Customer Contact Services

Scrutiny Review

June 2011

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Contents

Task & finish group members:

Cllrs Jose Hales, Lynda Harford, Sally Hatton, Bridget Smith (chairman), Peter Topping and Bunty Waters

All meetings were attended by the Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder, Cllr Tom Bygott

Executive summary

A scrutiny task and finish group was set up to look at how customer contact services could be provided following the end of the Council's contract with Cambridgeshire County Council in December 2012. This contract had provided a telephone handling service at a joint contact centre in St Ives since 2003.

This contact centre was achieving high customer satisfaction and comparatively good value for money. However, there was a need to explore the possibility of even greater value for money, given the increasingly difficult financial environment within local government. There was also a need to consider how to best provide a holistic customer contact service, given customers' reducing usage of the telephone and increasing shift to other access channels.

The task and finish group worked alongside an officer group from January to June 2011 carrying out visits to other councils; surveying and meeting residents, staff and partners; and researching new methods and technologies. They learned of recent developments in call handling technology that had led to much more flexible and affordable systems. These handled modern and cost efficient channels such as webchat, smartphone apps and texting. Staff were handling enquiries via these channels alongside telephone calls, providing a flexible service that could readily accommodate any channel shift.

The group recognised that channel shift would continue to happen, and that it would be financially beneficial to further encourage this, for example by improving the transactions available electronically. This meant that any future customer service would need to be flexible. It would also need to be scalable to accommodate any loss of volumes, for example if services were contracted out.

The group also learned of advances in customer relationship management systems which were enabling councils to provide impressive and highly efficient customer service. The technology had become much simpler to use since the St Ives service was set up in 2003.

They also found that none of the councils visited were open to visitors or phone calls outside 8am to 6pm on weekdays and some had even shorter hours than this.

A final learning point related to the location of the service. The group found that on-site services integrated better with the back-office. They were also able to combine with reception services, which improved the quality and efficiency of the face-to-face service. There was one example of the customer contact team being used as a pool of staff which reduced the council's need for agency staff.

Weighing all these factors, there was agreement amongst the task and finish group, officers and portfolio holder that December 2012 presented an opportunity to bring the customer contact service in-house and on-site. This would be recommended to the Cabinet in July 2011.

The task and finish group also made several other recommendation for improving customer care in the meantime. These related to the reception service, customer care training, text messaging, applications for smartphones and service information booklets.

Introduction

In November 2010 the scrutiny committee set up a task and finish group to look at how to provide a modern, integrated customer contact service on expiry of the Council's contract with the Contact Centre in December 2012. The aim was to help inform the portfolio holder's decision on whether a new service should be provided internally or tendered externally, and what such a service should include.

An officer group had already gathered data on existing contact channels - telephone, email, fax, face-to-face and web - and had identified that the service could realistically deliver substantial savings, both immediately and over the longer term. So the aim of task and finish group was to build on that work and contribute to the final decision process.

The task and finish group met six times; visited five other councils to examine alternative approaches to customer contact; and consulted residents and staff regarding their preferred methods of contact now and in the future. They researched video-conferencing, social media and cloud technology (where the software is located off-site). They also consulted with councillors and staff for their views and ideas.

This report, summarising those three stages, will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2011 and Cabinet on 7 July 2011.

Stage One – Research and Findings

Contact centres

1.1 At the outset, the task and finish group established that a contact centre was the best way of achieving high quality and cost-efficient customer contact services. There was evidence that a well-run contact centre could achieve economies of scale, especially in staffing and procurement. It could train staff to be highly customer focused. And it could free back office staff to focus on service provision.

1.2 The group wanted to examine different ways of organising and running a contact service. Visits were therefore arranged to four other councils as well as the Council's own contact centre provider at St Ives, from where Huntingdonshire District Council's contact centre was also run.

1.3 SCDC's contact centre is provided via a ten-year contract with Cambridgeshire County Council. The contract price had recently been renegotiated to reflect a drop in call volumes in recent years, coinciding with the growing popularity of email and web-based transactions. Opening times were also changed from June 2011: the Saturday afternoon service was stopped due to low call volumes.

1.4 The task and finish group found that it was delivering customer satisfaction levels at around 80% - much higher than the national average, even in the private sector. 80% of calls were being answered within 20 seconds and other performance targets were also being met or exceeded.

