



REPORT TO:	STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING
DATE:	16th March 2021
TITLE:	Contact Management Quarterly Report
REPORT BY:	Supt Mike Adamson

1. Issue for Consideration

The purpose of this report is to provide an update in relation to the continued upgrade and performance of the Contact Management Department of Lancashire Constabulary for the period October to December 2020.

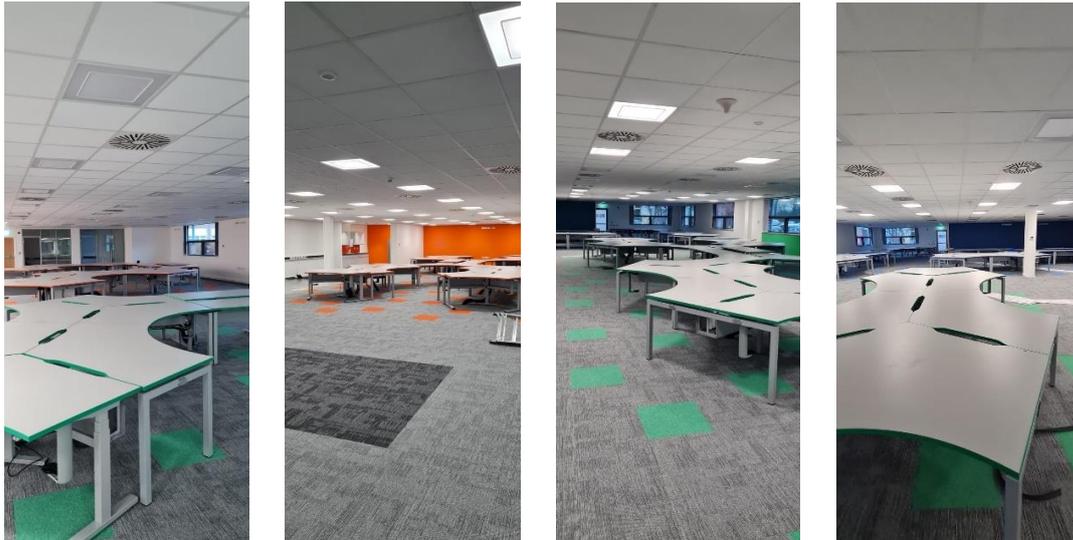
2. Recommendation

The Commissioner is requested to review and make comments as appropriate

3. Background

Following an extended period of planning, the various elements of Contact Management decanted from the centralised Force Control Room (FCR) in April 2020. The move was to facilitate the physical and technological redevelopment of the FCR and redesign of Contact Management working practices, centred around geographically aligned POD working. Staff from the FCR decanted to locations across the Constabulary with the three principal call taking PODs relocated as follows: South POD relocated to Preston Operating Centre, situated in the newly refurbished FCR fallback room; West POD located at Site B at Headquarters and East Pod split between Burnley Operating Centre and the Force Fallback room at Preston Operating Centre.

Since the decant, a vast amount of work has been undertaken to rebuild the FCR, transforming it from an uninspiring, outdated environment to a fit for purpose, people-centred design. The design was influenced by the direct input of staff who will be working in the room, creating an environment which is conducive to a motivated and effective FCR workforce. The ICT technology within the new FCR has been comprehensively updated and renewed, facilitating more stable and effective call handling, which will enable staff to deliver a high-quality service to the communities of Lancashire. At the same time the digital transformation of the FCR has developed rapidly, introducing new digital means of communication and the ability to respond and update on a live-time basis utilising a spectrum of online capabilities. However, the redevelopment of the FCR has not just been about developing a future proof physical and technological FCR facility. Most important has been the ongoing, extensive transformational work to redesign how Contact Management functions as a department, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the department and thereby improve the quality of service to our communities and key stakeholders.



The FCR Decant Project continues to be governed via the FCR Project Governance Board chaired by ACC Lawson. The project remains on track to be delivered within budget and on time for the FCR staff to return from April 2021.

5. Contact Management Transformation Plan

Critical to the success of the FCR Decant Project is a comprehensive review of all business practices across the department to ensure both the investment and call service delivery are maximised. To this end, a departmental transformation plan has been developed encompassing all aspects of Contact Management with identified business benefits being tracked through the FCR Project Board.

The FCR Transformation Plan is owned by the Head of Contact Management with identified leads for each of the individual workstreams.

POD Methodology

Establishing geographically aligned POD working across the FCR has been central to the FCR Project. Since decant, the FCR staff have been operating in three PODs aligned to East, South and West BCU with the objective of providing a more localised, knowledgeable service both to the community and stakeholders. The development of POD working has now become well established, with strong relationships and interdepartmental working enabling the FCR PODs to work conterminously with BCUs both at a senior leadership and operational level. Critically, relationships between POD Supervisors and BCU DRIs and Sergeants are now firmly developed with significant impact on the management of deployments and outstanding demand awaiting deployment. The level of routine outstanding demand across the FCR PODs has nearly halved over the last 12 months. While there has indeed been a reduction in demand due to Covid 19, this does not nearly correlate with the level of reduction in daily outstanding demand experienced across the PODs.

