

WILTSHIRE CONSTABULARY
BEST VALUE UNIT



FUNDAMENTAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT

Managing Demand Through Improved
Service Delivery

December 2001

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 1999 requires best value authorities, including police authorities, to secure continuous improvement in the way in which they exercise their functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In order to achieve this improvement they are required to conduct best value reviews of all their functions by 31st March 2005.
- 1.2 The required content of best value reviews is outlined by statutory instrument, and Government guidance sets out the approach to reviews. This has become known as ‘the four Cs’, namely to:
- challenge whether each service is needed and/or could be better delivered in some other way;
 - compare performance and processes with those of other organisations to determine best practice;
 - consult with a range of interested parties/stakeholders on their experience and needs relating to the provision of the service; and
 - compete with other providers or potential providers of the service to test whether it could be delivered more effectively through another source.
- 1.3 In Wiltshire, a corporate review of the Force was undertaken prior to implementation of the Act. A five year programme of service reviews was developed, structures and reporting arrangements were put in place and additional staff were recruited to carry out the review work. Amendments to the programme, structures and review methodology have been made in the light of experience. Currently it is agreed that reviews will be carried out in accordance with a six stage methodology, although adherence to this model should not become rigid.
- 1.4 The functions reviewed in this report were originally scheduled for review later in the five year programme. However, in recognition of concerns within the Force about the way in which we meet operational demands, it was decided to suspend the existing review programme and to bring this work forward.
- 1.5 A centrally based Best Value Unit forms the basis of each review team, but for each individual review a Police Authority Liaison Officer (PALO) and at least one manager from the area under review is added to the team. The review team in this case consisted of: Chief Inspector Roger Warner (Best Value Manager), Karen Boyer (Benchmarking & Research Officer), Darren Skidmore (Consultation Officer), Frances Threadingham (Consultation Assistant), Dawn Young (Accountant), Jerry Howson (Business Benefits Evaluator), Matthew Slee (Review Officer) and Mrs M. Sitaram (PALO). A number of senior officers contributed to the review, in particular Chief Superintendents Abbott and Stayt, Chief Inspector Williams and Inspect Mason. Progress of the review has been monitored by the Operational Strategy Group.
- 1.6 The cost of conducting this review was £12,710.35. This figure was arrived at by calculating the hourly rate of individual members of the review team and applying it to the number of hours they devoted to the review. It does not include time spent on general best value issues, the time of people who were interviewed or consulted, or office costs. Terms of reference for this review are shown at Appendix A.
- 1.7 Previous best value reviews have set out the principal options for change, giving the advantages and disadvantages of each option. In this case the review team has been asked to make firm proposals for improvement. Where the review team believes the case for improvement is clear, this appears in the main section of the report (Chapter 7) as a ‘Recommendation’. Where a course of action is considered but insufficient evidence is available to make a firm recommendation, this is offered as a ‘Suggestion’. A list of recommendations and suggestions is included at Appendix B.

1.8 The review team is grateful to those who have contributed to this review by providing information and views on the subject.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Prior to 1995 the Force operated with a control room in each of the three divisions and one at Headquarters. In 1995 the divisional control rooms at Chippenham and Salisbury were closed, and the Headquarters control room took over their functions. Although it was recognised that this move might result in some loss of local knowledge amongst control room operators as they became more remote from operational staff, the potential advantages in terms of increased flexibility, consistency and efficiency were considerable.
- 2.2 The divisional control room at Swindon was not part of this amalgamation, but in recognition of the advantages to be gained by pooling resources, Westlea will close next year when the Force moves to a new joint services control room. The room will be retained as a fall back facility and a training venue for staff.
- 2.3 Staffing of control rooms consists of a police/support staff mix, with the proportion of police officers having declined over the years. The gradual growth in support staff numbers has resulted in a staff profile that is reasonably well balanced in terms of expertise and experience.
- 2.4 Following introduction of help desks on a limited trial basis, the Force moved in April 2001 to a centrally based Public Service Desk (PSD) located at Headquarters. The case for the PSD was driven by former Chief Superintendent Mackey. The intended benefits included improved call handling, reduced tasking of operational officers, a reduced burden on the control rooms and, with future developments in mind, provision of a front end portal for dealing with e mail/internet enquiries. It was recognised that the PSD could not be an overnight success, but that it should be regarded as a two year project.
- 2.5 Prior to April 2001 each of the divisions provided a Crime Desk, the principal function of which was to record details of crimes. This was from two sources: hard copy crime reports completed by officers attending scenes; and telephone calls from the public reporting minor crimes which did not require the attendance of an officer. It was recognised that the skills required of PSD and Crime Desk staff were similar. Staff had to be computer literate and be able to deal effectively with the public. This latter requirement included the ability to ask pertinent questions in order to deliver the service.
- 2.6 By way of a pilot, the 'C' Division Crime Desk was incorporated within the PSD in April 2001. This provided additional posts to supplement newly recruited PSD staff, although only one experienced member of staff moved with the post. In November 2001 the 'A' Division Crime desk was also incorporated within the unit and it is intended that 'D' Division will follow in December 2002/January 2003.
- 2.7 Staffing of the PSD/Crime Desks is again a mixture of police and support staff, but with the latter forming the majority. Apart from the Crime Desk posts, the unit was formed from a combination of existing control room administrators' posts, constable posts from the former Swindon helpdesk, and some new posts. In October 2001 the hours of the PSD were increased to provide services between 0700 hours and 0300 hours, 365 days a year. When staffing levels permit the hours will be extended to provide a full 24-hour service.
- 2.8 Co-inciding with the amalgamation of control rooms in 1995, most call handling was centralised at Headquarters under Central Call Handling (CCH). Support staff now provide this service from 07.00 hrs to midnight, when calls are switched through to the PSD. Between the hours of 03.00 and 07.00 calls go direct to the Control Room (CR).
- 2.9 Most specialist operational response comes from Headquarters based units. These include dog handlers, air support, scenes of crime officers and firearms trained staff. Most of these staff are line managed by Operations Support, which is also responsible for control rooms and call handling. However, the bulk of the Force's operational response comes from divisionally based officers.

- 2.10 In recent years attempts have been made to balance the competing demands of responding quickly to emergency calls and working in communities to reduce crime and provide reassurance, often in partnership with other agencies. Divisions have moved at slightly different times to manage this split and their needs have depended on their own local circumstances. However, it is broadly true to say that all divisions have moved or are moving to solutions which are intended to cater for both categories of demand, with a number of officers primarily providing the quick response and others with geographic responsibilities. Both types of work are considered essential, but whilst the latter offers the most effective use of resources to reduce crime in the long term, at any one time it is the former which is more urgent. It has therefore become common for officers to be reassigned to response duties from geographic or community roles, which have suffered as a consequence.
- 2.11 The Force has embarked on a number of projects, some primarily of a local nature and others national, which will have a major impact on working practices and service delivery in the medium term. As well as the joint control room already referred to, the national Airwave project, the installation of Teamphone and, perhaps most of all, the e policing project will have a significant impact. A little further into the future, Government proposals for a single non emergency number for the police and employment of community wardens will bring further change. Many of these projects are already being actively managed. However, the purpose of this report is to identify improvements which can be made immediately, and consequently these longer term solutions did not form part of the review.
- 2.12 The wide ranging HMIC thematic ‘Open all Hours’ was published shortly before completion of this review. Many of the issues addressed in that report form part of the review team’s terms of reference. Frequent reference is therefore made to the thematic and its recommendations.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The agreed standard methodology for best value reviews requires an EFQM based quality assessment of the service area at the beginning of each review. This assessment is then used to prioritise areas for more detailed consideration. In the case of this review the main issues had already been identified by managers and staff, and terms of reference were drafted accordingly. A formal EFQM assessment was not therefore undertaken but, in order to ensure that important areas were not omitted, reference was made to the HMI inspection protocols for Patrol and Call Management. Areas for potential improvement were identified from the protocols by the review team, in conjunction with operational managers.

Challenge

- 3.2 Under the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act police authorities are required to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force. In carrying out their responsibilities, chief constables are required to have regard to the Authority's policing plan.
- 3.3 The purpose of the service under review is to provide a first response to members of the public when they call the police. That first response may consist of routing their call to the correct person, answering an enquiry, arranging future action by the police, or deploying staff to an incident immediately. The full cost of providing this service would be difficult to quantify, even with advanced activity based costing, but the cost of providing staff to manage the calls currently amounts to just over £3.6 million.
- 3.4 This service is possibly the most fundamental of all those provided by the police. There are reasons, from public surveys, to believe that aspects of the service should be provided to a higher quality level than at present. There may be scope for the police to cease providing some parts of the service, but these represent a small proportion of the total.
- 3.5 Scope for provision of the service by another supplier are limited, although the review does consider the possibility of other agencies taking on some small specific areas of business currently undertaken by the police. Much of the call management function requires a good understanding of operational policing. Some specific functions, such as initial call handling, could be provided by another supplier, but this would reduce scope for multi skilling and flexible use of staff. This possibility has not therefore been explored in detail.

Compare

- 3.6 A number of criteria were employed to identify benchmarking partners. Some forces had recently completed similar reviews and supplied information, the most detailed coming from Devon and Cornwall and Staffordshire. Performance was also examined. Of the 24 forces operating with target times of 10 seconds or less for answering 999 calls, this Force is currently ranked 14th. Benchmarking was considered against better performing forces, in the first instance only if they also performed better under the 999 public satisfaction criteria. The Force's current performance is 16th out of 41 for which results have been published. Dyfed-Powys, Norfolk and North Wales performed better under both criteria and of those the first two provided information.
- 3.7 Other forces were contacted on the basis of existing knowledge from previous benchmarking contact. As a result, staff visited Devon and Cornwall and Staffordshire during this review.
- 3.8 Some commercial sector benchmarking had already been undertaken by Inspector Hookings, but there is some reluctance on the part of companies to share information which might be of use to rival organisations. The RAC were willing to arrange a visit and share information, but could not do so within the time available.

Consult

3.9 A stakeholder analysis was carried out at the beginning of the review. The principal stakeholders identified were the general public, operational staff, call management staff and senior managers. Consultation during the course of the review was approached as follows:

- Public consultation was through the People's Voice panel of volunteers. Only the results from the Swindon panel were available in time for inclusion in this report. This was not considered a serious limitation for most purposes as incoming calls from all parts of the Force are handled by CCH. However, results from the Wiltshire County Council area will be summarised in an addendum to this report, during January.
- Consultation with operational staff was by e-mail survey, which generated 397 responses, sufficient for 95% confidence within +/- 4%.
- Consultation with call handling staff was by way of two focus groups, but all staff not included in these were also invited to contribute their views by way of e-mail or telephone contact with the consultation assistant.
- Senior managers were not formally consulted on a one to one basis as the relevant commanders form the Operational Strategy Group which monitored progress on the review. However individuals, including all three operations Superintendents were consulted on issues arising during the review
- In addition to the consultation carried out specifically for the review, a considerable amount of other relevant recent consultation, both internal and external, was available. This included internal consultation with staff, carried out following an IIP assessment of the Force, and previous public satisfaction surveys and People's Voice questionnaires.

Compete

3.10 The Force sets targets for answering 999 calls and for responding to incidents requiring an immediate response. Quality is measured through public satisfaction surveys. A substantial part of the review was directed towards identification of ways in which current performance can be improved. These performance indicators will allow effective evaluation of measures implemented as a result of this review.

