



REPORT TO:	STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING
DATE:	29TH AUGUST 2019
TITLE:	CONTACT MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY REPORT
REPORT BY:	SUPT R. ROBERTSHAW

1. **Issue for Consideration**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update in relation to the performance of the Contact Management Department of Lancashire Constabulary for the period April to June 2019.

2. **Recommendation**

The Commissioner is requested to review the report and make comments as appropriate.

3. **Background**

This report will provide an update on the latest call performance and significant organisational developments in Contact Management for the quarter April – June 2019.

Section 4 provides an update on significant programmes of work within the Force Control Room (FCR). Most notably, this will include the status of the planned decant and refurbishment of the FCR in 2020/21 to maximise the benefits of geographic pod-based working. The section also includes an update on planned Police Communications Room Operator (PCRO) recruitment scheduled for 2019-20.

Section 5 provides an update on the performance within the FCR across a number of key call performance metrics. To allow a more informative and meaningful scrutiny of Contact Management performance several of the reporting graphs now provide a six month view of performance over the same period in the preceding year.

Section 6 provides a brief overview of a number of other important, predominantly ICT work streams, that will have significant current, or future impact on the FCR.

4. **Overview of Key Developments**

a. **Refurbishment of the FCR during 2020/21**

Since the last Strategic Scrutiny meeting, there has been a step change in the preparatory work required for the decant from and rebuilding of the FCR in 2020/21. The key developments during this quarter are as follows:

- The Decant Governance Board chaired by Chief Superintendent Procter is now in an established cycle of meetings, facilitated by the dedicated British Telecom Lancashire Services (BTLS) decant project manager. A representative of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has a standing invitation to the board to monitor progress.
- The high-level timeline for the refurbishment is that the decant of staff from the main FCR to the 'fall back' communications rooms will commence in early 2020, with staff returning to the refurbished FCR in early 2021.
- Under the direction of the Decant Governance Board, the project delivery team are currently undertaking a considerable amount of structured engagement and consultation work with FCR staff. The focus of this engagement is centred on a number of issues including:
 - Which of the temporary communications rooms (Burnley, Preston and HQ) staff will work from during the decant. This includes managing a wide range of staff welfare / wellbeing considerations combined with the need to have an even distribution of the skill sets required to ensure each pod is largely self-sufficient during decant.
 - The technical sequencing of the decant, including ensuring there is appropriate business continuity and technical resilience throughout all stages of the decant
 - Mapping and understanding the interdependencies that the decant has with other Contact Management and wider organisational ICT change programmes of work.

The summary position is that although a challenging and complex undertaking, the decant remains on track to commence in January 2020.

b. Force Control Room PCRO Staffing, training and recruitment 2019/20

The FCR continues to recruit PCROs to maintain a staff establishment of 345 PCRO Full-time Equivalent (FTE). In order to maintain this level there has been an intake of 17 PCROs in April (against a target of 20). The focus is now on recruiting for an intake of 40 PCROs in September 2019: this process is currently on going. Subject to vetting and medicals, it is on track to achieve the agreed intake size. The recruitment of a significant number of PCROs in September has been deliberately timed to ensure the FCR is at full operational establishment for the decant in January 2020.

Early planning alongside the Constabulary's Workforce Representation Team (WfR) has started for recruitment in 2020, the current proposal being three intakes of 20 PCROs. The exact size of these intakes will be determined nearer the time when the actual, rather than anticipated vacancy picture within the FCR has been assessed. The recent announcement of a significant national increase in police officer recruitment is naturally a concern, as historically a significant number of PCROs

successfully apply to be police officers. During recent discussions with ACC Woods it has been agreed from now onwards the recruitment strategy of Contact Management should be focused on maintaining an operational staffing level in the FCR as close to 345 FTE PCROs as possible. This is a departure from the current approach, which due to time lags in recruitment and the initial training course of eight weeks has frequently led to the FCR being below its agreed operational strength.

