Police & Crime Commissioner's Review of the 101 Service Provision in Devon & Cornwall:

101 – One year on

1. Introduction

1.1. The Police & Crime Plan published in April 2014 contained a commitment to review the 101 non-emergency police contact service in response to concerns raised by the public. 12 months ago the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner undertook a review in conjunction with Devon & Cornwall Police, the public and elected representatives. The review included public consultation, listening to calls received in the call centre and logging the nature and outcome for a significant sample of calls. The results focused on a number of key issues; policy and procedure, the nature of the demand into the call centre, staff and supervision issues. Recommendations were provided to assist the police in delivering a transformation in the service provided.

1.2. Now one year on the OPCC has taken the opportunity to look at work undertaken within Devon & Cornwall Police in the wake of our 2014 report. The current review considered the wider context of the police contact centre and considered evidence relating to a number of services including the emergency 999 service. The public can be reassured that this review found a consistently prompt and high level of response in relation to emergency calls for service.

1.3. The original report also found that once contact was made with someone who could help with a non-urgent issue the service provided by call handlers was to a high standard. Where there were barriers to delivering this high standard of service the barriers were clearly noted to be procedural and technological and not down to the quality of the work of the call-handlers themselves which was perceived to be very good.

1.4. This report provides a summary of progress made and sets clear expectations for improvement required in the future.

2. Summary

2.1. The main findings of our work are:

- First pick up of calls to 101 remains good with 84% of calls being answered in 30 seconds.
- 999 pick up remains strong even at peak times
- Average waiting time for callers being transferred to the Force Enquiry Centre (FEC) has almost doubled from 4 minutes 17 seconds in 2014 to 8 minutes 24 seconds in 2015.
- Almost one in three callers transferred to the FEC wait for more than 10 minutes before being dealt with by the appropriate staff member.
- Significant improvements have been made on handling internal crime recording processes that have saved considerable amounts of police officer and staff time.
- The introduction of necessary additional vulnerability assessments has also created additional work that has not been compensated by the addional resources that have already been invested into the contact centre operation.
- Planned improvements in technology have been, and continue to be, delayed. This has resulted in dedicated and skilled staff having to use cumbersome and time consuming systems as well as removing any ability to manage public expectations at times of high demand.
- Management awareness of data relating to waiting times was very low. Much of the key data contained within this report was created specifically for the OPCC and not routinely available to those managing the process.

2.2. In short, it is difficult to come to any other conclusion than that this important priority has not received the attention that it should have done. Despite this being a key priority for the PCC, performance has deteriorated for the public. A further concern is the lack of readily available data beyond daily average waiting times to support effective performance monitoring and management processes. It appears that force managers at all levels did not have a clear picture of the decline The focus of current performance regimes appears to be on internal processes and demand reduction rather than on the service provided to the public

2.3. There is some mitigation that has influenced performance over the last year. These include:
- the introduction of more stringent time limits on recording reported crime,
- technological issues that have hampered the early replacement of the existing telephony systems thus limiting the potential to adopt demand diversion technology
- and the shift in strategic focus to identifying and responding to vulnerability which has seen increased risk assessment processes that have resulted in increased average call lengths.

2.4. A transformation in performance has been achieved within part of the CMCU environment, however this is in relation to internal crime recording processes and has no impact on the length of time that the public have to wait to reach someone who can help them. Indeed it would appear that this improvement has been achieved at the expense of public waiting times in relation to non-urgent matters.

2.5. Further delays have resulted from the deferral of many performance issues, decisions and changes to strategic change programmes that are working to longer delivery times than is required.

2.6. The original report avoided setting a specific target after discussion with the police and in light of the perverse consequences noted with existing force internal targets. This report continues to support the view that target waiting times are not likely to help the position and may drive perverse consequences that could put lives at risk.

2.7. This report continues to highlight serious concerns about the length of time it takes for the public to get through to the support that they require when the issue or concern is not an emergency or urgent police matter. This is reflected not only in relation to data from the non-priority 101 service but also in relation to the public crime recording function as well.

2.8. The report concludes that the Chief Constable has not met the Police and Crime Commissioner's requirement to deliver a transformational reduction in the time that the public are waiting when trying to contact someone to deal with a non-emergency issue. The Police & Crime Commissioner's Police & Crime Plan for 2014-17 states that:

- The PCC will hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering the improvements to the 101 non-emergency service as set out in the 101 improvement plan and local engagement plans.

And that

- The PCC expects the CC to work with the Commissioner to review the 101 service and to take forward any agreed recommendations for improvement.

2.9. The Chief Constable is therefore now required to put in place an action plan that will address the concerns highlighted here and ensure that the force is focused on this key priority of the Police & Crime Commissioner. The Chief Constable may wish to consider establishing a Gold Command Group in order to ensure that the required performance improvements are delivered within an acceptable timescale. However it is achieved, the Chief Constable is tasked to secure significant reductions in the waiting times for members of the public attempting to contact the police on non-urgent matters. He should further ensure that this is achieved without compromising the service provided in relation to emergency calls.