4. COSTS

- 4.1 All of the three areas that make up call management are labour intensive and this is reflected in the staffing costs. An examination of current staffing costs shows the following annual expenditure in 2000/2001:

CCH	PSD/Crime desk	Westlea CR	HQ CR
£190,746	£472,630	£1,126,426	£1,642,804
		Total staffing cost	<u>£3,432,608</u>

In addition to the above there were crime desks located within 'A' and 'D' divisions.

'A' divisions crime desk had staffing costs of £70,136. This has now been incorporated into the PSD/ crime desk facility at Devizes.

'D' divisions crime desk had staffing costs of £112,764.

- 4.2 Overtime has a major effect upon the costs of running call management. The increased use of part-time staff may help to reduce this problem in the future.
- 4.3 It is to be expected that staffing costs within call management will be affected by the forthcoming move to one joint control room. This, combined with possible further reductions in the number of police officers in the control room, will assist in funding the newly created control room inspector posts. Staffing levels that will provide the most effective use of resources will need to be monitored to ensure that cost effective service delivery is maintained. This may require an increased level of flexibility from staff and that may be reflected in future costs.
- 4.4 No assessment has been carried out with regard to the expenditure on equipment such as IT, telephone and radios, owing to the implementation of the new joint control room project.
- 4.5 Call Management represents only part of the cost of managing demand. However, this subject is so wide that an estimate of the total cost would be somewhat arbitrary. Most of the Force's staff are involved in managing demand in one way or another and no attempt has therefore been made to cost the operational resources deployed in this area.

5. PERFORMANCE

5.1 The HMIC thematic ‘Open All Hours’ offers the following vision for call handling:

“The public will be able to contact police services using a nationally agreed, easily recognisable non-emergency number. Callers will be answered promptly by a trained and knowledgeable operator who, with appropriate IT support, will be able to resolve their call at the first point of contact. Forces will use standard definitions for incident grading. There will be a consistent framework of qualitative and quantitative standards and measures of performance.”

Some elements of this vision, for instance a single telephone number and agreed gradings can only be addressed at national level. The Force has made considerable progress towards other elements, most notably through the establishment of the PSD, but further work is needed to maintain this momentum.

Call Management: Current Performance against BVPIs

5.2 The staffing level for call management, which incorporates CCH, PSD/crime desk and CR, is 136. This is made up of a mixture of police and support staff (see Appendix C).

For CCH, who provide the initial ‘gate keeping’ service for the force, demand has increased as shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No of calls</u>	<u>% within target</u>
96-97	843,362	98.03%
97-98	805,394	99.21%
98-99	761,621	99.18%
99-00	788,099	96.98%
00-01	997,087	94.23%
01-02	1,033,500*	93.7%

*Projected figure based on first 8 months of the year

Note Local target times for answering non-999 calls ‘96-98’ was 60 secs
Local target times for answering non-999 calls ‘98-00’ was 30 secs
Local target times for answering non-999 calls ‘00-01’ was 20 secs

5.3 There was a 26.51% increase between the 99-00 figures and the 00-01 figures, an increase which has been more than sustained in the current year. Speed of answering non 999 calls is not currently a BVPI for which targets are set at Force level, although there is a local target time of 20 seconds. The percentage answered within this time is currently 93.7%, against a target of 90%. Given the reduction in target time from 60 seconds to 20 seconds, performance in this area should be considered good. Indications are that future improvements in service should concentrate on quality rather than timeliness as measured by this indicator (see paras 6.12 - 6.14)

5.4 In relation to 999 calls, which are routed directly to the control room, 65,792 calls were received from April to November this year, compared to 42,767 in the same period last year. This represents an increase of 53.8%. The milestone target for the current year is for 90% of calls to be answered within 10 seconds. The current success rate is 89%, the same as at this time last year.

5.5 Again, in the context of such a large increase in demand this should be regarded as a good level of current performance. The BVPI target is to achieve 92% by the year 2004/5. This target can be achieved by reducing the number of 999 calls received and/or reducing other demands on control room staff. Proposals to assist in achieving this are contained in section 7 of this report.

- 5.6 The increase in 999 calls is attributed to the rapid growth in use of mobile phones. Although some projections suggest a continuing upward trend in the number of calls, this should not be assumed as inevitable. For the first time, recent figures have shown a reduction in sale of mobile phones in the UK and the market may be near saturation point.
- 5.7 The problem of silent 999 calls from mobile phones has now been addressed through improved technology. Since October these calls have been screened out. Although no ready means of measuring the impact of this is available locally, data from Metropolitan Police suggests that 17% of 999 calls are being screened out as a result.

Response: Current Performance against BVPI

- 5.8 The Force operates with three categories of incident grading: immediate, negotiated and referred. The BVPI is for attendance at incidents graded ‘immediate’ within 10 minutes in urban areas and 20 minutes in rural areas. The five year target is for 92% success and the milestone target for the current year is 89%. In the period April – November 2001 the success rate was 88% against 90% in the same period last year.

Immediate response calls:	1998-99	-	22,731*
	1999-00	-	19,858*
	2000-01	-	15,071*

* note: these are the logs for which arrival times were recorded, on which the BVPI returns are based. Last year there were a further 4,454 incidents graded ‘immediate’ where no time was recorded.

- 5.9 The downward trend has continued in the current year, with the first 2 quarters showing a 3.3% fall over the same period last year. The Force does not have a high proportion of immediate response logs when compared with other forces. In Wiltshire 22.9% of 999 calls are graded ‘immediate’ as against 26.7% nationally. The total number of immediate incidents per police officer is 13.45 annually, against 25.96 for England and Wales.
- 5.10 The final recording of logs for negotiated and referred incidents showed a slight decline last year:

	99-00	00-01	01-Oct 01
Negotiated	132,380	127,150	71,662
Referred	35,865	32,966	17,930
Total	168,254	160,116	89,596 (6 month figures)

There has been an increase of 10.7% in the number of negotiated logs in the first 6 months of the current year compared to the same period last year, and an increase of 3.4% in referred logs. The perception amongst some operational staff that the volume of incident related work is increasing is confirmed to an extent, although only for negotiated responses. Of course, within these totals it may be the case that an increasing proportion of incidents is being undertaken by certain groups of officers.

- 5.11 Workloads in call management are therefore increasing, but primarily as a consequence of a rise in the number of calls, rather than incidents.
- 5.12 A major factor affecting the quality of response to calls is that the units within call management have incomplete information about the available resources. The Command and Control system is populated daily with information supplied from divisions but this does not include details of all available staff, nor does it include geographic responsibility, specialist skills and future rostered duties.
- 5.13 The IT systems to make a considerable difference are already in place and this is explored further at para 7.57 et seq. The proposals in section 7 of this report offer scope for improved performance under this indicator and it is not therefore suggested that the 5 year target should be revised.

Public Service Desk

- 5.14 The establishment of the PSD was outlined at para 2.4. As part of the monitoring process established within call management, activity analysis of call types and disposal has been conducted over two week periods in May, August and November 2001. There has been a rapid increase in the number of calls being referred to the PSD. The most recent results show that 3,941 calls were dealt during the two week period which, extrapolated out over the full year, would amount to 102,46 calls, or about 10% of incoming calls to the Force. Had this facility not been available, then it can be assumed that the majority of these calls would have been routed to the control room or to police stations.
- 5.15 During the period of activity sampling PSD staff were asked to record the number of occasions when they had successfully negated the need for a police officer to be deployed. 125 occasions were identified during the sampling, which produces an annualised figure of 3,250. In addition, the number of callers to the PSD who were referred onto another more appropriate agency to be dealt with was 219, an annualised figure of 5,694.
- 5.16 There is potential to develop the role of PSD further. Of the 90% of calls which do not go to the PSD, a large majority are simply routed on request to the appropriate extension at HQ or in divisions. However, a number go to the two control rooms and it is clear that not all of these require this response.
- 5.17 A snapshot check of one 24 hour period (2nd November 2001) showed that 573 control room logs were created. Of these 21.2% were graded 'negotiated' but did not actually result in attendance of an officer and a further 18% were referred. PSD staff are able to create logs, although not to deploy response officers by radio. However the majority of negotiated logs are presently created by CR staff. It is clear that there is potential to reduce workloads in CR by screening out some calls.
- 5.18 Performance of the PSD is not measured by a BVPI. To date, data collected has been through self recorded activity analysis. However, the service does lend itself well to both qualitative and quantitative assessment. In the case of the former, calls to PSD will soon be recorded enabling quality checks to be made on a regular basis, in addition to information obtainable through internal and external satisfaction surveys. In the case of quantity it would be possible to set targets for the number of operational deployments averted either on a numerical or percentage basis, the number of referrals to other agencies or number of incoming calls handled.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Findings from the consultation exercise are summarised below:

6.2 Views of Staff in CCH/PSD/CR

- Control Room staff feel that their role is reasonably well defined, although they sometimes receive calls which should go to the PSD. Staff in PSD do not feel their role is sufficiently clear.
- The old control rooms in 'A' and 'C' divisions worked more effectively than the present headquarters one.
- Operators are too busy to give a good quality service to the public, for example by following up progress on individual logs in a timely manner.
- Often operators do not have time to make routine contact calls. This creates a risk to officers' safety.
- Response officers are frequently committed for several hours, for example when an arrest is made. Prisoner handling teams could make an improvement.
- There was overwhelming agreement that a response category is needed between the current 'immediate' and 'negotiated' grades.
- PSD has already made some difference to CR operators, for example by entering some logs on command and control.
- When PSD staff are fully committed, CCH try to relocate calls (eg to parade rooms or traffic departments) or deal with them themselves.
- Detailed deployment criteria for particular types of incident should not be adopted as situations differ and individual initiative is needed
- CCH operators receive many internal requests for extension numbers, despite these being available to most members of staff on the intranet.
- Initial training for CR staff is good; ongoing development less so. The opportunity to go on patrol would be welcomed. This is available in theory but rarely occurs.
- There was broad support for their current shift patterns, although some staff would prefer to work longer shifts and have more days off.
- PSD staff believe that their shift pattern provides too many on the late shift and not enough in the mornings.
- Patrol officers do not always update CR when they become available after dealing with jobs. When double crewed units are working both officers will often return to the station to do paperwork; availability would be increased if this was done one at a time.

Views of Operational Staff

6.3 A total of 397 officers responded to the survey, with a good distribution between divisions, ranks and roles. Most questions required a single word response but invited additional remarks. Many hundreds of individual comments were provided and these have been grouped to give the common themes.

