

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

24 July 2024

COUNCILLOR L WITHINGTON - CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES (COMMUNITY OUTREACH)

For the period April to July 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

This time of year is always busy due to high customer demand, and the recent Council-run elections have further increased this activity. Starting with the Police and Crime Commissioner election in early May and followed by the General election in early July, we have experienced a significant rise in enquiries.

Over the past three months, assisting our residents with voter registration, postal and proxy voting, and general election queries has resulted in over 1,600 additional customer enquiries.

This high level of engagement has impacted both the Customer Services team and the Digital Mailroom, who efficiently handle and sort all inbound postal votes.

With reduced Customer Services resource from April, the average wait time significantly increased from 4 minutes 43 seconds (achieved in March) to 9 minutes 19 seconds. In May, this reduced to 7 minutes 36 seconds.

In preparation for the General election, during June, additional telephony support from Revenue and Benefit Services was provided which resulted in a wait time of 4 minutes 44 seconds.

Although the election has now passed, and we approach a quieter time of year, we anticipate our average wait time will still increase to above 6 minutes.

In January, February and March, customer satisfaction on contacting the Council recorded at an average of over 90%. This figure dropped to 76.11% in April, 78.62% in May and 86.01% in June. These figures are very reflective of the resourcing levels we have available to meet customer demand.

Despite the reduction in satisfaction in regard to being able to contact the Council, customer satisfaction on the customers overall experience has remain high at an average of 84.92% for the quarter, albeit less than the 89.78% achieved the quarter before.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.
<p>Workflow – work has begun to explore upgrading the functionality provided via workbench to our current contact centre service provider. We're in conversation with C3 to explore workflow development and possible integrations with back office systems aimed at reducing double handling and improving efficiencies. Initial conversations seem promising.</p> <p>Corporate Complaint Policy - The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman have recently updated their complaint handling code. An amended policy and procedure have been written and are await review before rolling out formally.</p>