2.10.   In view of the technological challenges that the force continue to face the only scope for improvement in the short term appears to rest with the number of resources available to address demand. The Police & Crime Commissioner has ring-fenced up to £250,000 for the Chief Constable to make immediate improvements. These improvements will focus on delivering a reduction in the number of calls waiting for longer than 10 minutes to get through to the support required and to reduce the number of calls abandoned.

3. January 2016 Recommendations

3.1 The implementation of the new AACC6 telephony platform needs to ensure that performance management data is available that supports a better assessment of the callers experience of the service.

3.2 Non-emergency performance management regimes within the contact centre should focus on the time it takes public non-urgent enquiries to reach someone who can help rather than how promptly the call is picked up at first point. Management should focus on significantly reducing the proportion of callers that wait longer than 10 minutes to speak to an FEC operator.

3.3 The reclassification of 101 calls as urgent and requiring an emergency response should be critically reviewed, to establish whether this practice is valid in delivering significant reductions of threat risk and harm to callers.

3.4 Performance data should be available that is drawn from individual call waiting times rather than average call waiting times. Furthermore real-time management of resources and the deployment of call handlers to different roles within the CMCU needs to be able to respond more directly to fluctuations in call waiting times. In order to support this and to enable supervisors to specifically target longer call waiting times more effectively the PCC has committed to ring-fencing up to £250,000 to provide additional resources to the CMCU.

3.5 The force should consider an evaluation of the training experience both in terms of how effective the training has been but also in terms of impact on business as usual.

3.6 The Chief Constable to put in place an action plan that will deliver significant reductions in the waiting times for members of the public attempting to contact the police on non-urgent matters. The action plan will ensure that the force is focused on this key priority of the Police & Crime Commissioner. It should further ensure that this is achieved without compromising the service provided in relation to emergency calls. The action plan should be prepared immediately and subject to an interim review within 6 months. The interim review should evidence an uplift in current performance in response to the additional resources being made available by the PCC. A transformation in performance is expected once the anticipated technological solutions are

implemented and at the latest within 12 months. A final review will be completed at that time.

3.7 The above recommendation is extended to encompass all non-urgent contact from the public including public crime recording.

3.8 The force should consider the costs and benefits associated with identifying and implementing software to better support managers in matching demand and resource within the Call Centre environment.

4. PCCs 'One year On' Performance Review

4.1 Obtaining data from the existing system to support effective performance monitoring has proven to be impossible. The focus of the current performance reporting is towards demand management rather than reflecting the experience of the caller. Thus it relies heavily on mean and median call waiting times and interquartile ranges. It does not support identification of the number of callers who are waiting an unreasonable amount of time. This lack of availability of data suggests that the force is not managing performance in this area effectively.

4.2 **RECOMMENDATION: The implementation of the new AACC6 telephony platform needs to ensure that performance management data is available that supports a better assessment of the callers experience of the service.**

4.3 Alongside activity to address the recommendations from the 2014 report the Call Centre had undertaken an extensive recruitment programme. This has resulted in all vacancies within the call centre being filled and the establishment being increased by 7%. Additional and innovative ways of matching the available resource to peaks in demand are also being progressed such as the recruitment of seasonal call handlers from the universities to specifically address the increase in demand over the summer period. This represents a considerable investment and commitment to delivering improvement.

4.4 The original review was concerned specifically with the time it took for a non-urgent caller to get through to someone who could help them. However it focused explicitly on calls that were transferred from the swtichboard into the non-urgent Force Enquiry Centre. In considering the performance of the 101 service, the current review has taken a broader perspective and examined data not only from the 101 system but also from the 999 system and crime recording systems. A brief summary of the key observations from that review is presented.

4.5 **999 emergency service**
999 calls are received on a separate line. 999 call volumes have remained stable over the last two years with 90% of calls being answered within 10 seconds for most months. Average waiting times increase during the summer

months and during December, coinciding with periods of peak demand. Despite this, both this review and the original review a year ago have found consistently prompt responses and high levels of service provision to emergency calls.

4.6 Switchboard demand
The number of calls received by the switchboard has significantly decreased in the 12 months to end of October 2015 compared to the previous 12 months. Nonetheless there were still more than 500,000 calls received by the switchboard in the last year.

4.7 A fuller process review is contained in the original 101 report but in summary calls received at the switchboard are risk assessed and then either resolved there and then, the caller signposted to another organisation, the call transfered to a priority response service or transfered to a non-urgent response service.

Figure 1. Number of calls received at the 101 switchboard

4.8 The switchboard currently has a target to respond to at least 80% of 101 calls within 30 seconds. The number of calls answered at switchboard within 30 seconds has consistently been above 80% and is currently 84%.

4.9 However the original review highlighted that this target is not delivering an acceptable level of performance in the time taken for non-urgent calls to reach someone who can help them. Furthermore the two tier process contains unnecessary duplication and delays as callers have to repeat the same information at least twice. Therefore it is concluded that the 30 second target is providing a perverse incentive to the call centre to focus on picking the call up quickly without addressing the subsequent lengthy delays.

4.10 RECOMMENDATION: Non-emergency performance management regimes within the contact centre should focus on the time it takes public non-urgent enquiries to reach someone who can help rather than how promptly the call is picked up at first point. Management should focus on significantly reducing the proportion of callers that wait longer than 10 minutes to speak to an FEC operator.