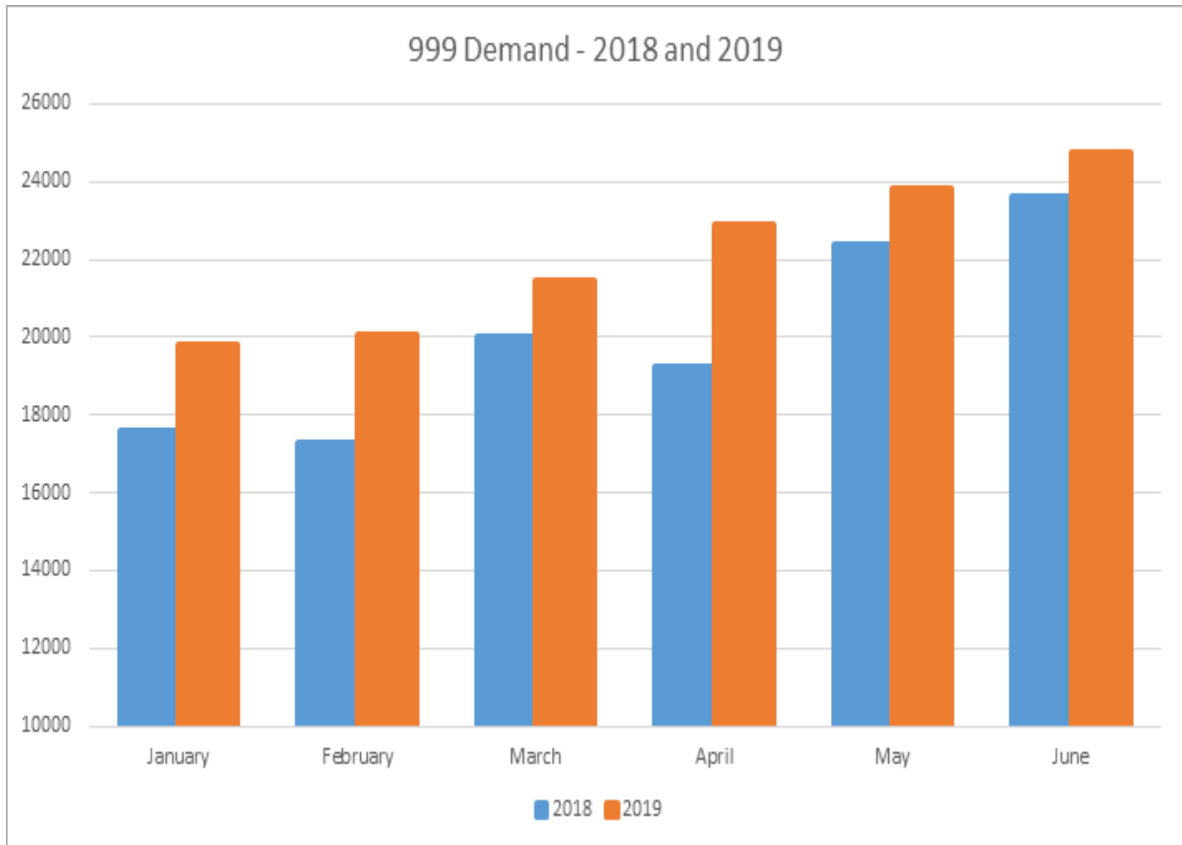
Since the last update, there has been good progress in 'upskilling' the significant number of new PCROs with the dispatching and facilitating skill sets, which are essential for them to be able to perform all aspects of the PCRO role. It should be noted that the volume of new staff, combined with the need to maintain acceptable call taking performance has made this essential process difficult to facilitate.

5. Performance Update

a. Call Performance – 999 Emergency Calls

Emergency calls remain a primary focus for the FCR. Whilst it is recognised that there is a correlation between 101-call performance and the demand on the 999 service, the FCR understandably continues to prioritise answering 999 emergency calls above any other type of demand.

The following graphs provide a comparison of how the FCR has performed across a range of metrics for this scrutiny period (Jan –Jun 2019 versus the same period in 2018).



