

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 13th February 2023 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:

Members:

Councillor Rose Bowler in the Chair

Councillors Allan Bailey, Patricia Clough, David Dixon, Ray Heffer and Rita Turner.

Officers: Victoria Dawson (Assistant Director Housing Management & Enforcement), Lesley Botham (Customer Services Manager) and Joanne Wilson (Scrutiny & Elections Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillor David Downes (to Minute No. CS45-22/23).

CS40-22/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Andrew Joesbury.

CS41-22/23 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

CS42-22/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

CS43-22/23 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10TH OCTOBER 2022

Moved by Councillor Ray Heffer and seconded by Councillor Rita Turner

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Customer Services Scrutiny Committee held on 12th December 2022 be approved as a correct record.

CS44-22/23 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Committee considered the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document.

Moved by Councillor Ray Heffer and seconded by Councillor Rita Turner

RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document be noted.

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CS45-22/23

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS AND COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS 2022/23 - 1ST APRIL 2022 TO 31ST SEPTEMBER 2022

The Assistant Director of Housing Management & Enforcement and the Customer Services Manager provided Members with an overview of the Council's performance for Q3 2022/23, in relation to the Council's customer standards and complaints.

The Customer Services Manager noted the headline detail in the cover report and then presented each of the appendices in turn.

Customer Service Standards (Appendix 1)

In relation to direct dial incoming calls, the Revenues service had answered 82% within 20 seconds for Q3, which exceeded that target of 65%. Cumulative performance for 2022/23 was at 80%.

Within the Benefits service, 94% of incoming calls had been answered within 20 seconds for Q3, again significantly above the target of 78%. Cumulative performance for 2022/23 was at 92%

During Q3, 69% of incoming calls to Contact Centres had been answered within the expected standard timescale of 20 seconds which was below the target of 75%. Cumulatively performance was at 72% which was only slightly below the target. The slight slippage was due to staff resources being below the minimum required during the period.

Within the period the Council had received 66,559 email enquiries all of which had been acknowledged within the target time of one working day and 99% replied to in full within 8 working days. There had been more e-mails (21,941) compared to the same period in 2021/22 (17,964), and the officer noted that this remained a popular method of contact.

The Live Chat service had also progressed in popularity since its launch. Within Q3, 96% of Live Chats had been answered within 20 seconds which significantly exceeded the target of 75%. Cumulative performance for the year was at 92%.

Corporate Telephone Standards (Appendix 2)

The officer noted that 95% of incoming calls had been answered within the corporate standard timescale of 20 seconds which exceeded that target of 93%. The majority of departments had achieved and exceeded the corporate target of 93%, with the exception of Revenues and Benefits, Joint ICT, Procurement, Streetscene, Housing/Community Safety and Housing Repairs. Cumulatively performance for 2022/23 was at 92% which fell just below the target of 93%.

In relation to Unanswered Calls (Abandoned), which was a new indicator, the report identified that during Q3, 12% of incoming calls had not been answered. The majority of departments had not achieved the target of 5% with the exception of Planning, Revenues and Benefits and Finance, who had all met the target. Cumulatively performance for 2022/23 was 13% which was above the target of 5%. It was highly likely this would be reviewed for 2023/24 possibly to a target of 10%.

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Compliments (Appendix 3A)

Appendix 3 (A) showed the number of written compliments received for the period by department. In total 38 written compliments had been received during Q3, 1st October to 31st December 2022. Compliments were received from customers who appreciated excellent service.

Comments (Appendix 3B)

Appendix 3 (B) showed the number of written comments received for the period Q3, 1st October to 31st December 2022. In total, 7 Comments had been received and 100% had been acknowledged and passed to the respective department for consideration when reviewing their service within the target time of 3 working days.

It was noted that where the Council did receive a Comment, these were not directly responded to as was the case with a complaint.

Informal Complaints (Frontline resolution stage 1) (Appendix 3C)

Appendix 3 (C) showed the number of Frontline Resolution complaints received by the Contact Centre service. In total 74 complaints had been recorded on the Customer Information System (62) and Open Housing Repairs system (12) for the Q3 period.

48 out of the 74 complaints related to missed bins, particularly in the Clowne and Bolsover areas. However, the officer noted that the Council was aware of a significant number of roadworks that had taken place at that time which did have an impact.

76% of the complaints had been responded to within the customer standard of 3 working days.

Formal Investigation (stage two) (Appendix 3D)

In total, the Council had received 34 formal complaints during Q3, 1st October to 31st December 2022. 83% of formal complaints had been responded to within the customer service standard of 15 working days. Four complaints had related to Streetscene (waste collections), and 15 related to Housing services, Housing repairs and maintenance.

MP Enquires (Appendix 3E)

The officer noted that the figures for Q3 were significantly higher than the first half of the year. There had been 62 enquiries within the quarter of which 85% had been responded to within the customer service standard of 15 working days.

The officer had now been able to make contact with the MP's office and was working with the MP's staff to ensure that enquiries made direct to the MP were being dealt with in the most effective manner. This included ensuring that enquiries were being directed to the correct authority for action. It was noted there had still been instances where enquires had been submitted for issues out of the Council's control. Furthermore, some issues were still being raised incorrectly as a complaint. A meeting was due to take place to endeavour to improve current processes.

Internal Review (stage three) (Appendix 3F)

Appendix 3 (F) showed the number of stage three complaints received for the period by department. These were complainants who had already made a stage two complaint and still felt dissatisfied. During the period, 2 stage three complaints had been received all of which had been responded to within the standard of 20 working days.

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Ombudsman (Appendix 3G)

The officer noted that no Ombudsman complaints had been received for Q3.

Following presentation of the report, Members discussed the details and noted the following points:

A Member commented that the property highlighted in Glapwell as part of an MP enquiry was still an ongoing issue.

The Chair enquired what feedback had been received from officers about the new approach to the reports and the way the data was now analysed and presented. The Customer Services Manager noted that officers found it much easier to identify trends and consequently challenge departments on issues arising.

The Assistant Director of Housing Management & Enforcement reminded Members that the reports would now be quarterly, and that the format of the reports made it much easier to analyse the data.

The Customer Services Manager confirmed that the end of year report would show comparison data and trend analysis.

Moved by Councillor Ray Heffer and seconded by Councillor David Dixon
RESOLVED that the overall performance on Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints be noted.

(Assistant Director of Housing Management & Enforcement/
Customer Services Manager)

CS46-22/23 WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

Committee considered their proposed work programme for 2022/23, and noted remaining items for the rest of the programme up to the end of March.

Moved by Councillor Ray Heffer and seconded by Councillor Rose Bowler
RESOLVED that the Work Programme 2022/23 be approved and noted.

(Scrutiny & Elections Officer)

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 10:15 hours and Members then met as a working party to continue their review work. The working party concluded at 10:48 hours.