Workforce Planning

The FCR has an establishment of 345 budgeted posts. The FCR has continued to lose staff, principally to police officer recruitment although this has reduced in the second half of 2020. Working with Human Resources, the FCR has reviewed and improved recruitment processes in order to improve the quality of applicants and to ensure applicants with the right skillsets are successful through the process. Key to improved recruitment has been the introduction of psychometric testing for applicants. Additionally, working with the force Valuing Difference and Inclusion Team, a deliberate focus has been placed on increasing the diversity of successful applicants through positive action. This has included targeted online campaigns, innovative use of targeted social media, including live chat sessions with experienced FCR staff; and intelligence led positive action for applicants between the psychometric test and interview stages of the process. The latter was put in place to address the previously identified loss of minority applicants at this stage of the process.

During the most recent recruitment process 811 applications were received comprising 67% Female, 7% BAME, 4% Disabled and 7% LGBT. Following all stages of the recruitment process 33 new PCROs were employed resulting in 67% Female, 18% BAME, 6% Disabled and 12% LGBT.

A further intake is now planned for March 2021 with further recruitment planned throughout the remainder of the year.

Working with the Futures Team, analysis of the demand and resource profile of the FCR has been completed. As a result of this work, a review is underway to identify a number of flexible working options for staff which align to demand. It has become clear that while FCR staff currently default to the 2X2X2 shift pattern, there is a business case to have a cohort of PCROs working a daytime rota. Internal recruitment is currently underway to identify a team of existing PCROs and supervisors to trial a daytime rota and examine the impact on demand and quality of service.

The recruitment of 2 dedicated Verint workforce planners has now been completed with the successful applicants commencing employment in February 2021. These staff have an extensive background in business planning and analysis and will become an integral part of how the FCR manages its resources.

Training and Progression

To support succession planning and maintain departmental resilience, the FCR has established a 2-year training and development plan, identifying the critical skills and roles needed across the department. The departmental training plan provides the foundations to inform decision making and ensure resources and skills are maintained to meet demand.

In addition to the redesign of recruitment processes, the initial training for new PCROs has been completely overhauled, moving away from a 10-week independent new starter training course. New recruits are now aligned to their PODs on appointment with identified mentors to improve and smooth the journey into their POD following initial training. Initial training is now also completed on a modular basis with earlier introduction to working within their POD, supported by a cohort of trained and accredited POD mentors. New recruits also now commence their skills attainment journey immediately on appointment with identified target dates to achieve their Call Handling, Facilitating and Dispatch skillsets. To support new

PCROs through the attainment of the three basic FCR skill sets, there is a fully developed FCR skill set training plan, managed through the force Kallidus PDR system. This provides clarity for new recruits and supervisors alike regarding expectations and supports staff to achieve the full range of skills within 18 months, however this remains flexible for staff needing more time. This has been a vast improvement on the previous training regime which has seen new recruits take a number of years to achieve the required skills.

Training programmes and associated sign off and governance have also now been established for the development of staff seeking to become Mentors, Acting Team Leaders, Team Supervisors and POD Managers. Over 40 staff have already commenced working towards ATL skillsets and 10 supervisors are working towards attaining POD Manager skillsets.

The development of clear and transparent training plans for lateral and vertical progression through Contact Management has built on the work completed in the first half of 2020 including:

- Agreement of enhanced pay progression arrangements for PCROs, enabling them to move from LC4 to LC6 within 2yrs service dependent on skills attainment;
- the newly agreed remuneration arrangements for staff undertaking Acting Team Leader roles; and
- the completed JE for all supervisory and management roles within Contact Management.

There now exists clarity and support for all staff to progress their Contact Management careers, increasing staff motivation and expertise, while hopefully reducing the loss of staff to other departments in order to seek professional advancement.

Continuous Improvement

Closely linked to the Training and Development workstream has been the progress achieved in ensuring continuous improvement is embedded into Contact management working practices.

Working in conjunction with Learning and Development, extensive progress has been achieved in developing a range of PDR pathways on the force Kallidus platform, enabling staff to agree their chosen career pathway with supervisors and then document personal progress achieved towards the objective. The PDR pathways are now integral to succession planning and are a prerequisite for attainment of new skill sets as well as application and appointment to new positions within Contact Management.

Feedback from staff on the development of the PDR pathways has been extremely positive. The pathways have provided staff the clarity and transparency they have highlighted in order to achieve their personal and professional aspirations. This is now becoming embedded into how Contact Management ensures we maintain and improve the skills of our staff and more importantly the motivation of staff to commit to a career within Contact Management.

Performance

Working with the Constabulary's analysts, the FCR has developed a comprehensive suite of Power BI products enabling an in-depth analysis at individual, Team, POD

and departmental levels. In order to maximise the benefit of this rich source of data, staff have received training inputs outlining how to use management information to monitor performance at all levels. Contact Management are the biggest users of Power BI dashboards across the Constabulary.

