
June 2019	17093	2 min 51 sec	19.83%
July 2019	19153	4 min 11 sec	25.30%

- Call duration has been consistently over 5 minutes for 18 months.
- Average total handling time 7mins 42 seconds

Operator	Volume	Average time to answer	Abandonment rate
May 2019	10547	40 sec	20.05%
June 2019	10250	40 sec	20.39%
July 2019	12003	55 sec	25.93%

- The average volume of operator calls transferring to FCR before "hold for operator" was introduced was 737 per month.
- Work is in progress to manage the transition of operator calls to Front Counter Services

Queue Buster Call Back	Volume	Average time to call back
May 2019	3220	15 minutes 02 sec
June 2019	3838	14 minutes 50 sec
July 2019	5064	16 minutes 04 sec

- Lowest daily volume is 32 calls when 101 option 1 was being answered in 1 min 05 sec
- Highest daily volume is 239 calls when 101 option 1 was being answered in 6min 38 sec

The following table demonstrates the total volume of non - emergency calls being handled in FCR. This includes Option 1, Operator and Queue Buster callbacks

Non- emergency	July 2017	July 2018	July 2019
Volume Option 1	26896	22804	19153
Volume Operator	737	12279	12003
Volume Q Buster	N/A	3976	5064
Total non - emergency	27633	39059	36220

- Decrease of 7%   2018 to 2019
- Increase of 41% 2017 to 2018
- Increase of 31% 2017 to 2019

Automated switchboard service

Options 2, 3 and 4

Automated service	Volume	Voice recognition accuracy rate	Abandoned at automation
July 2018	16868	84.3%	7.6%
July 2019	15904	85.2%	6.6%

- The average monthly volume of calls being handled by the automated service prior to introduction of "Hold for operator" was 22722. The reduction in volume is attributed to calls now being transferred to FCR as operator calls.
- There has been a 5.71% decrease in calls to options 2, 3 and 4 since July 2018
- 88.70% of calls which are not successful at the automation are due to misrecognition of request. 10.8% are where caller stayed silent.

- Daily weekday average is 568 calls
- Daily weekend average is 158 calls

Other Calls

Calls from other emergency services	1743	Slight increase
Outbound calls (Not QB call backs)	16362	Slight increase

Staffing levels at end of July

Role	Agreed T2020 FTE Budget	Actual FTE
Dispatchers	60	60.4
Communications	86	64.58