4.11 101 Priority calls
Of the calls received at switchboard over 50,000 (10%), which are treated as priority calls and routed through the priority FEC line, receive the same standard and urgency of response as 999 calls. The proportion of calls treated as priority calls has not changed significantly in the last 2 months compared to the previous year with the proportion answered within 10 seconds remaining relatively stable.

4.12 Performance in this area is consistently high and not significantly different to that evidenced in relation to emergency calls received via 999.

4.13 Arguably the value of retaining the switchboard screening process is in providing a capacity to screen calls that come through on the 101 line that should have been 999 calls. These calls represent only 10% of the total number of 101 demand. No examination has been made into the quality of decision making that support their reclassification as priority calls as part of this review. However there may be a case for critically reviewing whether these decisions are valid. Clearly at the point of calling, the callers assessment of the situation was that it was not an emergency that warranted a 999 response. In the absence of evidence it is simply not possible to determine the real value of this process in terms of potential impact on threat, risk and harm.

4.14 RECOMMENDATION: The reclassification of 101 calls as urgent and requiring an emergency response should be critically reviewed, to establish whether this practice is valid in delivering significant reductions of threat risk and harm to callers.

4.15 Force Enquiry Centre calls
200,000 calls received at the switchboard are subsequently transferred to the Force Enquiry Centre (FEC). This represents a 20% decrease in demand over the last 12 months compared to the previous year. However evidence presented later suggests that this demand has effectively shifted to alternative contact channels – largely e-mail.
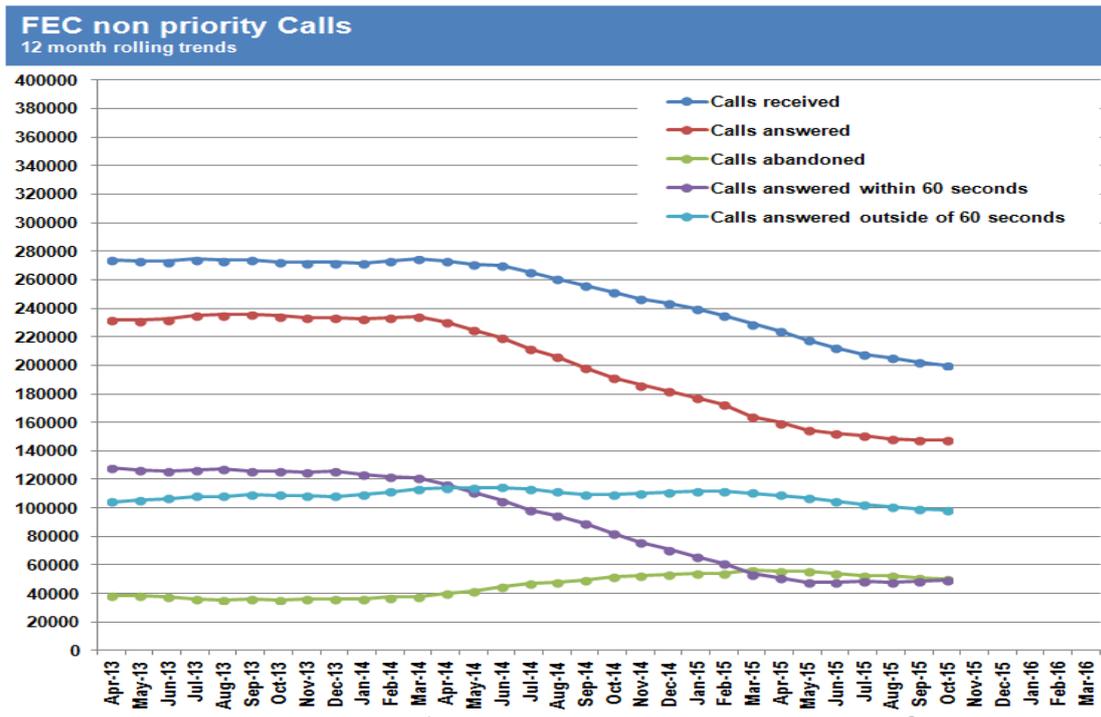
FEC non priority Calls
12 month rolling trends

Figure 2. Number of calls received at the Force Enquiry Centre

4.16 However the abandoned call rate has increased significantly over the same period from 35722 abandoned calls for the 12 months to end of October 2013 to 50355 abandoned calls for the 12 months to end of October 2015. This represents an increase of 41% with the abandoned call rate increasing from 14.7% of all non-priority FEC calls abandoned to 27.7% at the end of October 2015.
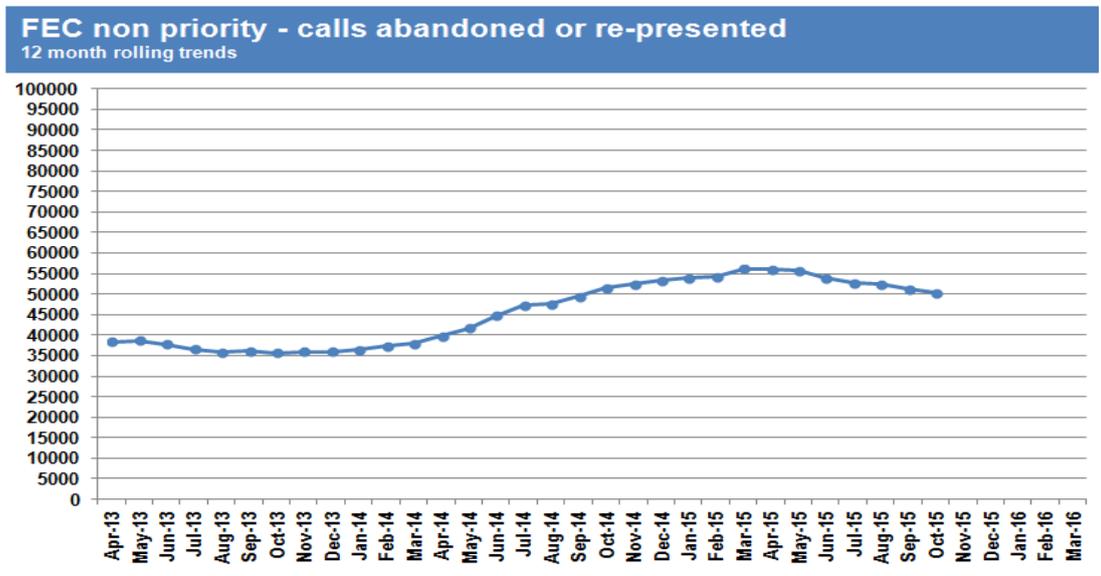
FEC non priority - calls abandoned or re-presented
12 month rolling trends

Figure 3. Number of calls abandoned between the switchboard and FEC

4.17 Force managers are using data that suggests that waiting times have reduced to an average of 4 minutes 35 seconds. However this data is based

on a misleading method of calculation that provides an overly favourable view of performance.

4.18 Unverified data produced to support this report and based on individual call waiting times shows that the FEC call waiting service has significantly declined. This data suggests that the average call waiting time has over the period between 1st March 2015 and 1st November 2015 has almost doubled to 8 minutes and 24 seconds compared to the twelve months to end of October 2014 during which the average waiting time was 4 minutes and 17 seconds.
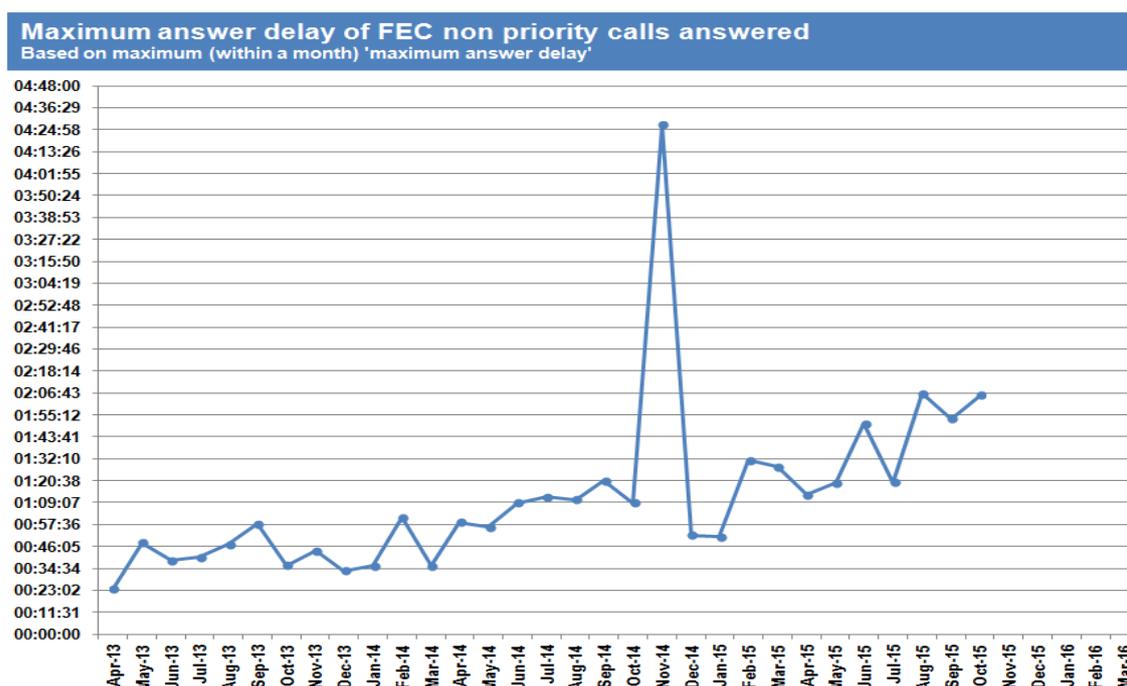

Figure 4.Maximum delay in time to answer FEC non-priority calls

4.19 The data produced to support this report also indicates a significant shift in call distribution. Specifically this has resulted in a marked reduction in the percentage of calls answered within 2 minutes from 63% in 2013 to 33% in 2015. By contrast the percentage of calls that took longer than 10 minutes to get through to the support needed increased from 5% in 2013 to 32% in 2015. The data currently available does not allow us to break down the 10 minutes and longer category to establish the distribution of these lengthy calls in greater detail.

