

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 25 February 2020

Contact Centre Performance: October - December 2019

Item number	
Executive/Routine	Routine
Wards	All
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee notes performance trends for the period concerned within the Contact Centre and;
- 1.2 the ongoing improvement activities to ensure that Council services are accessible and that citizen queries and complaints are dealt with effectively.

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Report

Contact Centre Performance: October – December 2019

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report details Contact Centre performance for the period October - December 2019 and outlines associated service improvement activities.

3. Background

- 3.1 Committee receives regular updates on Contact Centre performance, trends, and ongoing service improvement activities. This report covers a 3-month period from October 2019 to December 2019 and the data is based on a call performance target of 60% of calls answered within 60 seconds, as approved by the Committee in August 2018. It also includes management information relating to footfall in local offices and volume data for the Council's various digital contact channels.

4. Main report

Overview

- 4.1 The Contact Centre team aims to maximise the number of queries resolved at the first point of contact, aligned with clear escalation routes where further input is required from other Council services. The Contact Centre team currently supports phone calls (inbound and outbound), e-mails, social media channels, web chat and chat bots.

Current Trends and Service Performance

- 4.2 Regular management information is produced to monitor performance and inform future improvement activities. The current reporting period saw various Council projects impacting Contact Centre activities (both positively and negatively), including; the rollout of a new housing repairs system (Total Mobile), the ongoing deployment of the customer relationship model (Verint), UK General Election support, further online developments and support for corporate improvement programmes. Where possible Contact Centre resource was reallocated to best match demand and support key services.

- 4.3 Key performance data and trends for the Contact Centre are detailed in Appendix 1, with the major themes highlighted in the following section. Across the last quarter the Contact Centre has demonstrated a further improvement across the majority of Service Lines as a result of the team's continuous improvement approach:
- Total calls answered for December to October 2019 were 172,692, which is comparable with the same period in 2018 (172,473 calls handled).
 - 32 of 35 (91%) of service lines achieved the 60% service target (calls answered within 60 seconds) in the current reporting period. A further line achieved a 57% service level.
 - 33 of 35 lines were within the 10% call abandonment tolerance target, with 31 lines achieving the 8% stretch tolerance target.
 - 21 lines reported an improvement in average handling time (AHT). The overall AHT for all lines has seen a slight increase to 332 seconds. This reflects the continued programme of support and up-skilling to develop service knowledge and call handling skills, with a wider focus on first touch resolution.
 - The quality of service provided by the Contact Centre is measured via an assessment of contact adviser performance against criteria covering both technical and soft skills. For the last three months the Contact Centre has achieved a 93% outcome, against a target of 80%, demonstrating consistent performance and quality service outcomes.
 - Social Media (Twitter contact), saw an 35% percent increase with 37,054 tweets received between October - December 2019, compared with 27,442 for the same period in 2018. This demonstrates citizen's appetite to use other contact channels for service enquiries and aligns with the Council's digital transformation goals.
- 4.4 The Mitel telephony system enables citizen satisfaction levels to be monitored, with Team Leaders receiving real time alerts on low scoring satisfaction surveys. This allows for immediate intervention and remedial actions with citizens and staff. Customer satisfaction for the reporting period was 65%. All feedback is reviewed, and action taken to address service gaps, improve the overall experience and share existing best practice. Work is also ongoing to determine how other satisfaction measurement tools e.g. text or email surveys can be introduced in 2020.
- 4.5 Complaint levels remain comparatively low, with recorded complaints totalling less than 1% of calls handled by the Contact Centre in the reporting period. The volume of complaints also reduced month on month in the current reporting period. The largest complaint theme related to service failure. The Contact Centre team continues to work closely with relevant Council services to ensure that accurate service commitments are given to citizens and expectations are effectively managed.

