

Recommended Item from Scrutiny Committee held on 15th April 2009

879. POLICY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT GROUPS

(ii) PPMG 2 - Corporate Telephony Performance

The Chairman presented a report which detailed a review into the Council's Corporate Telephony Performance. Following a delay in getting the required information from some departments, it was shown that there had been some improvement in performance.

Moved by Councillor K. Walker and seconded by Councillor S. Wallis.

RECOMMENDED that (1) The Chief Executive Officer:

- a. **Confirms where the ownership of the technical support of the telephony software is within the Council to make technical changes in order to maximise telephony efficiency.**
- b. **Confirms where the ownership of the administration and detailed analysis is within the Council which is available to support departments to manage their performance.**
- c. **Supports managers and team leaders to give consistent messages, which are demonstrative of a commitment to the Corporate Standards from the leadership.**
- d. **Revisits the corporate telephony targets up to 2011 to ensure that they are achievable and considered as part of the revision of the Corporate Plan,**

(2) The group continue to monitor the corporate telephony performance,

(3) The review is closed,

(4) The report is forwarded to Executive for approval.

(Scrutiny and Policy Officer/Head of Democratic Services)

Council/ Committee:	Scrutiny	Agenda Item No.:	8(1)(b)
Date:	15 April 2009	Category	
Subject:	Corporate Telephony Performance	Status	Open
Report by:	PPMG2		
Other Officers involved:	Scrutiny and Policy Officer Officer		
Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	People and Performance		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – Providing excellent customer focused services

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

The review supports the Council's aims –

- Customer Focused Services to provide excellent customer focused services. It also supports the priority to improve the quality and consistency of services received by customers.
- Strategic Organisational Development by supporting the priority to monitor, review and improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of all Council Services.

TARGETS

The review supports the target in the Corporate Plan to continually improve our key Customer Service Standards; our targets for 2008/09 include 85% of calls answered in 20 seconds.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The review supports corporate priority to improve the efficiency – by aiming to cut time wasted in waiting for replies and move towards “one stop shop” service which in turn will reduce the time spent on dealing with customer complaints.

THE REPORT

The aim and scope of the review

To investigate the reasons for the agreed targets not being achieved and make recommendations how they could be improved.

The review will cover all telephone calls received by the Council across the departments.

The group have excluded Council response to emails, letters, complaints and face-to-face enquiries at this stage of the review but they may be considered at a later stage.

Involving the community

The group agreed that they understood the issues that the customer would have due to the extended time it was taking to answer the telephone. Therefore it was felt that customers would not be able to add any value to the review.

Evidence

The performance of the Council departments demonstrated that the following areas have consistently failed the agreed target to answer 85/87% of incoming calls within 20 seconds between April 07 to September 08:

- Legal
- Community Services
- Housing
- Switchboard
- Contact Centres

However the following departments have consistently exceeded the target during that period by achieving at least 90%:

- Finance
- ICT
- Human Resources
- Democratic services
- Environmental Health

Information required

The following information was requested from the departments that were not achieving the agreed targets:

- Details of the performance by department from April 08 to present
- Confirmation if the figures provided include internal calls

- Update on actions that have been taken to improve the performance over the last 18 months for the failing departments
- Head of Services of the failing departments to understand any activities that are planned to address the poor performance
- Head of Customer Service and Performance to understand any activities that are planned to address the poor performance
- Maintain contact with the Customer Contact and Access review to ensure there is no duplication of effort. Therefore the focus of the review will exclude the switchboards and contact centres initially.

Areas of concern

Performance and targets

The performance by department was reviewed (see Appendix A).

The group also considered the previous, current and future target and the overall performance against them as detailed below:

07/08 = 85% - highest quarterly achievement was 81%
 08/09 = 87% - highest quarterly achievement to date is 85%
 09/10 = 90%
 10/11 = 93%

The group were concerned about the future increase in the targets when the corporate target had not been achieved to date.

