

Ref.	Item / issue summary	Ref No. / Suggested Recommendation	Proposed action	Who by	When by	How monitored	RAG
3.1	Issues with ownership of calls and liaison between back and front office.	R1. There should be an improvement in communication between managers and staff of the back office and the contact centre, to enable any call handling issues to be raised and solutions agreed. It is suggested that this be achieved by holding monthly meetings, which should be attended by staff and managers from both front and back office, where open but positive discussions	Establish schedule for officers and managers from front and back office to attend team meetings of the other teams, to exchange views and ideas.	Karen Sullivan/Dave Sutherland/Peter Brown	Jan-13	Schedule to be produced for scrutiny panel every six months	
3.2	Staff feel undervalued and not confident that management listen to their views / concerns.	R2. The profile of senior management should be raised through regular floor walking and 'back to the floor' events.	Establish schedule for senior managers to participate in floor walking and 'back to the floor' events.	Graham Cadle/Dave Sutherland/Peter Brown	Jan-13	6 monthly feedback report to scrutiny panel	
		R3. Management should encourage staff to raise issues and suggest service improvements. Perhaps an 'idea of the month' award for staff should be introduced. This should be a standard agenda item at all team meetings, where staff are asked to suggest any ideas for improvement to the service. In addition, senior managers should agree a rota to attend all team meetings on a regular basis. Team building activities, including the involvement of managers should be organised. It is felt that	Ensure that standard agenda items are included on all team meeting agendas to encourage staff to raise issues and ideas for service improvements. Establish a programme for team building activities	Graham Cadle	Jan-13	6 monthly feedback report to scrutiny panel	
3.7	Staff were not always able to provide full answers to queries related to 4 service areas, repairs, tenancy, ASB and complaints. This was across all methods of approach - phone, email and face to face	R4. Provide staff and managers with regular training to ensure that they are able to provide customers with detailed and timely information.	Annual assessment of staff training needs and delivery of training programme	Karen Sullivan	Apr-13	Annual training programme to scrutiny panel	
		R5. Management to commission quarterly mystery shops (using tenant mystery shoppers) to test the service and publish the results and resultant action plans.	Shops organised with the resident involvement team and results and action plans published on council web site	Karen Sullivan	From April 13 ongoing	Results and action plans to scrutiny panel	

3.6, 3.8, 3.9 & 3.11	A key concern was the delay before calls were answered by an agent and this base target was consistently below that of other similar providers	R6 Review all response time targets to ensure that they are meaningful, realistic and can be benchmarked with similar organisations. Establish a joint officer/tenant steering group to develop these.	Steering group to be established to review targets	Karen Sullivan/Chris Stock	Apr-13	New performance targets published	
		R7 Management to review with other organisations in the benchmark group why the majority appear to achieve significantly faster call answering times. The report to set out what can we learn from these organisations and what steps we are taking to improve performance. This report to be considered by the Tenant & Leaseholder Panel.	Report to Tenant & Leaseholder Panel	Chris Stock/Karen Sullivan	Apr-13	Report received by TLP	
3.12	The 2010/15 Customer Service Strategy refers to the piloting of 'Croydon Champions' to improve customer services but no details of this scheme could be found.	R8. Subject to receiving information regarding the outcome of the 'Croydon Champions' pilot extend this to include some 'Tenant Champions' to focus on housing services.	Respond to scrutiny panel on the viability of establishing 'tenant champions'	Terri Saich/Chris Stock	Feb-13	Response to scrutiny panel	
3.6 - 3.10	The panel wondered if additional resources were to be funded that this may lead to improvements in the service	R9. The panel to explore with the Tenant & Leaseholder Panel if it would support additional HRA funding being diverted to the Housing Customer Contact Service to increase staff resources.	Conduct benchmarking exercise to explore resources employed by similar housing organisations and response times achieved	Dave Sutherland	Mar-13	Report to scrutiny panel Apr 13	
n/a	During discussions with managers it was noted that the council expect an increase in the number of customers carrying out transactions electronically. However, many customers remain unwilling and some continue to be unable to use this method of contact.	R10. Customer expectations can be high and some can be overly reliant on the housing service. Greater education is really an issue. More information should be given to the customer to reduce the need for some to contact the service. However, the panel would remind the council that many tenants are vulnerable and will continue to rely on regular contact with the council by phone.	Officers will be spending more time on estates and tenants will be encouraged to become more self servicing and help themselves. There will always be support for less able tenants to access services. The council would welcome greater feedback from tenants on what information is required and through what channels	Dave Sutherland/Peter Brown	Jan-13	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel	
3.13 - 3.15	A number of issues were noted with the present reception facilities and the area generally and it was felt these could be designed out in the new building.	R11 That a customer steering group be formed to work in partnership with officers to develop the new reception space at Bernard Weatherill House.	This group has already been established	Graham Cadle	Dec-12	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel	