4.20 Although unverified, this data confirms that the rate of calls abandoned between switchboard and FEC has doubled in the last two years.
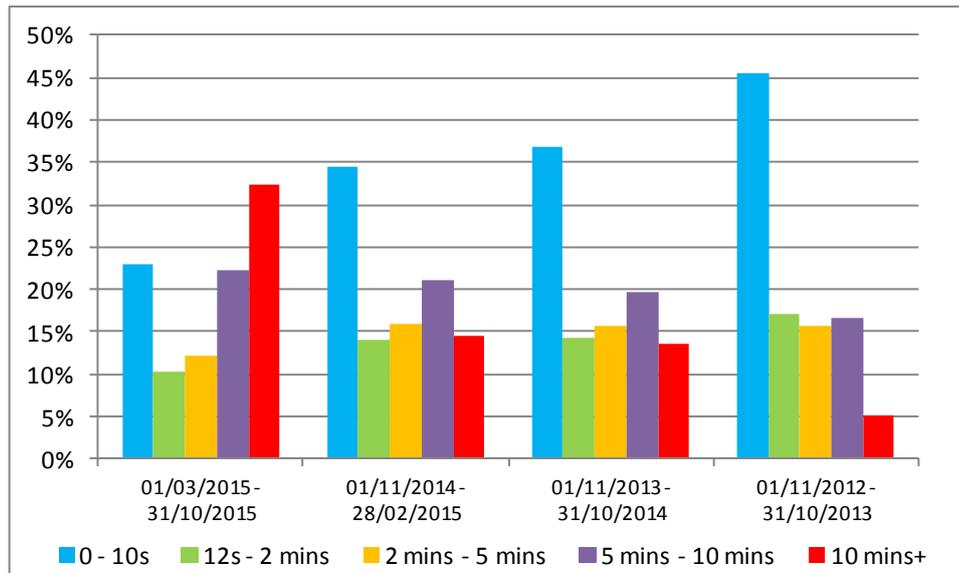
Figure 5. Percentage of calls answered at FEC within specified delay periods.

4.21 The lack of available call data to support more effective and accurate assessment of performance is of deep concern at this stage.

4.22 RECOMMENDATION: Performance data should be available that is drawn from individual call waiting times rather than average call waiting times. Furthermore real-time management of resources and the deployment of call handlers to different roles within the CMCU needs to be able to respond more directly to fluctuations in call waiting times. In order to support this and to enable supervisors to specifically target longer call waiting times more effectively the PCC has committed to ring-fencing up to £250,000 to provide additional resources to the CMCU.

4.23 Taken together the data presented here relating to calls answered within 2 minutes and those that took longer than 10 minutes to answer, coupled with the increases in abandoned call rates supports the view that the required transformational improvement in performance in non-urgent 101 calls has not been delivered.

4.24 Furthermore the data presented here suggests that rather than delivering an improvement, performance has deteriorated to a significant degree.

4.25 In seeking to understand why this might be the case it is important to consider the impact of recruiting large numbers of new and untrained staff who then need an investment of time and resource before they can begin to have a positive impact on performance. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this large volume of new recruits is having a significant impact on the capacity of more experienced call handlers as they provide support and mentoring to new recruits who are still learning and are much slower to deal with calls. The recruitment and training programme will continue throughout 2016, it may therefore be advisable for the Learning & Development Department to

evaluate how effective and the impact of the experience this year and review training processes for the future.

4.26 RECOMENDATION: The force should consider an evaluation of the training experience both in terms of how effective the training has been but also in terms of impact on business as usual.

4.27 A further explanation for the apparent reduction in performance is likely to be the operational focus on addressing the backlog in crime recording. One interpretation is that delivering the improvements in a non-emergency internal process may have been at the expense of service provision to non-emergency public calls for service.

4.28 RECOMMENDATION: The Chief Constable to put in place an action plan that will deliver significant reductions in the waiting times for members of the public attempting to contact the police on non-urgent matters. The action plan will ensure that the force is focused on this key priority of the Police & Crime Commissioner. It should further ensure that this is achieved without compromising the service provided in relation to emergency calls. The action plan should be prepared immediately and subject to an interim review within 6 months. The interim review should evidence an uplift in current performance in response to the additional resources being made available by the PCC. A transformation in performance is expected once the anticipated technological solutions are implemented and at the latest within 12 months. A final review will be completed at that time.