6.4 75% of staff thought there were 'never' enough staff to meet demand, or that there were insufficient for 'most of the time'. This view was most marked in 'D' Division. Most thought that existing shift patterns provided the best use of resources to meet demand. Individual comments included the following themes:

- CBOs are back filling response jobs therefore not being effective in their own areas;
- Greater flexibility in shifts is required – 8 hour shifts do not give flexibility and the variable shift arrangement is not flexible enough to meet peaks in demand;
- CID are not needed on nights and CID are over staffed;
- Hand over periods are too short;
- There is unhealthy disparity between stations and divisions on shift patterns;
- Variable shift patterns improve morale;
- Specialist officers who work nights are not needed and are a waste of resources;

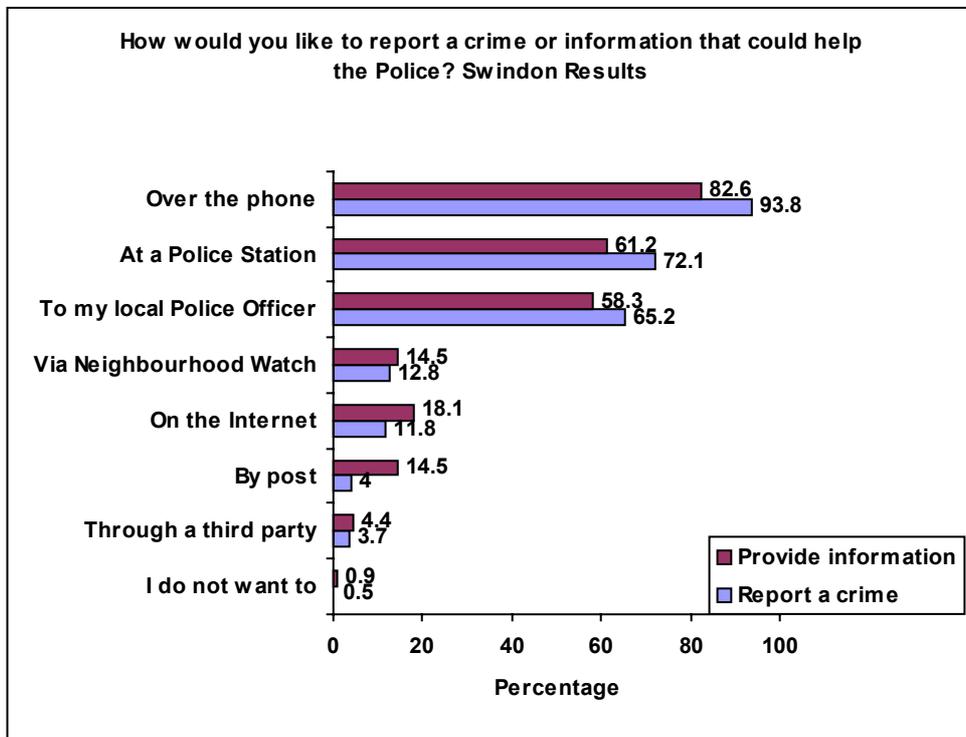
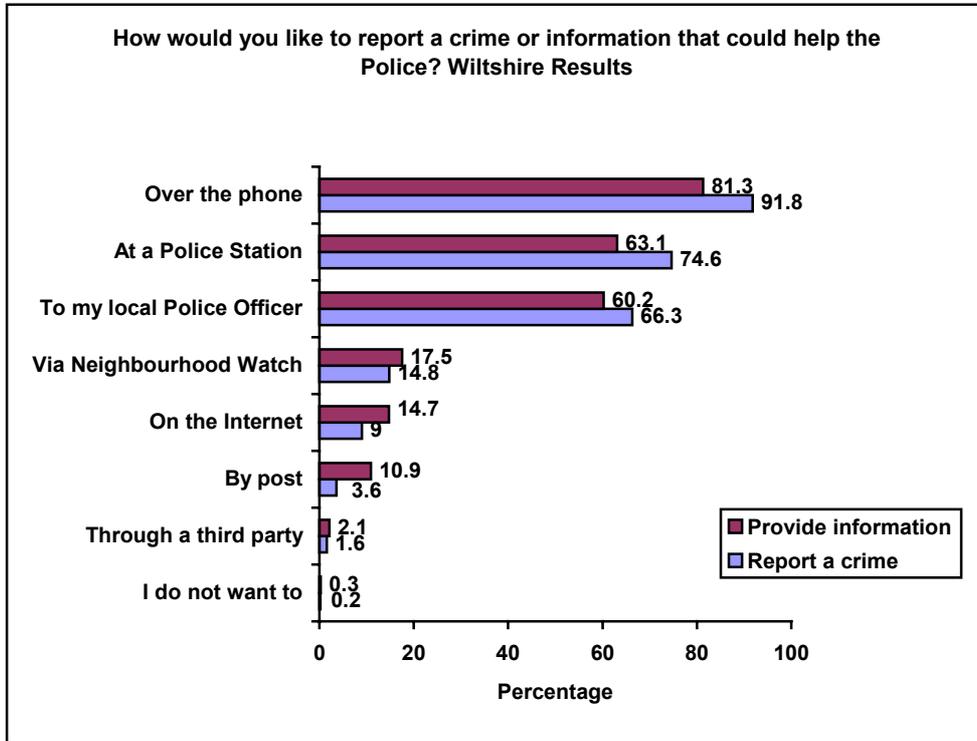
- 6.5 Most staff either thought that the ratio of CBOs to response officers was ‘about right’, or didn’t know.
- 6.6 69% had expected the PSD /Crime desk to reduce the number of jobs they attend and, to date, 39% thought it had done so; 32% thought it hadn’t. Satisfaction on this criterion was highest in ‘D’ and ‘C’ Divisions, whereas only 26% in ‘A’ Division thought the number of jobs had dropped.
- 6.7 Nearly two thirds of staff were ‘very dissatisfied’ or ‘dissatisfied’ with the service from control room, with dissatisfaction much higher in ‘A’ Division than in the other two. In contrast 62% were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the PSD. The main themes identified were:
- The control room is always very busy and understaffed resulting in a poor service being provided to officers
 - The control room does not manage incoming customer calls/requests; all they are interested in is clearing their screen. They need to obtain more information from callers.
 - The public service desk is not filtering out jobs that police officers should not attend and jobs are being wrongly allocated
 - Control room and public service desk staff have a poor understanding of the staffing resources available to them
 - Control room and public service desk staff need more training on call handling, local geographic knowledge, and streetwise policing
- 6.8 55% were either ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with the way jobs are allocated, with reasons often similar to those above. About a third of respondents thought their division/department could withdraw some of the services it currently provides. There were many suggestions in response to this question, but the three most commonly mentioned were stray dogs, vulnerable children, and abandoned or illegally parked cars.
- 6.9 Responses to a question about officers’ roles are shown below:

Within your role do you agree that you are	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Empowered to do your job	15%	65%	18%	2%
In a clearly defined role	9%	49%	37%	4%
Receiving adequate training	8%	52%	33%	7%
Sufficiently skilled to do your job	14%	73%	11%	2%
Praised for doing a good job	2%	32%	43%	23%

- 6.10 The final question in the survey asked for ‘anything else’ that would help manage demand on divisions. The main themes were:
- Increasing partnership working with other agencies, and saying no to customers when it is not the Force’s role to provide the service;
 - More police officers are needed;
 - The Force should be tackling the use of drugs as it will reduce crime considerably;
 - The Force should work more closely with schools and let schools deal with a lot more issues on their own;
 - Better use could be made of officers located at HQ – there are too many;
 - The Force does not have enough resources to prevent or detect crime;
 - There are too many small, specialised units or squads – officers could be better used on the beat or front-line;
 - There are a lot of roles that could be civilianised.

People's Voice Responses

- 6.11 The information included in this section is from the April 2001 Wiltshire People's Voice and the November 2001 Swindon People's Voice, with the most relevant data coming from the latter survey. Respondents were asked how they would like to report a crime or information that could help the police, from a range of options. Results are given below, and confirm the importance of call handling:



6.12 Of those responding to the November survey, just over 40% said that they or a member of their family had telephoned Wiltshire police in the last 12 months. They were asked to tick the boxes which applied from the following list. The percentage ticking each box is shown after the statement:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I got all the information I needed | 44.4% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I got some of the information I needed | 22.2% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | a police officer came to see me at a later date | 25.2% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | a police officer telephoned me at a later date | 16.5% |

6.13 When asked 'How much interest did the police show in what you had to say?' replies were:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| More than you thought they would | 18.5% |
| As much as you thought they should | 51.5% |
| Less than you thought they should | 29.9% |

6.14 Responses to a question on the speed of the service revealed a similar level of satisfaction. Finally, respondents were asked 'Overall, how satisfied were you with the way the police handled your telephone enquiry?' Replies are shown below:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Very Satisfied | 36.8% |
| Fairly satisfied | 29.4% |
| A bit dissatisfied | 17.5% |
| Very dissatisfied | 15.6% |
| Too early to say | 0.8% |

6.15 Thus 1 in 3 people who telephoned the police were 'a bit' or 'very' dissatisfied with the way the telephone enquiry was handled. During 2000/1 the Force answered 997,087 telephone calls, suggesting a total of 330,000 dissatisfied callers. Analysis by reason for making the call revealed that there was greater satisfaction with reporting a crime. 88.6% of people who telephoned to report a crime were 'fairly' or 'very' satisfied. This is in comparison with 28% satisfaction for 999 calls, 44.1% for general enquiries and 38.3% for other reasons.

7. PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 7.1 Call management has undergone considerable change in recent years. The number of calls coming into the Force has increased and public satisfaction levels could be improved upon (see para 6.14). Improvements with regard to the deployment of operational staff are also required.
- 7.2 The HMIC inspection protocol for call management was referred to earlier (para 3.1). There are a number of areas where the questions asked as part of the protocol can be answered positively. Some areas of possible weakness, which should receive attention from management as part of the ongoing aim of improved service delivery, are outlined below:
- Improved communication between call management and operational staff in order to identify problems and find solutions to call management/operational user problems.
 - The policies and procedures section of the Force intranet should include the PSD/crime desk role.
 - Policies and procedures should have a clear link to Force strategies.
 - Strategy needs to address the potential to reduce officers' time, for example by identifying repeat incidents.
 - Need to ensure that deployment criteria are communicated effectively to the Force, so that a clear understanding of strategy, policies and procedures are fully understood.
 - Keep staffing levels within call management under constant review to ensure that resources match demand. The continuance of part time employment to cover peaks should be used to the maximum.
- 7.3 Likewise, application of the HMIC protocol for Patrol raises several points for further consideration, some linked to those listed above:
- When the patrol strategy is finalised (see recommendation 23) there will be a need to ensure that there is a direct link to graded response as well as the other force strategies.
 - With regard to the needs and expectations of the force's customers, these must be matched to the likely service they will receive i.e there will not always be a 'come quick' response.
 - There needs to be better monitoring of abstraction levels. Full utilisation of 'Promis 8' may assist with regard to this (see paras 7.57).
 - In order to ensure that patrol officers have appropriate knowledge and competencies a skills analysis should be considered. Again usage of all the 'Promis8' facilities may assist.
 - The patrol strategy should fully consider the role of neighbourhood watch, CCTV and the special constabulary.
 - Could and should more use be made of de-briefs as a matter of course rather than just critical incident de-briefs.
 - Research has indicated that in the region of 5% of locations/premises generate 65% of demand on police resources and time. Incident hotspot mapping could assist with demand reduction.
 - The design of shift patterns must be effective and efficient to ensure that the best use is made of patrol officers' time and to meet demand.
- 7.4 Some of these are ongoing management issues which will not be resolved immediately or permanently. The remainder of this section outlines areas where it may be possible to provide short term improvements to these and other problems.

Training

- 7.5 Staff in the PSD have undergone a considerable amount of training in a short period of time, and this is not yet complete. Taking a broader look at training of call management staff as a whole, the following issues were raised:
- Hard skills training (eg use of the available IT) is generally good, but there is scope for improvement in ‘softer’ areas such as communication skills.
 - Call management staff must be familiar with the organisation. Waits for induction training are unsatisfactory; one member of staff with more than 12 months service is still waiting for this.
 - Tutorship is important to new CR staff. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest this is given a higher priority at Westlea than at HQ.
 - The potential benefit for call management staff to have periods of attachments with operational officers is considerable, although it is accepted that this results in short term abstractions.
 - Improved questioning skills would enable call takers to route calls appropriately, thereby addressing one of the main areas of dissatisfaction with the current service.
 - Where processes are poor, these should not be transferred to the new control room. Improvements in training should not therefore wait until the move.
- 7.6 At the present time recruitment takes place as and when a vacancy occurs. The nature of work and the number of staff employed within call management means that there will always be a turnover of staff. A solution to the ‘drip feed’ of new call management staff could be to recruit staff for these types of posts at set intervals, perhaps twice, during the year.

