

**Bolsover District Council**

**Executive**

**2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015**

**Customer Service Standards and CCC Report 2015/16 –  
1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**Report of the Joint Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement/ Customer Standards and Complaints Officer**

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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

**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 (5 rings)**

Appendix 2 shows the performance between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 by quarterly period. The report identifies 94% (94% achieved for Q1 and 93% for 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:

**Quarter 1**

- Customer Services (& Improvement) 87%
- Planning 89%
- Streetscene Services 90%
- Property & Estates 92%

## Quarter 2

- Housing Depot 86%
- Planning 91%
- Property & Estates 91%
- Housing 91%
- Streetscene Services 92%

## Contact Centres

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

Contact Centres achieved 46% and 44% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (45% cumulatively).

## Revenues & Benefits

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

Revenues & Benefits 'direct dial' achieved 70% and 73% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (72% 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, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015:

- 4,360 email enquiries (2,281 in Q1 and 2,079 in Q2) from the public were received through [enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk)
- All were acknowledged within one working day
- 100% were replied to in full within 8 working days

It is pleasing that this target has been met, as this electronic form of communication is a popular method of contact with the Council, with the volumes showing that this method continues to increase.

## Face to face monitoring

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

Waiting times were monitored during week commencing 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015. During the week 1,260 customers called into the Contact Centres all of which (100%) waited less than 20 minutes to be served. 99% or 1,254 waited less than 15 minutes to be served. This exceeds the target and demonstrates that we provide our customers with excellent service.

## Complaints, Comments and Compliments (Appendix 3)

### Compliments

Appendix 3 (A) shows the number of written compliments received for the period by department. In total 135 written compliments were received and represents a huge increase of recorded compliments (we received 57 for the same period 2014/15). A good cross section of compliments was received from customers appreciating excellent service, including 34 for Customer Services, 28 for the Housing Department, 24 for Streetscene Services and 23 for the Leisure Department. 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 25 were acknowledged and passed to the respective department, within the target time of 3 working days, for consideration when reviewing their service. Five comments were requesting more leisure facilities (Leisure Department) and three wanted an update on the Bolsover/ Morrisons development (Property & Estates Section).

## 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) by department. The customer service standard for responding to these complaints is 3 working days.

### Formal Investigation (stage two)

Appendix 3 (D) shows the number of Formal Investigation complaints by department. 61 complaints were received during this period. 59 were responded to within our customer service standard of 15 working days.

The Housing Department received 27 complaints in total, which covered a variety of issues including requests for planned repairs to be carried out more quickly and calls for surrounding Housing land to be developed. The higher number of complaints for this service area reflects the fact that it is a front facing service and also the scope of the services provided. Of the 27 complaints received, only 2 were justified in part. These concerned the actions of contractors when working on behalf of the Council (damage to a tenant's plants by contractors erecting scaffold and a contractor trespassing on a neighbouring property when accessing a site). In both instances Officers in the Housing Repairs Department addressed the issues with the contractors.

There were no trends. 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 by date order. These are complainants who have already made a stage two complaint and still feel dissatisfied. During this period 15 stage three complaints were received, 13 of which were responded to within standard with the remaining 2 still within timescale.

## Ombudsman

Appendix 3 (F) shows the status of Ombudsman complaints for 2015/16 as of 1st October 2015. During this period, the Ombudsman (Local Government and Housing) made 5 decisions; only one of which was based on an investigation (which culminated in a decision of 'no maladministration'). 4 decisions were based on prior responses sent to the customer by this Council and/ or initial enquiries. This appears to indicate that the Ombudsman is satisfied with how we have handled those complaints.

We are awaiting the (LGO) Ombudsman decision in the remaining case.

## Performance

Cumulatively, 97% of Formal Investigation complaints were responded to within 15 working days to date for 2015/16. It is pleasing to report that this exceeds the target of 95%.

## **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 Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well.

In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government 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 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 Recommendations**

**That Executive note the overall performance on customer service standards and compliments/comments and complaints.**

## 7 Decision Information

<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> (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
<b>District Wards Affected</b>	All wards
<b>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</b>	Providing Our Customers with Excellent Service – retain Customer Service Excellence accreditation year on year Transforming Our Organisation – good governance.

## 8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Customer Service Standards performance by quarterly period 1/4/15 – 30/9/15
Appendix 2	Telephony performance by quarterly period 1/4/15 – 30/9/15
Appendix 3:	Compliments, Comments and Complaints information
A:	Compliments by department 1/4/15 – 30/9/15
B:	Comments by department 1/4/15 – 30/9/15
C:	Frontline resolution complaints by department 2015/16
D:	Formal Investigation complaints by department 1/4/15 – 30/9/15
E:	Internal Review complaints by department 1/4/15 – 30/9/15
F:	Ombudsman complaints summary for 2015/16
<b>Background Papers</b> (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
Joint Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement	Ext: 2343
Customer Standards and Complaints Officer	Ext: 2353