

Bolsover District Council

Standards Committee

24th February 2020

**Customer Service Standards/ Compliments, Comments and Complaints Report
2019/20**

1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019

Report of the Joint Head of Corporate Governance & Monitoring 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 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019.

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.

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 – corporate (Appendix 2)

Target - 93% to be answered within 20 seconds

Appendix 2 shows the performance between 1st April 2019 and 30th September 2019 by quarterly period. The report identifies 98% of incoming calls are being answered corporately within 20 seconds cumulatively. The department not achieving the key customer service standard of 93% over these periods was:

- Streetscene Services, who narrowly missed the target in Q1 (92%)

Contact Centres

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

Contact Centres achieved 76% and 78% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (78% cumulatively). This is a significant improvement from the same reporting period last year (73%).

Revenues & Benefits (direct dial)

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

Revenues & Benefits 'direct dial' achieved 79% and 81% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (80% 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, 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019:

- 7,459 email enquiries (3,750 in Q1 and 3,709 in Q2) from the public were received through enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- All were acknowledged within one working day
- 99% were replied to in full within 8 working days.

Despite other contact channels being available e-mails still appear to be an increasingly popular method of contact, 6,026 e-mails were received in the same period in 2018/19.

Face to face monitoring

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

Waiting times were monitored during week commencing 15th July 2019. During the week 813 customers called into the Contact Centres 812 of which (99.88%) waited less than 20 minutes to be served.

During the same period, 199 callers were served on Meet & Greet at The Arc in Clowne, bringing the total number of callers served during week commencing 15th July 2019 to **1012**.

Compliments, Comments and Complaints (Appendix 3)

Compliments

Appendix 3 (A) shows the number of written compliments received for the period by department. In total 111 written compliments were received and represents a slight decrease of recorded compliments (we received 123 for the same period 2018/19). A good cross section of compliments was received from customers appreciating excellent service, including 23 for Housing, 22 for Streetscene Services, 18 for Leisure, 16 for Planning and 14 for Customer Services (Contact Centres). 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 16 were acknowledged and passed to the respective department, within the target time of 3 working days, for consideration when reviewing their service. Some comments raised valid issues and cross cut departments, as such they were responded to corporately. As previously, the total does not correspond with the total above when viewed in this way.

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) and other Contact Centre systems, by department. The customer service standard for responding to these complaints is 3 working days. 91% were responded to within this timescale, which is a significant improvement from the 85% achieved in the same period last year, 2018/19.

Formal Investigation (stage two)

Appendix 3 (D) shows the number of Formal Investigation complaints by department. 98 complaints were received during this period. 97 (99%) were responded to within our customer service standard of 15 working days, the remaining 1 was partly regarding a service provided by another organisation and was responded to within 19 working days.

There were no trends for this period.

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. These are complainants who have already made a stage two complaint and still feel dissatisfied. During this period 28 stage three complaints were received, 93% (26) of which were responded to within standard. As some complaints cross cut departments, the total does not correspond with the total above when viewed in this way.

Ombudsman

Appendix 3 (F) shows the status of Ombudsman complaints for 2019/20 as of 18th November 2019. During this period, we received eight decisions from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman of 'closed after initial enquiries', one of 'not upheld: no maladministration' and one of 'upheld: maladministration and injustice'. This last complaint was a complex one and the criticism was about a delay in putting the person back on the housing waiting list. We received one decision of 'close the case' from the Housing Ombudsman (HO) and another of 'close the case' for a review of the same complaint as at 18th November 2019.

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 maintain and improve upon our Customer Service targets.

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 and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well.

In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government and Social Care 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 and Social Care 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 the Standards Committee note the overall performance on compliments/comments and complaints and customer service standards.

7 Decision Information

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: <i>BDC:</i> <i>Revenue - £75,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £150,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>NEDDC:</i> <i>Revenue - £100,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £250,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Has the relevant Portfolio Holder been informed</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>District Wards Affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</p>	<p>Providing Our Customers with Excellent Service Transforming Our Organisation – good governance.</p>

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title	Page No
Appendix 1	Customer Service Standards performance by quarterly period 1/4/19– 30/9/19	18
Appendix 2	Corporate telephony performance by quarterly period 1/4/19 – 30/9/19	19
Appendix 3: A: B: C: D: E: F:	Compliments, Comments and Complaints information: Compliments by department 1/4/19 – 30/9/19 Comments by department 1/4/19 – 30/9/19 Frontline resolution complaints by department 1/4/19 – 30/9/19 Formal Investigation complaints by department 1/4/19 – 30/9/19 Internal Review complaints by department 1/4/19 – 30/9/19 Ombudsman complaints summary for 1/4/19 – 30/9/19	20 to 24
Background Papers (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
Customer Standards and Complaints Officer		Ext: 2353