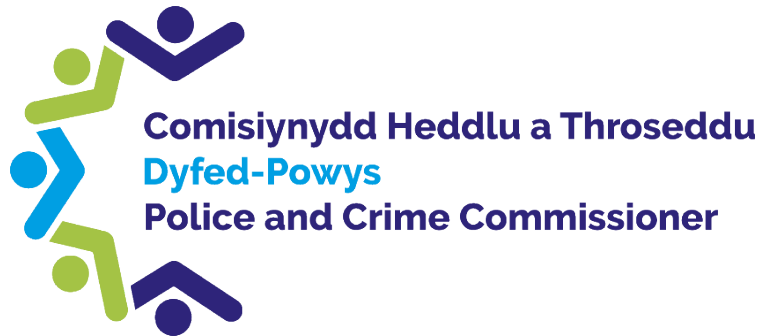




Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg yn ogystal â Saesneg.

This document is available in Welsh as well as English.



Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys

Scrutiny Panel Dip Sampling Exercise Force Communication Centre Call handling

Panel Members' Findings & Feedback

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1.0 Overview, Background, Purpose and Methodology

The Quality Assurance Terms of Reference, available on the PCC's website, states the background and purpose of the Panel along with how the dip sampling is carried out and what the Panel is asked to consider.

At the meeting of the Commissioner's Quality Assurance Panel held on the 30th July 2025, a random selection of Force Communication Call recordings were considered by the Members. Members listened to the audio recording and reviewed the corresponding STORM (Force Command and Control system) record.

To support the Panel's understanding of the Force Communication Centre, the Deputy Head of Contact and Incident Management and a Trainer provided inputs on the work of the FCC. This included an overview of the work of the FCC highlighting that they are responsible for all 999 calls, all 101 calls, all incoming social media contact, 80% of Single Online Home contacts and emails. The Panel were also provided with the figures relating to all contacts for the previous month to allow a greater understanding of demand.

The Quality Assurance Panel members were asked to review the sample of calls considering the below criteria:

- The call opening
 - "Heddlu Dyfed-Powys Police Speaking how can I help you?"
- Establishing the caller needs
 - Logical progression of questions to quickly determine the purpose of the call
 - The call handler explains to the caller what course of action they are taking
 - Caller's needs are immediately identified
- Investigation & data entry
 - Clear, logical questioning ensures that the information is quickly

- & logically recorded
 - Caller's details are recorded accurately (Date of Birth, full address, and telephone numbers)
 - Call handler confirms information and all key points as necessary
 - If relevant information is offered it is recorded on STORM
 - No call-back would be needed as all relevant information captured
- Victim / vulnerability established & recorded
 - Thorough questioning quickly establishes that caller is a victim, be it of crime or otherwise
 - Thorough logical & sensitive questioning establishes if caller is vulnerable
- Rapport / professional manner
 - Call handler from the start of the call shows the caller politeness and empathy
 - Starts to build rapport from the outset
 - It is clear that the caller is comfortable speaking to the call handler
- Positive service offered
 - Call handler signposts caller to information / services, transfers the call to the CIH or tasks an officer to attend
- Safeguarding/Scene Preservation Advice given if applicable
 - Appropriate safeguarding advice given e.g., lock windows and doors or caller advised to place dustbin lid over the broken glass footprint.
- Recap
 - Call handler recaps pertinent points either throughout the call or as a summary at the end of the call

- Closure advice / management of expectations
 - Call handler gives relevant advice to caller
 - Caller is fully aware of what will happen next for them
 - STORM reference is provided (caller is clear what the STORM reference is) and text to any mobile provided by the caller
 - It is clear that caller is reassured / happy with service provided

2.0 Executive Summary

In total, the Panel reviewed eight Force Communication Centre Calls.

Positive Feedback

- Members were satisfied that all the calls that were considered were handled with a calm approach that would have put the callers at ease particularly during difficult situations.
- Members noted there was a good rapport built with callers in 5 of the 8 calls.

