

Bolsover District Council

Scrutiny

26th November 2018

Customer Service Standards and CCC Report 2018/19 –
1st April 2018 to 30th September 2018

Report of the Head of Corporate Governance

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide information on the Council's performance in relation to its customer service standards.
- To provide information on the effective management of complaints and customer requests which is central to excellent customer service and the Council can use to improve its services.
- To provide information on the number of compliments, comments and complaints for the period 1st April 2018 to 30th September 2018.

1 Report Details

The purpose of this report is to make Elected Members aware of performance in relation to its Customer Service Standards across the organisation and provides supporting evidence for Customer Service Excellence. Elected Members will note that Customer Service Excellence is compliance checked annually to ensure that the organisation still meets the standard.

Customer Service Standards

Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the key customer service standards by quarterly period, together with the target and the cumulative performance for each standard.

Telephones

Target - 93% to be answered within 20 seconds

Appendix 2 shows the performance between 1st April 2018 and 30th September 2018 by quarterly period. The report identifies 98% (in both Q1 and Q2) of incoming calls are being answered corporately within 20 seconds cumulatively. Those departments not achieving the key customer service standard of 93% for these periods were:

- Housing and Community Safety 88% in Q1 and 92% in Q2
- Customer Service 90% in Q2

Contact Centres

Target - 80% of incoming calls to be answered within 20 seconds

Contact Centres achieved 71% and 75% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (73% cumulatively).

The main contributing factor on performance is the current staffing resource levels. However, 3 vacant posts have now been filled and it is envisaged that performance will start to improve with these new members of staff in post and also the return of staff from long term sickness.

Revenues & Benefits

Target - 60% of incoming calls to be answered within 20 seconds

Revenues & Benefits 'direct dial' achieved 75% and 79% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (77% cumulatively).

E-mails

Target 1 - 100% to be acknowledged within 1 working day

Target 2 - 100% to be replied to within 8 working days

For this reporting period, 1st April 2018 to 30th September 2018:

- 6,026 email enquiries (3,180 in Q1 and 2,846 in Q2) from the public were received through enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- All were acknowledged within one working day
- 99.7% were replied to in full within 8 working days.

Despite other contact channels being available e-mails still appear to be an increasingly popular method of contact, 4,846 e-mails were received in the same period in 2017/18.

Face to face monitoring

Target – 99% not kept waiting longer than 20 minutes at a Contact Centre

Waiting times were monitored during week commencing 9th July 2018. During the week 894 customers called into the Contact Centres 891 of which (99.7%) waited less than 20 minutes to be served. 99% or 1,337 waited less than 15 minutes to be served. This exceeds the corporate target and demonstrates excellent service.

During the same period, 266 callers were served on Meet & Greet at The Arc in Clowne, bringing the total number of callers served during week commencing 9th July 2018 to **1160**.

Compliments, Comments and Complaints (Appendix 3)

Compliments

Appendix 3 (A) shows the number of written compliments received for the period by department. In total 123 written compliments were received and represents a slight decrease of recorded compliments (we received 130 for the same period 2017/18). A good cross section of compliments was received from customers appreciating excellent service, including 39 for Streetscene Services, 21 for Housing, 23 for Customer Services (Contact Centres), and 18 for Revenues and Benefits. As there are some compliments which cross cut departments, the total does not correspond with the total above when viewed in this way.

Comments

Appendix 3 (B) shows the number of written comments received for the period. All 45 were acknowledged and passed to the respective department, within the target time of 3 working days, for consideration when reviewing their service. Some comments raised valid issues and cross cut departments, as such they were responded to corporately. As previously, the total does not correspond with the total above when viewed in this way.

Complaints

Frontline resolution (stage one)

Appendix 3 (C) shows the number of Frontline Resolution complaints received by the Contact Centre service, and recorded on the Customer Information System (Firmstep) and other Contact Centre systems, by department. The customer service standard for responding to these complaints is 3 working days. 85% were responded to within this timescale, which is a significant improvement from the 60% achieved in the same period last year, 2017/18.

Formal Investigation (stage two)

Appendix 3 (D) shows the number of Formal Investigation complaints by department. 98 complaints were received during this period. 97 (99%) were responded to within our customer service standard of 15 working days, the remaining 1 had an extension applied and was responded to within 20 working days.

There were no trends for this period.

As some complaints cross cut departments, the total does not correspond with the total above when viewed in this way.

Internal Review (stage three)

Appendix 3 (E) shows the number of stage three complaints received for the period. These are complainants who have already made a stage two complaint and still feel dissatisfied. During this period 16 stage three complaints were received, all of which were responded to within standard. As some complaints cross cut departments, the total does not correspond with the total above when viewed in this way.

Ombudsman

Appendix 3 (F) shows the status of Ombudsman complaints for 2018/19 as of 31st October 2018. During this period, we received two decisions from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman of 'closed after initial enquiries'. We received one decision of 'Service failure' from the Housing Ombudsman (HO) for the same period. The HO's report highlighted that this was not a straightforward situation for the Council to address and that to a large extent the speed at which the situation could be resolved was beyond our control as we were reliant on the actions of Derbyshire County Council.

The HO decided that there was one particular aspect which the Council could have improved upon and that was in updating the complainant.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

The report is to keep Elected Members informed of volumes and trends regarding customer service standards and compliments, comments, complaints and to remain compliant with the Customer Service Excellence standard.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

The report is to keep Elected Members regularly informed of volumes and trends regarding customer service standards and compliments, comments and complaints. No consultation or equality impact assessment is required.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not applicable as the report is keep Elected Members informed rather than to aid decision making.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

Whilst there are no direct financial implications with regard to the report, the Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well.

In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

In the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner's Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman and, in the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner's Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines. There are no Data Protection implications.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

Not applicable as the report is to keep Elected Members informed.

6 Recommendation

That Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee note the overall performance on compliments/comments and complaints and customer service standards.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	All wards
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Providing Our Customers with Excellent Service Transforming Our Organisation – good governance.

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Customer Service Standards performance by quarterly period 1/4/18– 30/9/18
Appendix 2	Telephony performance by quarterly period 1/4/18 – 30/9/18
Appendix 3:	Compliments, Comments and Complaints information
A:	Compliments by department 1/4/18 – 30/9/18
B:	Comments by department 1/4/18 – 30/9/18
C:	Frontline resolution complaints by department 2018/19
D:	Formal Investigation complaints by department 1/4/18 – 30/9/18
E:	Internal Review complaints by department 1/4/18 – 30/9/18
F:	Ombudsman complaints summary for 2018/19
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
Customer Standards and Complaints Officer	Ext: 2353