1.5   A comparison of unit costs showed that on average each phone call to the contact centre was costing around £3.30 to handle, whereas the average for four neighbouring district councils ranged from £5.25 to £7 per call.

1.6   The task and finish group chose to visit Babergh District Council in Suffolk as it serves a largely rural population and like SCDC, it manages its own housing stock and depot.

1.7   Babergh's contact service consisted of four teams of customer service officers (CSOs) who were centrally managed and trained, but located in four different service areas. Call handlers for the Planning service were managed slightly differently and they worked 50% on call handling and 50% on back office tasks.

1.8   CSOs also dealt with enquiries made via email or face to face and ran the council's texting service.

1.9   Lessons from this visit were that:
        a) locating customer service officers within service areas and providing joint customer care training created strong links between the back- and front-office
        b) staff were skilled in different service areas and job rotation was encouraged
        c) customers were proactively encouraged to use more cost-efficient contact channels than the phone; this included a shift to 100% electronic access to the choice based lettings service which appeared to have been accepted without problems.

1.10   Broadland District Council in Norfolk was chosen because it described itself as having made a conscious decision not to have a contact centre and yet it was achieving high customer satisfaction.

1.11   Broadland's call-handing structure was quite similar to that at Babergh. While call-handling was dispersed in small teams around the council, staff were collectively trained and managed. Staff rotated between sections and the reception area.

1.12   Lessons from this visit were that:
        a) call handlers could double as bank staff; this had almost eliminated the council's spending on agency staff
        b) customer care training was undertaken with back office staff and councillors which enabled call handlers to make useful contacts, learn more about services and share skills
        c) in response to customer research, there was no use of voicemail or queuing; if a line was in use the caller would hear a busy tone

1.13   Cambridge City Council was chosen because it had relatively recently set up a contact centre and so comparisons with its previous system would be easy to recall. Officers reported that setting up the contact centre had greatly improved the quality of service. Call handlers operated in three discrete service-based teams located in one large office. They also dealt

with generic emails, post opening and scanning, and served visitors in reception.

1.14   The task and finish group observed several other practices that could improve the reception service at SCDC:
- queuing controlled by self-serve ticket system: this reduced customers' anxiety if they had to wait
- small play area for children
- well-designed, fully carpeted reception area with curved lines and soft seating creating a calm, comfortable environment
- staff visible in open cubicles with access to printer/scanner and back office data via CRM
- self-serve computers available for visitors to (learn how to) access services online
- comprehensive range of brochures about council services

1.15   The lessons from this visit were that:
a) a high quality, modern service can generate income by serving other councils; Cambridge City was exploring this
b) setting up a new service impacts on the whole council
c) creating a lunchtime shift maintains full service when full time staff are at lunch, and it provides an attractive option for potential employees with other daytime responsibilities.

1.16   Wokingham Borough Council was chosen because its contact centre was achieving outstanding levels of customer service and because it was using leading edge technology. The task and finish group was impressed by the IT in use (based on cloud technology) as it seemed to be very flexible, scalable, fast and easy to set up, and highly affordable. A high volume of email enquiries were handled by call handlers during quieter spells, and fast responses times were achieved.

1.17   Lessons from this visit were that:
a) an organisation offering quality, job variety and flexible working patterns, attracts excellent staff
b) high quality staff, recruited via a strict assessment centre, provided excellent service and engendered respect from back office staff
c) home working enabled the organisation to run a lean shift system and retain talented staff who had other personal commitments

1.18   The task and finish group also observed the reception at SCDC's Cambourne office, where visitors are served by two officers. In some cases they were able to fully resolve the visitor's enquiry; in the majority of cases their role was to ask the relevant officer to come and attend to the visitor. During quieter times of the day the officers forwarded online job applications and generic emails to the relevant service area.

1.19   At Cambridge and Broadland the reception staff were managed as part of the customer contact centre and were all trained to be able to resolve a larger percentage of enquiries without referral to the back office.

1.20 Reflecting on their visits, the task and finish group agreed some key findings. A well-coordinated customer contact centre offered the opportunity to locate various access channels within the same team, enabling resources to shift seamlessly to match customers' changing channel usage.

1.21 There was also the potential to achieve a 'tell us once' service, especially where a customer relationship management (CRM) system is used. The national 'Tell Us Once' project is due to be launched in November 2011.