A clear performance regime is now in place within Contact Management to support individuals and teams to identify areas for improvement and recognise outstanding work. The establishment of a formal performance regime across the department ensures accountability from individual to FCR level. The development of new role specific performance measures continues at pace to ensure the FCR improves in terms of both quantifiable metrics and quality of service. For example, the FCR is now in the process of developing performance measures for the specific Supervisor Dispatch function with the objective to promote positive working practices which will reduce unnecessary deployments and increase the speed of deployment to priority incidents.

The continuing development of a robust performance culture within the FCR does not only support high level traditional call handling performance but has been implemented to promote improved performance in other critical areas. These include the management of staffing and abstractions from core FCR functions as well as improving attendance across the department. Resource planning is now tracked down to daily levels, enabling the identification of factors detracting from core FCR roles.

Similarly, attendance management has experienced significant improvements through a supportive but robust attendance management regime, focussing on the wellbeing of staff in order that they are able to contribute effectively to FCR performance. This has resulted in an 18% reduction in repeated absence over the last 12 months.

Staff Engagement

The wellbeing and engagement of staff working within the FCR is of critical importance in delivering an efficient, high quality service. To this end, extensive efforts have been undertaken to engage the staff working in the FCR in the physical design, aesthetics and improved working practices for the new FCR.

While members of the senior leadership team have led the individual workstreams, working groups involving team supervisors and PCROs have been actively involved in the work to identify and design the concepts being developed within the Transformation Plan.

In order to benchmark how FCR staff feel and to identify the blockers they perceive prevent them from providing an exemplary service, a bespoke FCR staff survey has been completed, building on the information received from the force wide staff survey.

In addition, the use of blogs and update videos and development of the Contact Management Sharepoint site have enabled staff engagement with the SLT. Plans are also in place to hold a contact management virtual awards event to highlight the exceptional work of many staff.

Digital Transformation and Innovation

Both the updating of existing systems and exploration of new ones has been central to developing an FCR which is future proofed and embraces the opportunities provided by emerging digital technologies.

To this end, the digital workstream is now finalising a 2-year Contact Management Technology Programme plan, supported by James Harvard consultants, setting out 25 programmes of work. Many of these workstreams are already in the final stages of being realised while some will come to fruition over the next 12 to 18 months. This will include the continuous refinement of existing technology such as Smart Storm, the Integrated Command and Control System and the delivery of Centricity.

New technologies will also be introduced, including a webchat function, EBIT and Voice Analytics, while national IT developments will continue to be factored into local systems, including NLEDs and Single Online Home.

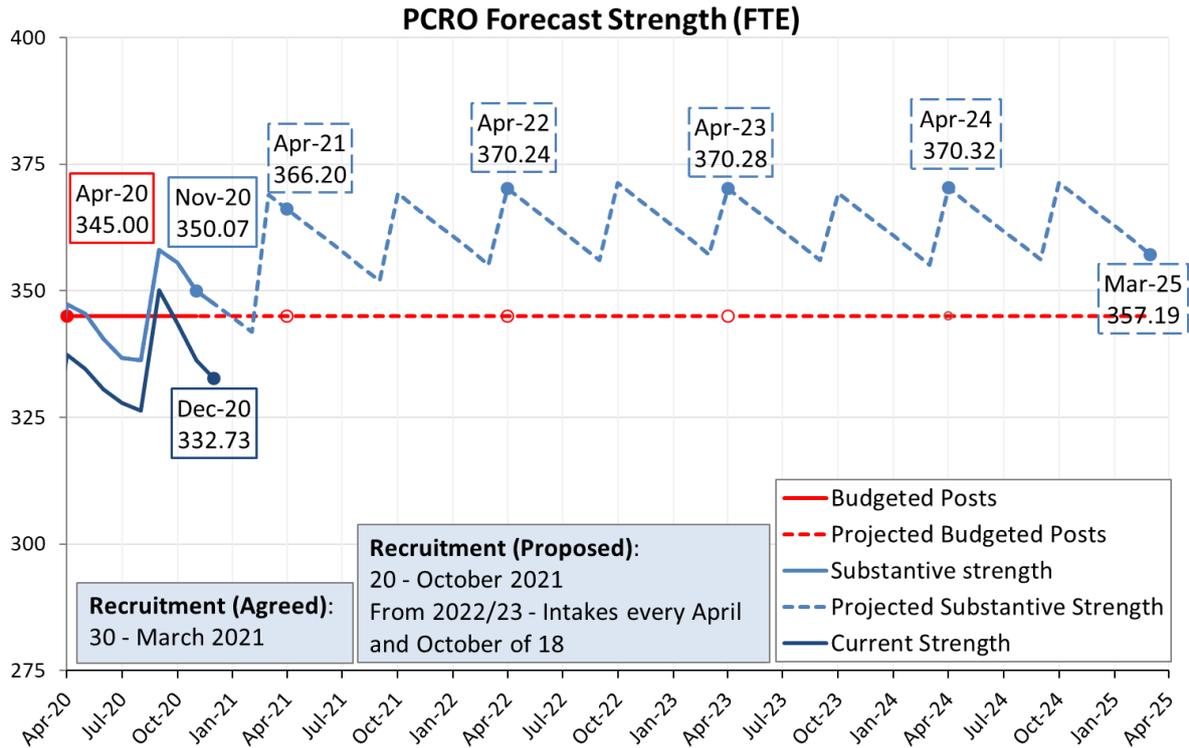
The FCR Digital Team was recruited in December and has now gone live managing online demand and live time social media communication with our communities. Not only does this release PCRO staff to focus on their core call handling role, it also enables the development and implementation of new digital opportunities which will be driven through the FCR Digital Plan.

