

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 06 August 2019

Contact Centre Performance: April – June 2019

Item number	
Routine	
Wards	ALL
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

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

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Report

Contact Centre Performance: April - June 2019

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report details Contact Centre performance for the period April - June 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 April 2019 to June 2019 and the data is based on a call performance target of 60% of calls answered within 60 seconds, as agreed by Committee in August 2018.

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 and web chat.

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; further recovery action to support Council Tax collection rates, staff training in preparation for the registration of Garden Waste, supporting council wide improvement programmes and further developments on our online offering. The Council Tax and Scottish Welfare Fund services continued to experience increased contact levels. Where possible Contact Centre resource was reallocated to meet service demands 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:
- Total calls answered for April to June 2019 was 164,399, a reduction on the same period in 2018 (183,202 calls handled).

- 26 of 35 (74%) service lines achieved the 60% of calls answered within 60 seconds service level target in the current reporting period. A further 4 lines achieved a 50% or higher service level.
- 28 of our 35 lines were within the 10% call abandonment tolerance target with 25 lines achieving the 8% stretch tolerance target.
- 24 of our 35 lines reported an improvement in average handling time (AHT). The AHT for all lines remained consistent at 347 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. This activity helps reduce the number of required outbound and follow up calls. This and other forecasting activities are being supported by a dedicated Workforce Planning team.
- The quality of service provided by the Contact Centre is measured via an assessment of contact adviser performance against a series of set criteria covering both technical and soft skills. For the last 3 months the Contact Centre has scored 95%, against a target of 80%, demonstrating a consistency of performance and positive quality of service outcomes.
- Social Media (Twitter contact), saw a 19% percent increase with 25,854 tweets being received between April and June 2019, compared with 21,713 for the same period in 2018. This demonstrates citizen's appetite to use other contact channels for servicing enquiries and aligns with our digital transformation goals.
- During the current reporting period the team handled 1367 European Election calls. This was supported by existing headcount and resulted in some additional pressure for other lines of business.
- Flash flooding on Monday 24 June, demonstrated how weather conditions can have a detrimental impact on services. Twitter saw an increase of 59% compared to contact received on the previous Monday and critical services saw a significant spike in calls; Clarence 367% increase, Property Helpdesk 70%, Central Emergency Services 330% and Repairs Direct 55% when measured against the previous Monday's volumes. Resource was reallocated to support key service lines.

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 is 83% (public-sector industry customer satisfaction standard is 75%) and all feedback is reviewed and action taken to address service gaps, improve the overall experience and share existing best practice.

4.5 Complaint levels remain comparatively low, with complaints recorded against contact centre activity equating to less than 1% of calls handled by the Contact Centre in the 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 and expectations are given to citizens.

Ongoing Projects and Improvement Activities

- 4.6 Following the appointment of a Senior Quality and Planning Manager 'deep dive' performance sessions have been held and improvement targets for each line within the Contact Centre Team are being reviewed.
- 4.7 The Scottish Welfare Fund, Council Tax, and NDR lines continue to experience service pressures during the current reporting period. To address these pressures additional resource was recruited and advisors in this area continue to be multi skilled to ensure that the team is as flexible as possible to tackle emerging issues. Council Tax performance was heavily impacted by this year's recovery runs, with calls offered recorded at 28,643 a slight increase on the same reporting period in 2018 (28,316 calls offered).
- 4.8 The NDR performance saw further improvement from 58% to 69% service levels, abandonment improved from 6.8% to 3.8% with wait time reducing from 2 minutes 12 seconds to 1 minutes 36 seconds.
- 4.9 The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) service level recorded a slight dip in performance to 46%, and abandonment levels remained within the 10% target at 8.8%. The team during this time received 4,536 applications against 4,567 applications received in the last reporting period. A detailed analysis of contact volumes was undertaken in May to June 2019 and this has resulted in resource being reallocated from teams with consistently high service level attainment, to the SWF team during peak periods of demand. This and other process improvements, including further training, call back facilities and website changes, are designed to improve the overall citizen experience. The initial pilot has proved successful with improved performance across these lines. This area will continue to be closely monitored and a progress update will be provided in the next Committee report
- 4.10 Performance in the Repairs Direct team, as referenced in previous Committee reports, has continued to be a key focus area for the Customer Contact team with a joint improvement action plan in place. Recent performance trends show month on month improvements in 2019, with a further 19% improvement on our last reporting period, a reduction in abandoned calls to 4.3% and a further reduction in wait times.
- 4.11 Social Care Direct lines all exceeded the 60% target in the current reporting period with Children and Families professional services achieving 82%, Children and Families public services 78%, Professional Adult support at 76% and Public Adult support at 69%.
- 4.12 The Contact Team continues to implement changes to improve the overall citizen and service user experience. The use of technology continues to play an important role and following the successful introduction of webchat in waste services, Repairs Direct is now live providing tenants with another channel to make contact. Another development in the use of technology is the Chatbot roll out planned for our social media channels. This will support appropriate automated engagements and will be piloted in Revenue and Benefit services in summer 2019, with further plans to roll out to the waste and environmental services in autumn 2019. This will also be complemented by 'how to' videos for citizens that will focus on high volume online self-service activities.

