

**Bolsover District Council**

**Executive**

**13<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

**Customer Service Standards and CCC Report 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016  
and Annual Summary 2015/16**

**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 for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
- 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> October 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
- To provide an Annual Summary on the above.

**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> October 2015 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 by quarterly period. The report identifies 93% (93% achieved for Q3 and 94% for Q4) 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 3**

- Planning 89%
- Economic Growth 84%
- Legal and Governance 89%
- Property & Estates 88%
- Housing 90%
- Housing Depot 88%

Economic Growth had a dip in performance during quarter 3 when a technical fault removed the 'hunt' group setting, however, performance rose to 98% in quarter 4 after it was reset.

#### Quarter 4

- Planning 89%
- Property & Estates 87%
- Customer Service (& Improvement) 84%
- Leisure 88%

Customer Service (& Improvement) experienced a dip in performance and are looking at putting arrangements into place to avoid this happening again.

Cumulatively, corporate performance over the year is 94%, which exceeds the target.

#### Contact Centres

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

Contact Centres achieved 69% and 65% for quarters 3 & 4 respectively (67% cumulatively).

Cumulatively, this brings Contact Centre performance over the year to 56%, which does not meet the target. Whilst demands on the service have had an impact on performance, there is a clear improvement in the performance over the year.

#### Revenues & Benefits

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

Revenues & Benefits 'direct dial' achieved 77% and 74% for quarters 3 & 4 respectively (75% cumulatively).

Cumulatively, Revenues & Benefits 'direct dial' performance over the year is 74%, which exceeds their target.

#### 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> October 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016:

- 4,509 email enquiries (1,852 in Q3 and 2,657 in Q4) from the public were received through [enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk)
- All were acknowledged within one working day
- 99% were replied to in full within 8 working days

A significant increase in this form of communication in the last quarter has impacted on Contact Centre's ability to meet this target (by 1%). This electronic form of communication is an increasingly popular method of contact with the Council.

Cumulatively, performance over the year is 100%, which meets the target.

#### Face to face monitoring

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

Waiting times were monitored during week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016. During the week 1,293 customers called into the Contact Centres 1,281 of which (99%) waited less than 20 minutes to be served. This meets the target for this period, but exceeds the target (by achieving 100%) when viewed cumulatively over the year.

## **Compliments, Comments and Complaints**

### Compliments

Appendix 3 (A) shows the number of written compliments received for the period by department. In total 188 written compliments were received and represents a huge increase of recorded compliments (by way of comparison, we received 110 for the same period 2014/15). A good cross section of compliments was received from customers appreciating excellent service, including 92 for the Leisure Department (the greater part of these compliments were for the Festival of Brass which was held and live streamed worldwide, however the compliments did cover all of the services the Leisure Department provides including the very popular Sports Awards). 26 compliments were received for Streetscene Services, 20 for the Revenues and Benefits Section and 18 for the Housing 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. Six comments were received by the Leader of the Council regarding the treatment of homeless people with pets. These appear to originate from a petition which is being circulated on Facebook and, as they raised a valid issue, were answered using information provided by the Housing Department.

### 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. 66 complaints were received during this period, all of which were responded to within our customer service standard of 15 working days.

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 24 stage three complaints were received, all of which were responded to within the standard of 20 working days.

### Ombudsman

Appendix 3 (F) shows the status of Ombudsman complaints for 2015/16 as at 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016. During this period, the Ombudsman (Local Government) made one decision, which was one of

'Maladministration and injustice'. This was because this Council caused a delay in carrying out some work to a piece of land which is in joint ownership.

### Performance

Cumulatively, 99% of Formal Investigation complaints were responded to within 15 working days to date for the financial year 2015/16. It is pleasing to report that this exceeds the target of 95%.

### **Summary for 2015/16**

The following tables provide a summary of performance for compliments, comments and complaints for 2015/16.

### Volume and Performance

<b>Volume by type</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>2015/16 Total</b>	<b>2014/15 Total</b>	<b>2013/14 Total</b>	<b>2012/13 Total</b>
Compliments	64	72	145	43	324	167	135	127
Comments	10	15	4	21	50	48	46	56
Formal Investigation Complaints (S2)	31	30	30	36	127	121	140	164
Internal Review Complaints (S3)	3	12	13	11	39	20	25	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>382</b>
Stage 1 Complaints	<b>65</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>273</b>	310	211	143
<b>% Comments acknowledged within standard (target 3 working days)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>This data was not collated pre 2014</b>	
<b>% Stage 2 responded to within standard (target 95%)</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Average response in days (target 15 working days)	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>% Stage 3 responded to within standard (target 100%)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Average response in days	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

When comparing 2015/16 to the previous year of 2014/15, the following is noted:

- There has been a significant increase in written compliments
- We have received a similar number of comments
- We have received slightly fewer frontline resolution complaints
- Received slightly more formal investigation complaints
- Received more internal review complaints

The above would appear to indicate that the Council has an easy to access complaints system, as recommended by the Local Government Ombudsman.

### Customer Feedback

No trends have been identified, however two complaints resulted in the amendment of Customer Information Scripts (CIS) as follows:

- Although a kitchen light repair was done very swiftly and in line with timescales in the Council's policy, an extra question is now asked of tenants to pass to the Housing Department to ascertain if they are vulnerable and therefore require a quicker response
- Reports of missed bins are now accepted prior to 4.00 p.m. on the day of collection (previously customers were asked to wait until after this time to report a missed bin).

## **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 notes 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>	<b>Providing Our Customers with Excellent Service</b> – retain Customer Service Excellence accreditation year on year <b>Transforming Our Organisation</b> – good governance.

## 8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Annual Summary of Customer Service Standards performance by quarterly period 1/4/15 – 31/3/16
Appendix 2	Telephony performance by quarterly period 1/10/15 – 31/3/16
Appendix 3:	Compliments, Comments and Complaints information
A:	Compliments by department 1/10/15 – 31/3/16
B:	Comments by department 1/10/15 – 31/3/16
C:	Frontline resolution complaints by department 1/10/15 – 31/3/16
D:	Formal Investigation complaints by department 1/10/15 – 31/3/16
E:	Internal Review complaints by department 1/10/15 – 31/3/16

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)		
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