1.22 Where the service was located within a council's main building, there was an opportunity to achieve further economies of scale by combining with services such as reception and perhaps the post room. Also, the team could be used as a pool of staff available to be seconded to service areas, thus reducing the council's need for agency staff.

Customer and Staff Research

1.23 A key part of the research undertaken by the task and finish group was into the views of service users and staff. The group surveyed residents via the Council's magazine, community group meetings and face to face. Small numbers were involved in all cases and so the results may not be viewed as statistically reliable. However they did enable the task and finish group to develop an impression of residents' views.

1.24 Responses showed that most readers of the magazine were satisfied with their experience of the Council's telephone service, correspondence, email, website and face-to-face. None of the respondents had used fax.

1.25 Between 9% and 16% of readers would be happy to use texting, social media and webchat. Almost all thought that emails should be answered within four days and over half thought the response should be the same day. Delivering this level of performance would be likely to encourage more use of email instead of the phone.

1.26 Officers attending a staff focus group were very keen to improve customer service and they had several suggestions:
  - include video clips on the website
  - make more use of FAQs (frequently asked questions)
  - rationalise generic email addresses – remove obsolete ones
  - provide automatic acknowledgement on generic email addresses
  - use VOIP (voice over internet protocol) applications such as Skype
  - use apps for smartphones, such as My Council Services
  - use texts for payment reminders

1.27 Around half of the staff interviewed had used Facebook and a quarter had used webchat.

1.28 A previous internal survey of staff had shown that almost 80% of staff thought that SCDC should use social media. However, staff recognised the risk of attracting inappropriate messages; and raised the concern that maintaining an up-to-date presence on these sites was resource intensive.

Recommendations from Stage One:

Recommendation 1: That the reception area at South Cambridgeshire Hall is
  a) equipped to cater for visitors accompanied by small children and
  b) upgraded to create a quieter and less draughty environment, with access to privacy where desirable or requested

Recommendation 2: That consideration is given to providing joint customer care training for Members and officers

Recommendation 3: That a system is developed for using text messaging to send payment reminders to those who request it

Recommendation 4: That research is conducted into the use of apps for smartphones such as My Council Services

Recommendation 5: That the Council considers producing a full range of easy-to-read booklets on SCDC's services for display on reception and via parish councils, libraries, local access points and other outlets

Stage Two – Principles for Designing a Customer Contact Service

2. Designing a customer contact service

2.1   The task and finish group met with officers of SCDC's Contact Centre Partnership Board and the Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder to consider how to design a service to succeed the current contract from December 2012.

2.2   The discussion was informed by the evidence obtained during the visits described above as well as by officers' and councillors' aspirations for improving the quality and efficiency of SCDC's customer care.

2.3   Those taking part agreed a set of aims as follows:
  • Provide an increased range of cost effective access channels to meet increasing customer expectations, and optimise value for money within the budget set in the Medium Term Financial Strategy
  • Promote greater use of the most cost effective access channels through a series of targeted and deliberate channel shifts
  • Ensure services are accessible to all
  • Reallocate resources from simple and routine enquiries to customers with higher levels of need.

2.4   A set of key principles was also agreed as follows:
  • Promote self-service and greater access to information
  • Resolve the significant majority of enquiries at first contact and avoid repeat calls. Ensure only those queries that require professional expertise are referred on
  • Ensure service is scalable and can adapt and respond to changing customer contact demands

- Offer a first class service whilst providing excellent value for money through clear and transparent service standards
- Ensure staff are appropriately skilled, motivated and experienced.
- Effectively integrate people and systems to ensure a one-team approach to customer service
- Contribute to the Council's Corporate Aims, with particular regard to environmental sustainability and local economic development

Contact channels

Telephone

2.5 For the majority of people surveyed during this review, the telephone was the preferred method of contacting South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). However, there was a growing appetite for email, web transactions and social media. A small number of people preferred face-to-face contact, either by visiting the Council or being visited at home.

Email

2.6 Respondents who preferred email, saw it as faster than a letter and more convenient than a phone call as it could be used at any time. From the Council's perspective, email took less time than handling a telephone call and allowed more flexibility on when to respond.

2.7 SCDC staff currently answer within much less that the Council's target response time of 10 days but most respondents said that they would expect an answer within a few hours. This feedback was passed to officers working on the corporate Customer Service Excellence project to inform the setting of a revised minimum standard.