RECOMMENDATION 1.

Recruit support staff for CCH, PSD and CR in blocks at set intervals during the year.

- 7.7 The potential advantages of this proposal are shown below:
- Will enable all training to be done at set times, eg induction course at the beginning of employment.
 - The softer, people skills can be built in and addressed by the trainers and tutors in a consistent manner during the training programme.
 - Attachments can be better arranged if completed at set time within training programme. The existing inconsistent approach is removed.
 - Cover for abstractions during training can be better managed by call handling managers, i.e. staff missing or delaying vital elements of the training should be eliminated.
 - The block recruitment should permit new recruits to receive much of the softer training before they undergo the harder technical training.
 - Block training would ensure that the questioning skills are consistent across all three elements of call management (CCH, PSD/crime desk/control room).
 - Will improve the internal aspects of knowledge by the various elements of call management staff with regard to their colleagues operating in other areas of call management.
 - Lessons learnt from previous experience, feed back from customers, good practice from other forces/organisations can be fed into new recruits in one hit.
 - In addition, if a skills analysis of existing staff were to be conducted then any gaps identified could be addressed within new recruit block training.
- 7.8 The HMIC thematic ‘Open all Hours’ has highlighted the need to ensure that staff involved with call management are subject to competency based quality monitoring. The report gives an example taken from Leicestershire Constabulary which has such a system. Decision making, information gathering and recording, communication and personal skills such as firmness, patience, sympathy and reassurance are all part of this process. It is these elements of training that can be addressed more effectively and consistently if all recruits and those with identified skills deficiencies are trained in blocks.

- 7.9 Possible disadvantages of this recommendation are:
- Potential for budgets to be adversely affected by staffing levels rising above and below establishment levels before and after a block recruitment intake.
 - Pressure on existing staff in periods immediately prior to recruitment of a new intake.

7.10 Managers within call management spend a proportion of their time dealing with complaints regarding the level of service received by members of the public. Where trends or patterns emerge from complaints then these must be addressed as part of the training package, in order to avoid this 'firefighting' approach.

RECOMMENDATION 2.

Effective steps should be taken by management to ensure that trends with regard to the causes of complaints are addressed. The remedial action to be built into recruit training, tutor training and existing staff refresher training.

- Trends will be identified early.
 - Bad practice will be addressed and will not be transferred into new control room.
 - A structure can be established to ensure that all staff when going through skills analysis are subject of evaluation in identified areas of bad practice.
 - Potential to provide a basis for achieving improvements in customer satisfaction levels.
- 7.11 The Force is to establish a single number for incoming calls within the next few months. Experience in other forces and organisations suggests that this will result in an increase of up to 20% in the number of calls. It is to be hoped that the proposed 'Team phone' system will help to reduce some of this demand. It is apparent from observation within CCH that a number of current calls are requests from internal customers for extension numbers and other miscellaneous information that is available from the Intranet.

RECOMMENDATION 3.

Take steps to ensure the Force is educated as to the whereabouts of information that has in the past only been available from CCH.

- Will reduce unnecessary demand on CCH staff.
 - Potential to reduce level of dissatisfaction felt by outside callers for Police services
 - Will permit CCH staff to utilise their questioning skills to better effect. (less pressure to move the call on in order to meet incoming demand).
- 7.12 Failure to make progress on this issue may mean that the intended benefits of introducing a single number for the Force will not be achieved, as CCH will not be able to cope with the demand.

Public Expectations

- 7.13 The number of '999' calls received in the control room last year was 65,777. The number of level 1 response calls was 15,071, or 22.9% of 999 calls. Work in this area conducted by the Metropolitan Police produced very similar figures, with 23.4% of 999 calls requiring immediate response. Members of the public are clearly making inappropriate use of the '999' system.

RECOMMENDATION 4.

That the media/PR department undertakes a campaign to highlight the wastage caused by inappropriate use of the '999' system. In addition it draws attention to matters that are clearly not police issues which the public should refer elsewhere.

- 7.14 This recommendation would have a cost implication, but would offer the following benefits:
- Potential to reduce demand.
 - Potential to improve service to public by informing them of the correct agency to contact.
 - Media campaign can be linked into issue of a single number for the Force, thereby reducing any perceived negative impact from public.
 - Costs can be reduced in the longer term.
 - Measurable performance improvements can be achieved (answer '999' calls, reduction in missed calls).
 - Provides opportunity for call management staff to concentrate more on questioning skills.
- 7.15 This campaign will highlight the message that other agencies will deal with certain matters. There is therefore a need to consult with them on implementation. This recommendation is part of the process of managing expectations. The public need to be made aware of what they can expect, and of areas where we cannot or should not be providing a service.

Incident Grading

7.16 The Force used to operate with a four category incident grading system, but there are currently three categories. Where a log is created the operator will enter a response grade code:

Immediate	Code 1
Negotiated	Code 3
Referred	Code 4

The three grades are defined in more detail at Appendix E.

7.17 A number of issues have been raised in respect of incident gradings:

- A recent quality and audit check in 'C' Division suggested that only 44% of logs were graded correctly and, further, logs frequently contain inaccuracies.
- At busy times, when resources are stretched, operators conscious of response targets may be downgrading code 1 logs. Senior managers are investigating this further.
- As has been identified from an analysis of log details obtained from 'Promis' there has been a decline in the number of logs that have been received a Code 1 response over the last three years.
- Code 3 covers over 70% of all logs and a very wide range of circumstances, many of which could be dealt with by the PSD. However most code 3 incidents are currently dealt with in the control room.

7.18 In 2000/01 10.9% of logs for the Force were graded 'immediate', well below the national average. Other Forces' equivalent figures range from 3% to 28%, but the average is approximately 15%. The average number of code 1 logs per day is approximately 52, although even this figure is overstated as a proportion are duplicate logs.

7.19 Interpretations of the term 'immediate response' differ around the country, a point made in 'Open All Hours', which recommends that ACPO should agree on a national policy for grading incidents, using common definitions and categories. It has been expressed as a suggestion by a number of those consulted during this review that the Force should look to re-establish the grade 2 response and this is discussed further at paras 7.31 – 7.34.

7.20 Of the front line staff who responded to the consultation e mail survey, 64% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with service from the control room. A variety of themes were identified, but the most common was that lack of questioning by control room staff leads to front line officers being dispatched to incidents that could have been dealt with by a more appropriate resource, or not at all.

7.21 There is a consensus that part of the reason for this is that the high volume of work routed through control rooms encourages quick disposal, and deployment of an operational resource is the most obvious response. This effect is depicted in diagrammatic form at Appendix 'D', which shows demands from calls (left hand side of the model) being pushed from the centre onto operational staff, who at the same time are being pulled in other directions (right hand side).

7.21 In order to assist control room staff to grade incidents correctly and to ask the right questions the Force could benefit from acquiring a script and prompting system.

SUGGESTION 1.

That the Force investigates the development and deployment of a scripting product to assist with grading assessment.

- Will provide a consistent Force wide grading response.
- Will assist control room staff in decision making process.
- Will reduce inaccuracies with regard to the recording of grading and other information.
- Can be adapted to fall in line with any agreed national policy on grading.

- System already in use within ambulance service and is being developed by a number of forces, eg. Cleveland, Lancashire and Dorset.

7.22 Disadvantages would include the cost and the potential to increase the time that control room staff take to obtain details from callers.

7.23 These systems are used extensively within commercial call centres and therefore the public is used to the process. There is a need for operators to have a degree of discretion to ensure that particularly vulnerable callers are not scripted out of a police response. Managers would also need to carry out quality checks, especially with regard to those incidents where police officers have not been deployed.

7.24 A variation on the same proposal could be applied by CCH staff when determining the most appropriate routing of calls.

RECOMMENDATION 5

That a basic scripting procedure be introduced for CCH staff, to be applied to calls other than those for a specific extension number or individual.

7.25 This would be less complex than that suggested for control room staff and the primary benefit would be to allow CCH staff to better assess whether to route calls to the PSD or to the appropriate control room. In West Mercia call handlers route calls to their equivalent of the Wiltshire control room if they receive an affirmative response to any one of three questions:

- ‘Is it happening now?’
- ‘Is there a serious threat to life or property?’, or
- ‘Is the alleged offender at the scene or nearby?’.

Other calls are routed to their equivalent of the Wiltshire PSD. Staffordshire also have a set of standard questions for initial call handlers to help determining routing of calls

7.26 Another theme from the consultation was the concern expressed by officers over unanswered radio or telephone calls. It is not suggested that control room staff are choosing to ignore calls, but that they are doing their best in difficult circumstances.

7.27 A snap shot of unanswered telephone calls into the control room via the hunt number extension covering a 24hour period on Friday 30th November 2001 reveals the following:

	HQ Control	Westlea Control
Total calls	215	188
Calls answered	132	143
Calls unanswered	83	45
Ave answering time	26 seconds	21 seconds
% of unanswered calls	38.6%	23.9%

This does not take into account 999 calls into the control room. As an example of a ‘typical’ day it reveals a rate of 31.7% of calls being unanswered. As stated above, this is not a criticism of staff but there is a possibility that a significant number of radio calls are also being missed.

7.28 Improvements can only be made by increasing staffing levels, reducing workloads or improving working methods. In respect of the latter a division of responsibility between ‘receivers’ and ‘dispatchers’ could assist. This is the procedure that is operated by the majority of forces.

SUGGESTION 2.

That the Force gives consideration to implementing the ‘receiver’ ‘dispatcher’ model as soon as possible.

The perceived benefits are:

- Potential to provide improved service from control room.
- Will potentially provide the dispatching staff the time to deal with incidents without the distraction of answering the telephone.
- Should permit improvements on the quality of recording of incoming calls if the receiver is not distracted with dispatching and dealing with incidents.
- Potential to address Health and Safety concerns with operational staff contact calls.
- Potential to reduce the number of unanswered calls.

7.29 Disadvantages include the time spent on change management and the possible need to increase staffing levels.

7.30 If this suggestion is accepted it should be implemented promptly in order to address any teething problems before the new control room opens. Problems with service delivery that arise at the same time as the new joint project will potentially undermine the successful implementation of the project as far as front line operational staff are concerned. The staffing levels for implementation need to be examined.

7.31 The introduction of the PSD/crime desk has provided the Force with the opportunity to divert a level of calls away from the control rooms. In addition it has provided an alternative to the deployment of a police resource. Whilst the PSD is taking on a growing proportion of the work, there is a feeling that it has not yet made a major impact in either of these key areas. The benefits that were hoped for following the introduction of the PSD are shown at Appendix 'F'.

RECOMMENDATION 6.

That the Force re-establishes response grade 2.

7.32 The main advantages are:

- Will permit the border line grade 1 calls to drop down a level.
- Potential to reduce demand on operational response staff.
- Increase likelihood of BVPI response target being achieved,
- Reduces current problem of prioritisation of level 3 incidents
- Potential to provide a more realistic level of possible service to the public.
- Assist in identifying the appropriate resource for the particular incident.

