

For public release

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (PCC) FOR LINCOLNSHIRE
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

REF: 24/2022

DATE: 24 November 2022

SUBJECT	
REPORT BY	CHIEF CONSTABLE
CONTACT OFFICER	Supt Nic Templeman, Head of Force Control Room Nicola.templeman@lincs.police.uk
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND PURPOSE OF REPORT	
	The purpose of this report is to confirm approval to raise the establishment of the Call Takers within the Force Control Room (FCR) from 60 FTE to 75 FTE.
RECOMMENDATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To approve the increase in the Call Taker establishment within the Force Control Room to 75 FTE.2. That approval is given to the proposed changes to the Revenue Budget for 2022/23 as summarised in paragraph 3.2.

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LINCOLNSHIRE

I hereby approve the recommendation above, having considered the content of this report.



Date: 24 November 2022

Signature: _____

A. NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE PCC

A1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Force Control Room (FCR) is the first point of contact when members of the public call for assistance or to access services. The FCR is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is the beating heart of the force.
- 1.2 The FCR is responsible for every police deployment in the county. It is the first point of operational command for all major incidents including those involving firearms. The FCR is responsible for ensuring that all incidents are appropriately resourced which may include the use of specialist resources.
- 1.3 Operational Inspectors and Supervisors lead teams of frontline support staff on a shift basis. Staff work 12 hour shifts on a four on/four off rotating shift pattern and teams consist of call takers and controllers.

- 1.4 The Call Takers within the FCR deal with all incoming 101 and 999 calls. 101 calls are triaged by Switchboard 8am - 8pm Monday to Sunday, outside of these times all 101 calls come directly to the Call Takers. They use the threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability, and engagement (THRIVE) model to assess the grading of the job and then will create or update incidents with all relevant details including offers of general advice.
- 1.5 The Call Takers have key performance indicators around the timeliness of the calls being answered, the 999 performance measures are a National Standard, 90% of calls to be answered within 10 seconds, with a 2% abandonment rate.
- 1.6 There are no national performance measures in terms of the timeliness of 101 calls, however the force has set some new measures for July 2022 onwards of 65% answered in 3 minutes and 99% in 10 minutes. These have been adjusted at the end of the G4S contract to represent the change in demand within the FCR and to be more in line with other forces. It is worthy of mention that the previous measures for 101 calls were not achieved since February 2021, as the priority is always placed on the 999 emergency calls.
- 1.7 The Call Takers also have key performance indicators around the percentage of incidents which are recorded in accordance with the National Standard of Incident Recording guidance, as well as the correct closure codes and qualifiers. There are also performance indicators around the proportion of customers who are satisfied (or better) from the "*Phoning the police customer satisfaction survey*".
- 1.8 Nationally, force control rooms are all struggling to meet the demand and regionally, we are working together to identify best practice to improve our performance. It is well documented that emergency demand has been increased by circa 10% year on year, whilst non-emergency demand has been reducing by 2 – 3% year on year.
- 1.9 As mentioned above, the demand is increasing and is now more complex, which has therefore increased the average call length and processing times for both 999 and 101 calls. For example, the average call length for 999 calls in January 2019 was 4 mins and 5 secs compared to in September 2021 being 5 mins and 52 secs. The processing times post call have also increased from 1 min 35 secs to 2 mins 11 secs during the same period. The same is also present in the 101 calls showing an increase in call length from 8 mins 41 secs to 13 mins 37 secs and processing times of 3 mins 45 secs to 6 mins 12 secs.
- 1.10 This illustrates that the increase in 999 calls and the time taken to deal effectively with the calls is now taking considerably longer than in 2019 and even though there has been a slight decrease in 101 call volumes, this is negated by the increase in time required to deal.
- 1.11 The current 2022/23 budget for FCR call takers has been based on the number of call takers in the FCR in January 2022, which was 60.66 FTE. The number of call takers required is considerably higher than this and over the last year has fluctuated from the current 56.5 FTE to 72 FTE. The reduction in numbers since the start of the year has been due to 6 call takers leaving to join the force recruitment for police officers and 4 transitioning to the controller position within the FCR.
- 1.12 Due to the increased demand and the reduced performance on the 101 calls, the force has reviewed the staffing levels of call takers. In early 2020, G4S, who previously managed the FCR performance on behalf of the force, instructed a consultant to provide guidance on the appropriate number of call takers required at that time.