Web

2.8 The task and finish group noted that an increasing number of the Council's services were available online. All service areas have dedicated pages containing information, email links and in some cases web forms for online completion. Many services offered online transactions and the most recent addition was the facility for council taxpayers to view their accounts online.

Face to Face

2.9 Face-to-face is the most expensive form of contact but it meets the needs of people who need that level of service. The portfolio holder assured the task and finish group that the Council would remain committed to meeting that need.

2.10 The group found that SCDC has several means of delivering face-to-face contact with customers:
- reception desk at the Cambourne offices
- cash desk at Cambridge City Council's offices - with plans to introduce an automated payments kiosk
- off-site visits by staff

- community-based sheltered housing support staff
- liaison officers such as for tenants or the Gypsy and Travellers community

Fax

2.11 The task and finish group did not research fax usage beyond establishing that the Council receives very little contact via fax. It is still required by some customers but is becoming less popular. All service areas have access to fax facilities and would expect to retain them for the time being, but with a longer term aim of moving to e-fax.

Post

2.12 At SCDC and all the authorities visited, customer contact staff did not open post, even where the post room was in the same building. The task and finish group realised that incorporation within SCDC's customer contact team would depend on where the customer contact service was located after December 2012.

Social media

2.13 Visiting other authorities the task and finish group found that social media usage varied. SCDC is perhaps achieving as much as most by its use of Twitter and Facebook. Also, the Council's Youth Plan will drive further use of these media by training staff and producing a toolkit.

Text messaging

2.14 The task and finish group saw text messaging in use at Wokingham Borough Council and Babergh District Council. For example, it was used to broadcast messages to subscribers who wanted news of specific services, such as pitch reports for sports clubs.

2.15 SCDC staff confirmed that texting was used to contact prospective tenants who may not have a fixed location. It was also used by the Elections and ICT teams. All agreed that there was scope to make more use of texting.

Web chat

2.16 Web chat was observed at Wokingham. This worked via a link on the appropriate web pages and enabled customers to engage in a short, speedy interaction without the cost of telephoning. It was similar to email but easier to use and faster. The task and finish group was very impressed by this facility and agreed that it would be important to have the capacity for this in the future. The Council's ICT team was exploring the introduction of Yammer.

2.17 There was agreement that future provision should include: telephone; email; texting; social media; and webchat. The little-used fax service would remain available in the back office only, albeit via e-fax in the future.

2.18   If the service were to be based at South Cambridgeshire Hall then it could include the face-to-face service; and perhaps post, pending the findings of the management review of post service planned for 2011/12.

2.19   There was agreement that the future contact service should have the capacity to respond quickly to any changes in the access channels available. It was recognised that within the lifetime of any contract some media may cease altogether, such as fax; whereas other media, such as webchat, may emerge or become more prevalent.

Channel shift

2.20   The task and finish group discussed the concept of channel shift, where customers move from channels such as the telephone to more convenient and cost efficient ones such as email or web. Such a shift over recent years had led to a variation in the current contract with the Contact Centre. Further shifting could be expected and even encouraged; therefore the Council's contact service would need to be flexible enough to accommodate this.

2.21   The group agreed that there would always be customers who preferred to visit or telephone; but many other customers would be content to shift to electronic channels if the experience was as good or better than phoning. A recent survey of SCDC visitors showed that around half had come to find out information or deliver a form. Around a third of visitors would prefer to contact the council electronically. Further research is needed to establish why they visit instead, and how to help them to make their desired channel shift.

2.22   The Council is currently exploring targeted initiatives, such as self-service on council tax accounts, aimed at making the website more transactional and easy to navigate for those who would prefer to make contact that way.

2.23   The discussion about channel shift did not reach a unanimous conclusion. All accepted that there would need to be elements of push and pull. Pulling customers towards more efficient, less costly (electronic) channels would involve making those channels much more user-friendly and convenient to the customer than the costlier ones such as the telephone.

2.24   Pushing customers would involve closing down access via the costlier channels, as at Babergh where choice based letting was only accessed electronically. There was a concern that apparently cheaper channels would have hidden costs, due to a greater number of customers needing staff support to access the service.

Service Standards

2.25   The discussion regarding potential service standards was inconclusive. It was argued that setting response times and resolution rates can have a perverse incentive; the quality of response may be sacrificed in the achievement of speed or resolution at the first point of contact. It was agreed that the most reliable indicator of a successful standard of service is customer satisfaction.