7.33 Disadvantages might include inappropriate downgrading of calls and problems of grade definition. Should the Force proceed with the recommendation then agreement will be required as to a corporate grading and response level. Strong management support must be given to control room staff in the implementation of any change in policy. Given the relatively low proportion of 'immediate' logs it is likely that reintroduction of grade 2 response would serve to assist with prioritisation of logs currently 'referred', rather than bringing about a significant reduction in the number of immediate responses.

7.34 Benchmarking reveals that whilst Wiltshire is not unique in having only two grades of response involving deployment of an operational resource, it is unusual. Devon and Cornwall operate with 4 grades requiring deployment (immediate, prompt, routine, deferred) and a fifth for non attendance. This is a common model, although it may seem unnecessarily complex. Many forces operate with 3 grades, plus one for non deployment. West Mercia's criteria are fairly typical and have the added attraction of simplicity. They are reproduced at Appendix 'G' and could be used as a basis for criteria in this Force. The Best Value Unit holds details of deployment gradings and criteria for a number of other forces.

Job Allocation

- 7.35 If the Force proceeds with the recommendation to re-introduce 4 levels of response then it is proposed that there should be a clear split between the control room and the PSD as to which will deal with particular grades of incident. This accords with the original intentions for PSD.

RECOMMENDATION 7.

Control room should in principle receive and manage all response 1 and 2 incidents whilst PSD should receive, record and allocate response 3 and 4 incidents.

- 7.36 Under this proposal, the Control Room would handle 4 types of work:
1. 999 calls as at present. However they would route all 999 calls not assessed as grade 1 or 2 to the PSD
 2. Incoming calls assessed by CCH staff as requiring a grade 1 or 2 response
 3. Radio communication with operational staff dealing with grade 1 or 2 responses.
 4. Other radio communication initiated by operational staff (but not updating of grade 3 logs)
- 7.37 The main advantage would be that control room staff would be able to deliver a better quality service on the matters they handle. Consequently:
- This should result in an improvement in service to both the public and operational staff.
 - Health and Safety concerns regarding unanswered radio calls would reduce.
 - Potential to provide management with the opportunity to examine staffing levels to deal with the peaks and troughs of level 1 and 2 demand.
 - The slow time response to level 3 and 4 incidents can be better managed away from the pressures of level 1 and 2 response requirements.
 - With the proposed improvements to duties management via 'Promis' (see para 7.57) the PSD/crime desk staff will be better able to match resources to an agreed response with the caller.
 - Potential to reduce demand on core of response officers.
 - Will provide a more consistent response to members of the public with regard to problem solving, police response, or deflection to a more appropriate agency to deal with their query.
- 7.38 The main area of uncertainty with this recommendation concerns the ability of PSD to cope with the consequent increase in workload. If increased staffing levels were necessary to successfully implement this recommendation, the benefits would be less clear. If this recommendation is accepted, an assessment of control room workloads should be undertaken, post implementation. It is possible that the balance of staffing levels between PSD and control rooms would need adjusting, particularly when the two control rooms combine in the new building. Given appropriate working practices however, the burden on PSD should not become too great:

RECOMMENDATION 8.

Incident logs for grade 3 and 4 incidents should not be updated and resulted centrally, except to record initial allocation.

- 7.40 Even with the reintroduction of grade 2 incidents, it is anticipated that grade 3 would form by far the largest category. If PSD are to handle these and make the initial allocation the incident should be recorded, whether as a command and control log or by some other means, for audit purposes and for reference in the event of a follow up call from the informant. However, management of these incidents should then become a divisional responsibility.

RECOMMENDATION 9.

Divisions should agree simple, consistent and corporate procedures for allocation of grade 3 incidents.

7.41 This becomes important if recommendation 7 is accepted. It would be unsatisfactory for PSD staff to be required to take a course of action applicable to one division/section/time of day/day of the week and an entirely different one in other circumstances. Processes should be sufficiently flexible however to accommodate a chosen contact point in one division or sector (eg duty Inspector) but a different one in another (eg e-mail to mailbox).

Development of Public Service Desk

- 7.42 The recommendation above puts all response level 3 and 4 calls, and many other general enquiries, through the PSD/crime desk. The present level of supervision within this unit is provided by two acting sergeants. These two officers have provided an excellent service and in no small part have ensured that the PSD/crime desk has established itself within the Force. A large part of their work has consisted of managing the teething problems associated with establishment of a new unit, in particular managing workloads and abstractions during a period when new staff have undergone training. However, a significant part of their role has been to work as operators in the unit in addition to these responsibilities.
- 7.43 Whilst the number of calls into the PSD can be measured, at present it is difficult to assess quality of the service. It would be surprising if this has reached the desired level only 9 months into what was originally intended as a two year project, and evidence from the consultation exercise tends to confirm this. There is a clear role required for supervision of the staff with a view to monitoring quality and providing guidance and ongoing staff development.

RECOMMENDATION 10.

That three substantive Sergeants be allocated to the PSD/crime desk and that continuing need for these posts be assessed after six months.

- 7.44 Sergeants with previous control room experience would be particularly well placed to perform this role. The main advantages would be:
- Will permit the officers performing acting duties to revert to their primary function as call takers.
 - Will provide a resource dedicated to ensuring staff support, development, supervision and quality control.
 - Will provide a consistent approach regarding supervision through all three elements of call management: CCH, PSD/crime desk and control room.
- 7.45 The major disadvantage would be cost, either on a temporary or permanent basis. However, it should be noted that, despite the creation of new posts for the PSD, the proportion of staff allocated to call handling in the Force is significantly lower than in many other forces.
- 7.46 When the control room inspectors are all in post there will be 136 FTE posts in the control rooms, CCH and PSD, representing approximately 7.5% of the Force's staff. The situation in the two forces visited for benchmarking purposes is as follows:
- Staffordshire. Have two control rooms operating as one 'virtual' room and with PSD equivalents based in divisions although forming part of the Communications Division. In all this Division has 311 FTE members of staff, equating to 10% of the force's total. Like Wiltshire, the force has recently established PSDs. About 60%-70% of PSD staff are currently police officers, although the intention is that they will be replaced by support staff in time.
 - Devon and Cornwall. The force has a total of 359 FTEs in call handling, representing approximately 8.5% of the force total. Of these only 42 are police officers. Agency staff are used to supplement established posts during peak periods, for initial call handling only.
- 7.47 There are currently 21 posts in PSD, including the two recently transferred from the 'A' Division Crime Desk. The greater the number of posts, the more easy it becomes to match resources to demand and to cope with peaks and troughs in workload. Multi skilling also assists in this process. At present 'D' Division Crime Desk still operates as a self contained unit at Westlea.

RECOMMENDATION 11

That the 'D' Division crime desk posts be transferred to the PSD as soon as this is considered feasible

- 7.48 There are difficulties with this proposal at the present time. Although the number of workstations in the PSD would allow accommodation of the additional staff, conditions are cramped and this situation would worsen. Further, it is likely that the 'D' Division staff would be reluctant to transfer. Only a small number of PSD staff are fully trained to take crime desk calls and, in the short term, it would not be possible for them to take on the 'D' Division workload if these posts were to be filled with new untrained staff. It is therefore recognised that this change will not be effected immediately.
- 7.49 Although they work in the same room, the roles of call handlers and PSD operators are distinct. If this distinction were abandoned this could assist with matching resources to demand, through a larger pool of multi skilled staff. It would also remove a process from the present system in the case of those calls which are transferred from CCH to PSD.

SUGGESTION 2a

That over a period of time the roles of call handler and PSD operator be merged

- 7.50 It should be noted that supervisors in call management do not support this suggestion and, in any event, it could not be implemented immediately. CCH staff are essentially recruited and trained for that defined role and would not necessarily be able to take on the additional role of the PSD work. However, if agreed in principle it would be possible to move to this position in future by replacing CCH posts with PSD ones, as and when vacancies arise. This would appear to sit well with the vision statement in 'Open All Hours' (see para 5.1) There would be a cost implication as CCH staff are grade W3 and PSD are W5.
- 7.51 Current plans are for the PSD to move to 24 hour staffing in the near future. This can be achieved with current staffing levels, although leaving little resilience. The volume of incoming telephone calls between the hours of 0300 and 0700 does not appear to justify this change. Over a recent one week period only 177 incoming calls were made to CCH during those times, an average of just over 6 per hour. This compares with an average of 138 per hour averaged out over the remaining 20 hours. PSD staff time would be put to better use during the peak hours, with staff from the control rooms continuing to handle the small number of calls between 0300 and 0700.

RECOMMENDATION 12

That the PSD continues to operate only between the hours of 0700 and 0300, for the foreseeable future.

- 7.52 Most of the funding for the PSD/crime desk has come from the sparsity fund. This funding will cease in 2003. Although the Force operated with other systems and processes until quite recently, it is difficult to see how demand can be managed in the future without a PSD. All of the Forces contacted in the benchmarking exercise have an equivalent unit, albeit precise roles and responsibilities vary. Alternatives would be a much expanded control room (probably a more expensive option), or devolvement to divisions. The latter would also be likely to cost more through loss of economies of scale, and would run contrary to the Force's existing strategy as well as that of HMIC and Government.

RECOMMENDATION 13.

That the Force should examine the best way of continuing funding for the PSD beyond the year 2003. Decisions on this issue should be taken well before implementation, in order to avoid loss of staff who are presently on fixed term contracts.

- 7.53 This will assist with recruitment and retention of staff. As the remaining term of sparsity funding reduces, offers of contracts to new staff will become shorter. The identification of future funding will mean that new contracts can be set for a reasonable period.
- 7.54 It has already been noted (para 5.18) that the work of the PSD can be readily measured. Future development of call management will depend to a large extent on the performance of the PSD.

RECOMMENDATION 14

Quantitative and qualitative performance targets should now be set for the PSD. These should be incremental in nature, in order to allow for continuing development of staff .

- 7.55 The staff in call management carry out a number of ancillary functions. For example CCH staff the front reception desk from 09.00 hrs to 17.00 hrs, Monday to Friday. Control room staff are expected to deal with members of the public, deliveries, alarms and general site security outside of these peak hours. The front desk role is not analogous to that of enquiry offices at police stations; it is basically a reception role requiring little expert training.

RECOMMENDATION 15.

That reception and general site security duties be removed from being a call management responsibility and be outsourced.

- 7.56 This would make better use of call management staff, but there would be a cost implication. Costs have not been prepared at present, pending a decision in principle.

Duties Management

- 7.57 It has been noted that the number of incidents to which staff are deployed does not appear to be increasing as rapidly as some officers assume. However, the consultation results show considerable dissatisfaction with tasking and workloads. Additionally there is confusion and uncertainty amongst PSD and, especially, CR staff as to how and to whom they should allocate tasks.
- 7.58 Present arrangements are that the command and control system is populated daily with details of officers on duty, supplied, normally overnight by fax, from divisions or sections. Sometimes a particular section fails to supply the information but at best the system includes only a proportion of the available operational resources.
- 7.59 The three divisions have all been moving towards establishment of core roles which, broadly, fall into the two categories of response and community/beat/geographic. Reference has already been made to the large number of non urgent matters which are allocated and controlled by the two control rooms and proposals have been made to rectify this. An associated problem has been that, in an effort to clear backlogs, many of these non urgent tasks have been allocated to a limited pool of response officers, simply because they are the only known resource available to operators.
- 7.60 A new duties management package, referred to henceforth as 'Promis', is now available for use in the Force. The advantages of this system include:
- Facility to plan duties for staff in advance
 - Facility to show officers dedicated to particular areas/beats
 - Facility to show officers with particular specialist skills
- 7.61 The Force currently has 10 licences for Promis; three have been allocated to each division and one to headquarters. A licence is required to update the system, but it can be viewed via a browser facility from other networked machines. The system will be ready for use as soon as it is populated with the required data. It has already been decided at OSG that implementation should proceed as soon as possible and that this should be achievable by the end of February 2002. In the meantime the appropriate business processes must be agreed and put in place. The three Operations Superintendents have been tasked with progressing this issue.

RECOMMENDATION 16

Divisional staff should normally populate the Promise database, but PSD staff should be trained to update it, in order to cater for short notice changes.

- 7.62 Divisional staff prepare duties at present and should continue to do so, but PSD will be best placed to make short notice changes out of normal working hours. The most appropriate method of notifying such changes will be by e-mail, normally from the relevant first line supervisor.
- 7.63 The potential exists for the system to show availability of all police officers up to Chief Constable, and all support staff. It would be too ambitious to expect this to operate immediately, but the database should include all staff normally regarded as operational if the benefits in terms of resource deployment are to be realised.

RECOMMENDATION 17

The information to be included on Promis will be agreed corporately and will be to corporate standards.

- 7.64 Divisions may choose to co-ordinate all inputting through one office/postholder or more than one, and other procedures may vary too. However, corporacy should be achievable in the following areas:

- Roles to be included on Promis
- Minimum period of advance duties to be shown
- Authority levels for effecting changes
- Skill sets to be included
- Beats to be shown (where applicable)
- Procedures for updating PSD with details of short notice changes

7.65 Headquarters staff must be included on the database if CR are to be fully informed of available operational resources. The system should show availability of officers in Specialist Operations, Dogs, Air Support, MCSU, SOC and Fraud.

RECOMMENDATION 18
Responsibility for co-ordinating duties of HQ staff and entering them onto Promis should be allocated, if possible to an identified existing post.

No attempt has been made to identify a post for this responsibility. In the first instance it is suggested that departmental commanders be asked to identify any existing clerking/administrative roles where there may be some spare capacity.

7.66 Most police stations and specialist units have officers' duties displayed, typically on a duty sheet showing a number of alterations to cope with changes as these become necessary. In order to establish Promis as the definitive record for the Force, this practice should cease when Promis goes 'live'.

RECOMMENDATION 19
Supervisors should ensure that hand written duty rotas, or duties showing hand written alterations, are no longer displayed

7.67 There is some evidence to suggest that the PSD is being used as a fallback to cover for absences in divisional enquiry offices. It is accepted that on occasions, for various reasons, it may be that enquiry offices are not staffed at the regular times, particularly at smaller stations. However the PSD should not be regarded as a substitute. This is not primarily a question of workloads but of service delivery. PSD staff cannot assist members of the public who wish to produce driving documents or hand in found property. Further, when enquiry offices are closed unexpectedly, PSD staff are asked by callers when they will be open; not an unreasonable enquiry from a member of the public. However, this information is not currently available to the PSD.

RECOMMENDATION 20
The Public Service Desk should be kept fully informed as to opening hours of enquiry offices. The most appropriate process for achieving this should be through divisional duties clerks, with the information being included on the Promis duties system.

7.68 The staff in PSD do not have access to information on beats at present but the necessary electronic maps and licences are available. In order to view road maps and beats they will ideally need a second screen. This will not only be for effective use of Promis, but also for identifying locations and grid references for crime recording purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 21
That the Force purchase additional licences for Promis duties and equips workstations in PSD with split screens

7.69 The Promis licensing costs for ten workstations would be £8,869 and annual maintenance would be a further £2129. This should meet present needs. The distribution of licences should be agreed according to need. There are 10 work stations in PSD, with a maximum of 8 likely to be in use at any one time. To upgrade 10 Service Desk positions to 2 flat panels, dual video cards and extra Ram would cost £12,000, with no annual revenue implications.

Demand Management

- 7.70 There may be scope to reduce demand by referring some work to other agencies or, in some instances, declining to act at all. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act requires local authorities to consider reduction of crime and disorder in the exercise of all their duties. There are some functions presently carried out by the police which could more appropriately be referred to other agencies.

RECOMMENDATION 22.

That the Force develops a firm consistent approach to matters which will no longer receive a response. Where possible it identifies a more appropriate agency to provide a solution to the callers' problem.

- 7.71 The advantages can be summarised as follows:
- Develops a joined up approach to problem solving.
 - Provides a form of education for the public, which will aid the management of their expectations.
 - In the longer term it will assist partner agencies to identify the correct level of resources to match demand for services for which **they** are responsible.
 - Will reduce demand on operational police resources.
 - Will assist in raising morale of operational officers.
 - If correct agency is tasked to problem solve then long-term persistent problems that have been dealt with in the past by a quick fix from the police will be addressed.
- Examples of services which could be discontinued include kenneling stray dogs, dealing with noise complaints, most abandoned vehicles and fly tipping. The only apparent disadvantage to this recommendation would be possible adverse public reaction, at least in the short term.

Resource Management

- 7.72 Whilst it is call management that act as the gatekeepers to demands for service being placed upon the Force, it is the divisions that normally provide the operational response. According to recent activity analysis in the Force, 63% of officers are able to provide a uniformed response to deal with the initial demand for service. This is broken down as follows:

CBO	18%
Response	31%
Specialist uniform	14%

These figures are based on officers' own interpretation of their roles, as indicated on activity sampling cards. In some parts of the Force, particularly the more rural areas, the CBO and response functions are still effectively dual roles. 'Open All Hours' places the average percentage of officers on patrol duties nationally at 56%.

- 7.73 The ability to meet initial demand depends on these front line operational officers' availability. The October activity based costing survey suggests the following proportion of time spent in police stations:

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Force	49.34%	53.75%
'A' Div	46.36%	49.64%
'C' Div	53.37%	55.72%
'D' Div	55.51%	55.01%

When broken down by role, divisional figures are as follows:

	<u>Response officers</u>	<u>CBOs</u>
A Div	45.55%	47.7%
C Div	51.89%	56.95%
D Div	54.65%	48.44%

- 7.74 'Open All Hours' shows a national average of 43% of time spent in the station for response officers, against a Wiltshire equivalent of 51%. The report lists the most common reasons for these officers being committed in the station as:

Causes	Percentage of total hours recorded	
	Community	Response
Paperwork/Case file preparation Wiltshire	9% 15.11%	12% 15.05%
Non-incident-linked paperwork Wiltshire	9% 7.70%	7% 6.87%
Briefings and Meetings Wiltshire	7% 7.73%	8% 7.12%
Dealing with detainees/suspects Wiltshire	N/K 4.1%	5% 5.43%

- 7.75 A full report on the activity sampling exercise will appear early in 2002, but it appears from these preliminary figures that time spent on case file preparation is considerably higher than the national average and may offer the greatest potential for increasing operational availability. The data can be used to prompt both strategic and management level decisions in future. For example:

Possible Strategic Decision: The Force is currently exceeding its BVPI target for expedited files. It might be appropriate to place less emphasis on this area in order to increase officer availability for response.

Possible Management Decision: 'D' Division response officers spend nearly 17% of their time dealing with prisoners and case files, the highest rate in the county and well above the national average. Introduction of a prisoner handling team could assist with this.

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RECOMMENDATION 23

That the Force and Divisional Management make best use of the information obtained during the ABC survey to identify areas where operational officers' time could be better utilised to improve performance against agreed strategic priorities.

- 7.76 It is not suggested that the Force should act purely on the basis of activity sampling data. However, where findings are consistent with other research such as 'Open all Hours' and the recent internal report 'The role of the patrol sergeant in the Wiltshire Constabulary', a persuasive argument can be made. Advantages of this recommendation include:
- Potential to reduce the 'down time' of response officers.
 - Examination of causes of down time provides an opportunity to target and improve business processes.
 - Improvements in business processes have the potential to both raise morale and to reduce the demands on staff.
- 7.77 At an operational level 41% of officers do not believe that their role is clearly defined (para 6.9). It may be that of the remainder some may have an understanding of their role based on actual practice rather than agreed policies. One of the findings from the 'role of the sergeant' report was that sergeants felt they were not being given clear direction on priorities. This suggests that supervisors, and presumably other operational officers, have no clear idea as to which demands need to receive what level of response.
- 7.78 It is not the response 1 calls that are the problem area, but the remaining calls for service. At the present time there is no Force patrol strategy, yet this is one of the fundamental areas that will be subject of examination when the BCUs are inspected HMIC, starting in 1992.

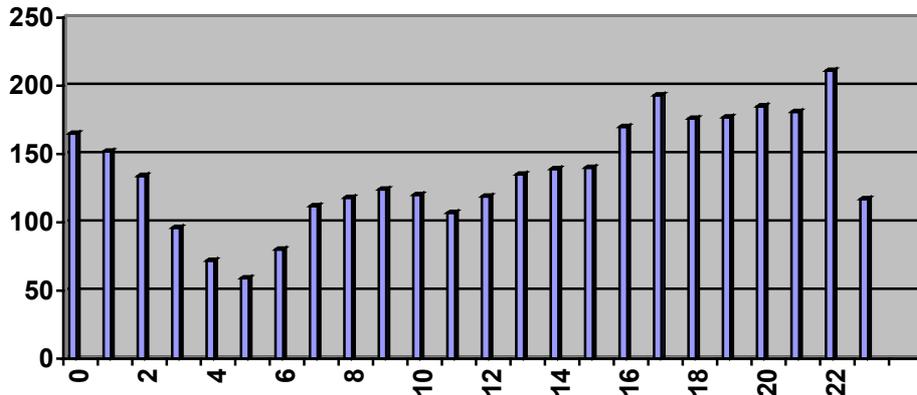
RECOMMENDATION 24

That the Force prepares and implements an agreed patrol strategy as a matter of priority

Advantages:

- Will provide a framework for defining roles of patrolling officers.
 - Will provide a clear link with other relevant strategies eg the crime strategy.
 - Will assist divisions when they are subject to HMIC inspections.
 - Will provide a clear link with recommendation 5.
 - Will assist in providing direction for front line supervisors.
- 7.79 There is evidence to show that CBOs regularly provide response cover in the absence of response drivers. This is not only a local issue; it also receives attention in 'Open All Hours'. The impact of this on their efforts to tackle the longer term quality of life, partnership and community issues should not be under estimated. This latter group makes up the bulk of the present category 3 response calls that need a consistent response from a local officer, often working in conjunction with partner agencies.
- 7.80 This report does not attempt to define the correct balance between response and CBO posts but the following principles could be applied across the Force:
1. Response capability should be sufficient to avoid abstractions from CBO roles in other than exceptional circumstances
 2. In order to achieve 1 above, the average geographic area of responsibility of CBOs may have to increase
 3. The core role of response officers will be to deal with category 1 & 2 incidents, which should be managed by the control rooms.
 4. The core role of CBOs will be to deal with category 3 incidents and other community, crime reduction and partnership work, managed in divisions.
- 7.81 There is a need for divisions to be more effective in optimising all of the resources that are available to them. This review did not include an examination of the variable shift arrangements (VSAs) currently in place throughout the Force. There are a number of perceived advantages to

VSAAs, but it is suggested that, of these, the matching of resources to demand should be paramount. A profile of demand over 24 hours by reference to immediate response logs, giving the number of incidents from January 2000 to December 2001, is shown below:



This profile might be used as a basis for decisions on core shift patterns for response officers. The data is readily available on a divisional basis. Most VSAs cater for the peak shown around 22.00hrs, but not for that shown earlier in the evening.