Ongoing Projects and Improvement Activities

- 4.6 The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) service performance is broadly comparable with the previous reporting period, and monthly targets have been achieved. Continued analysis of call trends, the use of flexible resource planning and the expansion of multi-skilling has enabled call volumes and application volumes to be managed effectively. During this reporting period the team received 4861 applications, an 18% increase when compared with the same period in 2018. This increase is attributable to welfare reform activities and the proactive promotion of the Fund.
- 4.7 Performance in the Repairs Direct team continues to be an area of focus with service levels dropping to 28% in the current reporting period. A new Housing Property repairs system, Total Mobile, launched during the current reporting period with some initial technical issues, which created additional calls to Repairs Direct line, with a 6.1% increase in calls compared with the same period in 2018. The Tradesman line experienced a 21.4% increase in calls and the Planners line received 13.6% more calls than the same period in 2018. These initial technical issues have now all been fixed and the Repairs Service Teams continue to enhance their knowledge of the new technology to maximise the efficiency.
- 4.8 During this period the team dealt with 3838 emails and 24,692 outbound calls (a 40% increase). Service levels have improved month on month in the current reporting period, with the Resource Planning Team proactively reviewing demand patterns with a view to realigning resources along with, active code management (reducing aftercall work from 32% to 26%), bespoke coaching and individual performance improvement plans introduced. New shift patterns were launched in January 2020, and the team, in conjunction with Housing Property, are actively promoting the non-emergency online form, resulting in increased uptake and higher levels of self service.
- 4.9 Planning and Building Standards and 1Edinburgh lines had lower service performance levels in the July – September 2019 report to Committee. Effective forecasting and resource management has resulted in these lines achieving and maintaining service levels in the current reporting period.
- 4.10 The school supply line delivered improved performance in the current period, handling 1280 requests. This is an essential service that sources temporary/supply cover for educational establishments across Edinburgh.
- 4.11 Almost 13,000 general enquiries were received by the Contact Team during this period and this data will be included in future performance updates. These calls were previously supported by a dedicated switchboard but now present as an option on all major service lines. An analysis of these calls will be completed in Q1 2020 to understand the reasons for the calls and work will be undertaken to ensure that citizens and Council officers are aware of the most appropriate contact number or online option to resolve their enquiries.
- 4.12 The use of technology continues to play an important role in improving the overall citizen and user experience and following the successful introduction of webchat in Waste Services, Repairs Direct is now live providing tenants with another channel to make contact. Online volumes will be reported in future reports.

- 4.13 The Council Chatbot functionality is live for Council Tax, Waste and Environmental services. Edinburgh is one of the first councils in Scotland to deliver this digital channel and 3590 messages were received during the reporting period October – December 2019, with volumes increasing month on month.
- 4.14 Other new initiatives include 'how to videos' for services such as Council Tax. The videos provide guidance and advice on how citizens can get the most from the Council's online forms. These videos will be widely publicised during the first half of 2020.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Performance will continue to be reviewed against target to ensure issues are addressed and service level improvements are achieved.
- 5.2 The use of technology continues to play an important role and we will continue to implement technology and systems throughout 2020 to better improve the citizen experience and to help achieve further saving targets.
- 5.3 Analysis of Customer Relationship Management, chatbot and online forms is now being undertaken and will be included in future reports. This analysis is a key component in producing comprehensive workforce plans.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The Contact Centre Team is projected to deliver a 15% efficiency saving within 2019/20 and this will be achieved through greater self-service, a rationalised cash collection operation and improved call handling. Where appropriate and subject to a comprehensive integrated impact assessment, predominately online activities will be considered for appropriate services, e.g. interaction with businesses.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The Council continues to progress a primarily digital by design approach to ensure that all citizens are supported, providing them with appropriate and accessible service options. This adopts the standard call centre and shared services methodology of providing a range of channels, including: self-service options, call-based options, face to face interaction at a customer hub or locality office.
- 7.2 As the Council's online offering develops and matures consideration will be given as how best to further encourage and improve uptake of both self-service and online transactional options, supported by automation where appropriate.
- 7.3 The Customer Team draws upon a broad range of feedback and citizen groups to support service development and improvement.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Customer Performance Update July - September 2019 - Report to Policy and Sustainability Committee, November 2019](#)
- 8.2 [Customer Performance Update April - June 2019 - Report to Policy and Sustainability Committee, August 2019](#)
- 8.3 [Customer Performance Update January – March 2019 - Report to Corporate, Policy and Strategy, May 2019](#)
- 8.4 [Customer Performance Update October - December 2018 - Report to Corporate, Policy and Strategy, February 2019](#)
- 8.5 [Customer Performance Update July – September 2018 - Report to Corporate, Policy and Strategy, December 2018](#)
- 8.6 [Customer Performance Update January – June 2018](#) - Report to Corporate, Policy and Strategy, August 2018
- 8.7 [Customer Performance Update: July – December 2017](#) – Report to Corporate, Policy and Strategy, February 2018
- 8.8 [Contact Centre Performance Update: April to July 2017 - Report to Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, October 2017](#)
- 8.9 [Minute of Council Meeting 24 August 2017](#) – Automated Service – Customer Journey, Motion by Councillor Johnston
- 8.10 Report to Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 28 March 2017 – [Customer Contact Update](#)
- 8.11 Report to Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 8 November 2016 – [General Switchboard and Website Enquiries](#)