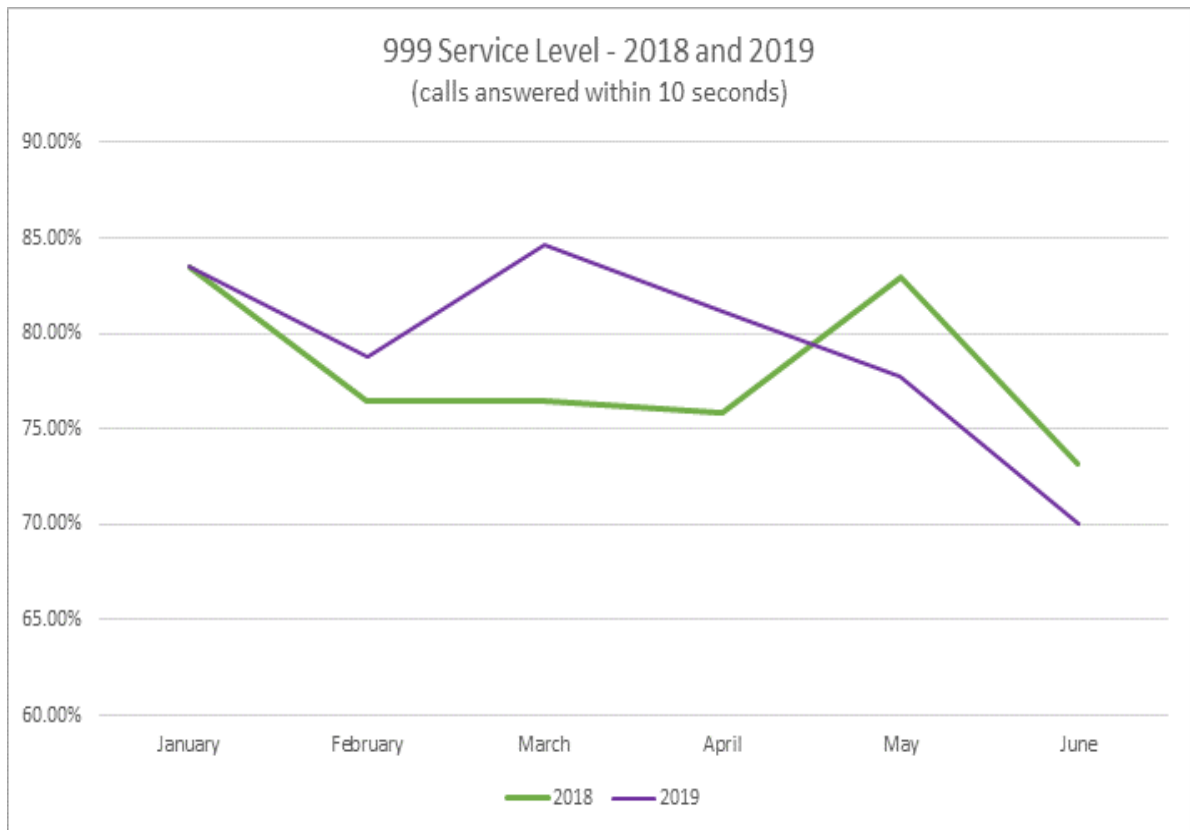
Key Points: 999 Demand

- As the Commissioner will recall the Constabulary reported in previous Strategic Scrutiny meetings that Lancashire 999 demand continues to rise. This reflects anecdotal feedback that the same trend is being seen in many other police forces.
- The summary of 999 demands shows an 11.04% increase when comparing Jan-Jun 2018 to the same period this year. For the three months, covering this scrutiny period (April – June) there was a 10.08% increase when compared to the same period in 2018.
- A high-level review of the increases in 999 calls has not identified an underlying reason for this trend of increasing 999 demand. At present Contact Management and Corporate Development are working in partnership with HPE (Hewlett Packard Enterprise) on a review voice analytics review of all telephony demand into the FCR. This study has already produced some interesting insights into current demand patterns and trends (both 999 and 101), particularly around ‘waste’ demand that consumes a considerable amount of PCRO time. The strategy to operationalise the key findings of this innovative research will be articulated in future scrutiny papers.



Key Points: 999 Abandonment Rate

- With the exception of June 2019 (0.2% higher than 2018) the 999 abandonment rate was an improvement on the same period in 2018. As per the “long wait” results below June saw a mixture of staffing and technical issues leading to reduced performance.
- The consistent delivery of approximately 1.0% abandonment rate represents good performance for a critical area of FCR business.



Key Points: 999 Service Level

- The months of May and June had lower performance than the corresponding period in 2018. Analysis indicates this is likely to be down to a range of factor including:
 - The difficulties experienced in ensuring sufficient staffing resilience and required skill sets following the introduction of the Verint duty management system in late April (the previous Planet duty management system being end of life). The introduction of Verint resulted in a period of adjustment - as is inevitably the case when an ICT system is replaced – whilst FCR supervisors became operationally familiar with the system. The current position is that many of the initial difficulties have now been addressed, with the position in terms of planning advance duties and filling gaps via either amending duties, or offering preplanned overtime has returning to pre Verint levels of performance;
 - The increases in 999 demand during this period;
 - The staffing total staffing establishment being below the 345FTE level for a number of months following higher than anticipated PCRO turnover.

National 999 Context

Detailed below is the number of BT longest wait time for 999 performance (any 999-call waiting over two minutes). The data below focuses on comparable sized forces with similar levels of demand, other North West forces are also included to allow a regional comparison of performance to be made. BT do not provide figures when the long waits have not exceeded 50 calls in a month, these months are represented by a blank box in the below table.

BT 999 Long waits of in excess of 2 minutes (Figures only supplied if monthly total exceeds 50)

999 > 2 minutes	OCT 18	NOV 18	DEC 18	JAN 19	FEB 19	MAR 19	APR 19	MAY 19	JUN 19
CHESHIRE POLICE	176	196	154	106	124	140	162	175	163
CUMBRIA POLICE									55
DEVON & CORNWALL POL	204	124	136	131	213	268	248	455	668
ESSEX POLICE	204	261	167	79	108	322	233	104	160
GMP	1067	811	1293	513	751	749	239	432	570
HAMPSHIRE POLICE	117	104	165	80	162	143	92	144	155
HUMBERSIDE POL	52	50	69		66	78	54	84	85
KENT POLICE	59	79	73	56	60	101		53	90
LANCASHIRE POLICE	177*								95**
LEICESTER POLICE	73	63	60	54	66	72		83	146
MERSEYSIDE POLICE	309	277	268	78	210	186	274	339	304
NORTHUMBRIA POLICE	508	344	203	93	145	217	401	330	432
NORTH WALES POLICE									
NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE									
SOUTH WALES POLICE									
SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE	51	477	604	294	316	461	388	359	691
THAMES VALLEY POLICE	148	131	158	60	98	57	81	110	182

As can be seen from the above data in relation to long wait 999's Lancashire continues to perform extremely favourable in comparison with other forces in the North West region and other similarly sized forces nationally.

*October 2018 - 127 of the 177 calls were due to technical issues when the clocks turned back , this has now been resolved and will not be an issue in 2019 and beyond.

** June 2019 – 40 of the 95 long waits occurred on the 1st of June and were due to a combination of technical issues and staffing resilience. Technical and staffing issues throughout the rest of the month are the underlying reason for many of the other long wait delays. In respect of the technical issues these were predominately connected to preparatory work required for the ICCS upgrade this Autumn causing a number instances of the FCR needing to go into 'fallback' (desk top telephony). An additional significant issue was on-going technical issues with the FCR wallboards (the monitor screens in the FCR that display 999 and 101 calls that are waiting to be answered). The wallboards are end of life and technically difficult to maintain, it is likely they will be problematic and cause operational issues until they are replaced as part of the ICCS upgrade later this year

b. Call Performance - Non Emergency 101 Calls

Non-emergency calls remain a priority for the FCR. As has been reported previously, achieving the locally agreed target of answering 101s within 40 seconds remains extremely challenging. As with 999-call performance, a proportion of these difficulties can be attributed to the changing nature of demand entering the FCR.

The main issues are the complexity of the demand within the calls, combined with the additional safeguarding / vulnerability checks done by FCR staff following adverse Child Protection and Crime and Data Integrity inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in 2017/18. Additionally the change from SLEUTH to Northgate Connect for crime and investigation in November 2018, has cumulatively led to significantly longer average call handling times.

