



Corporate Resources O&S Committee

Scrutiny Inquiry: Contacting the Council – Improving Satisfaction

Evidence Pack



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BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**PUBLIC REPORT**

Report to:	Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Report of:	Chris Gibbs - Service Director, Customer Services
Date:	14 July 2015
SUBJECT:	Citizen Satisfaction and Complaints
Wards affected:	All

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on citizen satisfaction and complaints

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report.

Contact Officer Details

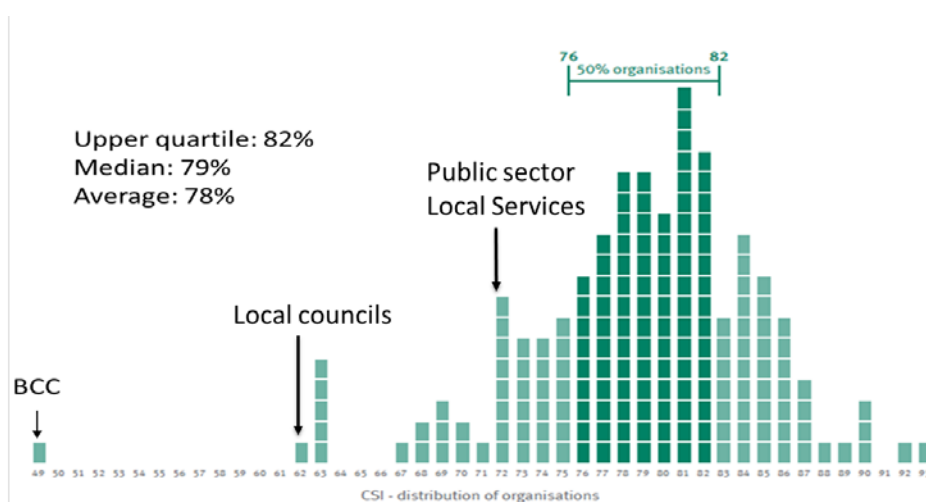
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Citizen Satisfaction

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the Contact Centre contract re-negotiations with Service Birmingham during 2014 there was a strong focus on the requirement for any new contract to deliver the key values and vision for the Council. A true understanding of citizen satisfaction with its Contact Centre services was an important factor for the Council in determining whether its citizens were being well served by an outsourced provider.
- 1.2 A working group was set up in late 2013 to commence negotiations with Service Birmingham with independent consultancy being commissioned to support with value for money benchmarking and establishing critical success factors for the negotiation.
- 1.3 The Contact Centre has two million conversations with citizens a year and is therefore the largest touch-point the council has with end users of council services. Bringing these conversations in-house (removing the need to balance the supply of public service with the commercial needs of Service Birmingham) has allowed more control of messages, customer's needs to be addressed appropriately and places the voice of the customer at the heart of the organisation.
- 1.4 Service Birmingham (SB) measured satisfaction with its Contact Centre services through an 'end of call' survey whereby Advisors could choose which call to promote to a citizen. This reported an average satisfaction score of 97% despite anecdotal citizen feedback providing evidence to the contrary.
- 1.5 Customer Services commissioned independent analysis into citizen satisfaction during March/April 2014 which provided results of 49.4% satisfaction for contact centre services and 43.2% satisfaction for end to end delivery. As a result of these findings, and in order to measure any improvements, the independent measurement of citizen satisfaction has continued.
- 1.6 BCC benchmarked these results against the Institute of Customer Service annual customer satisfaction survey that shows satisfaction with local councils at 62% (see graph below) compared to 72% for local services in the public sector.



1.7 The contract re-negotiations with Service Birmingham ended in June 2014 when the decision was taken to bring the Contact Centre in-house to demonstrate improved value for money and enable the Council to deliver its vision for one front-door to Council services, resolve more customer issues at the first point of contact, and deliver an easier experience for customers. The service was bought in-house on 1st November 2014.

2. How customer satisfaction is now measured with the in-house service

2.1 There is a text survey sent to citizens' mobile phones within 24 hours of them having called the Contact Centre. It is currently sent to all citizens mobiles but we are reviewing whether this is appropriate going forward and whether a random sample would be as effective. Citizens are asked 6 questions which are shown in Appendix A. This survey aims to measure satisfaction with the Contact Centre.

2.2 A further survey is sent via email to citizens to measure their satisfaction with the end-to-end experience. This survey is sent when a job is shown as completed within the Contact Centre's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which holds details of the citizen's interactions with the Council. The email survey asks 7 questions (Appendix A).

2.3 Citizen satisfaction results are fed back to Customer Services on a monthly basis shown at an organisational level with the ability to drill down to individual Service Areas. Customer Services is also provided with detailed sentiment analysis of customer feedback showing both positive and negative commentary.

2.4 These results are fed back to Service Areas through the 6 weekly Contact Centre Governance Board and also provided to the Relationship Managers within the Customer Services team.

2.5 The Relationship Managers work with the Service Areas to develop Action Plans to address the areas of concern as identified by the feedback via the citizen satisfaction survey. These Action Plans aim to address the root cause of dissatisfaction and are tracked regularly through face-to-face meetings on a monthly basis with Service. The Fleet and Waste Action Plan is attached at Appendix B.

2.6 The Customer Services team (which was restructured following transition in-house) now includes a number of new roles that can support with issues identified in the survey e.g. process issues are highlighted to the new Process Improvement Analyst roles so they can address these.

3. Customer Satisfaction Trends

3.1 There has been an overall improvement in citizen satisfaction from service transfer 1st November 2014.

3.2 There has been an overall improvement in agent 'willingness to help' which correlates to citizen satisfaction and supports the investment made in frontline staffing.

3.3 There has been an overall improvement in ease of resolution and a declining trend in citizens with previous/repeat calls.

3.4 There is demonstrable evidence in a step change to meet the Local Council's benchmark of 62% and ambitions to exceed.

Whilst all of these are positive trends it is recognised that this is still a low baseline and that there is still much work to be done by both Customer Services and the Service Areas to improve citizen satisfaction.

4. Improvements made to the operation since transition

4.1 There have been a number of improvements to the Contact Centre since transition; some of which have been introduced as a result of the citizen satisfaction surveys, that has had a positive impact on citizen satisfaction - these include:

4.1.1 Improving training materials and coaching skills

- “Day in the Life” sessions taken place with Benefits, Housing Repairs, Fleet and Waste, Environmental Health and scheduled for Parks, Planning, Elections and Revenues in February and March. These sessions allowed Team Managers/Advisors to spend a day with the Service Areas to build a comprehensive understanding of the Service Areas and how they operate. The Team Managers have increased knowledge of the whole process and have improved relationships with Service Areas which are useful to handle escalated issues or complaints.
- Coaching skills for Team Managers have been rolled out
- New customer service training developed and rolled out to Team Managers to train out to Advisors during March/April 2015. A specific module have been developed to focus on empathy which citizens reported through the citizen satisfaction survey as being a behaviour that was lacking when dealing with the Contact Centre.
- There has been a complete revision and re-launch of the quality monitoring procedure used within the Contact Centre to measure the quality of calls. The previous quality monitoring procedure had little focus on soft skills which the citizen satisfaction had highlighted as a problem. The new way of evaluating quality is built around the vision and values of the Council with a heavy emphasis on soft skills.

4.2 There have been Resolution Champions appointed within the Contact Centre whose role it is to handle escalations from colleagues in their team. A great deal of those escalations has resulted in an outbound call to the customer to resolve their issue and has prevented the need for any further escalation to the corporate complaints procedure Your Views.

4.3 There is a new focus on end-to-end service delivery, working in partnership with Service Areas to reduce customer effort, failure demand and unnecessary contact.

4.4 As part of this year's Service Plan Customer Services is planning to re-engineer the IVR (inter-active voice response that allows citizens to interact with the Council via their telephone keypad) to make it easier for citizens to get through to the service they require and eliminate unnecessary calls by providing pro-active information within the IVR when we are aware of issues that might generate calls – missed collections, etc.

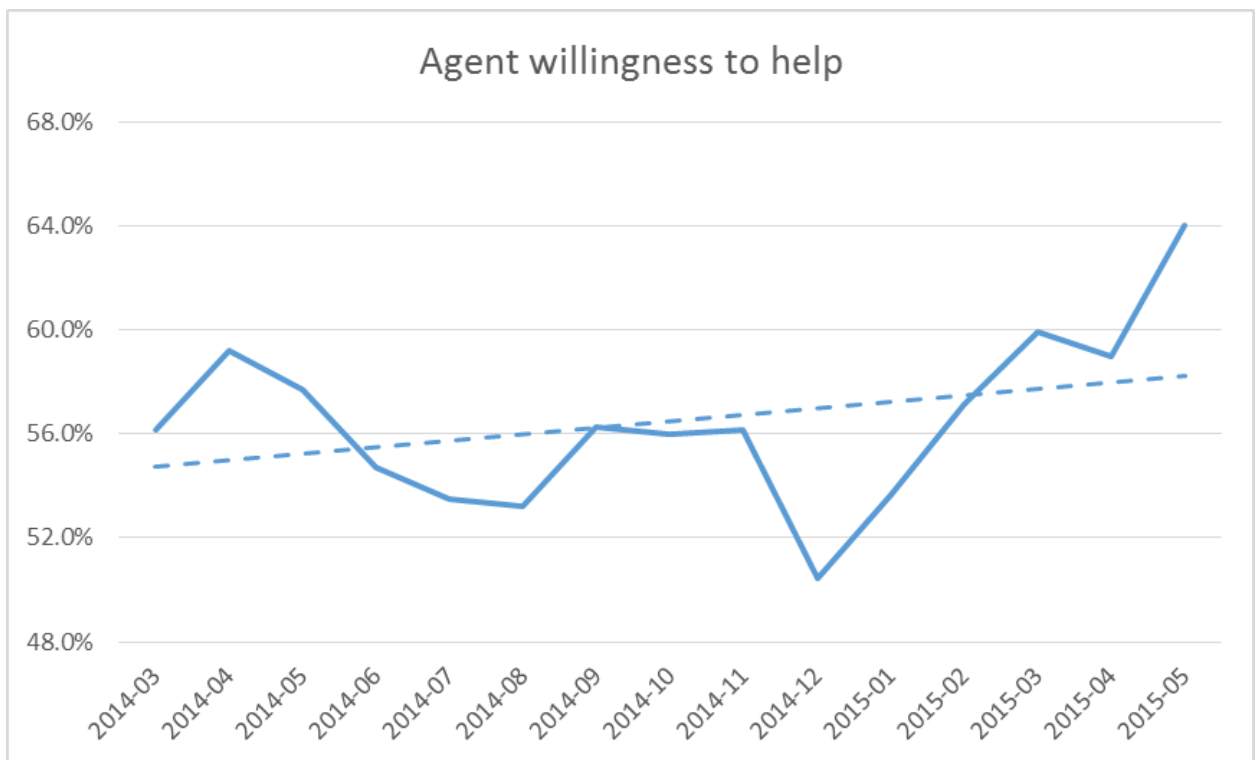
4.5 Improvement plans are being developed in conjunction with the Service Areas to further increase first contact resolution and embed cultural and behavioural change.

5. Citizen satisfaction trends – March 2014 – May 2015

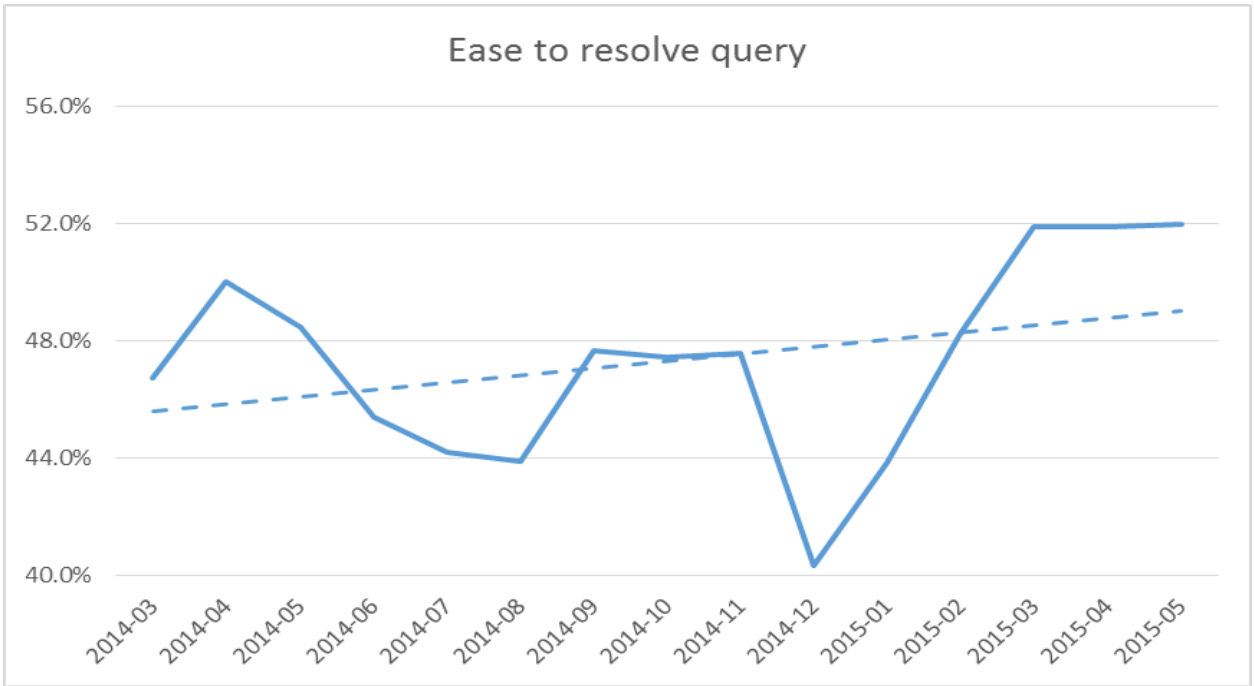
Q. How satisfied are you with your overall experience of speaking with us?



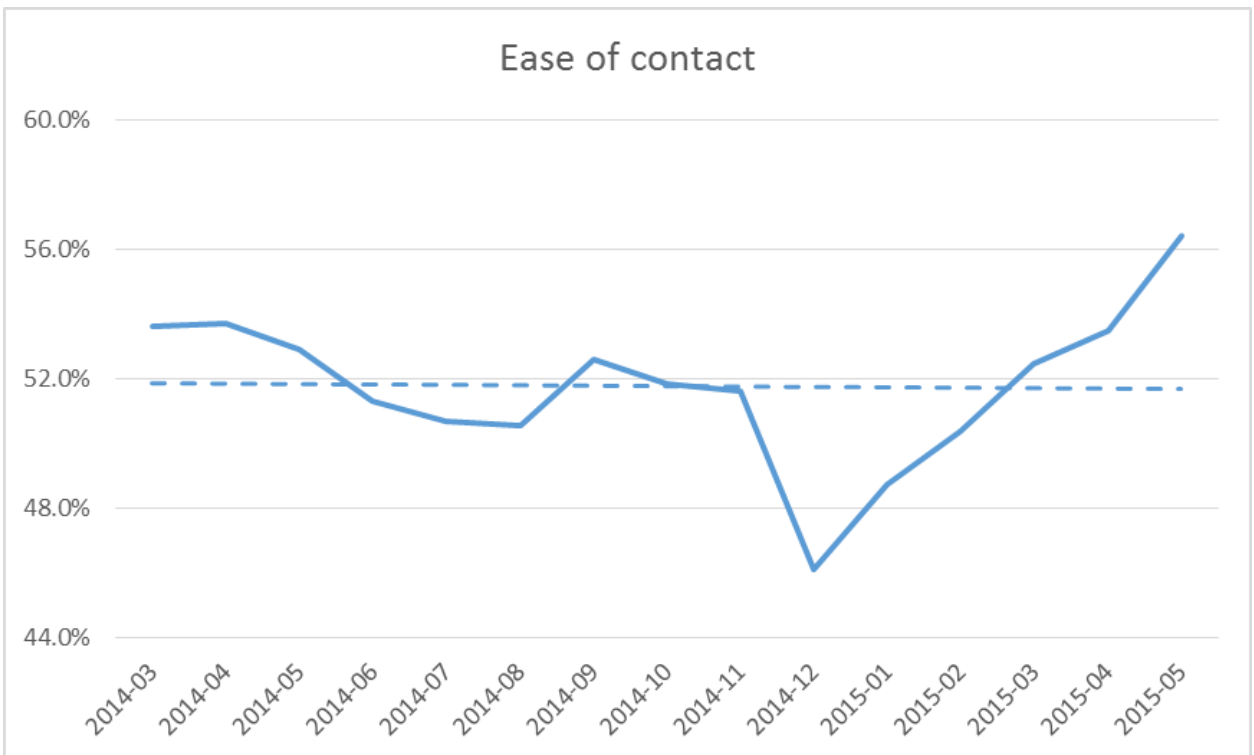
Q. How would you rate our advisors willingness to help?



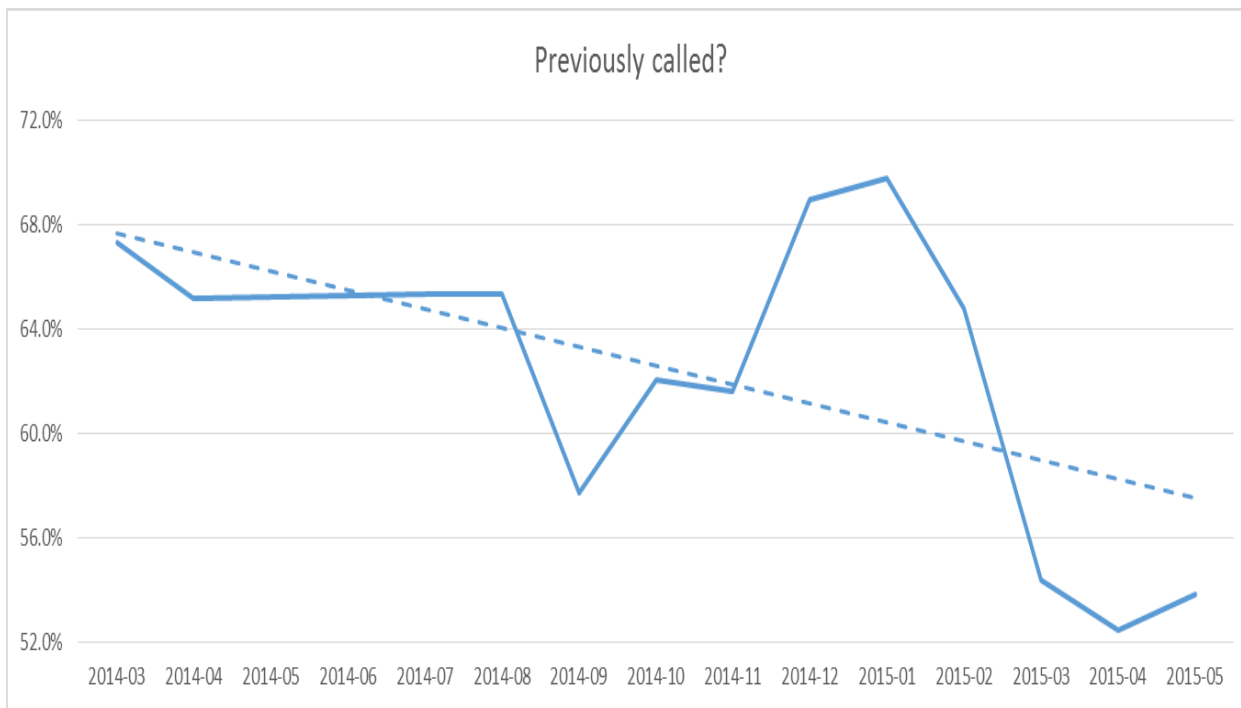
Q. How easy was it to get your query resolved?



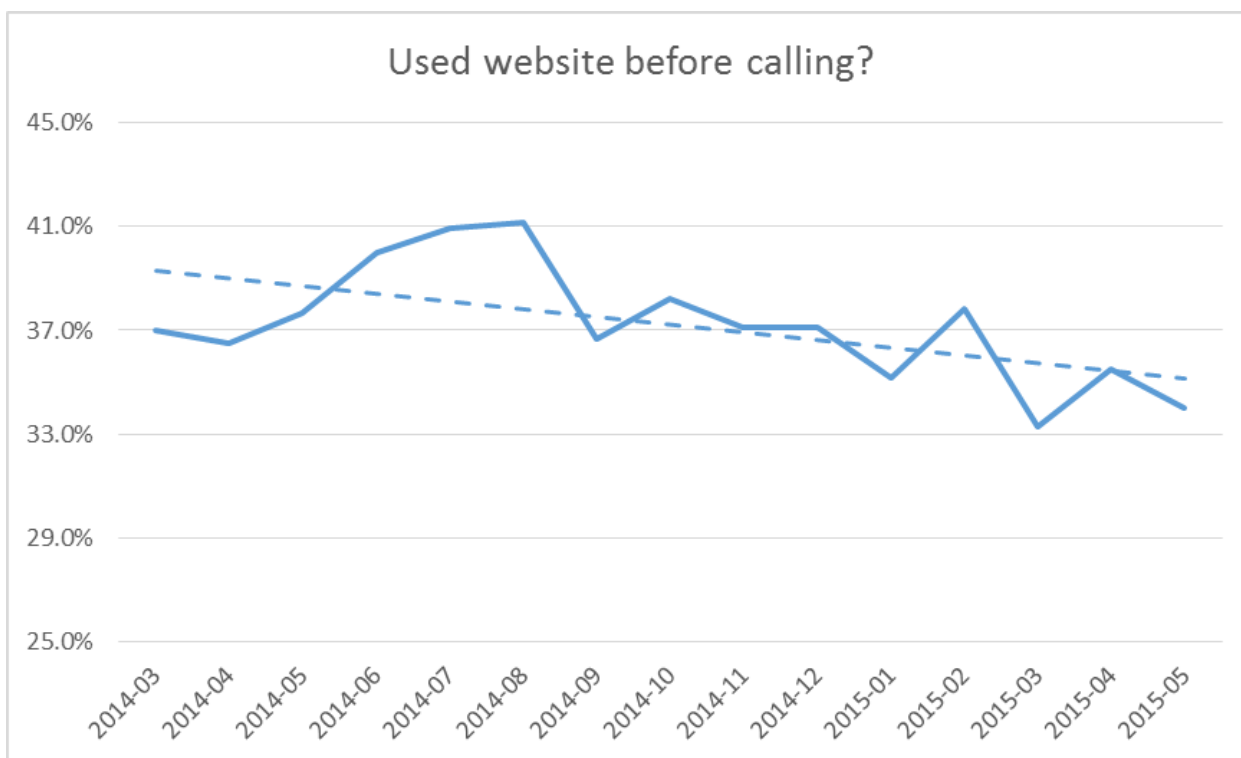
Q. How easy was it to get through to someone to talk about your query?