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Customer Centre Performance Data

Contact Centre - Performance Data

Contact Activity & Timescale	% Calls answered within 30 seconds SLA target of 60%			Trend Jul – Sep 19 / Oct – Dec 19	Abandonment target – not exceed 10%, with a stretch target of 8%					Average Wait Times			
	Apr – Jun 19	Jul – Sep 19	Oct – Dec 19		Apr – Jun 19	Jul – Sep 19	Oct – Dec 19	Total Calls Handled	Trend Jul – Sep 19 / Oct – Dec 19	Apr – Jun 19	Jul – Sep 19	Oct – Dec 19	Trend Jul – Sep 19 / Oct – Dec 19
Anti-Social Behaviour	95%	88%	89%	▲	0%	4.8%	0%	26	▼	00:23	00:21	00:41	▲
Central Emergency Serv	74%	74%	70%	▼	7%	5.4%	8%	7028	▲	01:19	01:13	01:32	▲
C & F Professional Child	82%	76%	72%	▼	3.7%	5%	7.4%	1644	▲	00:37	00:52	01:04	▲
C & F Public Child	78%	71%	66%	▼	3.9%	8%	9.4%	2151	▲	00:42	01:00	01:27	▲
SCD Emergency	80%	72%	80%	▲	3.6%	4%	3.8%	194	▼	00:36	00:52	00:37	▼
Clarence	52%	42%	61%	▲	13.6%	17.7%	8%	3024	▼	02:06	03:15	01:50	▼
Council Tax	42%	58%	71%	▲	10.5%	5.9%	3.3%	24133	▼	04:09	02:44	01:29	▼
Benefits	61%	67%	71%	▲	4.7%	2.6%	2.3%	5785	▼	02:26	01:54	01:29	▼
NDR	69%	81%	79%	▼	3.8%	1.1%	1.6%	1630	▲	01:36	00:37	00:38	▲
Customer Care	94%	91%	85%	▼	0.9%	1.2%	2.1%	4298	▲	00:16	00:21	00:32	▲
Food Bank	63%	73%	74%	▲	10.1%	5.2%	5.1%	1877	▼	01:58	01:21	01:09	▼
Emergency Home Care	85%	86%	82%	▼	11.4%	5.7%	7.7%	2982	▲	00:28	00:25	00:34	▲
Emergency Home Care	87%	86%	80%	▼	3.2%	4.3%	7.1%	1102	▲	00:26	00:28	00:42	▲
Emergency Social Work	88%	86%	84%	▼	5.1%	3.9%	6%	5006	▲	00:30	00:33	00:39	▲
Interpretation	43%			▲	42.9%			730	▼	01:54			▲
ITS Daytime	94%	90%	91%		3.3%	4.1%	3.7%			00:17	00:23	00:26	
1 Edinburgh	55%	42%	63%	▲	9.7%	16.1%	8.6%	4756	▼	02:00	03:19	01:41	▼
Repairs Direct	71%	35%	28%	▼	4.3%	14.6%	28%	22565	▲	01:09	04:15	07:46	▲
Repairs Planners	91%	87%	91%	▲	1.7%	2.8%	2.4%	13022	▼	00:20	00:25	00:17	▼
SCD Professional Adult	76%	67%	64%	▼	4.6%	6.1%	8.5%	548	▲	00:46	01:03	01:07	▲
SCD Public Adult	69%	55%	47%	▼	8.1%	13.9%	19.2%	9356	▲	01:24	02:30	03:19	▲
Scottish Welfare Fund	46%	77%	74%	▼	8.8%	2.3%	2.7%	9796	▲	04:05	01:12	01:12	↔
Repairs - Tradesman	73%	62%	60%	▼	5.3%	8.4%	10%	11230	▲	01:02	01:36	02:13	▲
Waste Special Uplifts	50%	48%	57%	▲	5.8%	7.2%	3.8%	3224	▼	02:45	03:36	02:27	▼
Waste	75%	65%	62%	▼	2%	5.2%	3.9%	5789	▼	01:00	02:07	01:40	▼
Environment	56%	46%	61%	▲	5.8%	9.8%	4.7%	2048	▼	02:01	03:54	01:55	▼
FM Helpdesk	88%	87%	74%	▼	4.2%	4.5%	10.4%	4178	▲	00:21	00:22	00:48	▲
Building Standards	44%	49%	61%	▲	11.5%	13.4%	7.5%	1648	▼	02:56	02:33	01:40	▼
Planning	48%	45%	61%	▲	10.6%	13.7%	7.8%	1260	▼	02:35	02:50	01:34	▼
PBS Building Payments	72%	57%	68%	▲	5.7%	10.9%	5.5%	1418	▼	01:02	02:02	01:26	▼
North East Locality	75%	69%	83%	▲	4.9%	5.7%	3.1%	3816	▼	00:44	00:49	00:30	▼
North West Locality	75%	69%	83%	▲	4.2%	5.5%	3.6%	5526	▼	00:43	00:52	00:31	▼
South East Locality	75%	70%	83%	▲	4.4%	5.7%	3.4%	3518	▼	00:44	00:51	00:30	▼
South West Locality	76%	68%	81%	▲	4.1%	5.7%	3.3%	3425	▼	00:44	00:52	00:32	▼
Supply Hub		76%	82%	▲		17.1%	10%	447	▼		00:44	00:23	▼
Debt Services		52%	70%	▲		6.8%	3.4%	3539	▼		01:11	00:38	▼