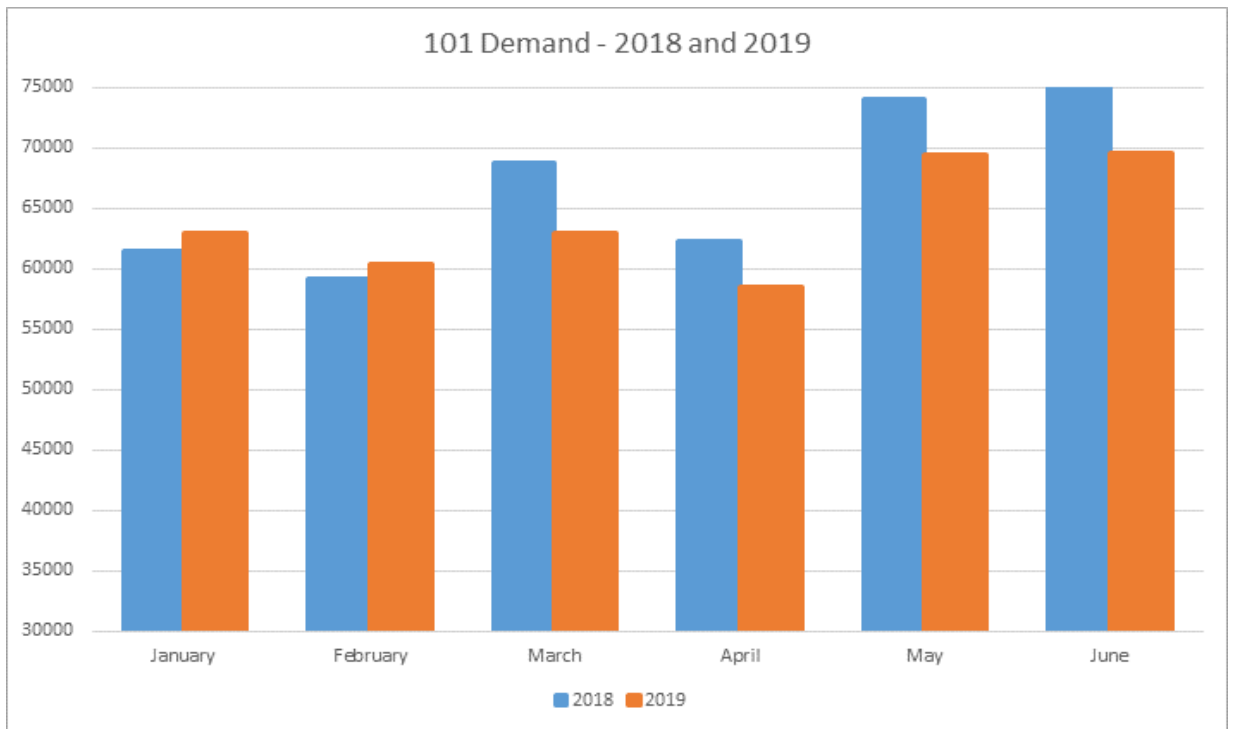
It should be noted that call-handling time is the total time it takes to deal with a call, not just the 'talk time'. It is often the case that after a call has concluded additional checks must be made and updates will be added to the incident log before a PCRO is free to take their next call; this is known as 'wrap up', or 'not ready' time. The inevitable impact of longer call handling times is a reduction in available capacity in the FCR to answer new 999 / 101 calls for service.

The following, provides context around 101 performance, including a number of operational challenges that are hindering the delivery of consistently high levels of 101 performance across the key metrics (time to answer within target, abandonment rate and 90th percentile time to answer):

- **FCR PCRO staffing levels** – As has been highlighted earlier in this report maintaining the 345 FTE PCRO operational level in the FCR during this quarter has been problematic. This is predominantly due to higher than expected turnover of PCRO and the associated lag of recruitment and training. It has recently been agreed with ACC Woods that the future recruitment strategy of Contact Management will be on maintaining an operational establishment of 354 FTE PCROs in the FCR at all time.
- **101 Call handling time** – Recent scrutiny reports have invariably reported longer talk time (time on the call) and longer wrap up time (time after the call finalising the matter) . Positively as per the chart within this section of the update report the position seems to have stabilised with the talk time in this scrutiny period (Apr - Jun) actually being 4.8% lower than the corresponding period in 2018. This equates to an average of 15.7 seconds saved on each 101 call.
- **Online demand** – As will be highlighted later in the report online demand has been rising month on month, this trend has been ongoing for the last two years

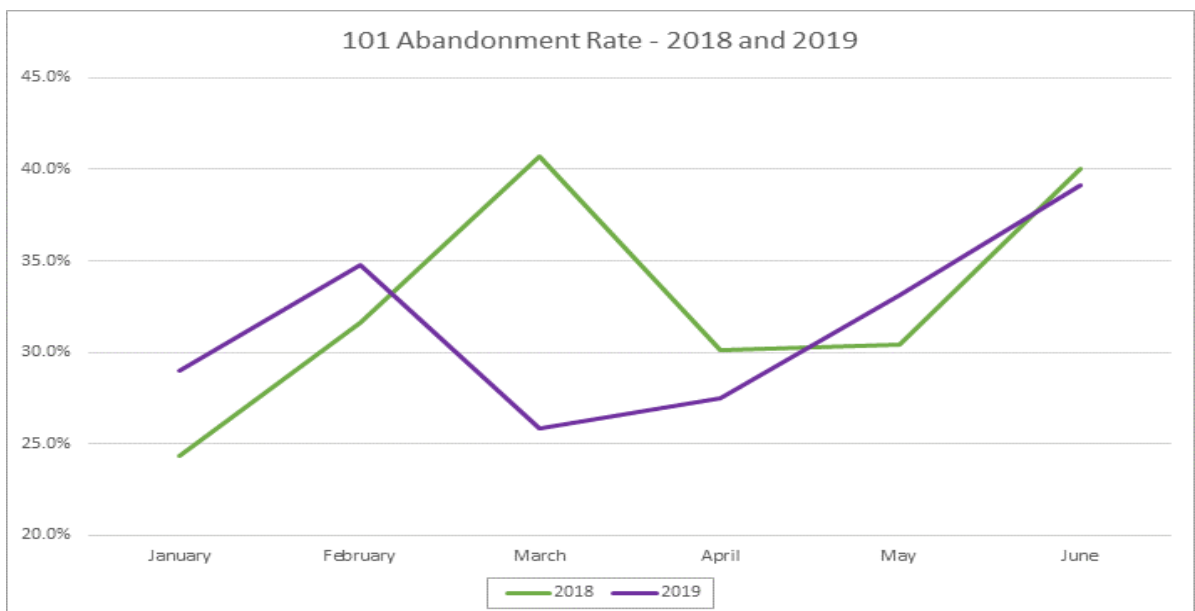
and shows no sign of stabilising at a fixed level. Dealing with this demand is a constant daily abstraction from the FCR PCRO establishment