- 7.82 Similar profiles can readily be prepared to show other types of demand, for example negotiated logs, which might assist in determining duty times for CBOs.

RECOMMENDATION 25

That divisions should examine duty patterns, including existing VSAs, with a view to matching peaks in demand with maximum staffing levels

- 7.83 Practice varies across the Force, but often the person responsible for preparing duties for one set of officers (for example Traffic, CID) does so with no knowledge of staffing levels elsewhere (for example uniform response). This can result in unusually low, or high, staffing levels across several functions on a particular day. A more co-ordinated approach to planning of duties is necessary if best use is to be made of operational resources.

RECOMMENDATION 26

Divisions should ensure that duties for officers whose roles are operational should be co-ordinated. Where potential shortfalls are identified through this process, remedial action should be taken.

- 7.84 All divisions have traffic departments, whose officers are probably the best trained in the Force to respond to incidents quickly and safely. Whilst traffic units are sometimes deployed to incidents other than collisions, this is often only as a last resort. Activity sampling suggests that there is scope to make better use of traffic officers, who at present spend 19% of their time on 'preventative patrol' as against 15% and 16% for CBOs and response officers respectively.

RECOMMENDATION 27

That increased use should be made of traffic officers to provide a first response to priority incidents.

- 7.85 This could be achieved in a number of ways. At one extreme, traffic departments as they presently exist could be disbanded in order to supplement response teams. At the other end of the scale control room staff could simply be encouraged to make greater use of traffic units. It is probable that the former would result in an unacceptable loss of expertise to the Force and the latter would be ineffective. A solution between these extremes could offer valuable resilience within the

response function, thereby reducing abstraction of CBOs. This issue should be considered in conjunction with Recommendations 25 and 26.

- 7.86 The Force already operates a number of policies quoted as best practice in ‘Open all Hours’, but a number of questions raised in that report and in the HMIC inspection protocol on patrol may warrant further examination. This review has not examined these in detail but offers these as suggestions:

<p style="text-align: center;">SUGGESTION 3.</p> <p>Examine whether specialist squads are achieving the aims set for them when they were set up, or whether some officers could be returned to core roles.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SUGGESTION 4.</p> <p>Better use could be made of specialist traffic investigation officers as a central pool, as presently happens with dogs and SOC officers. Centralisation could free up a small number of posts, but would in any event assist with the allocation of resources to investigation of serious and fatal collisions</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SUGGESTION 5.</p> <p>There may be scope to increase the number of officers wearing uniform, without fundamentally changing their roles. This would identify them more clearly as police officers in the event of a requirement to respond to incidents.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SUGGESTION 6.</p> <p>At larger stations the make up of individual shifts should be reviewed to ensure an appropriate balance of skills and experience.</p>

Additional Issues Arising from Benchmarking

- 7.87 Information gained from benchmarking has been included at various points in this report. The following section lists some practices from other forces. Inclusion does not imply that the practice is recommended for Wiltshire, but in some cases further consideration may be merited.
- Norfolk have an arrangement with the Environmental Health Department covering abandoned vehicles. If a vehicle is abandoned, untaxed or causing an obstruction an officer faxes details to that department which will arrange for removal.
 - Lincolnshire have a resource allocation model which has found favour with several other forces. A paper copy is held in the best value unit.
 - Dyfed Powys have recruited a call handling manager, a former business analyst, whose role includes development of multi skilling and a 'warm transfer' policy whereby operators ensure a call to an extension is answered before transferring it.
 - Kent Police have been referred to as having developed effective means of educating the public and managing expectations. If the Force decides to embark on a similar campaign the Best Value unit holds relevant contact details.
 - The Metropolitan Police are currently developing non deployment guidelines (see Recommendation 22 of this report), but details could not be obtained in time for inclusion in this report. The Best Value unit holds contact details for the relevant Metropolitan Police staff.
- 7.88 A considerable amount of information was gathered during this review from the benchmarking visits to Staffordshire and Devon and Cornwall. This has been referred to in some sections of this report, but more detailed information is available from Mrs Boyer, the Benchmarking Officer. Her report is available to managers within call management and may offer ideas to help achieve further improvements.

Terms of reference

Appendix A

Review: Managing Demand through Improved Service Delivery

Brief for the review:

Scope

To examine ways in which the Wiltshire Constabulary can make best use of limited resources to deliver a service which reflects the priorities as contained in the Local Policing Plan and meets the realistic needs and expectations of the public. Specifically this will involve examining:

1. Policies and procedures for managing demand with particular emphasis on the Public Service Desk (this term shall be taken to include Crime Desks) and the deployment of divisional operational staff
2. The roles, skills, knowledge and training of staff employed in Central Call Handling, Public Service Desk and Control Rooms.
3. The roles of those divisional police officers whose primary duty is immediate response to incidents and those whose primary duty is for the community policing of a geographic area.
4. Availability of information relevant to deployment of operational staff, for example: the task required, duty rosters, IT systems, geographic areas of responsibility, roles of staff.
5. The means by which the PSD informs divisions of matters it resolves without tasking a divisional resource.
6. Present and likely future workloads of staff working in Call Handling, Public Service Desk and Control Rooms.

To make recommendations intended:

1. To identify clear standards and guidance which determine the service the public can expect from the Wiltshire Constabulary
2. To identify opportunities for reducing demand on operational resources by alternative means of service delivery.
3. To ensure that only incidents requiring deployment of an operational resource are routed to the Control Rooms
4. To clearly define roles of operational staff, thereby ensuring that operational deployment of resources is consistent and appropriate to the circumstances.
5. To ensure that staff employed in Call Handling, PSD and Control Room have the information and training necessary to help reduce demand on operational resources.
6. To ensure that quality checks are in place, sufficient to monitor standards of service delivery

Recommendations may include medium term solutions but will also include firm proposals for improvement in service delivery in the immediate future. In making recommendations, due regard should be paid to the impact of likely changes to working practices arising from initiatives such as e policing, Teamphone, PSRCP, developments in IT

Stakeholders

The following stakeholders have been identified:

The Public

Staff working in roles affected by this review

First and subsequent line managers of staff working in areas affected by this review

Staff Associations

Operational Strategy Group

Critical success factors

1. Public satisfaction with the resolution of their calls to the Wiltshire Constabulary
2. Reduction of inappropriate deployments of operational officers

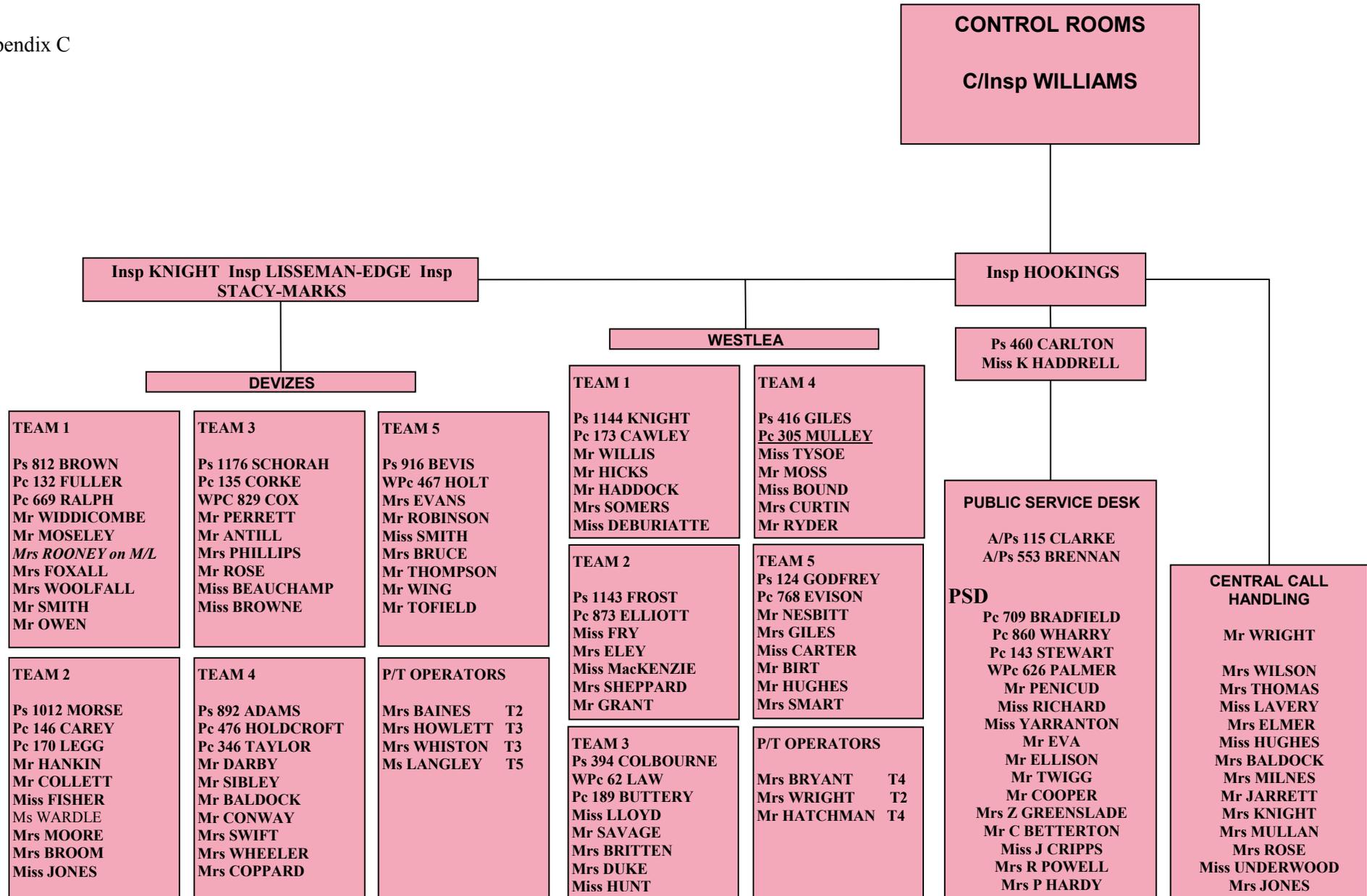
- Methodology:** The review will use the agreed six stage review methodology, adapted to the needs of this particular review. Reasons for any significant departure from the six stage review methodology will be agreed by the Best Value Manger, the PALO and the Service Liaison Managers. The Best Value Manager will report on this review at meetings of the Operational Strategy Group, which will monitor progress. The final report will be considered by OSG prior to submission to Force Forum.
- The review team:** Overall responsibility - Chief Inspector Roger Warner (Best Value Manager)
Review co-ordinator - Inspector Adrian Griffiths (Best Value Review Manager)
Service liaison manager – Ch/Supts Abbott and Stayt
PALO – (to be notified)
Other BV Team members
- Time-scales:** A report on this review, with proposals for improvement in service delivery, should be prepared by 31st December 2001.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