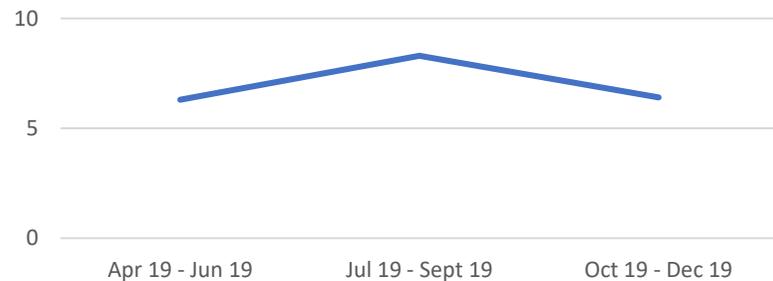
Contact Centre Performance Overview

Performance Measures

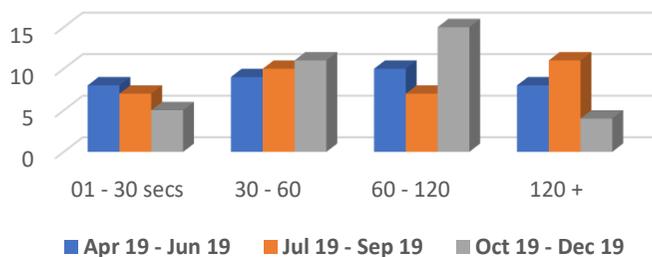
% of services achieving baseline



Abandonment Rate

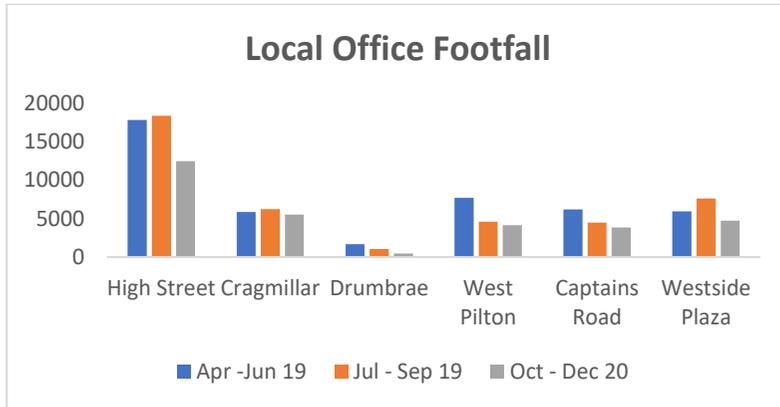


Average Wait Times



Commentary

- 32 lines achieved 60% service level (a further 1 line achieved 50% or above service level).
 - Total calls answered for October - December 2019 was 172,692
 - 91% of lines are achieving or exceeding the 60% service level compared to 64% of lines for the same reporting period in 2018.
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- Overall call abandonment rate reduced to 6.4% this reporting period, achieving the 8% stretch target. The Contact Centre is answering 93.6% of all calls received.
 - 33 lines are achieving the 10% or below calls abandonment threshold target with 31 lines achieving the 8% stretch target.
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- 19 lines show an improving trend seeing a reduction in average wait times (based on lines reported in previous report).
 - Online/self-service continues to be promoted to allow customers to self-serve where they can without the need to call.
 - Continued focus on code handling to ensure we have maximum staff capacity available to take calls and new shift patterns being introduced to cover periods of higher demand e.g. 10-2 shift.



- The higher footfall in High Street and Westside Plaza highlights the offices where cash is handled
- 18,213 payments handled in the current reporting period across High Street and Westside Plaza.
- Across all Local Offices the main reasons citizens present are for Housing or Homelessness Assessments