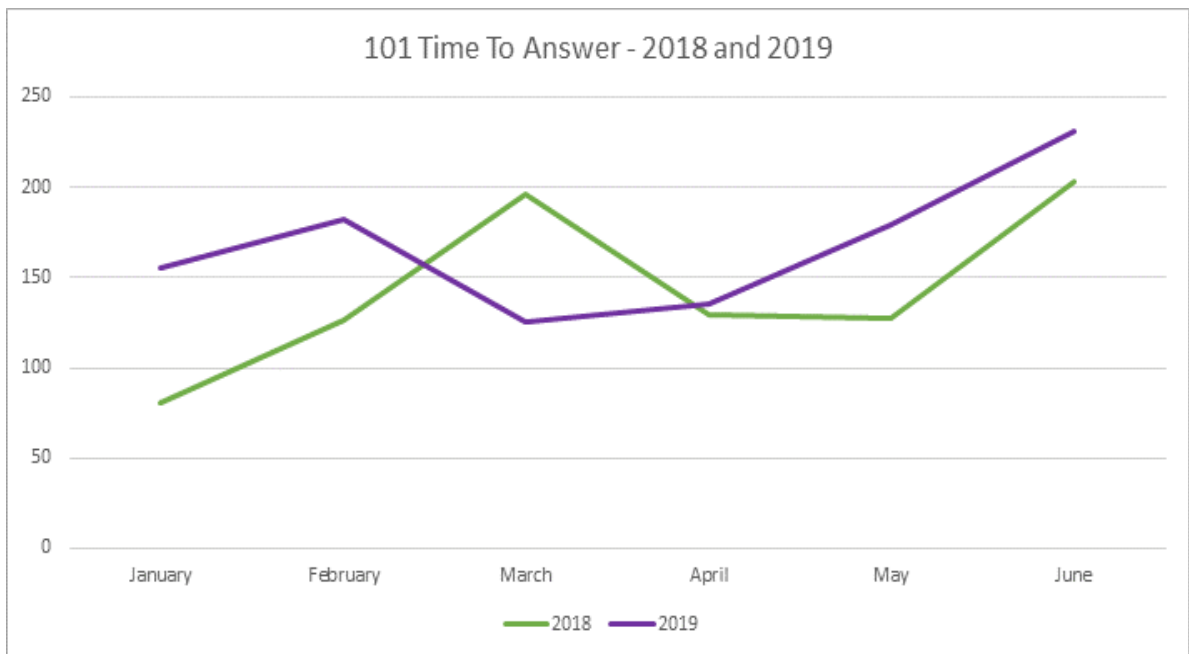
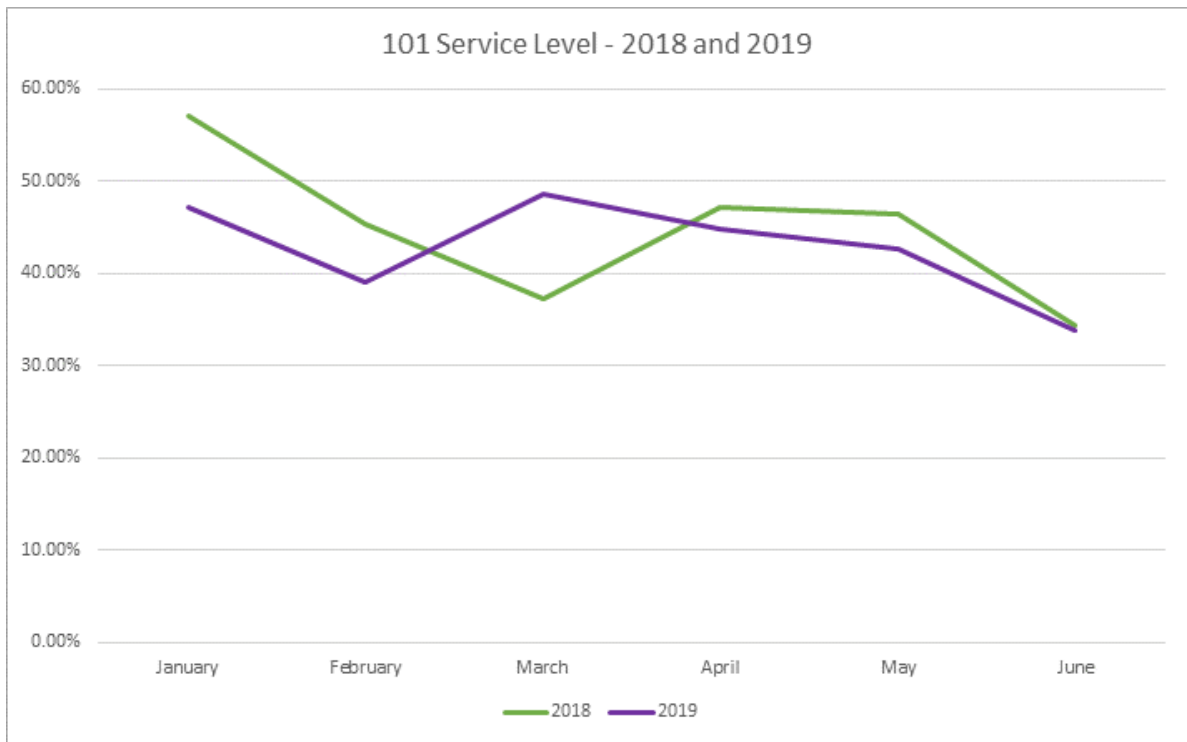
- **Connect Phase 2** – The introduction of Connect phase 2 undoubtedly led to increases in total handling time (talk time + not ready time following the conclusion of the call) as staff became familiar with the system. Encouragingly this time has now reduced to pre-Connect phase 2 level rates.
- **PCRO experience** – as was highlighted in the last report the levels of inexperience in the FCR remain a significant issue. At present 37.6% of the staff have under 2 years' service. 45.9% have under 3 years' service. This position of high levels of inexperience in the FCR will not be improved by the recruitment of 40 PCROs in September, or the planned significant increases in police officer recruitment, that is likely to negatively impact on PCRO turnover. The need to constantly upskill new PCROs in facilitating and radio dispatch, to allow the FCR to deliver all of its critical functions is a resource intensive process in terms of the level of abstractions required during the training process for these highly skilled roles.
- **POD Overflow** – Since pod go-live in September 2018, 101 calls have been deliberately held within geographic pod where the call originated, the intention being that a localised service is provided to the caller, rather than the previous more generic approach. Following a period of evaluation the current overflow time has been set at 7 minutes, i.e. if a 101 call is not answered within its originating pod within 7 minutes, it will then become available to the two other pods. The FCR management team feel this is the optimum time to deliver a local service, whilst still providing the benefits of a centralised FCR. Clearly, at periods of high demand this approach will on occasion lead to an increase in 101 waiting times.



