

Avoidable Contact Improvement Plan Corporate:

Issue No.	Issue identified	Improvement Action(s)	Resource implications	Target Date	Progress	Responsible Officer
1	Out of date contact information, hyperlinks, event notices etc. on the EFDC website.	<p>(a) Comprehensive and systematic review of all website pages, leaflets available etc. to identify out of date details.</p> <p>System of review, identify, notify, action and follow-up to be put in place with senior management backing to ensure any errors are addressed and put right.</p> <p>Acceptable timetable for corrections to be established.</p>	<p>Initial stages of review to be undertaken within PIU. Guidance and advice will be sought from EFDC web team but responsibility for corrections should fall predominantly within directorates.</p> <p>Resources for all corrections to come from existing within directorate.</p>	<p>To be begun immediately & continued as an ongoing task throughout the year. Quarterly report on pages & literature checked / errors found to be made as part of Scrutiny Report</p>	<p>In excess of 340 web issue notifications sent out to a variety of service areas around the Council. Over 280 (82%) have already been actioned within services and corporate web team. Results to date have been reported to Website Improvement Board. Ongoing work to identify issues may be undertaken where resources allow. Printed leaflets were not considered, although a range of pdf leaflets on the website were included in the web review. Printed leaflets could be considered in the future where time and resource allows.</p>	MW
2	Out of contact information contained within EFDC literature, leaflets, pdfs, posters etc.					

3	Inconsistent approach to use of the EFDC switchboard number instead of direct dial numbers	(b) Feedback to be sought from directorate management teams on establishing a consistent corporate approach to the use of switchboard no. against direct dial nos.	PIU to investigate current situation at EFDC and compile report for Management Board consideration.	March 2011	Data covering volume of calls to switchboard & via direct dials obtained but insufficient to pursue further detailed examination of ultimate destination of switchboard calls. This work has therefore not been taken any further.	MW
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Avoidable Contact Improvement Plan Directorate: Finance & ICT – Local Taxation

Issue No.	Issue identified	Improvement Action(s)	Resource implications	Target Date	Progress	Responsible Officer
1	Council Tax payers contacting the Council Tax office but require the Benefits Division instead	Improved display of Benefit contact details on notices sent out. Update Benefit contact details on Council Tax webpages	Within existing resources	September 2010	Completed	Rob Pavey
2	People contacting the Local Taxation office when they want to make a payment.	Provide an option on the telephone system upon receipt of the call which transfers the caller to the automated telephone payment line	Within existing resources	October 2010	Completed	Rob Pavey David Newton
3	People contacting the Local Taxation office to check details on their account	Channel migration of enquiries - The Capita system has the functionality to allow Council Tax payers and Business Rate payers to access and view their own accounts via a web-based module.	Software already part of current system. Requires resource internally and from Capita to implement the relevant module, the costs of which are to be determined.	Cost implications October 2010. Potential go-live summer 2011.	No further cost implications from supplier. Work commencing in spring 2011.	Rob Pavey
4	An increasing number of enquiries are now coming via e-mail. A number of people contact the office to check the e-mail has been received.	Explore with ICT the provision of an automated response to confirm the e-mail has been received and response timescale.	Within existing resources	September 2010	Completed	Rob Pavey David Newton
5	Business Rate payers contacting the Business Rates section but instead need to speak to the Valuation Office Agency	Clearer signposting on notices and documents providing Valuation Office contact details.	Within existing resources	December 2010	Completed	Rob Pavey

6	Call transfers within Local Taxation between the Council Tax and Recovery sections	Review of payment arrangement documentation to provide better signposting for Council Tax payers	Within existing resources	Completed	Completed	Rob Pavey
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Avoidable Contact Improvement Plan Directorate: Finance & ICT – Benefits Division