Force Control Room Staffing

The FCR continues to plan regular recruitment of PCROs in order to maintain the establishment of 345 budgeted posts. Through the first half of 2020 staff attrition rates continued to track at a rate of 4 PCROs per month, (with most departing to take up police officer roles). During this quarter, there has been a noticeable reduction in leavers, partially due to a slowing of regional police officer recruitment and more notably due to a scarcity of alternative employment opportunities during the pandemic.

As detailed above, the recruitment process for PCROs has been extensively reviewed and improved, as has initial PCRO training, however it has not yet been possible to move away from large intakes to a more manageable, regular recruitment of smaller cohorts.

The next intake of 30 PCROs is planned for March 2021 with a further intake planned for October. As detailed in the chart below, the March intake may take PCRO numbers over the 345 establishment for a short period, however this will be resolved by anticipated leavers, particularly retirements, and the substantive promotion of 8 temporary FCR supervisors.



The actual number of staff currently available for operational deployment within the FCR PODs is 327, against the substantive strength of 345. The difference is made up of staff having to socially isolate due to Covid19, maternity leave and sickness.

Absences between October and December due to positive COVID-19 tests or isolation were as follows:

Oct – 2,108 hrs
 Nov – 3,089 hrs
 Dec – 1,223 hrs

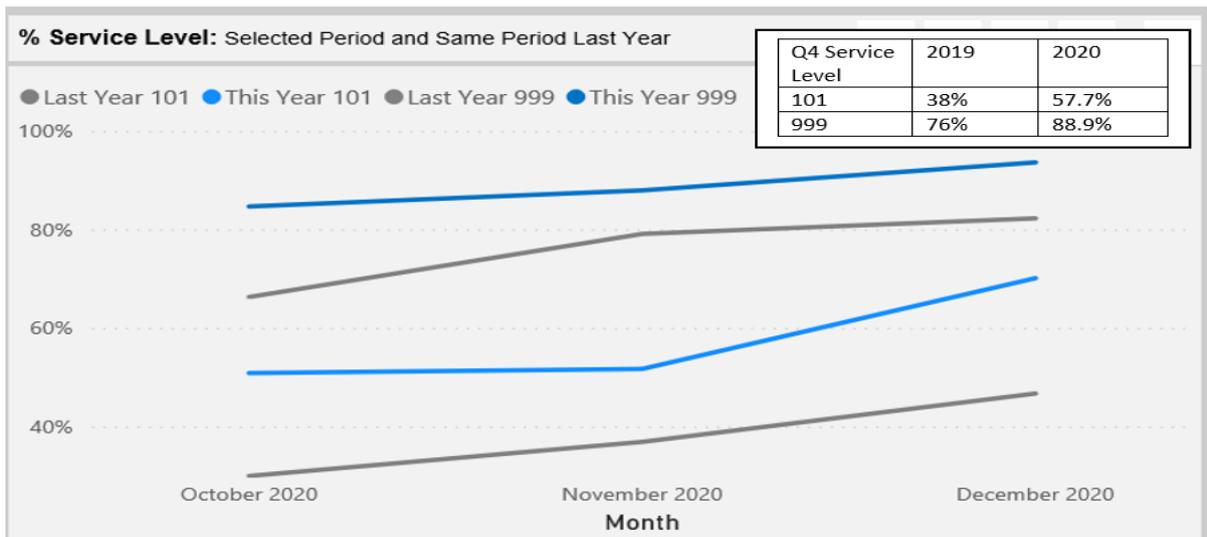
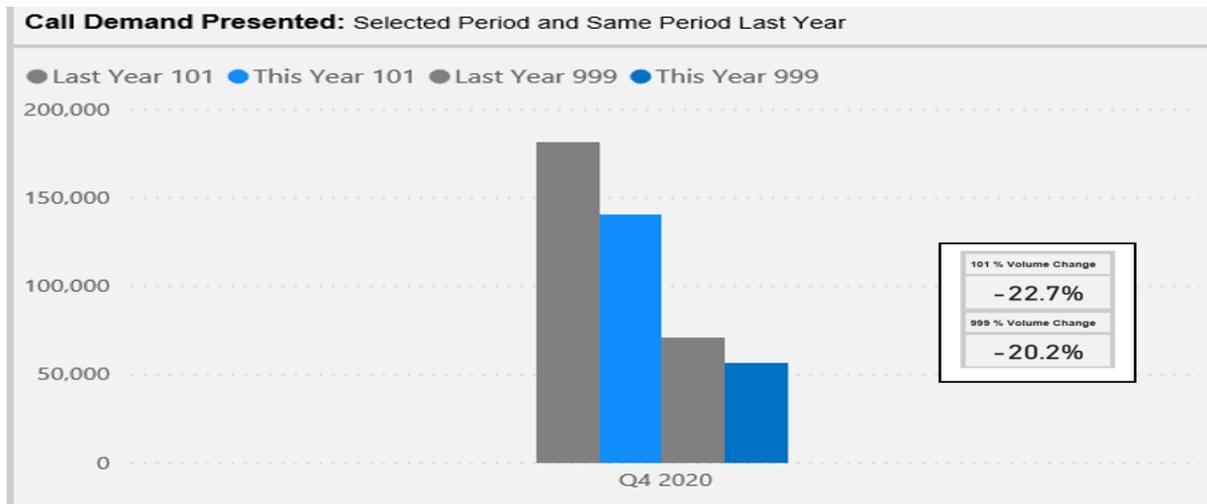
As detailed above, attendance in the FCR has shown marked improvement following the introduction of improved attendance management practices and relevant training for supervisors. The use of Actionable Support Plans has increased by 66% over 12 months despite a 70% reduction in the number of staff being absent on 4 or more occasions. This is mirrored in the use of Unacceptable Repeated Absence Procedures (URAP) with 20 cases going to URAP in 2020 compared to only 18 URAP cases over the preceding 5 years.