4.29 Public Crime Reporting
Public calls to report or update crimes are showing an increasing trend over the last 2 years with 63,000 calls being received through this route. Calls to the Public Crime area are also routed through the 101 switchboard function and similar to non-urgent 101 calls are not considered a priority.
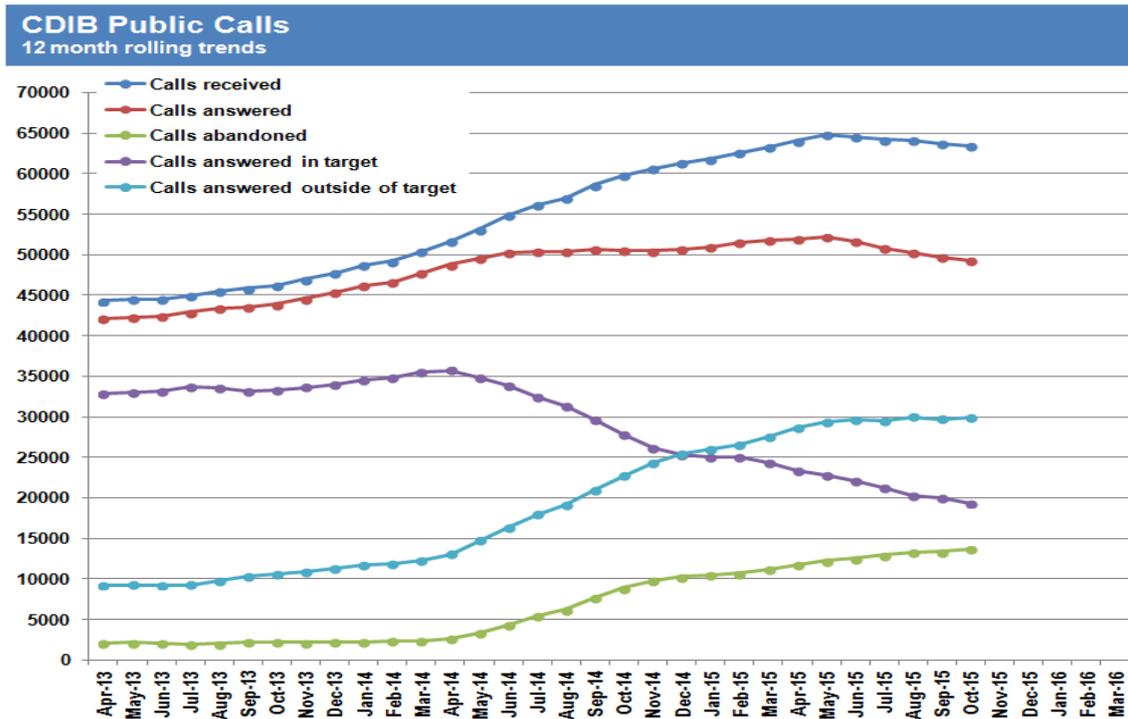
CDIB Public Calls
12 month rolling trends

- Calls received
- Calls answered
- Calls abandoned
- Calls answered in target
- Calls answered outside of target

Figure 6.Number of public crime calls received.

4.30 Again the abandoned call rate in this area has increased significantly, by more than 50% over the last 12 months and from this chart by 600% in the last 18 months.

4.31 Time to answer Public Crime calls has increased significantly and for October 2015 the average delay in answering was 8 minutes 44 seconds.

4.32 The performance data provided suggests that real concerns remain in relation not only to how the public access non-urgent support via the 101 number but also how they access non-urgent crime recording support.

4.33 A balanced view might be that where the public need to contact the police in Devon & Cornwall on an urgent matter they can be reassured of a prompt response. However where the public are attempting to contact the police in relation to a non-urgent matter performance has deteriorated.

4.34 **RECOMMENDATION: The above recommendation is extended to encompass all non-urgent contact from the public.**

5. Progress against 2014 recommendations

5.1 The 2014 recommendations addressed the issues highlighted in the report and specifically called into question the justification for a 24 hour service provision. The police response to each of these recommendations is summarised in the following.

> **It is recommended that the call centre consider amalgamating the switchboard and Force Enquiry Centre functions with all calls dealt with by all call handlers as they are during the overnight periods.**

5.2 While initially this recommendation was accepted and actions contained in the report provided by Devon & Cornwall police suggest that work has been undertaken to ensure that all call handlers are equally skilled in both areas to support this change there are a number of significant concerns about the response to-date.

5.3 The police force appears to continue to judge performance against the 30 second pick-up target for the switchboard function. This has the potential to drive resources to be front loaded to this part of the call handling process rather than to the more time consuming Force Enquiry Centre.

5.4 The police force suggests that moving away from a separated process was dependent on the implementation of software that could be used to sign post callers to alternative channels. Within Dorset Police, the use of such technological solutions overnight has shown a reduction of over 30% of calls handled as the caller 'self-serves'.

5.5 The original intention was for the implementation of advanced technological solutions to support self-service and better sign posting of callers to alternative channels to be developed alongside the implementation of the new like-for-like replacement telephony platform.

5.6 However technological barriers to early replacement of the telephony systems have hampered this intention. In particular the proposed replacement system failed a critical vulnerability test and both the software provider and the development company have had to undertake additional software development and testing in order to mitigate the impact of this to an acceptable degree. This has resulted in considerable delays to implementation.

> **The principle of providing 24 hour cover for a non-emergency police contact service should be reviewed. Further work to examine the nature of the demand and likely impact of this is recommended.**

5.7 Additional work was undertaken by the police force to examine the nature of overnight demand. This work was reported to have supported the recommendation to move away from a 24 hour service for non emergency calls and a proposal was put to the Chief Operating Group. At the time it was

felt that the operational context was particularly challenging and that any decision should be deferred for a number of months.

5.8 However the decision has recently been made to move to a managed service provision overnight and this will be introduced in Spring 2016.