Key Points: 101 Demand

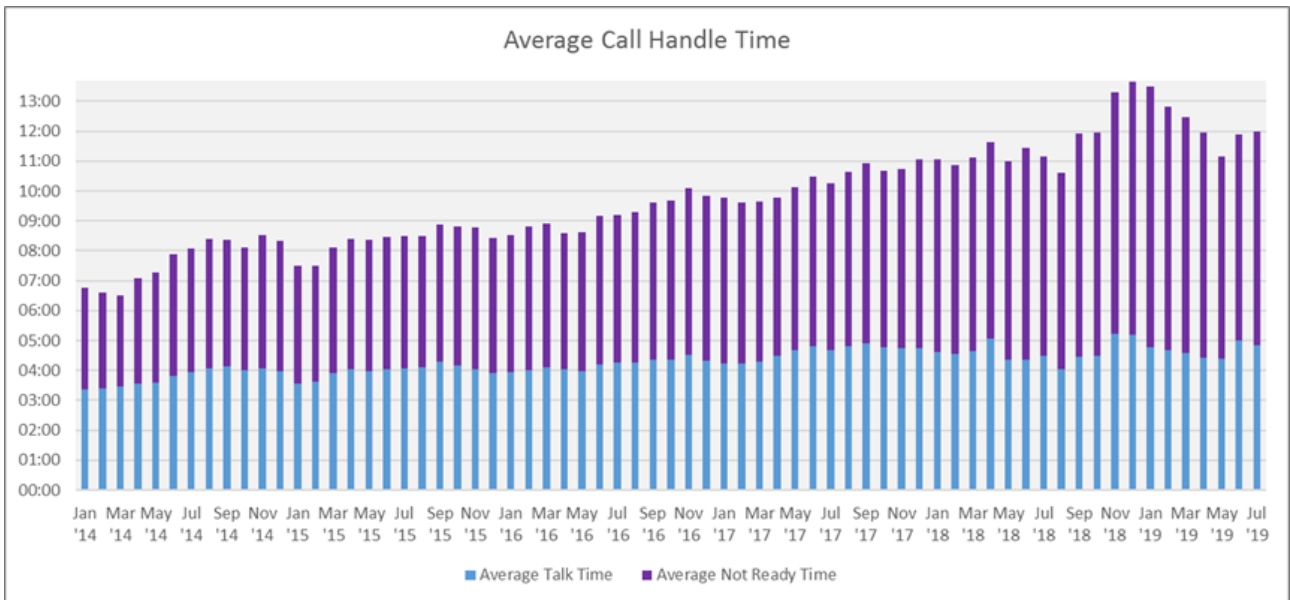
- Comparatively, from March onwards, there has been lower 101 volumes for this period in 2019 than in 2018.
- The total fall in the 101 volumes for the period Jan-Jun when comparing 2018 to 2019 is 4.6%.





