



**EVERY CUSTOMER, EVERY TIME -
“Everybody Matters”**

**Making Experiences Count
Quarterly Customer Service Report**

REDDITCH

1st April 2011 – 30th June 2011



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Introduction

This report aims to provide Members with some of the key customer service information for the organisation, including:-

- analysis of the complaints and compliments received during this quarter and any other relevant feedback;
- Customer Service Centre management information, including transactional statistics;
- customer satisfaction;
- progress highlights in respect of the Customer Experience Strategy;
- Hub Update; and
- Voice of the Customer – the big issues for customer this quarter.

Customer Feedback Analysis

Compliment and Complaints Received

The figures show the expected increase in recorded complaints as we have been working with staff to improve the understanding for the need to record complaints and have introduced computer software to enable this to be achieved more easily. Complaints are a vital form of feedback to enable us to better understand what is not working well in our organisation and will be an important measure for services as part of the transformation programme.

The following table sets out the numbers of complaints and compliments received during the first quarter of 2011/12

Dept	Compliments	Complaints	Complaint target met	Complaint Justified	Complaint not justified
Business Transformation	0	1	1	0	1
Community Services	0	6	3	1	5
Customer Services	6	3	3	2	1
Environmental Services	15	13	10	5	8
Housing	17	18	12	9	8 (1 still open)
Legal and Democratic Services	2	1	0	1	0
Leisure and Culture	0	3	Still open	0	0
Planning and Regeneration	1	6	3	2	4
Resources	2	5	3	3	2
Totals	43	56	35	23	29

These compare with the following statistics from last year:

	Total complaints	Dealt with in target time	Justified
All 2010/11	80	65	20
Q4 2010/11	22	17	6

What did we learn from the Complaints received?

The majority of complaints received this quarter had several factors in common which were:

- not keeping the customer informed;
- not returning their calls for information;
- delays to services; and
- not listening to customer concerns.

These are all issues that we are addressing with staff by customer service training and the introduction of customer care guidance for all staff which will be monitored by managers through personal development reviews. These are also issues that will be addressed through the transformation process which is also a key part of our drive towards total customer driven services.

Time taken to respond to complaints

We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days. 63% were dealt with within that timeframe. This figure rises to 73% when we take account of user error on the system. Where it has taken us longer to respond than expected customers were informed that there would be a delay in all case.

This is a drop compared with last year when we dealt with 81% of complaints within the timescale, but this may be because we are ensuring that customers get a fuller, better quality response to their complaints in the first instance. We will be working to improve on our response rate.

Complaints Received	Number handled within target	1-2 days after target	3- 10 days after target	11- 21 After target
56	35	6	8	2
Reason		This is mainly due to users not entering the correct date when closing the case on the system.	Complex and varied investigations	Complex investigations (Housing/Anti Social Behaviour)

Details of justified complaints and actions taken

It is important that we understand the scope of complaints received and what action was taken to address the issue. The following table provides some detail on each justified complaint.

Service	Nature of Complaint	Action Taken/Improvement Action
Housing Strategy/ Private Sector	Near derelict state of private landlord accommodation	Apology given. Officers have inspected the property and provided the landlord with a schedule of works to be completed and will monitor the situation
OSS	Customer wanted a private interview at OSS but this did not happen	Apology given and staff have been provided with guidance on how to arrange private interviews
OSS	Customer handed in Direct Debit details for Council Tax at main reception which was mislaid and had to be completed again	Discussed the issue directly with customer and apology given. Customer pleased with quick response and satisfied that proper processes are in place.
Waste	Grey bin being repeatedly missed for collection	Apology given and assisted collection agreed with customer. Collection will be monitored.
Waste	Customer only receives refuse sacks when he requests them and call not returned about this.	Apology given about returning call and refuse sack process explained.
Waste	Replacement Grey bin – time taken to receive and amount of calls made to sort matter	Bin delivered and apology given.
Waste	Repeated missed bins	Apology given although records show only 2 missed collections this year. New communal collection point being put in place to rectify.
Street Cleaning	Slabs outside house damaged by cleaning vehicle	Apology given and arrangements made with WCC to replace slabs. Staff advised about using heavy vehicles on slabbed areas.
Housing	Non maintenance of council land and state of tenant's garden.	Investigations into ownership of land taking place and neighbour has been contacted and tenancy conditions regarding the garden will be enforced.
Housing	Customer spent a lot of money on new kitchen only to be informed that Council will be replacing it later this year.	Apology given and staff guidance given about providing information at sign up tenancy stage. Replacement of bathroom agreed as goodwill gesture.
Housing	Delay to repair to wall and wall ceiling despite numerous requests	Apology given as this repair should have taken place when flue was replaced. Arrangements made for repair. Staff reminded to check all requests before sign off.