Q. Have you called previously with this query?



Q. Did you try and use the website to resolve your query before calling?



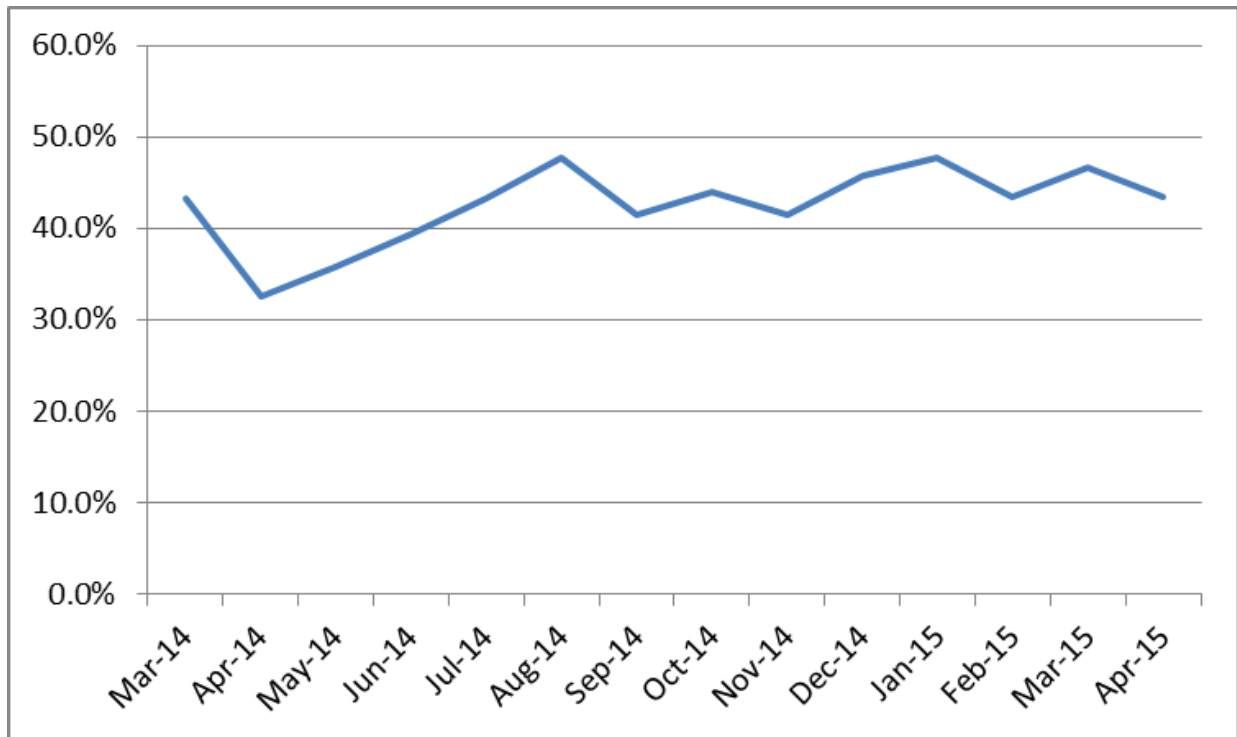
Overall citizen satisfaction by highest volume Service Areas (Contact Centre)



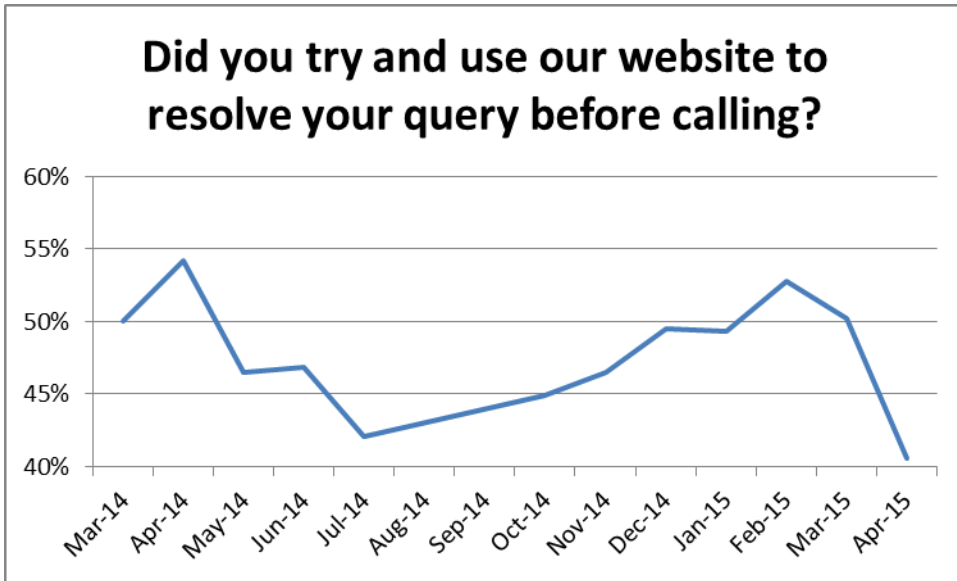
End-to-end citizen satisfaction survey

This survey sent by email to citizens when a job is closed on CRM measures the end-to-end satisfaction with their experience.

Q. How satisfied are you overall with dealing with us?



Q. Did you try and use the website to resolve your query before calling?



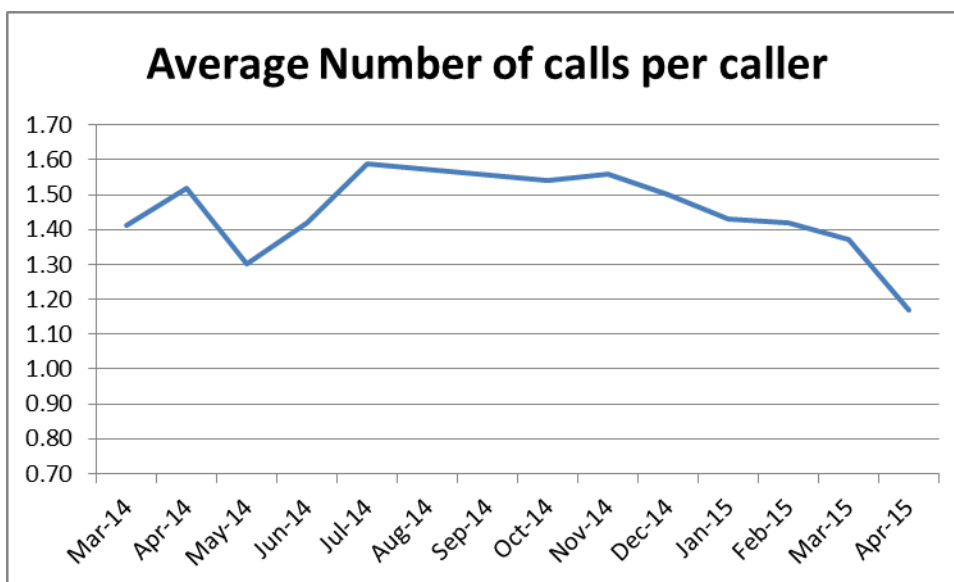
Q. How easy was it to request what you wanted?



Q. Were you advised of how long it would take to complete the job?



Q. How many times have you called previously with this query?



Q. Was the job completed to your satisfaction?



5.1 Other data available to analyse

The citizen satisfaction surveys provide us with the ability to drill down to individual Service Areas performance. We can also assess citizen 'sentiment' via the free-text comments that they leave on the SMS and email survey responses and we can track surveys back to Advisors in order to assess citizen satisfaction with individuals.

6. Complaints

6.1 Background

6.1.1 Since 1st April 2013, all complaints, compliments and comments have been handled via the corporate Your Views system, with the exception of Adults and Children's statutory complaints which have their own statutory procedure to follow.

6.1.2 All reporting comes directly from the CRM system with no manual intervention in the statistics.

6.1.3 The corporate target for complaints is to provide a full response to 90% of citizens within 15 working days. The Birmingham Promise states that a full response or update will be provided to citizens within 20 calendar days.

6.2 Complaints performance 2014/15

6.2.1 The table below shows the volume of complaints during 2014/15 and the performance by Directorate for responding to these within 10 and 15 working days. This also shows the comparison to 2013/14 and demonstrates the positive improvements made in meeting the 15 working day target.

Values		Grand Total 2013/14	Grand Total 2014/15	Q1 14/15	Q2 14/15	Q3 14/15	Q4 14/15
Economy	Volume of Complaints	3,680	3,403	1013	879	796	715
	% responded to in 10 working days	55%	75%	56%	81%	86%	85%
	% responded to in 15 working days	85%	96%	94%	94%	99%	99%
Place	Volume of Complaints	9,105	12,509	3,560	3,051	2,726	3,172
	% responded to in 10 working days	43%	66%	46%	59%	83%	80%
	% responded to in 15 working days	66%	91%	81%	89%	98%	99%
People	Volume of Complaints	207	364	78	91	101	94
	% responded to in 10 working days	24%	35%	28%	45%	36%	32%
	% responded to in 15 working days	32%	89%	72%	97%	94%	91%
Citywide	Total Volume of Complaints	12,992	16,277	4,651	4,021	3,623	3,982
	% responded to in 10 working days	46%	67%	48%	63%	82%	80%
	% responded to in 15 working days	71%	92%	83%	91%	98%	98%

6.2.2 Customer Services has introduced an escalation system whereby if a service does not achieve its monthly target, then the issue will be escalated to the Head of Service; a consecutive month would result in an escalation to the AD; and a third month would lead to escalation to the Strategic Director. This escalation process has been in place since 1 April 2013.

6.2.3 Given the positive improvements in meeting the corporate SLA the focus has switched to learning from complaints and taking actions to address the root cause. On a quarterly basis, Customer Services provide the Your Views Coordinators for each Service Area with a breakdown of the top 3 nature of complaint (i.e. staff attitude, efficiency of service, etc). The

Service Area is required to provide a report to the Customer Services on changes that will be made to the service as a result of complaints received. These Action Plans are monitored via Customer Services to ensure the proposed actions are implemented. An example of the most recent Your Views Directorate learnings report is attached at Appendix C.

6.2.4 Customer Services undertakes random sampling of complaints responses to ensure adherence to quality standards and reports findings back to Service Areas where any non-compliance is identified. As a result of this, Customer Services has developed and delivered specific training courses on 'Complaints Investigation' and 'Writing a Complaint Response' in order to ensure that staff handling complaints are aware of good practice

6.2.5 Customer Services has worked with the Directorate Coordinators to develop a Your Views Customer Satisfaction survey measure customer satisfaction with the complaints process.

6.3 Complaints procedure

When a citizen makes a complaint we are required to:

1. enter the complaint on to the CRM system and share and keep data inline with BCC Privacy Policy
2. acknowledge the complaint and provide the citizen with a reference number for that complaint;
3. investigate the complaint fully;
4. send a full response to the customer within **15 working days**, using the method of their choice. If we cannot provide a full response within 15 working days, perhaps due to the complaint being complex and requiring further investigation, then we should inform the customer of when we will be able to respond.

The complaints procedure is based on a three-stage process as below.

Stage 1 – Settle the complaint immediately

This is where we are able to resolve the issue on the spot. The Resolution Champion role introduced within the Contact Centre as part of the re-organisation is helping to ensure that complaints are resolved at the first point of contact and do not escalate to a Stage 2 or beyond.

The aim is to deal with the complaint straight away. However, this is not always possible, in which case the complaint will go straight to a Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Investigating the complaint

The department that provided the service will investigate the complaint and respond to the citizen within 15 working days.

Stage 3 – Review the complaint

If the citizen is unhappy with the Council's decision at stage 2 they can ask the Council to review it. The citizen will need to explain why they feel the Council's decision is incorrect. The complaint will then be looked at by an independent officer and the Council will respond within **20 working days**.

If the citizen is still unhappy after their complaint has been reviewed the Council will tell them what they can do next. At this stage the citizen may wish to contact the Local Government Ombudsman who will expect them to have exhausted the complaints procedure.

6.4 Citizen Satisfaction with Your Views

To ensure that the Council is following the Your Views procedure correctly and is giving our citizens the best service we send citizens a link to a Your Views satisfaction survey to ask about their experience. The most recent survey results identified the following:

- More than half of respondents complained via email or web, the rest complained via telephone with a very small % complaining via letter or face-to-face
- The majority of respondents received an acknowledgement letter
- Of those that received an acknowledgement many were not clear on the timescales when they would receive a response – this is unusual given that auto acknowledgements are sent for web and email responses and these clearly state the date by when the complaint will be responded to – we will review the acknowledgement templates to see if this could be made clearer
- The majority of respondents found it easy to make a complaint, however, many of them also found it difficult to contact the Council to discuss their complaint when it had been made.
- 50% of respondents were dissatisfied with the time it took to resolve their complaint but there is no way of identifying how long it took to resolve
- More than half of respondents were dissatisfied with the complaint response – we will review via quality checks of responses and promote ‘Responding to complaints’ training course.

Appendix A

Citizen Satisfaction Survey Questions (SMS and Email surveys)

Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions (draft) for BCC - email survey only 8th April 2014		
1	Did you try and use our website to resolve your query before calling?	Yes or No
2	How easy was it to request what you wanted?	1 to 10
3	Were you advised of how long it would take to complete your job?	Yes or No
4	Did you have to contact the council again after you first reported your request	Yes or No (if No, how many times?)
5	Was the job completed to your satisfaction?	Yes or No
6	How satisfied are you with your overall experience?	1 to 10

Customer Satisfaction Questions for Birmingham City Council (from 31st March - 25th April) - SMS		
1	Did you try and use our website to resolve your query before calling?	Yes or No
2	How many times have you called previously about this query?	1, 2, 3, 4 or more than 5
3	How easy was it to get through to talk to someone about your query?	1 to 10
4	How would you rate the person's willingness to help?	1 to 10
5	How easy was it to get your query resolved?	1 to 10
6	How satisfied are you with your overall experience of speaking with us?	1 to 10


APPENDIX B Fleet & Waste Action Plan – 2015 / 2016

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Review volumes and types of calls to the actual requests for service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7076 provide information tickets recorded in January 2015. This represents 49% of calls answered. • Are customers calling about recycling collection rotations for example? • Do we need to look at Bulky waste calls vs bookings to understand what the other enquires are. • Missed collection call volumes from the IVR selection can report up to 28% of call traffic, are all these calls resulting in a missed collection being book? <p>Once understood we should look for: -</p>	<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established around 25% of all bulky calls result in a payment, further exercise to be taken to understand what the additional calls relate to. • Provide info tickets can only be reviewed by sample checking, you can't run a report which will provide the note data recorded. • Will need to secure a resource to perform this analysis. 	<p>To be allocated (Awaiting PA role to be filled)</p>	

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we reduce volumes? • Is there a root cause? • Can the call be deflected? 			
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Defective tickets process.</p> <p>Currently not live with the service.</p> <p>The process will assist in driving out error and deliver service improvement. Reporting and tracking on the errors taking place will assist in reducing repeat call, escalations and complaints.</p>	<p>24/04/15 – BH has been in dialog with SW and provided the codes which are to be used to report defective tickets. BH has also provided a list of pointers of what does and does not constitute a defective ticket.</p> <p>TH to establish the go live date for clinical waste so BH can prepare the team internally at Customer Services</p>		

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Ember call foresight report (April 2015 issue)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From October 14 to March 15 there was between 24% to 30% repeat contact. This equates to 4366 calls in January 2015 by means of illustration. • FCR over the same period averages 77%. • In March the key time for repeat calls up to 7 days = 50%. • 10% re-called within 15 minutes. <p>Further data analysis is requirement to get under the numbers. For example to understand the 15 minute recall.</p>			
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Review work being generated in the Back Office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data errors / LLPG, are these genuine errors, are numbers reducing? 			

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Service requests via e-mail to the Back Office.</p> <p>Review volumes being received by Back Office and the sources of the requests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we close down old e-mail addresses? • Can we bounce back requests from Contact@ • Can we stop all e-mail handling to encourage channel shift to the web. 	<p>24/04/15 – Agreement reached between KM & BH to close down legacy e-mail address which are filtering through to Contact@Birmingham inbox. Additionally it was agreed to cease processing jobs being reported via Contact@Birmingham and instead to send a response back steering the customer with a link to self-serve.</p> <p>June 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim is to close down legacy inboxes such as “Recycling@Birmingham”. FV / Joe O trying to establish what the inboxes are. • Send back a response to Contact@birmingham e-mails steering the customer online. • Have discovered there is another inbox customers are using Fleet&Waste@servicebirmingham – This looks as if it has been a creep over time, this should not be in the public 	<p>BH / Ops</p>	


Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
		<p>domain. We will use the response for contact@birmingham on this mail box. Joe also needs to flush out the users of this inbox.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once legacy inboxes have been established a Change will be raised with SBIT to close them down. Like highways, I have asked Stuart for a copy of this CR. <p>The following is the response to be used on the inbox.</p>  <p>Fleet & Waste - Email Job Response -June :</p>		
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>IVR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the layers Ease of journey Length of time to navigate Review the content, is it repetitive for example telling customers to go on line. Are splits / options fir customer use or MI. If MI is it being used? <p>Where there is option split, analysis the usage to establish</p>	<p>June 2015</p> <p>First draft review taken</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can maybe reduce some wording in some of the scripting The repeated use of www.birmingham.gov.uk need to be reviewed Missed collections – we ask customers to split out the type of missed collection (5 options) but where is this being used? Stating that the green service is now a chargeable service – This is year 2, do we still need this? 		


Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
	<p>changes in demand by month and across the year. This could identify events that drive call demand.</p> <p>The Ember call insight report shows 55% of customers abandon their call when waiting up to 5 minutes. 29% of customers wait up to 10 minutes. This could be reflective of the pre IVR messaging adding queue time for the customer.</p>	<p>This feedback needs to feed into the review the service improvement team is undertaking.</p>		
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Complaints & Customer Satisfaction</p> <p>Review of complaints & C-Sat reporting or actual complaints to establish themes and trends which are causing repeat demand or failure.</p> <p>There is a high volume of your views raised in Fleet & Waste, in January 2015 there was 946 of which 763 were complaints.</p>	<p>June 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action to be picked up when Performance Analyst is in post. • Aim is to drill down on the verbatim feedback from the C-sat to build up insight and themes. • Build up a month on month C-Sat insight 		

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome																														
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Collate and gather reports of service failure and use information to drive improvements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with resolution champs / logs Error reporting to the BA team Defective ticket reporting <p>Findings can be delivered via the meeting set up of: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly review meetings Service improvement Operations improvement group 	<p>May 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have taken a review of the log sheet and cut it to the attached. This represents 1 res champ over the first 4 weeks of being in place. There is in total 90 records which have been recorded as a service area failure of which 70 appear to be missed collection related, <table border="1" data-bbox="804 667 1312 1131"> <thead> <tr> <th>Missed Collections</th> <th>Vol</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Refuse</td> <td>17</td> <td>24.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recycling</td> <td>17</td> <td>24.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bulky</td> <td>5</td> <td>7.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green</td> <td>3</td> <td>4.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Communal</td> <td>2</td> <td>2.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Container</td> <td>5</td> <td>7.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Assisted</td> <td>14</td> <td>20.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asbestos</td> <td>7</td> <td>10.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>70</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The other 20 issues relate to other reasons connected to wheelie bins, fly tipping, address updates and clinical. 10 of the customers are repeat reports / escalations to the resolution champ (highlighted in green on the attached) which would suggest the customers report or</p>	Missed Collections	Vol	%	Refuse	17	24.3%	Recycling	17	24.3%	Bulky	5	7.1%	Green	3	4.3%	Communal	2	2.9%	Container	5	7.1%	Assisted	14	20.0%	Asbestos	7	10.0%	Total	70			
Missed Collections	Vol	%																																
Refuse	17	24.3%																																
Recycling	17	24.3%																																
Bulky	5	7.1%																																
Green	3	4.3%																																
Communal	2	2.9%																																
Container	5	7.1%																																
Assisted	14	20.0%																																
Asbestos	7	10.0%																																
Total	70																																	

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
		<p>issue is not being resolved.</p> <p>This has been shared with the service area Assistant Director.</p> <p>June 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This analysis to be developed when Performance Analyst is in post in order to build up a month on month insight. 		
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Providing advisors with view only access to MAPPS.</p> <p>There is more meaningful data being capture within MAPPS compared to the update to CRM. The data in MAPPS would aid the advisor better in handling the call.</p> <p>For example – CRM will state “Job Closed no further action” but MAPPS will state the bin was not presented.</p> <p>There are developments with “Slab In The Cab” to consider as the technology rolls out across the service and what updates</p>	<p>June 2015</p> <p>The need to provide MAPPS to advisors is the main is avoid with the introduction of slab in the cab. The integration to CRM will provide advisors in the Contact Centre with live updates. The first phase of this starts on July 6th.</p>	<p>BH / Service Area</p>	

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
	integration with CRM will offer.			
April 2015 Open	Financial Impact Establish the key drivers which constitute cost to the Service Area or Customer Services. For example: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of repeat calls • Cost of reduced channel shift • Cost of error Cost of resolution management			
April 2015 Open	Clinical Waste Currently customers needing a sharps box collection needs to call and book a collection each time. If a regular collection is needed can this not be set up to be a scheduled collection? This would avoid calls, need to establish the volumes involved for sharps.			

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
<p>May 2015</p> <p>Open</p>	<p>Analysis on the IVR split for F&W shows there is on average 1500 to 2000 calls per month for Bulky Waste. However 25% of the calls on average result in a booking.</p> <p>Need to establish what the other 75% of calls are for.</p>			
<p>April 2015</p> <p>Closed</p>	<p>Undertake and outbound calling campaign to understand and obtain feedback from customers who had taken up the green waste service for 2015. Aim is to ask 6 questions and gain verbatim feedback,</p>	<p>April 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outbound calling commenced using 2 advisors from the F&W dedicated team. <p>May 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attached report produced on findings and presented to service area. 	<p>BH</p>	<p> Green Waste Survey Results - April 2015.d</p>

Date Added Open / closed	Item or Initiative	Actions & Updates	Owner	Outcome
May Closed	A set of golden rules and check list was developed for advisors to support with reports of missed collection from Citizen. Due to a number of changes due to the F&W service transformation there was additional requirements to follow. Errors being made by the Contact Centre are impacting the citizen and the service area.	May 2015 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golden rules formed and agreed between Customer Services and F&W. • Advisors briefed and visual aids created • An easy missed collection check list developed to support the golden rules • New daily reporting formatted by F&W to support the Contact Centre in error management. 	BH	Copy of the golden rules and check list.  Missed Collection Desk Aid - BH Version

APPENDIX C

Your Views Directorate Learnings Summary

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Business Development & Innovation	Business Development & Innovation	Failure to explain thoroughly the reasons why a business was not eligible for grant	Failure to explain	Discussions already held with the author of the letter to share best practice and the expectations of what is required in a grant decision letter.
Business Improvement	Business Improvement	Delay in handling general enquiries.	Staff absence, high workloads, caused prioritisation to take place with enquiries being lowered in importance and therefore general enquiries were not handled in time	Management have now appointed additional resource to assist the team.
City Centre Management	City Centre Partnerships	Third Party related for which we are unable to control but can advise for future regeneration projects	Unable to retrospectively control the situation through planning as we are unable to enforce the provision of disability access.	Discussed with relevant project managers to raise awareness of disability access for Golden Triangle regeneration in the same area
Library & Archive Services	Central Library - General	Increased noise levels and the consumption of food	The vision of the Library was to be like no other in order to deliberately attract new users and visitors. In this we have been successful and the building has become a tourist attraction but with it has come the increase in noise levels not normally associated with old style libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of procedures and policy for eating and drinking in the library to be carried out. • Explain to customers that a heavily used building will generate greater noise levels due to the sheer volume of people the library attracts. • Remind public that members of the library can book private rooms (study carrels) to undertake research or undisturbed study. • Reminder that a quiet study area is located on 2nd floor at the front of the building and also on 4th floor. • Staff and security to police the quiet study areas to try and reduce the amount of noise generated. • It is our intention in the near future to erect partitioning to demark an area on the 1st floor for the purpose of quiet study. • Remind the public that drinking from a bottle is allowed anywhere in the building, but drinking from cups is allowed on the terraces or cafes only. • Only food and drink purchased from the café can be eaten within the designated areas. • Customers eating outside of these areas will be challenged by staff and asked to relocate. • Library staff, specialist security personnel and CCTV systems will be used to police these issues.

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Library & Archive Services	Central Library - General	lack of understanding of staff especially IT related problems resulted in poor customer service	Review of policy and procedures for customer service department to be carried out	Review staff rotas so that they are able to build up expertise in each service area. Staff will work closely with duty manager and incident manager when they require help and advice. Ensure staff 121 interviews are undertaken on a regular basis. Staff have been provided with communication devices to enable them to make contact with other staff quickly and efficiently. Refresher courses will be arranged for staff to include customer service, manual handling, first aid and fire evacuation
Planning Management Support	Planning Enforcement	The cause for the increase in service complaints about disagreement with an enforcement decision is linked directly to an increase in enforcement complaints about breaches in planning control. It is also linked to closure of enforcement complaint cases and there is very little that can be done to prevent complaints about our decisions.	Further proactive work is needed to manage customer expectations. This way we can educate complainants on what action can be taken and the reasons why enforcement action is unlikely.	Improved and more detailed leaflet information available on the web to manage complainants expectations. Direct officer contact details are now provided to allow discussion and explanation to aid the complainants understanding of our decision.
Benefits	Benefit Enquiry - Payment Enquiry	<u>Reconsider of benefit</u>	This is where customers believe we haven't got their benefit details correct, linked to updating of DWP passported benefits which customers don't associate or customers failing to report changes	Due to the nature of Benefits, with the continuation of the SSSC, and the use of DHP funds, all cases had to be reviewed in the first quarter of the year, this action has now been completed. Although the volume of complaints has increased, the % of justified complaints has reduced. This demonstrates that the customers experiencing financial pressures and reliant on benefit will continuously use the complaints process even if prematurely to establish their full entitlement.