- 4.13 Email engagements are now being migrated to the Mitel Platform. This will allow for the more effective routing of emails and deliver improved volumetric information, enhanced forecasting and performance tracking.
- 4.14 The Contact Centre is also continuing to add online forms and appropriate self-serve functionality. This includes a refresh of the self-service terminals that are situated in the Council's local offices. These initiatives will ensure that resource is effectively allocated to those services and citizens that require agent or face to face interaction and more direct support.
- 4.15 These activities are being progressed in conjunction with the rollout of a comprehensive customer relationship management (CRM) system, which is scheduled for later in 2019. This investment, which is a planned and budgeted change project as part of the Council's ICT partnership with CGI, will simplify the citizen and service user experience by making it easier to log and track service requests.
- 4.16 In June 2019 cash handling services at the local offices were streamlined as part of planned and Council approved savings and this service is only now provided at High Street and Wester Hailes. This change was successfully delivered and customers have quickly adopted the wide range of alternative payment options, including cash payments at the large number of Allpay sites across the city. The Contact teams in the local offices are also using technology and data analysis to ensure that resources are allocated to best meet service demand. This summer we will be introducing more structured service advice sessions and reduced opening times in a small number of offices to better reflect footfall trends. In addition, Customer Contact staff will provide support, on a rotating basis, at locations out with the normal local office settings to assist citizens with changes and how to use online forms and access services. These changes have been developed in consultation with the Council's Locality Managers, key service teams including Housing, and external agencies such as the Edinburgh Tenant's Federation.
- 4.17 During the current reporting period the Contact Centre has also taken responsibility for the Debt Recovery lines previously managed by the Transactional Team within Customer and Digital Services. Our next committee report will include these lines as part of our performance reporting.

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 2019 to better improve the citizen experience and to help achieve further saving targets.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The Contact Centre Team is projected to deliver a further 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 services will also be considered in areas, 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 uses a broad range of feedback and citizen groups to support service development and improvement.

8. Background reading/external references

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

8.9 Report to Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 8 November 2016 – [General Switchboard and Website Enquiries](#)

