

CUSTOMER SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Monday, 15th June 2026 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Vicky Waplington in the Chair

Councillors David Bennett, Louise Fox, Emma Stevenson and Rita Turner.

Officers:- Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Lesley Botham (Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager), Jane Calladine (Tenant Engagement Officer), Coby Bunyan (Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting, observing was Councillor Cathy Jeffery (Jnr. Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing) and Mr. Andrew Washbourne (Challenge and Change Group).

CS1-26/27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Amanda Davis, Lisa Powell and Mary Dooley (Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing).

CS2-26/27 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

CS3-26/27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

CS4-26/27 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Emma Stevenson and seconded by Councillor Rita Turner

RESOLVED that the minutes of meetings of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee held on 23rd March 2026 and 5th May 2026 be approved as true and correct records.

CS5-26/27 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

The Committee considered the List of Key Decisions and Items to be Considered in Private.

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RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and Items to be Considered in Private be noted.

CS6-26/27 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS AND COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS REPORT - 1ST JANUARY 2026 TO 31ST MARCH 2026 AND 2025/26 ANNUAL SUMMARY

The Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager presented the report to the Committee to provide information on the Council's performance in relation to its customer service standards and the number of Compliments, Comments and Complaints received for Quarter 4 2025/26 (1st January 2026 to 30th March 2026) and an Annual Summary on the above for 2025/26.

Revenues had achieved 81% of incoming calls answered within 20 seconds for Quarter 4 2025/26 (target 70%), with cumulative performance for 2025/26 being 84%. Benefits had achieved 89% of incoming calls answered within 20 seconds for Quarter 4 2025/26 (target 80%), with cumulative performance for 2025/26 being 90%.

In Quarter 4 2025/26, Revenues had received 5,476 emails and Benefits had received 1,667 emails – all had been acknowledged within 1 working day.

For Quarter 4 2025/26, Contact Centres had achieved 77% of incoming calls answered within 20 seconds (target 75%) with cumulative performance for 2025/26 being 78% with 70,359 calls answered (the target for 2026/27 would increase to 80%).

For 2025/26, the overall average incoming call wait time was 31 seconds, and the average call handling time was 4 minutes and 47 seconds – a slight decrease from previous years.

In the same period, Contact Centres had acknowledged all 8,328 email enquiries received within 1 working day (meeting the target of 100%), with 99.7% of emails replied to within 8 working days (target was 100%).

For 2025/26, a total of 31,628 emails were handled and 100% were answered within 8 working days.

Contact Centres had answered 82% of incoming Live Chats within 20 seconds for Quarter 4 2025/26 (target 90%), with 765 chats answered out of 791 in total.

For 2025/26, 86% of live chats were answered (target was 90%) with 2,435 chats answered out of 2,490.

63 Compliments had been received during Quarter 4 2025/26, with Go! Active receiving 12 Customer Feedback Form Compliments within this time.

27 Comments had been received with all acknowledged and passed to the respective department within the target time of 5 working days during Quarter 2 2025/26. Go! Active had received 9 Customer Feedback Forms within this time.

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70 Stage 1 Complaints had been recorded in Quarter 4 2025/26, with 12 M.P. Enquiries received during the same period. 98% of Stage 1 Complaints and 100% M.P. Enquiries had been responded to within the Council's Customer Service Standard of 10 working days.

10 Stage 2 Complaints had been recorded in Quarter 4 2025/25 with 100% responded to within the Council's Customer Service Standard of 20 working days.

2 Local Government Ombudsman Complaints had been received for investigation during Quarter 4 2025/26 – the Council was awaiting determination regarding these cases.

The report further detailed the service improvements made ("the Leisure department will make arrangements to ensure a deeper clean of the changing rooms happens more frequently" was 1 of the examples provided to the Committee) following receipt of applicable Comments and Complaints.

The report additionally provided 2025/26's performance in comparison with previous years, and when compared directly to 2024/25, the following was noted:

- There had been an increase in Comments;
- There had been a decrease in Stage 1 Complaints;
- There had been a decrease in Stage 2 Complaints;
- Acknowledgements were within target for full responses to Stage 2 Complaints; and,
- There had been a slight decrease in average working days response times.

The data would appear to indicate the Council had a robust Complaints Policy, as recommended by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Details on the Housing Ombudsman Policy Review and the changes made to the Council's Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy (the 'Policy') was attached at Appendix 3. Updates to procedures made it easier for residents to access information on how to submit a Complaint on the Council's website via the self-service portal and homepage.

Additionally, the Housing Ombudsman had reviewed the Policy and had invited the Council to review the following recommendations:

- Clarify when a customer would be given the choice to make a Complaint where dissatisfaction was expressed;
- Clarify the Council would review initial requests as a service request;
- Edit the Out of Scope / appeal route points; and,
- Confirm a customer could escalate to a Complaint at any time during a service request and that this would not slow or interrupt a service request.

In response to a concern raised, the Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager informed that whilst a Complaint from February 2026 was detailed twice in respect of the 2 service areas responsible, it should not be listed within the figures as 2 separate Complaints.

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After the meeting it was confirmed that whilst the report might have appeared to show a duplicate entry in this regard (to detail the 2 separate service areas responsible), this was not the case in the final figures.

A Member raised concern on the Council's handling / process of collecting Council Tax Debt with regards a resident who was a survivor of Domestic Abuse (incl. financial abuse). The Customer Service, Standards and Complaints Manager informed the case would be reviewed after the meeting to ensure the handling of such a sensitive case was appropriate.

The Chair offered and the Member agreed that the Committee discuss the specific case referenced above during the informal session (due to its sensitive nature).