2.26   At Babergh, customer feedback had informed the council's decision not to
        use voicemail or queuing on Customer Service calls; if all staff available
        were currently on calls the next caller would hear a busy tone

2.27   It was agreed that the question of service standards should be settled at a
        future date alongside the corporate Customer Service Excellence project.

Opening Hours

2.28   As described above, SCDC currently provides a telephone service 8am to
        8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm on Saturdays. However, all the
        authorities visited by the task and finish group opened during office hours
        only. None opened on Saturday. All limited their reception opening hours to
        office hours.

2.29   Analysis of SCDC call volumes showed that the vast majority were received
        in office hours – 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. However, there was a
        need, albeit very small, for some telephone access outside these hours.

2.30   The discussion therefore concluded that future provision should include a
        telephone service during office hours only, but perhaps with one late night
        per week if there was a significant and proven need.

Customer Relationship Management

2.31   Only two of the authorities visited by the task and finish group was making
        significant use of CRM: Wokingham and Huntingdonshire. SCDC was
        making some use of CRM which was adding significantly to the level of
        customer service offered.

2.32   The discussion concluded that far more use could be made of CRM,
        especially if it were an efficient system that was easy to use. There was full
        agreement that the next customer service contract should include CRM.

Council Service Areas

2.33   It was recognised that the current contract does not include all of the
        services provided by SCDC. Some service areas had not fully opted into the
        service and were still handling their own routine enquiries. The lead officer
        will need to work with managers in each service area to establish which
        services to include in the future. It was recognised that the responsive
        repairs service may be outsourced and those calls would therefore be
        handled elsewhere. Also, further services may be outsourced or cease in
        the longer term.

2.34   As with other considerations addressed in this report, there would be a need
        for great flexibility in the future to accommodate any changes in the number
        and range of services involved.

Other criteria

2.35 Another key aspiration for the customer contact service was the need for flexibility and scalability. This would enable a timely response to any need to re-shape, grow or reduce the service or to serve other partner organisations.

2.36 There was agreement that the future service should reflect the Council's priorities regarding sustainability, equal opportunities and supporting local economic development whilst achieving the necessary financial savings.

Recommendations from Stage Two:

Recommendation 6: That the next customer contact service provision should
   a) include telephone; email; texting; social media; and webchat
   b) provide a telephone service during office hours only, with further research into the need for one late night per week
   c) include a Customer Relationship Management system capable of being used throughout the Council and with the capacity to link with partners' CRM systems
   d) provide flexibility and scalability that would enable a timely response to any need to grow or reduce or serve other partner organisations
   e) reflect the Council's priorities, especially those regarding sustainability, equal opportunities and supporting local economic development

Recommendation 7: That if the next customer contact service is based at South Cambridgeshire Hall then it should include the face-to-face service; and inclusion of the post service should be considered as part of the management review of the post service planned for 2011/12.

Recommendation 8: That the Council's emerging Customer Access Strategy should include the intention to encourage and support customers to use the most cost effective customer contact channels such as email, webchat and social media.

Stage Three – Options for a Customer Contact Service

3.1 The task and finish group, Customer Contact Partnership Board and Portfolio Holder met for a second time to reach a final agreement on the service to recommend from December 2012. Specifically they needed to discuss where the service should be located and whether it would be managed in-house or by an external provider.

3.2 The discussion was informed by the recommendations agreed at Stage Two.

3.3 There was unanimous agreement that a service *managed* in-house would provide the following advantages:
   • Direct management and control of first point of contact for customers, allowing full transparency and direct accountability.
   • High level of control regarding
      • Council reputation

- recruitment, management and training of staff
- performance management
- channels provided
- any future channel shift strategy
- delivery of Corporate Aims such as sustainability, equalities and local economic development
- High flexibility regarding timely variation of 'contract' such as changes to services included; service standards; joint working with partners and delivery of corporate aims
- Economies of scale by using in-house support services (ICT/HR/Payroll)
- Potentially easier integration with in-house service continuity plans
- Greater opportunity to create One Team approach across whole Council
- Opportunities for further financial savings

3.4 There was also unanimous agreement that a service *located* in-house would provide the following advantages:
- Use of spare floor space - reducing carbon footprint per head of staff
- Enhanced internal communication, formal and informal
- On-site exemplar of excellent customer service
- Opportunity to become part of One Team approach within SCDC
- Opportunity to combine with reception service, thus improving service at reception through increased resolution at first point of contact
- Opportunity to create pool of bank staff, thus reducing agency costs