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Benefits	Housing Benefit - Change in Circs	<u>Customer did not provide the Requested Information</u> Due to the nature of the Service relying on information provided by the DWP and the customer to enable an se,	Customers writing in, however the information relates to change in circumstances, payments of HB, or general enquiries. In context in the number of changes that are processed in the quarter, the level is very low.	The service area have developed a customer service promise. And continues to ensure in the main that speed of processing is high. Of total complaints received for Q3 for Benefits delays in processing where there was a justification equated to 0.02% of the entire number of items processed in the same period.
Benefits	Housing/Council Tax Benefit - New Claim	<u>Delays in Processing</u> Due to the nature of Benefits, with continuation of the SSSC, use of DHP funds, introduction of the Benefit Cap and review of Discounts (Including Single Person Discount) by the Revenues Service, there will always be an overlap of complaints between the two Services, due to the reliance on both Services working together, and correspondence being dealt with simultaneously	Customers writing in, however the information relates to change in circumstances, payments of HB, or general enquiries. In context in the number of changes that are processed in the quarter, the level is very low.	The service area have developed a customer service promise. And continues to ensure in the main that speed of processing is high. Of total complaints received for Q3 for Benefits delays in processing where there was a justification equated to 0.02% of the entire number of items processed in the same period.
Rents	Hsg - Account Refund Request	Delay in customers receiving a credit refund	Further examination of resources and demand ongoing. The volume of complaints is very low, in comparison to the number of refunds required.	The restructure of the Rent Service was completed in Nov 2013. The restructure introduced an Inbound team as the first point of contact in the arrears recovery process. Initially the team consisted of temporary staff until September 2014, when permanent appointments were made. An extensive & comprehensive programme of training was introduced.
Revenues	Council Tax Enquiry	Recovery method applied	Customers will be unhappy where a final notice is issued, when they believe they have made all required payments. However, unless the customer indicates the correct account, payments are always allocated to oldest outstanding account first	* Continued improvement the outcomes through the benefit of Special payment arrangements, including removing associated costs. * Introduction the use of TEXT messaging a couple of days prior to reminder being issued, to remind customer payment is due (due to go live April 15) * More use of telephone contact with Customers where payment arrangements can be made

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Revenues	Council Tax Payment Investigation	Incorrect bill	Bills issued whilst awaiting benefit awards, or review of benefit entitlements, awaiting decision on DHP, or Discounts	Introducing the removal of costs on any final payment of a Single Person Discount by Direct Debit
Revenues	Council Tax Refund/ Transfers	Clarification of Bill	Bills issued whilst awaiting benefit awards, or review of benefit entitlements, awaiting decision on DHP, or Discounts	Introducing the removal of costs on any final payment of a Single Person Discount by Direct Debit
Business Development & Innovation	Business Development & Innovation	Failure to explain thoroughly the reasons why a business was not eligible for grant	Failure to explain	Discussions already held with the author of the letter to share best practice and the expectations of what is required in a grant decision letter.
Business Improvement	Business Improvement	Delay in handling general enquiries.	Staff absence, high workloads, caused prioritisation to take place with enquiries being lowered in importance and therefore general enquiries were not handled in time	Management have now appointed additional resource to assist the team.
City Centre Management	City Centre Partnerships	Third Party related for which we are unable to control but can advise for future regeneration projects	Unable to retrospectively control the situation through planning as we are unable to enforce the provision of disability access.	Discussed with relevant project managers to raise awareness of disability access for Golden Triangle regeneration in the same area
Planning Management Support	Planning Enforcement	The cause for the increase in service complaints about disagreement with an enforcement decision is linked directly to an increase in enforcement complaints about breaches in planning control. It is also linked to closure of enforcement complaint cases and there is very little that can be done to prevent complaints about our decisions.	Further proactive work is needed to manage customer expectations. This way we can educate complainants on what action can be taken and the reasons why enforcement action is unlikely.	Improved and more detailed leaflet information available on the web to manage complainants expectations. Direct officer contact details are now provided to allow discussion and explanation to aid the complainants understanding of our decision.

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Housing needs	Housing needs	<p>Assessing Needs Northfield and Newtown Offices - Efficiency of service / roofless: Due to staffing shortages Northfield office no longer offers pre booked appointments and provides a walk in service only until further notice. Again for the same reason Newtown only offers pre booked appointments only until further notice. This message is relayed to customers through the contact centre and officers are directing persons to the appropriate offices dependent on their circumstances.</p> <p>Birmingham Home Choice - Efficiency of service: When customers are shortlisted for a property upon which they have bid they are suspended from bidding on further properties until the outcome of their earlier bid is known. If after the viewing the outcome is not passed back in a timely way the customers application can remain suspended for longer than it needed to be.</p> <p>Recently a large number of enquiries have been received from customers wanting to be released from bidding cycles after the viewing outcome. A more robust system is to be put in place between the allocations service and the voids teams to ensure that all properties viewed are outcomed post viewing. A cleanse of unoutcomed properties is also to be undertaken.</p> <p>Medical Assessment - Efficiency of service: In the last quarter there was a review of the Health and Housing assessment process. The team now contacts the customer to undertake a telephone based assessment. This is an improvement for the customers as it reduces the number of forms a customer has to complete in order to obtain an assessment. There has been an increase in the demand for such assessments. The process is further being reviewed to reduce the overall timescale to complete the assessment.</p> <p>Temporary Accommodation - Efficiency of service: BCC's temporary accommodation team offers a variety of tenures as temporary accommodation. The majority of enquires relate to repairs or issues occurring in the temporary accommodation property. The accommodation is either provided through BCC or through the private sector landlords via their agents. The length of time to resolve such issues is dependent on the landlord type and the associated service level agreement. Contact centre staff are being trained on the various types of temporary accommodation to enable them to speedily report temporary accommodation issues to the appropriate team.</p>		
Car Parking	PCN Written Other for Specialist	PCN Process.	Complainants should have followed the PCN appeal process.	No Actions
Car Parking	Service Spec Enquiry - Parking	First point of contact between Customer and Contact Centre/CEO's.	Alleged Contact Centre and CEO's attitude, 4no. Complaints which were not justified.	Feedback given to Contact Centre and CEO's
Car Parking	Specialist Use of Car parks	First point of contact between Customer and Contact Centre/CEO's.	Alleged Contact Centre and CEO's attitude, 1no. Complaint which was not justified.	Feedback given to Contact Centre and CEO's
Fleet and Waste Mgt	Wheelie Bins Enquiry	Resistance to change from residents	Improved communication with residents during wheelie bin roll-out and improvements to .Gov web site	

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Fleet and Waste Mgt	Wheelie Bins Enquiry	Some initial problems experienced in Redfern during Stabilisation	Continued engagement with residents. Increased Stabilisation period for Redfern. Updated Lessons Learned	
Fleet and Waste Mgt	Refuse& Recycling: Missed Collection	A report is being circulated to SMT which identifies repeat missed collections and this will be used to determine root causes	Engagement with residents to determine reasons for service issues / work with Waste Prevention Team	
Housing Repairs	Wilmott Dixon (Repairs North)	Heavy rain fall in 2014 caused leaks. This lead to an increase in roof repairs and the change in weather is now bringing further issues to light, e.g damp caused by the previous leak	1. Weather related issues that could not be foreseen.	NA
Housing Repairs	P H Jones (Gas North)	PH Jones had issues with new technology which impacted on service delivery. There was also a secondary cause but we are unable to disclose this detail.	1. Issue with new technology. 2. Other	Snr management highlighted this issue in Dec 2014. They met with the contractors and established the reason for service issues. A service improvement plan has put in place.
Housing Repairs	P H Jones (Gas North)	PH Jones had issues with new technology which impacted on service delivery. There was also a secondary cause but we are unable to disclose this detail.	1. Issue with new technology. 2. Other	Snr management highlighted this issue in Dec 2014. They met with the contractors and established the reason for service issues. A service improvement plan has put in place.
Housing Repairs	P H Jones (Gas North)	PH Jones had issues with new technology which impacted on service delivery. There was also a secondary cause but we are unable to disclose this detail.	1. Issue with new technology. 2. Other	Snr management highlighted this issue in Dec 2014. They met with the contractors and established the reason for service issues. A service improvement plan has put in place.

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Housing Repairs	Willmott Dixon (Repairs South)	This is a small increase due to issues with fencing jobs from earlier in the year. Fencing jobs related to Efficiency of service. This is due to categorisation of complaint reason. This is still being addressed as it is subjective.	Miscommunication between Contractors and Asset Management	Agreement with Willmott Dixon that all fencing jobs are to be completed by yr end. All new fencing jobs will be completed within SLA.
Housing Repairs	Mears (Repairs Central)	Inclement weather increasing volumes	Unforeseen weather related	None required
Housing Repairs	Morrison (Gas South) Contracted to Mears	Root cause analysis indicates a need for Mears to balance resources between new heating system installation programmes and gas repairs in order to ensure priority to the latter as this was having an adverse impact on service delivery in specific cases.	1. Allocation of resources. 2. Seasonal increase -winter boiler issues as people are using their boilers more.	Senior management bought Mears in (Dec) to discuss and resolve issues with resourcing of gas installation programme and maintaining existing resources for day to day repairs.
Housing Repairs	Morrison (Gas South) Contracted to Mears	Root cause analysis indicates a need for Mears to balance resources between new heating system installation programmes and gas repairs in order to ensure priority to the latter as this was having an adverse impact on service delivery in specific cases.	1. Allocation of resources. 2. Seasonal increase -winter boiler issues as people are using their boilers more.	Senior management bought Mears in (Dec) to discuss and resolve issues with resourcing of gas installation programme and maintaining existing resources for day to day repairs.

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Housing Repairs	Mears (Gas Central)	Root cause analysis indicates a need for Mears to balance resources between new heating system installation programmes and gas repairs in order to ensure priority to the latter as this was having an adverse impact on service delivery in specific cases.	1. Allocation of resources. 2. Seasonal increase -winter boiler issues as people are using their boilers more.	Senior management bought Mears in (Dec) to discuss and resolve issues with resourcing of gas installation programme and maintaining existing resources for day to day repairs.
Housing Repairs	Mears (Gas Central)	Root cause analysis indicates a need for Mears to balance resources between new heating system installation programmes and gas repairs in order to ensure priority to the latter as this was having an adverse impact on service delivery in specific cases.	1. Allocation of resources. 2. Seasonal increase -winter boiler issues as people are using their boilers more.	Senior management bought Mears in (Dec) to discuss and resolve issues with resourcing of gas installation programme and maintaining existing resources for day to day repairs.
Housing Repairs	Mears (Gas Central)	Root cause analysis indicated that Mears' management were moving resources around the city and this was having an adverse impact on service delivery in specific areas.	1. Allocation of resources. 2. Seasonal increase -winter boiler issues as people are using their boilers more.	Senior management bought Mears in (Dec) to discuss and resolve issues with resourcing of gas installation programme and maintaining existing resources for day to day repairs.
Housing Repairs	Council Officer (Capital Team)	1. Surveyors visiting properties 2. Works commencing in their estate 3. Lack of clear communication after a survey has taken place 4. Increased knowledge of Capital Investment	1&3. Communication from surveyors to tenants is not 100% clear. 2. Investment carried out an expire lifecycle and not street by street basis 4. Confusion of how investment programmes are programmed	1&3 Develop a leaflet Q&A to advise on reason for survey and to remove any miss understandings 4. Ensure all communication is clear and concise including the webpage and over the telephone, create better awareness of programme formulation
Parks & Nature Cons	Shrub/Hedge pruning	Customers' enquiries to reflect seasons growth in vegetation.	Green & Growing environment	Continued monitoring to ensure compliance and meeting programme deadlines.

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Sport & Events	Major Events	Various - from access problems to issues with stallholders / security.	The markets do affect normal access, but alternative routes are made clear with signage. Some people see this as a disadvantage.	Most complaints resolved with third parties ie Security Company / Stallholders or by Duty Manage on-site. More serious issues are discussed at Internal Meetings and SAGs or referred to relevant section i.e. Trading Standards.
Sport & Events	Sports Events	Road closures.	As part of the race, we have to implement a number of road closures and diversions along one of the major routes into Birmingham.	Customers complaints were taken on board, residents affected by the route are given prior notice by way of letter drops. Anything major was reported to the SAG and measures will be implemented if necessary.
Sport & Events	Sports Events	Road closures.	As part of the race, we have to implement a number of road closures and diversions along one of the major routes into Birmingham.	Customers complaints were taken on board, residents affected by the route are given prior notice by way of letter drops. Anything major was reported to the SAG and measures will be implemented if necessary.
Housing Management	District Area Management Edgbaston		The Complainants made incorrect assumptions about an officer and the way they dealt with a case	The officer concerned has been moved to another location. No further complaint received and no new complaint received from the officers new location
Housing Management	District Area Management Hall Green	Not done in a timely matter	Justified	Officer spoke to about performance issue
Housing Management	District Area Management Hodge Hill	Customer not happy with offer and the condition of garage.	Partly justified	Explained the void standards. We cannot meet everyone's expectations in terms of what they like/don't like
Housing Management	District Area Management Hodge Hill	These are not services delivered by the local housing team.	Justified	We have no control over these services therefore cannot implement improvements. Complaints fed back to relevant service areas
Housing Management	District Area Management Sutton	1) Service charges have been explained at Sheltered Housing Liaison Board and minutes sent to scheme, also the line manager of the scheme has emailed the customers with a breakdown off service charges. 2) Plans for development are still being considered & costed so no information available to be	1)No previous complaints received. 2) No previous complaints received. 3) Improve communication on timescales on development updates.	1) No actions 2) Update on development. 3) Monthly reporting process for contractors in place.

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
		given Customers have been advised. 3) Process of reporting concerns advised and explain dhow contractors are monitored		
Housing Management	District Area Management Yardley	Customers did not like the wording of our letters	Partly justified	We explained to the tenants that the letters have to be written in such a way so that people are clear on what is expected of them and the likely consequences of not allowing the visit to proceed.
Housing Management	District Area Management Yardley	Issues at the property relating to repairs, works after a mutual exchange was completed.	Partly justified	City wide looking at the process in relation to the process for tenants leaving property in a fit state after moving out.
Housing Management	Housing Management	This was a private tenant renting a leaseholder property.	The items in the letter were not the councils responsibility but the leaseholders. This was also the first time the council had received information on these issues.	NA
Neighbourhood Offices	Northfield NO - Northfield	None	1) Justified - Building Issues - No space within main office to locate public telephone. 2) Unjustified - Lack of communication - The customer was known to the staff as a 'special case' who needed to be seen as priority. However the Advisor was unable to explain this to the customer at the time due to data protection.	1) When the main office is refurbished the phone will be removed from the corridor. Two telephone booths will be located within the main office. 2) A notice will be displayed at reception stating that it may be necessary for customers to be seen out of turn on occasions due to special circumstances.
Tenancy Management	Hsg - Mutual Exchange Proposal	The legislation give the council only a few grounds to refuse a proposal. Most disputes are regarding tenant responsible repairs and the delays these cause	NA	NA

Service	L4 service	Local Root cause Analysis	Diagnosis	Actions
Tenancy Management	Hsg - Mutual Exchange Proposal	Process can take a long time to complete once we have all the information we have 42 days to make a decision and then there is the time to arrange a multiple assignment.	Waiting times now back on schedule	Additional resources deployed
Const. Eng	Request for Parking	None	<p>1) Justified? - The original complaint had been dealt with and the issue should have been referred to the police.</p> <p>2) Justified - Engineer did not respond to original enquiry.</p> <p>3) Justified? - Contractor misread instruction and H marking was incorrectly marked out.</p>	<p>1) No action</p> <p>2) Site visit undertaken and letter sent to customer explaining the process.</p> <p>3) No action</p>

Customer Services Division – Birmingham City Council

Overview and Scrutiny Report – Council Tax

October 2015

Report prepared by – Georgina Foxwell, Head of Business Change and Service Improvement

1. Background Information

The Revenues Service is a key front-line service that touches every household and business within Birmingham.

There are approx. 440,000 Council Tax accounts in Birmingham, and the vast majority of citizens make payment of their Council Tax without the need to contact BCC.

Council Tax and Business Rates are the most significant source of income to the City, generating £469.6 million per year for the City (£271.2m from Council Tax and £198.4m from Business Rates), which allows the Authority to provide necessary services for all Birmingham residents, and meets its key priorities.

However, there will always be situations where citizens will need to make contact, as a result of changes in their individual circumstances, etc. In addition, where citizens are facing difficulties in meeting their payments they are requested to make contact as soon as possible to ensure that accounts can be dealt with appropriately, and stop the requirement for further enforcement and recovery action being taken.

There are, unfortunately, those citizens who do ignore various attempts to make contact, which results in further communications being sent. However, in the majority of cases this will eventually result in the citizen making contact in order to set up a Special Payment Arrangement, to notify the City of a change in circumstances or to raise a general query.

The initial telephone calls from citizens are handled in City's corporate contact centre whilst the back office function is outsourced to Service Birmingham.

2. Service Birmingham Role

Birmingham City Council has outsourced its Revenues Council Tax and Business Rates Service Operation to Service Birmingham since April 2011.

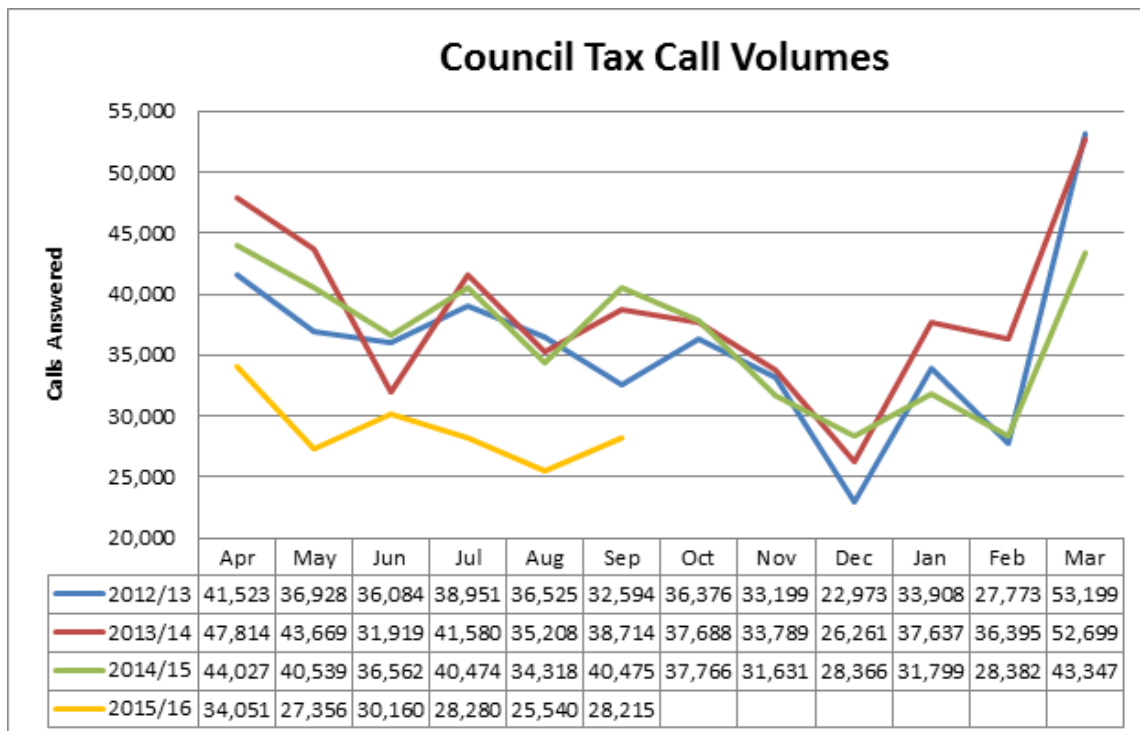
Service Birmingham provides the statutory function for the billing, collection, recovery, enforcement and administration of Council Tax and Business Rates, maintains all appropriate databases and ensures compliance with all appropriate legislation and regulations.

Due diligence and investigation was undertaken prior to the awarding of the Revenues Contract to ensure that Birmingham City Council achieved both value for money and the provision of an effective Revenues Service which delivered against agreed key contractual performance measures.

The SB Revenues Contract has a set of key performance indicators to ensure collection levels of 98% over a 3 year period which allows the City Council's budget, in terms of discretionary expenditure, to be achieved and its budget to be balanced. The Contract, now in its 5th year of operation, continues to provide this and has over-performed against the targeted collection rates across a number of years.

3. Call volumes and types

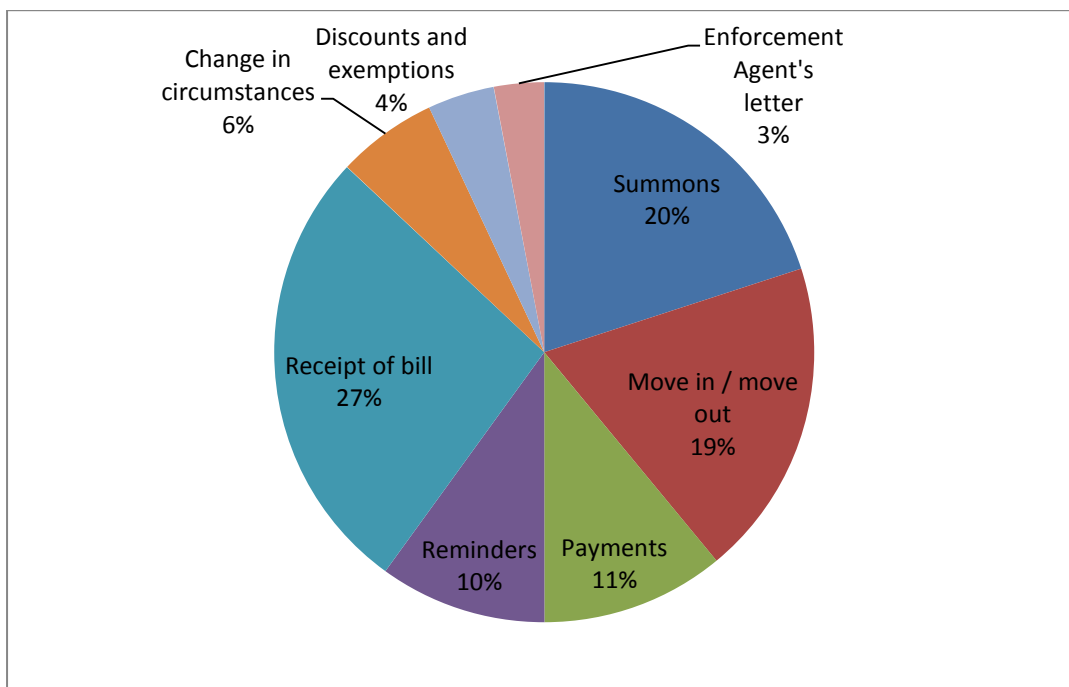
The following graph shows the volume of calls answered at the contact centre by month from April 2012 to September 2015. The chart below shows the underlying data.



The contact centre receives a number of enquiry types for Council Tax. These include:-

- Move in / Move out
- Change in circumstances
- Discounts and exemptions
- Payments – missing payments, refunds, transfers
- Query following receipt of bill
- Query following receipt of reminder
- Query following receipt of summons
- Query following Enforcement Agent (Bailiff's) letter

The typical breakdown of enquiry types is shown in the pie chart below. It should be noted that this breakdown will change during the course of the year eg at annual billing time the proportion of queries following receipt of the bill is likely to increase.



4. Mailing Sequence

65% of citizens pay their Council Tax by direct debit and rarely need to contact the Council unless they experience a change in circumstances.

The majority of contact is from citizens who do not use direct debit.

Citizens are given a number chances to clear their debt before being issued with a summons to attend Court as follows:-

- Initial bill
- Reminder 1
- Reminder 2
- Final notice
- Summons

The following table shows the volume of different mailing types that were despatched last year:-

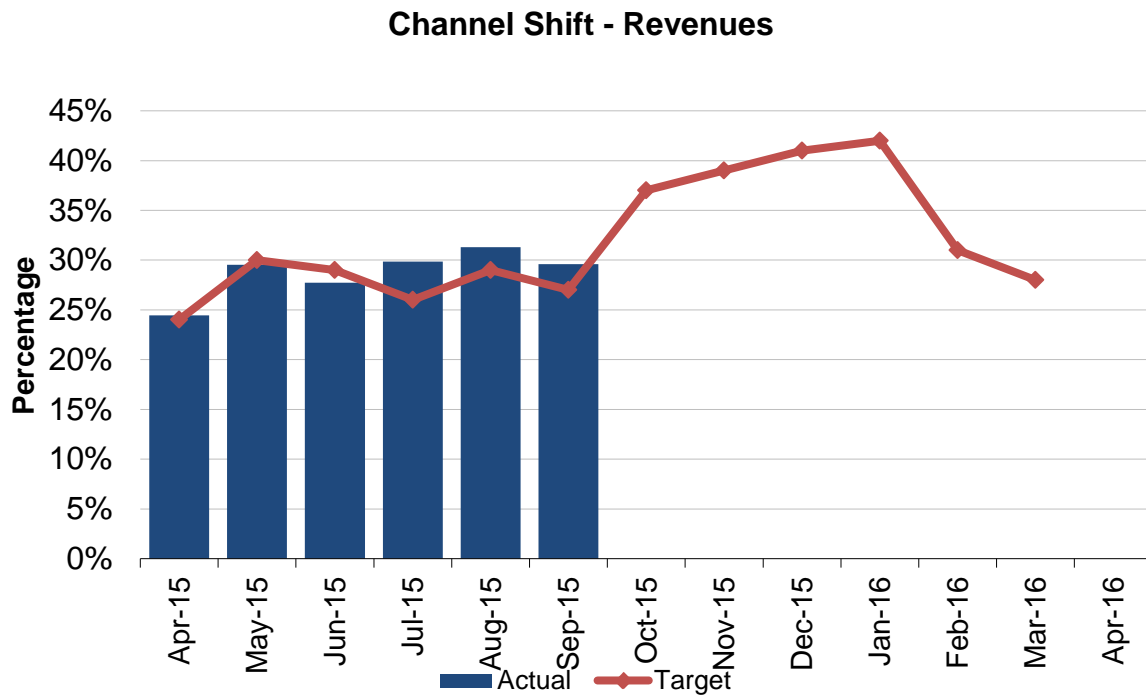
2014/15 Output – Daily CT Bills, Reminders, Final Notices, Summons and 14 Day Letters.

Month	Bills	Reminder 1	Reminder 2	Final Notice	Summons	14 day letter
April	97391	44083	39	12	1602	3835
May	48803	38078	3070	3	12000	3698
June	48731	17310	7048	535	16000	10769
July	56720	16439	4920	1719	12000	10280
August	44617	15946	3841	4286	10567	14568
September	51610	9238	3965	2090	10246	9056
October	50934	13933	4223	2420	4778	8268
November	43605	13046	3181	2293	5153	3647
December	44686	12922	3732	2407	8000	3935
January	44482	15093	3332	2349	4934	6313
February	43948	5152	2112	932	5545	3706
March	12711	11199	1135	358	8383	4098
Total	588238	212439	40598	19404	99208	82173

NB – In addition during the Annual Billing Period in March approx. 440,000 bills are issued

5. Web Developments and Channel Shift

Channel shift is a corporate target. In 2015/16 four key services are included in the measurement of the target – Benefits, Council Tax, Fleet and Waste Management and Housing Repairs. The graph below shows the target for Council Tax and the actual achievement by month.