Moved by Councillor Emma Stevenson and seconded by Councillor Louise Fox

RESOLVED that: 1) the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee note the overall performance on Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints; and,

- 2) the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee approve the CCC Policy changes following recommendations by the Housing Ombudsman.

CS7-26/27 REVISED TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Tenant Engagement Officer presented the report to the Committee.

The current Tenant Engagement Strategy 2023-2026 (the 'Strategy') was due for review, and the report outlined the proposed refreshed strategy, summarised the consultation (to the writing of the report) and enabled formal consultation with the Committee before submission to Executive.

The Strategy set out 4 objectives:

- Objective 1: Ensure two-way information and communication;
- Objective 2: Provide accessible and varied ways to achieve meaningful engagement which added value;
- Objective 3: Empower tenants to influence and scrutinise landlord services, strategies and policies; and,
- Objective 4: Ensure tenants views were welcomed, respected and acted upon to drive continuous improvement.

The proposed outline of the updated Strategy for 2026-2029 had been presented to and approved by the Housing Liaison Board January 2026 (for further development / consultation).

Locality Group sessions had been held to enable tenant review. These sessions had been face-to-face and held at community venues with discussions on:

- Tenant perceptions of good tenant engagement;
- The importance and value of tenant involvement;
- A brief overview of the history of tenant engagement; and,

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- The proposed Strategy.

Tenants were asked to identify which existing engagement activities should continue and suggest any new approaches – feedback and suggestions had been used to refine the Strategy and develop the Tenant Engagement Action Plan 2026–2029.

Further tenant consultation continued and all responses would be considered before the Strategy was submitted to Executive.

Once approved, monitoring would take place every 6 months by the Housing Liaison Board.

Moved by Councillor Emma Stevenson and seconded by Councillor David Bennett

RESOLVED that Scrutiny Members review the proposed objectives, priorities and milestones outlined within the Strategy and provide feedback, as necessary, as part of the consultation process

CS8-26/27 CHALLENGE AND CHANGE TENANTS REVIEW

The Tenant Engagement Officer and Mr. Andrew Washbourne, of the Council's tenant led Challenge and Change Group, presented the report to the Committee.

Tenants could engage with the Council via the Challenge and Change Group (the 'Group') – this Group delivered the tenant scrutiny function of the tenant engagement and governance structure.

A review of the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Service had been chosen by the Group, which had taken place August 2025 to April 2026.

During the review, tenants had been supported by the Tenant Engagement Officer, Housing Services Manager and the Community Safety and Enforcement Manager.

Tenants had agreed recommendations across 4 areas:

- Clarification of information provided to tenants on ASB;
- Clarification of procedure and processes for dealing with ASB;
- Clarification if the Council used its full range of powers / tools available to handle ASB; and,
- Develop an ASB service standard for Housing tenants as part of the wider agreement of service standards.

The Group's review was attached at Appendix 2.

It was noted a small number of review recommendations had been changed or confirmed as not required / possible by service areas, including 1.5, 2.4 (in the new report it would be listed as 2.7) and 5.1 (the Community Rangers' uniforms could not be changed due to ASB being but one of their responsibilities).

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Moved by Councillor Emma Stevenson and seconded by Councillor David Bennett

RESOLVED that the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee note the recommendations of the Bolsover Tenants Challenge and Change Group in relation to the Anti-Social Behaviour service.

CS9-26/27 JOINT REVIEW OF SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AT THE ARC: POLICIES, PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES (SECOND INTERIM REPORT)

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report to the Committee.

The Committee and Local Growth Scrutiny Committee had undertaken a joint review of security arrangements at The Arc, Clowne focussing on the policies, protocols and procedures in place and to examine how security for staff, public and Members could be improved as part of their respective 2024/25 Work Programmes.

The Joint Committee had put together 11 recommendations to assist the Council in improving security and safety arrangements at The Arc, Clowne.

6 out of the 11 recommendations had been achieved: CSSC23-24 2.1; CSSC/LGSC 24-25 2.3; CSSC/LGSC 24-25 2.6; CSSC/LGSC 24-25 2.7; CSSC/LGSC 24-25 2.8; and CSSC/LGSC 24-25 2.10.

The remaining 5 were on track with 0 extended.

The Strategic Director of Services informed of some of the wider security arrangements being made following the review and in consideration of new duties under Martyn's Law and Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

Whilst most work identified following the review had been internally managed / developed, the Derbyshire Constabulary had attended The Arc, Clowne to inspect / advise any other security measures required / to be developed.

Moved by Councillor Lousie Fox and seconded by Councillor Emma Stevenson

RESOLVED that: 1) Scrutiny Members note the progress against the review recommendations;

- 2) Scrutiny Members acknowledge any exceptions to delivery and clarify the additional action required by the service;
- 3) Scrutiny Members make its report and findings public, in accordance with Part 4.5.17(4) of the Council's Constitution; and
- 4) Officers continue to implement the recommendations and submit a further report in six months' time highlighting progress and any exceptions to delivery.

CS10-26/27 AGREEMENT OF WORK PROGRAMME 2026/27

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report to the Committee.

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The proposed Work Programme 2026/27 was attached at Appendix 1 and was subject to change should additional reports / presentations be required, or if items required re-arranging.

Moved by Councillor Emma Stevenson and seconded by Councillor Rita Turner

RESOLVED that Members review this report and the Programme attached at Appendix 1 for approval and amendment as required. All Members are advised to contact the Scrutiny Officer should they have any queries regarding future meetings.

The Chair thanked all those in attendance.

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 10:37 hours and Members then met as a working party to continue their review work until 11:06 hours.