Areas for Improvement

- It was noted that during two calls there appeared to be different levels of engagement with the caller which may have been dependent on the type of call. A point was raised to remind staff to be as engaging as much as they possibly can regardless of the type of call.
- The Panel noted that in two cases call handlers were inputting information and there were periods of silence, it is suggested that call handlers should explain to the caller what they are doing.
- The Panel identified that in three of the eight calls there was silence from the call handler whilst they recorded the information that had been relayed from the caller. The panel felt that periods of silence were not reassuring for the caller.
- The Panel felt that there was an opportunity to provide additional safety advice in one of the calls and to further explore vulnerability issues during three calls.

3.0 Review of Calls

Call 1**Circumstance**

A domestic incident where the caller has noted a known individual attempting to gain access to the house that was deemed to require an immediate response.

Positives

- The Panel Members noted the call handler remained calm and reassuring throughout the call.
- The Panel Members also highlighted the call handler had established there may be additional issues affecting the situation such as mental health issues of the caller and the alleged perpetrator.
- Members noted that appropriate safeguarding advice was given on several occasions by the call handler.

Areas for Improvement

- It was agreed by Members that during the call there were periods when the only sound was that of typing whilst the call handler inputted the information. It was suggested that the caller should have advised that there may be occasions when the caller may hear them typing but they were fully engaged with the call.

Queries Raised

- There were periods of silence whilst notes were typed up and a query was raised as to whether this should have been explained to callers.

Call 2**Circumstance**

An incident of an individual reporting criminal damage to a property that was deemed to require a standard response.

Positives

- As the call progressed the call handler made a good effort to gather relevant information although the caller was vague on occasions

Areas for Improvement

- Panel Members noted that the call handler initially seemed disengaged from the call and not as interested as they would have expected.
- The call was placed on hold, but it was not explained fully the reason behind this action.
- On occasion members noted that the call handler spoke over the caller. However, members felt this may have been to gather the relevant information.

Queries Raised

- Panel members noted that there was no explanation to the caller

on why they were put on hold. This is a repeat point that was raised during the consideration of FCC calls in 2022.

Call 3

Circumstance

A call reporting a Road Traffic Collision that was deemed to require an immediate response.

Positives

- The Panel noted that the caller remained calm throughout the call including when there was poor signal connectivity from the caller.
- Members were concerned that given the nature of the call, there was no advice provided to the caller on keeping themselves and others involved safe. It was felt that the advice should have been for the caller to remain in a place of safety and not walk around the scene to provide updates to the call handler.
- The Panel thought that the Methane Methodology could have been followed during this call.
- It was also noted that there was less information contained on the STORM Log than the call handler took.
- There should have been more assurances provided by the call handler on what services were on their way and their estimated time of arrival.

Queries Raised

- Could a refresher session be arranged for staff on the importance of ensuring the caller and anyone else involved in the incident is safe.

- It was noted that the call handler sometimes spoke over the caller and it was appreciated that depending on the call type this may be necessary to ensure a prompt response, on this occasion it was not warranted.

Call 4

Circumstance

A report of a domestic incident that was deemed to require a standard response

Positives

- Members noted that this call was handled extremely well.
- The Panel could understand from the call that a good rapport was built with the caller.
- The Members thought that the call handler was efficient at gathering the information but did so with a balance of empathy.

Areas for Improvement

- No areas for improvement were identified.

Queries Raised

- The panel highlighted this call as good practice and felt it could be used for future training purposes.

Call 5

Circumstance

A report of an incident of harassment that was deemed to require a standard response.

Positives

- Members did not identify anything specifically positive with the call but felt that by addressing the areas for improvement highlighted below it would result in service improvement.

Areas for Improvement

- Members advised that they thought there were long gaps of silence while the handler took notes. They would have expected that the call handler would have advised the caller they would be listening while they typed.
- Members thought that the tone of the call handler on occasion seemed condescending and there appeared to be a lack of empathy.
- There was no further probing of mental health issues once the caller had advised they suffered with the issues.
- It was felt that the call was closed with no real explanation of the next steps.

