

MEETING	Strategic Executive Board
DATE	5 th February 2021
TITLE OF REPORT	Public contact - CSCJ plan - (66) Build a comprehensive picture of the inputs and outputs of information that flows into and out of the Constabulary and suitable public feedback mechanisms.
SUBMITTED BY	Chief Superintendent Matthew Nicholls
PURPOSE OF REPORT	Provide an update on progress against the PCC's Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan Priority 66.
DECISION(S) REQUIRED	To agree with the approach outlined in the paper
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	The work has incurred two separate costs. The first is opportunity cost of staff working on the solution. The second is a financial cost of circa £4k (found from within Constabulary budgets) to pay for development work with the technical supplier (Rant and Rave) and to pay for increased SMS traffic.
RISK IMPLICATIONS	The risks are limited. Not doing the work that is about to be piloted (mid Feb) has two implications. Firstly, there would be less data available to the Constabulary to understand the sentiment of the public who contact us about incidents they have witnessed or matters that have involved them where they have contacted the police (not involving crimes). Secondly, not taking the opportunity to provide a better level of customer service.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	There is no legal requirement for this work to be done albeit it is a commitment within the PCCs CSCJ plan. It is being piloted in order to improve caller experiences and build trust and confidence in the Constabulary to then further increase the flow of information from the public to the police.
EQUALITIES IMPACTS	The proposed work will have a greater reach into those members of the public that contact us for a reason. The responses have been carefully considered in the SMS messages that will be in plain language.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION EXEMPTION SECTION IF APPLICABLE	Not exempt
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1. INTRODUCTION

Priority 66 of the PCC’s Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan is:
 “Build a comprehensive picture of the inputs and outputs of information that flows into and out of the Constabulary and suitable public feedback mechanisms”.

There is some concern that ‘non-crime’ reported to the Constabulary does not flow through the system in the same audited and structured way than those reported and classified as ‘crime’, and does not always result in a feedback mechanism. Concerns with how long the public and victims are waiting when they have reported information to receive a response and that information/intelligence submitted is not acted upon. Some reassurance is required that digital solutions particularly after initial contact have been explored to support a public-centric approach.

Up until this point there has been no co-ordinated approach to close the feedback loop to those members of the public that contact the Constabulary regarding non-crime matters of which there are many thousands over the course of a year.

2. BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT

Following a period of local consideration and national benchmarking, work on this CSCJ commitment was reinvigorated in June 2020 utilising some operational officers, staff from the FCR and the Thinking and Analysis team to look at just how could the Constabulary close the feedback loop in a way that provided genuine utility (value) to the member of the public who contacted the Constabulary, whilst utilising technology and minimising costs. It was intended to be a transformative piece of work.

The particular focus of this work is on those contacts that do NOT involve a crime. VCOP exists for managing contact, updates and feedback to victims of crime. This is about all those other contacts (everything else that is not a crime) of which there are thousands. A significant task that needed breaking down so it was both manageable and achievable.

The work was predicated on creating a virtuous circle – namely feedback given to a caller / user of our services along the lines of ‘thank you for your call this was the outcome...’ and ‘you did the right thing in calling the police...’ a belief that this ultimately enhances trust and confidence, which leads to more people feeding information and intelligence into the Constabulary, which allows the Constabulary to act on concerns.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the benchmarking exercise across other forces for views and insights into whether, and if so, how other forces undertake this task proved negative. It either does not happen or is fairly ad hoc and unstructured with little meaningful feedback, if any, being captured. Some Forces provide a ‘thank you’ at initial point of contact. The Hertfordshire Constabulary team wanted to go beyond just a ‘thank you’ ensuring that the caller got utility (value) from the process.

Perhaps the one exception was West Midlands Police where they have a cultural focus around customer satisfaction, but there was little or no recording of 'contacts' and capturing the feedback in a meaningful way. The focus appeared to be on criminal investigations. None had digital solutions to assist.

Following analysis of all the available caller data and discussions within the working group – the incident type 'Transport – Highways Disruption' was selected as the grouping of incidents to focus this work on initially. These types of incidents along with 'Admin' and 'concern for welfare' make up the top 3 incident types that are not 'crime' and frequently involve 3rd party witnesses to focus feedback upon.

The attached PowerPoint presentation provides detail around the process and how it will operate and how it will be monitored. The team are hopeful that this will increase caller satisfaction that will ultimately build trust and confidence by providing better service provision through feedback (virtuous circle) and build on the principles of a Prevention First approach.

3. DECISION(S) REQUIRED (where applicable)

To agree to the pilot taking place as a system to capture feedback and respond to the public as outlined in priority 66 in the CSCJ (66) plan.

4. DISCUSSION/ PROPOSAL/ MAKING THE CASE FOR CHANGE

The pilot will begin with 'RTC / Transport' matters to hone and monitor the process as this provides many opportunities to deploy the automated messaging in a way that is bespoke to the type of incident reported.

The pilot will run for six months and then be formally reviewed to gather feedback and establish any learning. It will be at this point where the team will look at other groupings of incident types that might be suitable for the automated 'closing the feedback loop' process.

The risks associated with running this pilot are minimal and are as described in the initial summary above. The financial implications revolve around development time with the supplier (Rant and Rave) which have been covered off for the pilot. If expanded there will be further development work that will need to be paid for any new campaign. Each new item of work will vary in the technical scope with Rant and Rave and the architecture of the extraction from Athena and Storm. However, we estimate this to be between £2,500 and £3,000 one off (2-3 days' supplier work) and there is a cost (minimal at 3p per text to the Constabulary) to every SMS that is sent out to the public. We forecast that, for this particular campaign, the SMS cost will be around £240 per year. As the feedback expands more messages will be sent, thus volume dependant.

The pilot is due to go-live February 2021 and as stated will be reviewed after 6 months specifically to understand the utility (value) that the caller is getting from closing the feedback loop. At this point a decision will be made around if and how to expand into other incident types where the public have called the Constabulary.

The measure of success will be around the level of sentiment scores that are received back into the Constabulary alongside measures of satisfaction and ultimately trust and confidence levels in the

Constabulary that lead to higher levels of engagement (for example community intelligence submissions).

5. PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE

This paper seeks approval from the Commissioner to proceed with the innovative and transformative pilot and review the data from the pilot 6 months after implementation, which will feed into organisational learning. At that point consideration will be given to expanding the (closing of) the feedback loop into other incident types in order to enhance the caller experience and further build trust and confidence in the Constabulary

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS (If any)

PowerPoint presentation attached.

5th Feb 2021
Matthew Nicholls
Chief Superintendent