To date, channel shift performance has been in line or slightly exceeded the forecast projections for 2015/16. Analysis shows that the volume of calls in 2015/16 is on average 26.5% lower than in 2014/15 whilst the volume of online transactions completed is fairly static at an average of 11,600 per month.

A number of improvements have already been made to the Council Tax pages on the website to support channel shift and to improve customer satisfaction with the website. These are designed to make it easier to find the information; to better understand the information; and to take the correct action without needing to speak to anyone.

The main changes are as follows:-

- The Council Tax landing page has been planned around usage evidence and citizen priorities and complaints to allow easy access to services and content.
- Making a Council Tax payment has been added to the home page as a top task and this has resulted in an increase in the number of citizens utilising the online automated payment facility.
- All Council Tax pages have been reviewed, duplicate content has been removed, language has been simplified, the layout has been changed so that it is easier to find key information and links, and pages have been split where there was previously too much information on one page.
- New pages have been created
 - Council Tax Bands and Charges – this information was not easy to find and therefore citizens had to ring the contact centre. A new page is easily accessible from the Council Tax landing page and clearly shows how much the charge is for each band and how the amount is made up.
 - Problems paying your council tax – this page outlines the various stages in the recovery process, what the citizen should do at each stage and what will happen if they ignore the letters.
 - Your Council Tax bill explained – shows a copy of a bill and what each piece of information means.
 - Council Tax student discounts – a page dedicated to students and how Council Tax applies to them and what they need to do.
- A feedback widget has been applied to all of the Council Tax pages. This enables customer feedback (both positive and negative) to be routed through to the Web Team as soon as it has been left. The Web Team are then able to make changes to the pages very quickly and let the citizen know as soon as this has been done.
- Paying by Direct Debit has been given a higher profile.

6. Integrated Voice Response (IVR) or Automated Messaging Review

Customer Services has undertaken a full review of the existing IVR messaging presented to citizens at the start of a Council Tax call. Feedback through customer satisfaction surveys and Your Views evidenced a level of dissatisfaction with the current set up. The review had the clear aims of:-

- Removing repeated messages
- Reducing the amount of messaging and wording
- Reducing the number of selection menus and options to press
- Reducing the time to reach an Advisor

The revised IVR is due to be implemented by the end of October. The new IVR has retained key information, instructions and messages that are helpful to the caller. The intention is that the flow of the IVR will be quicker and easier for the citizen to navigate.

The key changes are as follows:-

- The number of options on the main Council Tax menu has reduced to just 3 options whereas previously it was 5.
- The number of layers is now typically 2 and the lengthy information messages have been removed.
- The out of hours messaging has been substantially reduced by removing unnecessary and lengthy messages. Callers are now either given the option of being put through to the automated payment line or going on to the website for more information.
- The general wording has been simplified making it easier for customers to select the correct option.
- The typical journey through the IVR has reduced from 3 mins 27 secs for a change in circs and 2 mins 43 secs for a reminder letter to around 1 minute.

7. Current contact centre processes

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the call flows that show the typical customer experience when contacting Council Tax in respect of the most popular call types.

8. Resolution Champions

Earlier this year as part of the 'One Contact vision' Customer Services introduced a team of Resolution Champions to the contact centre. Council Tax Advisors have access to 5 Resolution Champions. The aim of the Resolution Champions was to have a group of senior customer service focussed Advisors who have advanced system, service area and customer knowledge. They support the call handling teams with the immediate resolution of escalated enquiries, repeated service failure, complaints and "on the call" issues that arise. The objective of adding these roles to the operation is to proactively reduce repeat calls, improve the citizen experience and remove the need for further escalation or complaint.

To be successful in this task Resolution Champions have direct contact with members of staff in the Service Area so that they are able to gain background knowledge, progress updates and request assistance on a case in order to resolve any customer concerns in a quick turnaround. Resolution Champions will also call the customer back to give them an update on what they have done and to give them reassurance that action has been taken. They are also able to contact the enforcement agents direct and request a stand over on the account if they feel this is appropriate.

By way of illustration, between July and September one of the Resolution Champions handled 250 escalations with a breakdown as follows:-

- 81 – Customers not happy with the Council Tax recovery process/policy – 32.4%
- 64- Query regarding the process (correct process had been followed) 25.6%
- 33 – Service Error (Back office process delays account not updated) 13.2%
- 33 – Advisor Error (Contact Centre Error) 13.2%
- 18 – Enforcement agent cases – 7.2%
- 17 – Customer error – 6.8%
- 2 – Staff Behaviour (Lack of soft skills) – 0.8%
- 1 – Complaint avoided – 0.4%
- 1 – Complaint Escalated – 0.4%

9. Customer Satisfaction

Customer Services commissions a monthly customer satisfaction survey across the Service Areas that use the contact centre. For Council Tax this is conducted via an SMS text survey. A daily survey is sent to a random selection of citizens who have called the Council via their mobile (approximately 65% of callers use their mobile phone). The text message directs citizens to a website where they respond to a series of 6 questions about the service they received and they score each question on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent. They also have the option of leaving a comment to explain why they have scored the service in the way that they have. A citizen will only receive a maximum of one text per month and has the option to opt out of the survey process altogether.

The following graph tracks overall satisfaction with the Council Tax service since the surveys were first commissioned. This shows a steady increase in overall satisfaction. It is recognised, however, that further improvement is still required and there is a focus in the contact centre on improving soft skills, increasing first time contact resolution, making the customer experience easier for our citizens and improving the online presence.



One of the questions asked of citizens in the survey is how willing the Advisor was to help. This is a key measure for the contact centre as it provides evidence that the improvement plans that were instigated following transfer of the contact centre from SB are working. The results are shown in the graph below. Again this also shows a steady increase since November 2014.



The results for September are disappointing and have shown a dip in performance that is against the longer term trend. Further analysis of the results does not show a clear reason for this dip although there is evidence of more citizens complaining about the time to get through to an Advisor and dissatisfaction with the automated messaging. As detailed above, the automated messaging is due to be improved by the end of October. A number of new Advisors have been recruited to fill gaps in the teams and they are currently in training. They will be fully operational during October and this will improve call answering times.

10. Future plans

Letter review

A review of existing letters shows that citizens typically call as they are unsure what to do with a bill or reminder. The wording is not clear and often causes confusion. 27% of all calls during September were as a result of receiving a bill.

Customer Services has reviewed the current bill, reminder notices and summons. A number of positive changes have been made to the look and feel, plain English has been used and some “nudging” techniques have been used to encourage customers to sign up for direct debit. This will result in savings against printing and postage costs, reduce calls coming into the contact centre and reduce recovery action.

Single Person Discount

Requests for exemptions and discounts account for considerable demand in the contact centre. The most significant are calls in relation to single person discount. Historically the contact centre has been unable to resolve customers' enquiries and instead have had to send an email to the back office for them to send out a manual form. This created unnecessary delay for the customer and created additional activity in the back office.

Customer Services have worked with colleagues in Council Tax to deliver a seamless online solution for single person discounts and some of the other most frequently used exemption and discount forms. Contact centre advisors are now able to order a single person discount form electronically at the first point of contact and award the discount for a one month period pending receipt of the form from the customer. This removes at least 20 days from the process for the customer, reduces back office activity and improves customer satisfaction.

Direct Debit Take up

The Council would like to encourage those in arrears to change their payment method to direct debit; thus reducing the time and money spent on chasing arrears and pursuing citizens at Court where they incur additional costs that they cannot afford to pay.

Work has been undertaken to identify where costs could be reduced and where the service to the customer could be improved.

A new process was introduced on 20th October 2015 whereby contact centre advisors will offer those citizens in arrears the opportunity to pay by direct debit. The incentive to the customer is that if payments are maintained and the account is cleared, court costs will be withdrawn. Once the account is clear the direct debit will continue to the next financial year, reducing the possibility of further arrears.

Discretionary Payments for Rent and Council Tax

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) & Council Tax Discretionary Fund payments (CTDF) payments are awarded as a short term measure to help claimants in extremely difficult circumstances. These funds support people who need extra help with their rent or Council Tax when Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance/Universal Credit/Council Tax Support does not cover the full amount.

Previously customers claiming the rent element did not claim the council tax element as it was less well known.

A new claim form has been created that incorporates both elements into one form. This will support those suffering financial hardship and reduce the arrears collection for the City. Again this will reduce costs and back office activity.

Refund process

Previously any requests for a Council Tax refund received at the contact centre resulted in an email being sent to Revenues Back Office to request that they make the appropriate refund. Where there has been Council Tax support paid on the account, the back office sent an email to Benefits to check that benefit had been awarded appropriately and that the credit on the account could be refunded to the customer. Once checked, the Benefit Service sent an email back to Revenues to confirm if the refund could be made or not. This process could take more than a month and meanwhile it was not unusual for a citizen to ring in multiple times chasing the progress of the refund.

This process has been improved considerably, saving time for the customer and the back office by up to 20 days; by removing elements of the process to provide a more efficient process.

Text messaging

A mobile phone text alert process is to be introduced from October 2015, sending messages to customers who are in arrears with their Council Tax payments. The text message will be sent automatically to run before the paper reminder notice is sent. This is intended to reduce printing and postage costs and reduce arrears action which can be expensive, by encouraging citizens to bring their account up-to-date sooner. It is also intended to accelerate cash flow by serving as a gentle reminder. It costs BCC approximately £1 per Council Tax Arrears letter, whereas text message alerts cost 3.8p per text. The text will refer customers to the online payment solution, encouraging channel shift for other council services. It is a quick, interactive and convenient way of communicating with Council Tax payers - providing instant information to customers.

11.SB Revenues Role

The Back Office receives over 1,000 items of customer communication per day through the document management systems. Over 50,000 outbound call contacts per annum are also made, as well as maintaining weekly court attendance and customer interaction through a team of inspection officers.

SB has continued to work closely with the Contact Centre to drive down unnecessary customer contacts (both in/outbound) and changes this year to the reminder mailing schedules have reduced premature arrears letters being sent out. This aligns well to the text messaging processes outlined above.

There is regular dialogue to cover aspects of joint working and both Managers and Resolution Champions have received further coaching and development training from the Back Office. Both SB and BCC believe that there is potential to further improve the skill levels of the two areas through the sharing of best practice and using customer data more proactively. A number of specific areas have been highlighted covering escalations, liaison with Enforcement Agents etc.

SB liaises with a number of BCC functional areas to support and improve Council Tax collection rates including the Benefits Service, Finance and Property Services. There is also an involvement with many of the ongoing projects that cross the operation including process change, annual billing and improvements to the customer journey.

SB has recently been undertaking more detailed analysis of customer behaviour particularly dealing with the more significantly indebted customer. They are working closely to identify opportunities to segment customers that require more specific action through bankruptcy or committal.

A new workflow management tool has been implemented within the back office and whilst this is a recent addition it is expected to deliver significant improvements to the management information and performance of the operation. In addition this is being used to shape and deliver a better customer-centred view of actions required when dealing with more complex interactions. This will reduce customer confusion where multiple communications are being sent out. This system will be extended to the Business Rates teams over the next few weeks.

The SB back office function is also going through a restructure and refocus of approach. It is expected that this will enhance and drive clarity to the customer journey whilst also providing opportunities for contractual savings.

12. Longer Term Improvements

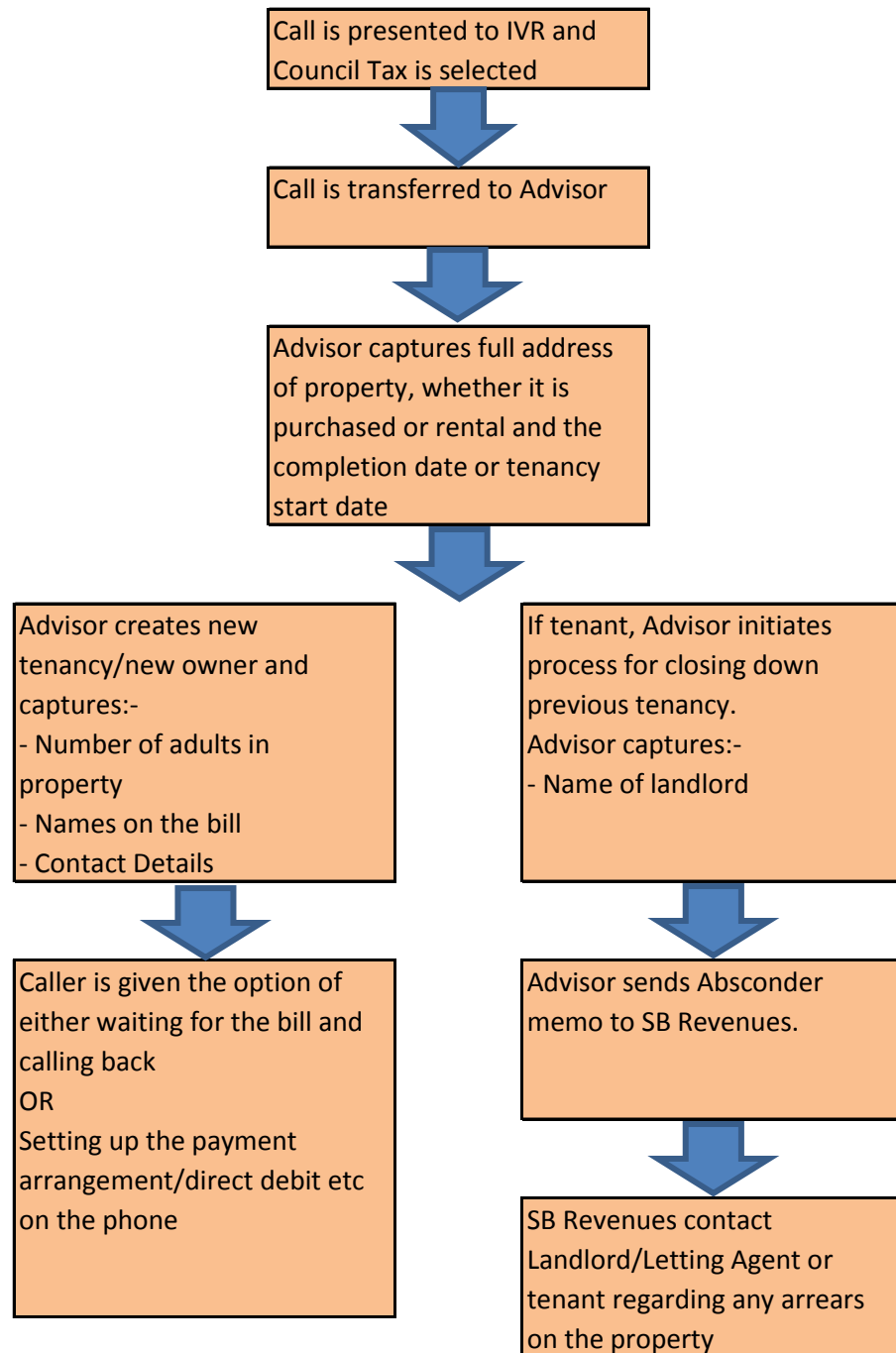
Identifying and segmenting the customer base to understand and distinguish between the “Can’t pay/ Won’t pay” is an important part of developing communication strategies that maximise performance and service. SB is working increasingly with a wider sphere of specialists to not only learn from them but also share the knowledge that exists within Birmingham. This includes other Authorities and specialist Legal/Insolvency practitioners.

Data capture is being refined to understand more about what makes customers respond to all of the communication channels. Joint working is taking place to reduce multiple contacts. There are customers that require more engagement in order to educate and inform and the intention is to increase the channels used. SB and the contact centre will also continue to respond to feedback gained through complaints and front office satisfaction surveys.

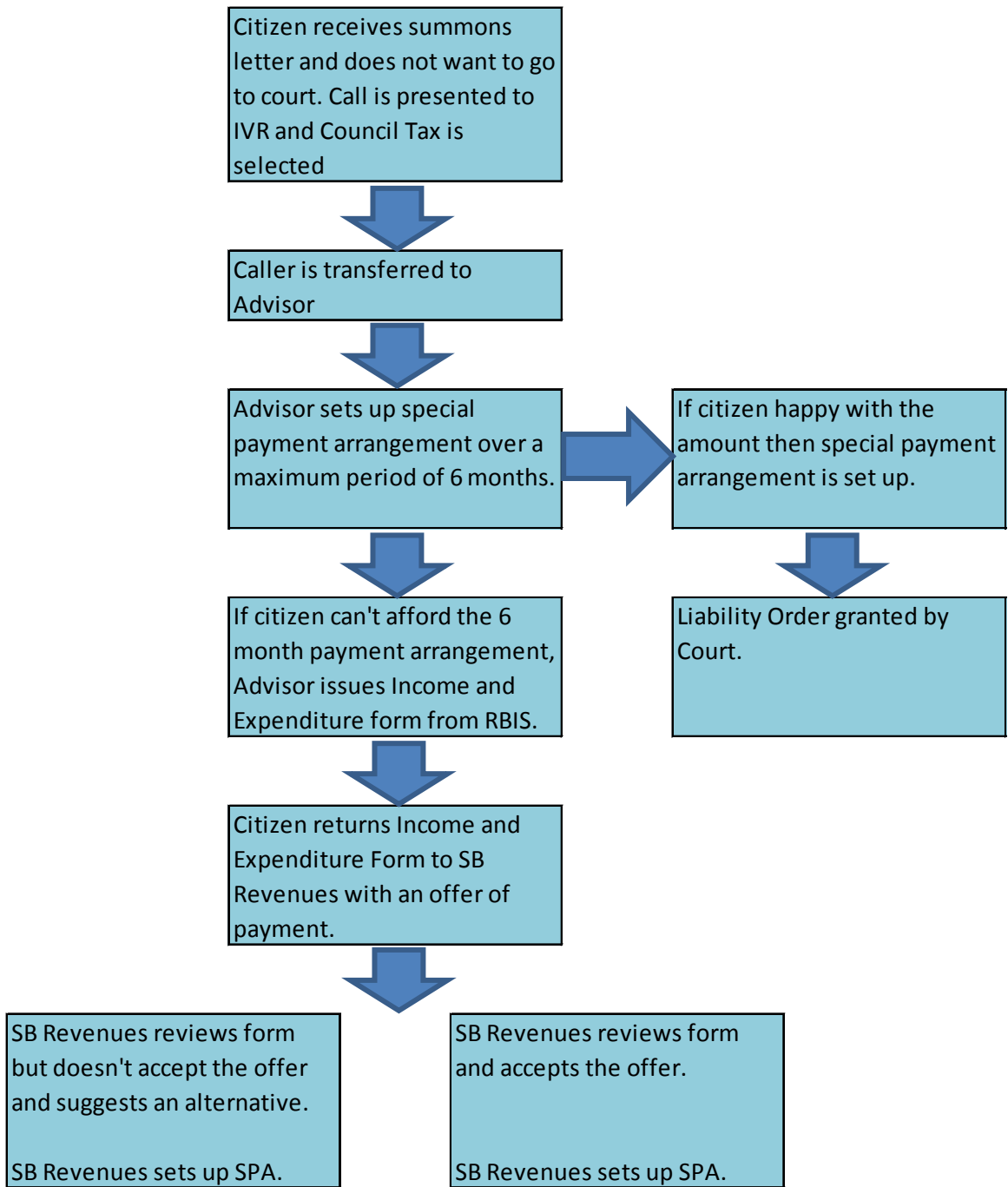
There are a number of automation opportunities under consideration aimed at reducing processing time, enhancing the customer experience and consequently reducing customer contact, to include enhancing payment capabilities, on line data capture and greater personalisation of communications.

Appendix 1 – Call flows for the most popular call types

Move in / move out process

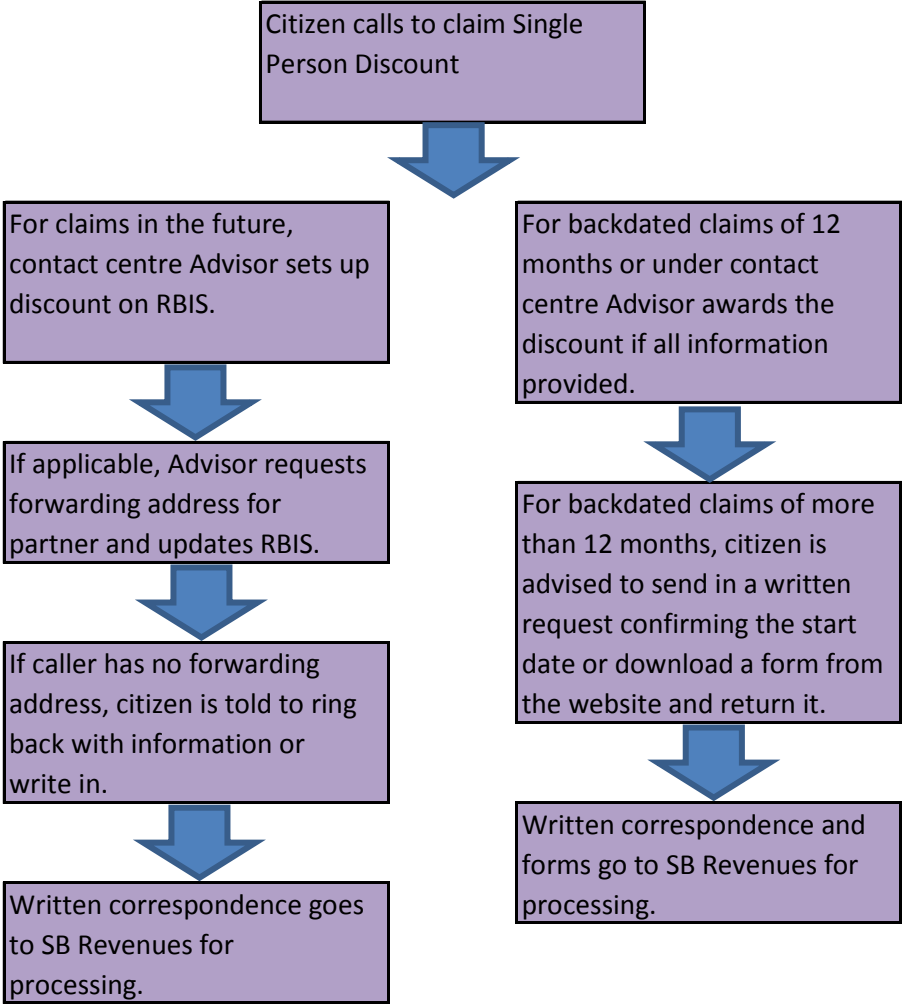


Summons Process



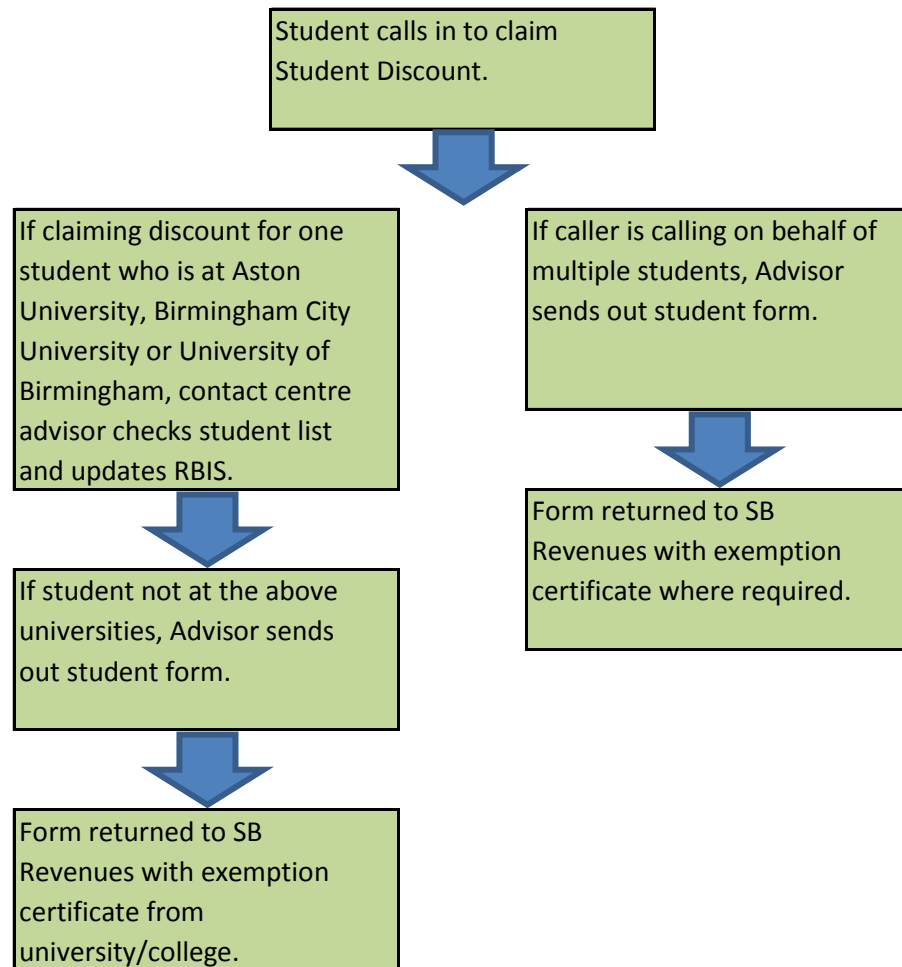
Note: SPA stands for Special Payment Arrangement.