9. Appendices

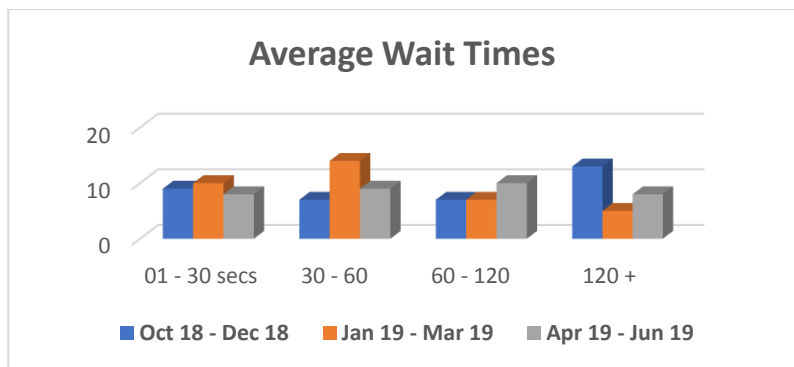
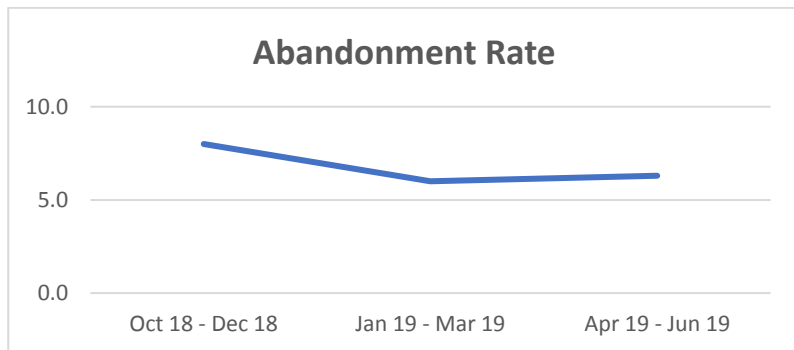
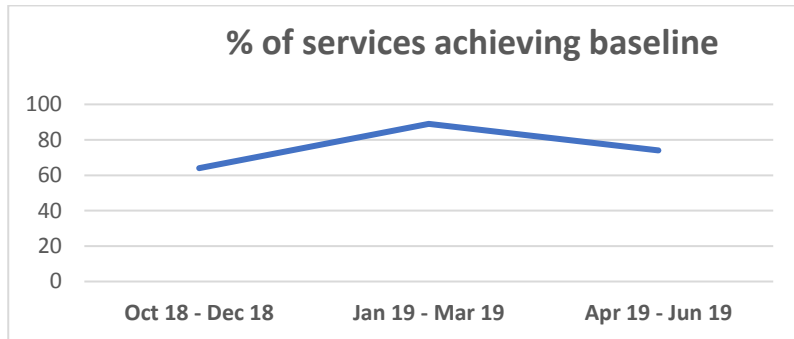
Appendix 1 – Customer Centre Performance Data

