

Ms Gwen Swinburn
Via email:

Our ref: NY4640

30 September 2019

Dear Gwen

Thank you for your recent question about staffing in the North Yorkshire Police (NYP) Force Control Room (FCR). As you know, the FCR has been a specific focus of my oversight work for many years, with the service being unacceptable at times, but improvements more recently. Consistency remains difficult however, and even within 2019 monthly average waiting times have fluctuated between 60 seconds to 4 minutes for 101 calls, and 3 seconds to 16 seconds for 999.

As a consequence, I have invested heavily in the FCR over the last two years, which was the main reason for increasing the precept in 2018/19. That investment amounted to £3 million, leading to an additional 32 FCR staff, amongst other improvements to the building, technology and better crime recording. Further details of that decision can be found in the decision notice on my website: <https://www.northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk/decision-notice/dn-05-2018-101-999-crime-recording-improvements/>.

Later that year, we began the Transform 2020 programme, seeking £10 million savings over four years. This is a comprehensive and much needed programme, to help ensure the force was as efficient and effective as possible, freeing up savings which could be reinvested into front-line policing. You will note our latest HMICFRS grading for efficiency has been restored to 'good' having been 'requires improvement' previously.

Transform 2020 has resulted in various staff and departments being placed into formal 'consultation' (as is mandated by HR policy) whilst new ways of working were identified, and efficiency and effectiveness improved, including the FCR. Whilst the changes were different for different teams, in the FCR they were largely around ways of working and shift patterns. A small number of roles were being made redundant and new roles created.

During this process there were no 'sackings', nor compulsory redundancies. Instead, we sought to redeploy staff to new roles within the same or different teams wherever possible. As part of this, voluntary redundancy was also offered to some people who were not at risk of redundancy from across the organisation, in order to allow NYP to ensure that sufficient roles would be available for redeployment, negating any requirement for compulsory redundancies.



NYP also froze police staff recruitment, including in the FCR, for a period of time so that everyone who wanted to remain with NYP had the greatest chance of doing so. This did however mean short-term shortages of staffing in the organisation, including the FCR, which could not be avoided.

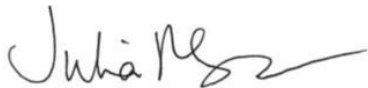
At the same time, there has been significant police officer recruitment, and the FCR is traditionally a 'feeder' for police officers and often loses staff to successful applicants. To reiterate, no FCR staff were given compulsory redundancy or 'sacked' as a result of T2020 during this period. However, the combination of police officer recruitment and T2020 has led to a greater reduction in staffing than we had anticipated.

FCR recruitment and training have now progressed quickly, although we remain 20 FTEs short of the budgeted staffing level. We have also seen performance in the FCR begin to improve, as more staff become operational and demand reduces as we enter the latter part of the year.

Fully staffing the FCR is likely however to remain challenging. Notwithstanding the extension of training facilities, NYP can only train so many FCR staff at once, and of course we are experiencing significant local and national recruitment campaigns for police officers.

I would like to finish by adding that the staff in the FCR do a fantastic job and I appreciate the professionalism and effort they put into their work each and every day. If you have any other questions about the FCR or would like to discuss anything in more detail, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Julia Mulligan
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire

