

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP  
Home Secretary  
2 Marsham Street  
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28 July 2020

Dear Home Secretary

**HMICFRS - PEEL spotlight report: Police contact management through call handling and control rooms in 2018/19**

In line with my statutory responsibilities as Police and Crime Commissioner and following consultation with the Chief Constable, I am pleased to provide the following response to the HMICFRS and the Secretary of State for the Home Office in respect of the above report by HMICFRS which was published on 9 July 2020.

The Chief Constable and I welcome the report and support the conclusions that control rooms are hampered by inconsistent management systems and are often taking calls which are neither emergencies nor routine police work, and which would be better dealt with by other agencies. We also agree that this added demand can also result in calls from vulnerable people going unanswered or assessed.

We note HMICFRS' finding that a more consistent approach should be adopted to help forces to better meet this demand and as PCC, I agree that there should be more national consistency in this space.

We also agree with the need to agree a standard for how quickly forces must respond to 999 calls so the public can expect to receive a consistent service, regardless of where they live.

We agree the next steps listed in the report will assist towards better contact management and look forward to the progress being assessed as part of their PEEL inspections 2020/21.

In particular we agree the points about risk assessment and safeguarding to ensure the best response to the vulnerable. The importance of training, supervision and support for control room staff, including terms and conditions and career development, investment in technology and involvement in Single Online Home and social media are all topics that have been discussed at our recent meetings of our Customer Service Improvement Panel, which provides independent scrutiny on my behalf of the service provided to the public by the Force.

The Office of the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner

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### Dorset Police Specific Actions

The following summarises the plans of Dorset Police for its Contact Management going forward:

Our Head of Contact Management, Supt Jared Parkin, is soon to discuss these findings with the HMICFRS lead and explore how Dorset Police can support the national and local picture to influence and implement change.

Supt Parkin is in wholehearted agreement on the need to draw definitive guidelines around national call handling statistics, not only in 999 but also in non-emergency contact (not just 101 but the other digital channels too).


On behalf of Dorset Police, Supt Parkin also agrees with the findings that contact with the police is becoming increasingly complex. This requires a change in the way that policing operates and delivers training to its Contact Management teams.

We feel that Dorset Police is in a strong position with regard to the report's findings and observations around resolution without deployment. Dorset Police continues to improve the support they provide to Contact Management staff, offering a range of services including welfare support following traumatic exposure to incidents, and investment in training.

Supt Parkin confirms that he welcomes the observations of the HMICFRS and will be implementing further improvements within the department.

This response will be published on the OPCC website.

Yours sincerely



Martyn Underhill  
Police and Crime Commissioner