Issue No.	Issue identified	Improvement Action(s)	Resource implications	Target Date	Progress	Responsible Officer
1	Customers requesting further information about the Benefit schemes	<p>Promote the Benefits section on the website.</p> <p>Review the current range of leaflets available</p>	Within existing resources	August 2010	Completed and ongoing. Direct link to Benefits from homepage instead of using A-Z. Benefit information on website reviewed and is being updated as and when necessary. All leaflets have been reviewed.	I Willis
2	Customers telephoning because they do not understand letters that have been sent to them due to the complexity of the scheme.	<p>Review documentation to ensure that plain English is used.</p> <p>Consider where appropriate to telephone customers to discuss a problem with their claim instead of just writing</p> <p>Promote the Benefits section of the website.</p>	Within existing resources	August 2010	Completed and ongoing. Documentation reviewed and staff encouraged to telephone with enquiries. Website information reviewed.	J Lewis
3	Customers contacting the Division to query when payments of benefit would be made to them	<p>Payment schedule to be put on the Benefits section of the website to include changes to payment dates around bank holidays.</p> <p>Include information flyer on payment run prior to any potential disruption to normal payment schedule due to bank holidays.</p>	Within existing resources	August 2010	Completed and ongoing. However, the flyer in itself produced several calls from claimants requiring reassurance and confirmation of the amended payment dates.	I Willis
4	Customers chasing progress of their claim	<p>Minimise any backlog of work.</p> <p>Advertise expected average processing times</p>	Should be within existing resources but additional resource may be required if contractors need to be employed.	August 2010	Ongoing. Backlog minimised producing fewer calls chasing progress of claim, but may increase due to staff vacancies which cannot currently be filled.	J Lewis

5	People contacting the Benefits Division when they actually wanted a discount on their Council Tax	<p>Promotion of what the Benefit service is responsible for and clearly indicate that discounts are not part of Benefits.</p> <p>Consult with Council Tax to minimise unnecessary calls to Benefits of this nature</p>	Within existing resources	September 2010	Ongoing. To be promoted further on website.	J Lewis
6	People contacting the Benefits Division when they actually wanted the Housing Service	Consult with Housing to minimise unnecessary calls to Benefits of this nature	Within existing resources	September 2010	Ongoing. It has been identified that people obtain the telephone number from recent correspondence which quite often is relating to benefit entitlement. It is difficult to eradicate this avoidable contact.	JLewis
7	Out of date information displaying old telephone numbers for Benefits	<p>Review all documentation and consult with other Service areas to update contact numbers</p> <p>Promote direct dial numbers to Benefits</p>	Within existing resources	October 2010	Ongoing. Documentation reviewed but it is proving difficult to put the relevant DDI numbers on the Academy letters due to the restrictions with those letters	I Willis / J Lewis

Avoidable Contact Improvement Plan Directorate: Environment and Street Scene

Issue No.	Issue identified	Improvement Action(s)	Resource implications	Target Date	PROGRESS	Responsible Officer
1	<p>Poor call transfer / poor signage That staff were not sure where a service sits following the Council's restructure. This issue is further heightened by the mixture of the old names and new services/directorates which are used on the website and the intranet pages.</p> <p>That staff are not sure which staff covers which areas</p> <p>The forms from the Environmental Customer Services gave more detail to the separate issues and have been analysed. The Calls to other depts. emphasises the item with regards to the insufficient clarity of who does what.</p> <p>The post was sent to the wrong Directorate so again clarity is required</p>	<p>Within ESS we produced a Roles and Responsibilities list of Senior Officers, which was issued to all staff and the main telephonists so that it is clear what the Directorate is responsible for, and the names etc of the lead managers.</p> <p>Recommend that the Website and intranet pages reflect the present structure clearly- Website Manager to deal with. Corporate issue the to be populated with Services information</p>	<p>None</p> <p>Corporate Issue</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Awaiting the new role out of the Council's systems which we hope will clarify matters</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Project delayed - Corporate Issue</p>	<p>L MacNeill</p> <p>Corporate Issue ICT and then Rob Purse for ESS</p>
2.	<p>Progress chasing There has been a lot of discussion with regards to what was an avoidable / unavoidable contact with regards to the Waste service and missed bins/recycling as to whether a missed bin/recycling was one not left out or whether the customer was genuinely missed. To understand the figure for Progress Chasing (PC) The definition of Progress Chasing was reviewed as there was concern that there was a problem with the service not answering queries put to either the</p>	<p>It then seemed logical to see if there is big problem with our contractor and the percentage of bins missed. Statistics for the two week period were therefore analysed</p> <p>The figures show that there is not a problem with the contractor when looking at the overall number of bin collections compared with missed collections reported:</p>				

