

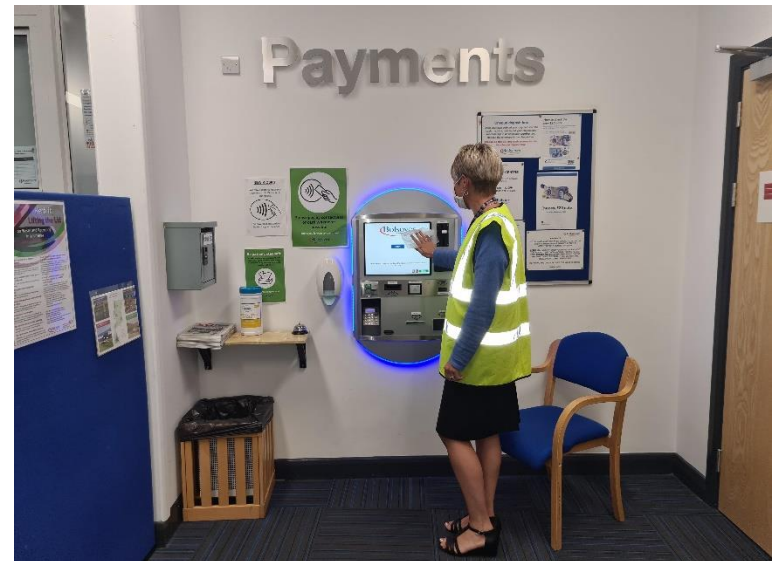
# **Impact of Covid-19 on Customer Services & Contact Centres**

# Initial Actions

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- ❑ Contact Centres closed to the public over all sites on the 24/03/20.
- ❑ Face to Face Reception, Meet & Greet and Payment Kiosks suspended.
- ❑ Telephony, Webchat, Email and Online contact remained available as the main contact channels to the public 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday.
- ❑ Posters displayed on the front door of each Contact Centre advising customers how to contact the council, make a payment, submit a form. Following consultation with the essential service areas Repairs, Housing, Street Scene, Revenues. Appendix (i)
- ❑ Recorded message on Telephony updated to reflect the above guidance and included 'Self – Isolation' advice for customers.
- ❑ Security Plus cash collection service suspended, cheques received by post deposited via the Post office.
- ❑ Courier service suspended, the CAN Rangers assisted with this service on as and when basis.
- ❑ Guidance issued to staff regarding social distancing and sanitising within the workplace. Workstations arranged to comply with 2m social distancing.

- ❑ Individual staffing needs addressed in relation to self isolating/shielding/childcare. Home Working Facility issued to the most vulnerable whilst maintaining service delivery.
- ❑ Communication/Consultation/Action plans maintained with Staff, Human Resources and all Service Areas.





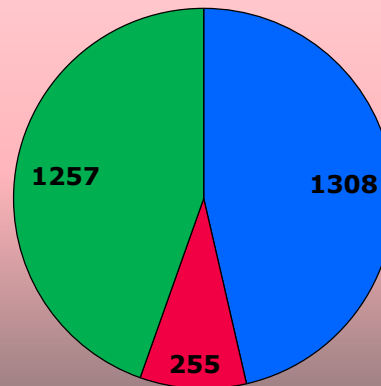
# Community Support Team

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- ❑ Community Assistance Plan for residents seeking guidance, assistance and support relating to COVID either via telephone 01246 242424 or online via the websites Self Form.
- ❑ Collation of data from residents who are self isolating, to assess needs, offer regular contact and support, and identify spikes of the virus.
- ❑ Online registration form created and publicised on the BDC website for customers to request support. Additional 'call-centre' form created for Contact Centre staff to register residents requiring assistance and collation of data.
- ❑ Contact Centre staff, Meet and Greet staff and 1 officer from Planning Services deployed to deliver CST on site at Clowne Contact Centre, triaging all enquiries received via all contact channels.
- ❑ Contact Centre Service and Community Support delivered initially 7 days per week and over the Easter Bank Holiday period.
- ❑ Contact Centre staff delivering this additional service were committed, compassionate and embraced the project by demonstrating commendable flexibility to deliver this additional service.