Contact Centre - Performance Data

Contact Activity & Timescale	% Calls answered within 30 seconds SLA target of 60%			Trend Jan – Mar 19 / Apr – Jun 19	Abandonment target – not exceed 10%, with a stretch target of 8%					Average Wait Times			
	Oct – Dec 18	Jan – Mar 19	Apr – Jun 19		Oct – Dec 18	Jan – Mar 19	Apr – Jun 19– Jun 19	Total Calls Handled	Trend Jan – Mar 19 / Apr – Jun 19	Oct – Dec 18	Jan – Mar 19	Apr – Jun 19	Trend Jan – Mar 19 / Apr – Jun 19
Anti-Social Behaviour	85%	98%	95%	▼	5.5%	1.1%	0%	59	▼	00:36	00:08	00:23	▲
Central Emergency Serv	73%	76%	74%	▼	7.4%	5.4%	7%	6023	▲	01:04	00:58	01:19	▲
C & F Professional Child	79%	81%	82%	▲	4.7%	4.2%	3.7%	1652	▼	00:43	00:38	00:37	▼
C & F Public Child	74%	76%	78%	▲	6.6%	4.7%	3.9%	2038	▼	01:02	00:48	00:42	▼
SCD Emergency	88%	86%	80%	▼	3.1%	3.9%	3.6%	186	▼	00:27	00:27	00:36	▲
Clarence	57%	78%	52%	▼	12.4%	4.5%	13.6%	2626	▲	01:43	00:41	02:06	▲
Council Tax	48%	56%	42%	▼	9.8%	7.4%	10.5%	25637	▲	03 :58	02:54	04:09	▲
Benefits	65%	65%	61%	▼	3.4%	3.9%	4.7%	7733	▲	02:06	02:11	02:26	▲
NDR	50%	58%	69%	▲	9.4%	6.8%	3.8%	1447	▼	03:09	02:12	01:36	▼
Customer Care	87%	94%	94%	↔	1.6%	0.6%	0.9%	4336	▲	00:32	00:15	00:16	▲
Food Bank	62%	67%	63%	▼	11.2%	9.6%	10.1%	1635	▲	01:48	01:48	01:58	▲
Emergency Home Care	91%	93%	85%	▼	3.7%	6.5%	11.4%	294	▲	00:17	00:12	00:28	▲
Emergency Home Care	89%	88%	87%	▼	4.1%	4.2%	3.2%	1096	▼	00:19	00:25	00:26	▲
Emergency Social Work	90%	91%	88%	▼	4.1%	3.3%	5.1%	5243	▲	00:22	00:21	00:30	▲
Interpretation	100%	100%	43%	▼	0%	0%	42.9%	4	▲	00:07	00:05	01:54	▲
ITS Daytime	91%	86%	94%	▲	2.9%	6.2%	3.3%	695	▼	00:22	00:32	00:17	▼
1 Edinburgh	56%	77%	55%	▼	11.3%	3.8%	9.7%	5386	▲	01:55	00:46	02:00	▲
Repairs Direct	16%	52%	71%	▲	43.8%	11.5%	4.3%	19754	▼	11:39	02:36	01:09	▼
Repairs Planners	87%	83%	91%	▲	3%	3.7%	1.7%	11231	▼	00:24	00:35	00:20	▼
SCD Professional Adult	83%	77%	76%	▼	7.3%	3.5%	4.6%	561	▲	00:30	00:39	00:46	▲
SCD Public Adult	71%	69%	69%	↔	8.2%	7.4%	8.1%	10120	▲	01:17	01:18	01:24	▲
Scottish Welfare Fund	48%	47%	46%	▼	11.3%	8.5%	8.8%	9381	▲	04:35	03:24	04:05	▲
Repairs - Tradesman	52%	64%		▲	12.1%	8%		8966	▼	02:14	01:23		▼
Repairs - Quality Care	38%	60%	73%		8.9%	4.2%	5.3%			03:18	01:51	01:02	
Waste Special Uplifts	42%	69%	50%	▼	8.9%	3%	5.8%	3833	▲	04:00	01:17	02:45	▲
Waste	67%	90%	75%	▼	5.5%	1%	2%	4036	▲	01:53	00:20	01:00	▲
Environment	45%	78%	56%	▼	9.9%	2%	5.8%	2518	▲	03:23	00:44	02:01	▲
Missed Collections	63%	86%	75%	▼	6.5%	2.2%	3.3%	1927	▲	02:29	00:23	01:01	▲
FM Helpdesk	93%	97%	88%	▼	2.6%	1.4%	4.2%	3365	▲	00:12	00:08	00:21	▲
Building Standards	47%	64%	44%	▼	14.2%	5%	11.5%	1772	▲	02:35	01:22	02:56	▲
Planning	49%	67%	48%	▼	15.1%	5.4%	10.6%	1576	▲	02:22	01:21	02:35	▲
PBS Building Payments	56%	80%	72%	▼	13.7%	4.3%	5.7%	1676	▲	02:11	00:36	01:02	▲
North East Locality	78%	82%	75%	▼	4.1%	3.3%	4.9%	3862	▲	00:39	00:32	00:44	▲
North West Locality	79%	81%	75%	▼	4.4%	3.3%	4.2%	5526	▲	00:37	00:33	00:43	▲
South East Locality	78%	81%	75%	▼	4.6%	4%	4.4%	4471	▲	00:39	00:33	00:44	▲
South West Locality	78%	81%	76%	▼	4.2%	3.7%	4.1%	3734	▲	00:38	00:33	00:44	▲

Contact Centre Performance Overview

Performance Measures



Commentary

- 26 lines achieved 60% service level (a further 4 lines achieved 50% or above service level).
 - 7 of the 26 lines achieving service showed an improved trend and plans in place to further improve
 - Total calls answered for April - June 2019 was 164,399
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- Overall Call abandonment rate remained static at 6.3% this reporting period, exceeding our stretched target. The Contact Centre is answering 93.7% of all calls received.
 - 28 lines are achieving the 10% or below calls abandonment threshold target with 25 lines achieving the 8% stretch target. 10 lines show an improved trend
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- 7 lines show an improving trend seeing a reduction in average wait times.
 - 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.