3.5 These advantages were considered to outweigh the potential disadvantages:
- Resource implications of procuring and managing 2-3 'minor' contracts rather than one 'major' – this was not felt to be a major concern.
- Lack of in-house experience and potentially reduced access to specialist skills, innovation and emerging technology – this was rejected as visits to other councils had shown how readily the council could learn from new developments

3.6 There was robust discussion of the main advantages of using an external provider:
- SCDC could focus on core services as external provider has responsibility for customer contact service
- Contractual obligations allow legal recourse in case of under-performance

3.7 These were felt to be out-weighed by the potential disadvantages:
- Reduced ability to control the Council's reputation through this first point of contact
- Reduced transparency and accountability
- Contract may stifle innovation and hamper timely response to:
  - channel shift strategy
  - change in channels provided
  - changes in services included
  - revised service standards
  - joint working with partners
- Reduced opportunity to create One Team approach across whole Council

3.8   There was unanimous support for bringing the service in-house, subject to that being affordable within the identified budget. Officers were asked to conduct further research and it was subsequently confirmed that an in-house solution could be achieved within budget. See appendices C and D.

Recommendation from Stage Three

Recommendation 9: That the customer contact service provided by the Council from December 2012 be managed in-house and located at South Cambridgeshire Hall

4. Achievements during the review

4.1   During the course of the review, the Cabinet discussed a reduction in opening hours at the Contact Centre. Based on its research, the task and finish group supported the decision to close on Saturday afternoons and this took effect from 13 June.

4.2   Also, feedback gained from residents and partners regarding customer service has been used to inform the corporate project Customer Service Excellence and its work on setting performance standards.

SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP - SCOPING DOCUMENT

Enquiry name	Customer Contact Review
Terms of reference	• To examine options open to the Council for providing a modern, integrated customer contact service • To make recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for improving customer contact service standards and efficiency
Summary of enquiry	• Examine/ challenge current customer contact channels • Test veracity of evidence • Test that products will do what they promise to • Research best practice elsewhere • Draw on external expertise (added by PFH) • Identify customers' requirements • Evaluate options and make recommendations to Cabinet
Reason for enquiry	• The current contract with the Contact Centre expires in December 2012 • Need to make contract decision that complements other customer contact channels and requirements • Timed to accommodate lead-time of around 18 months for some of the known options • Officers seeking cross-party Member input regarding customer involvement, research and recommendations
Existing evidence	• Contact Centre Review Sept 2010 • Customer Contact Review October 2010
Potential outcome/s	• Wider awareness amongst officers and Members of the need for a modern and effective customer contact service • Well-research recommendations regarding the design of a modern, integrated, flexible customer contact service • More efficient use of reducing financial resources • Improved customer satisfaction
Relevant corporate and/or community strategy/ies	Being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all
Portfolio holders	Cllr Bygott
Members of the task & finish group	Cllrs Hales, Harford, Hatton, B Smith, Topping, Waters
Key stakeholders	All SCDC council taxpayers; elected members; officers
Officer involvement	Lead officer: Paul Howes/Paul Knight
Timing	December 2010 to May 2011
Report dates	SMT May; Scrutiny 30 June 2011; Cabinet 7 July 2011

List of Interviewees, consultees and contributors

Babergh District Council

Broadland District Council

Cambridge City Council

Huntingdonshire District Council

Wokingham Borough Council

Contact Centre Partnership Board

Community groups

SCDC Equalities Forum

South Cambs magazine readers

Survey Monkey respondents

SCDC staff focus group

Background papers

Contact Centre Performance Review 2003/04 – 2009/10
Customer Contact Access Channel Review

Contact Centre Illustrative Budget V1.3

Operational Costs (excluding Capital Costs)

SUMMARY

In House Solution Key Facts:

Total Cost (before reception and officer assimilation)	**494,722 PA**
Reception Service & Officer Assimilation	**-111,825 PA**
Total Cost (after reception and officer assimilation)	**382,897 PA**
Total Saving (against 2011/12 outturn 646,463)	**263,566 PA**
Accommodation – Potential Rental Revenue Loss	**37,500 PA**
Total Saving (Including loss of potential accommodation revenue)	**226,026 PA**

In House Solution Key Assumptions:

Monday to Friday 08:30 – 18:00 (9.5hrs)