- 1.13 The results were shared with the force. This was reviewed again recently where two options were considered by the force Chief Officer Team. One of the options recommended an increase in call taker numbers to 104 and the second, an increase in establishment to 75 call takers. The second option was supported by the force Chief Officer Team.
- 1.14 This paper is seeking approval to raise the establishment of call takers to 75 FTE. There are plans in place to reach and maintain this level as a minimum through the four recruitment phases that are planned annually.
- 1.15 The uplift to 75 call takers is considered as the minimal option as this provides a utilization rate of 87%, allowing minimal time for refreshment breaks, continued professional development and line management 1:1's/reviews) etc. Many forces operate around 70-75% to allow extra time away from answering and dealing with calls for service.
- 1.16 This uplift to stabilize the situation following the transfer back from G4s is also considered as an immediate first step in 'right-sizing' the Force Control Room to ensure appropriate resources are available to meet demand from the public. More evidence will be gathered from the FCR performance in order to shape a way forward on the sustainable level of resource required for future consideration and decision.
- 1.17 Answering the public's calls for help is hugely important. To keep people safe, it is essential that the police service deals with contact from the public effectively. People generally contact the police when they are in crisis, when they need help or when they are vulnerable.
- 1.18 The way the public expects and needs the police service to handle their calls for service is changing. Improvements in policing and technology are encouraging the service to be more ambitious in what it achieves at the first point of contact. While it faces these challenges to the way it manages contact, the police service is also working with challenging budgets.
- 1.19 Lincolnshire Police must provide a suitably staffed control room who are appropriately trained to perform and fulfill the function and who can manage and deal effectively with incoming demand to provide a quality service to the communities of Lincolnshire and to build trust and confidence in the police.

FCR Overtime

- 1.20 A cost pressure in respect to FCR overtime was omitted during the 2022/23 budget setting exercise. It is proposed that an additional £66k is allocated from the Recurrent Funding Requirements budget to Central Operations – FCR to increase the overtime budget in 2022/23 from £54K to £120K.

A2. LINKS TO POLICE AND CRIME PLAN AND PCC'S STRATEGIES/PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The increase in the number of call takers within the FCR will assist the force in meeting the key principles within the Police and Crime Plan:
- Community safety and prevention in partnership

- Listening, responding and being accountable
 - Protecting and supporting victims and the vulnerable
 - Policing that works
- 2.2 The performance of the FCR is an indicator as to how good the force is responding to the public as well as its service for victims of crime, through managing incoming calls, assessing risk and prioritising the police response as well as deploying resources to respond to victims and incidents in an appropriate manner. All these elements are assessed by the HMICFRS as part of the PEEL Assessment Framework.

B. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are four planned recruitment phases throughout the year which are set around training availability. Due to this, it may take a number of months to reach the 75 FTE number. It is proposed that £334k is allocated from the Recurrent Funding Requirements budget to the Police Staff Pay budget in 2022/23 to increase the establishment to 75 FTEs. This amount reflects the estimated incremental growth in 2022/23, with a recurrent annual revenue cost of £454k in future years.

The following table summarises the proposed 2022/23 revenue adjustments:

Transfer from Budget	Amount £000	Transfer To Budget
Recurrent Funding Requirements	334.0	Police Staff Pay
Recurrent Funding Requirements	66.0	Central Operations – FCR

C. LEGAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

[This should include the legal powers the PCC has for making the decision]

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (“the Act”) makes provision for the governance and administration of police forces. The Act charges the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire with securing the maintenance, efficiency, and effectiveness of Lincolnshire Police.

The Scheme of Arrangements and Financial Regulations require changes to the Revenue Budget to be approved by the PCC having consulted with the PCC’s CFO.

D. PERSONNEL AND EQUALITIES ISSUES

[This should include a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment, if required]

Usual employment contractual considerations will apply.

E. REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

The recommended roles will be managed in accordance with Police Staff policies and procedures which include performance management.

F. RISK MANAGEMENT

This will be managed in accordance with existing Force policies and procedures.

G. PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Information in this form along with any supporting material is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the PCC's website within one working day of approval. However, if release by that date would compromise the implementation of the decision being approved, publication may be deferred. An explanation for any deferment must be provided below, together with a date for publication.

Is the publication of this form to be deferred? No

If Yes, for what reason: N/A

Until what date: N/A

Any facts/advice/recommendations that should not be made automatically available on request should not be included in Part 1 but instead on the separate part 2 form.

Is there a part 2 form? No

If Yes, for what reason:

DECLARATIONS

	Initial to confirm
Originating Officer: The Head of the Force Control Room recommends this proposal for the reasons outlined above	NJT
The CC's Chief Finance Officer has been consulted on this proposal	SC
The Chief Constable has been consulted on this proposal	CH
The PCC's Chief Finance Officer has been consulted on this proposal	JF

The PCC's Monitoring Officer has been consulted on this proposal

MB

OFFICER APPROVAL

Chief Executive

I have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that financial, legal and equalities advice has been taken into account in the preparation of this report. Consultation outlined above has also taken place. I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire.

Signature:



Date: 22 November 2022