3.13 and 3.14	In particular, lack of play facilities for young children and the lack of privacy for customers was raised as an issue.	R12 That a play area and private interview rooms are provided as part of the new reception area at Bernard Weatherill House and offered to customers who require privacy.	To be provided	Graham Cadle	Apr-13	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel	
3.15	Homeless people had to wait in the reception area with their baggage whilst their allocation of bed and breakfast accommodation was being organised, which was felt to be humiliating and bags etc. created a safety risk.	R13 That a storage area be provided for the baggage of homeless people awaiting bed and breakfast accommodation, so that they can be offered a choice to either remain in the reception area with an improved level of dignity, or leave the reception area and return when details of their accommodation have been confirmed.	To be provided	Graham Cadle	Apr-13	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel	
3.16	Not all staff wore name badges that were visible	R14 That all reception staff wear name badges that are visible and regular checks	Reminders to staff	Karen Sullivan	Jan-13	Spot checks by scrutiny panel	
3.18 & 3.19	A significant number of customers - particularly for housing services - may have no or limited understanding of how to use IT equipment due to be installed in the reception area of the new building.	R15 That resources are made available in the self servicing area of the new reception area to ensure that those customers who require support are able to access this.	Support staff will be made available	Graham Cadle	Sep-13	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel	
3.18	It was noted that around half of housing customers do not have access to the internet and the council must offer alternate methods to allow customers equal access to services.	R16 To ensure that customers who are unable to access the internet or the self service area have suitable alternative choices to access the housing service and are not discriminated against in any way.	A range of alternative methods of accessing housing services will be continue to be provided	Graham Cadle	Ongoing	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel on numbers of tenants accessing housing service and the methods they are using	
3.20	It is important that customers are kept up to date with the changing methods of contacting the council.	R17 Ensure that housing customers are regularly provided with up to date information on the choices for accessing housing services, including office and contact centre opening times, web site and email addresses, social media sites and texting options. This should include information in Open House, Your Croydon, the web site and on new tenant sign ups	1) The RI team will provide residents with advice and relevant signposting about the full range of contact centre options at meetings, surgeries and events. 2) The Communications team will liaise with Contact Centre managers to ensure timely and accurate provision of information in publications, website etc.	1) Chris Stock 2) Sandra O'Connor	Ongoing	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel	
3.21 & 3.22	There was little evidence of the council working in partnership with residents in relation to developing or monitoring the contact centre service.	R18 That a customer steering group be established to work in partnership with the council to review the charter and monitor performance.	Steering group to be established to monitor targets and review charter.	Chris Stock/Hayley Lewis	Apr-13	6 monthly feedback to scrutiny panel	

Comments on progress

Monthly (and with some services fortnightly) meetings are taking place with majority of the colleagues, where issues are discussed and actions agreed. We will look into involvement of other colleagues in these meetings. For example – we have fortnightly Operations meetings, where the operational details are discussed with repairs Service and monthly Strategic liaison meetings. We meet with Landlord Service monthly and feedback from both sides is always discussed. Following the changes to the AI, we have been involved in the process with the allocations team from the start and have worked on strategy and post implementation customer demand.