14 x Contact Centre Agents

1 x Contact Centre Manager

Hosted Media Handling Software (e-mail, web-chat, SMS, social media, e-fax)

Hosted Automatic Call Distribution Software (ACD)

Hosted Customer Relationship Management Software (CRM)

<10% Increase in Face-Face & Telephone Contact

Reception Assimilation (Budget & Staff)

Officer Assimilation

Contact Centre Illustrative Budget V1.3

Operational Costs (excl. capital expenditure) - In House Solution

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Employees						
Salaries	95,210	95,210	95,210	95,210	**380,842**	76.98%
Appoint of New Staff	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	**4,000**	0.81%
Agency Staff	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Professional Training	1,313	1,313	1,313	1,313	**5,250**	1.06%
Other	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Section Totals	97,523	97,523	97,523	97,523	**390,092**	**78.85%**
Premises Related Expenses						
Accommodation	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Repairs & Maintenance	100	100	100	100	**400**	0.08%
Section Totals	100	100	100	100	**400**	**0.08%**
Transport Related Expenses						
Car Allowances	938	938	938	938	**3,750**	0.76%
Section Totals	938	938	938	938	**3,750**	**0.76%**
Supplies & Services						
Equipment, Furniture & Materials	500	500	500	500	**2,000**	0.40%
Uniforms & Protective Clothing	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	**4,000**	0.81%
Printing, Stationary & Office Expenses	625	625	625	625	**2,500**	0.51%
Books, Manuals & Magazines	150	150	150	150	**600**	0.12%
Professional Consultancy	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	**4,000**	0.81%
Security Services	125	125	125	125	**500**	0.10%
Section Totals	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	**13,600**	**2.75%**

Communications & Computing

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
Postage	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	**6,000**	1.21%
Telephony	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	**20,000**	4.04%
Computer	250	250	250	250	**1,000**	0.20%
Section Totals	6,750	6,750	6,750	6,750	**27,000**	**5.46%**
Expenses						
Staff Subsistence	375	375	375	375	**1,500**	0.30%
Seminars & Courses	950	950	950	950	**3,800**	0.77%
Section Totals	1,325	1,325	1,325	1,325	**5,300**	**1.07%**
Grants & Subscriptions						
Subscriptions to Professional Bodies	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Section Totals	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.00%**
Miscellaneous						
Other	0	0	0	0		0.00%
Section Totals	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.00%**
Software						
Telephone Handling	3,060	3,060	3,060	3,060	**12,240**	2.47%
Email, SMS, Web-Chat, Social, Fax	8,385	8,385	8,385	8,385	**33,540**	6.78%
Customer Relationship Manager (CRM)	375	375	375	375	**1,500**	0.30%
100MB Resilient Internet Line	1,625	1,625	1,625	1,625	**6,500**	1.31%
PCI Compliment Call Logging	200	200	200	200	**800**	0.16%
Section Totals	13,645	13,645	13,645	13,645	**54,580**	**11.03%**
Grand Totals	**123,680**	**123,680**	**123,680**	**123,680**	**494,722**	**100.00%**
Loss of accommodation rental	9375	9375	9375	9375	**37500**	
Grand Totals (+ rental loss)	**133,055**	**133,055**	**133,055**	**133,055**	**532,222**	**-**

Capital Costs V1.2

Calculations

- 20 -

	Total PA
In-House Set Up Costs	**£**
100mb Resilient Internet Connection	15,000
10 Factor Increase Bandwidth	7,000
PC Stations	12,000
Office Software	5,000
Peripherals	2,000
CRM Software	10,000
Multi Media Handling Software	5,000
Telephone Handling Software	5,000
Tupe / Redundancy	7,271 * Based on 1 redundancy @ 10 service year and age 50
Total	**68,271**

Tupe / Redundancy

Eligible Tupe Staff Numbers

Agents	12
Switchboard Agents	3
Total	**15**

New Solution Staff Requirement No.

