

Bolsover District Council

Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee

7th December 2020

**Customer Service Standards and CCC Report 2020/21 –
1st April 2020 to 30th September 2020**

Report of the Head of Corporate Governance

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 2020 to 30th September 2020.

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 2020 and 30th September 2020 by quarterly period. The report identifies 97% 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:

Quarter 1

- Customer Services (80%)
- Revenues & Benefits, who narrowly missed the target (92%)

Quarter 2

- Revenues & Benefits (80%)
- Housing Repairs (87%)
- Partnerships (89%)

This is largely due to the arrangements put in place for the Covid-19 pandemic, with Officers being deployed to other duties and working from home (the system does not record forwarded calls).

Contact Centres

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

Contact Centres achieved 82% and 54% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (69% cumulatively).

Revenues & Benefits (direct dial)

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

Revenues & Benefits 'direct dial' achieved 70% and 76% for quarters 1 & 2 respectively (73% 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 2020:

- 6589 email enquiries (3,794 in Q1 and 2,795 in Q2) from the public were received through enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- All were acknowledged within one working day
- 98.5% were replied to in full within 8 working days.

Despite other contact channels being available, e-mail still appears to be a popular method of contact.

Face to face monitoring

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

No monitoring has been carried out due to the Contact Centre being closed, as per the Covid-19 arrangements.

Compliments, Comments and Complaints (Appendix 3)

Compliments

Appendix 3 (A) shows the number of written compliments received for the period by department. In total 123 written compliments were received and represents a slight increase of recorded compliments (we received 111 for the same period 2019/20).

A good cross section of compliments was received from customers appreciating excellent service, including 35 for Revenues & Benefits, 30 for Streetscene Services, 20 for Customer Services (Contact Centres), 16 for the Leaders Executive Team and 15 for Leisure. 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 65 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, particularly regarding the suspension of the 'green bin' recycling service (21) 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. 93% were responded to within this timescale which is a slight improvement on the figures for the same period last year (91%).

Formal Investigation (stage two)

Appendix 3 (D) shows the number of Formal Investigation complaints by department. 62 complaints were received during this period. 55 (88%) were responded to within our customer service standard of 15 working days. This does not meet the target and is largely due to the arrangements put in place for the Covid-19 pandemic, with Officers being deployed to other duties and working from home.

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 18 stage three complaints were received, 94% (17) of which were responded to within standard. The complaint out of time was responded to within 21 working days and was a particularly complex one involving an enforcement issue.

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 2020/21 as of 19th November 2020. During the reporting period, we received one decision from The Housing Ombudsman Service of 'No maladministration'. The report also shows a decision from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman on 2nd October 2020 (just outside of the reporting period) of the 'Ombudsman cannot investigate this complaint'.

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 Scrutiny note the overall performance on compliments/comments and complaints and customer service standards, particularly in the light of the constraints Officers have been working within during the Covid-19 arrangements.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (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
District Wards Affected	All wards

Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Providing Our Customers with Excellent Service Transforming Our Organisation – good governance.
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8

Document Information

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