Housing	No response to request for maintenance repair	Discussed with customer. Apology given and arrangements for repair made. Situation with contractors will be monitored.
Housing	Repair to water damaged flat and compensation	Supervisor to inspect and arrange for work to be completed
Housing	Repairs to damp flat and non response to calls	Supervisor will ensure that work schedule is arranged to cover all repairs and will keep customer updated.
Housing	Repairs to lighting on stairs and non response to calls	Apology given and contractors reminded to keep customers updated about any delays to repairs.
Housing	Ongoing issues about housing repairs and rent arrears	Repairs made good and rent agreement discussed with customer.
Housing	Repeated delays to replacement of fencing.	Fencing replaced, apology to customer and team responsible reminded to check/review schedule of works
Legal Services	Dispute about land with purchase of ex RBC property and non return of calls.	Apology given and process will be rectified to ensure that title searches are made to indentify such issues.
Development Plans	Unlicensed riding school and access to complaint website	Discussed with customer and officers asked to keep complainants updated.
Development Plans	Event taking place around war memorial	Discussed with customer and explanation given.
Benefits	Delay to claim and information not received/ verified.	Apology given. Change will be made to process to ensure that evidence requirements are listed in initial contact correspondence and direct contact is made with customer to discuss.
Benefits	Letter from Bailiff although she has lived in Hull for 20 years.	Apology given and staff reminded that single billing indicators should be used in these instances.
Benefits	Confirmation of Direct Debit details sent to wrong address	Apology given and changes to process being looked at.

“You said – we listened” – what did we change as a result of complaints?

Benefits - Several changes are being made to the claims process to make it easier to produce evidence and to keep direct debit details secure

Housing - are monitoring contractors to make sure they return customer calls and keep them updated about repairs.

Number of complaint escalated to Head of Customer Services

There were no complaints escalated to the Head of Customer Services, for further investigation or action.

What did we learn from the compliments received?

From the range of compliments received it is apparent that customers appreciate when we take the time to listen to their concerns and take prompt action. Here are some of the compliments we have received.

Team	Compliment from Customer
Customer Service Centre	Reception staff are always very helpful and smiling. Keep doing things this way.
	Advisor who answered my call was lovely and calmed me down. She went the extra mile to call me back with the information I needed.
Housing	The Housing Officer was very professional with a very pleasant attitude
	Great job done on the repair to my roof.
	The Housing Officer was the nicest and most helpful person I have ever met
	I have been through a very traumatic time and I could not have coped without the help of your home support officer – she was fantastic
Landscaping	Highways that have been mowed look fantastic- thank you!
	Men that cut the hedge were very nice and did a great job.
Waste Teams	Excellent prompt service
	Waste Enforcement dealt with our rubbish issues very quickly- thank you.
Street Cleaning	Excellent level of cleanliness at bus station – thanks to team.
	Thank you for the excellent job in sweeping and cleaning the footpaths
Legal and Dem Services	Thanks for the Overview and Scrutiny training- it really helped with our understanding of this group

Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

There were no LGO complaints received during this period.