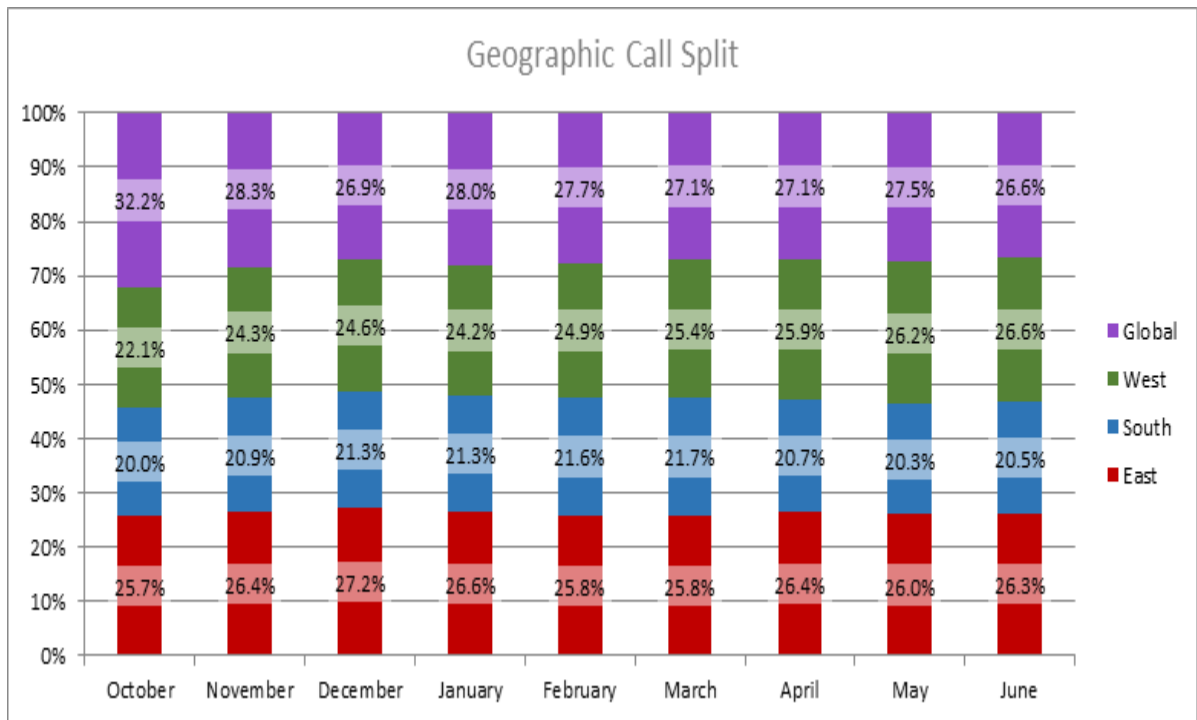
Key Points: 101 service level/ abandonment rate/ time to answer

- The context of the falls in performance within these three metrics are as per the earlier commentary on issues hindering delivery of consistently good 101 performance



Key Points: Average call handling time

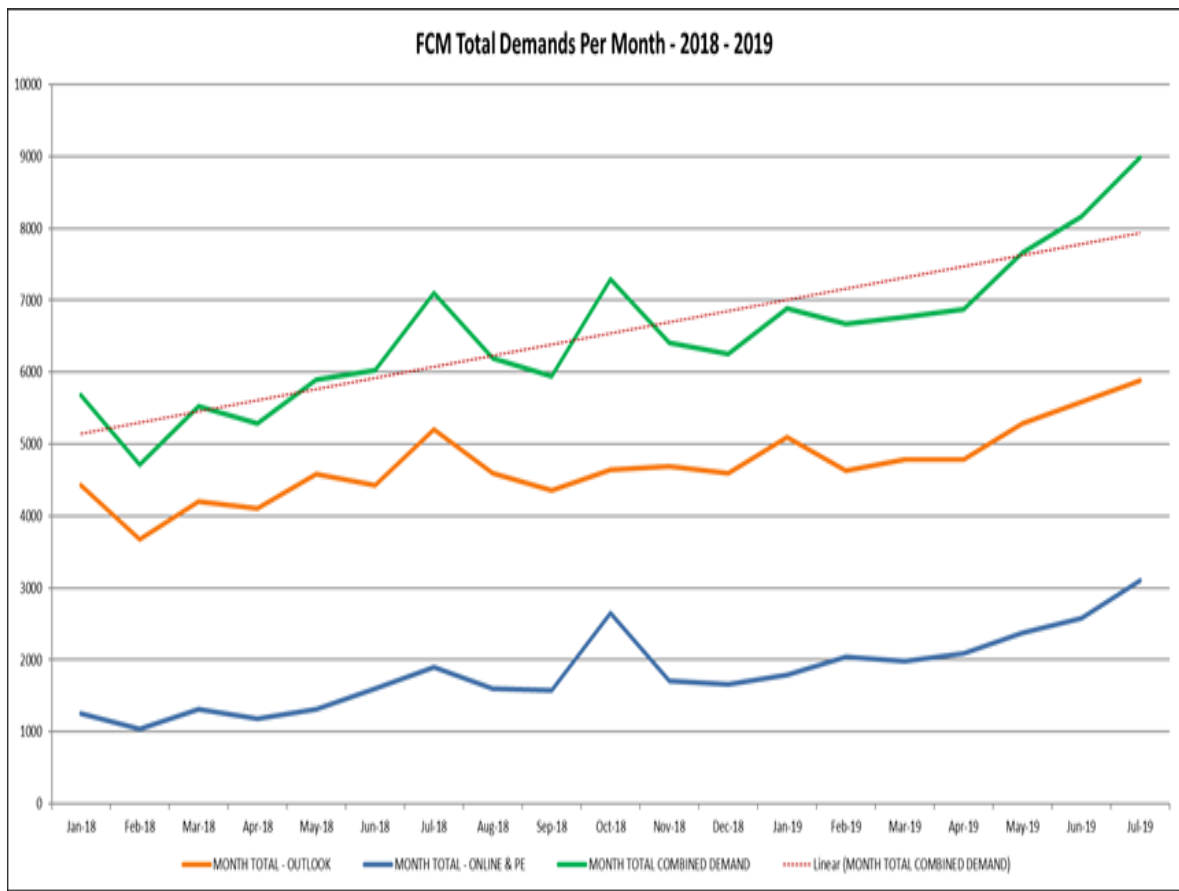
- As per the earlier commentary positively in this quarter average call handling time has decreased to pre Connect phase 2 levels