- ❑ Additional support for staff from colleagues and management was required due to nature of the enquiries.
- ❑ Guidance Notes were created and training delivered to the Customer Service team ensuring a consistent approach delivering this new service.
- ❑ Customers still continue to register for support and this is being delivered by Contact Centres by offering advice and or signposting to various external agencies, Foodbanks, Pharmacies etc.
- ❑ Continued development of the scripting was necessary to ensure staff had access to relevant COVID guidance. Additional services were added as the service became publicised and guidance changed. Including Pharmacy assistance, Business Funding Grant enquiries and more recently to capture outlets not adhering to the wearing of a Face Mask.

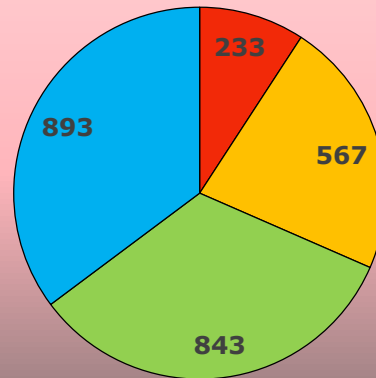
Covid-19 - Community Support  
Registrations/ Enquiries Mar 20 – Sept 20



■ Staff Assisted Enquiries    ■ Self Service Enquiries  
■ Customer Call Backs by CST



Assistance Provided by Community  
Support Team Mar 20 – Sept 20



- Food Parcels
- Prescriptions Collection/Delivery
- Other (Advice, Data Collection & Support)
- Business Grant Enquiries

# Impact on Staff

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- ❑ Prior to closing the Contact Centres face to face service , staff became anxious and worried regarding the impact of COVID and some resistance to delivering a Reception service was experienced over the four sites. Additional support and ensuring staff were working in a safe environment was implemented
- ❑ Minimal staffing located at each Contact Centre to adhere to social distancing guidelines, maximum of 2 x Customer Advisors at each outlying Contact Centre and 4/6 staff at Clowne including the Customer Service Manager.
- ❑ Staff identified for Working from Home, prioritised by support needs identified, ie. Shielding with underlying health conditions, Schools closing staff with children under 12, Carers or family within the household who are within the vulnerable category (9 staff).
- ❑ 3 staff were provided with the facility to work from home week commencing 25/03/20 and over the following weeks as soon as equipment was made available, an additional 6 staff were provided with this facility. This included the Contact Centre Managers.

- ❑ The staff rota was adjusted constantly over the Lockdown period to support staff with children who had minimal or no child care provision and staff with underlying health issues self isolating or shielding.
- ❑ Weekly communication and contact with staff was vital either face to face , telephone or email with all staff who were working from home, in work or unable to work, with guidance and updates and to recognise any support needed, wellbeing and mental health issues.
- ❑ Short term Staff Sickness recorded outside of COVID related issues became minimal overall as a service.
- ❑ Initial concerns raised by the team , loss of Annual Leave, Child Care provisions withdrawn, potential loss of pay. Anxiety and stress was shown from staff prior to closure whilst the face to face and Meet and Greet service remained open. Support from the management team was given individually and a fair approach was maintained whilst embedding the 'Key Worker / Priority Service' status and service needs.

# Financial Impact

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- ❑ Potential loss of revenue to the authority received via the Contact Centre payment kiosks
- ❑ Increase in Direct Debit take up, Customer Advisors pro active in promoting the other payment channels, online and ATP.
- ❑ Overtime – additional required to deliver the Contact Centre service and in addition the Community Support service.
- ❑ Publicity – additional Signage / Posters/Floor markers.
- ❑ PPE – Provision of sanitising equipment, face masks/visors.
- ❑ ICT – Home working equipment.