6. Performance

A robust performance culture and governance framework is now developing across Contact management. Quarter three has continued to be challenging due to the impact of Covid19 and consequent loss of staffing hours, coupled with continuing interruptions to service owing to ongoing ICT upgrades and outages. While demand coming into the FCR has reduced by

20% this is offset by staffing abstractions. Despite this challenging environment, the FCR PODs have delivered excellent performance levels, with significant improvements against both the previous quarter and the same quarter last year.

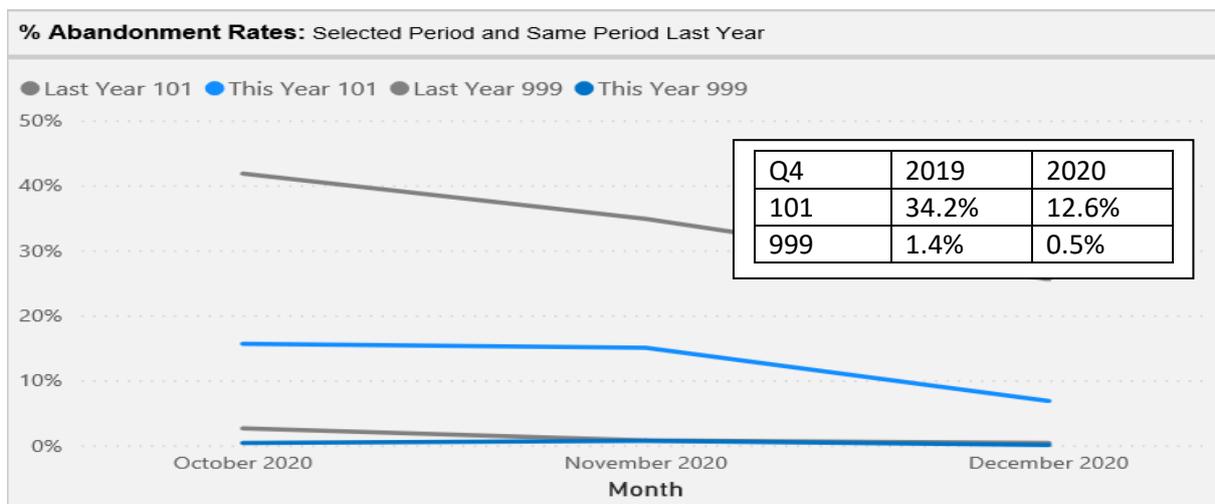
101 service level has increased to 57.7% and 999 service level to 88.9% when compared with the same quarter last year. This increasing trajectory has continued into January 2021 with service levels currently standing at 72.7% and 91.5% respectively.



The average time to answer calls across the FCR during Q4 has shown a 53% reduction for 999s at 4.9 seconds and a 67% reduction for 101s at 71 seconds (compared with the same period 12 months ago) as shown below.