Senior management holds weekly (Graham Cadle) and Quarterly (Nathan Elvery) 'Tell it as it is' meetings. Sullivan holds monthly staff welfare meetings. Graham Cadle has also attended Team Meet and attend them. All of the above sessions are designed so the staff have different platforms for service improvement ideas. Following the feedback from these sessions, we have implemented initiatives such as PDCS (Personal Development and Competency Scheme) guide for improvement. We have further engagement with back office partners and Access Programme vision and engagement. Directors conduct regular floor walking plus attend staff meetings.

All the teams had away days, with the service specific objectives, where TMs have facilitated and provided the output for the action - for example - sharing the best practice on efficient call handling to reduce call queues without impacting the customer experience or advising the tenants on options and other payment channels, where internet access is available. As of 2013/2014 PDCS is a new objective for CSAs - minimum of 4 service improvement ideas per year and to actively develop these ideas. Access Programme is currently working on a number of service improvement ideas where staff input was taken on board during the scoping phase. Whilst 'Idea of the month' is a proposal, it is something we could introduce in the future, once the Access Programme marketing project deliverables are embedded. With the current projects in the pipeline, we may get into a similar situation; hence the future plans for potential implementation of this recommendation.

Professional development team are now part of the contact centre and there are 3 consultants, including a 'specialist' in the service area (Housing and Repairs consultant is Hayley Dunn). Consultants conduct meetings with Team Managers and do independent observations, which they feedback to TMs. TMs provide the ongoing support to the advisors in terms of training support. Team Managers also provide quality monitoring and do coaching on the back of this. This will continue to take place as they work with the Access Programme deliverables. Our current training plan is related to the training following the restructure as well as the Access Programme projects (details available in separate documents). We await the guidelines to the next planned mystery shopping activity as we understand from the new process will be put in place.

All targets are reviewed and benchmarked at the end of each financial year, whilst we do check some KPIs such as average handle time (AHT) in terms of how it's measured within the service (comment in the body of the text above), the corporate targets are agreed by members. We have achieved these overall in realy 2013/14. Within the service we currently have service average targets so advisors are driving what is reasonable and are in better position to control their performance. A 'league table' has been implemented in the last financial year, on the back of the feedback from the advisors. We have enhanced this by publishing the reports as a 'league' table, where each advisors has the opportunity to see where they are in relation to their colleagues - e.g. 1st of 15. Some improvements have been made to service performance levels and we will review again early in 2013/14

Dependant on definition and details of 'Other Organisations'. We are still waiting for the corporate organisations in order to progress this.

This work has not commenced yet but we would propose to some tenants to pilot the approach. We will come back to the panel in the coming months to work through how this might be implemented.

Resources are regularly reviewed and adjusted accordingly. Any further changes would need to be supported by an appropriate business case through the Housing Governance Board.

For homelessness we now use the self help Wizzard tool which enable customers to see their options and also exploring the use of on-line application forms.

This will be addressed in the new Access Croydon area in BWH - a working group meets regularly where all spatial and service aspects of the new service area are discussed. Before final decisions are made we will ensure representatives of this group are invited to review and input into initial plans and a comprehensive update will be available by June as we approach the move time.

As above

As above

All staff are and continue to be reminded

We are not looking to stop access into services from channels such as phone and face to face these options will remain for those customers preferring those methods. However we will al number of services on-line so those residents wishing to self-serve can do so at their own c also be helping residents to use these facilities through Express Service' staff in Access Crc new arrangements will increase options and hopefully free up resources to improve the spe more complex enquiries

As above

The charter has now been replaced with a new customer commitment. Planned launch is C currently developing how we will monitor the new standard and will work with the panel to s include their input.