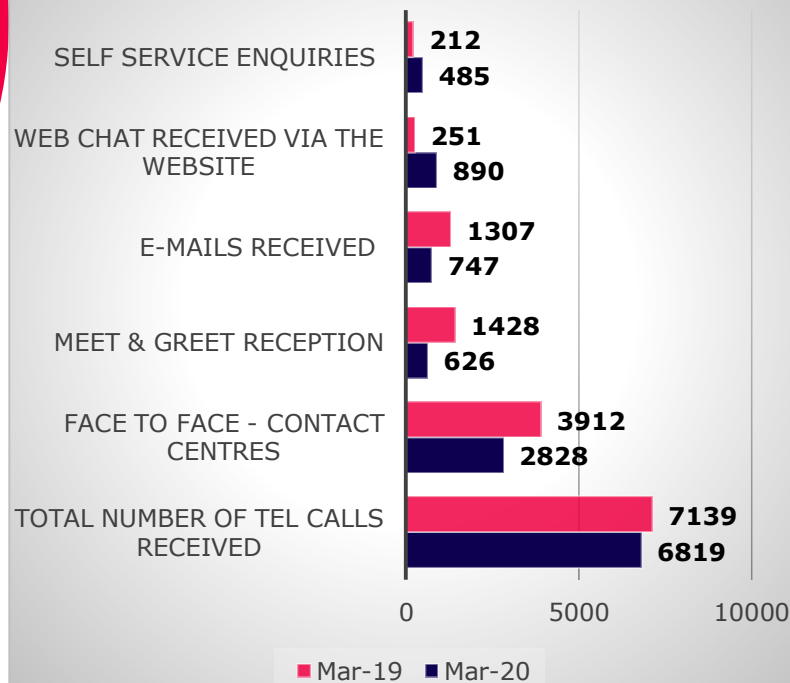
# Channel Shift

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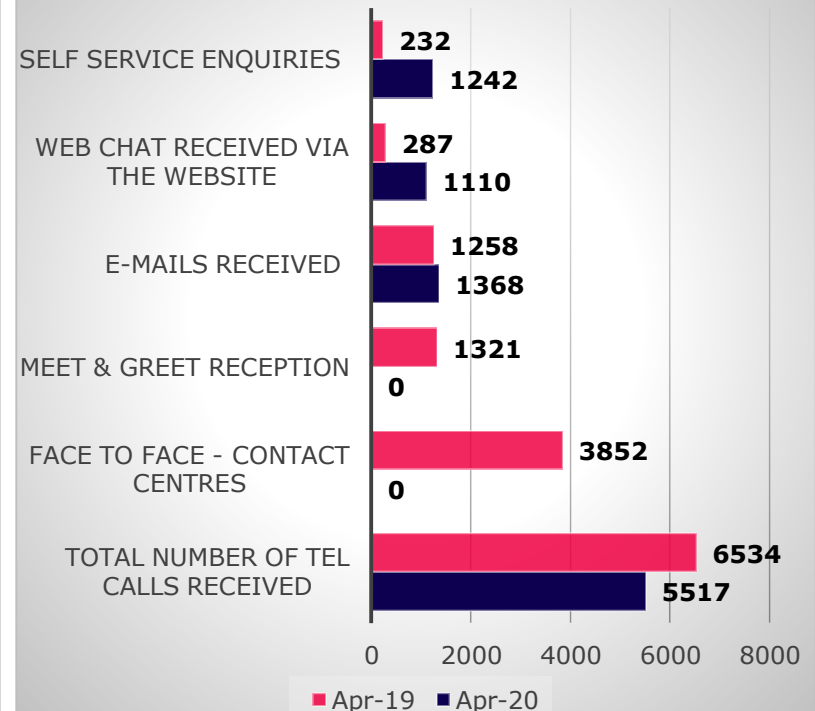
- ❑ Prior to 'Lockdown' and the closure of Contact Centre, the service was experiencing a higher than normal amount of telephone contact. This was due to public uncertainty of the pandemic and a majority of customers were signposted to the Government website Direct.Gov.uk for guidance.
- ❑ Following the decision to close the Contact Centres, the access to payment kiosks, face to face services and Online access areas resulted in an increase of telephone calls from customers concerned about Rent accounts, Council Tax recovery, Planning, Land Charges enquiries
- ❑ Email contact and Webchat and self Service became a preferred method of contact and some shift from telephone to digital channel was experienced during the period of closure.
- ❑ Following the reopening of the Contact Centres to present Face to Face and telephone contact is increasing weekly, whilst webchat and email continues to be higher than the same period last year