Queries Raised

- Members questioned whether call handlers had aide memoirs for when they are taking calls to ensure that they are asking the correct questions in a logical order.

Call 6**Circumstance**

A report of an incident of harassment that was deemed to require a standard response.

Positives

- The Panel wished to highlight their thoughts that this call was handed exceptionally well and should be held up as best practice.
- The call handler gave specific information and advice that showed empathy with the caller and allowed them to feel at ease.
- The rapport was built from the beginning of the call through the logical questioning undertaken by the handler.

Areas for Improvement

- No areas for improvement were identified.

Queries Raised

- The Panel highlighted this call as good practice and felt it could be used for future training purposes.

Call 7

Circumstance

A report of an incident of Anti-Social Behaviour that was deemed to require an immediate response.

Positives

- The Panel noted the call handler was calm throughout the call.
- It was noted that a good rapport was built with the caller.
- Given the nature of the situation the Panel were encouraged at how the call handler regularly checked if there were any changes to the situation.
- The call handler provided sufficient assurance to the individual

that the Police were on their way and kept the caller updated on progress throughout.

Areas for Improvement

- One negative aspect of the call was it took the caller some time into the call to check whether the caller was alone and it was felt this could have been asked earlier during the call when identifying any vulnerabilities.

Queries Raised

- There were no specific queries raised in relation to this call.

Call 8

Circumstance

A report of an incident of a missing person that was deemed to require a priority response.

Positives

- Members noted that due to the caller's ambiguity, this was a difficult call to handle.
- The call handler persevered with good questioning to gather the relevant information.
- The call handler also remained calm and professional throughout the call

Areas for Improvement

- Members didn't note any areas for improvement for this call but noted that it was quite a difficult one to deal with due to the lack of information coming from the caller.

Queries Raised

- There were no queries raised with this particular call.

4.0 Response to Queries Raised

Panel Members made the following observations:

Observations	Force Response
The Panel wished to highlight calls 4 and 6 as good practice and felt these calls could be used for future training purposes.	It is always a pleasure to use our staff's calls to help train future intakes. Both these calls will be used in future training.
Members noted that there was a lack of safety advice during call 3 and thought that a refresher session could be arranged for staff on the importance of ensuring the caller and anyone else involved in the incident is safe.	The training department will look to deliver relevant training to highlight the importance of the METHANE model and offering advice to callers for safeguarding purposes.
In calls 2 and 3 it was noted that the call handler sometimes spoke over the caller. Whilst it is appreciated that depending on the call type this may be necessary to ensure a prompt response on these occasions it was not warranted.	The department is due to have Active Listening Skills training in the new year where it will be highlighted the importance of allowing the caller to finish speaking whenever possible rather than interrupting.
Panel Members noted that in call 2 there was no explanation to the caller on why they were put on hold. This is a repeat of a point that was raised during the consideration of FCC calls in 2022.	Teams are encouraged to warn callers and explain fully any reasons for being placed on hold. Calls are Quality Assured regularly by the supervisor team to pick up on any matters such as this during 1-to-1 feedback.

Members noted that on several calls there were periods of silence whilst notes were typed up. They felt it important that this should be explained to the callers where appropriate. This was especially so when individuals may hear the typing or other calls in the background.	Teams are encouraged to warn callers and explain fully any periods of silence and reassure them by explaining what they are doing during these moments. Calls are Quality Assured regularly by the supervisor team to pick up on any matters such as this during 1-to-1 feedback.
Members questioned whether call handlers had aide memoirs for when they are taking calls to ensure that they are asking the correct questions in a logical order. If these are in existence it was felt that a reminder should be given to staff on the importance of asking the specific questions required.	There are aide memoirs available. This feedback is accepted and reminder will be shared with staff.