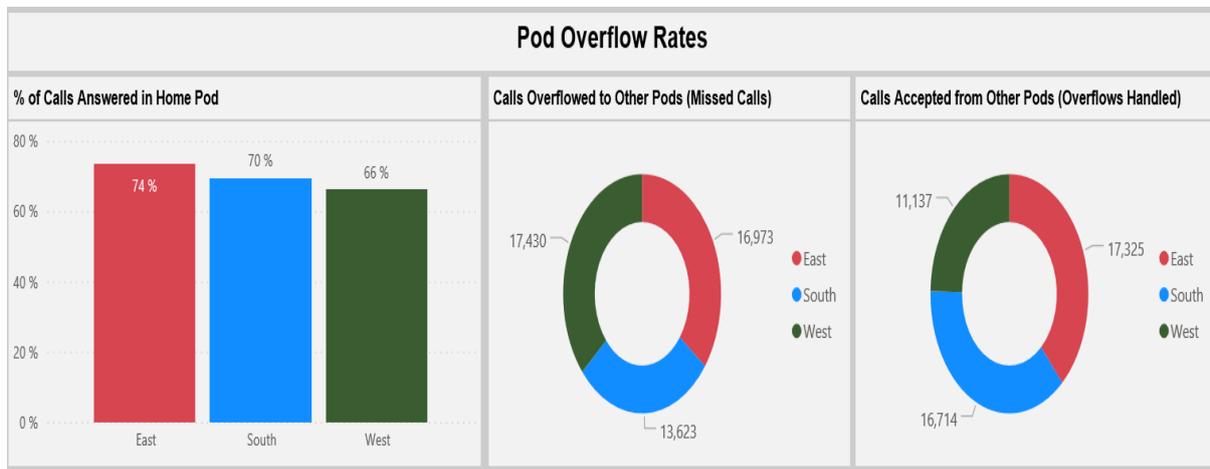
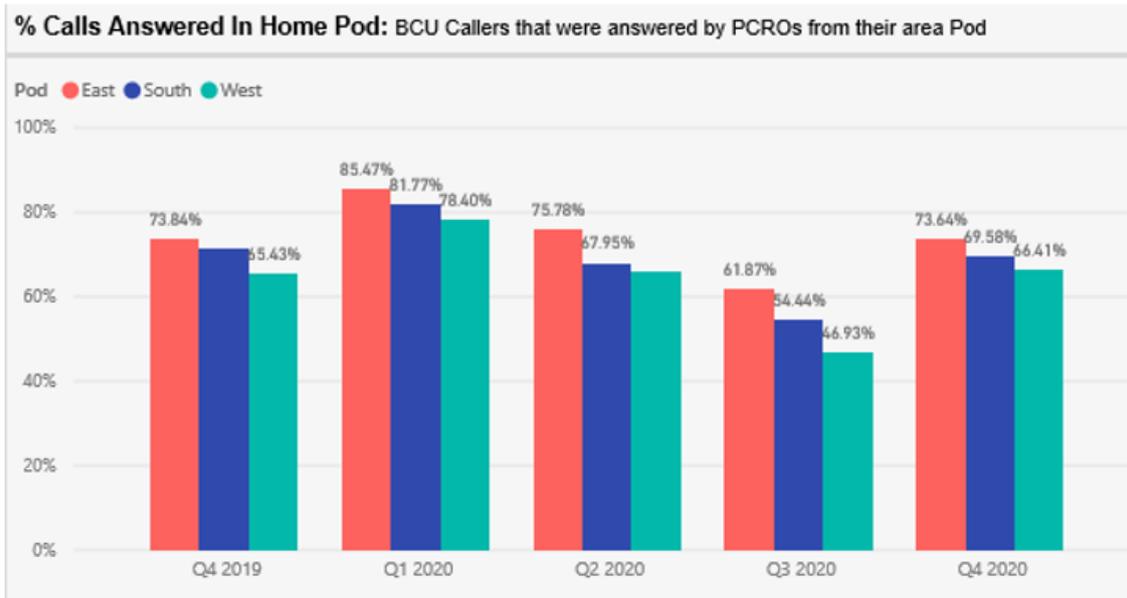
Measure	2019	2020	% Change
999 Time to Answer - Oct	13.17	6.01	-54.3%
999 Time to Answer - Nov	8.87	4.71	-46.8%
999 Time to Answer - Dec	7.51	3.21	-57.2%
999 Time to Answer – Q4 Overall	9.97	4.69	-52.9%
101 Time to Answer - Oct	283.69	89.15	-68.5%
101 Time to Answer - Nov	218.73	87.94	-59.7%
101 Time to Answer - Dec	141.11	34.96	-75.2%
101 Time to Answer – Q4 Overall	214.70	70.86	-66.9%

Corresponding abandonment rates also show significant improvements with 101 and 999 abandonment rates reduced to 12.6% and 0.5% respectively.



The establishment of POD working, aligned to the three territorial BCUs, is designed to increase the quality of service through improved local knowledge and relationships. Originally the trip over time (the amount of time a call is allowed to ring in its own geographic POD prior to be offered to be answered in the other PODs by the next available operator) was set at 7 minutes, as the evidence base suggested that this was the amount of time a caller would wait before abandoning the call. More recently, the trip over time has been reduced, initially to 3 minutes and currently it stands at 20 seconds. This decision was ratified by the Constabulary Operations Board, chaired by ACC Lawson, subject to regular review, and was taken due to the present instability in demand and staffing levels due to the impact of Covid19, with the objective of prioritising quality of service during the pandemic. The trip over time is kept under regular review and will be increased when demand and staffing become more stable.

Throughout 2020 the proportion of calls being answered in their home POD had steadily increased as can be seen in the table below.



The delivery of good performance is affected by the stability of ICT services in the FCR and while the day to day stability has improved, there continue to be regular occurrences when system faults impact on the ability of call handlers to provide their usual high level service. During Q4, ICT factors have impacted on 29 separate days, October 10, November 12 and December 7. Of these 10 outages were related to the ICCS, 8 to Storm, 3 to Telephony and 3 to Verint issues. The duration of ICT issues can vary greatly from a matter of minutes to a full day.

The vast majority of fallback procedures are planned in advance to facilitate essential upgrades or maintenance, enabling pre-planning to reduce the impact on service provision. In instances where fallback is necessary but unplanned, the impact on performance is often very significant but usually short lived. For example, on the 7th December following problems with the ICCS, the FCR was put into fallback at 9am. In one hour, 101 service levels dropped from 62% to 29% and by midday they were back up to 60%, however fluctuations continued throughout the day until the fault was rectified at 5pm.

The FCR continues to receive outstanding support from the force ICT department to rectify these faults and reduce such outages, holding external system suppliers, (who are largely

responsible), to account. Work is underway to reduce the number and impact of ICT outages on FCR performance.

7. Online Demand

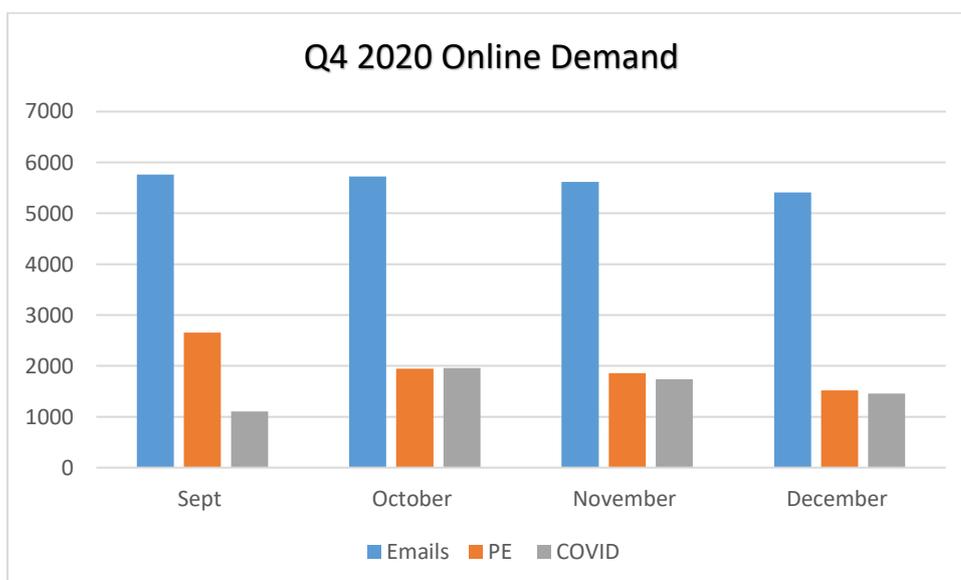
The public of Lancashire is able to contact the Constabulary to report an incident or submit an enquiry via various online services, which are available via our website as below:

- Contact an officer form
- General enquiry email
- Accessing the Public Engagement portal.

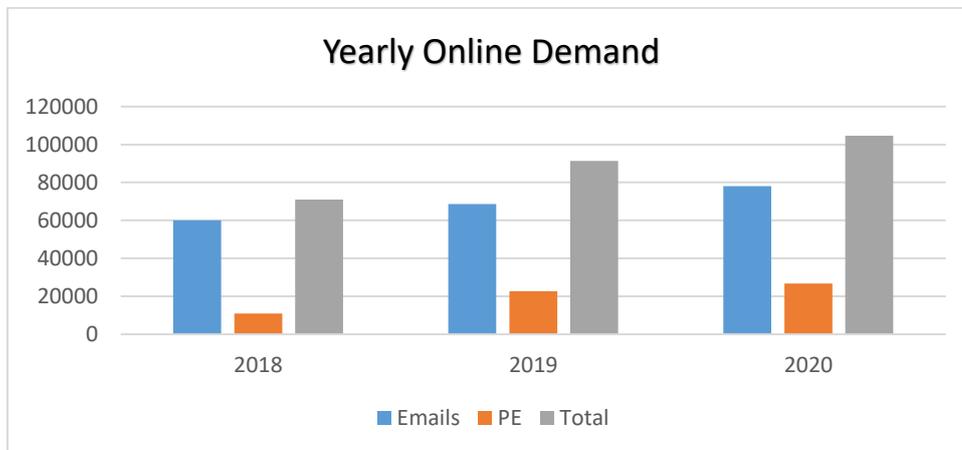
In conjunction with our current online reporting options, and in response to the pandemic, a specific form was developed for the reporting of COVID-19 regulations breaches. This singular reporting function ensured that such reports could be prioritised appropriately.

The use of the online COVID Reporting form was quickly adopted by the public with 4728 online reports received during the height of the first lockdown. This number reduced during Q2 2020 as lockdown restrictions (to 2546), however reports are now increasing again following increased COVID tensions and renewed restrictions. As a result of this, during Q4 the FCR joined the national platform for COVID reporting that was available via the Single Online Home solution.

Overall the levels of digital demand have been rising steadily, mirroring the national trend. Online demand in Q1 2020 remained largely static at just over 30,000 digital contacts for the quarter. However, it is predicted to continue rising for the foreseeable future, with monthly online demand having doubled over the last 12 months.



Current forecasts indicate increasing online demand based on current available digital means of contact. This is reflected below in the yearly figures.