Customer Service Centre Information

The section aims to give members useful information in respect of the service provided at the Customer Service Centre (CSC). The CSC deals with the vast majority of customer enquiries made face to face, and the telephone enquiries for many of the key frontline service. They also deal with email enquiries.

The purpose of the Customer Services team is **to help resolve customer's problems or requests**. We use measures rather than targets to assess what is happening in the service and here are some of the headlines.

Customer numbers

In the quarter 1st April 2011 – 30th June 2011 the CSC helped the following number of customers:

Face to face enquiries	21,451
Telephone enquiries	19,333
Email enquiries	725
Payments	32,454
Total customer contacts	73,963

Waiting Times

Our average waiting times for seeing or speaking to a member of staff who could help the customer were:

Face to Face	33 seconds
Telephones	1 minute 30 seconds
Email	We always respond to emails within 1 working day of receipt.

Failure and Value demand

Failure demand is customer contact that is a result of the organisation not doing something, or not doing something right.

For the purposes of transformation it is necessary to establish the rate of failure demand within a service. As the CSC deals with customer demand for a range of services we record failure demand across those services, so this is not a true picture of failure demand for the CSC.

During the 1st quarter of 2011/12 the CSC recorded an average of 39.9% failure demand.

Cost of service

The average transactions costs based on the total cost of the service for 2010/11 were:

Face to Face	Telephones	Payments
£2.80	£3.29	£0.98

Customer Satisfaction

During this quarter we asked **38%** of customers how happy they were with the service provided at the Customer Service Centre's.

99% of face to face customers were satisfied with the service they received.

99% of telephone customers were satisfied with the service.

Strategy Action Plan Progress

We have been progressing with work to meet the aims set out in the Every Customer, Every Time Customer Experience Strategy.

This quarter's headlines are.....



Successfully launched the Every Customer Every Time with staff via Staff and Management Forums, and to the public.



Launched staff guidance handbook.



Launched a revised customer feedback policy.



Installed and implemented i-case computer system to enable us to record and report more effectively on complaints and other feedback.



Introduced a Customer Focus group, with representatives from service across both Bromsgrove and Redditch Council's working together to identify and develop improvements to the customer experience.



Developed customer care training to be delivered to all staff in July/September.



Commenced transformation review in Revenues and Benefits service, lead by revenues and benefits managers and staff and supported by customer service staff.

Hub Partnership Update

We continue to work with colleagues across Worcestershire through the Hub Partnership. There are no major developments or events to report this quarter.

Voice of the Customer



The big issues impacting on customers and the customer service provision this quarter were:-

1. **Council Tax main billing and the commencement of the new payment cycle from the 1st April.** This was successfully managed by all concerned and although there was a small peak in calls to the CSC regarding the information sent out, the impact on customer services was negligible.
2. **Changes in Benefit legislation with effect from the 1st April (Changes to Non Dependent deductions and Local Housing Allowances).** Customers potentially affected by this were sent information by the Benefits team. The response from customers was again small indicating that these changes were managed in way that customers understood and found acceptable.
3. **Elections 2011** – The CSC provided support to the elections team leading up to and during the local and national elections held at the beginning of May. This went extremely well with customer services working extremely closely with the elections team to provide a high standard of service to customers during this high profile event.
4. **The roll out of the Benefits and Revenues transformation project.** This is going well and customers are already beginning to recognise the improved service this form of delivery can offer.
5. **Changes to customer service deliver - have** significantly reduced waiting times for face to face customers down from an average of 48 minutes to around 12 minutes. These changes have resulted in customer all waiting in the main foyer area before being seen and at times this area becomes crowded, but having canvassed customers and monitored the working practices customers are less likely have to wait in two queues as they did previously and generally receive service from the first point of contact. Changes to the way we deliver service will be on going as we move through transformation and we are constantly reviewing and monitoring our approach to ensure it meets customer's needs. Changing the way we use resources has also improved telephone answering times.