Single Person Discount Process

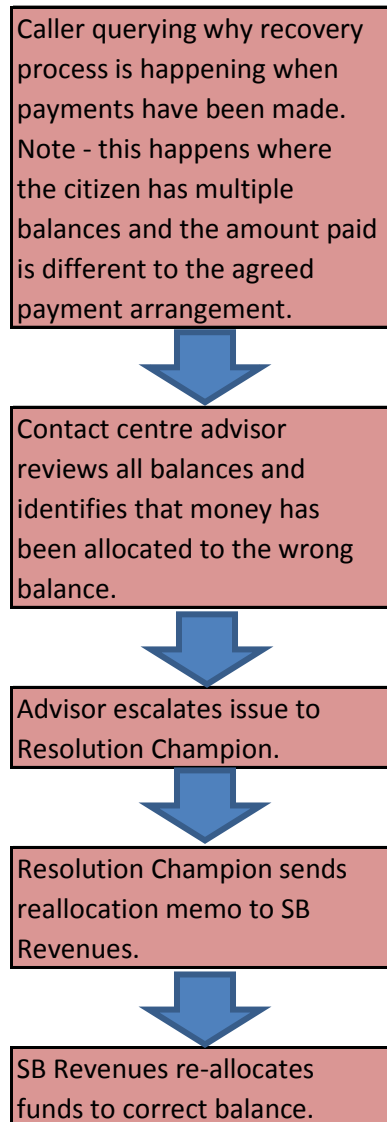


Note: RBIS is the specialist Council Tax and Benefits system that is used to record information about the customer.

Student Process



Reallocation Process



A Joint Report from Customer Services Division and Fleet and Waste Management – Birmingham City Council

Scrutiny Report – Fleet & Waste

October 2015

1) Current Service Offering

The Fleet and Waste Management Service is responsible for collection and appropriate disposal of the domestic and some trade waste produced by its citizens. In addition to this it runs and maintains the Fleet service for all council departments. Currently the service offering can be quantified as:

- 426k residential homes with an asset base of c660,000 wheeled bins
- 60k customers using the Green Waste Service (a paid for service)
- 500 citizens using the Clinical waste service
- 6,788 Trade Waste customers
- Average of 300 bulky waste collections per week (a paid for service)

In addition the Service runs a large garage at Montague Street, and a closed but very active landfill site at Queslett covering approximately 55 acres, with waste-filling at the site beginning during late 1982 and ceasing in 1992 with capping of the site being completed in 1994.

Since January 1994, the waste disposal contract for Birmingham's municipal waste has been contracted out to Veolia Environmental Services Birmingham (VESB) – an international recycling and waste management company. As part of the contract Veolia manage the 5 household recycling centres, 3 waste transfer stations and the Tyseley Energy from Waste (EfW) plant. This is a 25-year contract (with a number of contract variations), and will terminate in January 2019.

2) Recent Service Changes

Introduction of Wheelie Bins - In August 2012 a programme of work was started to replace the sacks and boxes with wheelie bin collections, introduce mobile technology into a new fleet of collection vehicles and other associated service improvements. This programme of work is in its final stages and all bins will be delivered by December 2015.

Garden Waste Charge - In the autumn of 2013 in response to the need to make further and significant budget savings, FWM were required to introduce a charge of £35 (£33 on line) for the collection of garden waste. A significant channel shift was made with over 60% of customers ordering via the web. In 2014 over 50,000 customers subscribed to the service and in 2015 nearly 60,000 customers have subscribed. A 10% increase in customer base is expected in 2016.

Introduction of Mobile Technology -The introduction of a mobile technology ('slab in the cab') system allows for a more reliable system for ensuring collection of waste. This technology is in the process of being installed in all collection vehicles and together with software to ensure the optimisation of routes and rounds the result should be more reliable performance and customer information. The driver is reminded of all the collections due on the route and as they are collected highlights any properties where the waste is not presented for collection. This should allow for increased reliability of missed collection data for the contact centre and performance data for the collection teams.

Bulky Waste Charges - Charges for Bulky waste were introduced in 2010/11 with the currently charging policy at £25 per collection (maximum of 6 items per collection). This compares to the previous system of 3 free collections per year, with a maximum of 6 items per collection. The new charge is in line with fees charged by other councils (that typically range from £15 to £44). Online bookings attract a £2 discount.

3) Current Service Contact Routes

Currently the citizens of Birmingham make contact with the Fleet and Waste Service through the following channels:

- Telephone call to the contact centre
- Telephone call directly to the Depots
- Web based on line transactions
- Smart Phone App
- Emails to the contact centre through 'Customer Contact' link (av. 200/300 per month)
- Letters directly to the service (average of 32 per week)

4) Call Volumes

The following 2 graphs report on the volume of calls offered and answered at the Contact Centre by month from January 2013 to September 2015. The line graphs demonstrate the variation in call demand created by garden waste orders and the ongoing roll out of wheelie bins across the city.

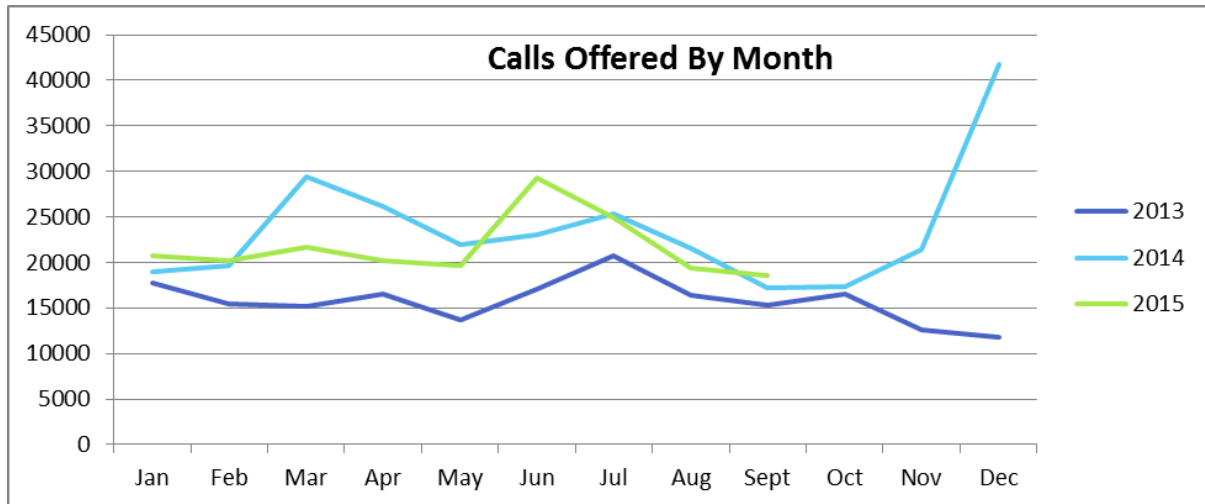
Each of the spikes shown in the below graphs represents a period of change taking place within the service area for example: -

In 2014 the increase during December relates to garden waste renewals, 10172 calls were answered in relation to garden waste representing 37% of Decembers call volumes.

June 2015 represent the roll out of wheelie bins at Perry Barr to the north of the city.

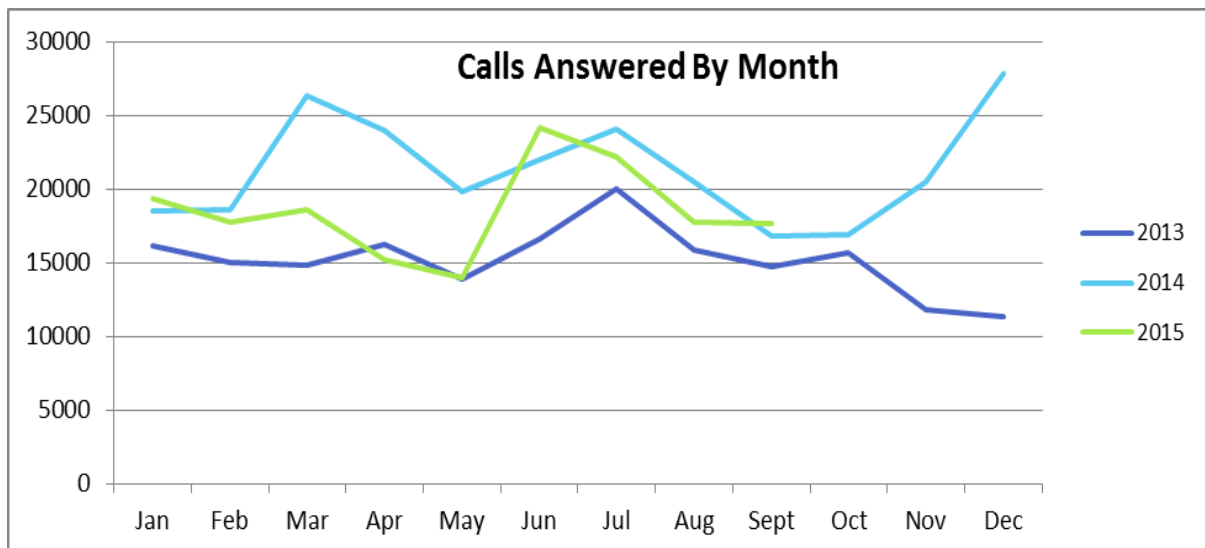
Calls Offered

Fleet & Waste	Calls Offered											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2013	17769	15464	15137	16481	13724	17028	20783	16348	15364	16556	12558	11730
2014	18968	19686	29379	26143	21948	23087	25351	21510	17254	17288	21354	41747
2015	20740	20228	21661	20257	19642	29302	24915	19410	18564			



Calls Answered

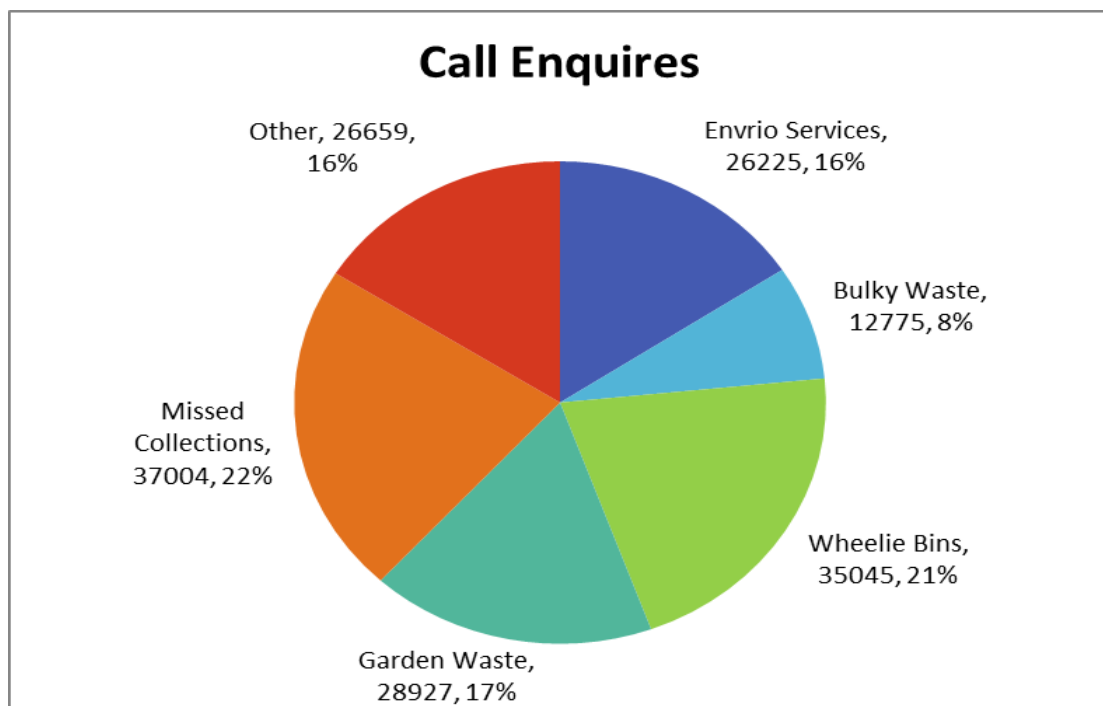
Fleet & Waste	Calls Answered											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2013	16171	15002	14820	16227	13850	16623	20017	15889	14741	15718	11846	11363
2014	18460	18640	26380	23980	19791	21955	24078	20451	16843	16945	20504	27809
2015	19316	17737	18602	15215	13997	24158	22206	17716	17688			



The Contact Centre receives a number of enquiry types for Fleet & Waste, these include: -

- Bulky waste collections
- Missed collections
- Replacement bins
- Wheelie bin enquires
- Garden waste orders & enquiries
- General enquires (collection days & schedule)
- Recycling centres
- Street cleansing
- Fly-tipping (dumped rubbish)
- Clinical waste

Since January 2015 to September 2015 the Contact Centre has answered 166,635 calls, the key call drivers are shown in the following pie chart.



Note: -

1. "Envrio Services" includes calls relating to clinical waste, street cleansing, dumped rubbish and Bin Replacements.
2. "Other" includes calls relating to recycling centres, abandoned vehicles and general enquires.
3. During 2016 we expect wheelie bin calls to reduce; many of the calls currently being received are in connection to the roll out of wheelie bins, delivery of bins, requests for larger or additional bins. As we move into a more stabilised period in 2016 the enquiries received will be more business as usual relating to replacement bins and missed collections.

5) IVR Review

IVR (Interactive Voice Response) is an automated telephony system that interacts with members of the public when calling the Contact Centre; it enables calls to be routed to the appropriate area of work or Advisor to service the call. The IVR system uses the telephone touch-tone keypad which enables the caller to select an option to direct their enquiry or obtain additional information before speaking to a live Advisor.

Customer Services has taken a full review of the existing IVR messaging presented to citizens when calling Fleet & Waste. Feedback via customer satisfaction surveys and your views evidenced a level of dissatisfaction with the current set up. The review undertaken set out with clear aims of: -

- Removing repeated messages
- Reducing the amount of messaging and wording
- Reducing the number of selection menus and options to press
- Reducing the time to reach a live advisor

The revised IVR will be in operation by November, the remodelling has retained key information, instruction and messages which are helpful. The flow of the IVR for the citizen will be quicker and easier to navigate, for example the new IVR delivers the following benefits.

- Reporting a missed collection will reduce from 2.20 minutes to an average of 60 seconds to reach a live advisor.
- Requests for the garden waste service will reduce from 1.50 minutes to an average of 1.05 minutes to reach a live advisor.
- In most cases there is an average of 2 key presses during the navigation of the IVR (3 maximum). This is in line with industry best practice.
- Where there is no need to provide specific service information the call flows directly to a live advisor. For example a call to report graffiti will go direct to an advisor, however if the call was relating to bulky waste the IVR will provide useful information such as the price and the number of items which can be included in the bulky collection.

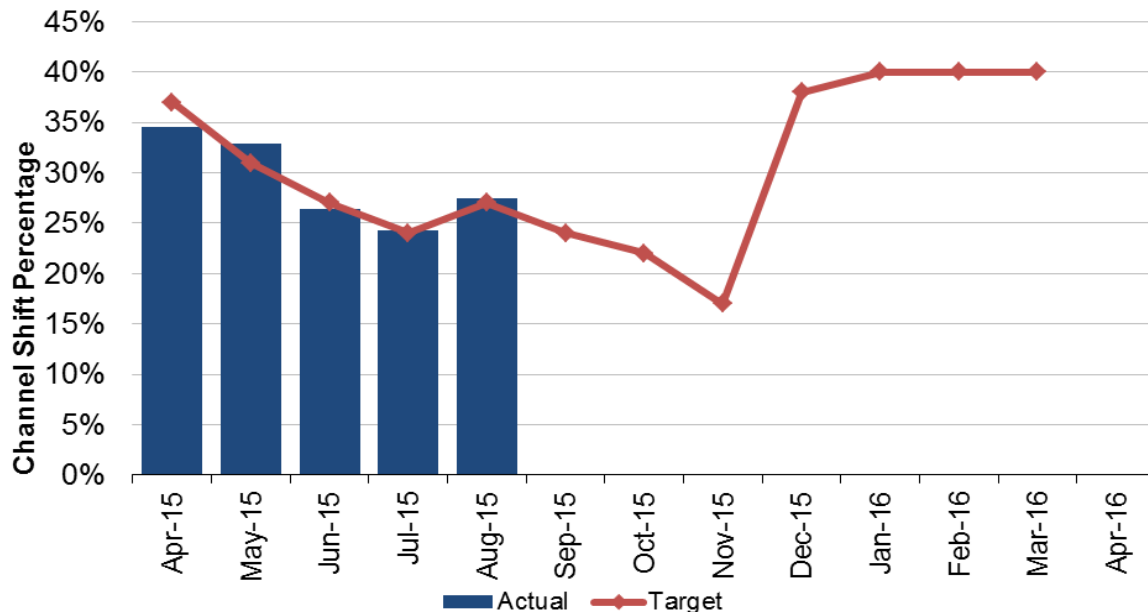
6) Web Developments & Channel Shift

Channel shift is calculated by taking the number of calls answered at the Contact Centre and dividing this by the number of service requests raised via the BCC website. The following table and graph shows the volumes, targets and performance for the current financial year.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Calls Answered	15215	13997	24158	22206	17716
Online Transactions	8018	6863	8679	7121	6710
Channel Shift Target	37%	31%	27%	24%	27%
Achievement Against Target	35%	33%	26%	24%	27%

Channel shift performance is in line with the forecasted projections for 2015, higher levels of channel shift are achieved in months where there is more stability after roll out periods for wheelie bins. During the roll out phase for Perry Barr there was a negative 10% channel shift reduction because citizens turn to the telephone to notify of service failure. Results on customer satisfaction can be found in section 10 of this report.

Channel Shift - Fleet & Waste



Note – The blue bars represent actual achievement and the red line represents the target for channel shift.

Developments taken on the web site to support channel shift and the wheelie bin roll out for Lifford Lane depot due to commence on the 16th November has included: -

- Citizens can access online a delivery schedule for when wheelie bins will be delivered to their property which saves a call to the contact centre to obtain this information.
- Advice added to inform of next steps once the bin has been delivered in terms of labelling and taking the bin to within your property.
- A series of web page updates during August to promote the arrival of wheelie bin red & green assessment cards. Assessment cards were sent to households to advise if the property was suitable for wheelie bins. A green card confirmed the property was suitable for wheelie bins and a red card confirmed the property would remain on sack collections. It was important to raise as much awareness as possible during August prior to the cut of date for citizens to request an additional or larger bin.
- We have ensured the web site clearly confirms that requests for additional or larger bins after the August 21st cut-off date can only be accepted from February 2016.

- Promoting the dates and venues for the wheelie bin roadshows at supermarket locations.
- A future web development currently being considered is in relation to publishing known service interruptions via the website which would alert citizens to specific roads in advance where impacts are taking place due to weather events, vehicle breakdowns or access issues.

Birmingham Alerts - We are looking to access the "Birmingham Alerts" database as a channel to target e-mail alerts to citizens who have consented to receiving updates. Via the website there is adverts and a pop up message asking citizens if they would like to be kept up to date on matters important to them, the citizen can then select which services they would like receive updates for. Examples of the advert and pop up is shown on the next page.

Web Pop Up



Web Advert



Sign up for free email alerts

Our free service will help keep you in touch with the things that matter to you

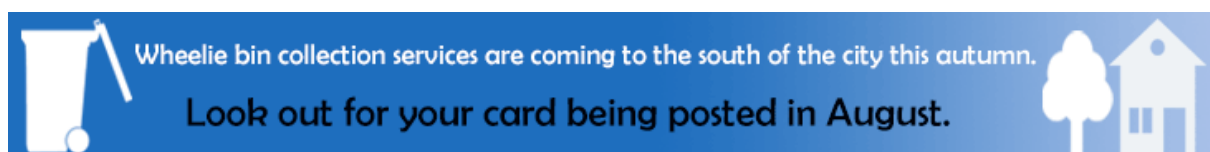


Using the data from Birmingham Alerts could be used to inform members of the public about: -

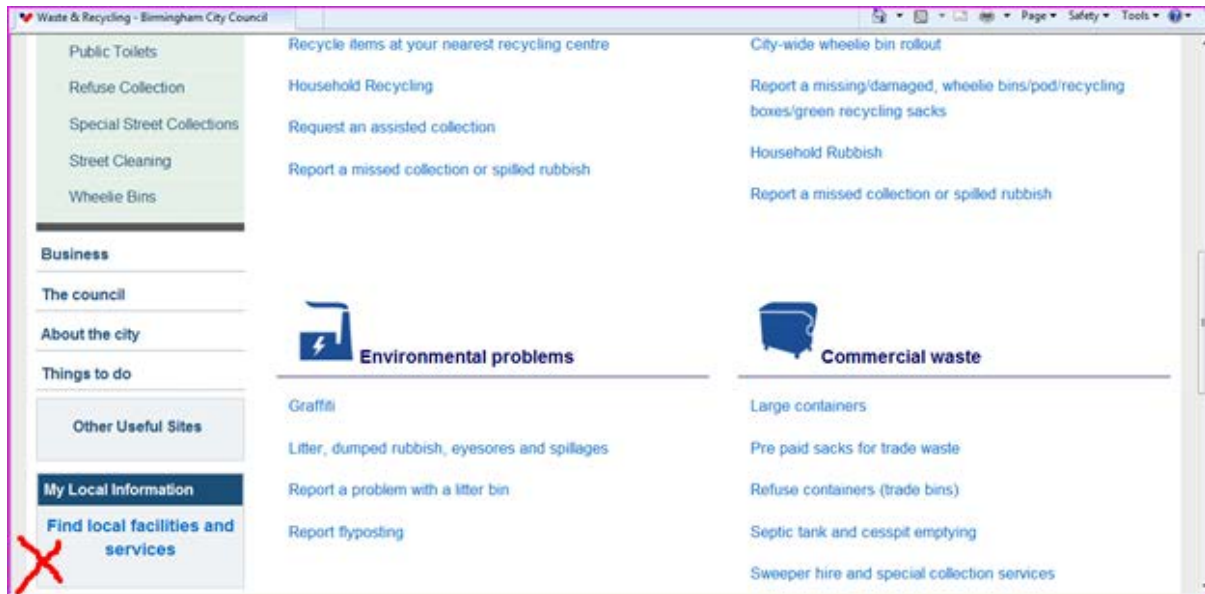
- When garden waste collections are due to end
- When garden waste renewals for 2016 can be purchased from
- Information concerning Christmas collections
- Wheelie bins updates
- Recycling updates

The first usage of the Birmingham Alerts is expected in December to support the garden waste renewals for 2016.

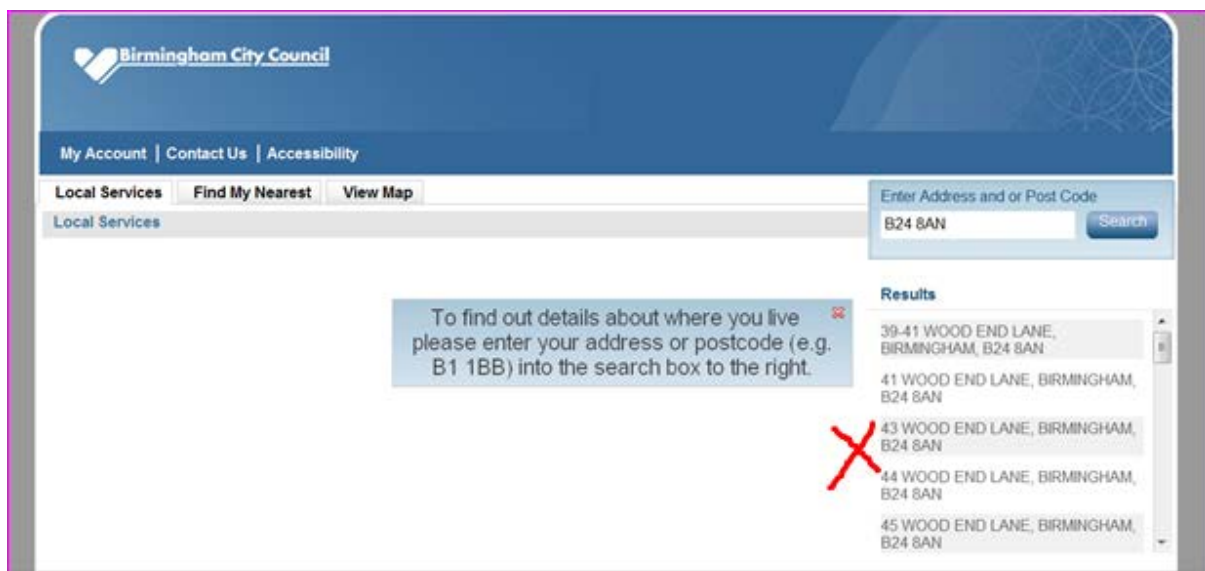
During the month of August we also introduced the following web banner across the BCC web site to promote awareness, when the ad was clicked on it would transfer the citizen to the main wheelie bin roll out web page to obtain further information.



My Local Information is a feature via the BCC website which enables citizens to access information regarding local services. The “My Local Information” feature can be located on the www.birmingham.gov.uk/waste webpage; the red cross below shows the exact location.