Key Points: Geographic Split

- The number of 'global' calls is remaining steady at 26-27% overall. The new Integrated Command and Control (ICCS) system has been designed with a prompt for global callers to select which pod they require, which will greatly reduce this number and route the calls to the most appropriate location. The option for global still exists should a caller not know which region they require.

c. Online Demand



Key Points: On-line demand

- As has been reported at previous Strategic Scrutiny meetings, online demand continues to rise on a monthly basis; this mirrors the trend being reported by many other police forces.
- The current approach to online demand is reactive, as opposed to proactive. With the exception of recorded messages whilst members of the public are waiting on 101 explaining the option to report crimes and incidents online there has been minimal marketing of our digital services.
- Dealing with online demand is not factored into the staffing establishment of the FCR. At present, the demand is dealt with via daily abstraction of PCROs from the FCR. The requirement for a significant number of staff on a daily basis to service digital demand is having an adverse impact on other areas of core business, most notably call taking.
- This position is neither desirable nor sustainable in the medium to long term. Having reviewed the current arrangement it has been agreed with the Chief Officer Team that a business case for establishing a permanent dedicated Digital Team based in the FCR will be prepared. Once completed this will be presented to the Chief Officer Team, who will then decide the best way to progress the matter.

d. Activity being taken to address 999 / 101 performance

Delivering high levels of performance for 999s and 101 calls against the agreed targets remains a high priority for the FCR. The following activity is taking place or is planned to improve performance:-

i. Short term

Summer Action Plan' in place. Key activities are:

- Payment of overtime to FCR staff and 'contingency list' police officers (police officers who have received call taking training) to cover staff gaps during the peak leave period.
- Daily scrutiny by SMT of staffing levels in the FCR to ensure that most effective use is made of available staff.
- Dedicated 999 agents to ensure acceptable service levels of maintained during peak periods of demand.
- Minimising non-essential PCRO staffing abstractions from the FCR during the peak leave period
- Collaborative work with Divisions and Departments to deal with demand in the most efficient manner

ii. Medium term

- Recruitment process ongoing for additional 40 PCROs in September
- Ongoing review of management / supervisory structures to ensure that there is clear alignment with FCR purpose and objectives. A systems thinking methodology has been followed throughout this process
- Continued review of best practice in other police forces to assess whether there are opportunities for improved demand management in the FCR
- Phased introduction of EBIT to facilitate an evidence based approach to the allocation of police resources to the investigation of crime in the FCR

iii. Long term

- Rebuilding of the FCR in 2020/21 to maximise the benefits of pod working and create opportunities for improved collaborative working both within Lancashire Constabulary and other agencies
- Upgrading of key ICT systems including ICCS, Storm and Connect to facilitate improved service to the public and more efficient and user friendly core ICT systems for FCR staff
- Implementation of a sustainable and fit for purpose model for resourcing increased levels of digital demand
- Operationalising the recommendations of the ongoing Hewlett Packard voice analytics review of demand in the FCR to ensure that inappropriate demand is significantly reduced

6. **FCR key ICT work streams update**

Over the next 12 months there are a number of ICT changes both within the department and wider organisation that are likely to have an impact on the FCR in terms of performance (both positive and negative). The most significant IT changes that it is useful to highlight are:

- i. **SMARTSTORM implementation** – This upgrade of our command and control system (Storm) was scheduled for summer 2019. This is a significant upgrade and offers a number of opportunities for improved service delivery and management of vulnerability. Unfortunately due to competing contact management ICT priorities (predominately the work required to decant) the upgrade from Storm to Smartstorm was postponed. Work is currently on going to identify an appropriate window for the transition: this is likely to be following the decant from the FCR in early 2020.
- ii. **Capita ICCS (Integrated Command and Control System) upgrade** - This is a major project for the FCR in 2019, with successful completion of the significant upgrade being a prerequisite for the decant of the FCR in 2020-21. The delivery of the upgrade is a significant programme of work and is governed by the 'ICCS board'. The main benefits the FCR and the public of Lancashire will be:
 - Implementation of IVR (Interactive Voice Response) this allows 101 callers to know their place in the queue and estimated wait time. This is scheduled to be available in late 2019.
 - Ability for members of the public calling from outside Lancashire to select the geographic areas their call relates too. This will then route the call to the relevant pod in the FCR.
 - Improved stability and resilience of the ICCS and telephony system in the FCR on a day-to-day basis (this has been an issue in the FCR since the move to the new single contact centre in 2013). In addition there will be a fully mirrored hot standby ICCS at the force Disaster Recovery, significantly improving the current arrangements
 - The upgraded ICCS will allow the constabulary to meet its national obligations around control room readiness for the transition from Airwave to ESN that is scheduled to take place in the coming years (no date for the Lancs transition is available)