

“Nobody ever rings the police for something good; you are dealing with people who need your help, and you need to lift some pressure off their shoulders.”

Our Force Control Room is often the first point of contact people have with South Yorkshire Police. Many of the colleagues who work there are civilian police staff, who spend their days and nights answering 999 and 101 calls.

Our Contact Resolution Officers are responsible for answering emergency (999) and non-emergency (101) calls from members of the public, Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS), South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR), social care, charities and other police forces.

Harvinder has been a Contact Resolution Officer in our Force Control Room (FCR) for 16 years. She said: “The main reason I wanted to work here was to make a difference to people. I used to work for a not-for-profit organisation and then 16 years ago, I got married and moved to Sheffield. That’s when I applied for this job in SYP.”

The role of a Contact Resolution Officer is varied. Every call you take or person you speak to is different. Some of these aren’t suitable for an emergency police response:

“Help. There is a bat in my bedroom.” “I’ve been charged too much for my coffee.” “There is a chicken in the road.”

However, as Harvinder explains, you can be faced with people in their worst moments: “Nobody ever rings the police for something good; you are dealing with people who need your help, and you need to lift some pressure off their shoulders.

“Much of my role is providing reassurance, calming people down, giving them instructions and advice in difficult situations.

“I was once on the phone to a woman who was being driven around by a group of men against her will. She had no idea where she was, and she was terrified. My job was to extract information to establish where she was, and what kind of danger she was in so officers could get to her quickly.”

Our Force Control Room usually receives over 2,000 calls per day, as well as reports through our online portal and live chat. Contact Resolution Officers then conduct assessments and ensure the call is dealt with properly to ensure there is no further risk.

Harvinder said: “You do feel pressure in the role, and there is a support in place to manage your wellbeing.”

In her 16 years with the force, Harvinder regularly acts up as a Team Leader to support her development. She also works on the Digital Desk managing the force’s social media messages. She said: “I’m happy within FCR. I’m part time, I job share, and the shifts fit around my life. There’s always resilience with overtime when I need it.”

We have vacancies in our Force Control Room right now. When asked what people should consider before applying, Harvinder explained: “Be prepared for variety – both in the calls you receive and the type of people you speak to.

“You are people’s first impression of South Yorkshire Police. If you want to help and you want to do something good, this is the place for you.”

Find out more about our FCR roles and other staff vacancies on our website [here](#).