Software

The group were concerned that about the software that supports the telephony system and if it was meeting the Council's needs including:

- Whether the software reports performance accurately (e.g. when the call diverts on after 15 rings and then answered – it is not clear how the system report this)
- While the group were aware that CSPD have responsibility for the administration of the software it is unclear who has ownership for the technical support of the software
- It is unclear if the reporting facility has the ability to provide detailed analysis to enable managers to pinpoint areas where they need to address the performance. **Please note** since this issue was highlighted it has been proved that the reporting facility does have this ability and that the detail has been provided to the areas that are failing to meet the target.

Culture

The group's investigations raised perceived concerns on the culture within the failing departments to putting the customer first including:

- Are issues such as this regarded as an integral part of delivering good customer service and sustaining excellent status in **all** areas of business?
- Attitudes to being questioned about this issue and inertia to provide feedback when asked for information by some suggest perhaps not
- What is the role of managers/team leaders in bringing about this shift in mind-set?
- How do we support/enable managers/team leaders to deliver consistent messages to deliver corporate goals?

Update

During the review, action has been taken by the Chief Executive Officer to improve the performance in the failing areas (see data for 2009 in Appendix A). Although the review highlighted the poor performance, the significant improvement is appreciated by the group. This will help to achieve the agreed target and ultimately improve the service experienced by our customers.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The recommendations of the PPMG be accepted.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial :None

Legal : None

Human Resources : None

RECOMMENDATIONS that

1. The Chief Executive Officer:
 - e. Confirms where the ownership of the technical support of the telephony software is within the Council to make technical changes in order to maximise telephony efficiency
 - f. Confirms where the ownership of the administration and detailed analysis is within the Council which is available to support departments to manage their performance
 - g. Supports managers and team leaders to give consistent messages, which are demonstrative of a commitment to the Corporate Standards from the leadership.
 - h. Revisits the corporate telephony targets up to 2011 to ensure that they are achievable and considered as part of the revision of the Corporate Plan
2. The group continue to monitor the corporate telephony performance

3. The review is closed
4. The report is forwarded to Executive for approval

ATTACHMENT: **N**
FILE REFERENCE:
SOURCE DOCUMENT:

Appendix A Corporate Telephony Performance - % of telephone call answer within 20 seconds

Period	April – June 07	July- Sept 07	Oct – Dec 07	Jan – March 08	April – June 08	July – Sept 08	% of call volumes	Oct – Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	
Target	85%	85%	85%	85%	87%	87%		87%			
Corporate performance	76%	77%	81%	81%	84%	80%		85%			
Areas under performing:											
Legal	82%	79%	80%	83%	83%	83%	2.64	80%	90%	87%	
Community Services	80%	77%	78%	80%	81%	75%	1.94	85%	93%	96%	
Housing	81%	80%	83%	82%	85%	85%	5.35		87%	91%	
Revenue services	81%		84%		85%	81%	17	81%	83%	97%	
Planning	84%										
Procurement	78%	76%									
Contact centres	41%	39%	52%	56%	53%	54%	21	70%			
Switchboard	79%	80%	81%	82%	83%	84%	15.63				

Areas achieving targets:										
Finance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%	94%	3.6		91%	91%
ICT	96%	95%	96%	93%	95%	97%	4.2		97%	97%
CSPD	86%	86%	93%	96%	95%	91%	4.2		95%	95%
Human resources	98%	98%	99%	98%	98%	97%	2.2		98%	94%
Democratic Services	97%	98%	99%	98%	97%	97%	1.25		99%	97%
Environmental Health	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%	95%	4.4		97%	95%
CEPT	94%	94%	96%	98%	98%	97%	2.07		98%	97%
Leisure	99%	89%	88%	87%	93%	96%	2.69		98%	92%
Revenue services		85%		85%						97%
Planning		87%	89%	89%	90%	88%	3.51		90%	88%
Regeneration	89%	89%	92%	94%	94%	92%	6.74		93%	93%
Procurement			96%	94%	93%	88%	0.98		96%	97%