As the FCR's online digital footprint grows and further avenues of reporting are introduced (Twitter/Facebook/WEBChat) then online demand is expected to continue to increase.

A number of workstreams have reviewed the online reporting functions within the force and have established that they do not replace or move demand from the 101 service. Instead, they create additional demand in the FCR. This is no different for other forces who have also introduced online reporting facilities and report the same finding.

The FCR has continued to manage the online reporting functions from within its existing staffing model. This initially saw PCROs removed them from their core role but was not a sustainable position. Following the submission of a detailed business case it was agreed to establish a dedicated Digital Team within the FCR which went live on the 18th January 2021. The team consists of one supervisor and 18 Digital Engagement Operators. Their core role and functions have been designed to manage existing demand and allow the FCR to explore further online opportunities such as Facebook/twitter/WEB chat.

The team received bespoke training and provide a dedicated digital first point of contact for anyone wanting to report an incident, or raise an enquiry using online services. The team now cover shifts over a 24-hour period and work in line with current Contact Management PCRO rotas.

The objective of the Digital Team is to provide a dedicated first point of contact for anyone wishing to report an incident or an enquiry to Lancashire Police via a digital channel. Whilst we are able to predict their workload based on the volumes of current contact via online methods, we are expecting to see an increase in contacts following planned media campaigns, and with the introduction of Twitter and Facebook interaction. The team will provide out of hours support to the Constabulary Media and Engagement Team for high profile social media cases as well as posting proactively on social media and providing

replies during live time events of interest to the public.

The development of digital functionality within the FCR will support:

- The national roll out of the Single Online Home (SOH) police website, which the Constabulary is expecting to adopt during 2021;
- The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Policing Vision 2025, advocating increased digital policing capability and capacity;
- The adoption of mandatory European Union legislation requiring police forces to accommodate the ability for members of the public to report emergency incidents via digital channels.

8. FCR key ICT work streams update

As has been described, the FCR successfully decanted into the 3 locations of Preston, Burnley and the upper level in site B, HQ and is now making preparations for the return to a single FCR with improved, stable ICT functionality. As planned, all of the Control rooms have successfully transitioned to Windows 10, USB functionality and SMARTSTORM.

As the FCR prepares to return to the single, upgraded room, there are still a number of ongoing ICT work streams. These are vital to ensuring that the FCR's ICT is stable and up-to-date, and that Contact Management is supported to deliver further digital innovation. Moving forwards into 2021/22, further digital opportunities in the FCR will be explored in line with the department's Digital Plan.

The current significant ICT projects on-going in the FCR at this time are:

STORM Upgrade to SMARTStorm

The FCR Command and Control system that has been in use since 2008, has now been replaced by the upgraded version SMART Storm. Whilst work had been ongoing in the background with regards to the replacement of the system itself, it was identified that as part of the POD project there would be an opportunity for the FCR to move to the upgraded version. The rationale behind the early change was due to the fact that the supplier of the command and control system advised that they would no longer be supporting any technical changes to the STORM system, (in preparation for the move to SMART Storm).

In addition to this, there were multiple benefits and opportunities identified that supported the FCR moving to SMART Storm. These included the "critical markers" function which would enable additional safeguarding options and ensure that information was presented in a streamlined format.

As the FCR transitioned from STORM to SMART Storm, a number of issues with SMART Storm were identified, which presented challenges. A large majority of the technical issues that were identified have now been resolved. Work still continues within the FCR systems team/ ICT department and STERIA to ensure that the system is performing as desired/expected, and the benefits of the system continue to be explored. This is captured within the departmental Digital Plan.

Capita ICCS (Integrated Command and Control System) upgrade

The full upgrade of the ICCS continues to be a major project for the FCR. The delivery of the upgrade is a significant piece of work and has been resource and time intensive. Throughout the project timeline there have been a number of challenging technical issues which resulted in the delay of implementing the upgrade. However, a large majority of these have now been resolved, and it is anticipated that one of the key final stages of the upgrade will commence Q1/Q2 2021.

The main benefits for the FCR and the public of Lancashire will be:

- Implementation of Interactive Voice Response (IVR). This allows 101 callers to know their place in the queue and estimated wait time.
- 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 fall-back arrangements.
- The upgraded ICCS will allow the Constabulary to meet its national obligations around control room readiness for the transition from Airwave to the Emergency Services Network (ESN). This is scheduled to take place in the coming years. (No date for the Lancs transition is available as yet).

Emergency Service Network. (ESN) ports replacement.

As part of the national ESN project, Lancashire have been working with the project team to upgrade the airwave ports from an old, out of date platform, to a new enhanced more stable platform. The ports are available within our ICCS system and control the way the transmissions are received into the control room, as well as the way the control room transmissions are communicated to operational officers.

The first phase of the ports replacement was completed in Q4 2020 and the second stage is scheduled to complete in Q2 2021.

National Enabling Program (NEP)

The Constabulary signed up to the NEP, and in Q1 2021, the PODs will return to the main FCR site on the NEP platform. This will enable the move to Office 365 and exploration of the opportunities this brings around multi agency information sharing and home working. Initial trials were conducted during Q1 2020 in the first wave of the Covid pandemic and their findings will inform further development.