5.9 This recommendation is therefore completed.

➢ **The role of call handlers needs to be better defined with clearer guidance about what research and post-call administration activity should be involved. It may be appropriate to consider meeting some or all of the crime recording and research functions currently undertaken by call handlers within another business area.**

5.10 This recommendation asked for greater clarity of function and purpose to be provided to call handlers. It also recommended consideration of the potential to remove some of the indirect research and administration functions that were variably observed being undertaken by call handlers including but not limited to research not linked to assessment of risk and extensive updating of back screens. One of the reasons for this recommendation was the observation that call handlers are not aware of (nor can they be expected to be) of the broader context of intelligence or the wider context of policing.

5.11 Research and intelligence checking are acknowledged to be the key foundations supporting effective assessment of threat, risk, harm and vulnerability. All call handlers are currently receiving additional training in enhanced threat assessment. However during the original exercise call handlers were often observed undertaking research beyond the scope of the need to assess threat, risk, harm and vulnerability. The recommendation asked for clarification of the boundaries between the research that a call handler might reasonably undertake with their supported knowledge of individual risk indicators and that which needed more detailed understanding of the wider context of policing, crime, criminality and the threats to the force.

5.12 It is also anticipated that Mobile Data will allow officers to undertaken further research themselves and reduce the burden on the front end of the process in the future.

5.13 The feedback report from the police contains a further area of activity against this recommendation which relates to the successful delivery of an improvement in the Crime Recording area of business. The difference in approach taken to addressing the backlog of crime recording to meet the new requirements of the National Crime Recording Standard and the PCCs requirement to improve 101 service delivery is stark. Both relate to non-urgent business and from the report provided, a similar level of risk is attached to both. In addition both face significant technological challenge which is dependent on the implementation of complex technical change programmes. However the force responded to the crime recording issue by forming a Gold Command Group and implementing key quick wins that reduced the backlog in crime recording, although long waiting times for the public to get through to

Crime Recording remain. By contrast the force response to the issues with 101 has been far less robust.

➢ **A more active and intrusive style of supervision with supervisors 'walking the floor' to provide immediate support where necessary rather than requiring call handlers to leave their stations to seek support would save vital minutes and ensure that call handlers were spending more time supporting callers to the best of their ability.**

5.14 The force has responded well to the supervision issues raised and have implemented and delivered training and mentoring programmes that have focused on visible leadership qualities and reinforced the role of the supervisor in delivering performance.

➢ **Supervisors should be required to a greater extent to actively manage queues flows through the transfer of available staff between the various functions. In particular, they should seek to ensure that public calls take priority over the management of internal force crime recording.**

5.15 The available data and commentary provided against previous recommendations suggests that this recommendation has not been acted upon. Indeed the relative lack of progress in relation to the 101 waiting times and the increases in waiting times for the public to get through to Crime Recording suggests that activity has focused on achieving impact in other areas.

5.16 This seems to be a clear manifestation of the fundamental challenge that the PCCs non-urgent priority conflicts with the nature of the police focus on emergency service priorities.

5.17 A fundamental concern that was reported in the 2014 review and persists at the current time is the lack of availability of technology to assist critical management decisions about deployment to enable them to effectively match demand and resources. The systems available currently are arguably inappropriate in the Call Centre environment. This means that despite the extensive recruitment effort of the last year, it is not clear whether an increase of 7% top the establishment is sufficient to meet current demand and that projecting resource need for the future lacks sophistication.

5.18 **RECOMMENDATION: The force should consider the costs and benefits associated with identifying and implementing software to better support managers in matching demand and resource within the Call Centre environment.**

➢ **The data available to support supervisors and management decisions and to enable more effective and relevant monitoring of performance needs to be critically reviewed.**

5.19 The force has introduced the use of briefing boards to support supervisors performance monitoring and decision making and this is welcomed and helpful. However the performance focus remains on answering 101 calls within 30 seconds producing the perverse results that mean that all non-urgent calls that are not dealt with at first point of contact are subject to extended waiting time and duplication, repeating the information at least once.

5.20 Performance management information available for monitoring the non-urgent 101 service is patchy and appears to have been reduced since the report 12 months ago. Meaningful information describing the levels of service provided to the public from the Force Enquiry Centre appears to have been removed from the central Performance Portal. The only regularly available data is now the bi-monthly average time to answer non-urgent calls that is provided to the OPCC to support our performance monitoring processes and the daily reports received by the CMCU senior management team. Data that would allow CMCU or force management to monitor progress effectively is not available and apparently cannot be obtained from the current system.

5.21 The implementation of the AACC6 system will address this. Given the clear level of priority given to this area by the PCC, it would be expected that regular and meaningful data would at least be available on the Force Performance Portal.

➢ **A Contact Strategy should be developed to identify alternative contact methods and support and promote their development and implementation**

5.22 Work has just begun to develop a Contact Strategy. It is not clear why there was a ten month delay between the need for a contact strategy being highlighted in our previous review and the team acknowledging the need and putting work in progress to address the issue. However the first meeting made clear the complexity of the challenge that this poses and that the force will be leading the way in developing a contemporary strategy that is cognisant of the challenges and changing societal context, in particular the rising popularity of alternative media.

5.23 This work is currently anticipated to deliver a working draft by the end of the current performance year and a final strategy by the end of the current PCC term of office. However the development of this strategy should not hinder progress against the over-arching requirement to deliver a transformational improvement in non-urgent waiting times to the public.