When the “My Local Information” link is clicked, citizens are then requested to enter their postcode. All results in terms of address options will appear (marked with the red cross)



After selecting an address option, the following information will be displayed. This provides specific Fleet & Waste information in relation to recycling and residual collection days.

Local Services

Enter Address and or Post Code

B24 8AN


Category: Environment

 [Bin Collection: THURSDAY](#)


 [Multi Material Recycling: THURSDAY](#)

 [Paper Recycling: THURSDAY](#)

Category: Administration

 [Constituency: ERDINGTON](#)


Contact your Member of Parliament <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/erdington-mp>

 [Polling Station: St. Mary & St. John Catholic Primary School \(Junior\), Beaufort Road - B23 7NR](#)

More information about the election <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/elections>

 [Ward: Stockland Green](#)

Contact your local Councillors <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/stocklandgreen-councillors>

 41 WOOD END LANE,
BIRMINGHAM, B24 8AN

7) Payments Team

Customer Services currently operate a dedicated team of advisors for Fleet & Waste who specifically handle call types where debit / credit card payments are taken. Additionally the payment team also support enquires relating to the wheelie bin roll out programme. The nature of calls handled by the team include: -

- Garden waste payments
- Garden waste enquiries
- Wheelie bin enquiries
- Replacement or lost bin payments
- Bulky waste payments
- Bulky waste enquiries

By providing a dedicated team of advisors who are expert in service knowledge delivers consistency in the advice being provided to members of the public. This has been important during the service transformation phases in Fleet & Waste where there are many new, specific or additional processes to be managed.

Additionally by taking debit / credit card payments over the telephone, we need to ensure compliance to PCI security regulations. The dedicated team allows us to create the correct environment to meet these requirements.

The team has been in place since August 2013; the size of the team fluctuates throughout the year from 12 to 25 Advisors. Call volumes in relation to wheelie bin rollouts, garden waste renewal offers and the commencement of garden waste collections drive increases in call demand. To date in 2015 calls to the payment team represent 46% of all Fleet & Waste calls.

For garden waste there is typically 3 peaks in call demand during the year, these are: -

- The discounted renewal offer during the month of December
- The commencement of collections in late February and early March
- The late spring bank holiday in May

As we move into 2016 the support given to wheelie bins will reduce as the roll out across the city will be completed by the end of 2015.

8) Customer Refund Process

Refunds are given for service failures around bulky waste and green waste. Fleet and Waste Management carry out this process following investigation (which includes removal of the green bin following a garden waste refund). In the six months from April to September 2015 the service have issued 300 refunds with 90% for the green waste service and 10% for bulky waste. This refund process is currently under review to ensure it is efficient.

9) Resolution Champions

Customer Services earlier this year introduced a team of Resolution Champions to the Contact Centre, for Fleet & Waste this involves 4 members of staff. The role of the Resolution Champion firmly sits within the live environment in the Contact Centre, the aim is to have a group of senior customer service focused Advisors who have advanced system, service area and customer knowledge.

Resolution Champions are supporting the call handling teams with the immediate resolution of escalated enquiries, repeated service failure, complaints and “on the call” issues which arise. This approach aims to proactively reduce repeat calls, improve the citizen experience and remove further escalation or ongoing complaint. To be successful in this task the Resolution Champions have direct contact with members of staff within the service area. This supports in gaining background information, progressing updates and reaching resolution to the issue in hand. Our Fleet & Waste Resolution Champions have also been meeting with the service area to discuss challenges and close knowledge gaps.

By means of illustration, one of our Resolution Champions during September managed 344 separate interactions, 85% of these were connected to 6 specific areas: -

- Missed collections - 43%
- Collection of old bins and recycling boxes - 20%
- Wheelie bins - 6%
- Fly tipping – 6%
- Clinical waste – 6%
- Bulky waste – 4%

10) Customer Satisfaction

Customer Services undertake an ongoing customer satisfaction survey across the services areas that access the Contact Centre. There are 2 separate methods taken to capture feedback, these are by SMS text messaging and e-mail.

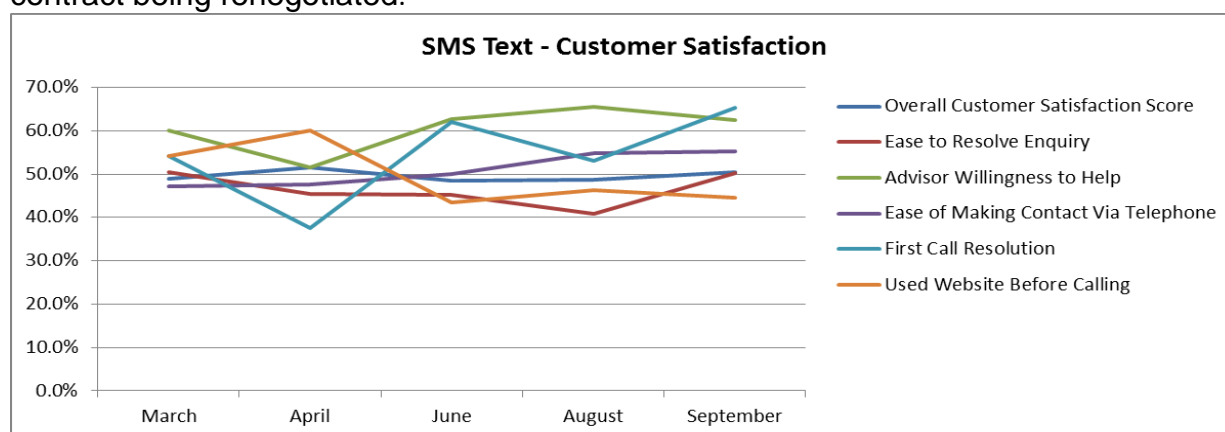
SMS text survey – Is a daily survey sent to a random proportion of citizens that called the council via their mobile (approximately 65% of callers use their mobile). A text message directs citizens to a website where they respond to 6 questions with a score of 1 to 10, additionally there is also the option to leave a comment on why they scored us that way.

A citizen will only receive a maximum of one text per month and has the option to opt out.

The following tables and graphs represent Customer Satisfaction specifically for Fleet & Waste.

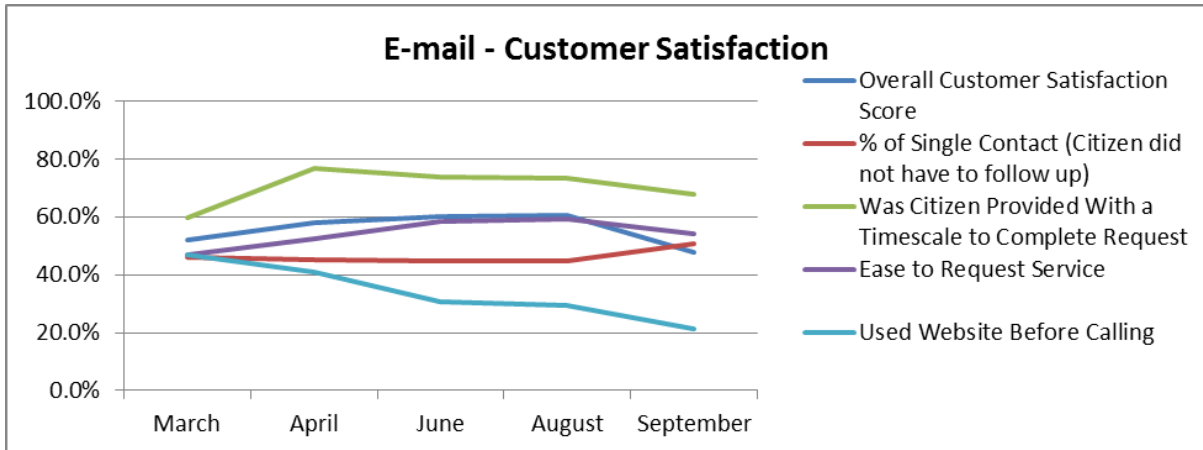
SMS Text	Overall Customer Satisfaction Score	Ease to Resolve Enquiry	Advisor Willingness to Help	Ease of Making Contact Via Telephone	First Call Resolution	Used Website Before Calling
March	48.8%	50.4%	60.0%	47.1%	54.2%	54.2%
April	51.6%	45.4%	51.6%	47.6%	37.5%	60.0%
June	48.5%	45.3%	62.7%	50.0%	62.0%	43.5%
August	48.6%	40.8%	65.5%	54.9%	53.1%	46.3%
September	50.4%	50.2%	62.5%	55.2%	65.2%	44.6%

Note – During May & July the survey was not commissioned due to the supplier contract being renegotiated.



E-mail survey – Is a weekly e-mail survey sent to all citizens whose service request has been marked as complete within CRM (typically these service requests are fulfilled by the service area directly). The survey is similar in nature to the SMS text survey although the questions are directed to how satisfied the citizen was with the whole service provided by the council and not just by the Contact Centre.

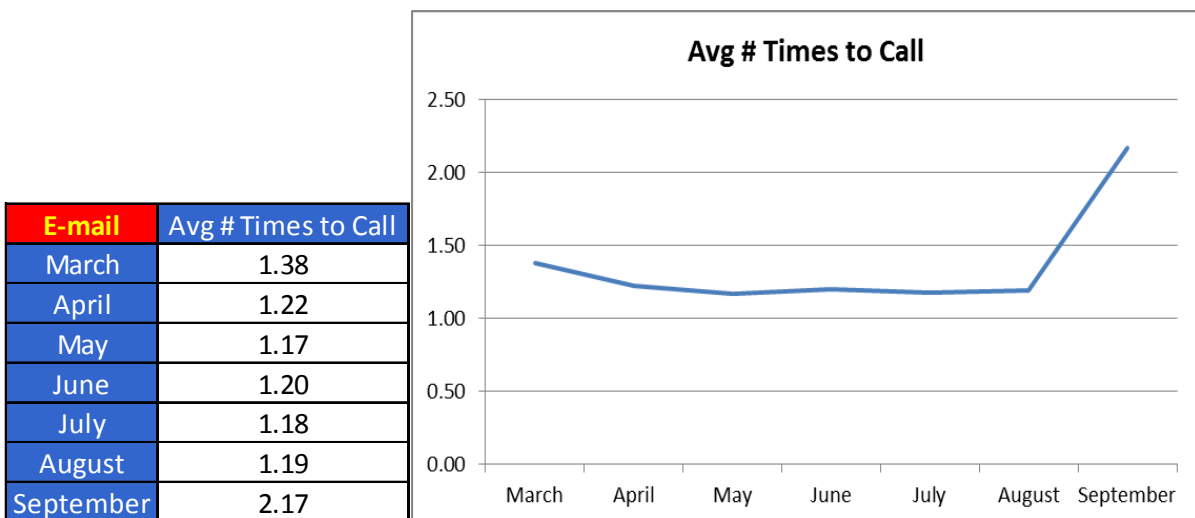
E-mail	Overall Customer Satisfaction Score	% of Single Contact (Citizen did not have to follow up)	Was Citizen Provided With a Timescale to Complete Request	Ease to Request Service	Used Website Before Calling
March	52.1%	46.2%	59.8%	46.7%	46.7%
April	58.0%	45.3%	76.6%	52.3%	41.0%
June	60.3%	44.8%	73.8%	58.6%	30.6%
August	60.5%	44.8%	73.4%	59.4%	29.3%
September	47.7%	50.7%	67.7%	54.1%	21.3%



The customer satisfaction e-mail survey is reporting an overall downward trend in satisfaction during the Perry Barr roll out period (June onwards) when an increased level of missed collections has been experienced.

The higher level of missed collections has a direct impact on citizens using the web site to report the service failure; this decrease is evidenced in the above graph when looking at “Used Website Before Calling”

The “Average number of times to call” reported below captures the number of calls the citizen needed to make to the Contact Centre in relation to their service request.



11) Initiatives

Depot Alerts - An initiative has been introduced for each of the Fleet & Waste depots to report on the day service interruptions to the Contact Centre. An e-mail alert is sent by the depot admin team detailing the streets where a missed collection has taken place. The alert also provides an explanation for the missed collection, such as a vehicle breakdown, shortage of drivers or a street access issue.

The Contact Centre currently receives on average 20 to 30 reports each month. This information when provided assists call handling when citizens call to report a missed collection. A missed collection is still recorded but by being able to provide an

acknowledgment and reason for the missed collections means citizens can have an increased confidence that the interruption is known and is being managed.

Text Message & E-mail Updates - When a service request has been completed and the job has been closed off, CRM sends an update to the citizen to confirm. This update is either in the format of a text message or e-mail depending on the citizen's preference. It was recognised that the existing messages contained within the update was not specific or helpful. This meant the update could cause additional follow up calls or complaints. We are aware that historically there have been complaints made that text messages have been sent out when the service request has not been resolved. We believe that there have been improvements in ensuring that jobs are not closed prematurely and are continuing to monitor this aspect of service discrepancy.

A review of all alerts has been undertaken to make the updates more meaningful, for example:-

Old Update

Update for: Missed Collection

Ref: 800012345

Status: Closed-Not Collected – Bin Tagged

New Update

Update for: Missed Collection

Ref: 800012345

Status: Sorry, we can't action this request as our records tell us your bin has been tagged.

There is information on the tag that tells you why your bin hasn't been emptied. Further information can be found at birmingham.gov.uk/recycling

Improving the content of the updates will reduce enquiries to the Contact Centre; reduce escalation and complaint by providing a more informative update.

The service is keen to explore the use of text messaging further. Suggestions to be considered are:

- Reminders to put out waste ready for collection
- Information about problems with specific routes / roads

On line information - The Service has been proactively reviewing its Web Pages – providing up to date information and removing old pages/broken links. The page feedback mechanism is used to identify improvements and current focus is on:

- Updating the pages on Garden Waste and preparing for the 2016 cycle
- Redesigning the page on Missed Collections to suggest why collections may have been missed
- Updating on the Wheeled Bin rollout

We expect to complete these improvements by the end of the year.

Outbound Calling Surveys - During April & May the Customer Services Contact Centre embarked on 2 outbound calling survey campaigns on behalf of Fleet & Waste for garden waste. The aim was to capture feedback via a short telephone survey, the focus of the surveys were: -

- Citizens who had purchased the garden waste service for 2015
- Citizens who had not renewed the service in 2015

The objective was to ask 4 to 6 questions to establish the resident's experience of the service in the current year or to establish the reason for not renewing. The findings from both surveys have assisted Fleet & Waste in understanding how the garden waste service is being perceived. Copies of both surveys are shown in appendix 1.

Service Telephone Lines - Historically there have been 7 separate telephone numbers in use to reach Fleet & Waste at the Contact Centre. This array of numbers to contact the council is unnecessary and can be somewhat confusing to have varying numbers for the same service. We are currently streamlining the 7 numbers to 1 number, which will be the main 0121 303 1112 telephone line. Taking this approach ensures a consistent number is provided and used with citizens, marketing and promotional activity. The numbers being taken out of service will be done in a phased approach, citizens calling these numbers will be advised via an IVR message about the changes taking place. The IVR messages will remain in place for 2 months before the telephone lines are decommissioned.

Longer Term Initiatives - There are some longer term initiatives currently being developed to support our insight into how members of the public perceive the service they are receiving, these include:-

- Development of a database for our Resolution Champions to record all interactions. Allowing us to evaluate the volumes, nature and outcomes to the resolutions they are managing. The database will provide management insight to identify: -
 - Service failure themes and causes
 - Service improvements
 - Volume reduction opportunities
 - Improve 1st call resolution
 - Identify any knowledge gaps or training needs
- Working with the verbatim data being captured via the customer satisfaction survey. This data presents us with a rich source of feedback. The development is to create the tools which can extrapolate the key trends and sentiment from the data to present opportunities to improve service delivery and identify what is working well. A database tool is currently being developed to assist with this reporting, we expect this to be implemented within quarter 1 of 2016.

- The benefit of using verbatim data proactivity is shown by the recent introduction of a weekly “call back report”. The report analyses the verbatim comments captured in the customer satisfaction survey to identify feedback which suggests the expectation of the citizen has not been met. The report seeks out words, phrases and sentiment which may suggest this, the feedback is then reviewed by the Contact Centre and a call back is made to the citizen to resolve the situation. This approach may prevent additional calls, escalations and complaints, however more importantly it instils renewed confidence in demonstrating we want to fix what has went wrong and displays we act upon the feedback given.

As we come to the end of 2015 the transformation of service to wheelie bins will be completed, this offers a period of stability for 2016. Further developments in Fleet & Waste include the full implementation of “slab in the cab” for all collections rounds, a citywide process for bin retrievals from properties not renewing for the garden waste service and the yearly planning to manage garden waste renewals from December. The service focus is on getting it right first time.

12) Compliance to Contact Centre Processes

Calls made directly to the Depots - One of the key areas of service change that is required to comply with the corporate processes is to ensure that as far as possible, all calls are routed through the contact centre. We have established that a significant amount of calls are going directly to the Depots which means we are not getting a full picture of service demand and additional staffing resource is required to answer the calls.

- August 2015: Calls made to Depots – 2956
- Calls answered by Depots – 2532
- Answer rate 82%
- Average of 50% of calls were from citizens requesting a service

Proposals to route calls to the Contact Centre - The volume and nature of calls is being explored to look at how we can encourage the service calls to go to the contact centre. This includes the redirection of numbers that are currently in use and were not part of the original transfer to the contact centre.

Contact made directly to Senior Officers, by email & phone - Many of the senior officers in the service receive phone calls and direct emails about problems with the service from Members. This can cause confusion in the service area, sometimes a duplication of work and additional work for the teams to reply to correspondence on simple complaints. There is a need to encourage all Elected Member contact to be made via the dedicated phone line and mail box in the contact centre so we can ensure consistency of reporting, response and ensure that all enquiries are treated with equal importance:

Email address SBCCCouncilorsEnquiry@ServiceBirmingham.co.uk
Dedicated phone line is **0121 303 5900**

Note – The address of the inbox will be updated in due course to reflect a Birmingham City Council e-mail address, when update this will be promoted to elected members.

Councillors will contact the CC at the above dedicated Mailbox, which a select group of experienced CC Advisors will handle. Depending on the nature of the email one of the following two actions will be taken:

- 1. General Enquiry** - If the email is a general enquiry it will be handled by the advisor and a “General Enquiry Service Ticket” will be raised as is the normal process. In addition a response to the email will be sent to the Councillor, which will include an enquiry reference number.
- 2. Escalation to a Manager** - If the Advisor is unable to answer the enquiry (this will include non-compliance of Data Protection) the email will be escalated to a Senior Advisor or Team Manager for a response.

13) Tacking Service Failure

The Fleet and Waste Management Customer Services Team is responsible for enquiry and complaints management, including Councillor enquiries, Your Views, co-ordination with Contact Centre resources, garden waste payment enquiries and web page updates. The team was expanded in 2013 as part of the Wheeled Bin Programme and again in 2014 with the advent of the chargeable garden waste collection services with additional resources to give additional capacity for dealing with enquiries about the new services. The current level of performance on responses to enquires are at 98% (August 2015) but this is at a cost to the service of increased resources. Due to the budgetary challenges facing the service it is essential that we look at demand reduction for this support area.

The statistics on service failure show a direct correlation with service changes to levels of complaints received by the service and accounts for peaks in the statistics for example, with wheeled bin roll out.

Not all complaints to the service are fully reflected in the service statistics due to them being made direct to the service through the depots and directly to the managers/senior officers. The main cause of complaint is around missed collections and the following actions are being taken to address issues of service failure:

Missed collections - This is highlighted as the biggest area of focus for the operational teams and their managers for immediate action. The key activity being undertaken is:

- Focus on the performance information and data available with Depot Managers being held accountable for improvements
- Introduction of New Technology (slab in the cab) was installed in the garden waste vehicles to enable the crews to view routes and report issues (e.g. bin not presented). The Slab was integrated with CRM in summer 2015 providing Contact Centre advisors with real time information.

- Further roll out of the technology to all vehicles to be completed by summer 2016 so that missed collection information is fully recorded and available in real time. We are currently looking as to ways to bring this implementation forward.

Repeat missed collections - Additional focus on this area by the Senior Team to look at key issues with focus on

- Analysis of the reasons for repeated service failure and associated performance management issues
- Flats – not currently on our technical database to allow for focussed performance monitoring. Plans being prepared to include this specific type of property.
- Assisted collections – establish the cause of the issue and ensure the teams take responsibility for ensuring the collections are made. The ‘slab in the cab’ rollout supports this additional requirement.
- New builds – this process currently tends to be reactive rather than proactive and the service is reviewing how information about new builds is passed to the service to redress this balance.

Correct application of closure codes - Following the decisions around the Birmingham Promise to include all missed collection reports, regardless of collection dates, it is very important that the service area inputs the correct closure date when they close down the jobs. This will ensure that the reporting against the Birmingham Promise is accurate and that the text messages received by the citizen are accurate.

14) Planning for the Future

Getting it right first time - The result of this will be a reduction in demand on the contact centre and consequently costs to the service. The embedding in of Wheeled Bin operations will reduce demand for Contact Centre support and the demand on the back office complaints team in the Service.

Proactive communication - We aim to share our data to be transparent about service delivery and failure.

Waste contract re-procurement processes:

- Reduce waste coming in to the waste stream
- Reuse: redirect to others e.g., Ladywood Furniture Project and Upcycle
- Recycle : prioritise waste for recycling focussing on value for money and our green credentials

Work is underway to produce a vision and develop a strategy detailing the Council’s approach to all aspects of waste management from 2019 and beyond.

A balanced budget and significant contribution to the City’s savings targets - All aspects of the service are under review to look at opportunity for efficiency and savings. This work links into the Future Council Programme.

Waste prevention and customer engagement around the waste prevention (3R's) agenda - Compliance is sought from residents using the wheelie bins through education, awareness raising and ultimately an enforcement process. Roadshows, community engagement and support are provided in attempt to deliver increased recycling and reduced landfill from waste presented by residents. Where none compliance with the requisite procedure is found the household will be advised served a notice and in extreme cases served with a fixed penalty notice.

Since 1st April 2015 the waste prevention team have responded to incorrectly presented waste by issuing:

- 501 Refuse Warning Letters
- 4164 Recycling Warning Letters
- 916 section 46 Letters
- 27 fixed penalty notices

Appendix 1 – Outbound Calling Surveys

Green Waste – Outbound Calling Survey

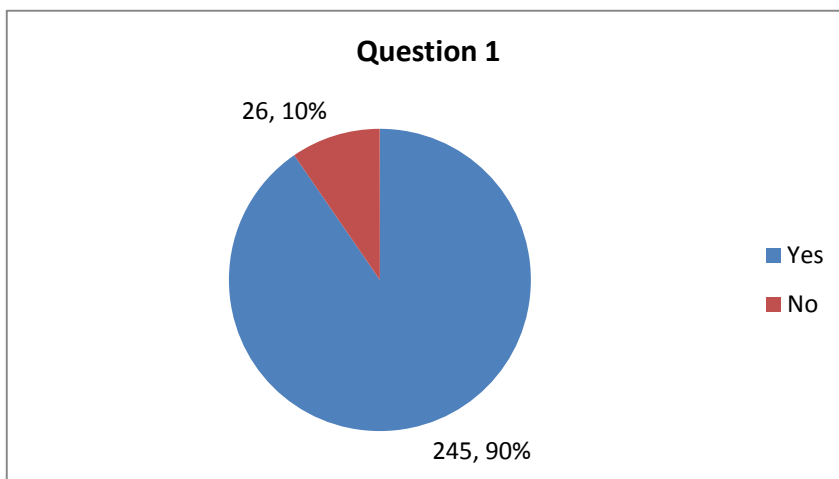
Background

During April 2015 the Customer Services Contact Centre embarked on an outbound calling campaign on behalf of Fleet & Waste to conduct a short call survey with residents who had purchased the garden waste service for 2015. The objective of the survey was to ask 6 questions to establish the residents experience from the initial purchase to the actual service delivery.

A total of 874 call attempts were made from a team of 2 advisors, 271 surveys were completed with 88 residents declining to take part. The remaining 515 call attempts are attributed to no answers, deadlines and engaged calls. From the 359 residents we spoke to 75.4% completed the survey. The findings from the completed survey are provided below.

Survey Results

Q1 - Would you recommend the Garden Waste service to friends and family in Birmingham?



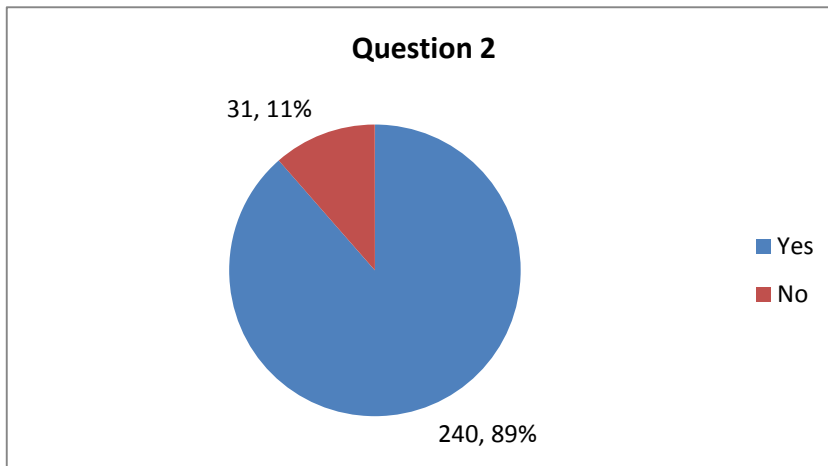
25 of the responders stated they would not recommend the service with the key reason being the cost of the service, many feeling the service should not be chargeable.