## Trend Analysis of Contact Channels – March to August 2019 / March to August 2020

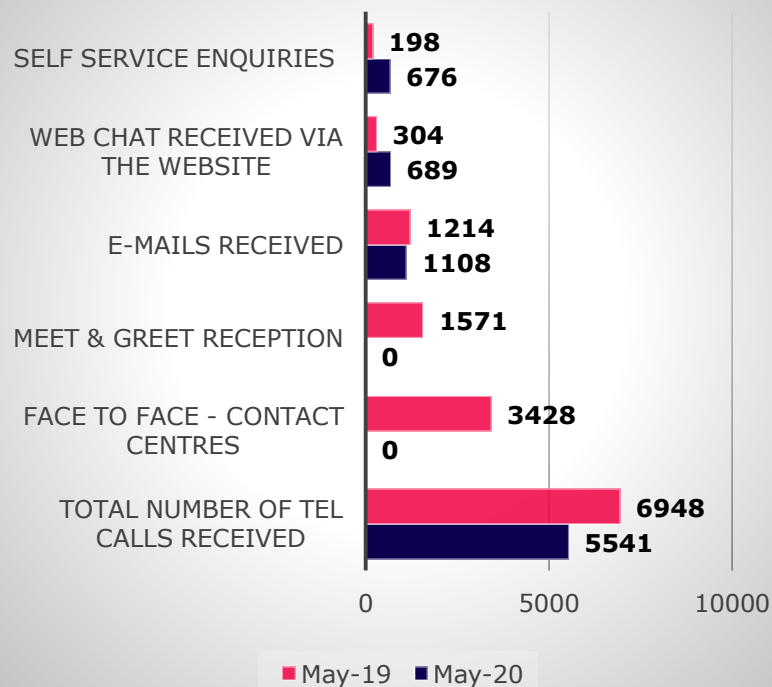
### March 2019 vs. 2020



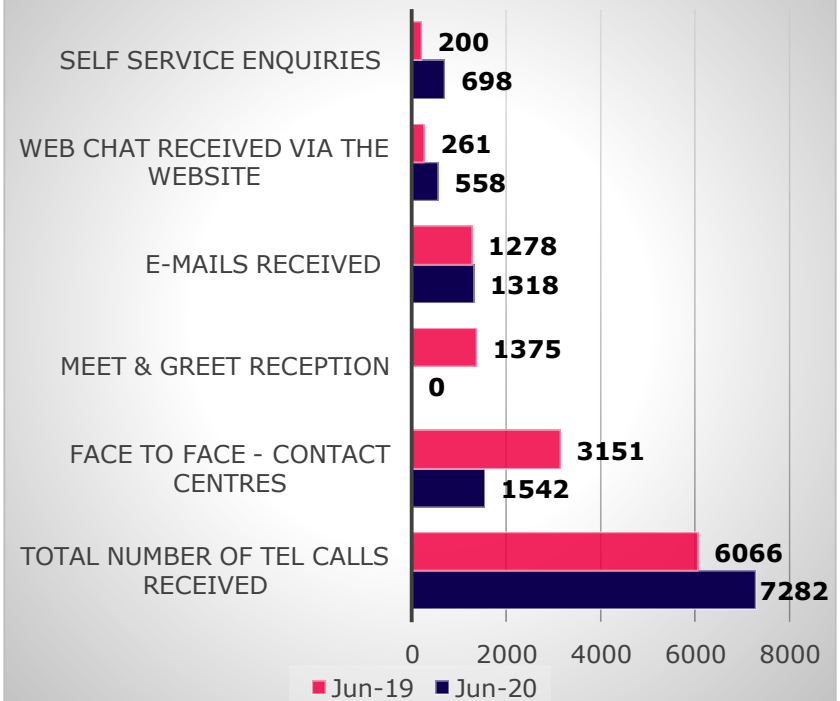
### April 2019 vs. 2020



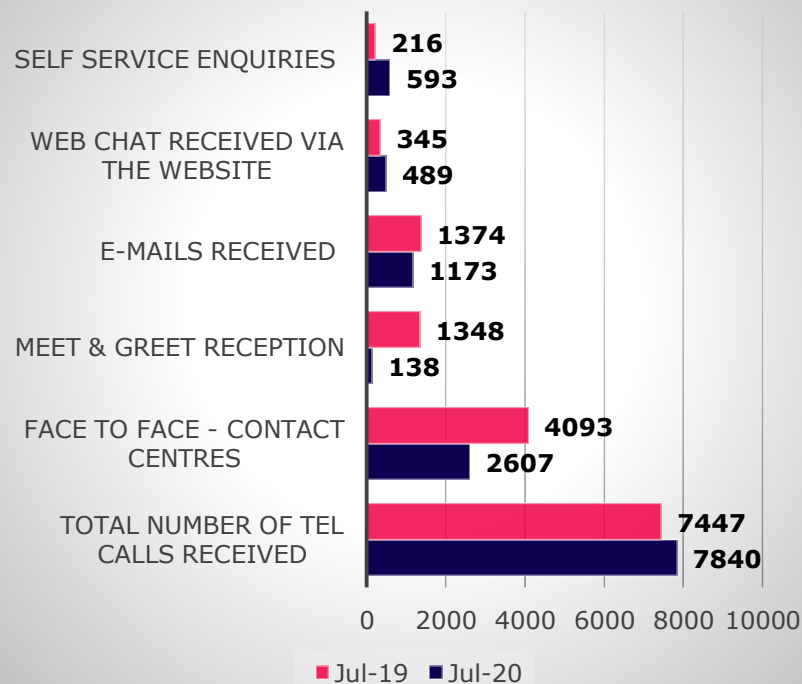
## May 2019 vs. 2020



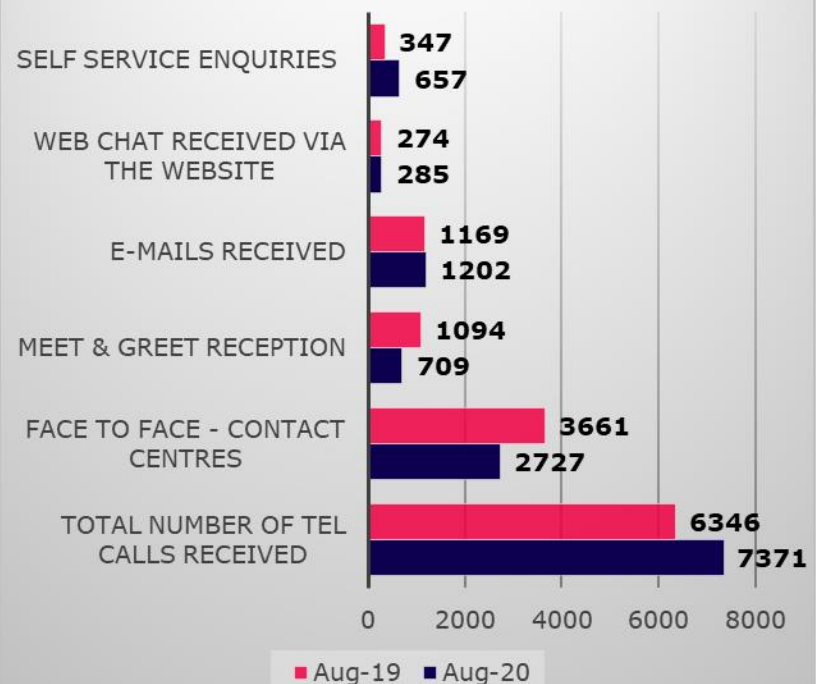
## June 2019 vs. 2020



## July 2019 vs. 2020



## August 2019 vs. 2020





# Contingency Plan

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- ❑ Contact Centres reopened the Face to Face service on the 15/06/20 over all four sites. 9am – 4.30pm Mon to Fri, reduced opening hours to allow for sanitising/cleaning of equipment.
- ❑ Full PPE provided to staff, Visors, masks, sanitising gels and wipes for both staff and customers.
- ❑ Risk Assessment carried out prior to reopening at all four sites jointly by the Customer Service Manager, a member of the Health & Safety Team and Property and Estates. Staff were consulted during the time of the inspections and any concerns regarding the reopening of Face to Face / Payment Kiosk & Reception were recorded.

## Appendix (ii)

- ❑ Advisory notices to the public were displayed at each Contact Centre advising of Social Distancing and Cleaning requirements within the centre.
- ❑ Contact Centre staff were supported with continuing to Work from Home unless service needs required them to work on site.

- ❑ Courier Service resumed 3 days per week , scanning of documents to service areas implemented where possible eg. Benefit Claims and proofs.
- ❑ Interview Rooms to be installed with a facility for virtual 'Zoom' interviews with back office services on an appointment basis.
- ❑ Online Digital Access area made available for external organisations to view documents on a pre arranged appointment basis with Planning and Land Charges. Sanitising equipment available for customer use.
- ❑ Customer Advisors were floor-walking and monitoring access to the Contact Centres during the initial 2 weeks of reopening. Staff floor-walking were also proactive with dealing with enquiries where appropriate to reduce access.
- ❑ Multi Channel system to be implemented as priority to enable webchat and email contact channel are dealt with via one system and by staff able to work from home.
- ❑ Development of the website to incorporate more online services and forms.
- ❑ Consider for future: reducing opening hours, keeping one site open for payments, appointment only access.

Any questions?

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