	<p>contact centre or service officers. The definition given was “a contact because of failure of a service”. It therefore transpires that all missed bin collections are put down as PC (progress chasing). A missed bin is caused by either the occupant not putting out the bin at the correct place/time or it was genuinely missed by the contractor (Sita). Because of the limitations of the recording on the NI14 data it is not possible to differentiate what the split was between these reasons.</p>	<p>One other item that could be investigated here is whether once a bin is reported as missed, is whether the actions taken by the Contact Centre are acceptable to our customers. This review will be incorporated into the Customer Satisfaction Survey that Julie Barnard is to undertake on the customers’ view of how the Customer Contact Centre deals with enquiries.</p> <p>Letter/enquiry Monitoring. (Environmental services M3 system and Confirm system)– A computer-generated report gives details of the response period to letters. Officers are now notified of items that have not been logged back onto the system so that any letters that have gone unanswered can be highlighted at an early stage thus reducing the customers need to chase items. All work is logged back on the system so if a customer calls then the stage the enquiry has reached is to hand</p>	<p>Staff time to create the questionnaire</p>	<p>November 2010</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Julie Barnard</p>
	<p>Were enquiries being answered in a timely manner</p>	<p>A set of Customer standards to being written up to establish what work is undertaken with regards to enquiries. This is in work in progress stage.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Jo Ellis Julie Barnard</p>
			<p>None</p>	<p>October 2010</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Laura MacNeill</p>
3.	<p>Unnecessary clarification This was very difficult to analyse due to the lack of specific information that the forms ask for</p>	<p>ESS will continue to review what and how it commutates its services with the public. Once the new Waste Roll was completed the Customer Services section began to create a customer response survey to see</p>	<p>Staff time to create the questionnaire</p>	<p>November 2010</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Julie Barnard</p>

	The requests for Calendars	<p>how it is communicating with customers as this is a major frontline service for ESS</p> <p>The issue re the calendars was caused by the lateness of the calendars being produced. This was a one off issue that the waste service has resolved and this should not occur again</p>	None	Completed	Completed	David Marsh
4.	There was a variety of other small issues	<p>An analysis of the specific areas was completed. (See attached) The post and call issues Admin will take up with CSS to see why these issues arise and if they or we need to do anything to improve matters.</p> <p>Service Managers were tasked with looking at specific items such as non-response to calls etc and to come back with specific actions.</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Staff time</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>November</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>	<p>Julie Barnard</p> <p>Julie Barnard/ L MacNeill</p>

Avoidable Contact Improvement Plan May 2011 - Directorate: Housing

Issue No.	Issue identified	Improvement Action(s)	Resource implications	Target Date	Progress	Responsible Officer
1	Some of the Council's telephone numbers are easily misdialled and customers can ring the wrong person by mistake	Arrange for some telephone extension numbers to be changed	Within existing resources	Completed	The advantages of changing extension numbers across the Council needs to be considered against the disadvantages as many existing numbers are known by the public and may cause further avoidable calls. ICT advise that they cannot make alternative arrangements as the Council has 800 direct dial numbers. Therefore, similar numbers have to occur frequently.	Keith Gardner
2	A number of customers are contacting Housing Repairs for matters that concern either Housing Assets or other contractors	Publish an article in the tenants' magazine, "Housing News" giving contact information, and make leaflets more clearer. Also, advise staff through the staff magazine "In House" to include clear contact numbers and e-mail addresses in prominent positions in a letters sent out.	Within existing resources	Completed	Contact information was included in "Housing News" in the September 2010 issue. Information has been provided in an updated leaflet within the deadline. Also, an item has been included in the Housing Directorate's staff magazine "In House", asking all staff to include clear contact numbers and e-mail addresses in prominent positions in all letters sent out.	Paul Pledger