Residents stating dissatisfaction just stated they were “not happy” without any specific reason.

The “other” category includes 1 resident having no one to recommend the service to, another who had yet to start using the service and a resident who felt they had no other option but to purchase the service.

Cost of service	11	44%
Dissatisfaction	2	8%
Missed collections	6	24%
Other	6	24%

Q2 - Was the booking service easy to use?



89% of surveyed residents found the booking of the service easy.

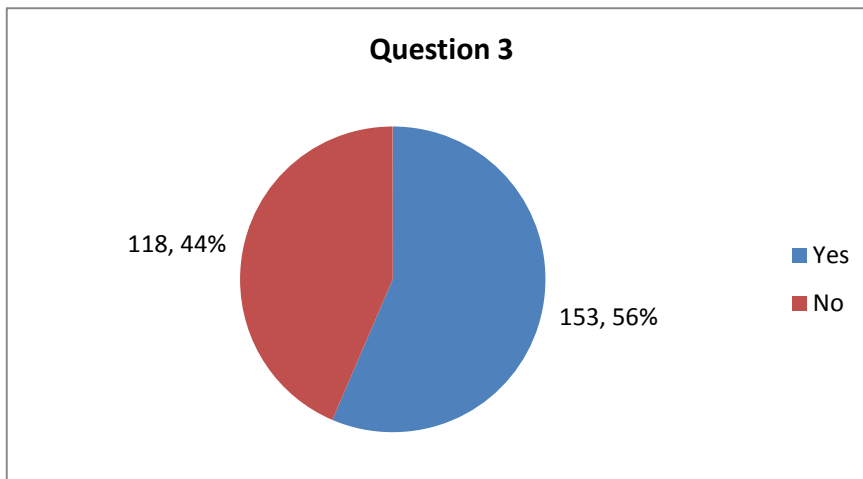
However there were some residents who shifted to online because telephone lines were busy during the December discounted offer.

17 of responses cited “ease of use” and “renewal process” via the web site as an issue. Residents returning to renew were confused thinking they were purchasing the service for another bin to be delivered. Additionally the setting up online one accounts needed to purchase the service caused difficulty with password set ups.

Accessibility relates to residents who are not on-line / web enabled.

Accessibility	4	13%
Other	3	13%
Payment line busy	7	22%
Renewal issue	2	6%
Website ease of use	15	47%

Q3 - Would a direct debit payment system be of interest to you in future years?



Q4 - Where did you hear about this service?

The table below is suggesting letter correspondence and newspaper advertising has been the most responsive channels of communication and promotion.

Email Marketing	Letter	Newspaper	Other	Radio Advert	Roadshow	Website	Word of Mouth
8	125	78	0	1	2	9	37
3%	48%	30%	0%	0%	1%	3%	14%

Q5 - What do you think of the service that you have had so far this year?

84% of responders stated that the service was good to excellent, 4% responded negatively.

1.Very Poor	2. Poor	3 OK	4.Good	5.Excellent
3	7	31	96	134
1%	3%	11%	35%	49%

Q6 - Any other comments or suggestions for improvement

Bigger bins	4	4%
Bin placement by crew after collection	9	9%
Collection of side waste	3	3%
Deal with fly tipping	2	2%
Full year service	4	4%
Ensure no missed collections	7	7%
More frequent collections	4	4%
Other (breakdown below)	6	6%
Payment options	7	7%
Provide collection calendar	5	5%
Reduce / remove the fee	34	35%
Option of sacks	6	6%
Website needs improving	5	5%

“Other”

Bulky waste service should be highlighted / promoted more
Customer did not feel service is working due to bags being collected even for people who have not paid.
Reinstate each resident being able to have at least one bulky waste collection
Improve refund process because it took had taken 3 months.
Resident hasn't used the service as of yet
Not enough notification was provided for when GGW started 2015

Green Renewals – Outbound Calling Survey

Background

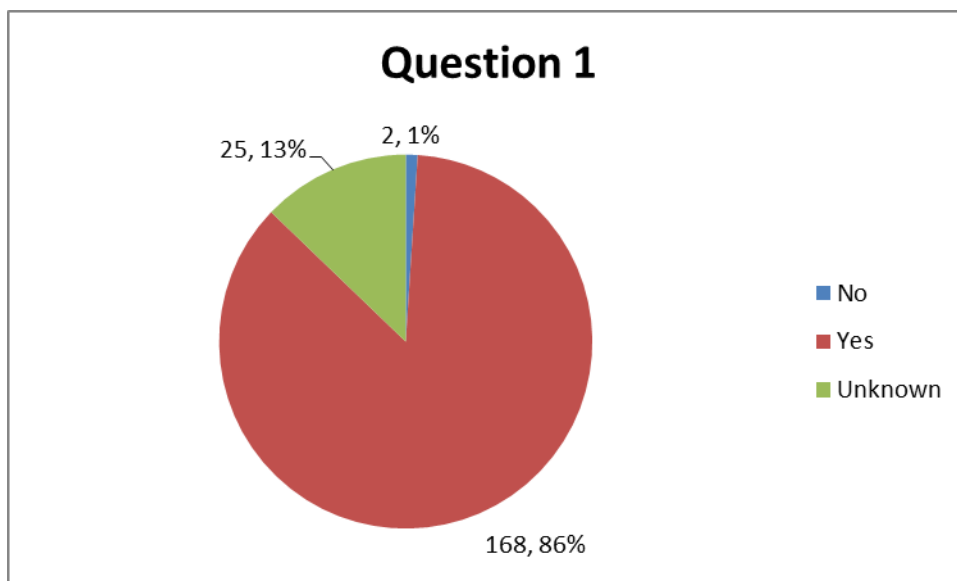
During May and June 2015 the Customer Services Contact Centre embarked on an outbound calling campaign on behalf of Fleet & Waste to conduct a short call survey with residents who had purchased the garden waste service in 2014 but had not renewed in 2015. The objective of the survey was to ask 4 questions to establish the resident's reasons for not renewing in 2015.

A total of 803 call attempts were made from a team of 2 advisors, 195 surveys were completed with 38 residents declining to take part. The remaining 573 call attempts are attributed to no answers, deadlines and engaged calls. From the 236 residents we spoke to 83.8% took part in the survey. The findings from the completed survey are provided below.

There was a further 63 customer records not called due to identifying the resident had renewed before making the outbound call.

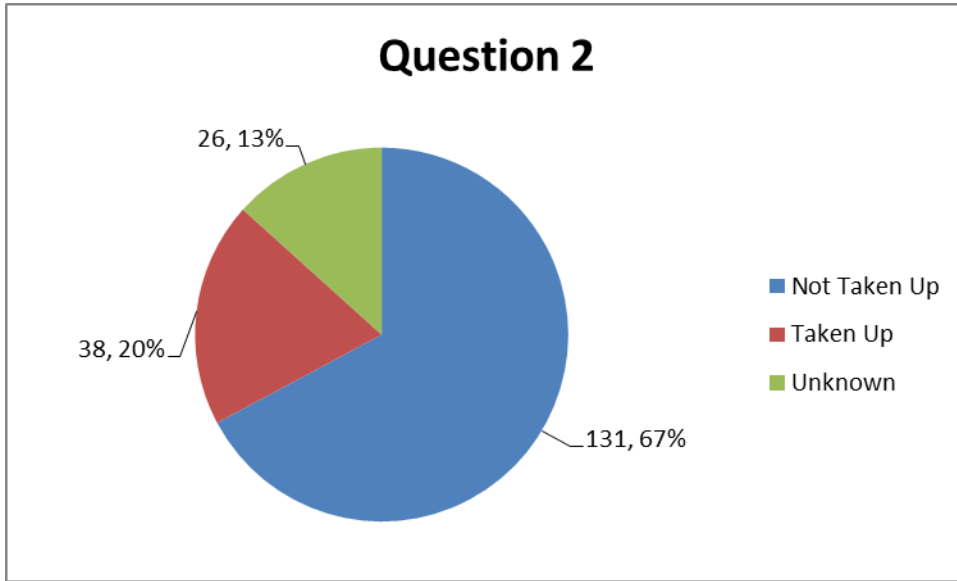
Survey Results

Q1 - Did the resident use the service in 2014?

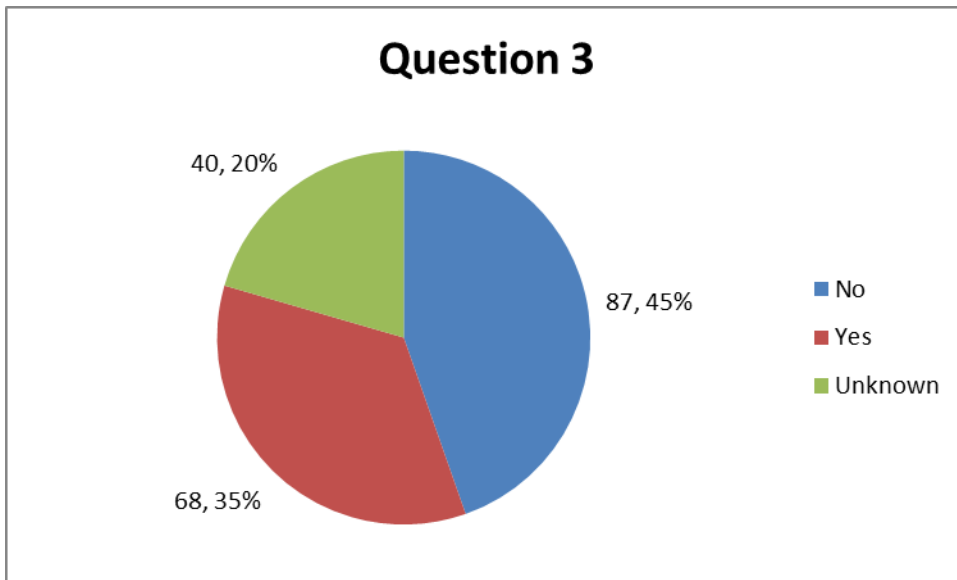


In 25 cases we could not establish if the property had purchased the service in 2014, this was because another member of the household participated in the survey or there was a change in resident at the property.

Q2 – Had the resident taken up the service for 2015?

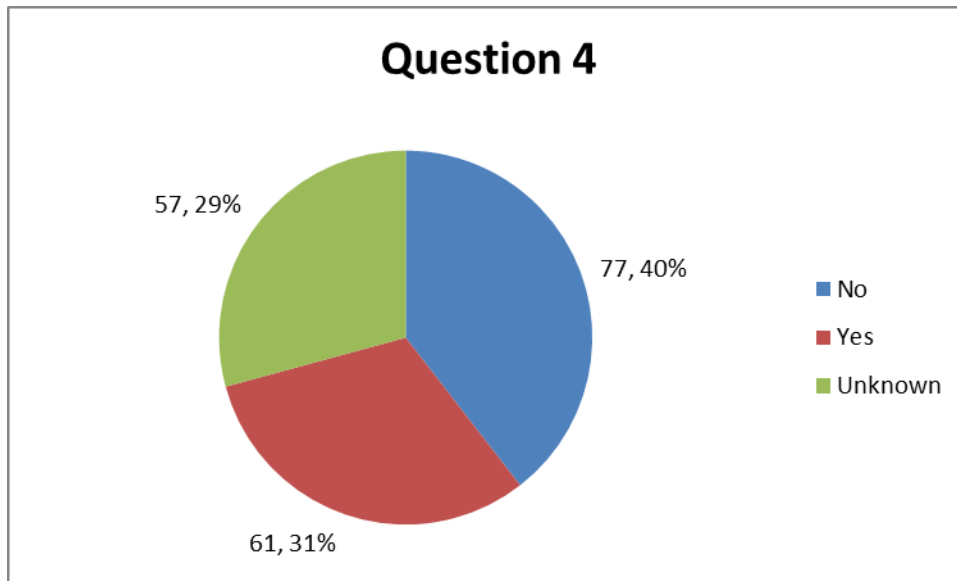


Q3 - Had the resident received a reminder to renew?



From the 68 responders who acknowledged the reminder to renew, 47 stated they received a letter and 21 stated they had received an e-mail.

Q4 - Will the resident be taking up the service this year?



From residents who responded stating “Yes”, the outbound call advisor was able to obtain a renewal during the call in 31 cases. Across the 195 contacts made during calling this represents 15.89%.

A further 28 “yes” responders stated it was not convenient to process a renewal or that they did not have payment details to hand (5). This equated to 14.35% of contacts during calling.

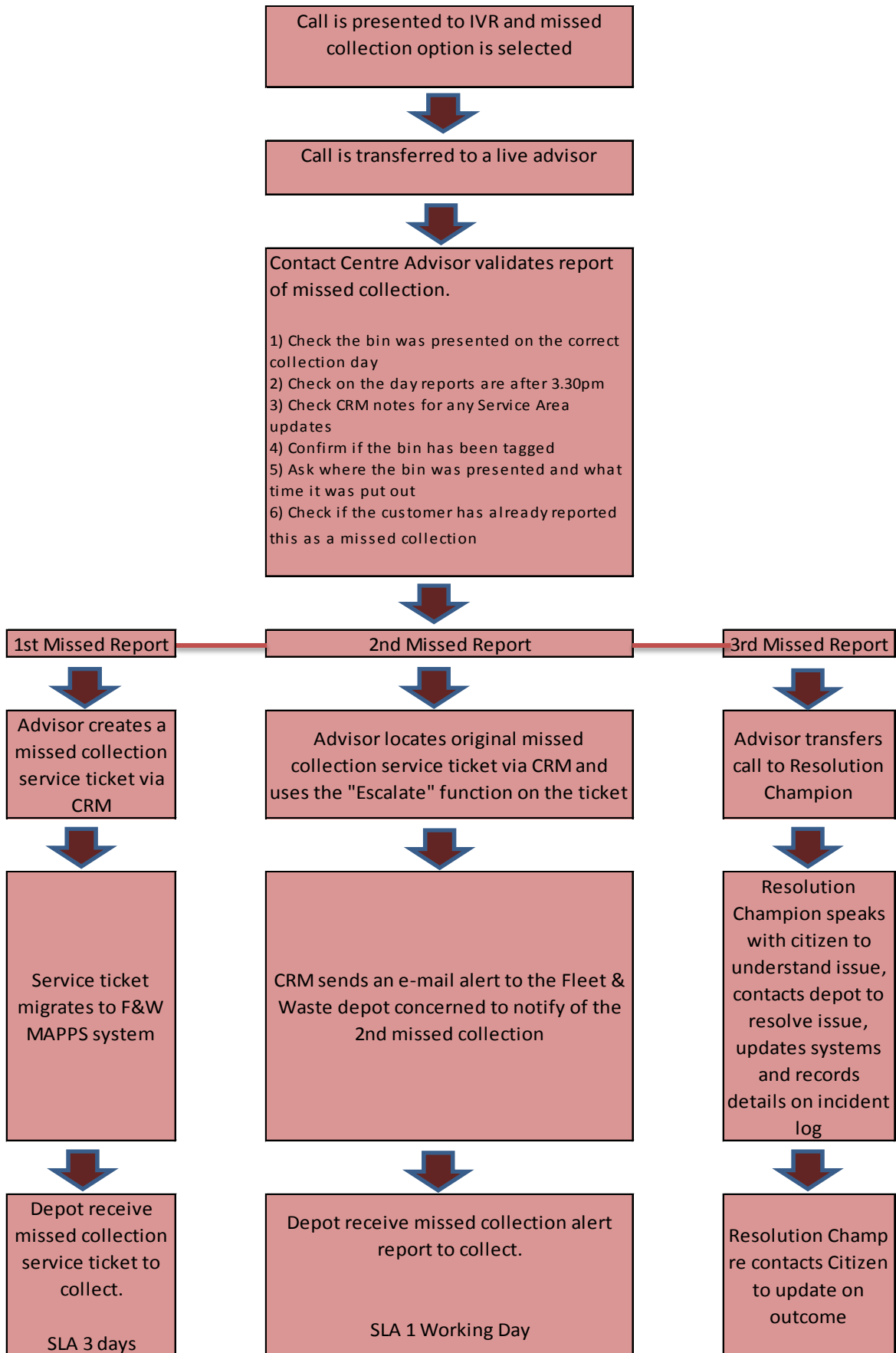
92 of responders representing 47.17% of contacts provided the following reasons as to why they would not be renewing the service.

Not Renewing Reason	Total	%
Change of address	13	14.1%
Service no longer required	10	10.9%
Will use HRC	11	12.0%
Prefers sacks	8	8.7%
Further consideration / Undecided	12	13.0%
Dissatisfaction with service	4	4.3%
Sharing with neighbour	4	4.3%
Has made alternative arrangements	4	4.3%
Did not use service enough	16	17.4%
Price	6	6.5%
Cost - Full cost for partial year	1	1.1%
Bin replacement cost	1	1.1%
Composting	1	1.1%
Disputes non-payer collections	1	1.1%

When asking residents who did not intend to renew the service how they intended to dispose of garden waste the response rate was low, however we can see from the above table the HRC is the main alternative option.

15) Appendix 2 – Call Centre Processes

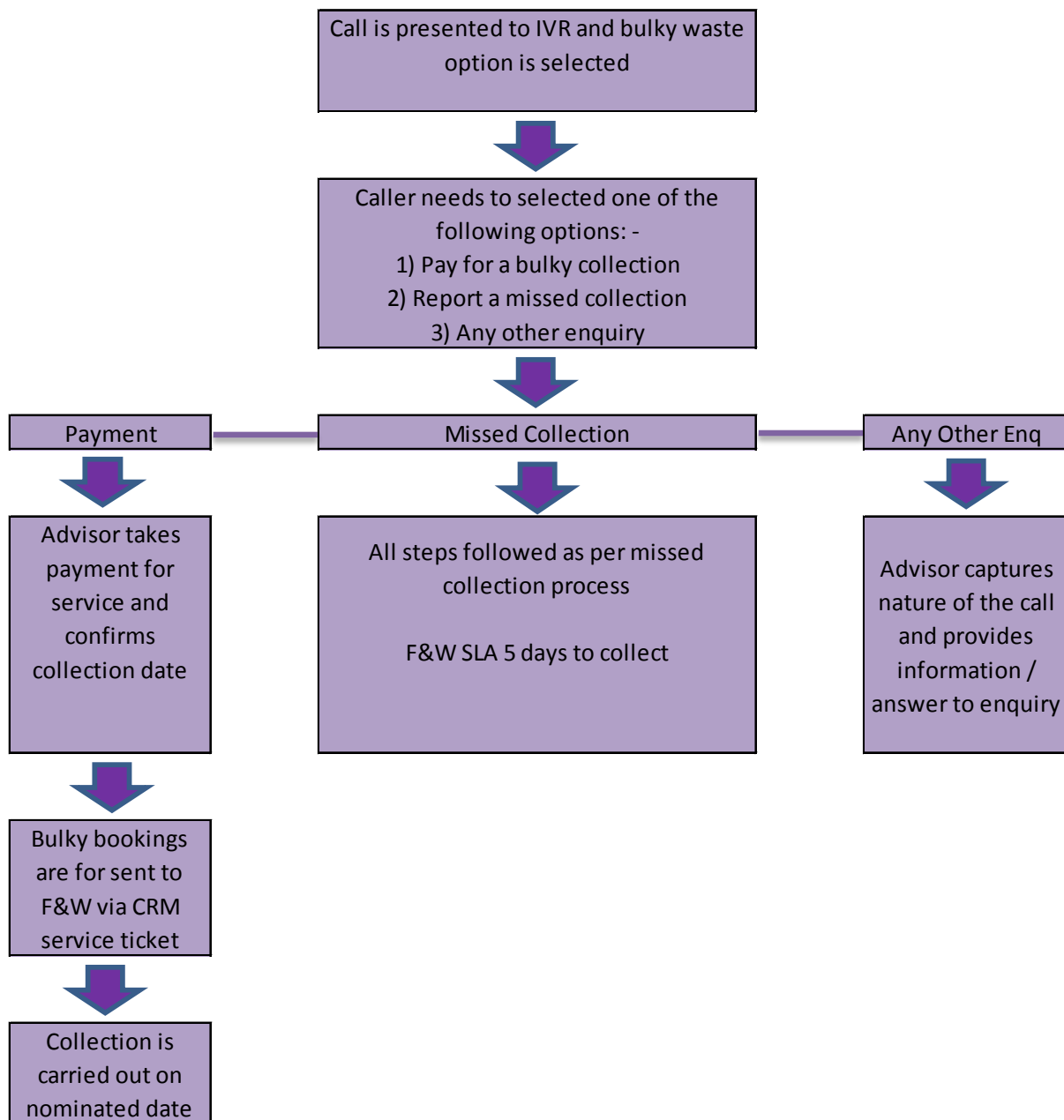
Missed Collection



Garden Waste



Bulky Waste



BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES O&S COMMITTEE

Evidence gathering session for Scrutiny Inquiry into the Customer Journey1400 hours on 10th November 2015**Present:**

Councillor W. Zaffar (Chair)

Councillors R. Brew, M. Bridle, T. Chatfield, J. Hunt, C. Khan, N. Kooner, G. Sambrook, K. Wood

Also Present:

- Chris Gibbs, Service Director, Customer Services
- Paula Buckley, Assistant Director, Customer Services Centre
- Geraldine Collins, Head of Operations, Customer Services
- Sue Jones, Contract Director, Service Birmingham Revenues
- Jacqui Kennedy, Strategic Director – Place (Interim)
- Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services
- Jayne Power, Scrutiny Officer

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chairman advised that this meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.birminghamnewsroom.com) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs. The whole of the meeting will be filmed except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Matthew Gregson, Chaman Lal and Yvonne Mosquito.

3. INQUIRY - THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Cllr Zaffar introduced the inquiry, and members fed back on their visit to the contact centre:

- Things have moved on leaps and strides but still work to be done;

- Technology and software user-friendly, but did seem to be a bit slow, especially when one call generated more than one ticket;
- Impressed by how the staff handled the calls – efficient and showed empathy; explained difficult issues well (e.g. paying for a missing wheelie bin) and offered additional advice from picking up clues in the call;
- Resolution champions very useful;
- The link with twitter good as issues are picked up that way too;
- Concerns about the flexibility to allow advisors to go the extra mile;
- Advisor told caller in the second sentence that they could use the website – appeared unwelcome.

CLlr Zaffar outlined the key lines of enquiry and referred to the detailed reports.

Fleet and Waste

Jacqui Kennedy gave a brief introduction:

- The fleet and waste service is a universal service and waste collection is delivered on a weekly basis to all properties in the city, which includes 426,000 residential homes;
- When contact centre was brought in-house, customer service staff were taken out of the depots and so the first port of call for enquiries to the service is through the contact centre;
- There have been three drivers for the peaks in calls for this service – the introduction of wheelie bins, the garden waste charge and bulky waste charges;
- Mobile technology has been introduced and data and intelligence are being used to inform actions and look at route rationalisation.

In response to questions from Members, the following were amongst the points made:

- Missed and late collections are reported in the same way;
- The problem of stolen bins is not as widespread as anticipated but in areas where this is happening officers are working with the police. Bins are chipped and residents are being encouraged to make the bins relevant to their property, eg by putting the house number and postcode on them;
- The chips contain a number unique to a particular address and can be used for identifying opportunities around recycling and to gain an understanding of what the vehicles are carrying;
- Where changes are made to refuse collection dates, there is an officer who provides briefings to contact centre staff and, similarly, when a round hasn't been cleared, the contact centre is briefed so staff can advise customers;

- SMS text surveys measure call satisfaction and e-mail surveys measure satisfaction with the end-to-end process;
- The contact centre performance is now very near where other Local Authorities are;
- There has been a reduction in repeat calls overall;
- There have previously been 7 different numbers for calling with Fleet & Waste enquiries and these are now being brought into one number within the contact centre. The numbers will not be deleted but they will no longer be publicised;
- It was suggested that it would be useful to have Resolution Champions for specific areas to allow councillors to build relationships with them and also for members to have an opportunity to visit the depots to see what goes on and start to build relationships with depot staff;
- A piece of work has been started on behaviour/culture to encourage operatives to be more customer-focused;
- With regard to staff retention, a new recruitment process has commenced to attract drivers, including wider advertisement of vacancies, telephone assessment and open days at the depots.

Council Tax

Chris Gibbs gave a brief introduction:

- Collection of council tax and business rates is outsourced through the Service Birmingham contract to Capita;
- This is another service which touches every household and business in the city and £470m of taxes are raised per year, which is key to the Council's budget;
- In 2015/16 there has been a significant reduction in terms of volumes of calls to the contact centre in relation to council tax;
- There is inevitably an increase in calls during the annual billing process.

In response to questions from Members, the following were amongst the points made:

- Webchat statistics to be circulated to Members;
- With regard to the percentage of enquiries relating to the issue of summons, if citizens are not paying then BCC has to take the statutory approach and people who cannot pay are encouraged to claim benefits they are entitled to;
- There appears to be conflicting information around HMOs, for which there is a specific definition within council tax legislation. The hierarchy list for HMOs will be circulated to Members;
- In terms of staff retention and career development, this was part of the thinking around introducing the role of Resolution Champion. There are also

staff forums and the “golden telephone” which is presented to advisors who achieve a 100% score on feedback.