5.24 In the meantime the force have worked to increase the use of e-mail as an alternative contact route. This has resulted in a 37% increase in the number of e-mails received during the 12 months to end of October 2015 as compared to the previous 12 months.
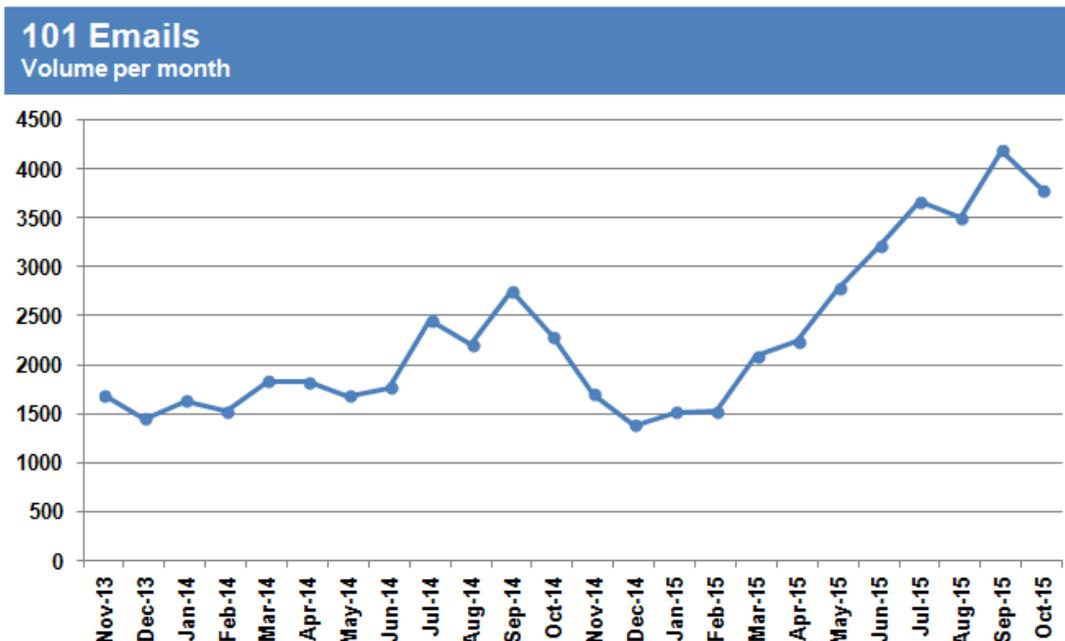
101 Emails
Volume per month

Figure 7.Number of 101 e-mails received

5.25 However it is not clear how effectively this increase is being translated into reduced demand on the call handlers since they are also required to field the responses to e-mail enquiries and anecdotal evidence suggests that there is frequently a need for call backs to the reporting individual.

➢ **An immediate review of CC6 functionality should be undertaken.**

5.26 Implementation of this recommendation has been subject to considerable delay due to issues that have emerged during the development of the replacement platform AACC6. Many of those issues have now been resolved or mitigated and the replacement system is now scheduled to go live in Spring 2016.

➢ **A further review of information input by FEC staff across the range of force systems should be undertaken. This should focus on how the information is used by the wider organisation and seek to reduce duplication.**

5.27 The focus of the Policing the Demand team and other internal review teams is reported to be on shifting demand resolution towards the front end, i.e. into the CMCU. While this may meet requirements to reduce onward demand into the wider police force it carries the risk of exacerbating the issue that was highlighted in the earlier report. Specifically CMCU staff were not sufficiently aware of the broader crime and policing context to make consistent and reliable decisions about for example how a report should be responded to or what information needed to be recorded. As a result some of the information that was observed being input had the potential to adversely affect other business areas such as performance or intelligence functions where accurate and consistent information recording is vital. It is therefore essential that any initiative that seeks to put more demand into the CMCU reality tests the

impact of this on data quality and consistency. All force papers that impact on CMCU or seek to reduce demand on the front line are now required to submit a CMCU Impact Statement within the report to capture and understand the impact on process and policy within CMCU.

➢ **Where possible police officers and other staff should provide those that are likely to need to call them directly with a dedicated direct dial inward (DDI) contact number to avoid the need for these to be routed through the contact centre.**

5.28 The focus of this recommendation was on placing responsibility for delivering contact change onto individual officers and staff and addressing the culture that seems to have emerged where every contact must come through CMCU rather than be made direct with the officer concerned. This is very frustrating for the public and places yet further demand into the call centre unnecessarily.

5.29 This is an issue that is expected to be addressed within the development of the Contact Strategy.

➢ **The Force Call Handling Policy should be reviewed to reflect recent changes in Force systems, additional contact methods such as e-mail and online reporting and changes in working arrangements.**

5.30 The force policy has been reviewed and amended and will be subject to annual reviews or amended as required.

➢ **The Office for the Police & Crime Commissioner should review the Performance Management Framework contained in the Police & Crime Plan to ensure that it can measure improvements in the performance areas highlighted.**

5.31 This recommendation was implemented in the Police and Crime Plan refresh and the Performance Management Framework published in March 2015. We continue to monitor progress through that process and also by more detailed analysis and updates from the police.