Agents	14
Total	**14**

Contact Centre Illustrative Budget V1.3 (MINUS HOUSING REPAIRS)

Operational Costs (excluding Capital Costs)

SUMMARY

In-House Solution Key Facts:

Total Cost (before reception and officer assimilation)	**441,805 PA**
Reception Service & Officer Assimilation	**-111,825 PA**
Total Cost (after reception and officer assimilation)	**329,980 PA**
Total Saving (against 2011/12 outturn of 646,463)	**316,483 PA**
Accommodation – Potential Rental Revenue Loss	32,500 PA
Total Saving **(Including loss of potential accommodation revenue)**	**283,983 PA**

In House Solution Key Assumptions:

Monday to Friday 08:30 – 18:00 (9.5hrs)

12 x Contact Centre Agents

1 x Contact Centre Manager

Hosted Media Handling Software (e-mail, web-chat, SMS, social media, e-fax)

Hosted Automatic Call Distribution Software (ACD)

Hosted Customer Relationship Management Software (CRM)

<10% Increase in Face-Face & Telephone Contact

Reception Assimilation (Budget & Staff)

Officer Assimilation

Contact Centre Illustrative Budget V1.3 - MINUS HOUSING REPAIRS

Operational Costs (excl. capital expenditure) - In House Solution

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Employees						
Salaries	83,041	83,041	83,041	83,041	**332,165**	75.18%
Appoint of New Staff	750	750	750	750	**3,000**	0.68%
Agency Staff	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Professional Training	1,138	1,138	1,138	1,138	**4,550**	1.03%
Other	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Section Totals	84,929	84,929	84,929	84,929	**339,715**	**76.89%**
Premises Related Expenses						
Accommodation	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Repairs & Maintenance	100	100	100	100	**400**	0.09%
Section Totals	100	100	100	100	**400**	**0.09%**
Transport Related Expenses						
Car Allowances	813	813	813	813	**3,250**	0.74%
Section Totals	813	813	813	813	**3,250**	**0.74%**
Supplies & Services						
Equipment, Furniture & Materials	500	500	500	500	**2,000**	0.45%
Uniforms & Protective Clothing	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	**4,000**	0.91%
Printing, Stationary & Office Expenses	625	625	625	625	**2,500**	0.57%
Books, Manuals & Magazines	150	150	150	150	**600**	0.14%
Professional Consultancy	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	**4,000**	0.91%
Security Services	125	125	125	125	**500**	0.11%
Section Totals	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	**13,600**	**3.08%**

Communications & Computing

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
Postage	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	**6,000**	1.36%
Telephony	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	**20,000**	4.53%
Computer	250	250	250	250	**1,000**	0.23%
Section Totals	6,750	6,750	6,750	6,750	**27,000**	**6.11%**

Expenses

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
Staff Subsistence	325	325	325	325	**1,300**	0.29%
Seminars & Courses	850	850	850	850	**3,400**	0.77%
Section Totals	1,175	1,175	1,175	1,175	**4,700**	**1.06%**

Grants & Subscriptions

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
Subscriptions to Professional Bodies	0	0	0	0	**0**	0.00%
Section Totals	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.00%**

Miscellaneous

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
Other	0	0	0	0		0.00%
Section Totals	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.00%**

Software

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
Telephone Handling	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	**10,800**	2.44%
Email, SMS, Web-Chat, Social, Fax	8,385	8,385	8,385	8,385	**33,540**	7.59%
Customer Relationship Manager (CRM)	375	375	375	375	**1,500**	0.34%
100MB Resilient Internet Line	1,625	1,625	1,625	1,625	**6,500**	1.47%
PCI Compliment Call Logging	200	200	200	200	**800**	0.18%
Section Totals	13,285	13,285	13,285	13,285	**53,140**	**12.03%**

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total	Total
Grand Totals	**110,451**	**110,451**	**110,451**	**110,451**	**441,805**	**100.00%**
Loss of accommodation rental	8125	8125	8125	8125	**32500**	
Grand Totals (+ rental loss)	**118,576**	**118,576**	**118,576**	**118,576**	**474,305**	

Capital Costs V1.2 (MINUS HOUSING REPAIRS)

Calculations

In-House Set Up Costs	Total PA
	£
100mb Resilient Internet Connection	15,000
10 Factor Increase Bandwidth	7,000
PC Stations	12,000
Office Software	5,000
Peripherals	2,000
CRM Software	10,000
Multi Media Handling Software	5,000
Telephone Handling Software	5,000
Tupe / Redundancy	21,811

* Based on 3 redundancy @ 10 service years and age category 50.

Total	82,811

Tupe / Redundancy	
Eligible Tupe Staff Numbers	
Agents	12
Switchboard Agents	3
Total	**15**
New Solution Staff Requirement No.	
Agents	12
Total	**12**