Chris Gibbs concluded by saying that in the last 12 months a big step has been taken along the journey and to move more than 10% in one year in terms of customer satisfaction is due to the hard work and dedication of customer services staff and staff in service areas. There is still work to be done but things are moving in the right direction. There is a need to reduce average times of calls in an environment that does not disturb the quality but takes into account financial considerations.

Councillor Zaffar thanked officers for attending to give evidence to the inquiry and stated that it was important to give citizens the chance to have a say and that this could be done by taking part in the survey on BeHeard which is open until 20th November.

The meeting ended at 1550 hours.

Report for Overview and Scrutiny - Review of the Birmingham Promise

1. Background

The Birmingham Promise was introduced on 1st April 2015 as a means of setting out a clear set of service standards that are meaningful for the citizens of Birmingham.

Governance, Resources and Customer Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed an early draft of the Promise at a committee meeting in April 2014 and suggested some key principles for taking the Birmingham Promise forward, namely:

- That the emphasis should be on public facing services “the things that matter to people” and presented in a way that is meaningful to them;
- That there should be simple and transparent reporting mechanisms;
- That it would be useful to do some comparisons with other Local Authorities

A revised draft was then prepared by the Deputy Leader and officers from both Customer Services and the Service Areas. In addition, internet research was carried out to identify similar measures or service standards for the core cities and the West Midlands Local Authorities.

The findings from the meetings and research were discussed at the Governance, Resources and Customer Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting in October 2014. Following that, assurances were sought from each service head that has responsibility for a promise that it was achievable. The final version of the Birmingham Promise was then prepared for approval. This involved having it re-written in plain English.

Corporate Communications took responsibility for preparing the final version that was distributed to frontline services and displayed on the website. This is included in Appendix 1. Posters were also designed and distributed for display in Neighbourhood Offices and Libraries. These posters featured individual elements of the Promise and sign-posted citizens to the website if they wanted to see the full version.

Quarterly updates on the promises have been included in the routine quarterly performance monitoring report to Cabinet. The most recent results are included in Appendix 2.

Since the Birmingham Promise was introduced two measures have had to be withdrawn as it proved difficult to report on them.

These being:

- a) Blue badge renewals
- b) Fleet & Waste missed collections

2. Review of the Birmingham Promise

It was always intended to review the Birmingham Promise after 12 months and then annually to ensure that it remains appropriate and meaningful. The 2015 review of the Birmingham Promise has involved the following:-

- Analysis of the number of views of the Birmingham Promise web page
- Discussion about the Birmingham Promise at the recent citizen panels run by Customer Services
- Service Areas and other stakeholders such as the Corporate Performance Management Team have been asked to provide their views

2.1 Web page statistics

In the seven months to October there were 490 page views of the web page that the Birmingham Promise is on – www.birmingham.gov.uk/birminghampromise and 416 unique visitors. The most page views in one month were in September and October when there were 121 page views each month. This indicates an extremely low level of interest given that the total number of visits per month to the website averages 771,000. The average time spent on the Birmingham Promise web page was 1 minute and 56 seconds.

2.2 Citizen Panels

Customer Services has run two citizen panels in the last month. The panel comprises a group of citizens who are interested in providing feedback about customer service issues. They have received our invitation to participate and volunteered to attend to provide their views.

The first question asked of each panel was “have you heard of the Birmingham Promise?” The overwhelming response was “no”, they have not heard of the Birmingham Promise. One of the 50 attendees advised that they might have heard something about it but were not sure.

The attendees were then asked whether they thought the Birmingham Promise was a good idea. Again the overwhelming response was negative. The views expressed were as follows:-

- That it is just a PR stunt.
- It's only of value if something happens as a result.
- It's more important to actually do something rather than talk about it.
- It's good that there is a Promise but citizens don't feel that they see the outcome enough as BCC is not living up to it.
- They wanted to know if it was measurable, tangible and auditable.
- If it has been around why haven't they seen the benefits of it.

- BCC needs to keep its promises.
- Actions speak louder than words.
- It's political and academic.
- They felt that over the years many promises have been made and then lost in the depth of time.
- They asked what the deterrent was to the department not to break their Promise.

2.3 Service Areas

When the individual promises were put in place, Service Areas were consulted and they agreed to the measures for their specific area. The Service Areas responsible for reporting on the measures in the Birmingham Promise have since been asked to provide their feedback on how it should be developed next year. The specific questions that they were asked to consider were:

- Would you like to change the “promise(s)” about your Service?
- If so, what would you change it to and why?
- Would you like to add any new measures/services to the Birmingham Promise?
- Have you received any feedback from your service users about the Birmingham Promise? What did your service users tell you?
- Do you think that the Birmingham Promise is a useful document/tool? Has it helped to improve service standards?
- Is there anything else that you would like Overview and Scrutiny to consider before determining the format of the Birmingham Promise next year?

When the targets were set Councillors were clear that they wanted the measures expressed in calendar days not working days as they felt that citizens would find this easier to understand and they wanted the target in all cases to be 100%. These decisions affect the views expressed below.

A specific concern was raised in regards to the Your Views measure as it would appear that there are two conflicting targets. The Council Plan target is that 90% of complaints should be responded to within 15 days whereas the Birmingham Promise expects 100% to be responded to within 20 calendar days. The intention was that the 20 calendar days would equate to 15 working days. Service Areas have commented that the expression “working days” is commonly used and well understood by the public. Having two different targets is confusing for the public and for staff. There is also a concern that having two targets for the same measure could result in misunderstanding and lack of clarity by citizens.

A RAG status of red in the Birmingham Promise reporting suggests service failure, however this does not put performance in the context of the volumes and levels of service achieved e.g. in the 1st quarter, 91.6% of routine housing repairs were completed within the required timescale, performance assessed as “red” under the Birmingham Promise. This equated to a total of 29,234 routine repairs completed out of a total of 31,919.

In some instances as the target is set at 100%, it does not reflect published targets and performance requirements as contained within existing contracts eg the repair to street light target. Although this is 100% in the Contract, wherever these targets are not achieved, there are financial deductions to incentivise performance improvement. There is therefore no further action we can legally take, other than to apply said deductions – these are the legal remedies to the ‘breach’ of these particular clauses. However, this is not reflected when reporting against a pass or fail system (red or green).

Similarly, responding to emergency repairs within 2 hours at 95.7% is within contractual target levels and therefore achieved but according to the Birmingham Promise is assessed as “red” ie not achieved. However, this contract also includes a sanction if performance isn’t achieved within the parameters of the contract.

Reporting on the Birmingham Promise has caused additional work for Council departments at a time when staffing levels are reducing and have added a layer of complexity to reporting.

Additions to the Birmingham Promise need to be aligned to the future Council work and it is better to wait for that to come to some conclusions before any Directorate adds or changes the promises. It would be good to link the Birmingham Promise to the City Council budget and business plan that is approved by Council in February / March. The financial plan will be clear on what we are going to stop doing, what we are keeping and what we can “promise” on service standards.

The Promise was generally seen as a good concept but it was felt that it needs more and constant communication with citizens to ensure that the message is being relayed effectively.

2.4 Corporate Performance Management Team

The Performance Management Team is responsible for collating results on a quarterly basis and reporting on the Birmingham Promise. The feedback from this team is given below.

It is unclear why the Birmingham Promise is needed when the Council Business Plan contains a comprehensive range of targets and measures. If contractual targets are less than 100% it is felt that it should be clearly stated as a promise on minimum standards ie a promise to uphold contractual targets. It is important to ensure that all, but, only key critical services are included.

There's a grey area between the Birmingham Promise and the Council Business Plan (CBP) measures. Given the affordability issues it might be more sensible to have a single set of key measures (i.e. a CBP set incorporating the most important minimum service levels).

The Birmingham Promise has inadvertently managed to turn some very high performance (and maybe even top performance) rates into bad news due to any performance less than 100% being classified as "red". This needs careful attention as the Council does not need additional bad news at this time.

A number of the measures were not well thought through or proven even though they were all signed off by officers and members. If it is decided to continue with the Promise in 2016/17, then it is recommended that they are all clearly defined and signed off (by the service and the Cabinet Member) using the Data Quality Assessment Form well in advance of them being submitted for approval by Cabinet. These forms provide no guarantees, but, have helped avoid the types of mistakes experienced in the current Birmingham Promise. This encourages owners to think about data sources, measure calculations, allowable exclusions, data quality etc. Perhaps services should be asked to provide results for a quarter before being accepted as Birmingham Promise measures. This would help avoid the pitfalls and would help assure that the 100% rate (or minimum service level) is achievable.

The Birmingham Promise measures need to be in the Appraisals of the responsible owners. Given that the Kerslake Improvement Panel has a focus on delivery and accountability then there should be an expectation that these do go into the appraisals of the appropriate heads of service. Otherwise, unless there are contractual sanctions, there are no consequences for delivery against the targets. Any conversion of existing measures using working days to calendar days must handle weekends and Bank Holidays in identical ways, as this has caused a number of issues with measures.

Some service promises, e.g. school admissions, are by nature seasonal so will not produce a result each month/quarter. Consideration therefore needs to be given to how they are reported to Cabinet, i.e. are they reported as upheld if none have been handled in the period?

3. Options for 2016/17

Having reviewed the feedback there are a number of options that could be considered for 2016/17 – continue with the Birmingham Promise in its current format; amend the Birmingham Promise; or terminate it. Overview and Scrutiny is requested to consider each of the options:-

3.1 Continue with the Birmingham Promise in its current format

It is not felt that this is a realistic option given some of the issues raised by Service Areas above whereby the Birmingham Promise is in conflict with existing contractual arrangements or potentially could result in fines for BCC. It is therefore recommended that this option is not pursued.

3.2 Amend the Birmingham Promise

If it is considered that the Birmingham Promise is a good concept then potential changes that could be made to it include:-

- Simplifying and reducing the measures so that they are easier to track and concentrate on.
- Focussing on those measures that are really important to citizens.
- Expressing targets in working days not calendar days.
- Where a contractual target already exists use this in the Promise rather than a new measure that has no contractual weight.
- Trial the measures for a quarter before they are included to ensure that they are achievable and that the calculations are robust.
- Having a comprehensive communications plan that publicises the Promise to citizens so that they are aware of it.
- Celebrate good achievement even if the 100% target is not being achieved.
- Focussing more on what we have done to improve performance in the format of “you said we did” rather than performance against targets which do not appear to resonate with citizens.
- Include the Birmingham Promise targets in the appraisals of Heads of Service where their services are featured in the Promise

3.3 Terminate the Birmingham Promise

The 2020 Future Council Vision that has recently been approved by Cabinet promotes the concept of “one vision, one set of priorities and one plan”. The Birmingham Promise would therefore appear to be at odds with this vision. Overview and Scrutiny should therefore consider whether the Birmingham Promise should be terminated.

Continue to report performance against the council plan measures via the Cabinet process.

The Birmingham Promise

Introduction

We take customer service very seriously here at Birmingham City Council.

It's not just about how quickly we answer the phone or how polite we are when we speak to you – it's also about resolving your enquiries and requests in a timely way.

It's why we have introduced The Birmingham Promise.

The Birmingham Promise is central to our values as a local authority: putting you first; achieving excellence; being true to our word; and acting courageously.

It also reflects our core purpose: to make a difference every day to people's lives.

The Birmingham Promise consists of specific standards that you should expect from us, whether you need to register a general complaint or raise a concern about any of the seven most frequently requested services in the authority.

We will monitor and measure how well we do in each of them and will publish the results every three months so that you can see how we are doing.

The impact of the financial situation

As you are no doubt aware, we have suffered unprecedented financial cuts over the past few years and these look set to continue for the foreseeable future.

This inevitably means there will be changes in the way that we serve you.

We will have to target our scarce resources at the most vulnerable people in our communities and support those who most need our help. This will be a key challenge for us.

Less money in our coffers also means we will have to increase our use of online services when it is appropriate to do so but we will ensure that these are easier to access and to use.

Contacting us

Whether you're a visitor to the city or you live or work here, you can expect to receive the highest levels of service from us. We are committed to providing open, responsive and effective services throughout the city.

As part of The Birmingham Promise, when you use any of our services you can expect us to:

- Be courteous and polite towards you
- Treat you fairly
- Take your problem seriously and to listen carefully to you
- Tell you what we will do to help you
- Give you open and honest explanations about our decisions
- Treat you as an individual – we will always respond to people's diverse needs
- Send you correspondence and information that is easy to understand
- Listen to your feedback
- Apologise if we get things wrong and do our best to put things right
- Send you updates about what we are doing to deal with your query
- Keep our promises.

Making a complaint

We hope you won't need to complain about our services but if you think we have fallen short, it is important that we know about it.

The easiest way to contact us is by using our Your Views service.

You can either ask for a form by telephoning 0121 464 9995 or you can find one online at www.birmingham.gov.uk/yourviews.

If you make a complaint, we will:

- Acknowledge it and provide you with a reference number
- Investigate your complaint thoroughly
- Send you a full response or an update within 20 days. You can choose how we send this information to you.

Delivering services – our commitment to you...

Benefits

Birmingham Benefits Service pays your housing benefit and council tax support.

We endeavour to do this accurately and quickly, and strive to provide an all-round excellent service by ensuring ensures that you receive all the help you are entitled to, according to legislation and local policy.

To make a claim for benefits, visit www.birmingham.gov.uk/benefits.

We promise to:

- Work with you to ensure that you receive all of the help you are entitled to
- Make a decision about your housing benefit our council tax support claim within 10 days of receiving your claim, if you have provided all the necessary information.

Waste and Recycling

Our Fleet and Waste Management service collects your household rubbish every week, except on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. It also collects your paper, card and mixed materials every fortnight, provided you have separated the items correctly.

To report a missed collection, visit www.birmingham.gov.uk/waste

If we miss a collection, we promise to:

- Collect your household rubbish/recycling within 3 days of you registering your complaint.

Housing Repairs

If you are one of our tenants, you can be assured that your home will be maintained to a good and improving standard.

To report a non-urgent repair, visit www.birmingham.gov.uk/housingrepairs

Or you can call us on 0800 073 3333 (free from a landline) or 0300 555 0404 (from a mobile) to report urgent and non-urgent repairs.

As part of our commitment, you can expect your home to be:

- Watertight and waterproof
- Safe and secure
- Repaired to a good standard.

If you report any problems with your home, we promise to:

- Respond to emergency repairs in 2 hours
- Resolve routine repairs within 30 days.

Parks

Our Parks Service is responsible for almost 600 parks and public open spaces, as well as more than 200 play areas and 115 allotment sites across the city. We are committed to providing high quality spaces that everyone can enjoy.

To report a dangerous tree, visit www.birmingham.gov.uk/parks.

If you report a tree in a dangerous state, we promise:

- To send a qualified tree officer to carry out an inspection within 2 hours.

Highways

Millions of people use the city's highways and road networks every day, whether they are motorists or pedestrians. Our Highways Service is committed to providing a consistently high level of service and routinely undertakes inspections to make sure the roads, footways, bridges and street lights across the city are safe for all.

To report a highways issue, visit www.birmingham.gov.uk/highways.

Sometimes, problems occur and we will do our utmost to fix them.

If you report a dangerous pothole or other defect, we promise to:

- Make it safe within one hour
- Carry out a temporary repair within 24 hours
- Fully repair it within 28 days.

If other potholes are reported, we will:

- Inspect them within 14 days
- Arrange its repair in our programme of works.

If you report a faulty traffic light, we will:

- Repair it within two hours.

If you report a faulty or broken street light, we will:

- Repair it within one month.

School Admissions

Our Services for Schools department aims to make sure that every child in the city reaches his or her potential.

We do this by supporting pupils, enabling them to access as many opportunities as possible, and developing their talents.

All our schools endeavour to provide activities for children and young people that make learning interesting and exciting.

You can apply online for a school place at www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions

As a parent applying for a reception or year 7 school place for your child, we promise to:

- Hold an appeal following an offer for either a reception or year 7 place in front of an independent panel within 40 school days of the appeal deadline
- Offer within 10 school days a place at a child's nearest school with availability if you have not received an offer
- Have an independent appeal panel consider in-year appeals within 30 school days of receiving your appeal application

Blue Badge Service

The Blue Badge scheme provides a range of parking concessions for people with severe mobility problems who find it difficult to use public transport. Blue badge holders can park in disabled spaces and other designated spaces throughout the city.

We promise to:

- Process your application form for a blue badge within 8 weeks
- Post to your address a renewal notice 10 weeks before your blue badge is due to expire.

Our expectations of you ...

The Birmingham Promise sets out what you can expect from us. For this to work, however, we need your help and co-operation. So, we ask you to:

- Treat all Council staff with respect and courtesy

- Provide full information when reporting an issue or submitting an application
- Use the correct channels when reporting an issue, ie. via the website or the contact centre
- Leave household waste/recycling out to be collected on the right day and at the right time.

ENDS

Ref.	Directorate	Portfolio / Committee	Description	Month 6 Result	Month 6 Target	Month 6 Performance	Month 6 DOT from previous Month	Qtr 2 Result	Month 6 DOT from previous Quarter	Month 6 Commentary	Month 6 Team Internal Analysis	DQAF Completed	VCR Number	Q1 Star Chamber criteria met	Q2 Star Chamber criteria met	Q3 Star Chamber criteria met	Q4 Star Chamber criteria met			
1	Economy	Deputy Leader	Making a complaint with full information - send a full response or an update out within 20 days using your preferred means of contact	96%	100%	✗	↔	97%	↗	Whilst the Birmingham Promise of responding to 100% of complaints in 20 calendar days has not been achieved there has been a notable improvement in Quarter 2. 97% of complaints (4,560 complaints) in Quarter 2 were answered in 20 days compared to 95% (3,561 complaints) in Quarter 1. Economy Directorate improved from 95% (634 complaints) in Quarter 1 to 98% (605 complaints) in Quarter 2 and achieved 100% for the first time in September. Place Directorate improved from 96% (2,858 complaints) in Quarter 1 to 97% (3,897 complaints) in Quarter 2. It was only People Directorate that showed no improvement dropping from 73% (69 complaints) in Quarter 1 to 70% (58 complaints) in Quarter 2. The issues with People Directorate have been escalated to Peter Hay.					YES	YES				
2	Economy	Deputy Leader	Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support - If you provide us with all the necessary information when you make a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support, we will make decision on your claim within 10 days of receiving it	100%	100%	✓	↔	100%	↔	Promise upheld.		Yes		NO	NO					
3	Place	Green, Smart and Sustainable City	Waste and Recycling - If you report your missed waste collection on your normal collection day or the following day, we will collect your recycling/household rubbish within a maximum of 3 days of hearing from you	67.72%	100%	✗	↘	74.24%	↘	The monthly result for September was 67.72% of reported missed collections collected within three working days means that we are below target. The monthly performance reduced from 77.96% in August. Year to date 80.07% of total of reported missed collections were collected on time. The increase in reported missed collections in September was due to the roll-out of changes in collection service in the north of the city. It is expected that missed collections will reduce once the new services have fully stabilised. Additional action has been taken reviewing performance of the crews and the collection round sizes to ensure completion. In addition, a full review is being undertaken by the Interim Director of Fleet and Waste Management with an emphasis on establishing the reasons for service failure and ensuring that a full performance management process is in place to ensure that significant improvement takes place.	Yes	674	YES	YES						
4	Place	Neighbourhood Management & Homes	Housing Repairs - Resolve routine repairs within 30 days	92.10%	100%	✗	↗	92.50%	↗	Performance continues to improve by contractors with a focus on completing minor non-urgent repairs. This compares to 1st Quarter performance of 91.6%.				YES	YES					
5	Place	Neighbourhood Management & Homes	Housing Repairs - respond to emergency repairs in two hours	97.03%	100%	✗	↘	96.90%	↗	Performance remains within contractual targets and has improved overall in the 2nd Quarter (versus 95.7% in 1st Quarter).				YES	Within contractual requirements					
6	Place	Green, Smart and Sustainable City	Parks - If you report a tree that is considered dangerous by our qualified Tree Officer, we will ensure the tree is attended to within 2 hours	100%	100%	✓	↔	100%	↔	All emergency call outs attended within 24 hours				NO	NO					
7	Place	Social Cohesion & Community Safety	Highways - If you report a dangerous pothole or other defect to us, we will make it safe within 1 hour	99.78%	100%	✗	↗	99.80%		Target set at 100% to reflect contract requirements. There is an additional requirement that 100% of defects are rectified within 28 Business Days. In both cases, performance below these requirements results in Adjustments under the contract Payment Mechanism to give incentive to the Service Provider to rectify outstanding defects and prevent future non-compliance.				YES	YES					
8	Place	Social Cohesion & Community Safety	Highways - If you report a dangerous pothole or other defect to us, we will carry out temporary repairs within 24 hours	100%	100%	✓	↔	100%	↔		Yes	674	NO	NO						
9	Place	Social Cohesion & Community Safety	Highways - If you report a dangerous pothole or other defect to us, we will fully repair it within 28 days	98.25%	100%	✗	↘	98.60%		Target set at 100% to reflect contract requirements. There is an additional requirement that 100% of defects are rectified within 28 Business Days. In both cases, performance below these requirements results in Adjustments under the contract Payment Mechanism to give incentive to the Service Provider to rectify outstanding defects and prevent future non-compliance.				YES	YES					
10	Place	Social Cohesion & Community Safety	Highways - We will inspect all other potholes within 14 days and arrange for the repair to be included in our programme of works	100%	100%	✓	↔	100%	↔		Yes	673	YES	NO						
11	Place	Social Cohesion & Community Safety	Highways - We will repair any red traffic light signal fault within 2 hours	96.90%	100%	✗	↗	100%	↔	Target set at 100% to reflect contract requirements. Performance below these requirements results in Adjustments under the contract Payment Mechanism to give incentive to the Service Provider to rectify outstanding defects and prevent future non-compliance.				NO	YES					

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12	Place	Social Cohesion & Community Safety	Highways - We will repair any street light that is not in light within 1 month	99.00%	100%	✗	🔴	100%	↔	Target set at 100% to reflect the Birmingham Promise, however, a tolerant of 2% is set to reflect contract requirements. Performance below 98% will result in Adjustments under the contract Payment Mechanism to give incentive to the Service Provider to rectify outstanding defects and prevent future non-compliance.		Yes		NO	Within contractual requirements		
13	People	Children & Family Services	School Admissions - Following the offer of Year 7 and Reception Class places, if you submit an appeal to us, then it will be considered by an independent appeal panel within 40 school days of the deadline for submitting the appeal	100%	100%	✓	Not available. Schools closed during Aug	100%	↔	All appeal submitted have been scheduled and considered within 40 school days.		Draft to service for sign off		NO	NO		
14	People	Children & Family Services	School Admissions - Any child who is identified as being without a school place will be offered their nearest school with availability within 10 school days	100%	100%	✓	Not available. Schools closed during Aug	100%	↔	All children who have been confirmed as being without a school place have been offered their nearest school within 10 school days.		Draft to service for sign off		NO	NO		
15	People	Children & Family Services	School Admissions - All in-year appeals will be considered by an independent appeal panel within 30 school days of being received	100%	100%	✓	Not available. Schools closed during Aug	100%	↔	All in-year appeals have been considered by an independent panel within 30 school days		Draft to service for sign off		NO	NO		
16	People	Health and Well being	Blue Badge Scheme - If all the information in support of your Blue Badge application is provided to us in a timely matter, then we may take up to 8 weeks to process your application form but we will strive to do it sooner	99.87%	100%	✗	🔴	99.91%	🟢	For the month of September 786 out of 787 applications were completed in timescale 99.87%. In the period July to September we kept the Birmingham Promise for 2,227 of 2,229 applications (99.91%) where the applicant's supporting documents were sent to Northgate for processing within an acceptable timescale. The two applications which exceeded timescale were due to human error, and these cases have been brought to the attention of the team and Northgate to address the issues.	Only missed 2 in over 2,000 application Awaiting monthly breakdown analysis from David Rose - back Mon 26th	Draft to service for sign off		YES	YES - but only 0.03% away from the target		
17	People	Health and Well being	Blue Badge Scheme - We will send out your renewal notices by post 10 weeks in advance of the Blue Badge expiry date	100%	100%	✓	↔		↔	The system for sending out renewal notices is operated by a third party on behalf of central government and we only receive notifications if a renewal notice has not been sent. Whilst we can assume that as no notifications have been received, then we have fully met our promise, we cannot be absolutely sure as we do not have sight of the data.	Star Chamber decision to stop collecting this Promise measure. To be referred to Cabinet and Scrutiny to remove.	Draft to service for sign off		?	No longer reported		

Questions Citizens are presented with via the Customer Satisfaction Survey

All the questions in the CSAT email survey

1. Did you try and use our website to resolve your query before calling?
2. How easy was it to request what you wanted?
3. Were you advised of how long it would take to complete your job?
4. Did you have to contact the Council again after you first reported your request? If no, how many times?
5. Was the job completed to your satisfaction?
6. How satisfied are you with your overall experience?
7. Please tell us why you scored us this way

All the questions in the CSAT SMS survey

1. Did you try and use our website to resolve your query before calling?
2. How many times have you called previously about this query?
3. How easy is it to get through to talk to someone about your query?
4. How would you rate the Advisor's willingness to help?
5. How easy was it to get your query resolved?
6. How satisfied are you with your overall experience of speaking with us?
7. Please tell us why you scored us this way