Issue No.	Issue identified	Improvement Action(s)	Resource implications	Target Date	Progress	Responsible Officer
3	Generally we need to check that all telephone numbers in all our leaflets are correct	All Managers will be asked to check all contact numbers in all of our leaflets	Within existing resources	On-going	Leaflets have been found to be accurate and will be updated to reflect any future changes	All Managers
4	Telephone numbers publicised to the general public sometimes give the main switchboard number	All Managers will be asked to change the number to direct dial numbers wherever possible	Within existing resources	Completed	In the Housing Directorate's staff magazine "In House" all staff have been asked to provide direct dial numbers wherever possible.	All Managers
5	Housing Applicants often ring the Housing Options Section asking information about their place on the list and how long they will need to wait.	Under the Government's new guidance on Allocations Schemes, the Council must make appropriate information about allocations widely available in a way that is easy to access and understand, including how long applicants are likely to have to wait and the general profile of the housing stock. This information will be published to all tenants and applicants in a future edition of the tenants' magazine, "Housing News"	Within existing resources	Completed	Extensive information on the Allocations Scheme was included in the September 2010 edition of "Housing News" as part of the consultation exercise for the review of the Scheme which was agreed by Cabinet on 25 October 2010.	Roger Wilson

Avoidable Contact Improvement Plan Directorate: Planning

Issue No.	Issue identified	Improvement Action(s)	Resource implications	Target Date	Progress	Responsible Officer
1	Applicants/agents monitoring progress on their applications.	Improve Web Site. It has arranged for the 'view related documents' section to now read 'view plans and related documents', since how to view plans, probably the reasons for most customer hits, was poorly sign posted. Other improvements proposed are a) the need for a section 'to view decision notice' – currently this too is hidden in the 'view related documents' field b) the word 'old' decisions or similar should be inserted alongside 'view current applications' on the Planning page, c) One page still has contact Barry Land on it. d) use class information on applications eg what is included in the Class C3 is misleading. Other issues relate to customers difficulty with the 'pop up blocker' and should the web site wording be more helpful to customers trying to find info.	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw
2	Poor signposting, poor call transfer	The largest group of such calls were for Building Control, and secondly, for enforcement with calls going to others eg planning officers/planning duty officer. An improvement would be to make the contact details of planning officers more readily available on the Website and Intranet.	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw
3	Customer seeking unnecessary clarification'	Calls related to the web site eg plans not on web site, customers unable to find what they needed etc. Web site review panel to be set up.	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw

4	A number of calls for Planning were unanswered	The dedicated planning officer duty hand set phone works well between 10.30 and 12. A similar dedicated handset line should be set up between 12 and 5pm to be answered by reception, customer contact team, planning applications processing, and possibly planning officers but not seniors/principals.	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned in a different way.	John Kershaw
5	1000's of letters are sent out on planning applications are currently signed off by the stamp bearing John de Wilton Preston, Director of.....,	The case officers name should be stamped or written instead. This would reduce calls going to John Preston.	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw
6	Poor signposting	Make the contact details of officers more readily available on the website, but also giving direct numbers instead of sending the customer through to the switchboard first, as is the case at present. It should also perhaps be made more clear on the website the times Officers are available to speak to the public. At present the website states that planning reception is open until 5:15 which whilst true, leads some people to believe that Officers are also available until this time, therefore making an avoidable contact as they come into reception in the afternoon to speak to an officer	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw
7	The numbers of requests that come through for applications that are on microfiche.	These take longer to deal with than requests for more recent applications, so by providing the information on the website, it could reduce the time spent dealing with these requests	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw

8	Re-Checking of meetings	This happens on a very regular basis. To a certain extent this can be avoided if people/staff are aware that they can set up a meeting appointment on groupwise e-mail and give more proxy access.	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw
9	Enquiries being answered in a timely manner	Corporate Customer Standards being monitored	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw
10	General	Generally we need to check that all telephone numbers in all our leaflets are correct Review documentation to ensure that plain English is used.	Within existing resources	December 2010	This has been actioned.	John Kershaw