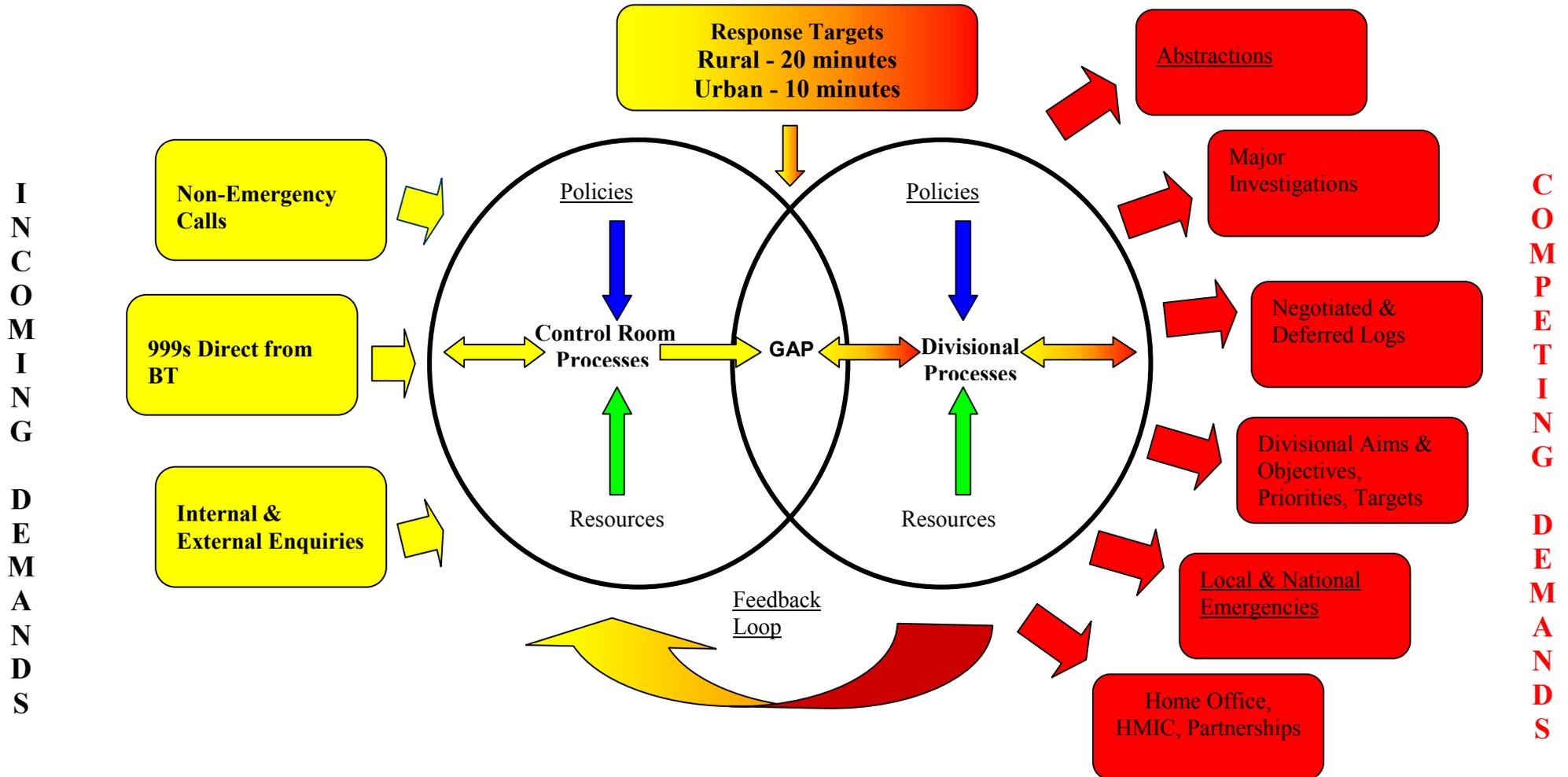
Appendix B

RECOMMENDATIONS		
1	Recruit support staff for CCH, PSD and CR in blocks at set intervals during the year.	
2	Effective steps should be taken by management to ensure that trends with regard to the causes of complaints are addressed. The remedial action to be built into recruit training, tutor training and existing staff refresher training.	
3	Take steps to ensure force is educated as to the whereabouts of information that has in the past only been available from CCH.	
4	That the media/PR department undertakes a campaign to highlight the wastage caused by inappropriate use of the '999' system. In addition it draws attention to matters that are clearly not police issues which the public should refer elsewhere.	
5	That a basic scripting procedure be introduced for CCH staff, to be applied to calls other than those for a specific extension number or individual.	
6	That the force re-establishes response grade 2.	
7	Control room should in principle receive and manage all response 1 and 2 incidents whilst PSD should record and allocate response 3 and 4 incidents	
8	Incident logs for grade 3 and 4 incidents should not be updated and resulted centrally, except to record initial allocation	
9	Divisions should agree simple, consistent and corporate procedures for allocation of grade 3 incidents	
10	That three substantive Sergeants be allocated to the PSD/crime desk and that continuing need for these posts be assessed after six months	
11	That the 'D' Division crime desk posts be transferred to the PSD as soon as this is considered feasible	
12	That the PSD continues to operate only between the hours of 0700 and 0300, for the foreseeable future	
13	That the Force should examine the best way of continuing funding for the PSD beyond the year 2003. Decisions on this issue should be taken well before implementation, in order to avoid loss of staff who are presently on fixed term contracts	
14	Quantitative and qualitative performance targets should now be set for the PSD. These should be incremental in nature, in order to allow for continuing development of staff	
15	That reception and general site security duties be removed from being a call management responsibility and be outsourced.	
16	Divisional staff should normally populate the Promise database, but PSD staff should be trained to update it, in order to cater for short notice changes.	
17	The information to be included on Promis will be agreed corporately and will be to corporate standards	
18	Responsibility for co-ordinating duties of HQ staff and entering them onto Promis should be allocated, if possible to an identified existing post	
19	Supervisors should ensure that hand written duty rotas, or duties showing hand written alterations, are no longer displayed	
20	The Public Service Desk should be kept fully informed as to opening hours of enquiry offices. The most appropriate process for achieving this should be through divisional duties clerks, with the information being included on the Promis duties system.	
21	That the Force purchase additional licences for Promis duties and equips workstations in PSD with split screens	
22	That the Force develops a firm consistent approach to matters which will no longer receive a response. Where possible it identifies a more appropriate agency to provide a solution to the callers' problem	

23	That the Force and Divisional Management make best use of the information obtained during the ABC survey to identify areas where operational officers' time could be better utilised to improve performance against agreed strategic priorities	
24	That the Force prepares and implements an agreed patrol strategy as a matter of priority	
25	That divisions should examine duty patterns, including existing VSAs, with a view to matching peaks in demand with maximum staffing levels	
26	Divisions should ensure that duties for officers whose roles are operational should be co-ordinated. Where potential shortfalls are identified through this process, remedial action should be taken	
27	That increased use should be made of traffic officers to provide a first response to priority incidents	
SUGGESTIONS		
1	That the Force investigates the development and deployment of a scripting product to assist with grading assessment	
2	That the Force gives consideration to implementing the 'receiver' 'dispatcher' model as soon as possible.	
2a	That over a period of time the roles of call handler and PSD operator be merged	
3	Examine whether specialist squads are achieving the aims set for them when they were set up, or whether some officers could be returned to core roles	
4	Better use could be made of specialist traffic investigation officers as a central pool, as presently happens with dogs and SOC officers. Centralisation could free up a small number of posts, but would in any event assist with the allocation of resources to investigation of serious and fatal collisions	
5	There may be scope to increase the number of officers wearing uniform, without fundamentally changing their roles. This would identify them more clearly as police officers in the event of a requirement to respond to incidents	
6	At larger stations the make up of individual shifts should be reviewed to ensure an appropriate balance of skills and experience	



Managing Immediate Response 'Push-Pull Model'



Critical Success

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| SMART Corporate Aims & Clear Policies | Understanding of each others Expectations | Determination & Optimisation of Resources | Training, Skills & Competencies | Effective Management & Supervision | Lean & Integrated Processes | On-going Review & Evaluation |
| Appropriate & Integrated IT/IS Systems | Effective Communication Channels | SMART Targets and/or SLAs | Performance and Quality Evaluation | Meeting the Needs of the Public | Crime Reduction & Partnerships | Publics 999 Awareness & Education |

DEFINITION OF CURRENT 3 GRADE RESPONSE CODES

Appendix E

- Immediate
- Where there is a danger to life.
 - Where violence is being used or threatened.
 - Where a crime is in process
 - Where a traffic accident occurs and there is injury or serious congestion
 - Where the operator or person taking the call assesses that an immediate response is necessary
- Negotiated
- Where an immediate response is not essential, but a response is desirable either within the hour, the same day, or on a future date.
 - Where an immediate response is not essential, but a response is desirable either from a particular individual or resource.
 - A response that is agreed with the caller and that agreement will be recorded on the log.
- Referred
- Where no foreseeable resource implication and no specific resource deployment is made by the control room.
 - Where the matter may be referred to an identified member of staff, an identified department, or another organisation.
 - Where advice only is given and the operator feels that it is appropriate to create a log.

Anticipated Benefits from Public Service Desk

Appendix F

1. Reduced tasking of officers to incidents

- ✓ Negate the need for an officer to attend when correct advice is given.
- ✓ 24 hour reporting of crime.
- ✓ Prompt action when telephone investigation necessary
- ✓ Circulation of stolen property
- ✓ Abandoned vehicles.
- ✓ Nuisance phone calls.

2. Provide a better service to the public

- ✓ More accessible help and advice
- ✓ A single point of reference

3. Improved handling of calls

- ✓ Emergency calls for assistance
- ✓ Radio traffic
- ✓ Enquiries from the public / our own organisation.

4. Better working conditions for staff

- ✓ Offer more diversity and career progression
- ✓ More time to deal with routine enquiries
- ✓ Reduce pressure of working in the Control Room
- ✓ Career development opportunities

5. Reduce the burden on the Operational Control Room to:

- ✓ Improve morale
- ✓ Increase Quality of Service
- ✓ Improved safety for the caller – both Public and Police
- ✓ Caller satisfaction through improved call fulfilment
- ✓ Opportunity to keep the public informed

6. Future proof call handling within the organisation

- ✓ Separates out the essential Police functions
- ✓ Packages up those functions which might fit with 'Police Direct', outlined in proposed National Call handling strategy.

7. Offers the Force resilience for escalating incidents

- ✓ Temporary closure of Public Service Desk to manage calls and assist with major incidents

8. Provide interface for Electronic Service Delivery developments

- ✓ New BVPI's for electronic service delivery
- ✓ E- government work
- ✓ ACPO Council agreed that all forces should have an interactive web site capability by 31st December 2001. (Interactive means capable at least of receiving and responding to e-mails)

Level 1 – Immediate Response

This means that there is an immediate and serious threat to life or property, or the offence is in progress and there is a probability of the offender being detained. National call handling guidelines describe it as a ‘critical or life threatening situation’, A physical police presence is required

Performance Indicator: Urban 10 minutes Rural 20 minutes

Level 2 – Delayed Response

A physical police presence to the scene is necessary. A police resource should be despatched to arrive as soon as is reasonably practicable taking other priorities into consideration

Performance Indicator: Attendance normally within 4 hours. Time of arrival and departure to be shown on the incident log

Level 3 – Agreed Response

A managed response is agreed with the caller to deal with an identified policing issue. Call handlers must include the agreed timescales on the incident log in order that local supervisors can arrange for compliance with the arrangement. Time of arrival and departure, together with officer dealing, must be indicated on the log

Level 4 – Station response

A physical police attendance is not required. Details of the incident will be recorded, analysed and investigated to the appropriate level and/or referred to the appropriate department or agency for further consideration